Studies on the Syntax of Central Romance Languages

Proceedings of the III Symposium on the Syntax of Central Romance Languages

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Presentation

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The present volume contains a selection of the papers presented in the IIIrd Workshop on the Syntax of Central Romance Languages that was held in Girona on the 15th and 16th of November 1996. The conference was organized by the Departament de Filologia i Filosofia of the Universitat de Girona.

The Workshop on the Syntax of Central Romance Languages constitutes an important forum for researchers working on the syntax of those Romance languages and dialects that have not traditionally occupied a central position in the Romance linguistic literature. The previous meetings were held in Geneva, July 1990, and in Barcelona, May 1993. Both meetings focused mainly on syntactic phenomena displayed by several Romance varieties such as Catalan, Franco-Provençal, Galician, Genoese, Italian, Ligurian, Occitan, Padovan, Sardinian, Spanish, Trentino, Veneto and Walloon.

The IIIrd Workshop continued the line initiated in Geneva and followed in Barcelona but it also included papers on the interfaces between syntax and other components of grammar (morphology, phonology, semantics, etc.). The papers presented there had mostly a comparative slant, payed special attention to the description of new data or phenomena, and explored some properties of the interfaces among the different components of the grammar. The papers were not restricted by any concrete theoretical model nor by any methodological imposition, although, most of them followed the framework of generative grammar, at least those included in this volume. The papers covered the following topics: functional categories of the sentence (complementizers, negation, aspect, temporality and modality), the properties of verbal predicates (ergativity, verbal quantification), auxiliary verbs, possessive structures, wh-questions, word order (right and left dislocation), pronominal clitics, expletives, word formation, and the influence of syntax on the intonation of the sentence.

This volume is a selection of 10 papers out of 19 presented to the Workshop, including the especial talk given by the invited speaker Ignacio Bosque. The reader will find different
analyses and approaches to new data from Romance languages and dialects that are already well known, like Spanish, Italian, Catalan, Galician or Piedmontese, and from Romance varieties that have not deserved too much attention yet, such as the ones spoken in Canton Ticino, some Northern Italian dialects (like Eastern Lombard), Central and Southern Italian dialects like Calabrian (both Latin Calabrian and Greek Calabrian) or Neapolitan, and Quebec French. We are sure that the publication of these articles will enrich the linguistic literature on Romance languages.

It is necessary, on presenting this work, to express our gratitude to all the people that have made the IIIrd Workshop and this publication possible. In this sense the first to be mentioned must be those who participated in the conference and, especially, the authors of the papers included in this volume.

We would also like to thank our colleagues Montse Batllori, Beatriz Blecua, Isabel Pujol, Joan Rafel and Avel-lina Suñer, who collaborated with the organizing committee before and during the conference. An special acknowledgement must go to Ignacio Bosque for agreeing to give the inaugural talk, to Maria Lluïsa Hernanz for agreeing to be the chair at the inaugural session, and to Lluïsa Gràcia for agreeing to be the head of the organizing committee.

Finally, we have to thank the institutions that gave financial or infrastructural support to the organization of the Workshop: the Universitat de Girona (Facultat de Lletres, Departament de Filologia i Filosofia), Dirección General de Recerca de la Generalitat de Catalunya, and the Fundació Girona: Universitat i Futur. We particularly want to acknowledge the Dirección General de Enseñanza Superior del Ministerio de Educación y Cultura that financed also this publication.