

Report on the 29th International Lexical Functional Grammar Conference

August 21-23, 2024

University of Ghana, Legon, Accra, Ghana

Introduction

The 29th International Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG) Conference, held from August 21 to 23, 2024, at the University of Ghana, Accra, marked another significant milestone in the ongoing discourse within the global linguistic community. Organized by the International Lexical Functional Grammar Association (ILFGA) in collaboration with the Linguistics Association of Ghana (LAG). This year's conference was particularly noteworthy for its pre-conference workshop on XLE held on August 20, 2024, at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana and facilitated by Prof. Emerita Mary Dalrymple, Prof. Miriam Butt and Dr Mark-Matthias Zymla, and a workshop on West African Languages also held to climax the conference. The event brought together a diverse group of linguists, researchers, and scholars from around the world, fostering discussions on the latest developments in LFG theory and its applications to a variety of languages.



Pre-Conference workshop

Conference Program and Participation

The three-day conference was structured to balance plenary sessions and paper presentations allowing participants to engage deeply with the content while also networking with peers. The conference opened on August 21, 2024, with a welcome address and registration. Attendees were introduced to the overarching themes of the conference, including discussions on the state and future directions of LFG, led by distinguished keynote speakers such as Professor Emerita Mary Dalrymple from the University of Oxford. Her presentation, "LFG: State of the Theory and Future Directions," set the stage for the in-depth analyses and discussions that followed.

The conference program was meticulously planned, with each day featuring a mix of plenary talks, individual presentations, and collaborative sessions. The presentations covered a broad spectrum of topics within the LFG framework, including syntax, morphology, semantics, and phonology, as applied to a wide array of languages. Notable presentations included "

Alternative Questions in Urdu: From the Speech Signal to Semantics" by Butt, Miriam., Bogel, Tina., Mumtaz, Benazir., & Zymła, Mark-Matthias and "Fusional Morphology, Metasyncretism, and Secondary Exponence: A Morphemic, Realizational Approach to Latin Declension" by Ash Asudeh and colleagues.

Pre-recorded videos were submitted by participants who could not attend in-person: Alekseev, Danil; Belyaev, Oleg; and Sensekerici, Berke & Przepiórkowski, Adam. These were played as the researchers joined virtually to answer questions. The conference fee of \$100 was waved off for online participants.

Generally, all the fifteen (15) abstracts accepted by ILFGA, were duly presented in addition to five papers on West African languages during the workshop.

Workshop on West African Languages

A highlight of the conference was the Workshop on West African Languages, which took place on the final day. This workshop was particularly relevant given the conference's location and the rich linguistic diversity of the region. Presentations in this workshop explored LFG approaches to West African languages, providing new insights and theoretical advancements. For instance, Adams Bodomo presented a general overview of LFG approaches to West African languages, while other scholars like Felix Ameka and Hasiyatu Abubakari delved into specific linguistic phenomena within Ewe and Kusaal languages, respectively.



Conference and post-conference workshop participants

Networking and Collaborations

In addition to the formal presentations, the conference provided ample opportunities for networking and collaboration. The inclusion of breaks, lunch sessions, and social gatherings within the program facilitated informal discussions among participants, leading to the exchange of ideas and the formation of new research collaborations. The presence of both seasoned scholars and emerging researchers created a dynamic environment where mentorship and scholarly exchange were highly encouraged.

Post Conference Excursion

Participants were taken to the Elmina Castle and to the Kakum National Park. It was a very exciting experience as members enjoyed every bit of the trip.



Conference Evaluation

Remarks from participants confirmed the huge success of the entire event, from pre-conference activity, main conference event and post-conference activity. Below are a few remarks:

“That was a great outing and a great day! The whole thing is a huge success – we are all so impressed with the work of you and your team.” Mary Dalrymple

“...I would like to thank you for this great conference you organized. I really enjoyed it.”
Lacina Songfolio Silue

“...I'd like to thank you for organizing LFG2024 in Accra. I had a wonderful time, enjoyed every minute of being there.” Szűcs Péter

Acknowledgements

The success of the 29th International LFG Conference was made possible by the collective efforts of various individuals and institutions. The organizers, particularly Professor A. Bodomo, Professor C.K.I. Appah, and Dr. H. Abubakari, played pivotal roles in ensuring the smooth execution of the event. Special thanks are extended to Dean of the School of Languages and the administration of the University of Ghana for their support in hosting the conference. The collaboration with the Linguistics Association of Ghana (LAG), which held its annual conference concurrently, also added significant value to the event by fostering greater interaction between participants of both conferences. We equally say thank you to the LOC Chair of LAG 2024.

Conclusion

The 29th International LFG Conference was a resounding success as attested by participants, and also as reflected in the high level of engagement, the quality of the presentations, and the productive discussions that ensued. The conference not only advanced the theoretical discourse within LFG but also highlighted the importance of applying these frameworks to understudied languages, particularly those of West Africa. The organizers and participants are to be

commended for their contributions, and the conference undoubtedly set the stage for future collaborations and advancements in the field. As the global linguistic community continues to explore the depths of language structure and function, conferences like this one remain vital in driving scholarly progress and innovation.

LOC

LFG 2024

Prof. A. Bodomo

Prof. C.K.I. Appah

Dr. H. Abubakari