Introduction to RLLT 18

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How to cite: MacDonald, Jonathan E., Fagyal, Zsuzsanna, Beristain, Ander & Robin Turner. 2022. Introduction to *Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 18*. RLLT18, eds. Jonathan MacDonald, Zsuzsanna Fagyal, Ander Beristain & Robin Turner. Special Issue of *Isogloss. Open Journal of Romance Linguistics* 8(4)/1, 1-10. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/isogloss.275

1. Introduction

This, the 18th volume of the Romance Languages and Linguistics Theory (RLLT) series, contains selected presentations from the 51st Linguistic Symposium on

Romance Languages (LSRL 51), which took place in April of 2021 organized by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

LSRL is an international annual conference that focuses on all aspects of Romance languages. LSRL 51 was held in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and, thus, was virtual. At that time, the virtual modality was not considered ideal. Nevertheless, it allowed for a geographically broader set of scholars to participate, and thereby truly highlight the international scope of LSRL. There were presentations from countries which collectively span an impressive portion of the globe: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Switzerland, the UK, and the US. LSRL's global reach stems from years of top-notch research in all major areas of linguistics, the impact of which typically extends beyond the Romance languages themselves and bears on key issues of interest to the wider field of Linguistics. The conference itself boasted 4 plenary talks, 42 oral presentations, and 13 poster presentations with a total of 295 registrants.

The present volume consists of 13 papers, each selected after a round of double-blind peer-review by three reviewers. The review process initiated as we were beginning to emerge from the COVD-19 pandemic, and so, we are grateful for each reviewer who took the time to read and evaluate the papers in this volume, under conditions that no one had experienced before. It is thanks to these dedicated reviewers that the papers in the present volume are of the highest quality. This is just one reason that LSRL is considered to be the premier event in Romance linguistics worldwide and a venue for the dissemination of the results of state-of-the art research in linguistics as it is applied to the Romance languages. This volume is no different.

There are a wide range of phenomena that the articles in the present volume touch on: intervocalic lenition of plosives, vowel compression, speech rate, collective-distributive interpretation in bilingual children, acquisition of psych predicates, *wh*-extraction from preverbal infinitives, adjectival passives, differential object marking, address inversion, *se* constructions, evidentiality in the present perfect, argument structure, nominal and verbal defectivity, among others. These phenomena come from a wide range of Romance languages, such as Catalan, Rioplatense Spanish, Altiplateau Mexican Spanish, Andean Spanish, Romanian, Galician, Abruzesse, Sicilian, Marsala, Messina, Brazilian Portuguese as well as Latin. In what follows, we briefly summarize how this breadth of topics and varieties distribute across the articles in the present volume.

Gilly Marchini and Michael Ramsammy's paper, entitled "Vowel Compression in Alteplateau Mexican Spanish," investigates whether the presence of an onset or coda consonant drives compression in AMS, to what extent onset and coda branching may further impact it, and what interactions between stress and compression can be observed. Based on the acoustic analyses of reading passages by six female participants born and raised in the city of Toluca and aged between 18 and 25, the authors show that mid and low vowels centralize and also display significant shortening in CVC contexts. However, coda-driven compression in AMS is implemented variably: both stressed and unstressed vowels have significantly shorter durations in CVC contexts than in CV contexts and vowels in closed syllables show more stress-driven centralization than vowels in open syllables. Contrary to previous findings, the results do not show evidence that onset complexity triggers shortening, although the authors document it in some CCV structures. The authors also show evidence that coda-induced vowel shortening occurs in AMS in environments of

resyllabification where consonant-final words occur before vowel-initial words. The paper concludes on the need for more and larger dialect-specific studies of vowel compression in relation with other phonological processes.

In their paper "Intervocalic lention, contrastiveness, and neutralization in Catalan," José Ignacio Hualde and Jennifer Zhang observe the effect of word boundaries on the lenition of intervocalic voiceless plosives in Catalan. The authors analyze three different contexts: word-final (VC#V), and word-internal (VCV) and word-initial (V#CV). They hypothesize that the acoustic cues for lenition are greater intensity, shorter duration, and greater voicing, as well as the fact that greater lenition should appear in word-final position (VC#V) as plosives are neutralized in that context in Catalan. The data analyzed were from two subcorpora from the *Glissando* corpus. Specifically, the *News* subcorpus was used to obtain formal speech from 8 professional radio presenters while the Task-based Dialogs were used to analyze more informal, conversational speech from 4 speakers. Results show a strong effect of speech style, as more conversational speech was conducive to greater lenition in plosive consonants. Additionally, authors found that lenition does not result in temporal reduction in Catalan. The present study provided weaker evidence to support their findings than in a previous similar study on Basque, which leads authors to believe there are phonological differences across the two languages.

Average information rate, i.e., the amount of information conveyed per speech unit, has been reported to be highly consistent across languages. Based on this finding, Daniel Stelzer's paper, entitled "How fast did Cicero speak?" provides a thoroughly documented and phonologically-sound estimate of the rate at which Classical Latin, a language that hasn't been natively spoken for thousands of years, might have been spoken by some of the greatest Latin orators at the time. First, using extrapolation and statistical resampling techniques, the author derives a measure of average information rate per syllable from the written corpus. Then, relying on the cross-linguistic consistencies of measured speech rates among living Romance languages, English, and Japanese, he provides an estimate of the average natural speech rate of Classical Latin. Conclusions indicate that Latin was likely spoken at a slower speech rate than modern Romance languages by orators such as Cicero. To lend additional credence to these results, the effect of historical sound changes in Romance and extensions of this methodology to other written corpora are also discussed.

Anne Lingwall Odio and John Gristead focus on developmental semantic research in in bilingual children in their article "Collective-Distributive Interpretations in Bilingual Spanish-English-Speaking Children". Developmental semantic research in child Italian, Spanish, and English has shown that children's knowledge of distributive interpretations does not appear adult-like until 10 or 11 years of age. Further, children's knowledge of distributive interpretations predicts their knowledge of collective interpretations. Lexical development, in these studies, predicts both their distributive and collective interpretations, while development of the inhibition component of executive function predicts children's collective interpretations, but not their distributive interpretations. In their article, they test Spanish distributive and collective interpretations in a sample of bilingual Spanish-English-speaking 1st graders and an age-matched sample of monolingual Spanish-speaking children in Mexico. Their results show that the bilingual children have significantly greater inhibition scores than the monolingual children. The monolingual children, in contrast, have greater lexical scores than the bilinguals. Further results show that the monolinguals

have more adult-like distributive and collective interpretations than do the bilinguals and that lexical scores are predictive of distributive-collective interpretations in the combined sample, while inhibition is not. They conclude that the lexicon plays a greater role in collective implicature interpretations than does inhibition.

Victoria Mateu's article, "On the acquisition of Spanish psych predicates: When intervention makes extraction of a nominative *wh*-phrase harder", discusses acquisition of intervention effects in Spanish psych verbs by children. Spanish psych verbs like *gustar* ('like'/'please') have a non-agreeing dative experiencer that asymmetrically c-commands the agreeing nominative theme (e.g., Cuervo 2003). Intervention accounts (Friedmann et al. 2009) thus predict children will experience difficulties with constructions that involve movement of the nominative-bearing argument past the dative DP. In her article, she evaluates this prediction with a corpus study and an experimental study. Results from the corpus study show that children under the age of 7 underuse the NOM-V-DAT (Theme-Verb-Experiencer) order with *gustar* compared to adults, in line with the predictions. In a picture-matching task 4-6-year-olds were tested on *d*-linked *wh*-questions with actional and psych verbs. Results reveal that while children display the expected NOM > DAT *wh*-phrase extraction asymmetry with actional verbs, they show a DAT > NOM asymmetry with psych verbs. Moreover, children perform worse when the two arguments match in number features (i.e., SG-SG) compared to when they mismatch (i.e., SG-PL), but crucially, only in *wh*-questions that involve intervention. The results cannot be fully explained under input-based accounts and are most in line with a structural account such as featural Relativized Minimality (Rizzi 2004).

In "A prosodic constraint on wh-extraction from preverbal infinitival subjects", Carlos Muñoz Pérez, Matías Verdecchia, and Fernando Carranza offer a unique perspective on island repair. Their article introduces a series of mitigating circumstances which improve the acceptability of wh-extraction from preverbal infinitival subjects in Rioplatense Spanish. It is argued that the factor behind these amelioration effects is encoded in prosodic structure, much in line with the hypothesis that certain island restrictions apply at PF. The linguistic principle accounting for the phenomenon is proposed to be a faithfulness constraint at the syntax-prosody interface stating that an extraction domain XP cannot be mapped as a prosodic word ω at PF. An alternative syntactic account based on freezing is shown to be unable to capture the relevant contrasts.

In "Spanish adjectival passives with a progressive reading", Elisabeth Gibert-Sotelo and Rafael Marín discuss Spanish adjectival passives with *estar* showing a progressive reading. In previous literature, it has been acknowledged that the participles of verbs encoding non-dynamic events, such as *vigilar* 'guard', give rise to a progressive reading when embedded in adjectival passives. Yet, they identify another group of verbs, those of the *perseguir* 'chase' type, which denote dynamic atelic events (i.e., activities) and whose participles are also attested in *estar*-passives with a progressive reading. This is a significant finding, since it is commonly assumed that only participles of verbs including a stative component in their event structure (i.e., telic or stative verbs) can be part of adjectival passives. After comparing the behaviour of these two types of verbs, they are proposed to share a relational layer that in the case of *vigilar*-verbs defines an event as non-dynamic and in the case of *perseguir*-verbs defines a motion event as continuously maintained. This relational layer, which constitutes the stative component needed for the adjectival passive construction to be

possible, accounts for the necessary atelicity of these two verbal classes (which cannot be telicized under any circumstances) and for the progressive reading obtained in their adjectival passives.

Brian Gravely and Monica Irimia discuss DOM in Romanian and Galician in their article, "DOM co-occurrence restrictions and their repair strategies: evidence from Romanian and Galician". Since Ormazabal & Romero (2007), work on PCC-effects that extend beyond clitic clusters has been of interest (Cornilescu 2020 a.o.). Many of these effects have been shown to arise with animate nominals, in Romance particularly those bearing differential object marking (DOM). More work, however, is needed on documenting how these types of cooccurrence restrictions can be repaired. In this article, repair strategies in contexts containing DOM from Romanian and Galician as compared to Spanish are the focus. The authors show that an understanding of these facts revolves around the typology of available [PERSON] licensing positions along the clausal spine. We show that Romanian and Galician exhibit multiple licensing positions within various licensing domains, both within and beyond the vP. Data from both Peninsular and Argentine Spanish that differ in this regard are discussed and it is demonstrated that they have fewer licensing positions than Romanian and Galician.

Jairo Nunes's article "Generalized phasal defectivity in Brazilian Portuguese" presents a novel approach to Brazilian Portuguese, which displays a cluster of apparently unrelated properties that set it aside within Romance. On the one hand, it has lost its third person possessive pronouns (cf. Oliveira e Silva 1984, Perini 1985, Cerqueira 1996, and Müller 1996), its third person accusative and dative clitics (cf. Omena 1978, Duarte 1986, Galves 1987, Kato 1993, Nunes 1993, Cyrino 1997, and Berlinck 2006), and its null subjects and null possessors have become severely restricted (cf. Duarte 1995, Figueiredo Silva 1996, Kato 1999, Ferreira 2000, Modesto 2000, Galves 2001, Floripi 2003, and Rodrigues 2004). On the other hand, it came to allow hyper-raising constructions (cf. Ferreira 2000 and Nunes 2020b), as well as the so-called 'topic subject' constructions, where a putative topic controls verbal agreement (cf. Pontes 1987, Galves 1987, Nunes 2017, and Kato and Ordóñez 2019). Moreover, it makes a pervasive use of preposition deletion in relative clauses (cf. Tarallo 1983) and its directional verbs came to select the preposition *em* 'in' instead of *a* 'to' (cf. Wiedemer 2013). Thee central claim argued for is that these and other seemingly independent changes can be accounted for if there is a general process of underspecification affecting phases in Brazilian Portuguese.

Alice Corr's article "Address inversion in southern Italian dialects" proposes a 'topological' reinterpretation of the extended nominal architecture in relation to southern Italo-Romance vocatives with and without *allocuzione inversa* (address inversion, Renzi 1968), a phenomenon involving the 'inverse' lexical indexation of the speaker-addressee relationship (reg.It. *Mangia, papà!* 'Eat up, little one!', father to child). Topological mapping theory (Longobardi 2005; Martín & Hinzen 2014) posits a unified model of grammatical structure and nominal reference denotation in argumental constituents, where a hierarchy of referentiality (from predicativity to deixis) emerges through the expansion of the functional architecture. Contributing to a growing theoretical consensus favouring extra 'vocative' structure in the nominal left periphery, it is argued that Italo-Romance vocatives with and without address inversion involve a part-whole expansion of structure, yielding a necessarily tripartite nominal architecture (VocP-DP-NP) in line with topological principles. The non-

literal interpretation of N observed in the 'lexical flip' of address inversion vocatives is argued to be the surface manifestation of movement into VocP, a functional space whose internal articulation serves to construe the ostensive-deictic possibilities of an object-referring expression at the exophoric level.

In "Revisiting -*ej*(*ar*) verbs in Catalan: Argument and event structure"' Victor Acedo Matellán and Elisabeth Gibert-Sotelo explore the properties of the Catalan verbalizing suffix -*ej*(*ar*), centering on intransitive verbs. After presenting the rich variety of outputs that this suffix allows, they focus on two generalizations. The first has to do with the consistent eventive nature of the verbs derived with this suffix, even from bases that count as individual-level predicates, like colour adjectives, or proper names. Importantly, their eventivity is orthogonal to their dynamic/non-dynamic status. The second one is the robust unergative status of intransitive -*ej*(*ar*) vebs. They show that previous work on -*ej*(*ar*) has failed to capture these two properties. Adopting a Ramchandian, nanosyntactic perspective, it is proposed that the suffix is the spellout of the subeventive structure of a caused process, i.e., the heads Init and Proc. The (non-)dynamic interpretation is claimed to emerge from interactions among the contents of the roots involved in the predicate, at the conceptual, non-grammatical level. Finally, they show how their analysis can account for the behaviour of transitive -*ej*(*ar*) verbs as well.

In "Optional se constructions and flavours of applicatives in Spanish" Fabienne Martin and Sudha Arunachalam address Spanish optional *se* constructions, constructions that host a reflexive clitic serving as a non-selected argument in transitive structures (*comer*(*se*) *la manzana* 'eat.REFL the apple'). On the basis of new experimental data, they argue against the view that in such constructions, *se* is similar to particles of exhaustivity such as *up* in English Instead, it is proposed that *se* is a pronoun merged as an argument of a low applicative, conveying a locative relation 'in(x; y; s)' between the binder of the reflexive x and the nominative DP y ('x is in y in s'), or, for a subset of speakers, as an argument of a high applicative, introducing an experiencer of the verbal event. It is shown how this proposal accounts for the variability in the acceptance of optional *se* constructions across speakers and verb types as well as for the inferences of enriched or unaided agency, affectedness and counter-expectation that have been argued to be triggered by the *se*-variant of these constructions.

In their article "Grammaticalization in the Evidential pathway of the Andean Spanish Present Perfect: Language contact as a trigger for language change" Anna María Escobar and Joseph Roy examine the development of the Spanish Present Perfect (PP) in an ex-colonial region where Spanish is in contact with Indigenous languages and argues for the inclusion of linguistic factors connected to subjectivity and information structure in the study of the PP, alongside the traditional temporal and aspectual factors. Perfects in the world's languages derive from three main sources (BE/HAVE, COME, FINISH, Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994), but HAVE perfects (e.g., Spanish) are considered the least common pattern (WALS, Dahl & Velupillai 2013; Drinka 2017). Bybee *et al*. (1994) posit that only the stative source branches into two distinct grammaticalization pathways of the PP: the temporal (towards past/perfective) or the evidential (leading to (in)direct evidential). There are exceptions to the temporal pathway in Romance: Daca-Romanian (Drinka 2017), Judeo-Spanish (Varol 2006), and Andean Spanish varieties (Escobar & Crespo 2020) are argued to follow the evidential path that is in each case triggered by contact with a language or

languages of families (Turkic or Quechumaran) that have evidential markers. Through grammatical analyses of data from semi-structured conversations, the effect of subjectivity and information structure on the grammaticalization pathway of the PP in Andean Spanish varieties is established.

Acknowledgments

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