

INTRODUCTION

THE EDITORS

The present volume includes papers that were presented at the conference *Languages in Contact* at the University of Groningen (25-26 November 1999). The conference was held to celebrate the University of St. Petersburg's award of an honorary doctorate to TJEERD DE GRAAF of Groningen.

In general, the issues discussed in the articles involve pidgins and creoles, minorities and their languages, Diaspora situations, Sprachbund phenomena, extralinguistic correlates of variety in contact situations, problems of endangered languages and the typology of these languages. Special attention is paid to contact phenomena between languages of the Russian Empire / USSR / Russian Federation, their survival and the influence of Russian.

In the following, we shall give a bird's-eye survey of the specific languages and topics that are treated in this volume. Starting off with Dutch we will travel eastward all around the world and cover Eurasia, the PACIFIC, the NEW WORLD, and, finally, Africa, thus returning to the OLD WORLD.¹

1. The OLD WORLD I: Eurasia

In "Dutch-German Contact in and around Bentheim" WILBERT HEERINGA ET AL. investigate the influence of political borders on the Lower Saxon dialect continuum, in particular in the German county Bentheim and in the Dutch varieties which surround it on three sides. Pronunciations twenty-five years apart are examined. To measure the distance between dialects, "Levenshtein distance" is used. The results of comparison are analysed by clustering and multidimensional scaling. The historical development is examined by comparing the two sets of measurements, in particular the change in relative proximity to each other. Results show that the political border and the influence of standard languages are driving the Dutch and German dialects apart.

There are several more papers that deal with contact situations in which Germanic languages play a central role. Thus, JURIJ KUSMENKO AND MICHAEL RIESSLER discuss the most important isoglosses that are characteristic of the

¹ The terms OLD WORLD, PACIFIC, and NEW WORLD refer to linguistic macroareas as described by Johanna Nichols (*Linguistic diversity in space and time*. Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press. 1992: 12-13, 26-27).

northern Scandinavian dialects. According to the authors, these isoglosses are the result of the Sámi-Scandinavian interference during the fourteenth through nineteenth centuries. WOUTER KUSTERS also concentrates on Scandinavian, but from a totally different perspective: he makes a typological comparison between the process of morphological simplification in Scandinavian languages and similar changes in Quechua languages (cf. below, section 3). The report by NINA VOLSKAYA AND ANNA GRIGORYAN describes the melodic patterns of Armenian intonation questions. Pitch patterns of intonation questions in English and Armenian in one-, two- and three-syllable words with different positions of the tonic syllable are compared and the results of the perceptual evaluation of the Armenian question intonation by English speakers are presented.

Two articles are devoted to language contact between German and different West Slavic neighbours. HANNA TOBY presents research that is devoted to a detailed diachronic investigation of a dialect area in Northeast Kashubia (in the northern part of Poland) in terms of different levels of interference with Low German. HÉLÈNE BRIJNEN addresses the question of German influence on the Sorbian aspect system. The use of verbal prefixes is analysed on the basis of historical evidence taken from writings of the peasant-writer Hanso Nepila (1761-1856).

Moving to the heart of Central Europe, we stop at Hidegség and Fertőhomok, two villages in the Northwest of Hungary where from the sixteenth century onward a Croatian (Kajkavian) migrant dialect has been spoken. In the previous volume of the present series, PETER HOUTZAGERS (1999) completed a monography on this dialect that is very rich in traces of both premigratory and postmigratory language contact, not only with Hungarian, but also with other varieties of Croatian and German. In his paper Houtzagers demonstrates the necessity and, at the same time, complexity of the distinctions between the various layers of borrowed language material.

In Southeast Europe we find the Balkan Sprachbund, “world’s most famous contact situation” as cited by RONELLE ALEXANDER in her article on word order in Balkan languages. The recent historical change which produced the Balkan ordering would seem to be due to convergent change. According to Alexander, however, close analysis of dialectal data shows that the motivations of the change are Slavic in nature, and throws into question the parameters of the concept Sprachbund. A second article that is devoted to the Balkan Sprachbund is the one by JOUKO LINDSTEDT, who argues that difficulties in finding a source for the common grammatical innovations of the Balkan languages are not due to our limited knowledge of the history of the individual languages. The innovations have no source languages in the traditional sense: the linguistic contact situation itself has caused convergent changes that would not have occurred in *any* of the Balkan languages by internal drift only. This process, described by Lindstedt as “mutual

reinforcement of change”, does not lead to outright simplification, but it does favour explicit and analytic marking of syntactic functions.²

Before discussing the bulk of papers in which Russian is involved, we should first mention two articles that deal with matters of Yiddish. ANE KLEINE adds a new argument to the discussion of “Standard Yiddish” by distinguishing between two kinds of contact situation, the first being co-existence of different languages in one territory and the second being “intra-language contact”. The latter means both the coming together of speakers from different dialectal backgrounds and also contact situations in which different social varieties meet. YURI KLEINER AND NATALIA SVETOZAROVA discuss the loss of quantity distinctions in the majority of the dialects of Yiddish. This must have been due to the influence of the Slavic languages, having the open syllable as the predominant type. The preservation of the quantity distinctions in the Mid-Eastern variety of Yiddish (Poland) may be accounted for by extra-linguistic factors.

Let us now turn to the language contact situations in which Russian plays a central role. Apart from the contribution by LARISSA NAIDITCH, who investigates the language of emigrants from Russia living in Israel and focuses on the influence of Hebrew on Russian on the lexical level, most articles deal with Russian as the dominant language within the Russian Empire / USSR / Russian Federation.

In more general terms, LIYA BONDARKO from the St. Petersburg Phonetics Department – an institution that has studied language contact for seventy years – stresses that the investigation of the phonetics of language contact presupposes the study of the phonetic systems of the individual languages involved. Data on Estonian, Lithuanian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, and other languages demonstrate different degrees of interaction with Russian. For Russian the problem of language contact is the problem of intra-language interference, which arises when the pronunciation norm interacts with stable dialectal features. PAVEL SKRELIN reports on two types of sound databases (sound archives and speech corpora) developed at the St. Petersburg Phonetics Department. They make it possible to process different types of sound material used in research on the interference between languages.

There are several case studies where Russian is involved. CORNELIUS HASSELBLATT addresses the question whether the often ascribed Russian influence on Estonian is historically founded or not. If not, Russian influence is asserted for political reasons without linguistic evidence. LARS JOHANSON deals with the complex language contact interaction of Russian, Finno-Ugric and Turkic in the Middle Volga area, where long-term contact-induced processes of mutual code-

² The Balkan Sprachbund is also discussed by Sarah Thomason.

copying have led to convergence of socially dominated and dominant codes and introduced new linguistic patterns, partly typical Sprachbund-phenomena.

Moving deeper into the territory of Siberia, we find a report by IRINA NEVSKAJA who examines various Shor-Russian contact features. The Shors are an indigenous Turkic people. Until recently their language was neither written, nor taught at schools. Within the last thirty years the number of speakers has diminished, all of them are bilingual, language transmission to younger generations has almost stopped, and all the systems of the language appear to be open to influence of Russian. ALEKSANDR KRASOVICKY AND CHRISTIAN SAPPOK discuss the phonemic system of an isolated Russian dialect of the arctic Russian settlement Russkoye Ust'ye on the territory of Siberia. The dialect inherited and preserved features of ancient North Russian dialects and has greatly been influenced by the Tungusic language of the neighbouring Even. LENORE GRENOBLE, who conducted fieldwork in the Amur basin and Yakutia, examines changes which are taking place as the result of language contact between Evenki – a seriously endangered Tungusic language – and Russian, focusing on changes in word order, case, modal constructions and syntax. MARINA KHASANOVA provides us with examples of pidginized Russian, spoken in the Lower Amur region by native speakers of Tungusic languages and of Nivkh. The latter language – an isolate, usually classified as Paleosiberian – is also dealt with by EKATERINA GRUZDEVA, who investigates prescriptive and optative constructions with synthetic and analytical imperative forms. The imperative in Nivkh seems to have been affected considerably by the influence of the Russian grammatical system.

In geographical terms, PETER BAKKER's contribution constitutes a bridge between the OLD WORLD and the PACIFIC, in the sense that it mainly deals with Sri Lanka Portuguese and Sri Lanka Malay (Austronesian), two mixed languages of the "converted" type, being the result of a process called "convergence intertwining"; they have all grammatical and lexical elements from one language, but these elements have the functions, grammatical status, and structural positions of a different language. One might call them "transvestites".

2. The PACIFIC

Both articles that deal with languages within the PACIFIC macroarea concentrate on language contact on New Guinea.³ In his paper BERNARD COMRIE refutes a particular combination of claims, namely that if words are recognizable as borrowings because of their near-identity in both borrowing and donating languages, then they will be restricted in semantic domain. Comrie uses evidence primarily from Haruai, a Papuan (i.e. non-Austronesian) language spoken in the Madang

³ Cf. also Sarah Thomason's contribution, in which she outlines the Sepik River Basin Sprachbund in northern Papua New Guinea.

Province of Papua New Guinea, in order to show that there are indeed instances of such easily recognized borrowings that nonetheless cover a wide range of semantic domains within basic vocabulary.

On the Indonesian part of New Guinea (Irian Jaya), CECILIA ODÉ investigates the prosodic system of Mpur, an unwritten non-Austronesian language with three (possibly four) lexical tones spoken by approximately 5,000 speakers in the Northeast Bird's Head Area. The prosodic analysis shows that phenomena, characteristic of the Mpur oral tradition, can be expressed in Indonesian as it is in Mpur. Odé presents examples of prosodic loans in Indonesian from Mpur, and also of loans from Indonesian that are increasingly used in Mpur, as well as some Dutch loans.

3. The NEW WORLD

Travelling from North to South, first attention is paid to the Pacific Northwest of North America, one of the world's most extensive Sprachbunds which encompasses several controversial genetic phyla, including "Mosan" uniting Salishan, Wakashan, and Chimakuan.⁴ In his paper DAVID BECK concentrates on Bella Coola, the most northerly of the coastal Salish languages within the Central Northwest language area. The Salishan outrider Bella Coola has gone even further than other Salish languages towards approximation to its Wakashan neighbours, and the novel features of this language illustrate both grammatical convergence and diversification.

In Southern Mexico LOUANNA FURBEE discusses narrative in the indigenous language Tojolab'al Maya, which incorporates Spanish both in terms of loan words and code switches. Furbée examines the less familiar loan vocabulary and longer code switches in twenty-six accounts of a miracle that occurred in 1994. The differences in the poetic usage of this loan vocabulary suggest different levels of vulnerability of the Tojolab'al shift toward Spanish.

The two remaining papers both deal with Quechua, one of the indigenous languages of the Andean countries in South America.⁵ ELLEN COURTNEY discusses the development of Spanish word order in Quechua-speaking children and challenges the claim that the children have a transitional grammar with a non-adult phrase structure rule. Quechua, among other South American languages, is also discussed by PIETER MUYSKEN, who presents a tentative typology of linguistic areas. In this context Muysken considers areal features in the Andean/Amazonian transition area and offers relevant data on word order and agreement patterns, verb morphology, and case marking in the languages of the eastern slopes.

⁴ Cf. also Sarah Thomason's paper.

⁵ Cf. also Wouter Kuster's remarks on morphological simplification in Quechua and Peter Bakker's contribution, in which Media Lengua, a mixed Quechua-Spanish language in Ecuador, is used as an example of an "intertwined language".

4. The OLD WORLD II: Africa

PATRICK-ANDRÉ MATHER uses data primarily from West African L2 French in order to support the second language acquisition / gradualist model of creole genesis. Mather provides evidence from recent SLA studies and discusses features that are found both in creoles and in L2 varieties of European languages: the position of specifiers and adjectives within the noun phrase, the position of verbs, pronouns and full NP complements within the verb phrase, serial verb constructions, copula deletion, reduplication of adjectives, and others.

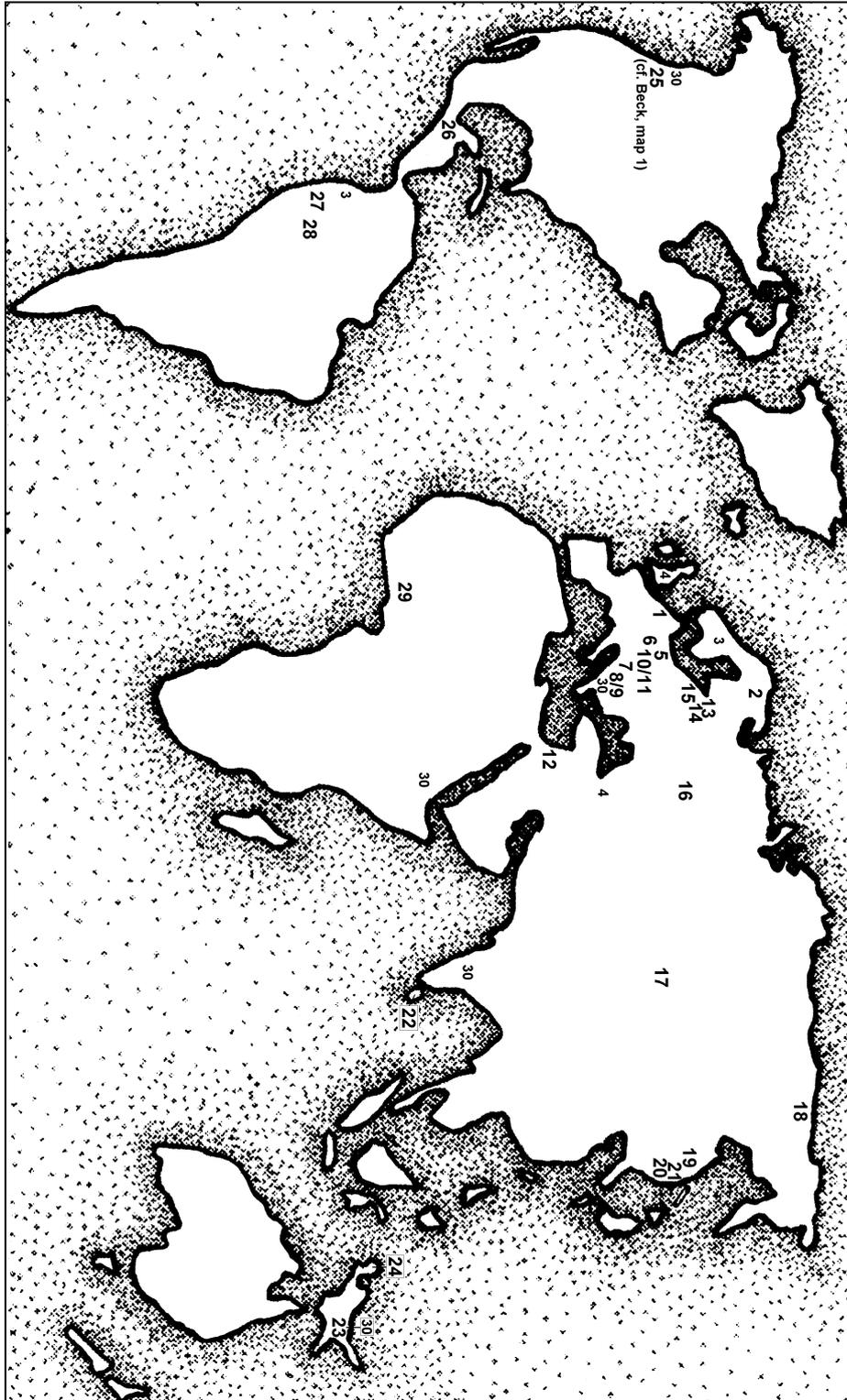
The Ethiopian highlands are one of five linguistic areas that are outlined by SARAH GREY THOMASON. She argues that the existence of linguistic areas greatly complicates the work of the historical linguist. Sorting out the processes by which the languages in a linguistic area acquired their shared features ranges from difficult to impossible. Thomason examines the historical issues raised by five “representative” Sprachbunds that are geographically and historically diverse. Apart from the Ethiopian highlands these are the Balkan Sprachbund, the Sepik River Basin in Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Northwest of North America, and South Asia.

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A html-version (including hyperlinks) of the Introduction is also available on the Internet:
http://www.let.rug.nl/~schaeken/ssgl/ssgl28_intro.htm

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Map 1. The major languages and linguistic areas discussed in the present volume.