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■ FASL 18

The eighteenth FASL (Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics) meeting took place at Cornell University (Ithaca, New York) between the 15th and the 17th of May, 2009. The meeting was sponsored by the Cornell University Department of Linguistics and Department of Russian. The Organizing Committee co-chairs were professors Wayles Browne and Draga Zec (Cornell University Department of Linguistics). Four graduate students from the same department (Adam Cooper, Alison Fisher, Esra Kesici and Nikola Predolac) helped them with the organization.

As the most important conference on Slavic formal linguistics in North America and one of the most important in the world, this year's FASL offered 37 presentations (32 talks and 5 posters) of relatively high-level quality. These presentations were distributed in sessions such as Syntax, Semantics, Syntax and Semantics, Phonology, and Interfaces. There were 46 participants in total, with scholars coming from research institutions in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Poland, Russia, Turkey, Israel, South Korea and Japan. The invited speakers were: Barbara Citko (University of Washington), Molly Diesing (Cornell University) and Jaye Padgett (University of California, Santa Cruz). All talks at the conference were held in the same room, without any parallel sessions.

The first day of the conference officially started with short welcoming remarks to the participants from Wayles Browne. The whole day consisted of syntax and semantics sessions. In the first talk of the conference, named *More students attended FASL than CONSOLE*, Roumyana Pancheva (University of Southern California) argued in favor of the small-clause analysis of phrasal comparatives (=the construction used in the title of the talk), based on the data from Bulgarian, Serbian, Polish, English, Hindi and Japanese. The following talk was given by Radek Šimík (University of Groningen) and it was concerned with how the focus placement affects the interpretation of multiple *wh*-questions cross-linguistically, with the crucial original data for the proposal coming from Czech. Sandra Stjepanović (West Virginia University) gave a talk on Left-Branch Extraction in multiple *wh*-questions with the data coming from Serbian/Croatian. Martina Gračanin-Yüksek (Middle East Technical University) proposed an account of object *što*-relative clauses in Croatian. Octav Eugen DeLazero (Cornell University) talked about the semantics of motion verbs in Russian. The last talk of the day was given by Barbara Citko (University of Washington), one of the invited speakers. Her talk named *Symmetry in Syntax?* was

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a very broad discussion of possible symmetry in minimalist syntactic operations such as Merge and Move, and also Labeling. She argued that symmetry exists in each of the three, giving a wide range of constructions from various languages (not only Slavic) to support her claims.

The second day included three sessions. While the morning session was again dedicated to syntax and semantics, the two afternoon sessions included talks on phonology and various interfaces. The first session started with a talk given by Boban Arsenijević (University of Amsterdam), in which he gave an analysis of Serbian coordination, deriving all conjunctions from two basic conjunctions *i* and *a*, the negative element *n* (as in *n-i*), and the clitic *li*, associated with extreme scalar values (as in *i-li* and *a-li*). The presenter also offered an intriguing hypothesis that disjunction is not a primitive cognitive operation, but one derived from syntactic configurations. The following talk was given by Chris LaTerza (University of Maryland, College Park) and Ivana Mitrović (Stony Brook University), who proposed a syntax-semantics-interface account for singular and plural reciprocal phrases in Serbian (e.g. *jedan drugog, jedni druge*). The last talk of this session was *The aspectual function of Slavic inceptive morphemes* by Larissa Nossalik (McGill University), in which she argued that inceptive morphemes, i.e. morphemes that encode the initial point of an event, are telicity markers, supporting her claims with the evidence from Russian. The phonology session started with Barttomiej Czaplicki's (University of Warsaw) talk, in which he presented evidence from a Polish dialect that contrast neutralization results from weak perceptibility. In the talk named *Interactions of tone and stress in Standard Serbian: phonological and phonetic evidence*, Draga Zec (Cornell University) and Elizabeth Zsiga (Georgetown University) proposed an Optimality Theory analysis for the system of pitch accents in standard Serbian, fully informed by both its phonetic and phonological aspects. The last talk of the session, by Markéta Ziková (Masaryk University), was concerned with pre-liquid yers in Old Czech. Among the talks in the session Interfaces, I will also mention the talk *Prosodic Description of Scopally Ambiguous Sentences in Russian* by Svitlana Antonyuk-Yudina (SUNY Stony Brook) and Asya Pereltsvaig's (Stanford University) talk on heterogeneous and the homogeneous case distributions in Russian quantified noun phrases, named *Babby's puzzle: syntax or morphology?* A well-received talk by the invited speaker Jaye Padgett (University of California, Santa Cruz) was the last presentation of the day. The talk was named *Russian consonant-vowel interactions and derivational opacity* and it contained a historical overview of formal approaches to Russian facts involving the interaction of vowel and consonant [back]ness (secondary palatalization, [i]-retraction, 'backness switch', etc.). The talk also suggested a contemporary-style surface-based account for the relevant data without call to serialism.

The second day officially ended with an excellent banquet dinner at Cornell's Statler Hotel. For many participants, socializing continued in Ithaca bars until late into the night.

The final day of the conference consisted of several talks on syntax and semantics, given by some of the regular FASL participants. The first talk of the day was concerned with Slovenian data, with the title *Two types of neuter: Second-conjunct agreement in the presence of '5 and ups'* by Franc Marušič (University of Nova Gorica) and Andrew Nevins (Harvard University). This was followed by a presentation by Miloje Despić (University

of Connecticut), who offered an elegant unified account for several phenomena in Serbian morphology related to plurality, gender and possessive adjectives. As the invited speaker for the day, Molly Diesing (Cornell University) presented findings on Serbian second-position clitics from joint work with Draga Zec (Cornell University) and Dušica Filipović-Đurđević (University of Novi Sad). The findings, based on corpora data and production and perception experiments, call for a four-way distinction in clitic placement. These differences were shown to correlate with the syntactic status of the category being followed or split by the clitic (i.e. argument or predicate) and different discourse conditions (neutral vs. marked contexts). The next talk was *What's Inside VP? New Evidence on VP Internal Structure in Russian*, given by John Frederick Bailyn (Stony Brook University), in which he provided new evidence for the claim that the accusative argument is structurally higher than the dative argument within the VP. In the last presentation of the conference, Denis Paperno (University of California, Los Angeles) talked about some semantic properties of Hybrid Coordination constructions with various sorts of quantifiers, showing that they can all be analyzed using quantifier resumption.

I did not do justice to some good presentations which I did not mention due to the very limited space in this report. FASL 18 was certainly a very successful and pleasant meeting. Let us hope that the conference will be able to last through current financial difficulties.