Björn Hansen and Jasmina Grković-Major, eds. *Diachronic Slavonic syntax: Gradual changes in focus.* Munich: Sagner, 2010. 208 pp. [*Wiener Slawistischer Almanach*, 74.]

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This volume is symptomatic of a recent trend in grammar studies marked by a revived interest in diachronic research from a theoretical perspective. This trend has been visible in the initiative to arrange a forum for linguists working within language diachrony using a formal analytical framework (mostly generative), which came to be established as the Diachronic Generative Syntax Conference (with its 14th meeting in 2012). This kind of work has been supported by the creation and wide availability of numerous electronic resources such as historical corpora, large scale databases of manuscripts for the study of language history. While most recent research has focused on the history of Germanic and Romance languages, with few exceptions (e.g., the recent publication *Development of language through the lens of formal linguistics*, 2010) research on Slavic diachrony is still relatively limited, sporadic, and scattered. In this respect the current volume is a welcome resource for linguists interested in the development of Slavic languages. It is the result of the conference "Diachronic Syntax of the Slavonic Languages: Gradual changes in focus" held in Regensburg in late 2008 and contains many of the papers presented at that conference, duly reflecting the diversity of topics and ideas aired there.

The main organizing idea of the volume is the assumption that the processes that lead to major and observable changes in language are marked by smaller, gradual, and often subtle, transitions, which sometimes even point to conflicting trends. While the contributions all address various aspects of Slavic language history, they reflect a number of theoretical approaches, from formal (generative) to Construction Grammar, language typology, and grammaticalization theory. The book includes 17 papers covering Russian, Czech, and Polish, as well as the almost extinct Ruthenian and Lower Sorbian. Thematically, four of the papers report results and analyze data obtained from language corpora (Bartels, Eckhoff and Haug, Krasovitsky et al., and Rabus),

two address negation (Dočekal and Veselinova). Other papers look at the development of verbal categories such as gerunds (Bjørnflaten) and the perfect (Jung), properties and constituents of nominal expressions (Karlík for a specific category of adjectives and Fried for adnominal participial adjectives), and clause-level categories, such as modal adverbs (Hansen), the syntax of perfect auxiliaries (Migdalski), predicative possession (McAnallen), and reflexive constructions (Lazar). Some papers address more general aspects of diachronic change, such as the grammaticalization of nominal paradigms (Rappaport), the driving forces in the history of Slavic syntax (Večerka), and transitivity and syntactic structure (Grković-Major).

The papers that draw on corpus data all share a common theme: the ways in which data extracted from historical corpora may shed light on changes that have been under way or have become visible over shorter (from a diachronic perspective) segments of time (e.g., 50 to 100 years). In this respect, the paper by Krasovitsky, Baerman, Brown, Corbett, and Williams entitled "Morphosyntactic change in Russian: A corpus-based approach" is of particular interest for the topic of the volume. In this paper the authors trace gradual changes in predicate agreement in Russian over the past two centuries. The syntactic contexts included in the survey are base orders, where the subject phrase precedes the verb phrase, expletive (impersonal) structures, where oblique phrases occur in clause-initial position, and sentences where the predicate precedes the (logical) subject. In addition, the semantic nature of the referents is taken into consideration, and animate and inanimate phrases are reported separately in the statistical analyses. Based on data from a large corpus of literary works, the following intriguing generalizations emerge: a radical increase of plural agreement with conjoined NP subjects; a similar, even farther reaching, change for quantified expressions containing the lower numerals (*dva* 'two', *tri* 'three', and *četyre* 'four'), but a very different pattern in the case of nominal expressions quantified by higher numerals (such as *pjat'* 'five' and above and quantifiers such as *neskol'ko* 'several' and *malo* 'few'. These patterns can be explained by the nature of the quantity items in question: the latter are proper quantifiers and consistently govern genitive plural complements, while the former display agreement with the nominal head and syntactically behave in a mixed way, both as modifiers and as (nominal) heads. The predicate agreement pattern for the former category behaves sporadically, with sudden

rises and falls over the period investigated without showing any clear pattern of change over time. This is not surprising in view of the nature of the nominal expressions at hand and are consistent with recent analyses of the syntax of nominal expressions in Russian which suggest distinct syntactic configurations for the two types of numerals (see Pereltsvaig 2007, 2006). Furthermore, from a diachronic perspective only patterns and configurations which display parameter ambiguity and allow for alternative underlying analyses are likely to change and be reinterpreted by new generations of speakers (Roberts 2007 and Dimitrova-Vulchanova and Vulchanov 2010). Obviously, the split pattern of behavior of the lower numerals drives syntactic change and parameter-ambiguity resolution, while for the higher (quantifier) numerals no such driving force is apparent.

The paper by Hauke Bartels entitled "Das (diachrone) Textkorpus der niedersorbischen Schriftsprache als Grundlage für Sprachdokumentation und Sprachwandelforschung" presents recent work on the creation of a digital corpus of Lower Sorbian from the 18th through the 20th century and discusses the current status of the language in regard to some of the factors that have brought about its near extinction. The author introduces an interesting psycholinguistic concept, that of language competence "by memory" (*erinnerten Sprachkompetenz*), referring to heritage languages, where native speaker informants provide language intuitions by recalling what their predecessors would say or use. The paper addresses a number of phenomena in Lower Sorbian which appear to have undergone changes due to constant contact with German, such as relativizers (*kót(a)ryž* vs. *kenž*), individual lexical items (*paršona* vs. *wósoba*), and two competing passive constructions, one employing an auxiliary borrowed from German (*wordowaś*, from *werden*) and the native Slavic one with *byś* 'be' as an auxiliary. Data from the corpus reveal that uses of the native Slavic construction have increased while the one based on *werden* has decreased in frequency over the 50 years between 1848 and 1910. An open question is whether these developments are due to the nature of the texts in the corpus, possibly influenced by the preferences of individual writers, or reflect genuine diachronic language tendencies. The paper is well written and provides invaluable up-to-date information on the Lower Sorbian language situation and insights into language maintenance and attrition.

The third paper in that group offers detailed information on the design of a diachronic parallel corpus (PROIEL) of the New Testament (NT) Greek translations into Latin, Gothic, Classical Armenian, and Early Slavic. The authors, Hanne Martine Eckhoff and Dag Haug, who are part of the team responsible for creating the corpus, address the choice of strategies for the syntactic annotation of the parallel corpora. The issues and problems related to these choices are illustrated with examples of token alignment between Greek and Early Slavic/Old Church Slavonic. The authors show how the data from the corpus can be used for the studying the structure of nominal expressions, especially adnominal possessives in Early Slavic compared with the Greek. The authors focus on adnominal datives and what they call "classical" Possessive Adjectives (PA) referring to modifiers of the type *cělovanie mariino* 'Mary's greeting', which are more commonly labeled denominal adjectives (DA) (cf. Trubetzkoy 1937, Corbett 1987, Vulchanova and Vulchanov 2009, Dimitrova-Vulchanova and Vulchanov 2010). The main aim is to identify the regularities in how these two types of expressions correspond to in the Greek original. The data show that certain regularities can be observed in the referential (discourse) nature of the referent of the nominal expression as a whole as well as the referent of the adnominal dative itself. A more comprehensive analysis would have included Early Slavic adnominal Genitives as well, since in the texts under examination they compete with both adnominal datives and other possessive expressions (PAs, DAs, Genitival adjectives) as translations of the Greek adnominal Genitives (see Vulchanova and Vulchanov 2009 for a detailed analysis and statistical observations from the Codex Suprasliensis electronic corpus and Dimitrova 2008).

Finally, the paper by Achim Rabus "Die Relativisatoren im Ruthenischen" looks at the evolution of relativizers and relativizing strategies in Ruthenian literary language (Belarusian-Ukrainian, also known as *prosta mova*). It traces the quantitative distribution of the items in question in a corpus of digitized texts, focusing on the 17th and 18th centuries. In line with the theme of the volume, the results show a relatively stable situation in the first half of this period, and a radically different situation in the second half. While the data from the 17th century show little variation, with a prevalence of *kotoryj* 'which', the 18th century is marked by competition between a number of items, e.g., *iže* (of Early Slavic descent), *kotryj,* and *jakyj*.

Two papers address negative expressions in (Early) Slavic. The paper by Mojmir Dočekal, "Negative concord: From Old Church Slavonic to contemporary Czech", provides an analysis of negative concord in Modern Czech compared with negative concord in the Codex Marianus. The paper is well written and argues convincingly that, while OCS is a strict Negative Concord language and behaves like West Flemish and Modern Greek, in Modern Czech (a non-strict Negative Concord language) *n*-words and verbal negation are not accompanied by semantic negation; they merely signal that there is an interpretable negative operator in their clause. The conclusion is that OCS and Modern Czech witness a full Jespersen cycle: while OCS did not require pre-verbal negation when a negative word occurred in high enough (scopal) clause-initial position, verbal negation became obligatory at a certain stage in the development of Slavic.

The paper by Ljuba Veselinova entitled "Standard and special negators in the Slavonic languages: Synchrony and diachrony" provides a comprehensive and very useful survey of negation in 13 Slavic languages, with a focus on what the author, following Dahl 1979, labels Standard Negation, i.e., negation as typically occurring in the context of lexical verbs and special negation, which has scope over certain constituents in the clause and obtains in a number of specialized syntactic contexts, such as existential sentences, locative sentences, possessive constructions. The paper concludes that, while there is very little variation in the expression of Standard/verbal Negation across the Slavic group (with small exceptions in the case of Future constructions in the South Slavic group), special negators offer a wider variation. The tendencies in the development of negation in Czech and Upper and Lower Sorbian are also discussed against the background of the South Slavic group and the remaining Slavic languages. The paper includes useful maps of the distribution of the different types of constructions.

The paper by Mirjam Fried entitled "A Construction Grammar approach to grammatical change" uses a specific construction, adnominal participles and their evolution into adjectives in Czech, as an example of how Construction Grammar can be used as an analytical tool in diachronic linguistics. The paper is engagingly written, clear, and instructive. All examples are appropriately chosen and illustrate the theoretical points very well. The paper argues convincingly that discourse context and the referential status of the nominal expressions in

which the adnominal participles occur played a decisive role in the later evolution of this construction.

In "Old Czech adjectives with the meaning of passive potentials" Petr Karlík offers an interesting morphophonological analysis of adjectives with the meaning '(entity) such that one can *Verb* it' in Czech. The author argues that these adjectives have two autonomous sources inherited in Old Czech from earlier stages of Slavic: the suffix *-tel-* (also available in the derivation of Nomina Agentis) and *-n-*, an essentially adjectival suffix.

Another paper with a focus on deverbal forms is "Grammaticalization theory and the formation of gerunds in Russian" by Jan Ivar Bjørnflaten. The author argues that gerunds (*deepričastija*) in Russian emerged through a shift from a major declinable category (grammatical class) to an intermediate indeclinable one. The paper cites miscellaneous examples from Early Slavic and Russian. Some claims made in the paper concerning language change from a psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspective are perplexing. For example: "The language user, in this situation, however, when confronted with two forms, would try to sort out in which contexts to use which form. If the command of this distinction is no longer part of his internalized grammar, the language user may make a wrong guess and distribute the form wrongly" (pp. 23–24).

A number of papers address issues related to clausal syntax. The paper by Björn Hansen, "Constructional aspects of the rise of epistemic sentence adverbs in Russian", addresses the transition of modal verbs into epistemic adverbs, a phenomenon attested not only in Russian but in the majority of Slavic languages as well as in other Indo-European languages. These items, sometimes referred to as modal particles (e.g., Andersen and Fretheim 2000), may have various sources but most commonly derive from compounding a modal verb with another root (a complementizer, another verb) or simply from the fossilization of a modal verb form. The paper adopts a constructional approach, first analyzing the synchronic Russian data and then focusing on the diachronic path of these constructions. The author provides an account in terms of the semantics of the verbs involved and more specifically their argument structure, e.g., whether they are raising predicates or not. The paper offers appropriate illustrations through well-chosen examples.

Hakyung Jung's paper, "Preconditions and motivations in the grammaticalization of the North Russian *be*-perfect", addresses the development of a well-known construction specific to North Russian dialects, and some other Slavic languages. This structure is characterized by a clause-initial possessive prepositional phrase (introduced by the preposition *u* 'at'), followed by a form of the auxiliary *be*, a Nominative NP (an object) and finally an (impersonal) 3sg form of the passive participle (u-PP + be + NP$_{NOM}$ + Pass.Part$_{3SG}$). The crucial evolution in the development of this structure is seen as the gradual shift of the *u*-Prepositional Phrase (PP) from a locative adjunct to base-generated (agentive) subject, passing through a causative/benefactive applicative stage. The author argues that the modern structure is an active construction, not a passive one, suggesting that the *u*-PP is an agentive base-generated subject. The questionable part of the analysis, however, is the assumption that BE embeds a mixed DP/PP category, with case being assigned by the preposition *u* which sits in the mixed head D(P), while the agent NP is generated in Spec,*v*P.

In "The diachronic syntax of perfective auxiliaries in Polish", Krzysztof Migdalski analyzes the distribution of perfect auxiliaries in Modern Polish. There are two positions available for the auxiliary: Wackernagel position and a contact position with the auxiliary affixed to the participle. Traditionally, the latter position is viewed as an innovation, and the result of a reinterpretation of the morphological status of the auxiliary. Based on a comparison with other Slavic languages and data from Old Church Slavonic and Early Slavic, the author argues, however, that auxiliary placement involves two independent synchronic strategies: affixation and second position cliticization inherited from Early Slavic. The paper is well written and offers a comprehensive survey of current research in Slavic synchrony and diachrony from a formal analytic perspective.

The focus of Julia McAnallen's paper, "Developments in predicative possession in the history of Slavic", is the typology of possessive constructions in Slavic from a diachronic perspective. The author traces how the three construction types attested in Early Slavic texts—the one headed by *iměti* 'have', the Dative possessive one, and the one featuring a genitive *u*-prepositional phrase—have developed and spread further in the Slavic daughter languages. A point of caution is in order concerning the use of the term Late Proto-Slavic (LPS). Since, as acknowledged by the author in her presentation of the historical

examples, the earliest Slavic sources come in different categories of texts of various provenance, South Slavic (e.g., Codex Marianus), West Slavic (e.g., Old Czech), and East Slavic (e.g., *Pověst' vremennyx lět*), it is difficult to ascertain what situation existed in earlier (pre-literacy) stages.

Marija Lazar's paper, "Placement of the reflexive *sja* in Russian business writing", has a focus on the development of reflexive *sja*, which has evolved from a clitic into a verbal affix. On the basis of data from business (*delovye*) documents and texts from the 12th–15th centuries, the author shows that this shift proceeded at a different pace in different regions of the country, a situation obviously related to dialectal differences.

Finally, three papers address more general processes in Slavic diachrony. The paper by Gilbert Rappaport, "The grammaticalization of the category *Masculine Personal* in West Slavic", offers a detailed and intriguing discussion of the factors that have contributed to the evolution of the category Masculine Personal (MP) in several West Slavic languages. The author suggests that this category is the result of two distinct morphological changes in plural nominal paradigms: the replacement of the historical Accusative inflection by the Genitive, and the replacement of the historical Nominative by the Accusative. By taking into account semantic factors, such as the Animacy Hierarchy, Rappaport shows that the above changes proceeded independently, and apparently in opposite directions, along this semantic hierarchy. The paper is an engaging excursion in the intricate ways inflectional paradigm can shift the history of Indo-European (and Slavic).

In "The role of syntactic transitivity in the development of Slavic syntactic structures", Jasmina Grković-Major views the development of syntactic transitivity as the basic driving force in syntactic change in Slavic and as a factor contributing, in the author's words, to "intra-sentence cohesion." The change that has occurred in Slavic diachrony is described as a drift towards a new language type, accusative. Since, as the author acknowledges, this change is characteristic of Indo-European languages in general, it is difficult to isolate the evolution of syntactic structures specific to Slavic. Moreover, even though the focus is on transitivity and changes in basic clausal syntax, no recourse is made to existing formal analyses of observable shifts in word order parameters in the history of Slavic (see Pancheva 2005, Vulchanova and Vulchanov 2008).

The paper by one of the nestors of Slavic diachrony, Radoslav Večerka, entitled "Entwicklungsvoraussetzungen und Triebkräfte der slavischen Syntax", addresses the factors, conditions, and driving forces behind some of the most central developments in the history of Slavic languages. In line with an already well-established tradition (see Kroch 1989), the author suggests that grammar change is characterized by the simultaneous co-existence of competing forms and constructions (grammars), some of which gradually move to the periphery of the system, eventually resulting in a grammar shift. The tendency towards a well-defined syntactic structure at all levels of organization is claimed to be one of the central driving forces in historical change. Interestingly, earlier works that discuss the nature of this kind of shift, e.g., Gŭlŭbov 1950 and Sławski 1946, are missing in the references. Finally, the author draws attention to the importance of the modern Slavic dialects for the study of Slavic diachrony.

In conclusion, through the variety of topics addressed and the quality of much of the data used (some of which are original and published for the first time), there is no doubt that the volume is a welcome addition to the growing body of work addressing diachronic aspects of Slavic. Despite these obvious merits, there are some problems with reader-accessibility. The volume comes across as rather eclectic. More is to be wished for in terms of homogeneity and alignment between how the topics are presented and how the argumentation is sustained. A more detailed introduction could have assisted the reader in finding the red thread in the featured works. Also, diachrony is slightly misleading in the title of the volume, since it is not featured prominently in many of the papers. This is particularly evident in papers based on data cited from other published papers rather than on their own data (whether from corpora, other available sources, or collected examples). A similar note applies to how the diachronic data are presented: some follow the standard OCS script, with adequate glosses and translations (e.g., Eckhoff and Haug), while others follow a latinized transliterated version which is misleading when it comes to the rendering of the Early Slavic (OCS) phonology, and others still do not even provide glosses, but only translations. Such issues could have been resolved in the editorial process.

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