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Generative Diachronic Syntax:
Word order and information structure

Edited by
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Generative Diachronic Syntax: Word order and information structure

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- 3 Acknowledgements to reviewers.
- 9-15 **Batllori, Montserrat** (Universitat de Girona. Departament de Filologia i Comunicació); **Hernanz, M. Lluïsa** (Centre de Lingüística Teòrica; Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Departament de Filologia Espanyola) Introduction. Generative Diachronic Syntax: Word order and information structure. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, 2011, vol. 10, pp. 9-15.

Articles

- 17-69 **Biberauer, Theresa** (University of Cambridge. Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics); **Kemenade, Ans van** (Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. Centre for Language Studies) Subject Positions and Information-Structural Diversification in the History of English. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, 2011, vol. 10, pp. 17-69.

The aim of this paper is to integrate Information Structure/IS-related insights of past work on the subject system of Old English with a particular formal account of word-order variation and change in earlier English that did not take IS considerations into account. We offer a first detailed formal account of how the IS-sensitive Old English subject positions can be understood in the context of an OV system which was becoming increasingly VO, and thereafter outline subject-related developments during Middle English and Early Modern English, leading us to the present day. Against the background of these diachronic developments, our contention is that English has, in one way or another, exhibited IS-sensitive subject positions throughout its history and that, as argued by Kiss (1996), it continues to do so today.

Keywords: information structure; nature of spec; TP; OV/VO word order; subject positions; word order.

- 71-94 **Taylor, Ann; Pintzuk, Susan** (University of York. Department of Language and Linguistic Science) The interaction of syntactic change and information status effects in the change from OV to VO in English. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, 2011, vol. 10, pp. 71-94.

It is well known that the position of constituents in a clause is influenced by information structure: the cross-linguistic generalization is that given information frequently comes early in the clause and new information is placed towards

the end. In this article we investigate the relation between syntactic change and information status on alternations in Old English and Early Middle English verb-object order, OV vs. VO. Our main hypothesis is that syntactic change and the constraints of information status are independent. The analysis we present is based on 1500 AuxV and VAux clauses from seven Old English texts and three Middle English texts. We consider three independent variables that influence the position of objects within the clause: text, information status and syntactic complexity. We build a quantitative model with syntactic change over time proceeding independently of synchronic syntactic variation due to information status and syntactic complexity; we then test the model against the Old and Middle English data and also against Icelandic historical data exhibiting the same types of variation. We show that the patterns predicted by our model show up clearly in both English and Icelandic, strongly confirming our hypotheses.

Keywords: Old English; Icelandic; information structure/status; syntactic change; quantitative models.

- 95-132 **Cruschina, Silvio** (University of Manchester. School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures)
Focalization and Word Order in Old Italo-Romance. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, 2011, vol. 10, pp. 95-132.

This paper sets out a comparison between modern and old Italo-Romance varieties with the aim of understanding the mechanisms that characterize the syntactic operations associated with the information structure of the sentence, as well as identifying their triggering factors. In particular, this study concentrates on the process of focalization and the movement operations related to it: constituent fronting and verb movement. In light of the synchronic variation found in modern Italo-Romance varieties, it is argued that most of the properties generally attributed to a V2 system found in the languages in question are instead associated with discourse-related features and functional projections. A distinction between a higher, left peripheral FocP and a lower, clause-internal FocP provides the basis for an account of both synchronic and diachronic variation, the analysis of which rests on a correlation between word order changes in diachrony, discourse-related features, and functional projections.

Keywords: Medieval Italo-Romance; Sicilian; Sardinian; synchronic variation; diachronic change; word order; focalization; contrastive focus; informational focus; functional projections.

- 133-158 **Martins, Ana Maria** (University of Lisbon. FLUL/CLUL)
Scrambling and Information Focus in Old and Contemporary Portuguese. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, 2011, vol. 10, pp. 133-158.

This paper proposes that object scrambling both in Old and Contemporary Portuguese is a strategy to create appropriate information focus configurations. Essentially, it makes the rightmost constituent that would otherwise bear the neutral sentence nuclear stress escape it. In narrow information focus structures this amounts to defocusing of the scrambled constituent. In broad information focus sentences the scrambled constituent is prosodically and pragmatically demoted with respect to salience. Thus, leftward displacement of the scrambled constituent either allows another constituent to acquire discourse/informational

prominence or creates a ‘flat’ structure in that respect. The informational import of the scrambling strategy is constant throughout the history of Portuguese. But while Old Portuguese allowed both short scrambling (i.e. adjunction to VP) and middle scrambling (i.e. raising to multiple Spec,TP), only short scrambling is a grammatical option in Contemporary European Portuguese. Hence, Old Portuguese scrambling could derive SOV sentences whereas Contemporary European Portuguese scrambling maintains the object in postverbal position. The view that scrambling may induce loss or downgrading of discourse/informational prominence as it removes constituents from the clause-final position to which such prominence is assigned is supported by cross-linguistic evidence (Taylor & Pintzuk 2010 for Old English, Pinkster 1990 and Devine & Stephens 2006 for Latin).

Keywords: Object scrambling; information structure; word order; Old Portuguese; European Portuguese.

- 159-184 **Sitaridou, Ioanna** (University of Cambridge. Queens’ College)
Word order and information structure in Old Spanish. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, 2011, vol. 10, pp. 159-184.

In this article it is claimed that in Old Spanish the discourse-sensitive field is exclusively the preverbal one. Focusing on object preposing, it is shown that the object can: (i) either be linked to a topic reading (England 1980, 1983; Danford 2002); or (ii) an information focus reading (cf. Cruschina and Sitaridou 2011) –the latter only available as the rightmost element in Modern Spanish (cf. Zubizarreta 1998, *inter alios*); or (iii) a contrastive focus reading; or (iv) *verum focus* reading (cf. Leonetti & Escandell-Vidal 2009). Given all these different discourse readings which are linearized as verb second syntax, the testing hypothesis is that the verb second orders are an epiphenomenon of the organisation of information structure (cf. Wanner 1989; Bossong 2003; Sitaridou 2006, 2011 *pace* Fontana 1993; Cho 1997; Danford 2002; Fernández Ordóñez 2009; Molina 2010) rather than structural as in the Germanic languages.

Keywords: Old Spanish; Topicalisation; Focus Fronting; OV; V2.

- 185-219 **Bartra-Kaufmann, Anna** (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Centre de Lingüística Teòrica)
Recycled Neuter Expletive Pronouns and the Nature of the Left Periphery: *ell* and Relatives Revisited. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, 2011, vol. 10, pp. 185-219.

In this paper, we revisit two types of apparently Neuter Expletive Pronouns in Romance, namely Catalan *ell*, Spanish *ello*, EP *ele*, a.o., and the expletive neuter demonstratives *aço*, *eso*, *esto*, which have been argued in the literature to have an expressive value and to belong to the Left Periphery of the sentence. Our aim is to explore the relationship between expletive subjects and the Left Periphery in NS languages in a simple way. We base our investigations on the rich insights set up in the literature, and discuss if grammaticalisation could explain the shift from expletive subject to expressive marker. After briefly reviewing the properties of *ell/ello/ele*, we show that it is unclear how they could fit into the current definition of grammaticalisation. We then review the common semantic properties of *ello* elements and neuter demonstratives and argue that these elements

anchor a speech act, a predication to the external situation. We explain how this property is encoded in a framework like the one of Hale & Keyser's work. As for their syntactic properties, we claim that these elements belong to a reduced C-T area.

Keywords: expletive subjects; discourse; left periphery; pronouns; demonstratives; *ello*; *açò*.

- 221-245 **Camus Bergareche, Bruno** (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha. Facultad de Letras); **Pérez Saldanya, Manuel** (Universitat de València. Facultat de Filologia)
From Adjectives to Quantifiers. Evidence from Old and Modern Catalan. *Catalan Journal of Linguistics*, 2011, vol. 10, pp. 221-245.

The history of indefinite quantifiers in Romance languages is basically the history of the development of new distributional patterns in the case of some Latin adjectives (Company 1991, 1997; Batllori 1998). This new distribution will contribute to the construction of the new subclass of Romance determiners we call Quantifiers. As explained by Zamparelli (2000), the growing structural complexity of the left margin of DetP entails the specialization of old word classes for those new positions. A Quantifier position creates thus the Quantifier word class. This is a long-term process, effects of which are clearly seen in medieval Romance for words derived from adjectives, such as *MULTUS* and *PAUCUS*, but also in later Romance adjectives such as Catalan *bastant* or even in Contemporary Catalan with the word *suficient*, which has a similar meaning (Brucart; Rigau 2002, Camus 2005, 2008, 2009).

Keywords: Word Class; Distributional Patterns; Left Margin of DetP; Catalan Diachronic Syntax; Indefinite Quantifiers.

- 247-249 Resums