

Preface

The standardization of Romance languages is a well-established domain in Romance studies. As shown in our detailed introduction (“Romance standardology: roots and traditions”), there is a considerable amount of research on this classical issue, and all the contributors to this manual draw heavily on it. However, this volume strives to do more than just provide an essential update of previous research findings. The first part of the book, dedicated to the theories of linguistic norm, presents, of course, overviews on traditional and proven methodologies, which have constantly enhanced our understanding of standardization. Nonetheless, it also ventures to include more recent approaches to the construction of regulated forms of language that are not easily found in former manuals. In the same manner, the second part on language-specific instruments and reference tools combines articles treating the traditional realm of language codification and modernization (i.e., orthographies, normative dictionaries and grammars). This engaging section encompasses elaborate analysis of the hitherto neglected issue of normative pronunciation (orthoepy) as well as the ever more dynamic field of usage guides (the so-called dictionaries of language difficulties).

From the standpoint of standardization, it is justifiable to distinguish between “major” and “minor” Romance languages. The chapters on Romanian, Italian, French, Catalan, Spanish and Portuguese always follow the same, full-fledged scheme (four articles each); a more concise chapter is dedicated to “minor” Italo-, Gallo- and Ibero-Romance languages not to mention Romance-based Creoles. Even though each language is treated separately, the introductory essay additionally contains a section intended to provide the reader with a comparative approach.

It goes without saying that in order to be useful and easily accessible, a manual needs a coherent structure and an analogous, corresponding treatment of the objects. However, if the reader detects excessive or disturbing heterogeneity in the presentation of (some of) the data, we as editors have failed to convince the contributors of the well-foundedness of our approach. We assume, of course, responsibility for any shortcomings in this respect.

Many esteemed colleagues have contributed to making the idea of a Manual of Standardization in the Romance Languages come true. First of all, we’d like to thank our General Series Editors Günter Holtus and Fernando Sánchez-Miret for their patience and support; of course, a lot of gratitude goes out to the many contributors of this volume – those who have fulfilled the promise of a substantial article and those who have generously helped us out in the case of a few missing articles by assuming that task on short notice. Furthermore, we also wish to thank Steven Dworkin for his advice in the early stages of this volume. We would also like to express our appreciativeness to Brandon Davenport, who has tirelessly improved the style of many manuscripts, as well as to Judith Strunck, Thea Göhring and Judith Harzheim, who rendered their services of laboriously reading and copy-editing the

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