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& Calendar, brief notes and back information.

metaphor. The reader is left in the lurch as to where conversational implicatures come from, how they actually arise, and how they become conventionalized, thus facilitating grammaticalization. More exploration and research must be carried out on the relationship between metaphor and pragmatics. The authors claim that their theory of grammaticalization is dynamic, not static, in that it recognizes grammaticalization as a continuous, gradual phenomenon, not as a discrete, discontinous phenomenon. But unless more research is done on the pragmatic force vis-à-vis grammaticalization, no theory can be *truly* dynamic, *since metaphor by definition represents a transfer from one discrete cognitive domain to another*.

Finally, it is a pity that the authors do not take a further step to develop such an internal reconstruction method as in Traugott (1986,1988) on the basis of their theory of grammaticalization. As is well known, the majority of the world's languages lack historical documentation that may shed light on their histories. If processes of grammaticalization are as regular as the authors convincingly demonstrate, it will be possible to develop a predictive theory of grammaticalization so that one can choose any language (i.e. not historically documented) from any period and project change back into the past (Traugott 1989:31). Regrettably, discussion to that effect is completely missing from the book.

The foregoing all sounds very negative, that is, in the context of the objectives that the authors set for the book. So let me close on a more positive note. The authors have produced a book which provides a wealth of data, a set of significant observations, and a theory of grammaticalization. It is full of examples, albeit mainly from African languages, that anyone interested in grammaticalization cannot afford to miss out on. It is sprinkled with a number of interesting observations, most of which can further be tested against languages from other families, and can then be developed into theoretical statements. And it represents one of the few consolidated attempts at theorizing about the phenomenon of grammaticalization, which continues to make language such an intriguingly dynamic object as we all marvel at.

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Material Ambitions
(Comments welcome)

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Given the increasing concern in *recording*[1] endangered languages and dialects the new series *Materials* by *Lincom Europa* is quite timely and eagerly welcome. In my opinion, however, this initiative and similar ones

[1] Language *maintenance* is a more complex and controversial issue; see, for example, the debate concerning the Oaxaca Project Update on the LINGUIST-network in October 1992 or Peter Ladefoged's note in *Language* 68/4.

like it[2] are not sufficient in meeting the challenge posed by the imminent extinction of many if not the majority of the world's languages and dialects. One major problem is the demand for linguistic expertise and the considerable amount of time needed for analysis that the established formats of presenting linguistic materials require. With this in mind, I would like to suggest a shift of attention away from such ambitious formats. I also would like to suggest the preoccupation with *grammatical* materials be reconsidered.

Established formats for publishing documentary materials such as dictionaries, descriptive grammars or text collections are extremely time-consuming tasks requiring a great deal of stamina from both the native speakers and the researchers. In the best case scenario, the collected data remain inaccessible for a long time to anyone but the fieldworker, until she or he eventually manages to publish all or most of the collected materials according to these formats. In the worst case scenario, however, the fieldworker may not achieve any of these goals, resulting in a tremendous waste of work and data.

Standards for a good grammar or dictionary have risen considerably in the last 40 years. The thorough documentation of a language, as envisioned by Lehmann (1989) for example, can hardly be achieved in a lifetime. This means that every fieldworker is faced with the choice of what to do first and foremost. Given the high prestige of grammars and given that a reasonably good dictionary can rarely be produced within a decade, as well as the preparation of a text volume being tedious and unrewarding work,[3] it comes as no surprise that dictionary and text collections are more often than not simply struck from the researcher's agenda. Even a very good grammar will only contain a fraction of the material collected, while the remainder disappears forever in the fieldworker's drawer. Thus, information on many aspects of a given language remains unavailable, apart from that deemed 'grammatical' at the time of writing the grammar.

Less ambitious formats with titles such as "Notes on ...", "A sketch of ...", etc. may be produced somewhat easier and faster, but they impose considerable constraints on the amount and quality of data to be incorporated. The bulk of data usually remains inaccessible.

[2] Cf., for example, Derek Nurse's appeal to publish sketches of endangered languages in *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 22/1 (1992:vii).
[3] Lehmann's 4th part, i.e. the "description of the historical situation of the language" (1989:136), has been considered thus far only as a matter from incidental remarks in prefaces and footnotes. Guidelines as to how to prepare such a description have yet to be worked out. Furthermore, I suspect that many fieldworkers who have received training only in core linguistics would need some extra training in order to be able to prepare such a description. There is no doubt as to the value and need of such a description as part of a 'complete' documentation of a language, but it is also obvious that it adds considerably to the already heavy work load required for such a documentation.

All of the formats mentioned, then, have in common their allotment of extra time for analyzing the data and their presentation of 'clean' data only. This would not be problematic if we had an infinite amount of time in which we could record, check, and recheck the data. This is, however, obviously not the case. It would be less problematic if there now existed, say, 10 researchers working on every language and dialect threatened by extinction. Since the chances of achieving this in the next few years are extremely slim, I think it necessary that thought be given to ways of improving and making more productive the current way of processing and distributing fieldwork data. One way to do this, I propose, is to encourage the presentation of recorded materials in less ambitious, less comprehensive, less polished formats, which would still be of use to both the native population as well as the scientific community, but also much more readily available. What I have in mind here are slightly edited versions of (sections of) the field notes, which are somewhat more accessible and consistent in spelling and glossing than the field notes proper[4] but lay no claims to the systematicity and comprehensiveness characteristic of the standard formats mentioned above. These include, for example, the preparation and distribution of

- a single text, even if morpheme boundaries remain unclear and interlinear glosses are incomplete. This was a common practice earlier this century, but seems to be less fashionable at present.
- lists of elicited words, paradigms and/or sentences with notes and comments on uncertainties, problems, and other kinds of observations made during recording.
- notes on 'special interest items' such as place names, proper names (and naming practices), terms for measures, etc.
- observations on the social and historical setting of the speech community, including notes on language usage, speech forms, text genres, geography, cultural practices, etc.

All of this could also be compiled and presented in book-form, in which extensive indices and cross-references would make the data even more accessible. Ideally, updated versions of such a compilation would be prepared whenever new data is recorded, or major advances are achieved in analyzing existing materials. The present state of computer technology makes such a procedure feasible.

This less ambitious format could also be of use in the following respects:

[4] Storing field notes as they are in a public archive or library is something else that, to date, is not done in a systematic and transparent way, though to do so would obviously be highly useful. The only exception I am aware of is the *Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies* in which all field notes on Australian languages are stored.

I believe that the native population, and especially the 'respondents', have a right to witness the fruit of their labor and cooperation as readily as possible. In drastic terms: It will not be much of a reward to them to have their death lamented in the preface of a 'complete' grammar. More importantly, however, data should be presented in a format useful to them. Among other things, this means that at least part of the presentation has to be in a language they know, and should also address issues of interest to them. In the presently established formats there is generally no space for such sections. Practically speaking, they are generally less interested in scientific grammars and more interested in dictionaries (wordlists) and texts which provide documentation of their own culture in this fast-changing world. To some extent as well, the simple fact of seeing their own language in print next to a standard language of high prestige may be instrumental in preserving (or even rebuilding) self-esteem and cultural identity.[5]

Furthermore, to my knowledge, present consensus sees terms like 'respondent' or 'informant' as inadequate in paying tribute to their achievement. The make-up of a less ambitious format would provide the setting for calling 'respondents' what they are: *contributors* to a compilation of language materials.

- Much fieldwork is done with a clearly limited goal in mind, such as preparing a thesis or investigating one specific aspect of a given language or language community, with a substantive amount of data recorded and observations made during such work having no direct relevance for the intended topic. And often, these data will not suffice for a presentation in one of the established formats, or the researcher may not have the time to prepare it in the required way. A less ambitious format could provide a convenient outlet for such materials, which would otherwise remain inaccessible.

- The same holds true for researchers and professionals from other fields (anthropologists, geographers, development workers, teachers, etc.), and interested native speakers. They often lack the expertise and time to present linguistic materials in one of the established formats. Less ambitious formats may be an incentive for them to share their often considerable expertise in a given language or dialect.

- Writing grammars and dictionaries and editing texts always involve normative judgements and activities, i.e. language *making* of which Harris (1980) speaks. Some wordforms, sentences, stretches of text are rated as mistakes and are usually simply discarded. Others are rated as marginal or minor variants and relegated to footnotes or are also simply discarded. The

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5 The relationship between investigator and 'respondent' is another issue that needs to be reconsidered. In linguistics there has to date been nothing comparable to the extensive debate on the 'ethics' of fieldwork in anthropology widespread in the seventies. The new issue of *Language & Communication* (April 1993, Vol. 13/2) seems to provide a good start for such a discussion in linguistics.

final outcome makes language making difficult, if not impossible, to detect. If earlier stages of the processing of the data were available in less ambitious formats this process would become more transparent. In this way, analyses would become more accessible for re-evaluation and verification, and data would be more reliable and trustworthy.

To point out the obvious: This call for less ambitious formats is not a call for lowering analytical standards or the established standards of presenting linguistic materials. It also does not imply that work on the established formats of presentation or refining and expanding the standards for recording languages be completely dispensed with for the present. However, it does offer consideration that, at the present time, the efforts to record and present new data should have precedence over a sophisticated analysis, one which can still be done from written sources provided that recording has been done and made accessible in due time.

Less ambitious formats are admittedly not very attractive for publishers. Given the pressure on academics to publish, however, it seems only realistic to suppose that such formats will only be produced if they are published or at least accorded the status of true publications by the linguistic community. Perhaps the new *Lincom* series is open to the idea of such a format, and thus could help in making language recording more attractive and productive. The title *Materials* lends to such a format perfectly.

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What is CHILDES?

The Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES) is a computerized exchange system for language data. It was originally developed within the field of child language to foster the sharing of transcribed language data of children's spontaneous speech (MacWhinney and Snow 1985). From its