



Wichita State University Libraries
SOAR: Shocker Open Access Repository

Gary H. Toops

Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures

Contemporary approaches to Romance linguistics: Selected papers from the 33rd Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages (LSRL), Bloomington, Indiana, April 2003 (review)

Gary H. Toops
Wichita State University

Recommended citation

Toops, Gary H. 2007. *Contemporary approaches to Romance linguistics: Selected papers from the 33rd Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages (LSRL), Bloomington, Indiana, April 2003 (review)* Language - Volume 83, Number 2, June 2007, pp. 452-452 DOI: 10.1353/lan.2007.0098

Posted on SOAR with publisher's permission.

This paper is posted in Shocker Open Access Repository

<http://soar.wichita.edu/dspace/handle/10057/3511>

BOOK NOTICES

Contemporary approaches to Romance linguistics: Selected papers from the 33rd Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages (LSRL), Bloomington, Indiana, April 2003. Ed. by JULIE AUGER, J. CLANCY CLEMENTS, and BARBARA VANCE. (Current issues in linguistic theory 258.) Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2004. Pp. viii, 404. ISBN 1588115984. \$144 (Hb).

This volume is a collection of twenty refereed conference papers presented at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Symposium on Romance Languages in April 2003. The papers deal with questions of phonology, morphosemantics, and syntax in a variety of Romance languages, including French (both Old and Modern), Spanish (both standard and Peruvian), Catalan, Galician, Italian, Occitan, Portuguese, and Romanian. The contributions are arranged alphabetically by their authors' surnames rather than thematically. Appended to the collection is an index of terms and concepts (399–404).

In 'Case, agreement, and expletives: A parametric difference in Old French and Modern French' (1–15), DEBORAH ARTEAGA and JULIA HERSCHENSOHN note that sentences in Old French, in contrast to Modern French, are characterized by V2 (verb-second position). By subjecting Old and Modern French sentences that contain expletives to minimalist analysis, they conclude that '[t]he loss of nominal and verbal inflection led to the loss of V2 and null subjects' in Modern French (13). Two problems arise from the otherwise instructive Old and Modern French sentences that Arteaga and Herschensohn cite in support of their analysis: the authors first analyze Old French *il* in *il ot* 'there was/were' as an expletive (cf. *Il ot plusors qui burent a outrage* 'There were several who drank to excess' (10)) but later contradict themselves by regarding it (correctly) as the subject of an impersonal verb (12); and they ignore the fact that the expletive *il* in Modern French is generally restricted to indefinite (including partitive) subjects (*Il arrive des jeunes filles* '[Some] girls arrive' (9)).

In 'The inchoative interpretation of the *imperfecto*' (65–81), ALICIA CIPRIA examines the conditions under which the Spanish imperfect tense expresses an ingressive ('inchoative') meaning rather than progressive or habitual meanings (*Frida ensayaba el libreto en una hora* 'Frida was rehearsing [= was going to rehearse] the libretto in an hour' (65)). She argues that 'the inchoative reading of the *imperfecto* only comes about in those situations covered by a futurate sense' (68)—in other words, in situations

where the imperfect is used to denote a *praesens pro futuro* in the past; and that 'the futurate is a subtype of the progressive case of the *imperfecto*' (74). She ultimately ascribes the 'furate' reading of the imperfect to 'coercion' and to 'the interpretation of accompanying adverbials . . . as reference time adverbials' (80).

In 'Proto-Romance *[w] and the velar preterites' (257–74), ERIC LIEF argues against a sound change *w* > *gw* in Occitan and Catalan. Citing the so-called velar preterites in Old Occitan and Old Catalan (e.g. *dek, deyist* < DEBUI, DEBUISTI 'owed, ought'), he persuasively contends that such preterite forms arose by analogy to reflexes of the preterite of Latin HABERE (HABUI) 'have', a verb whose use increased in Romance as it became an auxiliary for the formation of the perfect series of tenses. Lief attributes the velarization of stem-final */bw/ (i.e. **ha-bwi* < HA-BU-I) to labial-labial dissimilation that could have arisen through hypercorrection: /abwi/ → *[aβwi] → /agwi/ (270).

Judging by the many footnotes referring to comments from anonymous reviewers, I sense that the papers in this collection have been carefully refereed. The index of terms and concepts at the end of the volume would be more useful to readers if terms consisting only of initials were spelled out (e.g. 'extended projection principle' alongside EPP), since many papers demand of the reader more than just a passing familiarity with the linguistic theory in which the respective studies were carried out. [GARY H. TOOPS, *Wichita State University*.]