

Foreword

It gives us great pleasure to be able to host the fourth Quantitative Investigations in Theoretical Linguistics (QITL-4) in Berlin, under the auspices of the Institute for German Language and Linguistics at Humboldt University. The previous QITL conferences in Osnabrück and Helsinki remain among the most enjoyable and enriching conferences on empirical linguistics in our memory, and we are excited about the contributions the conference has attracted, covering some of the most important, original and interesting work that has arisen in the interim. Because of our wish to stay true to the one-session-only concept of the previous QITL conferences, out of some 80 submissions we could only accept 28 presentations: 15 talks and, following the introduction of a poster session in Helsinki, 13 poster presentations. In addition, our three invited speakers have graciously agreed to hold plenary talks on their work in different fields of quantitative linguistic research.

In planning the conference we have attempted to represent the best, methodologically and theoretically most diverse contributions from those contemporary researchers in linguistics who not only delve into data to begin with, but also use their findings to inform theoretical models of the language faculty. Our declared goal has been to bridge the gap between the theory of grammar and language data, in a way that enriches both without compromising either one. We firmly believe and hope that QITL has and will continue to serve this purpose.

This conference could not have been organized without the help of very many people. Special thanks are due to the members of the program committee in dealing with the sizable load of reviewing needed to shape the final program. We are also indebted to our colleagues and students for helping out at the conference, as well as to other members of the institute and the university who helped in organizing conference materials, printing this volume, providing technical support for the conference, refreshments and other forms of logistic support. Finally, we would like to thank all participants in the conference for contributing to the discussion on quantitative research in theoretical linguistics.

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