

June 2013

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1. Message from the president

This will be a short message as it's fieldwork time in the hemisphere where I live. But one important thing: I've been reviewing the responses to the questionnaire we put up earlier this year, and am delighted to see the amount of interest in the field reflected in the responses and the great number and variety of good suggestions. Responses were as diverse as our field, except that there was a very strong spike of 'yes' answers to the questions along the lines of "If we offered ways to volunteer for committee and/or officer work would you be likely to volunteer?" and "If you like the idea of summer schools, joint workshops, etc. would you be likely to participate/organize/etc.?" A lot of people have good ideas on how to make typological knowledge grow and how to make it more visible and are ready to translate that interest into action. Excellent -- prepare to be offered a smorgasbord of opportunities and volunteer lists. Watch this space, the Lingtyp list and the website, and of course the upcoming ALT Conference, for developments.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the upcoming conference! Among other things, more will be said there about the survey responses and how we're using them.

Johanna Nichols

2. ALT10 in Leipzig

2.1. Conference information

We look forward to seeing many of you at ALT10, which will run from August 15th to August 18th in Leipzig. General information about the conference can be found at:

http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/conference/2013_ALT10/

The definitive program is now available:

http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/conference/2013_ALT10/files/program.html

Members who still need to register, can do so at:

http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/conference/2013_ALT10/files/registration.html

2.2. Events at the conference

There will be eight adjacent workshops, five before the conference and three after the conference. All will be held at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, except for CoQuaT 2013.

More information can be found at:

http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/conference/2013_ALT10/files/adjacent_workshops.html

There will be two plenary lectures at the conference, by the winners of the 2013 Greenberg and Gabelentz Awards.

- Eva Van Lier's plenary lecture 'Multi-functionality in word classes and dependent clauses' is scheduled for Thursday August 15th at 14.20.

- Sebastian Fedden's plenary lecture 'Mian for typologists - the essentials' is scheduled for Sunday August 18th at 10.30.

Social events include a welcome reception on Thursday August 15th, and a conference dinner on Saturday August 17th.

2.3. Memorial event for Aleksandr Kibrik

At ALT 10, on Friday evening (16 August, 19-19:45), there will be a memorial event for Aleksandr E. ("Sasha") Kibrik -- founding member of ALT, former associate editor of LT, eminent linguist, revered teacher and dear friend of some of us -- who passed away in October. For contributions and suggestions get in touch with the conveners, Maria Koptjevskaja Tamm & Frans Plank (tamm@ling.su.se, frans.plank@uni-konstanz.de).

2.4. Business meeting

ALT's business meeting will be held on Sunday August 18th, at 11.30, after the Gabelentz plenary lecture.

We will present a report on ALT's finances and our journal, Linguistic Typology, we will launch a call for bids to organize ALT12 in 2017, and we will discuss the results of the members' poll we held earlier this year.

Members' input will be crucial here, so we hope that as many ALT members as possible will attend. After the business meeting, the executive committee will have a special meeting to discuss the results of the poll, as well as members' comments at the business meeting.

2.5. ALT scholarships

ALT's executive committee awarded nine scholarships to help students and scholars from developing countries attend the conference in Leipzig. The scholarships consist of partial reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs. The scholarship holders include three MA students, four PhD students, and two postdoctoral scholars. All scholarship holders will present papers or posters.

3. Events close to ALT10

There are (at least) three typologically relevant events close to ALT10, in time and space.

3.1. Historical linguistics (Oslo)

21st International Conference on Historical Linguistics

Dates: 5-9 August

Place: University of Oslo

Programme, registration & practical information:

<http://www.hf.uio.no/ifikk/english/research/events/ichl2013/>

3.2. Phonological typology (Oxford)

Phonological typology

Dates: 11-13 August

Place: Somerville College, University of Oxford

Organizers: Aditi Lahiri (U Oxford), Larry M. Hyman (U California Berkeley), Frans Plank (U Konstanz)

Programme: <http://www.ling-phil.ox.ac.uk/files/research/Phon-Typ-Schedule.pdf>

Registration: <http://www.ling-phil.ox.ac.uk/>

Practical information:

Somerville College:

http://www.some.ox.ac.uk/268/all/1/Maps_and_directions.aspx

Accommodation:

<http://www.visitoxfordandoxfordshire.com/accommodation/>

3.3. DGfS Summer School (Berlin)

DGfS Summer School: Language Development: Evolution, Change, Acquisition

Dates: 12-30 August

Place: Humboldt Universität, Berlin

Programme, registration and practical information:

http://www2.hu-berlin.de/dgfs_sommerschule/

4. ALT awards

4.1. Greenberg Award 2013

At the conference in Leipzig, ALT will present the Joseph Greenberg award for a typological dissertation defended between 2009 and 2012. The award winner is:

Eva van Lier of the University of Amsterdam, who will receive the Joseph Greenberg award for her dissertation "Parts of speech and dependent clauses. A typological study", defended at the University of Amsterdam in 2009 and supervised by Kees Hengeveld.

The jury also awarded two honorable mentions, to the following dissertations:

Natalya Stoynova. 2012. Типология глагольных показателей рефактива: модели полисемии и структура семантической зоны (Typology of verbal refractive markers: Polysemy patterns and structure of the semantic zone). Moscow: Moscow State University. (Supervisor: Vladimir Plungian)

Alena Witzlack-Makarevich. 2010. Typological variation in grammatical relations. Leipzig: University of Leipzig. (Supervisor: Balthasar Bickel)

We are very grateful to jury chairs Jae Jung Song and Seppo Kittilä, and to jury members Alexander Arkhipov, Isabelle Brill, Marina Chumakina, Denis Creissels, Holger Diessel, Heiko Narrog and Fernando Zúñiga. We also thank all ALT members who submitted their dissertations for the award.

4.2. Jury report for the Greenberg Award

The 2013 Joseph Greenberg Award for the best typological dissertation defended between 2009 and 2012, goes to Eva van Lier, University of Amsterdam, for her dissertation entitled 'Parts of Speech and Dependent Clauses. A typological study'. The advisor of the dissertation was Kees Hengeveld.

Van Lier's dissertation proposes a very ambitious research question and investigates it with original data to come to an original conclusion. Van Lier compares the structural properties of part of speech (PoS) systems to those of dependent clauses (DC) in a sample of 50 languages. Defining parts of speech cross-linguistically has been a notoriously difficult problem for linguists. The goal of this dissertation is to find out to what extent it is possible to predict flexibility of dependent clause constructions from corresponding PoS flexibility. Van Lier uses an approach proposed by Hengeveld where parts of speech are defined according to their propositional functions (predication, reference, nominal modification and adverbial modification), which are based on more general division of all communicative acts into reference, predication and modification. Van Lier provides a functional explanation to account for these results and interprets them as conforming to various principles

established in linguistic typology: the Principle of Increasing Categoriality, (or Staggering Level-dependent Categoriality), and Principle of Functional Transparency. The principle of Economy is claimed as the overall principle for the behaviour of the investigated structures. The dissertation is an exemplary piece of typological research in many ways and for this reason it has been selected as the best dissertation for the 2013 Joseph Greenberg Award.

Two other dissertations were also judged excellent by the jury, and were each given an Honourable Mention. They were:

Natalya Stoynova. 2012. Типология глагольных показателей рефактива: модели полисемии и структура семантической зоны (Typology of verbal refractive markers: Polysemy patterns and structure of the semantic zone). Moscow: Moscow State University.

Alena Witzlack-Makarevich. 2010. Typological variation in grammatical relations. Leipzig: University of Leipzig.

There were 21 submissions for the 2013 award (including 4 from 2011), and thanks are due to the jury members for their hard work: Jae Jung Song (co-chair), Seppo Kittilä (co-chair), Alexandre Arkhipov, Isabelle Brill, Marina Chumakina, Denis Creissels, Holger Diessel, Heiko Narrog and Fernando Zúñiga. In addition, we would like to express our gratitude to Andrew Spencer, who agreed to help the jury with the final decision.

4.3. Gabelentz Award 2013

At the conference in Leipzig, ALT will present the Georg von der Gabelentz award for a grammar published between 2009 and 2012. The award winner is:

Sebastian Fedden of the University of Surrey, who will receive the Gabelentz award for *A Grammar of Mian*, published by De Gruyter Mouton in 2011.

The jury also awarded three honorable mentions, to the following grammars:

Atoyebi, Joseph Dele. 2010. *A reference Grammar of Oko: A West Benue-Congo Language of North-central Nigeria*. Koeln: Koeppe.

Bowern, Claire. 2012. *A Grammar of Bardi*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Klamer, Marian. 2010. *A Grammar of Teiwa*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

We are very grateful to jury chair Hein van der Voort and to jury members Sonia Cristofaro, Mark Donohue, Nick Enfield, Katharina Haude, Birgit Hellwig and Soeren Wichmann. We also thank all grammar-writers who submitted their books for this award.

4.4. Jury report for the Gabelentz Award

Nine grammars published during 2009-2012 were submitted for the von der Gabelentz award. Although the quality of these works is generally excellent, the committee quickly came to the unanimous conclusion that Sebastian Fedden's grammar should be the winner. Among the submitted grammars, his work *A grammar of Mian* (2011) was judged best.

Here is a small summary of the praise Fedden's grammar received from the jury members:

Sebastian Fedden's *A grammar of Mian* (Trans New Guinea) is a truly excellent grammar that goes beyond a synchronic description. Based on eleven months of fieldwork, it covers the full range of descriptive topics and contains a large number of illustrative examples. The motivations underlying the author's analyses are usually presented in a clear and thorough manner, and the discussion is always typologically informed. The author has come up with excellent and original solutions in the difficult area of how to analyze the complex tonal system. This grammar furthermore has a highly useful and substantial index and table of contents, a high level of clarity of prose, explanation and organization, a high quality and richness of texts and vocabulary. Finally, engaging in areal, genealogical and typological discussions, it goes beyond the standard expectations of reference grammars in general. We should count ourselves lucky for having such a grammar.

Three works that followed very closely behind Fedden's in our verdict deserve honourable mention:

- Claire Bovern, *A grammar of Bardi* (2012)
- Marian Klamer, *A grammar of Teiwa* (2010)
- Joseph Dele Atoyebi, *A reference grammar of Oko: A west Benue-Congo language of north-central Nigeria* (2010)

Although the jury was less unanimous about these works than about the winner, there was general agreement that all three are also excellent grammars.

Sonia Cristofaro
Mark Donohue
Nick Enfield
Katharina Haude
Birgit Hellwig
Søren Wichmann
Hein van der Voort (head of the committee)

5. Members' poll

We launched a survey of our members in mid-February 2013, which ran until mid-March 2013. The questions covered members' understanding of the field, their involvement with ALT, their evaluation of ALT's functions and their opinion about some ideas for new activities.

182 members took the survey, which is a very good result. We thank everyone who took the time to respond. We are currently tabulating and interpreting the results, and will present an analysis at the business meeting in Leipzig. We hope that as many members as possible will attend the business meeting to discuss the results and their implications. The executive committee will also have a special meeting devoted to the survey and members' comments at the business meeting.