

Die lichtvolle Erkennung der Verschiedenheit

A linguistic birthday party for Wilhelm von Humboldt

Abstracts & Program (complete)

Monday, 19th of June (Senatssaal, Henry-Ford-Bau, Garystraße 35, 14195 Berlin)

9:00-9:10

Uli Reich

Introduction: Typological practice as a birthday present for Wilhelm von Humboldt

9:10-9:20

Klaus Mühlhahn

(Vicepresident of the Freie Universität Berlin)

Welcome Address

9:20-10:20

Daniel Jacob

„*Ein organisches Wesen*“:

Humboldt's typological thinking between universalism and nationalism

10:20-11:20

Martin Haspelmath

Language typology: the Humboldtian and the Greenbergian traditions

11:40-12:40

Ricardo Etxepare & Georg Kaiser

Typological issues in Basque morpho-syntax

12:40-13:40

Michael Dürr

The verbal complex and complex verbal structures in Mixtec

13:40-15:00

Lunch

15:00-16:00

Willem Adelaar

The innovative origins of Quechua I: Moving away from the agglutinative model

16:00-17:00

Martina Faller

Cuzco Quechua =*pas*: connecting the semantic maps of additivity and modality

17:00-18:00

Judith Tonhauser

Argument realization in Paraguayan Guaraní

Willem F.H. Adelaar (Leiden University)

The innovative origins of Quechua I: Moving away from the agglutinative model

Humboldt's view of Quechua was understandably based on the variety spoken in the Cuzco area in the Inca heartland, a classic example of agglutinative structure. As the dialectal diversity of Quechua became gradually visible in colonial sources, a two-way division of the Quechua language varieties emerged, which was not duly explored until the 1960s in pioneering work by Parker and Torero. Later on, the search for a decisive criterion defining the two main branches of the Quechua family became a central issue in the Quechua linguistic debate. This historical division between Quechua I (Central Peruvian Quechua) and II (all other varieties), in Torero's initial terminology, still holds, although it has recently been under attack for being incomplete or outdated. In reality, the Quechua I / II division is not based on a single dominant criterion but on a bundle of criteria, each of which can be derived from a particular innovation. It is possible to determine in which branch such an innovation occurred first. It turns out that most of them reflect early phonological changes in the Quechua I branch, which subsequently influenced the shape and behavior of roots and affixes. A general innovative feature of Quechua I was a tendency for the agglutinative structure of verb forms to become less prominent. The Quechua II branch initially remained unchanged, but later on underwent minor innovations in its different sub-branches. The above considerations are relevant for the antiquity of the Quechua language family and for the development of its early history.

Michael Dürr (Freie Universität Berlin)

The verbal complex and complex verbal structures in Mixtec

Mixtec is an Otomanguean language spoken by approx. 500.000 people in Mexico, primarily in western Oaxaca. Although long-established as a language name, "Mixtec" should be understood as a common label for a highly diversified continuum of dialects or languages. Typologically, Mixtec is renowned in particular for complex tonal systems with floating tones and for rich cliticization processes.

My presentation will discuss some issues of the verb phrase in Mixtec. While verb roots are canonically bisyllabic (or bimoraic), prefixes and clitics are mostly monosyllabic. The inventory includes TAM prefixes, prefix- or clitic-like auxiliaries and a few negational, conditional or subordinating proclitics. The verb root can be substituted by combinations of two verbs or of a verb plus a noun or an adverbial, some of which are practically lexicalized. There are also a few counterfactual and additive or restrictive enclitics. Finally and most prominently, Mixtec is characterized by a rather large group of monosyllabic pronoun-like enclitics derived from bisyllabic nouns.

Taking into account comparative evidence from various varieties, the Mixtec verb phrase illustrates the difficulties of morphology-syntax division some of which had already been noted with regard to Mixtec by Wilhelm von Humboldt.

Ricardo Etxepare (IKER, UMR 5478, Bayonne) & Georg A. Kaiser (Universität Konstanz)

Typological issues in Basque morpho-syntax

Basque is the only language in the Romance speaking area in Europe which does not belong to the Indo-European family and which already existed before the arrival of the Romans. Basque is spoken today by around half a million people in the region of the Bay of Biscay, on both sides of the Pyrenees. It is an isolated language with no demonstrable genealogical relationship with other languages. Typologically, it is a language with basic subject-object-verb (SOV) order, but with a relatively free word order. Basque is an agglutinative language, showing ergative case and agreement morphology, strictly analytic in its productive verbal predication, and allowing the pro-drop of up to three arguments in the clause.

One of the invariant aspects of Basque word order concerns the position of the *wh*-phrases in sentential structure: they must immediately precede the verb in affirmative sentences, and the negation marker in negative ones. The fixed position of the *wh*-phrase has been traditionally attributed to obligatory movement of the *wh*-phrase to the left periphery of the clause accompanied by the inversion of the subject and the auxiliary-verb complex:

- (1) a.
 Jonek liburua erosi du.
 Jon.ERG book.the bought has
 ‘Jon has bought/bought the book.’
 b.
 Zer erosi du Jonek?
 What bought has Jon.ERG?
 ‘What did Jon buy?’

This word order pattern in Basque interrogatives is special in the domain of SOV languages, which generally exhibit *wh*-in-situ, and has been attributed to contact influence from Romance. It can be shown that Basque *wh*-phrases undergo syntactic movement to the left periphery of the clause. We argue that this is related not to the syntax of *wh*-phrases as bearers of a question feature, but to the focal status of the *wh*-phrases in Basque. It has been noted that foci and *wh*-phrases behave in a parallel fashion. We develop the idea that in fact, *wh*-phrases in Basque are bearers of a focus feature, and that their *wh*-status is irrelevant to their syntax. We unveil some intriguing differences between Basque and the surrounding Romance languages, concerning (i) the possibility for *wh*-phrases of occurring outside the domain of interrogatives, with various quantificational values; (ii) the narrower restrictions operating on the adjacency of the *wh*-phrases and finite verbs in Basque, when compared to say, Spanish. We suggest therefore that Basque is a *wh*-in-situ language, with *wh*-movement being forced by independent conditions holding of focus operators.

Martina Faller (The University of Manchester)

Cuzco Quechua *=pas*: connecting the semantic maps of additivity and modality

Additives cross-linguistically are well known to have a variety of other functions (König 1991, Haspelmath 2001, Forker 2016) and the Cuzco Quechua enclitic *=pas* (*=pis*) is no exception. Besides marking additivity, (1), it can be used as a constituent coordinator and discourse connective; combining with *wh*-words it forms indefinite pronouns and free choice quantifiers, (2); in subordination constructions it can indicate concessivity, (3). What appears somewhat unusual from a typological perspective is that it can also mark epistemic possibility, (4).

(1) **Additive**

Chay miche-q wasi-n-pi=**pas** uwiha-lla-ta=taq michi-mu-ni.
 this *michi*-GEN house-3-LOC=ADD sheep-LIM-ACC=CONTR herd-CISL-1
 'In this *michi*'s house, too, I herded only sheep.'

(2) **Free choice quantifier**

Mayqen boton-ta=**pas** ñiti-y.
 which button-ACC=ADDpress-IMP
 'Press any button.'

(3) **Concessive**

Ni noqa=**pas** abusibu=**chu** ka-ni mas kharu llaqta-yoq ka-**spa**=**pas**.
 notI=PAS abusive=POL be-1 more far village-POSS be-NMLZ=ADD
 'I am not abusive either, despite being from a far-away village.'

(4) **Epistemic Possibility**

Icha veneno-ta=**chu** qo-mu-wa-ra-n-ku=**pas**?
 Or poison-ACC=POL give-CISL-1O-PST-3-PL=ADD
 'Or did they maybe give me poison?'

Building on Forker's (2016) semantic map for additives, I argue that there is a link to the semantic map of modality (van der Auwera and Plungian 1998) via concessivity. Concessivity in turn can be linked to free-choice quantification. I propose the hypothesis that, semantically, these three functions involve existential quantification over possible worlds. In its other functions, *=pas* can be analyzed as an existential quantifier over individuals or propositions. The core meaning of *=pas* can therefore be described as existential quantification over sets of alternatives.

Selected References

- van der Auwera, J. and V. Plungian. 1998. On modality's semantic map. *Linguistic Typology* 2:79-124.
 Forker, D. 2016. Toward a typology for additive markers. *Lingua* 180:69-100.
 Haspelmath, M. 2001. *Indefinite pronouns*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 König, E. 1991. *The meaning of focus particles: A comparative perspective*. London: Routledge.

Martin Haspelmath (Universität Leipzig)

Language typology: The Humboldtian and the Greenbergian traditions

Wilhelm von Humboldt is generally regarded as a key figure in the history of the subfield of language typology, which was revived in the 20th century by Joseph Greenberg. In this talk, I present a somewhat subjective comparison of the Humboldtian tradition through the first half of the 20th century and compare it with the Greenbergian tradition, which led to a flourishing of typological studies, even though Humboldt's dreams of explanatory depth may not have been fulfilled. However, Greenbergian typology has focused the attention on language universals, and I will argue in some detail that this step has been crucial for a deeper understanding of language structures.

Daniel Jacob

„Ein organisches Wesen“: Humboldt's typological thinking between universalism and nationalism

This talk aims at situating Humboldt's ideas on language typology within the current linguistic thinking of his time, and mainly at the edge of Western European Empiricism and German Idealism.

I argue that central claims, such as the primacy of language over reason, linguistic relativism and the idea of language as an all-embracing "organism" (which clearly anticipate the ideas of F. de Saussure or E. Sapir), are not only grounded in the antecedent currents of linguistic theory, but that they likewise harmonize with the concerns of nation building in post-napoleonic Europe, where language was an essential criterion especially for the creation of a German state, inexistent until then. As I will try to show, these concerns even seem to have shaped the design of Humboldt's language typology.

Judith Tonhauser (The Ohio State University)

Argument realization in Paraguayan Guaraní

This talk explores argument realization in Paraguayan Guaraní [gug], a Tupí-Guaraní language spoken in Paraguay and neighboring countries. Arguments in Guaraní can be i) implicit (i.e., not have an overt exponent in the clause) or ii) realized by a cross-reference marker, and iii) additionally realized by an independent pronoun or full noun phrase. Based on data collected with native Guaraní speakers in Paraguay, I show a) that whether an argument is implicit or realized with a cross-reference marker is determined by the cross-referencing system of the language, and b) that both grammatical and information-structural factors influence whether an argument is additionally realized by an independent pronoun or full noun phrase. Argument realization in Paraguayan Guaraní is thus markedly different from that in better-studied European languages, even so-called pro-drop languages like Spanish (Tonhauser 2017, ms). Throughout the talk I provide pointers, based on Thun 2011, to Wilhelm von Humboldt's thoughts about argument realization in the 16th to 18th century Guaraní language varieties he was studying.

References:

- Thun, Harald (ed.). 2011. *Guaraní-Grammatik*. In Ringmacher, R & U. Tintemann (eds.) *Wilhelm von Humboldt Südamerikanische Grammatiken*. Paderborn: Schöningh
- Tonhauser, Judith. 2017. *The distribution of implicit arguments in Paraguayan Guaraní*. In Estigarribia, B. and J. Pinta (eds.) *Guarani Linguistics in the 21st Century*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 194-230.
- Tonhauser, Judith. ms. *Implicit arguments in Paraguayan Guaraní*. ms., The Ohio State University.