

presents the state of the question: study abroad improves fluency and sociolinguistic and pragmatic awareness, and it increases lexical acquisition and the acquisition of oral and aural skills; by contrast, there is no clear evidence regarding grammatical gains. Ch. 3 gives an overview of this research investigation, providing details about the informants and explaining that the methods of data analysis are within the Variationist Paradigm. Ch. 5 reports on the acquisition of *ne* deletion, a feature of the French language that the informants acquired and used assiduously. Ch. 6 examines the variable use of *nous/on*. After their period of residence abroad, the informants' usage of *nous/on* alternation proved to be considerably below that of native speakers. Because *ne* deletion is an ancient feature of the French language and *nous/on* alteration is a relatively recent one, the authors suggest that "behaviour in L2 speech in relation to the old and new variables is different whatever the reasons" (93). Ch. 7 shows that, after their study abroad, the informants performed // deletion much more often than before, but still much less than native speakers. In Ch. 8, the authors consider the usage of future temporal references, and observe that the informants used the inflected future more often than the periphrastic future. Ch. 9 tackles the intriguing topic of gender in SLA. The data show that advanced learners become aware of gender patterns and reproduce them.

Finally, Ch. 10 recapitulates to offer the main conclusions drawn from this research: "after a year abroad, the L2 speakers approximate L1 variation speech patterns. This approximation is closer in relation to some variables than others, but in general, the speakers are using variation patterns which are significantly more similar to those of native speakers than before they went abroad and more than those of speakers who do not go abroad" (134). The authors prove convincingly that study abroad is advisable to improve L2 socio-linguistic competence.

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JAMES N. STANFORD AND DENNIS R. PRESTON (eds.), *Variation in indigenous minority languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2009. Pp. vii, 519. Hb. \$158.

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The aim of this volume is to present an anthology to fill "a significant lacuna in linguistics": quantitative variationist sociolinguistic research of indigenous minority languages. The geographic coverage is broad (each populated continent is represented), as is the linguistic coverage (phonetic, phonological, morphological,

syntactic, and lexical variation and change all receive attention). Indeed, with twenty-one contributions, space does not allow for discussion of the individual chapters here, but the editors provide an overview of each contribution in their introduction.

The volume is in two parts: “Variation in phonetics and phonology” (thirteen contributions), and “Variation in syntax, morphology, and morphophonology” (eight contributions). The features discussed are thus diverse (e.g. monosyllabization in Eastern Cham; aspiration of plosives in Maori and consonant reduction in Catalan; the effects of animacy on overt arguments in Bislama), but woven throughout the narrative are a number of recurrent themes. Again, these are summarized by the editors in their introduction, but they are worth repeating here because they give a clear sense of the scope of the volume.

In the traditional Labovian paradigm, external factors such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status play a central explanatory role in models of language variation and change. In this volume, the often qualitatively different social circumstances found in many indigenous minority contexts lead to different prevailing social structures, which often render the heuristics used in analyses of majority languages irrelevant, ineffective, or inappropriate. Age, for example, may closely correlate with majority language contact, which itself may be a powerful predictor of language change (e.g. contributions on Catalan, Dene Suliné, Frisian, Jonaz Chichimec, Mansi, Maori, Northern Paiute, Peruvian Quechua, Warlpiri). Gender may find reflexes consistent with Labovian principles (e.g. Innu-aimun, Yami), but where the cultural influences do not align with those found in many (urban) majority language contexts, patterns distinct from the traditional model may be observed (e.g. Eastern Cham, K’iche’). Social hierarchies in many of the communities addressed in this volume are unrelated to the Labovian model of socioeconomic status (e.g. Ewe, Innue-aimun, K’iche’, Sui). Rather, territorial (Innu-aimun) or clan-based (Sui) distinctions may be more relevant. Other themes that emerge concern the lack of a standard language model, the complexity of social networks, and the marked influence of exogamy. These issues may also be faced in majority language contexts, but their prominence and importance in minority ones presents additional factors to be considered by researchers working in these communities.

What this volume does not present are ethnographies of communication, nor does it focus on language endangerment, death, revitalization, or documentation. Facets of these areas of research arise in various contributions in the volume, inextricably linked as they are to indigenous minority language contexts. However, the lens is clearly focused on variationist research of indigenous minorities and the insights this work offers to variationist theories, principles, and methods. In this respect, *Variation in indigenous minority languages* is an invaluable companion to any collection of sociolinguistic readings, variationist or otherwise.

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