

# Foreword

 <https://doi.org/10.1075/cilt.91.01for>

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**Romance Languages and Modern Linguistic Theory:  
Selected papers from the XX Linguistic Symposium on  
Romance Languages, University of Ottawa, April 10–14,  
1990**

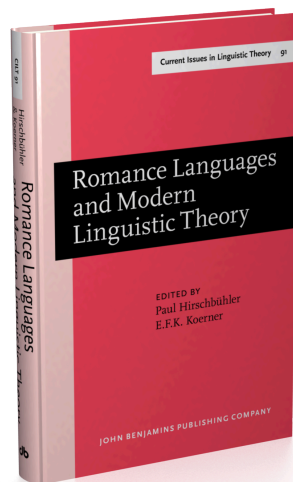
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[*Current Issues in Linguistic Theory*, 91] 1992. viii, 416 pp.

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## FOREWORD

*Habent libelli sua fata*, and the present volume is no exception to this venerable adage. However, rather than recounting the genesis — and the pain — involved in the preparation of the camera-ready text of this 420-page book, I would like to say a few words about the origin of the papers here united as well as seize the opportunity to say a few words about the publishing history of previous LSRL meetings.

As on earlier occasions, this volume of papers from the 20th Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages, held at the bilingual (English/French) University of Ottawa, in Canada's capital, in April 1990, reflects the state of North American Romance linguistics carried out within a broadly defined generative framework. As is obvious from the length of several articles, some of the papers included here remain close to the size and scope of the original presentation at the conference, whereas others constitute significant elaborations of the original papers, thereby in effect producing research articles of some importance. This might not have been the original intent of the conference organizers, but the delay in the production of the proceedings and ongoing research commitments made it desirable for several authors to revise their contributions considerably. In the end, it appears that the result was a better volume than it might have been otherwise.

As general editor of the series in which the present proceedings from a LSRL meeting appears, I would like to say something about the volumes of papers from such symposia which have thus far been published therein, and what my intent had been from the beginning. Traditionally, if one ignores university presses that tend to be well cushioned by the very fact that their actual overhead costs (equipment, salaries of employees, office space, maintenance, etc.) are covered by the general budget of the institution, regular publishers must make enough money to remain in business. Editors of a book series, if they understand their job well (and are not in a conflict-of-interest situation as sometimes happens), must have the health of the discipline at heart, which means in effect to defend the interests of the consumer, i.e., students and scholars. I am not thinking so much about the relatively high price these days of a book in linguistics (and in most other academic disciplines) about which we hear complaints quite regularly — people tend to forget that the cost of liv-

ing generally has rising dramatically over the years and it seems unreasonable to expect that books should remain at a 1975 level — but about the service to researchers by bringing out volumes of work in particular areas in one and the same place, so that also those who had no opportunity to participate in a given meeting can subsequently follow the trends of the field in question without any difficulty. This is, I thought back in 1982, when I attended an LSRL meeting for the first time, best accomplished by having the proceedings published in the same series on a regular basis. Before that time the papers from such symposia appeared in a variety of places (if at all), usually with a publisher near the conference venue. As a result, several of the pre-1982 proceedings have become difficult to track down and consult. Even after the 1982 meeting, I have been unable to persuade the conference organizers to submit the papers for publication in “Current Issues in Linguistic Theory” (CILT), but it was not for lack of trying. For instance I traveled to Los Angeles to attend LSRL XIV in order to meet with the organizers and discuss technical matters regarding the preparation of the papers for publication. The result is in the public domain. I am hoping, however, in the interest of continuity and the reasons stated above, that from LSRX XVII (1987) onwards the bulk of papers presented at these annual meetings will appear regularly in CILT — like those from Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, 1988 (CILT 69), Columbus, Ohio, 1989 (CILT 74), and the present volume.

Even though responsibility for the contents and form of the final product rests with the contributors and the editors, help has been received, quite generously at times, from graduate students of the Department of Linguistics, University of Ottawa, in the key-boarding of several papers not on disk, the transfer from an IBM to a Macintosh system of a number of submissions, implementing corrections, and the production of the indexes (prepared on the basis of documents originally developed by Douglas A. Kibbee of the University of Illinois for the LSRL XVIII proceedings): Pierre Carbonneau, Kofi Saah, Jean Veall, and Badia Zahouni. Several ‘trees’ were produced by the co-editor of the present volume and our colleague John T. Jensen. Technical assistance was cheerfully given by Daming Xu. Financial assistance, first for the holding of the 1990 conference, then for the preparation of the manuscripts for publication, was received from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the School of Graduate Studies and the Department of Linguistics, University of Ottawa. They all deserve our gratitude.

Ottawa, Ontario, 5 February 1992

Konrad Koerner