Language attrition (review)

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the conclusion that, for him, promotion involves movement of the 'head' of the relative into SpecCP followed by (not obviously triggerable) adjunction of the 'head' to the CP. In this structure, it is the lower CP segment that he takes to be extraposed, thereby flouting a central tenet of the segment/category distinction (viz. that segments cannot be syntactically manipulated), which he exploits elsewhere in the book. It would be worth one's while to explore the prospects of tweaking the structure of 'promotion' clefts in 1b to make it compatible with a more mainstream small-clause analysis of copular sentences.

Preserving the good results of R's carefully crafted analysis while avoiding its pitfalls should set the agenda for future work. R's book has given us a great deal to think about in the world of clefts and specificational sentences.

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Language attrition. By MONIKA S. SCHMID. (Key topics in sociolinguistics.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xviii, 277. ISBN 9780521759939. $39.99.

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The study of language attrition is currently entering its fourth decade. The development that this field of research has witnessed since the early 1980s is, however, not straightforwardly described as exponential or incremental. While the early years were characterized by groundbreaking investigations, there were also diverging research foci and isolation between studies. This state of affairs diverted attention and resources from the pursuit of a research agenda with common ground. The past decade, however, has seen a remarkable surge in attrition research, and Monika S. Schmid's book is highly representative of this development. In fact, S herself has

played an instrumental role in the advancement of the field, both as an editor of several volumes and special issues, and as a prolific researcher and synergist.

The book is an introduction to the study of first language (henceforth L1) attrition and a research manual. People who are about to embark on an attrition research project will doubtless find this book very useful. However, the readership is not circumscribed to novice researchers: the book's five main sections contain novel conceptual and methodological work that is of great importance to anyone working in the exciting field of language attrition and/or related areas.

Part 1 outlines the linguistic aspects of attrition: that is to say, it describes the way in which the language system may undergo attrition. After a general opening in which the basic terminology is outlined, the reader is introduced to the phenomenon of crosslinguistic influence (here the focus is of course on how the L1 is affected by the second language, that is, the L2). Here, S presents a taxonomy to characterize different types of crosslinguistic influence: BORROWING, whereby elements from the L2 are (temporarily) integrated into the L1; CONVERGENCE, whereby an element is used in the L1 in a way that is distinct from both the L1 and the L2; RESTRUCTURING, whereby L1 elements are reanalyzed on the basis of their L2 counterparts; SHIFT, which is similar to restructuring, with the exception that the L1 element is now completely remodeled on the L2; and finally ATTRITION, here defined as the complete loss of an L1 element, both productively and receptively. This taxonomy was originally introduced by Pavlenko (2004) in an attempt to problematize and refine the deviating instances in attriters' speech that have often just been conveniently labeled 'attrition'. Given that this classification has not received a great deal of attention among attrition researchers so far, it is significant that S has chosen to give it such prominence, illustrating with authentic data how the different processes are manifested across the domains of lexis, syntax, morphology, and phonetics. The fact that Pavlenko's taxonomy is given this recognition points to a need for attrition research to avail itself of more fine-grained conceptual tools in order to ferret out the internal (L1) and external (L2) mechanisms that govern the nature and selectivity of the attrition process.

Part 2 deals with so-called extralinguistic aspects of attrition, that is, independent variables that influence the extent to which a language may undergo attrition. S arranges these variables into three main sets: first, there are personal background variables, including age of onset of attrition and length of residence in the L2 environment; second, there is the variable of L1 input and output (sometimes called L1 contact or L1 use); and third, there is the set of attitudinal and emotional variables, including motivation to maintain the L1 and the role of L1 in identity construction. S's choice to treat L1 use as a variable distinct from the other two sets is unusual, since many times this variable is lumped together with the variables in one of the other two sets. It is, nonetheless, a well-motivated choice. The variable of language use has had a somewhat Janus-faced status in attrition research: on the one hand, it has been assumed that without any reduction in L1 contact, it is unlikely that there will be much attrition at all (cf. Andersen 1982), and on the other, the empirical studies examining the role of L1 use for L1 maintenance have yielded inconclusive—in some cases even contradictory—results. S points out that the root of this discrepancy lies in part in the elusive definition (and subsequent operationalization) of the notion of language use. She consequently pins down the language use variable into three main components: interactive language use (spoken and written communication with others), noninteractive exposure (reading, media), and inner language (thought, dreams, diary writing, arithmetics). These components are then further broken down and extended with other notions or accounts, such as bilingual language mode (Grosjean 2001) and social network theory (Milroy 1987). In this regard, S offers an extensive and novel treatment of the language use factor in attrition. Her fine-grained approach has without a doubt great potential in propelling forward research on the relationship between language use and language retention.

Whereas Parts 1 and 2 of the book concern the phenomenon of language attrition per se, the remainder deals with practical-methodological aspects of the study of attrition. Part 3 addresses some vital aspects of study design that should be taken into consideration in setting up an empirical investigation on attrition. These aspects include participant characteristics (e.g. experimental group, control group, sample sizes) and type of linguistic knowledge to be tested (e.g. implicit vs. explicit knowledge, receptive vs. productive skills, oral vs. written modalities). Some of the

points made in this section may seem trivial (in the preface, S is even apologetic about this), but they nonetheless fill an important function in, first, showcasing the methodological standards of the field, and second, providing researchers with a guide for their selection of linguistic domains and features to be examined. The second point is particularly important as it may inspire studies to explore new aspects of attrition rather than targeting features that are either overrepresented in research or known to be practically impervious to attrition (e.g. Scherag et al. 2004).

Part 4 provides a thorough introduction to a whole range of methods used to assess language proficiency among potential attriters. These methods cover lexical tasks, grammatical tasks (grammaticality-judgment tests in particular), and techniques for the elicitation of free speech. Each task is meticulously described in terms of implementation and procedure, and S is careful in defining the type of linguistic knowledge that each task targets. Many of the tests and procedures presented in this section are the result of a ten-year-long collaborative research effort between attrition scholars under S's management. The tests are, in other words, well established within the field and are available to researchers in a number of different language versions.[1] It is particularly refreshing to see that S also describes a number of techniques that are yet to be fully embraced by the attrition research community. One of these is the self-paced reading task that examines grammatical sensitivity as measured by reaction-time latencies. This technique is being successfully implemented in the study of L2 acquisition (e.g. Jiang 2007) and could further our understanding of the development of grammatical knowledge in the attrition process.

The last section of the book, Part 5, concerns data coding and analysis (be it either free speech or experimental data). In these chapters, S provides a very hands-on guide to the different steps of data analysis by means of descriptive and inferential statistics, with special reference to the software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Part 5 speaks particularly to an audience of novice researchers and should be extremely useful for those who are unfamiliar with statistical procedures in applied linguistics in general, and in attrition research in particular.

As can be seen, the book makes contributions at many different levels. S's choice to give such a central position to Pavlenko's (2004) taxonomy is particularly important. Clearly, a crucial task for future attrition research is to delve further into the multifaceted nature of the processes and outcomes of attrition, and Pavlenko's taxonomy is a potentially tremendously fruitful tool in this endeavor. S is also very careful in separating language attrition from incomplete acquisition. The difference between attrition and incomplete acquisition is intimately related to the age by which the speaker experienced a break with the L1 setting. If the speaker exhibits deviant use of a form that had been acquired before the break with the L1 setting, then the behavior is properly classified as attrition. If, by contrast, the speaker exhibits deviant use of a form that had NOT been acquired before the change of linguistic setting, it should be seen as a sign of incomplete acquisition. This distinction is indeed fundamental, and it took almost two decades before the term 'attrition' ceased to be used erroneously to refer to incomplete acquisition. S, however, goes slightly overboard in claiming that the term 'incomplete acquisition' should be used to refer to speakers who experienced a break with the L1 setting before age twelve, whereas the term 'attrition' is to be reserved for those who experienced such a break after age twelve. This claim is too categorical, as it disregards the fact that the child already at the end of the first decade of life has a very advanced (in many regards complete) mastery of the L1. Coming from such a leading scholar as S, this statement may contribute to a reverse development, whereby researchers start using the term 'incomplete acquisition' to denote instances of deviant linguistic behavior that are actually signs of attrition in speakers with early attrition onsets. Rather than using a generalized cut-off age for separating incomplete acquisition from attrition, it seems as if a distinction is needed between the age by which a given linguistic form is mastered and the age by which linguistic knowledge becomes less susceptible to attrition (these ages do not necessarily converge). In spite of the fact that age of attrition onset is considered one of the most important independent variables in attrition, our current knowledge about this variable is in need of both empirical and conceptual advances.

[1] http://www.let.rug.nl/languageattrition

Being the first monograph dedicated solely to the phenomenon of first language attrition, S's book is a future classic. It provides a comprehensive state-of-the-art overview of the study of language attrition and offers a thorough guide to the theoretical and methodological concerns of the field. In doing so, the book not only stipulates the standards that should guide research into language attrition, but also lays fruitful ground for future inquiry into this fascinating topic.

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Subordination in South American languages. Ed. by RIK VAN GIJN, KATHARINA HAUDE, and PIETER MUYSKEN. (Typological studies in language 97.) Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011. Pp. viii, 315. ISBN 9789027206787. $149 (Hb).

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The past few decades have seen a growing recognition of the importance of insights from South American languages to our understanding of linguistic theory and typology. Descriptive work on the indigenous languages of the continent has expanded, such that a 'linguistic black box' (as Grinevald (1998:127) described the Amazon region) has now yielded high-quality studies of dozens of languages (including many authored by contributors to this volume), although many more still await investigation. Many of these languages reveal structures and categories that challenge our assumptions about what is linguistically possible (see Dixon & Aikhenvald 1999, Everett 2010).

The eleven papers in this volume are testament to the variety of means by which languages may realize subordination, and to the challenges they offer for our understanding of how a relationship between associated concepts may be encoded. While the mechanics of subordination—and its variability and even existence across languages (see Everett 2005, Nevins et al. 2009)—have long been of interest to linguists, South American languages' realizations of the phenomenon have received relatively little attention beyond language-specific studies. This volume brings together papers focusing on languages from a diverse set of genetic groupings, in keeping with the striking linguistic diversity of South America more generally. Three of the largest lowland South American language families are represented—Tupi (Mekens), Jê (Mebengokre), and Arawak (Baure)—as