

PREFACE

This volume brings together most of the papers given at ISAPL'97 - the 5.th International Congress of the International Society of Applied Psycholinguistics (ISAPL), which took place at the Rectory and in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Porto (Portugal) on 25-27 of June, 1997. The title is that of the central theme of the Congress, Psycholinguistics on the threshold of the year 2000.

The Porto Congress was the latest of several congresses held by ISAPL (Barcelona, 1985; Kassel, 1987; Toronto, 1991; Bolonha and Cesena, 1994), and, like its predecessors, it was organised into plenary lectures presented by invited speakers, papers grouped according to the various themes for the Congress, posters and workshops.

Elsewhere in this volume¹ attention is drawn to the fact that the papers presented at this Congress are proof of the vitality and diversity of the field of Psycholinguistics, especially Applied Psycholinguistics. This factor had already been highlighted at the previous ISAPL Congress (Bolonha and Cesena, 1994), the theme of which had actually been Psycholinguistics as a multidisciplinary connected science².

All the papers included in the final programme of the Congress - from a total of 256 papers by 306 authors - with the exception of the plenary sessions, were all read and selected by a selection committee composed of members of the International Scientific Committee.

The order in which the texts appear in the Proceedings is based on criteria that we think will facilitate consultation.

We decided to begin with the speech given by one of the organisers, as Secretary-General of ISAPL and President of the Local Organising Committee of the Congress, at the opening session on 25 June, 1997. Apart from the usual acknowledgements and welcoming words, the speech described the scientific character of the central theme of the Congress in a way which we felt served as an introduction to the rest of the papers in the Proceedings.

This is followed by the papers presented by the invited speakers, in order of presentation at the Congress. Their content, apart from considerably enriching the scientific quality of the Proceedings, will allow the reader to understand the principal tendencies within the field of Applied Psycholinguistics.

After this, the papers, posters and contributions to workshops have been grouped according to the different thematic areas chosen by the International Scientific Committee. The contributions within each thematic area are presented according to the alphabetical order of the names of the authors. The decision to combine the contributions to workshops with other papers in this volume seemed a necessary step since many of the participants in these workshops did not send us their texts. To publish only a part of the contributions would thus give a false idea of the workshop as a whole. It therefore did not seem sensible to reserve a special section for the workshops in the Congress programme.

¹ PINTO, Maria da Graca - «Introduction» to this volume., pp. 1-5

² STAME, Stefania (ed., 1995) - *Psycholinguistics as a Multidisciplinary Connected Science - Proceedings of the 4.th ISAPL International Congress (June 23-27, 1994) - Vol. I.* Bologna-Cesena, Università degli Studi di Bologna/Società Editrice «Il Ponte Vecchio».

Since the Congress adopted English, French and Portuguese as its official languages, the organising committee allowed for the papers included in the Proceedings to be published in these languages. Several of the authors of the papers in this volume opted to send us their texts in French and Portuguese, and there are a considerable number in which the language in which the paper was presented at the Congress does not coincide with that of the written paper. Each author was free to choose the language used in the final version of the paper and this choice has been respected by the editors. Each author is also, and in all cases, the only person scientifically responsible for the content of his or her text.

The Local Organising Committee received 251 enrolments in the Congress from 25 countries. Of those enrolled, about 200 participants were present. The publication of these Proceedings will provide the Congress participants with a final written version of the papers, and a much wider academic community with access to research that we believe to be of great importance. We should like to emphasise the role of this volume as an example of the vitality of an academic field which is rapidly expanding.

We hope in this way to have contributed by our efforts to those of many specialists from dozens of institutions and countries, who work daily in a serious and dedicated fashion to further our knowledge in areas which are fundamental to the general understanding of human languages.

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