

Institutional evaluation of CLUNL

Reports 2015 and 2016
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This report has been prepared on the basis of the documents sent to us by the CLUNL management, namely the *Scientific Components* of the *Progress Reports* for the years 2015 and 2016, and the various documents attached to it.

The organization of the Research Unit is characterized by its continuity, with the development of the three initial groups: (1 - *Formal and experimental linguistics*; 2 - *Grammar & Text*; 3 - *Lexicology, Lexicography & Terminology*) and by the innovation that constituted the creation, at the end 2015, of the group 4 composed of researchers from the previous group and entitled *Cognition, language & multimodal communication*. Because of the specificity of their research areas and their objectives, these four groups place their work in epistemological, theoretical and methodological frameworks sometimes very seriously different, and in this respect the relevance and importance of the mechanisms put in place to improve the group's cohesion and to develop synergies between the four teams of the research unit (especially through *Fórum de Partilha Linguística* and sessions of the *KRUse doctoral program*) must be emphasized.

At the basic level, the research unit's work over the two years has this relatively rare feature of addressing a representative set of the various dimensions of the structure and function of human language, such as shows the following (non-exhaustive) statement.

- a) On the basis of corpus data, the description and analysis of properties of the Portuguese language concerning either organizational elements of sentence syntax, possibly compared to equivalent domains in other languages (in the perspective of generative grammar), or the regularities of textual organization (in the perspective of textual linguistics and the sciences of discourse).
- b) On the basis of corpus data, the highlighting of the specific properties of various textual “genres” in Portuguese language (including the “commentary”) combined, on the one hand with the analysis of the relations of interdependence between aspects of the textual organization and aspects of the organization properly syntactic, and on the other hand with the analysis of the relations of interdependencies between contextual factors and linguistic properties of the texts.
- c) Still on the basis of corpus data, diachronic analyzes aiming at either describing and conceptualizing syntactic phenomena from earlier states of the Portuguese language (such as subordination in medieval Portuguese) or, by focusing on the processes of grammaticalisation and lexicalisation, highlighting the factors making possible the innovation, the obsolescence or the persistence of forms of the Portuguese language.
- d) On the basis of experiments soliciting in particular the representations and interpretations of the speaking subjects, the analysis of the processes of treatment of

various dimensions of the Portuguese syntax, in particular the structures of subordination.

e) On the basis of experimentation in production and comprehension, analysis of L1 or L2 acquisition processes, dealing with structures and dependencies strictly syntactic as well as structures interacting with textual, contextual or semantics.

f) The creation, on the basis of corpus analyzes, of new methodologies of conceptualization and description of ordinary or specialized lexicons, as well as the contribution to the making of documents of the "vocabulary" or "dictionary" type.

g) The implementation of a research program related to multimodal communication, in particular to the semiotic dimensions of choreography.

The work carried out in CLUNL's research unit also presents the interest of combining the purely scientific studies that have just been mentioned with research and interventions on the development of children's language, and/or aimed at improving teaching practices and therapy as well as various other social practices, as shows the following (non-exhaustive) statement

a) The production of measuring instruments or diagnosis of language skills, more specifically the assessment of reading and writing skills, syntactic awareness and phonological awareness.

b) The analysis of the conditions for the didactic transposition of acquired knowledge from the research on the properties of texts "genres" and discourse types in Portuguese.

c) The training of teachers of Portuguese language in French-speaking countries.

d) Analysis of the effects, in practical situations of teaching, of corrective feedback and of explicit teaching.

e) Research on the promotion of scientific literacy and the analysis of textbooks.

f) The development of plurilingual skills in academic and professional communication.

In terms of dissemination of CLUNL's work:

- The research teams ensured the development of their journal *Estudos Linguísticos / Linguistic Studies*.

- These teams organized, on the Lisbon site of the UNL, various international scientific meetings, including the *International Grammar & Text Conference (GRATO)*.

- These teams have also set up knowledge transfer workshops in the area of syntax and in the area of grammar/text relations.

- These teams are finally engaged in many international research programs, particularly in the fields of lexicology and lexicography.

- Lastly, team members proposed papers in a large number of scientific meetings in Europe, North America and South America.

All of these researches and interventions generated a volume of publication that is in itself remarkable, with in particular for the two years concerned, 41 publications in peer-review international journals and 33 publications of books or book chapters of international distribution. For all types of publications, the score obtained is much higher than that mentioned in the *expected indicators* of the original project.

With regard to my area of expertise, which is that of textual/discursive approaches, in their relation to syntax and grammatical domain, I will highlight the important role taken by the *Grammar & Text* research group in the Portuguese-speaking, Spanish-

speaking and French-speaking scientific world. In addition to their work on the specific properties of various text genres in Portuguese language, this team has developed a conception of the specific marking of textual genres that is authoritative in the field, and on the other hand has become a renowned clearing and training house as evidenced by the extent of participation in the international *Grammar & Text Conference* (GRATO), as well as the number of doctoral theses directed by the teachers of this team.

The progress reports for the years 2015 and 2016 thus testify to the breadth and excellence of the work carried out by the CLUNL teams, the dynamism shown by the Research Unit at the internal organizational level and at the level of external exchanges and collaborations. In terms of recommendations, we can only encourage the members of the research unit to continue their projects in the current directions, and we may wish to emphasize the steps taken to reinforce the cohesion of the unit. which could for example take the form of close collaborations in teacher training interventions and more broadly didactical interventions.

Geneva, January 10, 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JP Bronckart', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is enclosed in a rectangular box with a vertical line on the left side.

Jean-Paul Bronckart
Honorary Professor