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*History from below: The 'Vocabulary of Elisabethville' by
André Yav: Text, translations, and interpretive essay* By
Johannes Fabian (review)

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nier are convoluted and often difficult to follow, due to excessive formalism and an insufficient amount of clear explanation.

Several of the articles fail to be convincing. Johnson-Laird argues against semantic-network and meaning-postulate theories and illustrates the construction of a mental model from spatial descriptions using 'to the left of' and 'to the right of'. It appears, however, that the sense properties and relationships of these expressions are the chief reason for the success of his demonstration.

Lakoff argues at length against 'objectivist cognition' and claims that, since evolutionary biology is at odds with the idea that natural kinds of living things are sets defined by the shared properties of their members (125), set-theoretical models cannot possibly be assumed to model the world accurately. But the failure of evolutionary biology to fit neatly into sets of natural kinds does not warrant the dismissal of an entire theory. It may be wrong to assume that natural classes can unambiguously account for all entities in the world, yet it seems equally wrong to reject a useful theoretical construct because it does not apply to every case in the physical world.

Wilks argues vehemently against Johnson-Laird's claim of a grounded antithesis between semantic decomposition and reference, and he defends the assumptions of artificial intelligence. Unfortunately, he never manages to state his own views clearly.

Each essay is accompanied by separate references, and there is no general index. Despite a few shortcomings, the book has much to recommend it to those interested in semantics, philosophy, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence. [MARY ELLEN SCULLEN, *Indiana University*.]

History from below: The 'Vocabulary of Elisabethville' by André Yav: Text, translations, and interpretive essay. By JOHANNES FABIAN. (Creole language library, 7.) Amsterdam & Philadelphia: Benjamins. 1990. Pp. 236.

The 'Vocabulary of Elisabethville' was a mimeographed history of what is now the city of Lubumbashi, Zaire, written in Swahili in 1965

by an unknown semiliterate Lunda speaker named André Yav. In the book this 35-page document is reproduced in facsimile (11–32), followed by a chapter of 'Linguistic notes' by WALTER SCHICHO (33–54), then a retranscription and English translation by Fabian (57–158), and finally an ethnographic interpretation, 'Thoughts against suffering' (161–227), also by F.

F's incisive descriptions of the structural and lexemic features of the text provide valuable insights into the semantics of Shaba Swahili. His discovery of a distinction between two words for 'knowledge' (*elimu* referring to whites and *malifa* referring to Africans), his recognition of naming as one of colonists' ways of taking possession of places, and his identification of oral timing structures in the narrative syncopation of events are only a few of his many contributions to our understanding of Shaba Swahili cognitive structures. He also points the way to further studies of this text; in particular, the system of nicknames given by Africans to the white colonists will be a rich vein to explore.

The principal linguistic objection is that the original—an authentic Shaba Swahili document full of alternations in spelling and word segmentation that represent well-known variations in the spoken language—has been drastically altered. In order to count items with a word processor, F had to make the orthography uniform, so that each lexeme would be represented as a consistent graphic form. Unfortunately, this artifactual distortion is presented as the 'Shaba Swahili version', creating the false impression that it represents current usage. It would have been more accurate, and much less misleading, to retain the actual text, perhaps with an interlinear translation into East Coast Swahili for purposes of comparison and easy dictionary reference. Readers should rely on the facsimile, which represents Yav's language, and ignore F's version, which represents no language at all.

What the normalized retranscription obscures is the essential fact that Shaba Swahili has many nonnative varieties associated with different ethnic groups, notably the Kasai Luba, the Hemba and Masanga of North Shaba, the groups from Kindu, the Bemba, and the Lunda. In addition, it has many young urban native speakers, whose usage is the only one that should be called 'creole'. The Lunda Swahili in this book is a pidgin, or nonnative variety. The differences between pidgin Swahili and the new creole type will constitute an important labo-

ratory for the theory of creolization, and the terms must be kept distinct.

F is eloquent on the undesirability of reification of abstract social-science concepts and on the colonial appropriation of Swahili by Europeans. He is also conscious of the deeply ironic viewpoint of Yav's history from below. Ethnographic honesty would recognize the further irony of his taking Yav's document to Amsterdam, rewriting it into an artificially uniform variety, and then basing his interpretation on that rather than on the original. André Yav wrote a history from below; F gives us a post-colonial ethnographic revision—language appropriated and reinterpreted once again from above and from the outside. [CHARLES GILMAN, *Missoula, MT.*]

Current progress in Chadic linguistics.

Ed. by ZYGMUNT FRAJZYNGIER.
(Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 62.) Amsterdam & Philadelphia: Benjamins, 1989. Pp. 311.

This volume includes fifteen papers (counting the editor's introduction) from the International Symposium on Chadic Linguistics held at Boulder, Colorado, May 1–2, 1987. All but three (those by Garba, Caron, and Baldi) were actually read at the meeting, and the only presented paper that was omitted is a report on a comparative Hausa dictionary by Neil Skinner. There are three brief indices (304–11) of Topics, Languages and dialects, and Names (excluding self-references).

As Frajzyngier points out in his 'Introduction' (1–7), the 140 or so Chadic Languages, comprising the largest branch of the Afrasian (= Afroasiatic) phylum, are still poorly described—only 40 with full grammars and only one (Hausa) with really adequate materials. Six of the papers in the book are on syntax (three in the Government-Binding framework), three on phonology, three on morphology, two on comparative/historical issues, and one on loanwords. Most of the authors consider more than one language, but, as is to be expected, Hausa is most prominent. This is a good collection and a valuable contribution to Chadic and Afrasian studies. The editing is fair: occasional non-idiomatic-English lapses, typos, and inadequate references occur.

LAURICE TULLER ('Variation in focus con-

structions', 9–33) and B. J. JOHNSON ('Case assignment in Hausa, Kanakuru, and Ngizim', 35–54) apply GB theory to Case and Focus. Tuller suggests that INFL is a focus assigner and lists five types of focus constructions in five languages (four West and one central Chadic); while Johnson, basing her analysis on West Chadic, rejects the Case-filter and proposes that forms surface Case-free. The third GB paper, by REJEAN CANAC MARQUIS ('Word orders in Gude and the VSO parameter', 55–86), reviews attempts to account for SVO/VSO alternation in Gude of the Biu-Mandara Group, finds them wanting, and presents an analysis using the notion of 'propositional government' which is claimed to account neatly for all the phenomena. KEMP WILLIAMS, in 'An alternative model of word order in Proto-Chadic' (111–120), also deals with SVO/VSO alternations. In contrast to Frajzyngier, who has analyzed Proto-Chadic as VSO, Williams argues for Proto-Chadic VS in intransitive constructions and SVO in transitive constructions.

GERRIT DIMMENDAAL ('Complementizers in Hausa', 87–110) surveys Hausa complements in terms of the nature of matrix verbs, subordinate structure, and complementizer properties. He concludes *inter alia* that complementizers DO add meaning to Hausa propositions, i.e. that semantics is vital in this area, and that perhaps this could be extended to other languages. M. M. GARBA ('A new look at the NP + NĀĀ + NP constructions', 121–29) argues in an early TG framework that *nāa* is a tense/aspect marker in a verbal sentence with an underlying verb *nān* which is optionally surface-deleted; earlier analyses argued for *nāa* as preposition, verb, tense or aspect marker.

Morphology papers include BERNARD CARON's 'The verbal system of Ader Hausa' (131–69), which breaks new ground and provides important documentation in Hausa dialectology. RUSSELL SCHUH's 'Gender and number in Miya' (171–81) deals with a West Chadic language, with brief comparative notes on Chadic in general. In Miya, [+animate] nouns are naturally gender-marked in the singular and neutralized in the plural, while [–animate] nouns are governed lexically. VÉRONIQUE DE COLUMBEL ('Origine de l'extension verbale (ə)r(ə) instrumental et connecteur, en Ouldémé, synchronie dynamique et diachronie', 183–97) exemplifies the derivational marker in question, outlines its diachronic development according to a three-stage model,