BOOK REVIEW

Review of *Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 2011. Selected Papers from 'Going Romance' Utrecht 2011*

Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 2011. Selected papers from 'Going Romance' Utrecht 2011, edited by S. Baauw, F. Drijkoningen, L. Meroni & M. Pinto, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 269 pages, 2013

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The present volume contains a selection of twelve peer-reviewed papers presented at *Going Romance* in 2011. Celebrating its 25th edition, the conference took place on December 8–10, in Utrecht, Holland, where the event was first held in 1986. While keeping the focus on the formal study of the Romance languages, the articles represent a wide range of topics related to different research areas, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and language acquisition. The papers are arranged in alphabetical order by author.

The volume – the 5th of this series published by John Benjamins – begins with an introduction by the editors – Sergio Baauw, Frank Drijkoningen, Luísa Meroni and Manuela Pinto –, which provides a brief history of this European conference, from its inception, in the eighties, until today. The editors emphasize the success of the meeting and the increasing number of participants from various universities. They also underline the scientific quality of the papers that have been presented and published throughout the years.

The 12 articles in the book will be briefly summarized below.

The first article focuses on L1 acquisition. In "A'-dependencies in French: A study in L1 acquisition", Anamaria Benţea and Stephanie Durrleman present interesting results of an experimental study of A'-dependencies in French, demonstrating a complexity scale for comprehension of questions and relative clauses, taking into account aspects such as the presence of an intervening element or the existence of syntactic optionality. Based on these results, the authors argue for the existence of an interaction between the presence of certain features on the elements involved in A'-constructions and children's comprehension of A'-dependencies.

In "The irregular forms of the Italian 'Passato Remoto': A synchronic and diachronic analysis", Andrea Calabrese analyzes the alternation between regular and irregular stem forms. Contrary to several previous accounts based on the idea that the allomorphy of the Italian Passato Remoto involves memorized stems and alternate endings, the author suggests an approach within the Distributed Morphology model based on the idea that the morphological synchronic and diachronic changes in phonological shapes can be accounted for in terms of the interference of grammatical components, such as Vocabulary Insertion (in which Vocabulary Items rules apply), Readjustment Rules and Impoverishment Operations.

The next paper focuses on a semantic issue. In "On the lack of stranded negated quantifiers and inverse scope of negation in Romance", Robert Cirillo presents a comparative study of negation in Germanic and Romance languages. In this study, the contrast between these two groups of languages in what concerns the licensing of floating negated quantifiers and the possibility of negation to take inverse scope over a universal quantifier arises from two major facts: (i) the status of negation, which is a functional category in the Romance languages but not in the Germanic languages; (ii) the fact that stranded negated quantifiers can occur in the Germanic languages but not in the Romance languages.

In "Evidence for the competition-based analysis of subjunctive obviation from relative and adverbial clauses in Italian", Francesco Constantini addresses the phenomenon of subjunctive obviation in Italian,

paying particular attention to nonargument (relative and adverbial) clauses, which have been understudied, in his opinion. Based on a comparison between obviation in argument and nonargument clauses, the author presents some data showing a similarity that provides counterevidence to approaches focused on Binding Theory, which predict a relation between obviation and tense dependency. Hence, the data favor alternative theories based on mood competition.

In a paper entitled "Quotative expansions", Ricardo Etxepare argues that quotative constructions in Spanish may involve predicates of different syntactic complexity. Thus, in addition to what was already suggested in Etxepare (2008, 2010), the author shows that Spanish quotative predicates may have three different structural realizations: a result noun, a participle and a gerund.

The following paper – "Dative, prepositions, and argument structure in Spanish", by Héctor Fernández-Alcalde – analyzes different cases of dative marking in Spanish in order to show that they do not form a homogeneous class. Quite on the contrary, as the author argues, the different types of dative constructions are related to different syntactic structures, leading to distinct interpretations. In his proposal, the semantic interpretations of these constructions play a crucial role, since only some of them imply a transfer of possession.

In their article concerning agreement processes – "A typology of agreement processes and its implications for language development" –, Vincenzo Moscati and Luigi Rizzi describe an experiment using a Forced Choice Grammaticality Task applied to three groups of children between 2;11 and 5;10 in order to assess the acquisition of four different agreement processes: D-N agreement, Subj-V agreement, Subj-Adj agreement and Clitic-Past Part agreement. Starting from the hypothesis that "a more local agreement process is fully mastered earlier than a less local agreement process" (p. 146), the authors obtain very convincing results concerning the relationship between full mastery and locality conditions. As a matter of fact, the younger group revealed a sharper distinction between the two extreme processes: D-N agreement (more local) and Cl-Past Part agreement (less local), while the older groups showed a progressive reduction of this distinction.

Subsequently, Nicola Munaro, in "On the syntax of focalizers in some Italo-Romance dialects", provides an analysis of focalizers which strengthens Kayne's (1998) overt movement approach to scope relations, based on data from some Italo-Romance dialects. Assuming that focalizers may be merged at the left edge of two phases – CP or vP –, the author argues that these elements, heading a Focus projection, attract the focalized constituent to their specifier. Crosslinguistic variation in the distribution of focalizers is obtained from the eventual activation of a higher functional projection WP, which can attract the focalizer to its head, as well as remnant material to its specifier.

In "The phonotactics of word-initial clusters in Romance: Typological and theoretical implications", Diana Passino examines the word-initial position phonotactics in Latin and in several Romance languages. The author shows that the binary typology based on the evolution of Romance languages in what concerns the word-initial position does not explain the existence of hybrid languages, where clusters of obstruents are accommodated in word-initial position while sonority reversal clusters are consistently repaired. In order to account for this type of language a refinement of the theory is required.

The intention of the next paper – "Double object constructions in Spanish (and Catalan) revisited", by Anna Pineda – is to propose a new approach to Spanish ditransitive constructions, based on data from Catalan and European Spanish. Rejecting the parallel between the alternation in English double object constructions and the presence/absence of clitic doubling in Catalan and Spanish, the author suggests that in the latter two languages the clitic does not have any influence on the structural position of the direct and indirect object. Since clitic doubling is optional, Catalan and Spanish ditransitive constructions with and without the clitic are regarded as two variants, arising from silent variation.

In "Cognitive economy, non-redundancy and typological primacy in L3 acquisition: Initial stages of L3 Romance and beyond", Jason Rothman introduces the reader to the emerging field of L3 acquisition from the generative approach, focusing particularly on transfer effects at the initial stages of L3. Moreover, the author updates the Typological Proximity Model of L3 morphosyntactic transfer proposed by Rothman (2010, 2011), clarifying how it works and what the relevant types of linguistic information are that determine relative typological proximity.

The volume ends with a paper by Petra Sleeman and Aafke Hulk, "L1 acquisition of noun ellipsis in French and in Dutch: Consequences for linguistic theory". The authors present a comparative study on the acquisition of nominal ellipsis, based on spontaneous production data of several monolingual French and Dutch children. They conclude that in child Dutch, just as in adult and child French, the presence of an element

with a partitive meaning plays a crucial role in the licensing of noun ellipsis. Furthermore, they show that there is no difference between the two languages in what concerns the acquisition of the role of the quantitative pronoun. This fact supports Sleeman's (1996) idea that the quantitative pronoun is a lexical variant of an empty noun.

This volume has an undeniable interest to everyone who, in one way or another, works in the field of Linguistics. As would be the case with any volume containing such a range of topics, any individual reader will likely find here some relevant information.