

# ALT Newsletter 57

Spring 2020

## 1 Message from the President

It is hard to believe that it is already the beginning of May! The new executive got off to a great start in January, but, as you all are well aware, the past two months have posed many challenges. Many thanks to Ljuba Veselinova for her persistence in seeing that this newsletter gets out, only a little bit later than usual.

I would again like to thank Jeff Good for his contributions as the previous president of ALT. He did a wonderful job, and leaves big shoes to fill. Thanks also to Kristine Hildebrandt for her hard work as Secretary. Ljuba is winding up her long-time commitment as Webmaster, and we are grateful to her for all of her work. She has taken over as Secretary from Kristine, we are delighted to have her in that position. Thank you also to the people who completed their terms as members-at-large, Silvia Luraghi, Stephen Matthews, and Felicity Meakins. Thank you as well to the new members-at-large, who have already been actively involved in discussions. You will find brief introductions to this group - Hilary Chappell, Nikolaus Himmelmann, and Iker Salaberri - in this newsletter. Finally, thank you also to Dmitry Idiatov, who is continuing as Treasurer and Membership Manager and to Rachel Nordlinger and to Mark Dingemanse for their continuing service on the Executive Committee. While Kristine finished her term as Secretary, she still retains a commitment to ALT, and is now serving as a member-at-large.

I think that you will find much information of interest in this newsletter, including a summary of the 2019 meeting in Pavia, great news about increasing membership, an interesting new arrangement with SIGTYP, and an announcement about our new webmaster.

In the 2018 spring newsletter, Jeff Good identified several priorities for ALT. These included one that remains on our minds, improving the system for membership management. In addition we are acutely aware of the pressures for open access of Linguistic Typology. We would welcome hearing from you about other priorities that you have for ALT, and we will do our best to address them.

*Keren Rice*

## 2 ALT 13 Conference report and on to ALT 14

### 2.1 Organization and Attendance

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Local Organizing Committee: Sonia Cristofaro, Silvia Luraghi, Elisa Roma and Chiara Zanchi. They did an amazing job of putting together an outstanding event that was scientifically informative and socially pleasant.

There were 275 submissions to the conference out of which 178 were accepted, either to the general session or to one of the themes sessions; 29 papers were accepted as posters. The general acceptance rate was 64%.

Thanks are due to the Program Committee for their hard work on reading and rating abstracts: Willem F. H. Adelaar (University of Leiden), Peter Arkadiev (Institute of Slavic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences), Gilles Authier (École pratique des hautes études, Paris), Isabelle Brill (CNRS-LACITO, Paris), Lea Brown (SUNY University at Buffalo), Michela Cennamo (University of Napoli "Federico II"), Denis Creissels (University of Lyon), Sonia Cristofaro (University of Pavia), Gréte Dalmi (Budapest University of Technology), Michael Daniel (Higher School of Economics, Moscow), Dan Dediu (Laboratoire Dynamique Du Langage/Université Lumière Lyon 2), Holger Diebel (University of Jena), Diana Forker (University of Bamberg), Alex François (CNRS-LaTTiCe), Volker Gast (University of Jena), Spike Gildea (University of Oregon), Nicola Grandi (University of Bologna), Eitan Grossman (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), Corinna Handschuh (University of Regensburg), Lars Hellan (Norwegian University of Science and Technology), Johannes Helmbrecht (University of Regensburg), Larry Hyman (University of California, Berkeley), Dmitry Idiatov (CNRS-LLACAN, Villejuif Cedex, Paris), Guglielmo Inglese (University of Pavia), Guillaume Jacques (CNRS-CRLAO), Katarzyna Janic (University of Leipzig), Carmen Jany (California State University, San Bernardino), Christa Kilian-Hatz (Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University of Frankfurt), Seppo Kittilä (University of Helsinki), Olga Krasnoukhova (University of Antwerp), Aimée Lahaussais (Paris Diderot University), Dana Louagie (University of Leuven), Silvia Luraghi (University of Pavia), Timur Maisak (Institute of Linguistics Higher School of Economics, Moscow), Stefano Manfredi (CNRS, Villejuif Cedex, Paris), Martine Vanhove (CNRS-LLACAN), Simone Mattioli (University of Bologna), Caterina Mauri (University of Bologna), Bradley McDonnell (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa), Amina Mettouchi (LLACAN - CNRS), Matti Miestamo (University of Helsinki), Johanna Nichols (University of California, Berkeley), Tatiana Nikitina (CNRS-LLACAN), Silva M. Nurmio (University of Helsinki), Brigitte Pakendorf (CNRS), Bill Palmer (University of Newcastle), Bastian Persohn (University of Hamburg), Nicolas Quint (CNRS-LLACAN), Davide Ricca (University of Turin), Keren Rice (University of Toronto), Elisa Roma (University of Pavia), Jorge Emilio Rosés Labrada (University of Alberta), Iker Salaberri (Public University of Navarre), Merja Salo

(University of Helsinki), Andrea Sansò (University of Insubria), Eva Schultze-Berndt (University of Manchester), Ilja Seržant (University of Leipzig), Ksenia Shagal (University of Helsinki), Andrey Shluinsky (Russian Academy of Sciences), Stef Spronck (University of Helsinki), Mario Squartini (University of Turin), Anna Maria Thornton (University of L'Aquila), Yvonne Treis (CNRS-LLACAN), Mark Van de Velde (CNRS-LLACAN), Jean-Christophe Verstraete (University of Leuven), Ljuba Veselinova (Stockholm University), Carlotta Viti (University of Zurich), Bernhard Wälchli (Stockholm University), Alena Witzlack-Makarevich (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), Chiara Zanchi (University of Pavia)

The conference and ultimately the discipline have grown demonstrably over the past several years. The general session of ALT 13 featured five parallel sessions of high quality presentations across all sub-domains of typology. In addition, there were five theme sessions selected in hard competition, one workshop and an adjacent event, a Summer School on *Language Universals and Language Diversity in an Evolutionary Perspective*.

The conference welcomed the revival of a long neglected topic, phonological typology. Not only was there a theme session devoted to it, but also both plenaries by Shelece Easterday and Nadine Grimm, as well as several papers in the general session discussed issues related to phonology from a cross-linguistic perspective. Examples of other topics include lexicon and grammatical relations, lexical restrictions on actionality, diachronic and areal typology. These are merely illustrations and do not exhaust the wide variety of subjects addressed by the presenters.

## 2.2 ALT 14

The 14th Biennial Conference of ALT will take place at the University of Texas at Austin, TX, USA. We will post information as it becomes available. The cycles of Award competitions will include the Greenberg Award for best typological work and the Georg von der Gabelenz Award for best published grammar. The EC will start working on putting together evaluation committees in early fall. Please look for subsequent calls for submissions.

## 3 Membership and Budget

This report has been prepared by Dmitry Idiatov, Treasurer and Membership Manager. Table 1 presents ALT membership over the past 5 years and among three ALT conferences. The financial report of the organization follows in Table 2 and Table 3. As demonstrated by the data, the membership is growing and the finances of the organization are in good standing.

Year	Members
2015	280
2017	475
2019	507

Table 1: ALT membership

2018 begin balance: 19.412,29 €	
Action done:	Amount
Bank interest	+4,02
Banking costs	-43,1
Membership 2017	+3986
Legal help	-100
Website	-102
ALT 2017 (fellowships, prizes. . .)	-7113,54
2018 end balance: 16.043,67 €	

Table 2: ALT Finances 2018

2019 begin balance: 16.043,67 €	
Action done:	Amount
Banking costs	-20,57
Membership 2018	+3448
Legal help	-100
ALT Summer School	-2000
ALT 2017 (fellowships, prizes. . .)	-341,5
2019 end balance: $\approx$ 17.029,60 €	

Table 3: ALT Finances 2019

## 4 Announcements

### 4.1 Newly elected members of the Executive committee

We welcome on board three newly elected members of the Executive Committee: Hilary Chappell, Nikolaus Himmelmann and Iker Salaberri, who offer brief descriptions of their careers and interests below. We also welcome Kristine Hildebrandt, who is well-known to the membership from her years as Secretary of ALT.

**Hilary Chappell** is a specialist in the typology of Sinitic languages, working in both synchronic and diachronic frameworks. She holds the Chair in Linguistic Typology of East Asian Languages at the research institute, *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales*, a graduate school in Paris, an appointment she took up in 2005, after teaching in the Linguistics Department at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, for 18 years.

Originally awarded her PhD degree in 1984 by the Australian National University, Canberra, some of her many publications on Chinese linguistics and typology include *Diversity in Sinitic languages* (OUP, 2015). From 2009 to 2013, she directed a European Research Council Advanced Grant project with six team members whose goal was to rethink the typological profile of Sinitic languages on the basis of both fieldwork and in-depth exploration of their variation. One of this project's outcomes is the series, *Sinitic languages of China: Typological descriptions* (De Gruyter Mouton), for which she is editor. She has also served on the editorial board of *Linguistic Typology* from 2001-2008.

Her current research is on the Waxiang language, an unclassified Sinitic language of Hunan province in China, where she has spent over a year of fieldwork collecting materials to write a reference grammar.

**Nikolaus P. Himmelmann**'s main research interests are typology, grammaticisation, discourse and conversation analysis, and language documentation and description, with a special focus on Austronesian and, more recently, Papuan languages. He has done field work in the Philippines, Indonesia and East Timor, since 2009 working closely together with the Center for Endangered Languages Documentation in Manokwari (West Papua). There are around 270 languages in the part of Papua New Guinea nowadays included in the Republic of Indonesia, most of which with little or no documentation and v

Nikolaus has a strong interest in questions of methodology, in particular the quality of the data that provide the basis for cross linguistic generalizations. One aspect of particular interest in this regard is prosody and the prosody-syntax interface, as understanding prosody is essential for taken spoken language seriously.

Nikolaus is currently a Professor in General Linguistics at the University Cologne, where he also functions as the spokesperson for the Key Profile Area Skills and Structures in Language and Cognition. He has published widely

on morphosyntactic topics (e.g. parts of speech, secondary predicates, demonstratives and deictics more generally, word order, the suffixing preference), the grammaticisation of phrase structure and grammaticisation theory, language documentation and prosodic chunking (intonation units).

**Iker Salaberri**'s field of expertise covers Basque as well as a number of western Indo-European (Germanic, Romance, Slavic) languages. He is currently a faculty member at the Department of Linguistics and Basque Studies at the University of the Basque Country (Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain), one of the birthplaces of the ALT.

Having obtained his PhD at the same university in 2017 for a contribution to the syntax of Old Saxon, a little-known ancient Germanic language, he has spent month-long study and research stays at the Johann Wolfgang von Goethe Universität (Frankfurt am Main, Germany) and Ghent University (Ghent, Belgium). He is interested in quantitative typology, i.e. the distribution of structural patterns in the world's languages, as a way to understand why languages are the way they are. This interest stems from his conviction that empirical observation of varying linguistic phenomena is the most reliable way to gain insight into universals of grammar. His research focuses on grammaticalization, reflexivity and word order change. Furthermore, he is curious to find out more about the interaction between two fields which have only seldom been investigated in light of each other, namely the morphosyntactic properties of names and variation across the world's languages.

Recently he has been awarded the Best Postdoc Presentation award by the Linguistic Society of Europe for the presentation *Reflexive constructions and areal relationships: A typological-diachronic analysis of replica grammaticalization*, which he co-authored with Prof. Dr. Anne Wolfsgruber from the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

## 4.2 New webmaster

Executive Committee has approved that Daniel Ross take over the duties of webmaster. A short introduction is below. Welcome, Daniel. We look forward to working with you.

**Daniel Ross** is a typologist and syntactician with a broad range of interests in related areas including morphology, semantics and historical linguistics. His research includes typological comparison, formal analysis and corpus-based work. For his dissertation project, entitled Pseudocoordination, Serial Verb Constructions and Multi-Verb Predicates: The Relationship between Form and Structure, he is working with a 325-language sample for a survey of multi-verb and multi-clausal constructions and related features.

He is currently teaching Syntax and Semantics at the University of California, Riverside. He began studying Linguistics at the University of California,

Davis, and then earned his MA and now is completing his PhD this year at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He enjoys studying a variety of languages and has taught English in Ecuador. During the summer of 2014, he conducted a fieldwork project on pseudocoordination in Faroese.

Daniel enjoys traveling, relating diverse data to theory, and staying in touch with everyone from the Association for Linguistic Typology over the internet, since he first attended the biennial ALT conference in 2015. His personal website is at [danielrosslinguist.com](http://danielrosslinguist.com). He is looking forward to the position of Webmaster for ALT.

### 4.3 SIGTYP

**SIGTYP** (ACL Special Interest Group on Linguistic Typology) is created to promote the study of linguistic typology and multilinguality in the computational linguistics community as well as to provide researchers from typology with advances in computational approaches. This includes aspects such as exploration of computational models that might explain typological variation, automatic inference of typological features, integration of typological features in language transfer and joint multilingual learning, improvement and completion of typological databases, the use of typological information in NLP tasks where such information has not been investigated yet, and many others. **SIGTYP** provides its members with a means of exchanging news of recent research developments in linguistic typology and multilingual NLP (we issue [monthly newsletters](#) and welcome everyone to share their work with others).

We also organize annual workshops, and this year's workshop will be online and co-located Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (EMNLP) 2020 . We are excited to have Miriam Butt, Yulia Tsvetkov, Richard Sproat, Harald Hammarström, and Bill Croft as our confirmed keynotes speakers!

In terms of the workshops, **SIGTYP** also organizes shared tasks. This year's task is [on the prediction of typological features](#). It features nearly 2,000 languages, with typological features taken from the World Atlas of Language Structures (WALS). Systems will compete in their ability to predict typological properties of languages, given a handful of observed features.

We kindly invite everyone to [join the group](#)! Also, feel free [to register for the task](#)!

Our website: <https://sigtyp.github.io/>

## 5 The Journal *Linguistic Typology*

The Editor, Maria Koptjevskaja-Tamm, highlights the most important developments for the nearest future together with a presentation of the Table of Contents of the first issue for this year.

### 5.1 Ahead of Print

*Linguistic Typology* is now implementing the ahead-of-publication praxis, which means that accepted manuscripts get published on-line as soon as they are processed, normally within three months on acceptance. This provides the authors and the journal a smooth way of reducing the time it would normally take to publish accepted manuscripts. This is especially useful given the fact that the journal is flourishing! We keep receiving many excellent manuscripts which we are eager to publish. “Ahead-of-print” versions are fully formatted but lack final page numbers, as they have not yet been assigned a definite issue. Please check the web page cited here regularly to stay tuned:

<https://www.degruyter.com/view/journals/lity/ahead-of-print/issue.xml>

### 5.2 Automatic submission

*Linguistic Typology* is ready to go over to ScholarOne, the De Gruyter standard submission system, in the first half of May 2020, but we will continue to accept submissions by email for a few weeks. We are well aware that some authors and reviewers are not fond of these systems. We hope, however, that this will both reduce the turnaround time and, even more importantly, help everyone involved in the process to keep track of the process and reduce the time, efforts and energy invested by the editors into the journal. Please be assured that we will keep our high standards in the interaction with the authors and the reviewers – but consider also how much time and efforts we have to put into unnecessary email traffic and other tasks that can be done automatically.

### 5.3 *Linguistic Typology* 2020 (1)

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#### RESEARCH ARTICLES

Ian Joo. *Spoken language iconicity: Articulatory-based analysis of 66 languages*. OPEN ACCESS

Vladimir Panov. *Final particles in Asia: establishing an areal feature*

Uta Reinöhl. *Continuous and discontinuous nominal expressions in “free word order” languages – Patterns and correlates*

Nicholas Rolle, Florian Lionnet Matthew Faytak. *Areal patterns in the vowel systems of the Macro-Sudan Belt*. EDITOR’S CHOICE: FREE ACCESS



## BOOK REVIEWS

Juha Janhunen Ekaterina Gruzdeva. *Nganasan — a fresh focus on a little known Arctic language*. Review of Beáta Wagner-Nagy. 2018. *A Grammar of Nganasan*. (Grammars and Language Sketches of the World's Languages: Indigenous Languages of Russia.) Leiden: Brill, 2018.

Klaudia Dombrowsky-Hahn. Review of A. Agoswin Musah 2018. *A Grammar of Kusaal. A Mabia (Gur) Language of Northern Ghana*. Berlin: Peter Lang.

Nathan W. Hill. Review of Simeon Floyd, Elisabeth Norcliffe, and Lila San Roque, (eds.). 2018. *Egophoricity*. [Typological Studies in Language, 118.] Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.