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Book of Abstracts

Part II



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Overview

	Gerd Carling, Marc Allasonnière-Tang and Niklas Johansson	Animal vocalizations: the evolution of animal names in contrast to their sound and cultural taxonomy
4696	Carolina Coelho Aragon	Negation in Tuparían languages (Tupían): From synchrony to diachrony
4715	Ion Tudor Giurgea and Rodica Ivan	Null nouns in definites and the structure of pronouns
4723	Elena Parina, Raphael Sackmann, Marieke Meelen and David Willis	Middle & Early Modern Welsh and translations: a case study in subject pronouns
4730	Ricardo Maldonado and Juliana de la Mora	Middle voice and mirativity in Mexican Spanish
4733	Amalia Rodriguez-Somolinos	Requests, thanking and politeness in Old Fench: vostre merci, multes merciz, merci!
4767	Eirini Apostolopoulou	Typological variation in Italiot Greek: Manner features in the coda
4790	Tom Ennever, Laurits Stapput Knudsen and Eleanor Yacopetti	Typological variation in Italiot Greek: Manner features in the coda
4799	Serhiy Potapenko and Nataliia Talavira	Finding Common Ground: Frames of Reference and Differential Place Marking in three Australian languages
4824	Scott DeLancey	Ukrainian President Zelenskyy's resistance discourse: An idea-turned-impression analysis
4857	Sergio Monforte and Marco Coniglio	Mirativity in the Realm of Stance
4887	Tom Koss	Peripheral vs. non-peripheral optative particles
4889	Theresa Biberauer	On binary tense systems
4891	Domenica Romagno and Carolina Marescotti	Peripheral significance: a neo-emergentist perspective on the grammaticalization of expletives
4917	Ilja Seržant	Resultative constructions with denominal/deadjectival verbs in ancient Greek and Latin: at the morphosyntax-semantics interface
4949	Juan Carlos Moreno Cabrera	Typology of partitives
4960	Kasper Boye	Appellative onomatopes in the languages of the Iberian Peninsula
4975	Vladimir Panov	Grammaticalization as conventionalization of discursively secondary status: Isolating what is unique to grammaticalization, and deconstructing the lexical-grammatical continuum
4983	Joana Garmendia	Allocutive at the crossroads: What does it mean after all?
5030	Björn Wiemer, Daniel Kölligan and Martin Joachim Kümmel	Lies we don't say
5079	Josep E. Ribera	Hypoanalysis as a distinct type of language change (and certain futures as paradigm cases)
5082	Jeff Parker	Differential Object Marking and Affectedness in Old Aragonese and Old Catalan. A cross-linguistic approach
5091	Jorge Emilio Rosés Labrada	On the (lack of) semantic conditioning in overabundant English verbs
5107	Shihong Zhou	Proto-Piaroa-Mako Genitive Classifiers: Reconstruction and Implications
5117	Jonathan Banks	As you should know: The Particle Ma as shared knowledge managing marker in Spoken Chinese
5120		The morpho-syntactic characteristics of switch-reference systems according to region: Towards a global typology of switch-reference

5141	Santiago Del Rey Quesada Niklas Metsäranta, Terhi Honkola and Veronika Milanova	The expression of the passive voice through periphrases in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period: Some insights from Latin-Spanish translations
5164	Milanova	Reconstructing Uralic kinship
5182	Abdelkader Fassi Fehri	Psych construction types: root-based or category-based?
5189	Koichiro Nakamura	Structural positions and focal stress dictate functions and interpretations of Japanese manner adverbs
5196	Paulina Zydorowicz, Michał Jankowski, Alona Kononenko and Katarzyna Dziubalska-Kořaczyk	The role of vowel quality in shaping phonotactic systems: Evidence from English, Polish and Georgian
5208	Antonio R. Revuelta Puigdollers	The diachronic evolution of participles in Greek: results from a parallel intralingual corpus
5252	Henrik Liljegren	Gradual weakening of aspiration as an areal phenomenon
5264	Juliette Huber	East Timorese Hakka between China and Timor-Leste
5268	Petr Biskup	Three types of -yva-
5287	Guillaume Stern and Jérôme Jacquin	Tense distinction in argumentation: a contrastive analysis of two tenses associated with the French verb of thought "penser" [think]
5318	Elisabeth Kaukonen and Lydia Risberg	There was a guy and a chick with such talentless face paintings in front of Club Tallinn that I just started laughing. Gender-marked words in Estonian language and their portrayal in lexicography
5336	Khaled Barkaoui	A Longitudinal Study of the Development of Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency and their Relationships in Second Language Writing
5337	Pilar Pérez Ocón	Evidential readings of the determiner uno in Spanish
5389	Nitsa Ben-Ari and Hava Bat Zeev Shyldkrot	Retranslation and diachronic change in Modern Hebrew
5475	Patricia Amaral	A closer look at terminative periphrases
5485	Valentin Radulescu	Constructional (a)symmetries in polar interrogatives
5513	Irini Koutrouba	Intercultural Performative Hybridization: A case of mixed couples' identity (co)construction on Tik Tok
5524	Iraide Ibarretxe-Antuñano	Semantic relations in Basque ideophones
5568	George Saad and Laura Arnold	Adult Vernacular Production in Island Southeast Asia and the Pacific
5606	Kristian Roncero, Neil Bermel and Jean Russell	Overabundance at the intersection with diglossia and variationism On the Mirative Use of Quotative Complementizers and Exclamatives in Japanese
5616	Yuki Ishihara	
5633	Tanja Gradečak and Snježana Babić	Illeisms as metonymic mirrors
5652	Piia Taremaa, Maria Reile and Renate Pajusalu	Demonstrative pronouns as determiners in Estonian temporal expressions
5655	Josefina Budzisch	Existentials in Forest Nenets
5670	Erika Just	Found in space - insights from non-standardized word demarcation
5671	Ekaterina Georgieva	Converb clauses as clausal manner adverbials?
5689	Sandra Auderset and Eric W. Campbell	Comprehensive database of sound changes reveals tree-like and wave-like processes in the Mixtec language family

5705	Frank Seifart	Instrument prefixes in South America: Bora, Muinane, Cahuapanan, and beyond
5708	Dimitra Ioannou	Light Verb Constructions: A Corpus-based Constructional Approach to the Modern Greek ECHO ('HAVE') NA ('TO') Construction
5739	John DuBois and Ryan Ka Yau Lai	Do words predict intonation units?
5748	Elizaveta Tarasova and José Antonio Sánchez Fajardo	Approaching affixal rivalry from a cognitive-onomasiological perspective: A case study of -ie/-o derivatives
5753	Izabela Duraj-Nowosielska	On the correlation of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features of sentences with intentionality modifiers (on Polish and English examples)
5763	Seongha Rhee	'What kind of' at LP and RP: The case of Korean discourse marker mwusun
5802	Jean Rohleder	Alignment in Vamale, South Oceanic
5804	Sven Van Hulle and Renata Enghels	How productivity interacts with near-synonymy: a behavioural profile approach of inchoative periphrases
5835	Alexandra Prentza, Maria Kaltsa and Ianthi-Maria Tsimpli	Language contact effects at the VP level: the role of lexical features & morphosyntactic evidence from Greek/Vlach Aromanian bilingual speakers
5850	John Mansfield	When social contact promotes diversification
5871	Alina Russkikh and Aigul Zakirova	Peripheral functions of additive and intensifying clitics: a typological perspective
5903	Simone Mattiola and Olga Krasnoukhova	Diachronic typology of pluractional markers in South America
5938	Colin Davis	Stress-sensitive alignment and truncation with an English diminutive
5941	Laurits Stapput Knudsen, Tom Ennever and Eleanor Yacopetti	Postural verbs and their roles in locative and existential predication in three Australian languages
5953	Beatriz Curti-Contessoto	Legal language change and certified translation: a study on the terminological comparison between Brazilian and French marriage certificates through the centuries
5967	Andra Kalnaca and Ilze Lokmane	Attitude dative in Latvian: speech acts and constructions
5971	Anna Roussou and Christos Vlachos	The morphosyntax of wh-pronouns in Greek
5987	Liudmila Khokhlova and Boris Zakharyin	Syntactic oppositions manifested by pronouns and pronominal affixes in Sindhi, Siraiki and Kashmiri
5994	Evelyn Wiesinger, Sarah Dessi Schmid (and Lydia Momma)	Mirativity in Romance – Speaker-oriented vs. Hearer-oriented Expression of Unexpectedness
5998	Meeli Roose, Tua Nylén, Harri Tolvanen and Outi Vesakoski	Habitat modeling of Uralic language speaker areas
6062	Jesse Holmes and Virve- Anneli Vihman	The role of dependency length minimization in the emergence of Differential Object Marking cross-linguistically
6093	Carolina Marescotti	Denominal verbs in ancient Greek and Latin: at the syntax-semantics interface

6096	Alice Mevis	When emerging varieties start living a life of their own: birth and growth of a constructional alternation in the Portuguese of Mozambique
6178	Matthias Mittendorfer	Left- and right-dislocation in discourse: discourse functions, word order and prosody
6195	Mael Farina	Crack, crunch, crash and crush: studying cr- words in a combined approach to English phonesthetics
6201	Teresa Fanego	On the history of the English construction type TOMORROW I'LL GO SHOPPING and its relation to the absentive
6202	Florine Berthe and Anita Fetzer	The-WHAT-NP-VP-BE construction: Boundary marker of left periphery in spoken discourse?
6215	Rahel Tesfu Dires	A morphological analysis of singulatives in Cushitic languages
6221	Silvina Espíndola Moschner and Malte Rosemeyer	Aspectual uses of saber + infinitive in South American Spanish varieties: a corpus-based study
6235	Manfred Krifka and Fereshteh Modarresi	Assertion Modifiers and Trustworthiness: Experimental Results from German
6236	Antonio Benítez-Burraco and Sihan Chen	Linking language variation to sociopolitical variation
6255	Wout Van Praet and Liesbeth Degand	As if grammar, discourse and prosody don't interact: Comparative study of the prosodic profiles of English as if-clauses and Dutch alsof-clauses
6317	Maria S. Morozova, Daria V. Konior, Snejana Gadjeva, Diana D. Ivanova, Alberto Giudici, Zeljko Jovanovic, Anastasia V. Kharlamova, Maxim L. Kisilier, Viacheslav V. Kozak, Johannes Mücke, Ionela Padure, Alexander Y. Rusakov, Andrea Scala, Georgios Vardakis, Nikita G. Gorlov, Tanguy Sollic, Andrey N. Sobolev and Evangelia Adamou	The Atlas of the Balkan Linguistic Area
6341	Maia Duguine and Aritz Irurtzun	Bare nouns in a language without bare nouns
6350	Maria Pupynina	Small-scale Multilingualism in Northeastern Siberia
6394	Iraide Ibarretxe-Antuñano, Andrea Ariño-Bizarro, David Moret-Oliver, M. Teresa Moret-Oliver and Guillermo Tomás-Faci	Multimodal metaphors in medieval manuscripts: The metaphorical conceptualisation and expression of POWER in miniatures
6396	Valeria Malysheva and Maria Flaksman	ONOMATOPOEIA IN PHONAESTHEMIC GROUPS: AN INTERPLAY BETWEEN ICONICITY AND SYSTEMATICITY
6401	Daniel de Oliveira Fernandes and Steve Oswald	Insinuated vs Asserted Ad Hominem: An Experimental Approach to their Rhetorical Effectiveness on Ethos

6410	Foong Ha Yap, Anindita Sahoo, Snigdha Medhi and Pratiti Palit	Effects of degree of permanence on inversion: Some insights from copula constructions in eastern Indo-Aryan languages
6411	Camille Denizot and Richard Faure	Classical Greek <i>hostisoûn</i> or pervasive freedom of choice
6422	Polina Bychkova	Confirmation particles as grammatical markers
6430	Ellison Luk	Multifunctional converbs in Australian languages: A typological study
6478	Karin Aijmer	Maybe or perhaps? -A corpus-based study of an on-going change in Present-day English
6506	Pekka Posio, Sven Kachel and Gloria Uclés	Gender, sexual orientation, and morphosyntactic stereotypes: A case study on Mexican and Peninsular Spanish
6507	Natalia Levshina, Rowena Garcia, Yevheniy Skyra and Anna Petukhova	Given before new? New insights from conversational corpora
6520	Yang Huang	Classifiers in nDrapa: Classifying and Beyond
6531	Birsel Karakoç	Discrimination of existential against possessive clauses in Turkic
6550	Ivan Roksandic	The rise of honorific markers in Xavante (Macro-Jê, Brazil): Paths of grammaticalization
6590	Miriam Thegel	From possession to (lack of) necessity: divergent paths in the rise of Spanish modal periphrases?
6592	Sami Honkasalo and Jesse Gates	When /ɤjə/ becomes [əjə] and /sni/ becomes [ɲni]: Preinitial vocalization in Horpa consonant clusters
6594	Riccardo Giomi and An Van Linden	Combined marking of reflexivity: Typology and grammaticalization
6620	Michalis Georgiafentis and Angeliki Tsokoglou	Contrast and Information Structure in Greek – a comparative study
6645	Anna Pompei	INCORPORATION AS A COHESION STRATEGY IN ANCIENT GREEK
6654	Cristina Sánchez López	Old nominal exclamatives in a new light
6662	Maria Ovsjannikova	Differential object indexing in Christian Urmi
6670	Lauren Fonteyn, Folgert Karsdorp and Enrique Manjavacas	From ecological to lexical diversity: measuring ‘vocabulary richness’ in linguistic corpora
6685	Sabine Arndt-Lappe and Natalia Beliaeva	The dramality of Biliarys and Sheriartys: Are name-based ‘ship’ blends different?
6708	Marius Zemp and Sara Schindler	A new look at the conjunct/disjunct opposition of the Kaike (Dolpa District, Nepal) past tense
6716	Anindita Sahoo and Foong Ha Yap	De-honorification strategies in Odia: an interactional linguistics perspective
6735	Jessica Kantarovich	Urbanization and incipient morphosyntactic change in Kalaallisut (West Greenlandic)
6739	Lutz Gunkel and Jutta Hartmann	Prepositional object clauses in West Germanic. Experimental evidence from wh-movement
6764	Jacob Menschel and Katarzyna Wojtylak	Differential Object Marking in Caquetá-Putumayo languages: an areal perspective
6811	Jong-Bok Kim and Gabriela Bîlbîie	English Inferential Cleft Construction: A non-expletive approach
6825	Matthias Urban	Dyadic kin terms and related phenomena in the Central Andes

	Jiahong Wang and Yam	
6860	Leung Lawrence Cheung	Flexibility and Person-Sensitivity of Egophoricity in Golog Tibetan
6872	Felicity Meakins	Mirroring converted languages: Two grammars, one lexicon
6876	Åke Viberg	Towards a full account of the meaning potential of cutting and breaking verbs
6913	Jessica Van de Weerd	"There must be a good reason." The use of epistemic <i>devoir</i> in French. A corpus study in comic strips.
6932	Daniel Van Olmen and Marta Andersson	Conventionalized impoliteness in English and Polish: The case of 'you idiot!'
6937	Matti Miestamo, Ksenia Shagal, Olli Silvennoinen and Chingduang Yurayong	Case marking under negation in complement clauses: The case of Finnic
6955	Julio Torres Soler	A diachronic study of <llevar + gerund> in Spanish
6965	Veronika Milanova, Terhi Honkola and Niklas Metsäranta	Circum-Baltic kinship terminologies through the lens of areal and contact studies
7006	Chiara Zanchi, Silvia Luraghi and Martina Giuliani	NomAccAbl/NomAccDat: A corpus-based diachronic study of construction alternation with Latin ditransitives
7111	Aleksandra Milosavljević and Stefan Milosavljević	Expletive Datives are situational Datives
7173	Aida Talić	Local dislocation and prosodic structure building in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian truncated infinitives
7182	Yoshifumi Kawasaki	Computational historical dialectology using spatiotemporal embeddings
7209	Marina Benedetti, Chiara Gianollo and Vladimir Olivero	Parallel innovation or contact through translation? Reflexive possessives in the Greek and Latin Bible
7213	Marketa Janebova and Michaela Martinkova	Prepositional markers of similarity in Czech: Evidence from corpora
7226	Silja-Maija Spets	Deicticity and epistemic interactivity. Mari evidential particles and epistemological stance
7227	Carla Vergaro	Conceptual structure and complementation: A study on English illocutionary shell nouns
7259	Sune Gregersen	From complementizer to causal subordinator: The functions of <i>dat</i> 'that, so, because' in Wangerooge Frisian
7276	Francesca Dell'Oro	Investigating semantics in an annotated parallel corpus. The cartography of modality in the New Testament.
7279	Anne Carlier, Jasper Vangaeveer and Lisa Pigère	The progressive gerund construction in three Romance languages: historical and comparative perspectives
7281	Josip Perković	Possessive and verbal person markers in the languages of the New Guinea region
7289	Enrique L. Palancar	Topicality and word order and voice in Otomi
7297	Johanna Miecznikowski and Elena Battaglia	Hearsay sources of information in Italian talk-in-interaction
7304	Viviana Masia and Marco Biasio	A micropragmatic perspective on valency construction in Irish and Polish 'impersonal' verbs
7325	Guillaume Guitang and Pius Akumbu	Sound symbolism in Gizey Onomatopoeia

7347	Carolina Gonzalez and Lara Reglero	Mirativity in wh-in-situ questions in Spanish
7417	Theresa Matzinger, Michael Pleyer, Elizabeth Qing Zhang and Przemyslaw Zywczyński	Pause Duration and Differences in Mental State Attribution in Native and Non-Native Speakers
7430	Mathilde Pinson	Left-peripheral bottom line sequences
7458	Helle Metslang and Carl Eric Simmul	To fear or to hope? Two opposing discourse markers sharing space
7471	Johannes Kabatek and Senta Zeugin	How can we measure normative pressure in linguistic experiments?
7508	Romain Delhem	The grammatical status of manner units within the English adverb class
7521	Luca Brigada Villa and Luigi Talamo	Measuring the impact of language contact on word order change
7522	Purificação Silvano, Maria De Los Angeles Gómez González and João Cordeiro	Tag questions in English and Portuguese monologues: types, features, and functions
7558	Liana Tronci	Translation effects on the syntax of Ancient Greek <i>gígnomai</i> 'become, be there'. A corpus-based study on Biblical translations and Christian literature
7580	Ekkehard König and Letizia Vezzosi	Deictic systems of reference to manner: Their formal, conceptual and gestural basis.
7585	Sara Amido	Identifying a quarrel: the contiguous disagreement hypothesis
7628	Martin Hummel	Morphosyntactic typology and the concept of MANNER face to face: adverbs and adverbials in Romance
7642	Fedor Rozhanskiy and Elena Markus	Functions of demonstrative pronouns in contemporary Soikkola Ingrian
7703	Johan van der Auwera, Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen and Daniel Van Olmen	Equatives and comparatives in connective negation
7722	Anton Buzanov and Rita Popova	Approaching place/goal alternation in Russian
7741	Jorina Brysbaert and Karen Lahousse	Syntactic position of contrast markers in different registers of French: A quantitative corpus analysis
7742	Federica Cominetti, Giorgia Mannaioli, Giulia Giunta, Viviana Masia, Norma De Marco and Edoardo Lombardi Vallauri	Manipulative effects of implicit communication across text genres
7811	Jorge Agulló	Definiteness Effects and linguistic variation: Spanish in contact with Catalan
7822	Miao-Ling Hsieh	Two Types of Confirmational Questions Relating to New/Old Information in Taiwanese Southern Min
7824	Mira Bergelson, Andrej Kibrik and Marina Raskladkina	The Kodiak town variety of Alaskan Russian: The diachrony of a contact language
7832	Yuri Koryakov	Mapping specifics of languages of nomadic peoples in Eurasian Circumpolar areas

7873	Lieven Danckaert and Achim Stein	Periphrastic passives from Latin to French
7885	Borja Herce	From sound change to overabundance: pan-lexical wa-/wu- free choice in Central Pame
7956	Gregory Antono, Francisco França Miguel and Isabella Coutinho Costa	The expression of space in Macuxi (Carib)
7976	Patrick Dendale and Ana Stulic	Intuition and its relation to evidentiality. Evidence from the cross-linguistic study of the expression 'Something tells me that' and its equivalents
8005	Giulio Scivoletto	Synchrony and diachrony of a mirative marker in Sicilian
8009	Margot Vancauwenbergh, Astrid De Wit and Peter Petré	Mirative uses of the progressive and GO-constructions in Romance and beyond
8015	Edoardo Nardi	The linguistic competence of the New Testament writers: a study in Greek-Hebrew bilingualism
8019	Natalia Stoyanova	Reconstructing a pre-Soviet contact with Russian: The case of Barhahan Evenki
8050	Deniz Zeyrek and Amália Mendes	Revisiting the Hypophora Label in the TED Multilingual Discourse Bank
8076	Alberto Hijazo-Gascón and Maria Andria	Deictic motion verbs and their acquisition in L2 Modern Greek and L2 Spanish
8085	Beatrice Andreea Pahontu	Avertive periphrases in Romance languages
8092	Martin Balo	Interaction between borrowing and overabundance in Romani
8119	Wiebke Petersen	New Insights on Question Formation in Colloquial French
8120	Álvaro Octavio de Toledo Y Huerta and Mar Garachana Camarero	On the history of conative constructions in Ibero-Romance – and their putative periphrasticity
8163	Silvia Luraghi and Chiara Zanchi	A variety in the making: New meanings and constructions of epí in the Septuagint
8175	Pierre-Yves Modicom	Indexical parameters in the pragmaticalization of thought verbs in three Scandinavian languages
8209	Ferdinand von Mengden	Reanalysis or Recontextualization?
8212	Diana Stolac and Anastazija Vlastelić	THE OLD AND THE NEW IN ADVERTISING: THE LANGUAGE OF CROATIAN ADVERTISING THROUGH THREE CENTURIES
8240	Barend Beekhuizen	Discursive variation explains colexification: A lexicon-wide case study on the DoReCo corpus
8257	Kalle Müller	Epistemic (Dis)agreement and Common Ground Information Typing
8264	Soichiro Kinoshita	Grammatical Irony in Japanese
8279	Susanne Maria Michaelis	Coexpression of existential and possessive predication in creole languages
8302	Sergey Say, Natalia Logvinova and Elizaveta Zabelina	Cognitive schemas in nominal causal constructions: a quantitative typological assessment
8332	Frederic Blum	Re-examining the proposed genetic relationship(s) of Panoan and Tacanan
8339	Ibtissem Knouzi	A Mixed Methods Study of the Cognitive Processes Engaged by an Integrated Writing Task

8342	Marina Gomila Albal	On the allomorphic variation of the Old Spanish feminine definite article: geographical variation and change in the Iberian Peninsula
8360	Maria Copot, Mari Aigro, Virve-Anneli Vihman and Andrea Sims	The linguistic prescriptivism filter on word form uncertainty: a cross-linguistic study
8366	Tiago Tresoldi, Freja Lindgren, Oscar Billing, John Huisman and Fabrício Ferraz Gerardi	Advancing Cognate Reflex Prediction: Incorporating Expert Evaluations and Multi-Tiered Representations
8386	Laure Sarda	What does rain do? Predication of existence with weather nouns in French
8412	Julian Victor Mendez Dosuna	Diphthongal Reduction in Medieval and Modern Greek: Setting the Record Straight
8438	Michael Dunn	Inheritance and contact in Koryako-Chukotian Languages
8444	Tue Trinh	Asking about asking (about asking): Revisiting the Performative Hypothesis
8449	Valentina Benigni and Beatrice Bernasconi	“Stylish” similatives. A corpus-based study of STYLE-nouns in Italian and Russian
8450	Eugenio Gorla and Fabio Gasparini	Multiple factors affecting the grammar of heritage languages. Evidence from Piedmontese in Argentina.
8472	Tomislava Bošnjak Botica, Jurica Polančec, Maša Musulin, Gordana Hržica and Sara Košutar	The Rise and Fall of Overabundance: The Case of Croatian Genitive Plural Forms
8528	Lubomir Andrej	Word-formation and semantic characteristics of onomatopoeia
8549	Juergen Fuchsbaauer and Fabio Maion	The translation of the Dioptra as a parallel corpus for Middle Bulgarian
8567	Thorhallur Eythorsson and Sigridur Sigurdardottir	The diachrony of weather predicates: Evidence from the history of Icelandic
8571	Katarzyna Izabela Wojtylak and Juan Alvaro Echeverri	Towards a reconstruction of the Proto-Witotoan pronominal system (Northwest Amazonia)
8634	Julie Marsault	Sound symbolism and conventionality in Omaha sound roots
8657	Cristián Juárez	Locative relations and valence extension: multifunctional locative markers in Mocoví (Guaycuruan, Argentina)
8720	Irati Zubia	On bullshit. How can indifference toward truth be characterized?
8723	Lidia Federica Mazzitelli	Varieties of passive in the Lavongai-Nalik languages of Northern New Ireland (Papua New Guinea)
8745	Alessandra Giorgi	Interjections, vocatives and adversative particles: For a syntax of micro-discourses
8783	Geraldine Quartararo	The evidential -jama in Aymara. A case of grammatical replication?
8800	Miina Norvik and Eva Saar	Finnic comparative constructions in an areal context
8803	Ljudmila Geist	On the mass-count distinction of nouns denoting foodstuff
8805	Diana Lewis	Between core and periphery: the development of English modal adverbs, evaluative adverbs and discourse connectives
8824	Rita Popova	The semantics of size in nominal classification
8840	Magdalena Wrembel, Anna Balas, Kamil Kaźmierski and Jarosław Weckwerth	Developmental trajectory of L2 and L3 vowel perception: Acoustic and perceptual similarity of English and Norwegian vowels to Polish vowel categories

8860	Lena Kaltenbach	Effects of translation in the syntactic realization of Recipient arguments in Middle English: Searching for unique items in translated and non-translated texts
8878	Natalya Stoyanova and Irina Khomchenkova	Adverbial clauses with Russian conjunctions in three languages of Russia: a morphosyntactic congruence perspective
8892	Benedikt Szmrecsanyi, Matt Hunt Gardner and Thomas Van Hoey	Grammatical variation is not suboptimal
8901	Hana Hledíková	Morphological complexity of verbs across the frequency spectrum in Czech, English, German and Spanish
8907	Emīlija Mežale	(Im)polite use of demonstrative pronouns in Latvian and Finnish online texts
8922	Nataliia Hübler and Simon J. Greenhill	Modelling admixture across language levels to detect areal and genealogical patterns in language variation
8929	Sonia Cristofaro	Diachronic pathways to case marking alignment, and their consequences for the explanation of synchronic cross-linguistic patterns
8938	Murad Suleymanov	From Reality into Wishful Thinking: A Non-Perfective Use of a Perfective Participle in Azeri
8970	Fuhui Hsieh	On the relations of SAY verbs and Deixis in Formosan Languages
8988	Giulia Greco	Middle voice and sigmatic future in Homeric Greek: between modality and event types
8991	Julia Nintemann	On the Special Grammar of toponyms in constructions of spatial relations
9034	Emma Santelmann	Examining the maintenance of dialect features in regional urban Armenian speech via variationist analysis of vowels in Gavar, Armenia
9046	Yidan Cao, Chao Zhou and Gueorgui Hristovsky	The Influence of Preceding Consonant and Following Vowel on the Production Portuguese /r/ by L1-Mandarin Learners
9051	Wojciech Guz	Quotative uses of Polish similative demonstratives: The relevance of manner/quality semantics, and pathways of development
9096	David Gil	Sociopolitical Complexity Drives Grammatical Complexity: An Experimental Cross-Linguistic study of Thematic Role Assignment
9134	Mari Aigro	Elusive argumenthood: Mapping argument status gradience along dimension-specific criteria
9170	Piotr Sobotka	Yiddish function words borrowed from Slavic languages
9176	Alexandre Nikolaev and Neil Bermel	Age, morphological form and semantic information
9250	Anastasiia Vyshnevskaya	The nanosyntax of Ukrainian deadjectival verbs
9252	Triin Todesk	Degree expressions una, jona, and džyk with verbs in Komi
9267	Anna Bondaruk and Božena Rozwadowska	Triadic Object Experiencer verbs in Polish
9268	Andrey Sobolev and Biljana Sikimic	Divergence in the Torlak dialect divided by the state border between Serbia and Bulgaria
9276	Tom Bossuyt and Eline Daveloose	Concessive conditionals in Cappadocian Greek: Issues of divergence and contact
9299	An Van Linden and Fabrício Ferraz Gerardi	Comparing morphosyntactic patterns in Katukinan, Harakmbut and Arawan: Genealogical relations or language contact?

9346	Peter Arkadiev and Evgenia Klyagina	The discourse basis of (non)finiteness in Abaza
9360	Eleonora Cattafi	The Accessibility Hierarchy in Greek documentary papyri: from syntax to sociolinguistics
9402	Werner Frey	On a basic distinction between adverbial clauses appearing outside of their hosts
9423	Chiara Fedriani and Maria Napoli	The “missing” dative alternation: typology and history of Late Latin ditransitives
9450	Imke Mendoza, Barbara Sonnenhauser and Wiemer Björn	Specifying time-stability of oscillating structures in clause combining
9453	Zlatan Kojadinovic	Forms of address: a function-to-form analysis
9582	Thomas Van Hoey	Iconicity in the streets, multimodal metaphor in the sheets: Chinese ideophones on social media
9639	Erica Biagetti and Luca Brigada Villa	Verb-Object pairs in the Latin, Gothic, Armenian, and Old Church Slavonic translations of the Gospels: a treebank-based quantitative study on the influence of Greek word order
9650	Ante Petrović	Towards an Areal Typology of Focus Constructions: A Look from Europe and Mesoamerica
9675	Antonina Bondarenko	Verbless Questions in Oral Monologic Discourse
9693	Espen Klævik-Pettersen	Core clause, periphery, and dislocation - towards a unified theory
9701	Niklas Erben Johansson	The influence of vocal iconicity on word structure through stress and segment placement
9705	Chris Smith	Methodology issues in detecting phonesthemic change in the English lexicon
9733	Gerson Klumpp and Rodolfo Basile	On locational constructions in Uralic languages
9751	Katharina Gerhalter and Andrés Enrique-Arias	Morir morirás ‘for certain you will die’. Intensifying strategies in Medieval Spanish biblical translation.
9756	Lorenzo Moretti	Semantic swap, network reconfiguration or both? The loss of causative do
9774	Irene Fally and Pamela Goryczka	It does not always take two: Revisiting overabundance in Italian verb morphology
9797	Charlotte Hemmings and Mary Dalrymple	Grammaticalisation of kidè as a simulative marker in contemporary Enggano
9813	Felix Berner	The very problem - the problem of using very as a diagnostic for modifiability
9839	Andrej Kibrik	Upper Kuskokwim Athabaskan: A case of resistance to language contact
9878	Gilles Authier	The rise of ideophonic compound verbs in Archi (East Caucasian)
9894	Gerhard B Van Huyssteen, Adri Breed and Suléne Pilon	Grammatical constructions of impoliteness in Afrikaans
9904	Sina Ahmadi, Antonios Anastasopoulos and Géraldine Walther	English Biblical Translations and Language Change: Mutual Impact
9911	Elisa Mattiello	Impoliteness and offensiveness: The case of English slang suffixoids
9972	Kristian Roncero	Less is more. Overabundance in minoritised Slavonic varieties.

9973	Vadim Dyachkov	The place of the theme vowels e and i in the functional spine of Russian verbs: evidence from denominal and deadjectival verbs
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Legal language change and certified translation: a study on the terminological comparison between Brazilian and French marriage certificates through the centuries

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Keywords: Certified translation; diachronic terminology; legal terminology; terminological equivalence.

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This research is a comparative-diachronic study of terms that appear in marriage certificates and that are related to the themes of marriage, divorce, separation, and property regime, since civil marriage was instituted in France (in 1791) and in Brazil (1890) until today. Its purpose is to verify which are the main challenges of certified translation that may be specifically linked to the evolution of these terms. The study arose from the following questions: is it possible to find different equivalents in a target language (TL) for the same term in a source language (SL) if terminological equivalence is conceived from a diachronic point of view? Does the terminological equivalence change from the diachronic point of view? If yes, what are the characteristics of this change? What are the main terminographic problems found regarding this subject? To answer these questions, the methodology adopted in this study consisted of five steps: i) four corpora were created, two of which were composed of French and Brazilian marriage certificates (respectively, FMCCorpus and BMCCopus) and the other two present laws and decrees relating to the above mentioned themes (FLCorpus and BLCorpus); ii) in the AntConc program (Anthony 2012), the terms in both languages were identified; iii) then, the semantic and lexical evolution of these terms was analyzed; iv) the FR-BR equivalents were established in the light of a diachronic perspective through the analysis of the concepts denominated by these terms in different moments of the history of the legal domain of these two countries. To follow this methodology, the theoretical assumptions of terminology (Cabré 1999, Conceição 1999, Alves 2006, and others) and diachronic terminology (DT) (Dury 1999, 2005 and 2013, Tartier 2006, among others) were adopted. As main results, it was found that there are terms that have different equivalents at different times of their existence in civil law (this is the case, for example, of *divórcio* that sometimes must be translated by *séparation de corps*, and other times by *divorce*), in addition to some situations in which equivalence has different degrees (Dubuc 2002) over time for the same pair of terms. It was also verified that the terminographic resources consulted do not provide the necessary data for a good understanding of these terms in relation to their dates of occurrence in legal documents, such as the marriage certificates of our corpora. Thus, the main challenges of certified translation in this context are especially linked to terminological transformations – the result of the evolution of specialized knowledge – and DT has proven to be a fertile field that highlights the semantic and lexical evolution of terminologies. Diachronic transformations are very relevant for translators, especially in the case of those who work with certified translations, as they can translate old documents in which the diachronic issues play a fundamental role. However, there is still a long way to go regarding the development of DT. Therefore, this communication proposes to present some reflections that can collaborate in this sense.

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