

## **SELECTED PAPERS FROM THE X WORKSHOP ON FORMAL LINGUISTICS: A PRESENTATION**

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In this issue of *ReVEL* we collect a selection of the papers presented at the *X Workshop on Formal Linguistics*. This edition of the workshop was held in Porto Alegre (Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil), at UFRGS, during the last week of October 2014, and was organized by members of the research group called “Grammar and Meaning” (Sergio Menuzzi, Pablo Ribeiro, Gabriel Othero, Marcos Goldnadel, Luisandro Mendes de Souza and Eduardo Soares).

The WFL has a long history, which can be traced back to the end of the 1990’s, when a group of linguists led by Ana Lúcia Muller first organized the WFL at the University of São Paulo (USP), with the aim of promoting deeper exchanges between Brazilian formal linguists – especially those active in the areas of formal semantics and its interface with syntax – and internationally renowned researchers. The goal was (and still is) to contribute to the training and qualification of the Brazilian group, particularly in the area formal semantics – syntax and morphology were already established in Brazil. Accordingly, WFL’s previous editions brought to Brazil exponents of contemporary research in formal semantics, including Angelika Kratzer, Barbara Partee, Irene Heim, Kay von Stechow, Paul Pietroski, Veneeta Dayal, Greg Carlson and Chris Kennedy.

Keeping with this tradition, the X WFL has had as its keynote international speakers John Beavers, from University of Texas at Austin, and Gennaro Chierchia, from Harvard

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University. There were main lectures by some of the most active semanticists in Brazil, namely Márcia Cançado (UFMG), Roberta Pires de Oliveira (UFSC) and Rodolfo Ilari (UNICAMP); and a program with 16 talks and 12 posters selected out of 52 papers submitted. Furthermore, we can say that, in terms of audience, the X WFL was a huge success for such a specialized kind of workshop: there were 90 participants, including professors and students of undergraduate and graduate levels, coming from 23 institutions – 17 from Brazil, and 6 from abroad. These are all names and numbers that show what we might expect of an event that reaches its 10th edition in about 15 years of continuous existence: it has grown up to become one of the main events in the agenda of formal linguistics in Brazil – certainly, the most important one for the community of formal semantics.

Here, we present some of the results of the X WFL – a selection of papers that may give an idea of the lively sessions of debate the participants could enjoy during those cold, but sunny, last days of October 2014 in Porto Alegre.

*Ana Paula Quadros Gomes* and *Luciana Sanchez-Mendes* discuss degree modification in Brazilian Portuguese and in Karitiana, a Tupi language spoken in the northwest of Brazil. The basic empirical observation is that gradable adjectives in both languages show the same scale types or standards of comparison proposed by Kennedy and McNally (2005), suggesting that the scales typology adopted in the literature is universal. Gomes and Sanchez-Mendez claim that what varies from language to language is the role of the typology for degree modification. Furthermore, according to the authors, the data examined in the paper “favors the ‘Obligatory Scale’ hypothesis (Frazier, Clifton and Stolterfoht, 2008; Kennedy, 2007) contra analysis of gradable adjectives that dispense scales (Neeleman, Van de Koot and Doetjes, 2004; Husband, 2011)”.

*Lovania Roehrig Teixeira* and *Sergio de Moura Menuzzi* examine the semantic role of demonstrations (understood as “any physical relevant gesture”) in deictic uses of demonstrative descriptions. The authors address the question of whether demonstrations are essential or non-essential for the interpretation of demonstrative descriptions. Two views on this issue are compared in the article: one which treats demonstrations as essential to the semantics of deictic demonstratives (Kaplan, 1989a; King, 2001 and Roberts, 2002;), and Wolter (2006)’ approach, which can be interpreted, according to the authors, as “reserving an indirect role for demonstrations in the interpretation of demonstratives”. The authors conclude that Wolter’s approach is on the right track, by showing that “demonstrations can be replaced by other elements (such as salience or additional descriptive content) depending on the context”.

*João C. de Lima Júnior* and *Marina R. A. Augusto* present an analysis for passive sentences which assume a special syntactic node for passives (alternative to VoiceP,  $vP$ -passive, or  $v^*P$ ). The paper offers a critical review of some of the main proposals for passives in the literature, in particular those assuming smuggling (Collins, 2005; Gehrke & Grillo, 2009). It is argued that these approaches present a few drawbacks, such as the constituency of the *by*-phrase, the different heads allowed for VoiceP and the “look-ahead problem”, among others. The authors then propose an analysis for passives which assumes a special node that constitutes a phase, allowing cyclic movement of the DP (internal argument) to happen, and casting doubt, according to the authors, on “the necessity of the smuggling movement in passives”.

*Mercedes Marcilese* and *Erica dos Santos Rodrigues* address the topic of speaker’s intuitions and judgements as a data-collection method in linguistic theory. In their contribution, they compare linguistic proposals largely based on informal judgments and experimental results concerning the interpretation of the Brazilian Portuguese universal quantifiers *cada*, *todo*, and *todos os*. The authors conclude that “the set of experimental results suggest that several methodological aspects—mainly the presence or absence of time pressure during the performance of experimental tasks, as well as the type of task itself—may affect the processing, the interpretation and, as a consequence, the judgment of sentences containing quantified expressions”.

*Wânia Miranda* and *Fernanda Rosa Silva* investigate the semantic and pragmatic characteristics of the connectives *mas*, *já* and *agora* in Brazilian Portuguese. The authors argue that *mas* is solely used to mark contrast in BP, by showing that it conveys contrast in all contexts taken into account. On the other hand, they observe that *agora* requires a pause or a particular intonation in order to convey contrastive semantics. Lastly, the authors show that *já* does not convey contrastive semantics, even though it may be used in contexts involving an explicit contrast marker. Following Roberts (1996) and Büring (1999, 2003), Miranda and Silva propose a formal analysis for these markers in BP, assuming that discourse structure is organized around underlying questions.

*Renato Caruso Vieira* defends in his contribution that ‘*mesmo*’ in the expression ‘*ele mesmo*’ (“he himself”) in Brazilian Portuguese is a scalar focus particle, sharing semantic characteristics with the English particle *even*. The author runs two experiments in order to investigate the scalarity of reflexive ‘*ele mesmo*’ on acquisition: the subjects were children between 3;6 and 6;6 acquiring Brazilian Portuguese. The results of the experiments

corroborated Kim (2011)'s results for the English scalar focus particle *even*, indicating that 'mesmo' in 'ele mesmo' is a scalar focus particle.

We hope *ReVEL*'s readership enjoy these nice pieces of semantic and syntactic argumentation, and we expect the next edition of the WFL – the 11th – can bring us more of it.

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