
REVIEW OF VAN KEMENADE & DE HAAS, *HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS* 2009

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1 OUTLINE

The monograph contains a collection of selected papers from the 19th International Conference on Historical Linguistics, which was held in Nijmegen, 10–14 August 2009 and provides us with a window into the current research trends in the field, which is clearly a dynamic one.

The book comes in four parts. While the first part theoretically addresses the general and specific issues of language change, the remaining three deal with linguistic variation and change in Germanic, Greek and Romance, respectively. In the remainder of this section, I outline and summarise the core topics and results, leaving the evaluation for §2.

Part I: General and specific issues of language change Biberauer's opening chapter scrutinises Jespersen's cycle in light of contact-induced data that form exceptions to it. She discusses and accounts for the data, where the high negative elements do not replace the original negators; instead they grammaticalise as concord material. This contribution also raises the more general question whether Jespersen's cycle may be obviated by external factors.

Bubenik's neo-philologically flavoured contribution is on the topic of reconstruction of experiential constructions in late Proto-Indo-European. His contribution looks at the rise and shift from [–OBLIQUE] to [+OBLIQUE] marked arguments, flavouring his analysis with semantic and pragmatic ingredients. He also commits to a cognitive-theoretic approach, stating that it is explanatorily more adequate than formal syntactic theories. While the former empirical range is by all means commendable, the latter remains an open question for theoreticians to debate and resolve.

Jadranka Gvozdanović's third chapter contains the only contribution on Slavonic prosody. In her paper, Gvozdanović looks at Slavonic accentuation with the desir-

atum to distinguish between an inherent and a contact-induced prosodic system of accentuation. Her results provide a fresh taxonomy of South Slavonic, which begs the question whether, for instance, comparative evidence from morpho-syntax might also converge on the same diachronic divisions internal to South Slavonic.

The following contribution on diachronic syntactic theory might in fact be theoretically the most interesting, if not the most controversial as the editors note. In it, John Whitman revisits the explanatory power underlying the notion of reanalysis in diachronic syntax, drawing from a wide range of data (Proto-/Niger-Congo, Middle & Early Modern English, German, French, Latin, Japanese, Mandarin) that were originally invoked to support reanalysis. Whitman shows that the traditional understanding of reanalysis as misparsing (or rebracketing) is not only an insignificant factor in language change but may even be disposed of and replaced by a newly proposed version of reanalysis that broadly pivots on syntactic relabelling and conservancy of structure.

In chapter five, Margaret Winters and Geoffrey Nathan provide a cognitive semantic analysis of prototype change. They address changes to prototypicality by drawing considerations from phonology, lexicon and morphosyntax. They conclude that changes to prototypicality are not homomorphic across the latter modules, while identifying a common process underlying changes across the modular board.

In the last chapter of the part, Yuko Yanagida proposes a syntactic reconstruction for Old Japanese, addressing alignment and configurationality. Her analysis shows that the split alignment system found in the history of Japanese is a typological system found across languages.

Part II: Linguistic variation and change in Germanic The opening chapter to the Germanic section is C. Jac Conradie's diachronic analysis on the Dutch-Afrikaans past participle prefix *ge-*, which he takes to be a candidate for degrammaticalisation as it has become—or is still becoming—a free morpheme. The cross-linguistically rare phenomenon of degrammaticalisation is proposed to account for the morphosyntactically changing trend of *ge-* in Griqua Afrikaans from (i) an inflectional morpheme to (ii) a clitic and even (iii) free particle. Conradie traces the syntactic transit from (i) to (ii) & (iii) as the semantically enriching one, where *ge-* diachronically acquired semantic functions it did not have at its Middle and Early Modern Dutch stage.

The following chapter is a corpus-based study in which Hoeksema and Schippers diachronically analyse long-distance dependencies in Dutch, focussing on four long-distance dependency constructions (*wh*-questions, relativisation, topicalisation and the comparative construction). They show that, while the resumption strategy is widely attested throughout diachronic Dutch, this is not the case for *wh*- and comparative constructions. They also note that Early Modern Dutch obviated the island constraint to a greater degree, which they explain as stemming from the availability of long-distance relativisation and topicalisation movement.

Eric Hoekstra, Bouke Slofstra and Arjen Versloot's corpus-based paper ad-

dresses the historical development of the syntactic status of quantification and free-relativisation as represented by Frisian quantifier *ea/oait* 'ever'. They define three diachronic stages while tracing the syntactic development of quantificational constructions over the period of around 550 years (from mid 13th to early 19th century). As the authors identify contact with Dutch in the early 18th century as a significant factor involved in the development and loss of the native Frisian *ea*, they argue for a construction-specific analysis, which leaves ample room for reinforcement from semantic theory.

Ida Larsson's study of the development of the perfect participle in Swedish provides an informal Kratzerian model-theoretic analysis of synchronic and diachronic linguistic data. Larson makes an argument for a detailed difference between participle types, which proves necessary for a diachronic analysis. Based on the synchronic Swedish evidence, an argument is made how this analysis may be extended and applied to other Germanic languages, yielding similar—if not same—results.

Eric Magnusson Petzell's chapter resumes the debate on the triggers and factors involved in the position of the verb: in his corpus-based study, Petzell looks at the syntactic loci of OV word order and finite verb movement/placement drawing from Swedish historical data. It is demonstrated that the changes in OV configurations were a significant factor in the loss of $V^0 \rightarrow I^0$ movement in Swedish.

In the penultimate chapter of the Germanic part, Gerard Stell makes an argument that ethnic factors have independent bearing on morphosyntactic variation of spoken Afrikaans. It is statistically shown that the difference between 'white' and 'coloured' dialects of Afrikaans correlates with ethnic identity to a greater extent than this may be attributable to other social or economic factors.

In the last chapter of Part II., Vosters, Rutten and Vandenbussche address 'the sociolinguistics of spelling', that is the orthographic variation and change in 19th century Flanders Dutch. This variation proves to be an interesting sociolinguistic variable for understanding the development of attitudes towards linguistic prescription.

Part III: Linguistic variation and change in Greek The part on Greek comprises two chapters. In the first, Adam Cooper and Effi Georgala look into the diachronic factors involved in dative loss and replacement Greek. They propose an account according to which the replacement of dative with accusative marking results from the parametric change of $[+DAT] \rightarrow [-DAT]$ on *v*, yielding replacement of object datives of mono-transitive verbs by accusative ones (in the medieval period).

Allison Kirk, in the second paper on the history of Greek, investigates the configurational status of two *wh*-structures in New Testament Greek. She comparatively looks into the syntactic status of direct objects and adjunct questions, showing that the object questions involve a two-step derivation: first, movement to $[Spec, FocP]$ (one locus of Q-interpretation); second, the head movement of V_{fin}^0 to Foc^0 . Causal questions, by contrast, are base merged in $Int(errogative)P$, located in the left periphery.

Part IV: Linguistic variation and change in Romance The final part of the volume contains four studies on the historical Romance. The first of these is Louise Esher's study of morphological evolution of non-finite complementation, future and conditional constructions in Occitan, invoking Aronoff's notion of 'morphome'.

Heather Burnett and Mireille Tremblay's corpus-based study addresses the morphosyntactic encoding of direction in the early history of French. They investigate the hypothesis "that the loss of directional particles was caused by another change [...]—the lexicalisation of directional and aspectual prefixes onto verbal roots." Importantly, they disprove the latter by quantitatively proving the independence of the developments. They thus recognise an *abstract parameter change*, regulating the valency of predicates. Burnett & Tremblay's conclusions are theoretically intriguing insofar as they show that French underwent two causally unrelated parametric changes: a syntactic one relating to change in the features of abstract functional heads (parameter loci), and another more (syntactic-)semantic one pertaining to changes in features of lexical predicates.

The last two studies address the historical syntax of Latin. Edward Cormany investigates the development and loss of *velle*-type prohibition constructions, which were eliminated by the Classical period. Cormany's study sheds new light on the synchronic grammar of Early and Classical stages of Latin, while also providing an interesting reconstruction of the innovation and decline of the *velle*-type prohibition, despite the fact that the period in which these changes took place is unattested. This also shows the potential for novel syntactic reconstruction techniques.

In the last paper, Mari Johanne Hertenberg investigates the non-finite complementation to *habere* in Latin. This control construction, semantically 'bivalent' with general distribution across future-tensed and deontic-modalised contexts, is accounted for—both synchronically and diachronically—from the perspective of the Lexical Functional Grammar framework.

2 EVALUATION

The current volume provides the latest reflection and proof of the headway made in diachronic linguistics. It proves that "diachronic syntax is [indeed] where it's at" (Campbell & Mithun 1980) since the majority of the monograph contributions are exclusively on historical syntax (with 17 out of 19 papers), and as such should be of great interest to historical syntacticians.

There are, in my opinion, two core research developments noticeable in the collection.

The first is empirical: in terms of the compendium of studied languages, there is a sense of Indo-European microsyntax crystallising, the methodological dreams for which were laid sometime around or in the 1979 *Indogermanische Gesellschaft* conference, the proceedings of which (Ramat 1980) were also published by John Benjamins, CILT. With Yanagida's chapter being the only non-IE study (addressing Old Japanese), this is implicitly a dynamic volume on comparative syntax of Indo-European.

In his paper on Indo-European argument structure, Bubenik makes a interesting mistake in stating that Sanskrit—both Vedic and Classical—did not possess subordinating conjunctions (p. 36). This is a mistake since ancient Indo-European languages, including Sanskrit, of course possessed and overtly realised complementisers (see Lühr 2008 for an overview and a diachronic account), cf. Hittite *ku-it* (e.g. in KUB XXI 38 Rs. 13f.), Early Avestan *hiiat* (e.g. YH 46:15), Old Persian *taya* (e.g. DBŠ13), Homeric Greek ὅτ(τ)ι (e.g. Hom., *Il.* H. 448f.; L. 408), Vedic *íti* (e.g. RV. 10.146.4), Gothic *ei* (e.g. Joh. 6:29), etc. The mistake, however, is a captivating one since the diachronic status and growth of the phonological presence of C⁰ is an underlying matter that is desperate for future research.

The volume also contains some brave and very attractive theoretical proposals. Whitman's contribution forms the resumption of a discussion of the explanatory models of diachronic syntax. In the same year, Kiparsky (2012) and Garrett (2012) independently argued that reanalysis occupies too dominant a position in historical syntactic explanation. In the present volume, Whitman argues for the same revision of the explanatory value of reanalysis. He argues that the accuracy of syntactic analyses of diachronic data has improved and that the explanatory role entrusted to rebracketing-style changes has decreased. After examining the best known examples in the literature of syntactic change resulting from alleged mispairing and rebracketing, he argues against such explanations by proposing a relabelling-/conservancy of structure model for syntactic reanalysis. Whitman's theory, dating back to his 2001 work, assumes that the locus of (reanalysis-type) syntactic change lies in the change of the categorial label. His Conservancy of Structure thus states that lexical items change categorial or projectional ([±MAX]/[±MIN]) features under preservation of hierarchical—c-command—relations. This approach also appeals to synchronic syntactic theory, since it does not only leave the immortality of nodes/constituency intact, it also places the locus of reanalysis on features alone, rendering it conceptually reducible to parametric change and the Borer-Chomsky conjecture, since a categorial label is nothing more than a (parametrised) feature. This novel approach to understanding reanalysis also allows plenty of unexplored space for diachronic semantics, where one of the questions concerning directionality of change is whether relabelling maps onto type-raising in the sense of von Stechow (1995). Such a question is not a far-fetched one in light of Larsson's diachronic syntactic-semantic contribution. Larsson's choice of applying a Kratzerian model-theoretic event semantics to diachronic data shows a possible diachronic pavement towards understanding language change at the syntax-semantics interface. Similarly, Burnett & Tremblay's quantitative-based study is diachronically captivating since it recognises two strata of parametric change: a standard syntactic parametric change and a semantic one. Works such as these show the future—or in fact the present (cf. Gergel 2011)—potential of diachronic syntax being drawn to the interface.

This compilation of cutting-edge research shows how meaningful the results

can be when the effort is interdisciplinary. The synchronic syntactic theory has matured to the extent it is able to provide a historical linguist with a solid set of analytical tools, which the present contributors have made full use of, while impressively incorporating corpus-based standards and statistical methods. Authors have clearly shown that the scope of languages diachronic syntax can address is growing to impressive proportions. In broadening our cross-linguistic horizons, the explanatory scope of our theory also needs expanding so as to include semantics (as Larsson and Burnett & Tremblay show) or a synchronically more appealing sense of variation and change (as Whitman argues). There just might be something to this historical syntax business.

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