Linguistic universals and language variation (review)

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a slight advantage in skills associated with inhibitory control for elderly bilinguals. In sum, the contributions in Part 4 consider different issues in the broad field of bilingualism from four different perspectives: L2 phonological development, early bilingualism, learning strategies in a third language, and language processing by bilinguals.

This volume is the result of a strict selection of submissions based on presentations at a conference. The selection reflects the broad range of theories and methodologies used in research on language learning. This makes the volume particularly interesting for graduate students and scholars in the different areas related to language learning. Another strong point of the volume is the general high quality of the contributions. The origin of this book also has some shortcomings. Its broad scope can be of interest to many readers, but it does not provide the expected focus on implicit/explicit learning. Some of the chapters address this issue, which was the conference theme, but others are only very indirectly related to it. By contrast, the allocation of chapters to the four different parts does not fit very well because there is a lot of overlap between the different parts. In fact, the specific aims of each of the parts are not given. Part 1 is no more focused on theory than other parts of the volume even if it is called 'Theory'. Another problem can be seen with the allocation of Ch. 14, which is in Part 4 but mentioned as being in Part 3 in the introduction written by the editors. In general terms, all of the chapters are well written although sometimes too many acronyms are used. In a strict sense, this volume cannot be regarded as a specialized volume on implicit/explicit learning, but it is a very important contribution to the fields of second language acquisition and bilingualism because its excellent collection of chapters reflects different research approaches and theories.

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Linguistic universals and language variation. Ed. by PETER SIEMUND. (Trends in linguistics: Studies and monographs 231.) Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011. Pp. viii, 472. ISBN 9783110238051. $140 (Hb).

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This volume is a collection of thirteen papers by twenty-one scholars on topics broadly related to linguistic universals and language variation, plus an easily accessible synopsis by the editor Peter Siemund. Some of the papers were first presented at the workshop of the same title held in 2007 at the University of Hamburg's Research Centre on Multilingualism. The thirteen contributions are organized thematically into four sections: Part 1, 'Varieties and cross-linguistic variation'; Part 2, 'Contact-induced variation'; Part 3, 'Methodological issues of variation research'; and Part 4, 'Variation and linguistic theory'. As the sectional titles suggest, the book is heavy on language variation and light on linguistic universals.

Part 1 consists of four papers that investigate the variability of selected morphosyntactic features. HOLGER DIESSEL and KATJA HETTERLE ('Causal clauses: A cross-linguistic investigation of their structure, meaning, and use') examine the positioning of the causal clause in some sixty genetically unrelated languages, and find that it follows the main clause (exclusively) in 45% of the languages. The temporal and conditional clauses, by contrast, score a mere 1.7%. So the causal clause stands out among the adverbial clauses. MICHELE LOPORCARO ('Two euroversals in a global perspective: Auxiliation and alignment') studies the variation of perfective auxiliation and accusative alignment in Romance languages. Adducing both synchronic and diachronic data, Loporcaro shows that the selection of 'have' or 'be' to mark the perfective is not neatly in line with accusative marking. TANJA KUPISCH and ESTHER RINKE ('The diachronic development of article-

possessor complementarity in the history of Italian and Portuguese') report that modern Italian and Portuguese, unlike English, require that the possessive pronouns be preceded by articles (Italian *il mio libro* vs. English **the my book*). They show that the two languages exhibit variation in the diachronic development of the possessive noun phrase since the thirteenth century. While Old Italian is not much different from modern Italian, Old Portuguese allows 'bare' possessives, suggesting variable paces in the spread of the article-possessive structure. The contribution by SALI A. TAGLIAMONTE ('Variation as a window on universals') is an extensive and detailed study of default agreement in English (*they*/*he was*) in terms of the feature's geographic spread in Britain and Canada, as well as the morphosyntactic or communicative contexts in which it is used. The variation is enormous. For example, the incidence of use in existential contexts (*there was ...*) varies from 30.2% in Toronto to as high as 95.7% in a small English town. For Tagliamonte, default agreement is a universal in the sense that it is widely attested in English dialects, despite the variability in usage pattern. Its status as a universal is an effect of the interaction of universal constraints.

Variation, of course, can be caused by language contact, which is the theme of the two papers in Part 2. HANS-OLAV ENGER ('Gender and contact: A natural morphology perspective on Scandinavian examples') studies gender marking in Norwegian. The modern Bergen dialect has a two-way system of marking grammatical gender, in contrast to the three-way marking of Old Norse and almost all other modern regional dialects of Norwegian. Enger attributes the reduction in gender marking to language contact in Bergen, which was a major commercial center in the Hanseatic League (ca. thirteenth century). The reduction of the Old Norse gender system is interpreted as evidence in favor of contact-induced simplification. No contact-specific evidence, however, is provided. YARON MATRAS ('Universals of structural borrowing') surveys the literature on structural borrowing and proposes various hierarchies that govern the likelihood of grammatical structures being borrowed in a contact situation: the higher a form is on the hierarchy, the more likely it is to be borrowed. So, derivational affixes outrank inflectional affixes, and the possessive construction outranks the attributive construction, and so on. For Matras, the hierarchies encode universals that govern structural borrowing. This notion of universal is different from the way the term is used by other scholars represented in the volume.

Part 3 starts with the contribution by WALTER BISANG ('Variation and reproducibility in linguistics'), which is a Popperian reflection on the reproducibility of evidence, and the falsifiability of generalizations, in linguistic theory in general and in variationist theory in particular. Although what counts as linguistic evidence is not theory-neutral, Bisang insists that the same factors governing form-function mapping and social interaction be brought to bear on the falsifiability of linguistic theories, formal or functional. Since the functional and social factors that influence speaker behavior are unknown or unknowable—for example, the contexts in which data are elicited from intuition or from communicative acts—Bisang concludes that reproducibility is problematic for all sorts of data, whether collected through intuition, corpus, or usage. The remaining two papers in Part 3 deal with the so-called angloversals, vernacular universals commonly found among vernacular varieties of English (Chambers 2003, Filppula et al. 2009), including native varieties of English (L1), new Englishes spoken in former British colonies such as India and Singapore (L2), and English-based pidgins and creoles. The latter two types exhibit varying degrees of contact-induced grammatical restructuring. Angloversals, however, are not universal in the sense that they are shared by all (or most) speakers of all (or most) vernacular varieties of English. Copula deletion (*She smart*) is identified as an angloversal, but its use is highly variable even in contact varieties that allow it. BERND KORTMANN and BENEDIKT SZMRECSANYI ('Parameters of morphosyntactic variation in World Englishes: Prospects and limitations of searching for universals') examine the notion of vernacular universal, the narrower notion of angloversal, and the controversy surrounding them. For them, angloversals are features that are widely attested among the vernacular varieties of English and are not restricted to a single variety type (for example, New Englishes or pidgins and creoles). These features exhibit variation across English varieties. In addition to individual features, Kortmann and Szmrecsanyi show that languages vary in terms of feature clusters as well. Two cluster-based metrics, the syntheticity index

and the analyticity index, are discussed in detail. These metrics measure the text frequencies of bound and free grammatical morphemes, respectively, in the texts from selected corpora. We learn that Hong Kong English, an L2 variety, scores rather poorly in the two measures. This is expected. Some results are surprising, however. Singapore English, another L2 variety, outscores American English in both analyticity and syntheticity. One would expect Singapore English to pattern with Hong Kong English and occupy the low end of at least the syntheticity scale, given the fact that Singapore English does not consistently use the typical English inflectional suffixes in daily interaction, a phenomenon common among nonnative varieties of English. Caution is needed when interpreting corpus-based quantitative results.

Computerized corpora also serve as the source of data for the contribution by JULIA DAVYDOVA, MICHAELA HILBERT, LUKAS PIETSCH, and PETER SIEMUND ('Comparing varieties of English: Problems and perspectives'); two corpora, the International Corpus of English and the Hamburg Corpus of Irish English, provide crucial data for the authors' analysis of variation among both native and nonnative varieties of English. They discuss two main types of variables—the typological hierarchies (mainly, the animacy hierarchy) and morphosyntactic features, such as the perfect and subject-auxiliary inversion. Cross-dialectal variation is investigated only with respect to the latter type. The authors compare the usage patterns of the selected morphosyntactic features not only across native dialects of English, but also along the basilect-mesolect-acrolect cline of nonnative L2 varieties. Thus, acrolectal Indian English is similar to Standard English in the usage pattern of the perfect. For students of contact phenomena, this is a rather uneventful result, because the cline is defined with respect to Standard English. Subject-auxiliary inversion in embedded interrogatives exhibits interesting variation across L2 varieties, including Indian, Singaporean, and Irish Englishes. In Irish English, there is also regional variation in the usage of the embedded inversion. It is not common in Ulster, and becomes more common the further south-westerly away from Ulster. This pattern is attributed to the extensive language shift the area experienced in the nineteenth century. So the embedded inversion in Irish English can be explained in terms of the extent and length of language contact. The work raises interesting questions about the very notions of vernacular universal and angloversal. The similarities in structure and variability displayed by certain morphosyntactic features across varieties may be caused by different mechanisms. There is nothing vernacular or universal about the similarities, or the differences, for that matter. One may add that if the variation of a putative angloversal emerges through language contact, there is perhaps nothing 'anglo' about it in a nontrivial sense.

The four papers that comprise Part 4 attempt to model language variation within current linguistic theories. In this sense, they depart from the concerns of the first three parts. KRISTIN MELUM EIDE and HILDE SOLLID ('Norwegian main clause declaratives: Variation within and across grammars') study the structure of the main declarative clause in Norwegian, which is SVO with the verb-second (V2) requirement that is common among Germanic languages. But the V2-rule is not absolute; a good 17% of the declaratives in their corpus of Tromsø and Oslo dialects have the main verb in the initial or third positions. Eide and Sollid propose a co-grammar solution to the V2 problem: speakers have a multiplicity of grammars, each nonvariant and with its own verb placement. Grammar remains monolithic. The contribution by GUIDO MENSCHING and EVA-MARIA REMBERGER ('Syntactic variation and change in Romance: A minimalist approach') is part of a bigger research project on Romance syntax undertaken at the authors' home institutions. Mensching and Remberger propose a set of formal parameters, expressed in the minimalist framework, to account for syntactic variation and change in Romance languages.

The paper by BRIAN D. JOSEPH ('A localistic approach to universals and variation') is programmatic in tone. Joseph advocates a functional and cognitive view of universals, and a diachronic view of how they emerge. Universals are generalizations over linguistic changes that speakers start in local environments, both structural and communicative, and later extend to broader environments or domains. Variation emerges when the diffusion process misses a few domains. Joseph's account of linguistic universals does not make a compelling case for a functional view of (synchronic) universals. The functional and/or cognitive explanation must be sought in the historical process of linguistic change.

Equally programmatic is the contribution by FRANS HINSKENS ('Lexicon, phonology and phonetics. Or: Rule-based and usage-based approaches to phonological variation'), which is the only one on phonological variation in the volume. (There appear to be minor typesetting problems with phonetic symbols.) In spoken Dutch, unstressed vowels are reduced or deleted. The reduction or deletion, however, is not absolute. Hinskens combs through a corpus of recordings of actual Dutch speech and uses statistical methods to determine the probabilities of the formal and registral factors that influence the vowel alternation. He brings the data to bear on the current debate between rule-based phonological theories, which include optimality theory, and usage-based theories (Bybee 2001). No attempt is made to show how the competing theories account for the probabilistic nature of the reduction or deletion phenomena. The theoretical engagement is programmatic in nature.

Despite the title, the contributions that comprise this volume are concerned mainly with language variation. When linguistic universals are discussed, they are of the functionalist-inductive type in Siemund's classification, and serve as a backdrop to the analyses of cross-language and/or cross-dialect variation. As for variation, we can identify three general types, involving, respectively, individual morphosyntactic features (e.g. perfective auxiliation in Romance and copula deletion in Englishes), feature clusters (e.g. analyticity and syntheticity), and constraint hierarchies (e.g. animacy and borrowability hierarchies). Siemund has done an admirable job in putting together this volume, which is a compendium of state-of-the-art summaries of the current scholarship in variationist studies. It is of immense interest to people who are interested in dialectology, variationist sociolinguistics, World Englishes, language typology, and general linguistic theory.

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Events, phrases, and questions. By ROB TRUSWELL. (Oxford studies in theoretical linguistics.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xi, 288. ISBN 9780199577781. $45.

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In this book, Robert Truswell takes a novel perspective on the long-standing issue that extraction is more restricted out of adjuncts than out of weak islands, yet is not entirely impossible (in contrast to strong islands), by taking into account not just narrow syntax but also the role adjuncts play in event structure. He proposes that adjuncts are weak islands, with extraction being further restricted by the single event grouping condition (SEGC).

(1) SINGLE EVENT GROUPING CONDITION: An instance of WH-movement is legitimate only if the minimal constituent containing the head and the foot of the chain can be construed as describing a single event grouping. (157, ex. 64)

An event grouping is defined as a set of (core or extended) events, the subevents of which necessarily spatiotemporally overlap and where at most one (maximal) event is agentive. Given that