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From the Desk of the Editor

Dear Reader,

In front of you lies (or, depending on your medium, is projected on a screen) the Fall 2011 issue of the LingNewsLetter.

When I started working on this issue, I was afraid I would not be able to fill even a meagre five pages. However, as so often with projects you start on, you blink and suddenly they have developed all on their own.

This issue of the newsletter includes the traditional introduction of the new first year students, a listing of the accomplishments of our current students, and a congratulatory section.

In addition, you will find "quick shots" of our most recent graduates, interviews with faculty members, a student’s perspective of living in Storrs and a report on attending a (linguistic) summer school.

Here's hoping that once the Reader turns the last page of this newsletter, they will wonder and talk about whatever caught their eye in this issue.

A fond farewell!

List of contributors:
Scott AnderBois, Jonathan Bohaljk, Miloje Despić,
Soyoung Eom, Harry van der Hulst, Troy Messick, Vanessa
Petroj, Zheng Shen, Koji Shimamura, Masahiko
Takahashi, Aida Talić, Lyn Shan Tieu, Neda Todorović,
Ting Xu, Yong Suk Yoo.

Special thanks go to Susi Wurmbrand for brainstorming and willingness to read and comment on earlier versions, and to Peter Smith for proofreading.

Edited by Beata Moskal (beata.moskal@uconn.edu) — comments and/or questions are welcome!
Allow me to introduce myself

By Scott AnderBois, Troy Messick, Vanessa Petroj, Zheng Shen, Koji Shimamura and Yong Suk Yoo

Troy Messick

I am Troy Messick, and I am from the small town of White Lake in the state of Michigan (the one that looks like a giant mitten surrounded by water).

I received my B.A. in Linguistics and Psychology from the University of Michigan. I am primarily interested in syntax, but also have a growing interest in semantics.

When I am not studying, I enjoy reading short stories, watching movies, or going to the gym.

Vanessa Petroj

I’m Vanessa, I just turned 23 and I come from a very small seven-street Romanian village in Serbia. I have a B.A. in English Language and Literature (with concentration in Linguistics) from the University of Novi Sad, Serbia. I have also been a part of the FORECAST Exchange Program as an exchange student at the University of Mississippi for the academic year of 2009/2010. Growing up in a bilingual and bicultural society has directed my main interests in Syntax and Language Acquisition towards bilingualism and all its mysteries.

I love my friends, the outdoors (when it’s warm and sunny), animals, music and languages and my hobby is table tennis. I like to laugh and to go for runs in the evening, although I wish I could do that in the morning (I'm working on it). My only childhood dream that has never changed is that one day I get to live somewhere near the ocean. I'm looking forward to meeting and working with all of you!

Zheng Shen

My name is Zheng Shen. I am from a small industrial city in China called Taiyuan.

After finishing my BA in English in China, I went to the UK to get an MA in Linguistics at University College London. Syntax is my academic focus now. I’m constantly amazed as well as confused by the ba-construction in Mandarin Chinese and causation constructions and I’m curious about other stuff too. I’m very excited to have the opportunity to study at UConn.

In my leisure time, I enjoy watching movies, listening to music and reading.
Koji Shimamura

Hi everyone, my name is Koji Shimamura. I’m from Nara in Japan, which is famous for its old temples or shrines for sightseeing and has a nice access to Osaka and Kyoto.

My specialization is Generative syntax, basically theoretical so far, but I’m interested in some “bio” aspects of Generative Grammar as well.

Japanese is my mother tongue and I speak a bit of English…

Talking of my non-academic concerns, I love cats (the most beautiful life form on the earth!), reading novels, listening to music, running and cycling (but I couldn’t bring my bike to Storrs this time, unfortunately).

Finally, I am not so talkative but drink a lot. Cheers.

YongSuk Yoo

I’m YongSuk Yoo from Seoul, Korea. I studied English Interpretation for my B.A. and Linguistics for my M.A. I'm interested in syntax, especially the structures of some intriguing sentences.

I love swimming and playing tennis even though I'm not good at it. Also, since I am fascinated by architecture; I would like to see some buildings in Connecticut. Please let me join the field trips.

I here attach a picture of the royal palace of the Chosun dynasty. They are beautifully designed even though they are quite small.

Scott Anderbois

Scott AnderBois (Ph.D. 2011 at UCSC) is Assistant Professor in Residence in semantics at UConn this year. We are very happy he decided to join our ranks and hope that everybody will enjoy his stay here!

Thanks to everyone for such a warm welcome to the department! My specialization is in semantics/pragmatics and its interfaces, especially that with syntax. Specific topics which interest me include: appositives and other “backgrounded” content, bias, conditionals and other clausal adjuncts, disjunctions, indefinites, negation, quantifier, scope, questions, sluicing and other ellipsis processes, and verum focus. Beyond English, I explore these topics through regular fieldwork on Yucatec Maya, an indigenous language of Mexico. In addition to traditional linguistic field methods, I also maintain an interest in the use of corpus and other quantitative methodologies to address these topics. I look forward to getting to know everyone, feel free to stop by my office any time, my door is always open!
Pleased to meet you

By Aida Talić

Welcome!

First off, welcome aboard our new first-year students Troy Messick, Vanessa Petroj, Shen Zheng, Koji Shimamura, and Yong Suk Yoo! I wish you all a successful and productive year. Your first weeks at UConn have probably been pretty hectic, with all the paperwork you needed to fill out, moving into your apartments, and meeting many new people. It is natural that you will need some time to adapt to life at UConn. In the beginning you might feel confused if you are not used to this kind of educational and administrative system, but don’t worry - whenever you have a question about anything, just look around, and ask someone for help. We have all been there, and we can provide you with most of the information you will need, or to refer you to someone else who can help you.

Linguistics Club

If you want to get involved in what is going on in our department, you can join our Linguistics Club and attend monthly meetings where issues of graduate students in our department are discussed and plans for future projects are made. This is a very good opportunity to meet with students other than your classmates, and share your ideas with them. Each student in the Linguistics Club chooses to be a member of one (or more) of the committees that help organize events, run our department library, and publish papers.

Additional excellent opportunities to benefit from other people’s ideas are colloquia, which are organized once or twice a month by the Colloquium Committee. Speakers from universities other than UConn are invited to give talks on their work in linguistics, and you will have a chance not only to listen to their talks, but also to schedule a meeting with them if you have a linguistics related question for them.

The island on Mirror Lake
University Services

Using services that the university provides can really make your life easier, and I will mention just several that I find the most useful:

-Homer Babbidge Library provides not only a lot of study space and lots of books, but you can also order books that are not available in the library from other libraries through Interlibrary Loan, access electronic journals through the library website, order articles and book chapters that you need in PDF.

-If you like sports or just an occasional workout, then the Student Recreational Facility is a place you should definitely try out. You can use basketball, badminton, or racquetball courts; use the climbing wall; or just work out in the gym.

-Some of the places you might need in the Student Union: the food court, the movie theater, the Graduate Students’ Lounge, the International Office, and the Graduate Students Senate Office.

-Many will tell you that a car is a must-have in Storrs, but before you get one you can use Transportation Services. For commuting on campus, you can use shuttles or Husky Watch service that you can call after 6 PM. There is also a bus that can take you to Willimantic for no charge, you just need to show the driver your Student ID. For longer trips you can use Peter Pan Bus or Megabus; their tickets can be bought online. Megabus is a lot cheaper especially if you book your ticket in advance. For instance, the normal price of a ticket to NY is around $40, but if you buy it a couple of months in advance, you can get it for $5, or even $1!

Storrs Fall

And lastly, Storrs is beautiful in fall, with all the trees changing every day. The weather is still warm, but not as hot as during the summer, which makes it perfect for walking or jogging around campus or other places nearby, as well as hiking. You will have a chance to feast your eyes with the beauty of many colorful sights before the winter comes and takes it away.
Awards and other good news

Faculty

Jon Gajewski has been awarded tenure and promotion to associate professor.

Diane Lillo-Martin has been appointed Director of the Cognitive Science Program.

Željko Bošković received the Certificate of Appreciation for 15 years of service at the University of Connecticut.

Doreen Simmons received the Certificate of Appreciation for 10 years of service at the University of Connecticut.

Students

Cheng, Johnny Hsu-Te. 2011. David Michaels Teaching Assistant Award for Excellence in Teaching, Department of Linguistics, University of Connecticut.

Tieu, Lyn Shan. 2011. David Michaels Teaching Assistant Award for Excellence in Teaching, Department of Linguistics, University of Connecticut.

Tieu, Lyn Shan. 2011. Isabelle Y. Liberman Prize (awarded for outstanding research paper in the psychology of language), University of Connecticut.

Tieu, Lyn Shan. 2011. Linguistic Society of America (LSA) Fellowship to attend the 2011 Summer Institute at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

Villa-García, Julio. NSF grant (consultant). Project title: ‘A longitudinal study of the pro-drop parameter: The case of Dominican Spanish children and adolescents.’ PI: Dr. María José Cabrera-Puche, West Chester University, Pennsylvania, USA.

Villa-García, Julio. 2011 Hispanic Linguistics Symposium Graduate Student Award. Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

Villa-García, Julio. Grant to present at the Generative Linguistics in the Old World Colloquium (GLOW 34) at the University of Vienna, Austria.

Xu, Ting. 2011. Fellowship for LSA Linguistic Institute [James McCawley Fellowship (Alternate)]

Alumni

Inkie Chung (Ph.D. 2007 at UConn) started a tenure-track Assistant Professor position in the Department of English at Sogang University, Seoul, South Korea in March 2011.
Congratulations Doctors!

By Miloje Despić and Masahiko Takahashi.

Miloje Despić

Dissertation Title: Syntax in the Absence of Determiner Phrase.

The thesis investigates the structure of the noun phrase in Serbo-Croatian as well as cross-linguistically, and argues that DP is not universal. The claim is justified with respect to a variety of syntactic, semantic and morphological mechanisms and domains, with binding theory being the center of a number of arguments. The dissertation also makes a host of new proposals regarding phase theory.

Life after UConn: Currently I am a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at Cornell University.

What UConn gave to you: I have had a great time at UConn. I think that one of the most important things about the Department of Linguistics is that the communication between the students and the professors is exceptionally good. The professors understand our needs and problems, and they always make themselves available to us, which I believe is a great advantage of studying here. As far as the students are concerned, I like the fact that it is a strong and diverse group of people. We work together and always try to help each other out. I have personally made great friends here who I know I will keep for the rest of my life.

Masahiko Takahashi

Dissertation Title: Some Theoretical Consequences of Case-marking in Japanese.

This thesis is a theoretical investigation of the status of phases within the phase theory with a particular emphasis on several constructions in Japanese and other languages that involve Case. I argue for a contextual approach to phases, where Case determines the relevant context for phasehood.

Life after UConn: I am now a postdoctoral fellow in syntax at the University of Maryland.

What UConn gave to you: I learned so many things at UConn. One of the most important things I learned is how to be "professional" as a linguist. The faculty members at UConn became my role models. I also enjoyed the very friendly and supportive atmosphere of the department.
The Life and Opinions of Jonathan Bobaljik, Professor

The fact that Jonathan Bobaljik is not teaching any first-year courses was the perfect excuse to have an interview with him - this way the new first years get to know a bit more about him, and Itelmen.

If you could get infinite funding for a project with the only requirement being your enthusiasm, and hard work, what would it be?

I would try to find a project that could be defined as open-endedly as possible. In some areas, such as acquisition or writing a dictionary of Itelmen, the tasks are fairly well-defined, but for syntax or morphology I would like to say, “I’m working on general questions like: what’s the architecture of grammar; how do syntax and morphology fit together?” I don’t know ahead of time what is going to be relevant, and what isn’t. I would like to fund bright graduate students to come up with proposals, where they say, “This is what I want to look at”, and I can say, “Good! Go work, and here is some money so you can eat a little bit during the time you’re working.”

Actually, I think that the fact that funding is tied to very specific research projects is a problem in the field. In Canada, we have a different system: you can propose a research program rather than a research project. This way you could define something much more vaguely (people talk about it as an umbrella under which various projects fit) and there’s a lot more flexibility as to what graduate students can do.

What made you decide to go into linguistics?

Scheduling. I started with a major in political science and Russian, so I was training for international affairs, but there was a gap in my schedule in my first year; the only elective that fit exactly in that space was ‘intro linguistics’, and I sort of became interested.

And why morphosyntax, or morphology, or syntax — actually, what is your field?

If I have to, I’d say I’m a morphologist and a syntactician, or working on the interfaces. I’m also interested in endangered languages. But I don’t like to think of my research as falling in particular disciplines. I think of it more in terms of problems. It could be a specific problem, such as “Why is there this prefix on this verb in Itelmen?”, or it could be a far more general problem, “Are there constraints on the size of morphemes?” But I don’t think you know ahead of time that the answer is going to lie in syntax, morphology, or semantics. Also, I sometimes end up working on projects based on student interests, when students come and tell me about what they’ve found and I get interested in them.

Problems that I work on tend to lie in the area of morphology and syntax. Because of this these are the areas that I know more about, both theoretically and empirically, and as such, I’m not typically doing semantics or phonology.

In what direction do you think linguistics is developing?

The most exciting new development is the large increase in the empirical basis of the field, especially in syntax. More languages are being discussed, and at a higher level of sophistication. Until recently, most syntax papers were restricted to a handful of languages. Now, a comparative paper looks at a larger and more diverse base of languages.
The empirical base has also been broadened in terms of methodologies. For the well-discussed languages we’ve pretty much come to the end of what we can do with a few linguists thinking about their intuitions. If you look at the literature where theories now disagree, the data is murky and researchers disagree on the judgments. There didn’t use to be a good way to resolve that, but now we’re getting more sophisticated and empirically more robust methodologies for data collection. Although there’s still things you can’t check in a corpus (such as scope judgments), very advanced (annotated) corpora can be searched, and applications like Mechanical Turk allow you to do in two days what used to take months.

The idea, as far as I’m concerned, has always been that no one methodology, no one range of data, is privileged over any other; all of them are relevant, but they tell us different pieces of the puzzle, and they all have their limitations. But a wider range of tools are now more broadly accessible than ever before.

What about developments in syntax?

Syntax is more fragmented, and that’s both good and bad. There used to be a common core, particularly around Chomsky’s writings. These have become more philosophical, containing less data and analysis, and fewer people work on spelling out the details of what he says. So, we’re now in a situation where there’s a bunch more alternatives; different directions are being explored, and I hope that means that there’ll be more cross-pollination of ideas.

It’s a bad thing in that it is harder for junior researchers, for example students, to make contributions in this area and to get accepted to conferences. There’s less consensus on what counts as an interesting research question or clearly defined problem. For instance, it used to be the case that many people in the field of syntax cared about whether the ECP should be formulated in conjunctive or disjunctive terms. Now you choose some technical question, like the proper formulation of the Activation Condition, and you’ll find that it’s only a small subset of the field that even acknowledges that it’s a question to work on. A lot of good research doesn’t get into conferences, for example, because of squabbling and disagreements about what counts as research.

What is your view on (non-UG) usage-based frameworks?

In morphology one that comes up a lot is frequency based frameworks. A lot of what you see in the frequentist literature responding to UG-based claims is that “it’s all frequency”. It is an empirical hypothesis, but it is clear that it doesn’t seem to be making the right predictions. Cynthia [Levart Zocca DeRoma] and I have a paper on gender and markedness and one of the things we responded to was Haspelmath’s claim that the patterns are frequency-driven. Haspelmath didn’t give any numbers, so we looked at actual numbers in the British National Corpus. We looked only at a small sample of ten or twelve pairs of nouns, but we found that the data follows a semantic-based pattern that we identified, and does not pattern on the basis of frequency (i.e., of the ratio of feminine to masculine members of a pair). So here’s a case of a frequency based hypothesis that in principle could be right, but as far as the numbers that we’ve looked at, it turns out it just isn’t.
Are there facets of language where frequency is relevant?

Absolutely, there’s many aspects of language where frequency plays a role. For example, Oksana Tarasenko did a study on the acquisition of gender in Russian. Russian has three genders: masculine, neuter and feminine. The distribution of nouns is not random; there are some phonological and semantic regularities, but they’re not entirely deterministic, so there are cases where you just can’t tell. One thing she looked at was words that are phonologically ambiguous between two genders; they were nonce words that could go into one of two genders. The adult controls showed a statistical frequency effect, where their choice of gender for a nonce noun matched the relative frequency of the two in the Russian lexicon, where feminines outnumber neuters by about 3:1, and the chance that people called the nonce words feminine over neuters was about 3:1! Jen Hay’s work, in New Zealand, shows a lot of extremely uncontroversial evidence that people have very detailed, sophisticated knowledge about statistical regularities in their lexicon and in their grammar, and that they use this knowledge in making judgments and in acquiring new words. When you hear a new verb in English or Dutch, how do you know whether it is regular or irregular? Well, there’s neighbourhood effects on this, which are frequency based effects about whether a particular phonological pattern is going to be regular or not.

So, how do these frequency effects fit in?

I assume that UG provides certain parameters, not in the parameter sense of switches, but in the sense of the bounds of possible variation. Children are armed with UG saying that certain kinds of data will force you to a particular range of possible analyses. Within that range of possible analyses, the children are also making use of statistical information to guide them to what the most likely analysis of a particular range of data is going to be.

How do Information Structure effects come into play all this?

One possibility, an old idea, and this is something that Susi and I have been looking at, is to say that syntax gives you optionality. Syntax says you can move some NP or not move it, and that’s where syntax stops, giving you two derivations. Then there are conditions that say, maybe you want to have old information earlier in the sentence, and new information at the end of the sentence, that’s a common pattern cross-linguistically. An economy condition says that if the resources of your language allow it then express it overtly. So, if movement is optional in your language then that optionality comes along with an Information Structure effect, but if your language has fixed word order, then you’ve got no choice and the sentence is going to be informationally ambiguous. If that’s the right way of looking at these things, then the question “Is Information Structure syntax or semantics or pragmatics” is almost undefined. Syntax tells you what the structures are that are available in the language, phonology tells you how you pronounce these things, pragmatics defines the various terms or concepts that you are working with, but how they are all mapped together is a question about the relationship among various components of grammar, not something that belongs in any one component.

Do you have a message for the (new) grad students?

Welcome. Work hard. In the next five years you have the opportunity to really broaden your horizons in a safe and encouraging environment. You have at the moment a group of people who are leaders in their respective areas who are paid to sit and listen to your incipient ideas and to help you develop those ideas.

It sometimes surprises me how little people make use of this. I think you should be trying to meet as many people as often as possible during your student career to get exposure to a whole range of ideas that you can then meld together distilling a view of your own in your dissertation.

Kovran, Russia (the main Itelen village). © Dima Kravchenko
An automated card-system of stress patterns

This summer Harry van der Hulst received an NSF grant for three years to work on a project called StressTyp2. Assuming that the topic of investigation was not the tension resulting in headaches and sore shoulders, I met with Harry van der Hulst to get more information about the grant.

How would you describe your project in a nutshell?

The stress project is about making a database which contains information about the word stress patterns of as many languages as possible. I started the database many years ago, together with Rob Goedemans [from Leiden University]. It was called StressTyp and over the years various languages have been added. This database has been consulted for papers and projects, such as the WALS atlas [the World Atlas of Language Structures].

You can think of the database as a matrix: every row in the matrix is a language, and each cell in that row lists information about the stress pattern of that language. The encoding is based on grammars and descriptive articles, so it’s a description of the main pattern. But if a grammar mentions exceptions or sub-regularities, we record that information in the Remarks field.

The description of each stress pattern is split up in quasi-parameters, such as “Where’s the primary stress?”, “Is it quantity-sensitive?”, “If yes, what type of quantity sensitivity?”, and so on. We also have geographical information, so that you can do areal studies to see whether certain types of systems are concentrated in, for instance, North-East America.

“A platform to exchange information”

The money I received from NSF is to improve the database, to rewrite the software for it, and to make a web interface. But as I was planning this, it turned out that somebody else had made a similar kind of database. So I invited that person to join me and now we will merge the two databases. Of course, we need to solve coding issues; certain distinctions are made in StressTyp and not in the other database, or vice versa. We have to preserve the information that is in both databases, merge them, work out incompatibilities and then come up with a unified system.

I like working on collaborative projects; it brings together researchers from, in this case, Delaware, Chicago, the Netherlands, UConn, and once it’s on the web, you also create an interaction with the users. It creates contact between researchers, and becomes a platform to exchange information, which, through repeated use and correction, will constantly improve the quality of the database.

To what extent do you incorporate theory in the database?

The database should be as theory-free as possible, but making certain theoretical decisions is inescapable; I call this the database paradox. You make databases because you want to understand the phenomena better, but you design your database building on previous experience and knowledge of theories of these phenomena. The coding in the database has to be as descriptive as possible, but we describe languages in terms of a number of ingredients that we know from theories on stress.

The big advance in stress theory has been to break down stress patterns into a small set of parameters. The fields in the database reflect the idea that a complex pattern is the result of a couple of interacting factors. But rather than striving for maximal conflation and economy, we spell out everything; if there is redundancy in the coding that is not a problem.
You have 3 years for this project – how do you intend to divide your time?

The first year is to design the new database and the central part is to develop it in the best possible way, and make it available on the web. We have to look carefully at the coding systems that have been used for both databases and all the researchers have to be familiar with them, so that we have a clear understanding of the extent of overlap and where the differences lie. We will write a proposal of how to merge the two databases, and the details of that proposal will be discussed at a workshop that will be organised in December. The programmer that will be hired for this project can then start his work, and probably it will only take a few months to write the program. The remainder of the year will be used to concentrate on adding content to the database, testing it and hopefully releasing it by the end of the first year.

Then we have two more years, which will be used to improve the content quality of the database. Sometimes things are coded in two different ways, because different people have worked on it, so we have to go through the database and check for inconsistencies. Presently, there are many languages in the databases where the information could be enriched; some languages are more detailed than others, so we will look at the sources and update the descriptions. However, my main contribution will be to add further languages, with the help of my charming assistants, of course. In making the coverage broader, we will pay special attention to endangered languages. With the grammar in your hand, the stress pattern of a language will be written down and discussed before it is added to the database. Also, in the web interface, there will be a way for users to report errors. They will be able to send an e-mail to the database manager, and somebody will look into it. But the core remains to have a careful description of the stress system for as many languages as possible.

How would you describe the merits of this project?

You receive a lot of money from the government to do this, so it should be usable by as wide a group as possible.

We will be designing a tool that can be used by stress-researchers irrespective of their theoretical commitment.

My primary interest is to make theories but you can’t make theories without data. Ongoing you have this data-oriented activity and hand-in-hand with it you develop your theory. For instance, for the book I’m writing now I’ve used the database to see how frequent certain patterns are. Furthermore, sometimes when you’re looking for an example, you stumble upon a correlation that you didn’t see before, just because you have this magnitude of data sitting there.

“No natural ending”

I believe that projects of this sort provide a continuous environment for students to work in. You could imagine various dissertation projects being attached to it; for instance, somebody could investigate the relationship between the syllable structure and the stress system that languages have, because we also encode syllable information for each language. In turn, that person would, in the course of their project, add valuable material to the database. In some sense, this is a project that doesn’t have a natural ending, because we can always continue to elaborate on it.
Special Report from the LSA Summer Institute in Boulder

By Lyn Tieu & Ting Xu

Linguistics at 5400 feet

For the month of July, the two of us were fortunate to experience the mountains of Boulder, Colorado, a city that’s located at the base of the Rocky Mountains, at an elevation of about 5400 feet. What could be better than summertime in the mountains, you ask?

How about studying linguistics in the mountains? Hundreds of linguists descended upon Boulder to take courses in different subfields of linguistics, to interact and network with each other, and of course to take in the sights of Boulder.

How many linguists do you need to...

Between the two of us, we took courses in language acquisition, formal semantics, probability, and psycholinguistics, learning from faculty based in the States and Canada, all the way to Germany. We heard different languages being spoken all across the campus, and drank with students from all over the world. Through the courses and special institute lectures, we were exposed to numerous research topics in various subfields of linguistics, across different theoretical and experimental approaches to linguistics. For the three and a half weeks that we were in Boulder, we lived and breathed linguistics. The daily readings and assignments, labs and lectures, and final papers and proposals ensured that we were fully immersed in linguistics – by the end, most students were loudly and brazenly declaring that once home, completing their regular graduate programs would be an absolute breeze, compared to what the Institute had been.
“Experience of a lifetime”

But we’re sure no student can deny how much we all learned in such a short period of time, or how much we all enjoyed this experience of a lifetime. Each of us takes back to our home institutions the knowledge we’ve gained, the inspiration to tackle new research projects, the new friendships we’ve made, and of course, the wonderful memories of our time in Boulder. If any of you get the chance to attend an LSA Summer Institute, we can’t recommend strongly enough that you seize the opportunity. Institutes happen every other year, and tuition fellowships are offered on a competitive basis. See the LSA website for more details (http://www.lsadc.org/). In the meantime, here are some pictures from our adventures in Boulder.

Lyn and Ting at the Rocky Mountain National Park

Gorgeous CU sidewalk
Boulder, CA

The mountain rainstorms were breath-taking.

The CU Boulder campus in the distance, against the backdrop of mountains.

Elk in the Rocky Mountains.
Colloquium Series

By Neda Todorović

Dear everyone,

This seems like an ideal time to advertise the perfect opportunity to meet with the leading names in linguistics. The Colloquium Series at UConn offers you a chance to learn about other linguists' perspective on the ongoing topics in the field. In a rather friendly atmosphere, we provide you with plenty of opportunities to talk to the invited speakers—during lunch, dinner, or the talk itself. Our experience over the years has been that speakers are eager to hear students' and faculty's thoughts on their research. Even more, we are certain that particular lectures are more or less connected to your research. This is due to the variety of subfields—this year we have experts in phonology, syntax, morphology, language acquisition and semantics. In the fall semester, we are pleased to welcome the following researchers:

October, 21  Kai von Fintel (MIT): Kai von Fintel is a professor of linguistics at MIT and also associate dean of MIT’s School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences. Von Fintel’s area is semantics, and his current research agenda includes the following: subjunctive conditionals, deontic modality, and imperatives.

October, 28  John McCarthy (UMass): John McCarthy is a distinguished university professor at the department of linguistics at University of Massachusetts. McCarthy’s field is phonology, and his research included topics like the nature of markedness constraints, the difference between gradience and categoricity, phonological opacity, and the role of morphological paradigms in phonology. His recent research covers topics related to Optimality Theory, focusing on the variety of OT known as Harmonic Serialism.

December, 2  Karlos Arregi (University of Chicago): Karlos Arregi is an assistant professor at the department of linguistics at the University of Chicago. His research covers syntax, the syntax-semantics and syntax-phonology interfaces, Morphology, and Basque and Romance Linguistics. His recent papers discuss clitic morphology in Basque and postsyntactic operations.

December, 8  Tania Ionin (University of Illinois): Tania Ionin is an assistant professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her area is language acquisition and her projects are related to articles and genericity in native and non-native grammars, indefinite scope and specificity, syntax and semantics of complex cardinals.

Finally, we would like to remind everyone that Beata and I will continue the tradition of having reading groups before the colloquia. The idea of having a discussion before each talk is due to Lyn Shan Tieu and Jungmin Kang. In a friendly atmosphere, accompanied with tea and cookies, we try to interpret the ideas of the upcoming talk and to make the lecture easier to understand.

We hope you will join us and we hope that the talks will be more than inspiring. Enjoy!
Student Achievements

(John 2011-August 2011)

Conference and invited presentations


Villa-García, Julio. “‘Find me in CP or in TP!’ exclaimed the Spanish Preverbal Subject.” Paper presented at the Hispanic Linguistics Symposium 2011 (HLS 2011), University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

Villa-García, Julio. “On Complementizer Reduplication: The Case of Spanish.” Invited talk at the CUNY Syntax Supper. Graduate Program in Linguistics at the City University of New York (CUNY), Manhattan, NYC. (By invitation).

Villa-García, Julio. “On the Spanish Clausal Left Edge—In Defense of a TopicP Account of Recomplementation.” 41st Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages (LSRL 41), University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.


Villa-García, Julio. “Back to Middle School.” Talk given on behalf of Compromiso Asturias XXI. C.P. Marcos del Tornielo, Avilés, Spain. (By invitation).

Villa-García, Julio. “Recomplementation, the architecture of the left periphery, and COMP-t effects in Spanish.” 19th Conference of the Student Organization of Linguistics in Europe (ConSOLE XIX), University of Groningen, the Netherlands.


Publications


Villa-García, Julio. “Enseñar aprendiendo” (Teaching by Learning). Opinion column in the newspaper La Nueva España, Spain.


Service

Villa-García, Julio, Second Language Acquisition session chair at the Hispanic Linguistics Symposium (HLS 2011), University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia.

Villa-García, Julio. Abstract reviewer, Generative Linguistics in Poland 7 (GiP 7), Wroclaw, Poland, 2011.

Villa-García, Julio. Interview for the radio program Abrázame. Principality of Asturias Radio and Television (RTPA), Spain. (September).

Villa-García, Julio. Linguistics Department Representative at the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Open House (for prospective and admitted students), University of Connecticut, USA.