

MISCELLANEA

Report on the 38th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea (Valencia, 7–10 September 2005)

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The 38th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea (SLE) took place in Valencia, Spain, from 7 to 10 September 2005. The meeting, whose central theme was “Formal, functional and typological perspectives on discourse and grammar”, was organized by Salvador Pons and the Department of Spanish Philology at the University of Valencia. It attracted quite a number of participants from a variety of European and non-European countries, who presented a total of over 200 papers during the three and a half conference days.

The plenary lectures included an opening paper by Johan van der Auwera (Antwerp), the departing president of the SLE, on “Prohibitive *no*”, in which he gave a stimulating account of the typology of prohibitive negation, as in Spanish *¡No cantes!* ‘Don’t sing!’. Antonio Briz (Valencia) examined the structure of dialogues from the perspective of discourse analysis. Sonia Cristofaro (Pavia) spoke on “Grammatical categories and functional principles in cross-linguistic perspective: the case of subordination”, while in “Harvesting the fruit from *Treebanks*: Information structure and the stock of shared knowledge” Eva Hajičová (Charles University in Prague) discussed the assigning of information structure (topic-focus articulation) to the *circa* 50,000 sentences in the *Prague Dependency Treebank*. The closing lecture by Emilio Ridruejo (Valladolid) approached the issue of “Opacidad discursiva e implicaturas conversacionales en el cambio grammatical”, which he illustrated with the development of a number of concessive conjunctions in Spanish.

The general programme necessitated six parallel sessions throughout most of the meeting and comprised presentations on phonology (one paper), morphology and syntax (70 papers), semantics (14 papers), pragmatics (28 papers), discourse analysis (20 papers), historical linguistics (14 papers), sociolinguistics (6 papers), and typology (13 papers). There were also a few papers on general issues of theory and methodology, including Cristina Alice Toma's "Quelques arguments linguistiques pour la distinction sciences 'fortes' vs sciences 'faibles'" and Christian Lehmann's "On the value of a language".

Several events were held in conjunction with the main programme, namely a parasession on *The world atlas of language structures (WALS)*¹ and five workshops. The workshop on "Code-switching and lexical borrowing" contained five papers and was convened by Larissa Naiditch and Ekaterina Protassova. It took place on Wednesday and ran concurrently with the workshop on "Ironía" organized by Leonor Ruiz Gurillo (three papers), and with the workshop on "Structures grammaticales et hiérarchies textuelles" convened by Anna Maria de Cesare (six papers). "Modals in the languages of Europe" was the topic of the workshop (13 papers) chaired on Thursday by Johan van der Auwera and Björn Hansen, while Karen Lahousse and Andr e Borillo presided over the workshop on "Sentence-initial and sentence-final position" which was held on Friday; it contained twelve papers focusing on nine different European languages.

Overall, the papers that were accepted for presentation at the conference accurately reflected the various concerns of European linguistics at the beginning of the twenty-first century, and the different methodologies applied to address them. As is usual at linguistics meetings nowadays, syntax dominated the programme, followed by pragmatics and discourse analysis. The growing popularity of typological research was also evident.

The efficient organization, the high number of participants, and the quality and breadth of many of the presentations contributed to making the 38th Annual Meeting of the SLE a very successful event. But the conference benefited too from the pleasant weather and the social programme; this included the opening ceremony at the splendid Library of Valencia –located in the former Hieronymite monastery of San Miguel de los Reyes–, a reception at the Town Hall, the conference dinner, and a guided tour of the

¹ Cf. Haspelmath, Martin, Matthew S. Dryer, David Gil & Bernard Comrie, eds. 2005. *The world atlas of language structures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Old Town followed by a visit to the stunning buildings designed by the Valencian architect Santiago Calatrava for the City of Arts and Sciences.

When this issue of *Folia Linguistica* comes off the presses, the 39th Annual Meeting of the SLE, organized by Thomas Stolz, will be about to take place at the University of Bremen, Germany. In 2007 Markku Filppula will host the 40th Annual Meeting at the University of Joensuu, Finland.