

## REVIEW ON LIMIAR - Limits and Areas in Dialectology

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The LIMIAR symposium was held by the Dialectology and Diachrony group of the Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa. As indicated in the title, this meeting was devoted to a classic issue in dialectology: the definition of the geographical space of linguistic variation. This complex task combines the well-acknowledged non-discreteness of the aforementioned linguistic variation with one of the most characteristic concerns of geolinguistics: the construction/detection of dialectal areas. Most of the papers and posters presented at the symposium offered theoretical advances in the understanding of linguistic variation and its relation with extra-linguistic factors, as well as new approaches to the cartographic representation of dialect limits and areas, with examples that came from many different linguistic families. The program of LIMIAR also contained a workshop named *How spatial is dialect syntax?*, which specifically explored these questions in this very prolific and dynamic research field.

The first invited speaker was Joan Veny (Institut d'Estudis Catalans / Univ. Barcelona), who delivered an opening talk entitled *Limites et aires en dialectologie catalane et romane*. The focus of this inspiring lecture was the study of some features of Catalan dialectal areas and linguistic borders, taking in account the division between consecutive and constitutive dialects or the distribution of isoglosses (linearity *versus* bundles). He also dealt with the importance of diachronic information (transmitted to us through the *scripta*) or the influence of politic and commercial factors in the formation of areas. Finally, Veny talked about the utility of dialectology for the determination of the authorship of anonymous works, as well as about its importance in the constitution of a linguistic standard.

The second invited speaker was Hans Goebl (Univ. Salzburg), who devoted his very documented talk to the Salzburg Dialectometry School, founded and developed by

himself: *Introduction aux problèmes et méthodes de la dialectométrie de l'École dialectométrique de Salzburg (avec des exemples gallo-, italo- et ibéro-romans)*. His lecture examined the epistemological foundation of the school, as well as its theories and practical methods for accomplishing many features (similarity maps, interpunctual analyses, dendrography, etc.). The talk was complemented with many examples from different linguistic areas; special attention was given to the software used to make the calculations and design the cartographic representation.

In the framework of the workshop *How spatial is dialect syntax?*, the third guest speaker was Sjef Barbiers (Meertens Instituut and Univ. Utrecht), with a lecture entitled *Geography and cartography of the left-periphery: The case of Dutch Imperatives*. This exhaustive talk was devoted to the structure of the left periphery in imperatives in German and in Dutch, from a comparative perspective that addressed word order variation in connection with variable morphosyntax. Along the talk, it was showed how the geographic distribution of distal fronting in imperatives, finite verb agreement patterns and subject pronoun forms and incorporation are crucial for a proper understanding of the linguistic systems involved.

The LIMIAR symposium also accepted 21 papers and 8 posters, which, for the purposes of this review, can be distributed in the following thematic areas (each section will follow the chronological order of the program).

## 1. Measurement of dialect boundaries

As previously stated, this theme was a key point for the symposium, and some contributions (besides Hans Goebel lecture) focused on this question both from theoretical and practical approaches. Maria-Pilar Perea (Univ. Barcelona) presented *The dialectal border between North-Western Catalan and Valencian: a quantitative approach*, a study both qualitative and quantitative, with computer support, that was based on the information concerning verb morphology gathered in this area by Antoni M. Alcover (1918-1921, cf. <http://alcover.iec.cat>). The paper *Geographical distance and linguistic areas in Galician. A correlative analysis*, by Francisco Dubert (Univ. Santiago de Compostela), applied some methods and tools of the Salzburg Dialectometry School to the data of the *Atlas Lingüístico Galego*. After that, the paper

*Towards a scientific measure of the linguistic boundaries*, by Gotzon Aurrekoetxea (Univ. Basque Country), with a more theoretical approach, dealt with the problem of the quantification of dialect boundaries; more specifically, the achievement of a scale that may be valuable for all dialect situations. Finally, Ramón de Andrés Díaz, Xosé Miguel Suárez Fernández, Maria Cueto Fernández and Fernando Álvarez-Balbuena García (Univ. Oviedo) presented the paper *Horiométrie ou essai de mesure quantitative d'une frontière geolectale ibero-romane*, describing the project *Estudio de la Transición Lingüística en el Eo-Navia, Asturias* (ETLEN) which aims at studying, from a quantitative point of view, the linguistic border between Galician-Portuguese and Astur-Leonese in the zone Eo-Navia (Asturias).

## 2. Dialectal syntax

Dialectal variation in the syntactic sphere was also a priority for LIMAR, and contributions on this theme constituted a significant core for the symposium.

In the general session, the paper *EAS project: first overview of the syntax variation in the Basque language*, by José Luis Ormaetxea, Ariane Ensunza and Lorea Unamuno (Univ. Basque Country), explored the syntactic variation in the *Euskararen atlas sozio-geolinguistikoa* materials and established a comparison with previous studies based in Bourciez data.

Most contributions on this theme belonged to the workshop *How spatial is dialect syntax?*, where six papers were presented. Georg Kaiser (Univ. Konstanz) and Michèle Olivieri (Univ. Nice-Sophia Antipolis) contributed with *On meteorological constructions at the boundaries of Occitania*, which explored some Occitan dialects that are usually classified as *pro-drop* languages; however they also show preverbal elements which can appear in combination with impersonal verbs, especially meteorological constructions. The paper *Geolinguistic patterns in the spatial distribution of the northern subject rule*, by Isabelle Buchstaller, Claire Childs, Karen Corrigan and Anders Holmberg (Univ. Newcastle), researched the occurrence, in the North East of England and in Scotland, of the *Northern Subject Rule* (NSR), which consists of two interrelated constraints which enable verbal -s occurrence with subjects that are not 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular. Kristel Uiboed and Liina Lindström (Univ. Tartu), in

their paper *Variation of verbal constructions in Estonian dialects*, confronted the traditional division of Estonian dialects (a North vs. South division, based on phonological and lexical features) with the result of geographic distribution of constructions formed by finite and nonfinite verbs, which showed the biggest differences between eastern and western dialects.

Christian Ramelli (Univ. Saarland) presented the paper *The am+INF construction in German varieties*. It explored the degree of grammaticalization of these constructions, existent in Dutch and some dialects of German, which express progressive meaning. Also in the German-speaking area, the paper *On the areal and syntactic distribution of indefinite-partitive pronouns in German: methodological advances and empirical results within the project 'Syntax of Hessian Dialects' (SyHD)*, by Thomas Strobel (Goethe Univ. Frankfurt), presented the methods and first results of the aforementioned project (cf. <http://www.syhd.info>); special attention was given to the cartographic representation of syntactic variables and variants. Finally, Elvira Glaser and Gabriela Bart (Univ. Zurich) presented the contribution *New methods in discovering syntactic areas*, which discussed the pros and cons of many cartographic techniques in order to represent dialect syntactic variation and geostatistic treatment of data; some own proposals, issued from a collaboration with GIS experts, were defended.

Regarding to posters, Ernestina Carrilho and Sandra Pereira (Univ. Lisboa) exhibited the poster *Aires dialectales en portugais européen et syntaxe dialectale*; from the same university, Adriana Cardoso and Catarina Magro presented the work *Naming constructions in European Portuguese: a new contribution to dialect differentiation*. Elvira Glaser (Univ. Zurich) showed the poster *Geolinguistic patterns of verb doubling in Swiss German*. Finally, Víctor Lara Bermejo (Univ. Autónoma de Madrid) made a contribution entitled *The allocutives in European Portuguese: from ALPI to CORDIAL-SIN*.

### 3. Description of geolinguistic projects

Jožica Škofic, from the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, presented the paper *Slovenian geolinguistics between tradition and innovation*, which was a brief history of Slovenian geolinguistics, mainly focused on the *Slovenski lingvistični atlas*

(SLA), which after more than 70 years of development has seen a great impulse in the last period. Xosé Álvarez and Clarinda Maia, on behalf of the research team of the project, presented the poster *TEDIPOR: Trésor Dialectal Portugais*.

#### **4. Phonetics and prosodic variation**

The paper *Étude de quelques particularités du vocalisme du dialecte de la Municipalité de Fundão (Portugal)*, presented by Maria Celeste Nunes and Paulo Osório (Univ. Beira Interior), analysed five representative phonetic features of that region from a sociolinguistic point of view, complemented by diachronic materials. Esther Baiwir (Univ. Liège) presented a contribution entitled *Emprunts vs formes héritées: l'analyse phonétique au service de l'histoire*, which establishes, for some concepts in Wallonia, a distinction between forms inherited from Latin and recent learned words; the division in areas of ancient designations and areas of loans may be very relevant for the history of words and even cultural and social history.

Gotzon Aurrekoetxea, Iñaki Gaminde, Leire Gandarias and Aitor Iglesias (Univ. of the Basque Country) presented the paper *Prosodic variation in the Basque language: stress areas*, which constituted the first description of Basque main dialectal prosodic areas and also provided the most important prosodic rules for these dialects. Finally, Miguel Cuevas-Alonso (Univ. Vigo) and M. Jesús López Bobo (Univ. Oviedo) exhibited the poster *Traditional vs. Castilian pattern in Cantabrian Spanish. Evidence of the northern Spanish intonation continuum*.

#### **5. The relationship between cultural and linguistic zones and between different linguistic families**

The paper *Les aires dialectales gallo-romanes à la lumière du celtique*, by Jean Le Dû (Univ. Bretagne Occidentale) and Guylaine Brun-Trigaud (Univ. Nice-Sophia Antipolis), explored the presence of Celtic elements in many maps of French atlases, as well as the existence of Romance data in Brittany. This coexistence obliges to overcome the classical vision of a discipline confined to one language or linguistic family. Closely

related to this, Elisabetta Carpitelli (Univ. Nice-Sophia Antipolis) and Daniel Le Bris (Univ. Bretagne Occidentale) presented the paper *Concordances aréales en zone atlantique*, which demonstrated the existence of an Atlantic area, with interesting coincidences above linguistic families; therefore, this contribution corroborated the interest of the joint study of Celtic and Romance materials.

Studying another area, that has Russian, German, Swedish, Estonian or Livonian influences, Vilja Oja, from the Institute of the Estonian language (Tallinn), presented the poster *The Finnic area as a borderland between East and West*.

## 6. Sociolinguistic and identity approaches

The paper *Réalité sociolinguistique brésilienne et géolinguistique pluridimensionnelle*, presented by Sílvia Brandão (Univ. Federal do Rio de Janeiro), showed the importance of multidimensional geolinguistic studies that take into account the sociolinguistic approach. In the same way, Melita Zemljak Jontes and Simona Pulko (Univ. Maribor) explored in the paper *Dialectal awareness as identity in correlation to dialectal delimitation* the importance of dialects as a part of national and, above all, personal identity; they showed the results of a recent research in Slovenian territory that pointed out that some dialectal variation comes as a result of diverse non-linguistic facts.

## 7. Other

*The diminutive suffixes of southern Portuguese: an example of new dialect formation by koineization*, by Maria Alice Fernandes (Univ. Algarve), studied the medieval Portuguese dialects in the South of Portugal, taking into account the diminutive forms in Toponymy. Guylaine Brun-Trigaud and Albert Malfatto (Univ. Nice-Sophia Antipolis) presented the paper *Limites dialectales vs limites lexicales du domaine occitan: un impossible accord*, which analysed the discordance between the dialectal areas of Occitan (that were established according to phonetic features) and lexical distribution.

Regarding to posters, Carlota de Benito Moreno (Univ. Autónoma de Madrid) made the contribution *Video stimuli in dialectal fieldwork*.

## **8. Conclusion**

As a conclusion, I must emphasize the vitality of this field of research and the initiatives that have developed around the world, focused in different linguistic families and from various approaches. LIMIAR was a small contribution which leaves an optimistic feeling for the future of our discipline. It must be also noticed the high level of debate and exchange of ideas among the participants, which probably will be the beginning for newer projects and joint collaborations. Proceedings will be published on the internet; more information and contacts are available at <http://limiar.clul.ul.pt>.