

My participation in the 40th Poznań Linguistic Meeting, Gniezno, Poland, 2-5 September, 2009.

Roland Noske

### Background

The Poznań Linguistic Meeting (PLM) in which I took part in September 2009 has a longstanding tradition. My first participation in this series of conferences dates back to as far as 1985, during the heydays of communism, when the conference was called “International Conference on Contrastive Linguistics”.

The weirdest experience, well worth mentioning, was my visit to this conference a year later in 1986, when it took place in Turawa close to Opole in Silesia, in a prison which at the same time was a holiday resort for policemen. We were hence served by (very polite) prisoners! (no murderers of course, more likely petty thieves).

Despite it taking place behind the Iron Curtain (and sometimes in prisons), even at that time the conference was of a high scientific quality. Nowadays, this conference is one of the most important linguistics conferences in Europe and even worldwide.

### The 2009 meeting

This time the conference took place in Gniezno, a former capital of Poland, located some 100 km east of Poznań. It consisted of four days of mostly four parallel sessions. The sessions were, among others, on clausal structure, phonology, discourse, clinical linguistics, cognitive linguistics, the interaction between language and music, sociophonetics, social semiotics, sociopragmatics, and text linguistics. There was also a workshop on one of the languages of the Netherlands: “Heritage and identity of Frisians and their language”. Among the more well-known linguists participating in the conference were Peter Trudgill, Yishai Tobin, Piotr Gąsiorowski and Camiel Hamans. The full programme can be found on: [http://ifa.amu.edu.pl/plm\\_old/2009/Programme](http://ifa.amu.edu.pl/plm_old/2009/Programme).

One of the most interesting sessions for me was entitled “Melody vs. structure in phonological representations”, organized by Geoff Schwartz. It was interesting because it sheds light on the debate of licensing by cues vs. licensing by prosody.

My own contribution was on the interface between Historical Linguistics and Modern Phonology, and was called “Grimm’s and Verner’s laws as a single process”. In it, I showed that with the help of Glottalic Theory (Gamkrelidze & Ivanov 1973, 1985, Hopper 1973), as well as of Contrast Preservation Theory (a subtheory of OT, Lubowicz 2001, forthc.), one can analyze Grimm’s and Verner’s laws as a single process, which has the form of a bifurcating push chain. I was very grateful for the feedback I received from Piotr Gąsiorowski, who pointed out to me that Kluge’s Law must have interfered with the phenomena I treated.

In all, the conference was very worthwhile. Like all conferences, it of course had also a social side. Many photo’s of that can be seen on the PLM website. I give one here, shot at the PLM party on Thursday night. It shows from left to right: Konrad Szcześniak, Emilie Caratini, Geoff Schwartz and myself, no doubt discussing some very important fundamental issues in linguistics.

