The volume under review is a collection of papers on morphosyntactic variation and change in settings involving language contact. The editors pursue three main goals, namely, first, to provide a set of linguistic data never discussed before; second, to adopt a cross-linguistic and cross-dialectal perspective; and third, to show that a holistic approach to Contact-Induced Language Change (henceforth CILC) is preferable to approaches focusing only on either linguistic or social factors (p. 13). Thus, the general aim of the volume is to elucidate the facts of language change from a multi-faceted and dynamic perspective.

While the intended cross-linguistic orientation of the volume is quite well reflected in the variety of languages discussed, the geo-linguistic sample is rather imbalanced, with Latin America and Europe being visibly overrepresented. This, however, is not a deficiency since the volume’s orientation is not quantitative in nature, but explicitly qualitative, with its interest in developing a meticulous discussion of contact-induced phenomena—individually pursued by each article—along the lines of three main thrusts of interest of current research on CILC. These are (1) the role of multilingual speakers and settings; (2) the continuum between phenomena of CILC and phenomena ascribable to language decay; and (3) the interplay of externally and internally motivated language change.

The book includes thirteen articles (1–375), an author index (377–383), a language index (384–389), and a subject index (390–393). Following the editors’ introductory article, the volume is opened up by Yaron Matras, who ably summarizes the activity-oriented approach to CILC that he has been developing since the late 1990s, based on the understanding of language as the practice of communicative interaction, organized at the level of discourse, rather than in terms of a system. Accordingly, Matras claims that contact phenomena “are the product of language-processing in goal-oriented communicative interaction” (p. 22) and enable, rather than interfere with, communicative activity. The multilingual speaker—he claims—has a more complex repertoire of communicative structures than the monolingual speaker, and s/he is keen to exploit it in its entirety; on the other hand, s/he is required to select the options that are contextually appropriate and to discard those that are not, on the basis of a ‘selection and inhibition mechanism’. However, especially in situations of distress, fatigue, or confusion, the monitoring procedure may fail to work properly, resulting in ‘selection malfunctions’. Selection malfunctions
determine non-conscious innovations, which, after frequent occurrence, may become stabilized, first at the idiolectal level, and later, propagate among a group of individuals via pattern-replication. Selection malfunctions and pattern-replication are the first two steps of a continuum of contact-induced creativity and innovation, which also embraces the more conscious steps of lexical insertion and deliberate language manipulation. While Matras provides an elegant overview of his approach to language contact, enriched chiefly by data on both bilingual speakers and minority languages, such as Domari, from his own fieldwork, the external (psycholinguistic and experimental) evidence on which his claims are founded remains undisclosed.

In the second paper, Claudine Chamoreau presents an instance of CILC in the domain of comparative constructions of superiority found in Purepecha, an endangered language isolate spoken in Mexico. Based on novel data from her own fieldwork, Chamoreau details the four main types of comparative constructions in Purepecha: the particle type; the particle type with locative phrase; the mixed coordination and particle type; and the applicative type. By comparing them with comparative constructions both in the pre-contact recipient language, Lengua de Michoacan, and in the contact language Spanish, with which Purepecha has stood in contact for nearly five centuries, Chamoreau convincingly demonstrates that one subtype of the ‘particle type with locative phrase’ constitutes an innovation. It consists of the degree marker \textit{mas} (Spanish \textit{más}) and the relator \textit{que}, followed by the Spanish-borrowed \textit{entre}, as in (1) (p. 68):

(1) \begin{tabular}{l}
Pedro & \textit{mas} & sesi-e-s-ti & \textit{ke} & \textit{entre} & Xwanu \\
Pedro more & good-PRED-AOR-ASS & than & between & Xwanu \\
Pedro is better than Xwanu
\end{tabular}

As a matter of fact, this construction deviates from both the comparative patterns in Spanish and the use of \textit{entre} in Spanish as a locative preposition meaning ‘between’. Chamoreau links this instance of creative borrowing with a cross-linguistic tendency “to connect comparison with location and to express comparison through the locative type” (p. 70), a hypothesis which seems pertinent and whose investigation is worth being pursued in more detail in separate publications.

In the ensuing article, Alexandra Aikhenvald investigates various aspects of language obsolescence relating to language contact. Presenting data on globally obsolescent languages, largely drawn from her own fieldwork on Manambu, Tariana, and Bare, but also covering Mawayana, Resígaro, and other languages, Aikhenvald masterfully shows that in qualitative terms, “the effects [of obsolescence] are the same as may have occurred in language contact of a
non-replacive nature” (p. 82), and that the difference is a question of size: language obsolescence determines an increase both in the quantity and in the speed of the change, even in contexts of traditional inhibition against borrowing, such as in Tariana, an Arawak language spoken in the Vaupés basin between Brazil and Colombia, which, due to the pervasive influx of non-native forms and to massive restructuring, has been becoming a ‘carbon copy’ of the dominant surrounding Tucano.

Ana Fernández Garay illustrates the case of Tehuelche, a language belonging to the Chon family, which has been spoken in southern Argentina and nowadays is only known to a few ‘rememberers'. At the time of its description in the 1980s, the language was almost extinct (p. 115) and had purportedly undergone a syntactic change from an ergative-absolutive towards a marked-nominative system. The author deems that this shift was stimulated by the co-existence of the ergative-absolutive alignment system, with the nominative-accusative one of both Mapudungun (Araucanian) in the area, and Spanish in Patagonia. Based on internal comparative reconstruction with the cognate Selknam, Fernández Garay cautiously ponders two possible explanations. She considers, on the one hand, the hypothesis of an internal, spontaneous change (realignment due to the extension of the use of an adposition realizing the agent-like argument, to marking the S argument, too); on the other hand, the hypothesis of a contact-induced convergence towards the structures of Mapudungun, due to the at least four centuries of language contact. The article is well informed and backed by a sound line of argumentation, but it is not easy reading, especially for non-experts in the Patagonian linguistic area. Also, in the absence of actual data, the Araucanization hypothesis is condemned to remain purely speculative.

The following article, by Bernd Heine, is the first of a group of papers which study language contact with the lens of grammaticalization theory. Heine discusses changes in (definite and indefinite) articles, possessive perfects, and the auxiliation of ‘threaten’-verbs, in a range of European languages. These changes—he claims—have led to new patterns of areal relationship. Declaredly, the main concern of the article is with grammatical replication. In fact, however, the line of explanation of the purported replication phenomena mainly rests on the paths of grammaticalization, as developed in previous work by the author (e.g. Heine, 1997; Heine & Kuteva, 2006). While all evidence available to the author supports the hypothesis of ordinary grammaticalization (p. 156), the replication of patterns triggered by language contact is merely an *argumentum e silentio*. Moreover, the issue of polysemy copying, which is included in the title as the first topic to be addressed, is not only peripheral, but also shown not to be covered by any of the cases discussed in the paper
(p. 157). For these reasons, and also because the discussion is chiefly based on data and analyses already published (mostly, in Heine & Kuteva 2006), this paper seems to be misplaced for the purposes of the present volume.

Still, Heine’s seminal work on grammaticalization in previous publications has paved the way for works that combine the theory on the evolution of grammar with phenomena relating to language contact in a meaningful way. This is the case of Stolz’s sober and solid chapter on indefinite articles in Chamorro, an Austronesian language spoken on the Mariana Islands, which stood in intensive contact with Spanish for more than three centuries. Intelligently, Stolz chooses to deal with a case of mat-borrowing (in the fortunate terminology by Sakel, 2007) (p. 127), since this permits identification of the role of contact in language change more clearly than instances of pat-borrowing would (p. 174), and demonstrates that Chamorro borrowed from Spanish the form un and has, then, started “the grammaticalization process all over again, instead of accepting the Spanish progress on the grammaticalization scale as a fact” (p. 189).

The next paper, by Patience Epps, is devoted to Hup, a language of the Nadahup family of the Vaupés region. Analyzing field-collected data, Epps showcases the form ni, which serves a variety of functions, ranging from a typically lexical function, as a verb meaning ‘be, exist’, to a relatively grammatical one, as a verbalizer and, crucially, shows that it occurs in all the Vaupés languages. Though a bit diffuse, Epps’ paper succeeds in shedding light on a quite intricate matter, showing that all functions of the Hup ni are the result of an areal strategy. The fact that this areal spread occurred despite the speakers’ negative attitude towards borrowing and mixing is intriguing, since a negative attitude is usually considered a factor impeding, rather than favoring, borrowing from another language. Still, as Epps ably argues, in a situation like that of the Vaupés region, in which widespread bilingualism is promoted, but at the same time, attitudes towards language mixing are restrictive, it can happen that linguistic elements which are recognized as foreign are avoided, while elements which are less clearly recognizable as foreign may slip under the radar (p. 224).

Julen Manterola’s article explicitly aims to criticize some previous claims about the Basque definite and indefinite articles, -a and bat, in particular those made by Haase (1992) and Heine & Kuteva (2005, 2006). In short, Manterola stresses the necessity of considering a larger amount of data, including both historical data and dialectal variation, and to study the article in Basque from a diachronic perspective. While the critiques raised by Manterola seem reasonable and his intent to set things in the right light is appreciable, the author does not provide any original contribution himself, and his view boils down to mere guesswork (see pp. 258–259). Instead of insisting on flagging the flaws of other scholars, Manterola should have sought to provide
evidence for his own ideas, some of which are intriguing indeed. In particular, the idea that the extension of the definite article, viz. sg -a and pl -az, may have followed the Romance model of overtly realizing the number values (p. 240) is definitely worth elaborating on. Also, this article is plagued both by an excess of block quotations and by a style which does not conform to international standards of academic writing in English.

Sibylle Kriegel is concerned with two phenomena occurring in the French-based Mauritian Creole and Seychelles Creole, respectively. In Mauritian Creole, the function word depi not only has a temporal use just as its French etymon depuis, ‘after’, but can also encode the value of ablative and sometimes of allative. Since these generalizations are deviant from both French and the Creole variety spoken by persons with no Indo-Mauritian background, the author perpendiculars the hypothesis that the polyvalence of depi has been induced by the polyvalent postposition se of Bhojpuri, an Indian language which has been in contact with Mauritian Creole since the introduction of indentured laborers from the Indian subcontinent in the 19th century. However, while the author may have the right intuition about the Mauritian Creole facts, only the ablative use is supported by actual data (p. 276). For the second case she treats, Kriegel provides a more solid line of argumentation and a sound documentation. She shows that in Seychelles Creole, the form pourdir displays besides a modalizing function, a main function as complementizer—again, a fact that cannot be explained through its original usage in French—and convincingly argues that this use of pourdir has been PAT-borrowed from Bantu languages, such as Swahili, which was spoken by the late 19th-century immigrants to the Seychelles.

Zarina Estrada-Fernández traces the emergence of modal auxiliary verbs in Pima Bajo, an Uto-Aztecan language spoken in northern Mexico, in order to understand why bare modal auxiliary verbs are only attested in languages which were in contact with Spanish (for three hundred years). The author contrasts an internal hypothesis, surveying Wackernagel clitics and verbal complements in a range of Uto-Aztecan languages including Nevome (an extinct variety of Pima Bajo), with a contact hypothesis, based on the influence of Spanish. She cautiously concludes that the contact hypothesis seems more plausible, but needs to be verified against a larger body of data, which is not available yet.

Anthony Grant examines the presence of borrowed conjunctions, such as BUT, UNTIL, and phasal adverbs, such as ALREADY, STILL, in a sample of 22 languages. All languages have a long contact history varying from approximately three centuries (English with Norse) up to a millennium (Tsat with local varieties of Chinese). Grant observes that his data do not allow for establishing perfect implicational hierarchies of contact-induced syntactic change, with one interesting exception: “If a language has borrowed a coordinating conjunction
it will (almost certainly) have borrowed at least one subordinating conjunction or dependent clause marker as well” (p. 350). The paper is sound, informed, easily readable, and, thanks to the detailed explanation of the methodological procedure adopted to establish the corpus, also useful for practical purposes.

The last paper in the volume is Carla Bruno’s analysis of a possible case of convergence between Latin and Greek with respect to possessive perfect constructions of the type Latin *habemus parta (bona)* ‘we have obtained goods’ and Greek *échō gramméno* (*to grámma*) ‘I have written (the letter)’. The author pursues the hypothesis that Greek may have replicated the Latin model, but *de facto* discards it in the end (see p. 371). Unfortunately, the fact that “the presence of a complex participial system [in Greek] has continuously interfered with attempts to systematize the opposition between *eimí* and *échō* in auxiliating participles” (p. 371) is not even envisaged as a possible alternative explanation, although it is a reasonable hypothesis. Also this article, although an undoubtedly well-informed and interesting contribution to syntactic change, does not truly deal with contact-induced change, and thus is not within the very scope of the present volume.

With the coverage outlined thus far, the majority of the papers collected in this volume adhere to the goals pursued by the editors, and the volume is a welcome addition to the De Gruyter Mouton book series *Language Contact and Bilingualism*, with its focus on acquisition-oriented aspects of multilingualism, borrowing, contact languages, pidgins and creoles, convergence, linguistic areas, and language shift.

Nonetheless, I have to voice some critical remarks. First and foremost, internal cross-referencing is completely missing in the volume. Even when the phenomena analyzed and the theories used by some contributors have been authored, and further developed in this volume, by fellow-authors, no reference to the fellow-contributions is provided. By way of example, while Heine’s work is the theoretical foundation underlying many of the papers published in the volume, Heine’s fellow-contribution is never referred to therein. Of course, this is only partially the authors’, and mainly the editors’ responsibility, and the summarizing introductory paper by the editors cannot repair this flaw. In fact, the richness in topics would have allowed for a high degree of cohesion and justified a more adequate coverage of subjects in the subject index, via the inclusion of important entries, such as antipassive, loanblend, heritage language, purism, stripping, Wackernagel particle, to mention just a few.

The editing is generally careful, but could be improved, as pointed out in what follows. The abbreviations of the glosses are missing both in Kriegel’s and in Bruno’s article; to be sure, Bruno adopts the Leipzig Glossing Rules, but does not hyphenize the forms quoted. In some papers (e.g. Chamoreau’s), only the surnames of authors of personal communications are mentioned, which is not
good practice. Kriegel orders the references of a single author from new to old, as opposed to the practice followed in the remainder of the volume. Embarrassingly, Heine has 76 unquoted entries in his reference list, while four are not included, for example, Sankoff (2001) (but probably Sankoff, 2002). Moreover, in some chapters, a map would help the reader through complex geo- and socio-linguistic descriptions, for example, on p. 112, in Fernández Garay’s contribution on Tehuelche.

As a final critical note, I wish to point to the wrong use of the term pair ‘diachronic’ and ‘synchronic’ in the contributions by Manterola and Kriegel: historical synchronic data are not diachronic, and a synchronic point of view does not necessarily refer to the present state of a language.

In conclusion, the volume includes both high-quality scholarly papers, among which the chapters authored by Aikhenvald, Chamoreau, and Stolz rank high, and a few less felicitous analyses. Its strength derives from the fact that most contributions are based on original field-work research, which is most welcome in contact linguistics. The book is well situated in the current international trends of research in language contact, richly informed, in terms both of the types of change discussed and of data tokens, and insightful. It is a reading which I highly recommend.

References


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