BOOK REVIEWS

Svenja Vökel & Nico Nassenstein (eds.), *Approaches to language and culture*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2022. Pp. 558. Hb €135.

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Approaches to language and culture, edited by Svenja Völkel and Nico Nassenstein, is the first in a new 'Anthropological linguistics' book series. As such, the volume serves as a kind of programmatic statement for the series, exploring different disciplinary approaches to the 'language-culture nexus' (543). The title of the series notwithstanding, the editors clarify from the outset that the volume aims to bring together work under the labels of anthropological linguistics (a largely European tradition that places the study of language and culture as a subfield of linguistics) and linguistic anthropology (one of the four major subfields of American anthropology); the authors argue that, despite minor differences in focus, the two should be conceptualized as alternative labels for the same broad field of study, one that should further incorporate insights from neighboring disciplines such as cognitive linguistics and conversation analysis. Indeed, the volume's biggest strengths, in my view, lie in bringing together research areas sometimes framed as separate and, in doing so, providing innovative and example-rich takes on 'classic' topics in language and culture.

The introduction sets out to define the interdisciplinary study of language and culture that will frame the rest of the volume. Its authors lay out the shared history of—and distinctions between—linguistic anthropology (LA) and anthropological linguistics (AL). Of particular interest is their discussion of kinship as a site for illustrating the complementarity of the two approaches; where anthropological linguistics might be more likely to focus on how 'cultural notions of kinship…. are reflected in the lexico-semantic categorization of referential kinship terminologies', they claim, contemporary linguistic anthropologists might more often examine practices such as the deployment of avoidance registers or the enactment of a joking relationship in particular interactional contexts (12). For the authors, the two approaches benefit from ongoing integration. Considering the connection between language and culture, then, means not only examining linguistic features in cultural context but also exploring how such features are enacted, reproduced, and/or modified in naturally occurring interactions.

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The remaining chapters are organized into two broad sections, entitled 'Fields of research' and 'Areal perspectives', followed by a concluding chapter under the heading 'Outlook'. The chapters in Part 2, 'Fields of research', use rich ethnographic and/or linguistic examples to address many longstanding topics in LA/AL, including language socialization, indexicality, language ideologies, and language endangerment. As noted, many such chapters bring together approaches that—despite obvious potential thematic connections—have sometimes been explored separately. Birgit Hellwig (chapter 2), for example, ties work in language socialization and acquisition to research on language documentation; she notes that studies of situated language learning are valuable to communities invested in revitalization. In chapter 4, Gerrit J. Dimmendahl considers the emergence of new languages alongside the development of new communicative style(s), demonstrating in detail how language contact can lead not only to new creoles and pidgins but also to the interpenetration of structural and stylistic features from multiple existing languages. Dimmendahl further notes that some styles can outlast the language from which they originated, such as when a child retains aspects of their immigrant parents' style without becoming fluent in the parents' first language. Alice Mitchell & Anne Storch take a similarly rich and varied approach to what they call 'The unspoken' in language (chapter 9), using the chapter title as an umbrella for such phenomena as taboo, censorship, and silence among intimate partners.

The volume's incorporation of perspectives from conversation analysis (CA) is particularly effective, especially in the chapter by Christian Meyer & Benjamin Quasinowski (chapter 6). CA, as the authors point out, views talk as an essential—and orderly—social institution in its own right. Its orderliness is 'not a result of social structure or internalized norms', they claim, but is instead 'methodically produced *in situ* by the participants in social situations' (129). The authors also argue that CA studies that deal with the 'particularities of interaction under institutional conditions' (129) should be integrated with older work on genre in LA/AL. Considering turn-taking expectations in doctor-patient interaction, for example, allows a researcher to examine the collaborative production of genre in real time.

The effective inclusion of CA in Meyer & Quasinowski's chapter led me to consider which other chapters might have benefitted from CA and related approaches. The chapter on 'The unspoken', for example, could bring studies of conversational overlaps, gaps, and 'noticeable absences' (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson 1978; Schegloff 2007:19–20) to Meyer & Quasinowski's question (223) of how to characterize aspects of the unspoken such as 'silence, noise, omission, confusion'. Similarly, Susanne Mohr & Anastasia Bauer's fascinating chapter on gesture, sign languages, and multimodality could be further enriched by work that has extended CA to include embodied talk-in-interaction; one such example is Charles Goodwin's (2018) *Co-operative action,* which views talk as one of many resources (along with bodies, gaze, objects, the built environment, and so on) that participants in interaction draw upon, modify, and re-use to build action with others. In both

cases, CA and related perspectives would further stretch already strong chapters that bring together multiple complementary approaches.

As noted, Part 3 consists of chapters that each focus on a geographic area. As their titles show, the chapters vary in scope, in terms of both their geographic range (e.g. Native North America, Africa, Amazonia, or mainland Southeast Asia) and their topical area (some chapters specify a topic, such as perspectivism (chapter 15) or ethnopoetics (chapter 14), while others keep open the thematic focus). Nick Enfield & Jack Sidnell's chapter on 'Language and culture in Mainland Southeast Asia' is one example of the latter type, which uses its thematic breadth—together with specific and grounded case studies from southeast Asia—to speak to some of the concerns laid out in the introduction to the volume, including how to define and understand the relationship between 'language' and 'culture'. Enfield & Sidnell propose four different conceptions of that relation before using case studies from Vietnam and Laos to advocate for the fourth, what they call 'reflexive semiosis'. Its central premise, they argue, is that 'much of culture consists of language….And ALL cultural phenomena are partially constituted through the modes of representation to which they are subject, language being the primary means in this respect' (481). Interaction, in other words, is the crucial mediator of culture; language, then, must be examined in terms of structure, practice, and ideology. This final point hearkens back to the editors' call to integrate approaches that take linguistic structure as their primary object with ones that tend to examine language use in particular cultural contexts.

Because many contributors integrated multiple strands of research into one thematic or geographic chapter, the volume covered impressive ground. Though I was surprised not to find certain topics represented in the chapter list—language and race being the most obvious omission—key aspects of those topics did emerge within other chapters. Paul Kroskrity's chapter on language ideologies and identity, for example, focuses on overlapping categories of indigenous, contact-related, and imposed (e.g. by the nation-state) ideologies, a typology that leads to a discussion of colonization and the need for a raciolinguistic approach (that is, one that sees language as essential to our understanding of race and racism and vice-versa; Alim Rickford, & Ball 2016). Hints of a decolonizing approach appear across the volume as well and are discussed explicitly in the final chapter. There, Andrea Hollington discusses 'attempts to overcome the ongoing bias rooted in colonial, historical and imperial academic ideologies and ways of producing knowledge' (540). One strand of such decolonizing approaches involves questioning the existence of separate languages and even the nature of language itself as products of European ideologies rather than objective realities (Hauck & Heinrich 2018). We might then ask how an integrated AL/LA approach might combine a close analysis of linguistic structure with a skeptical view of language(s). In its relational, emergent, and dynamic view of language and culture, the volume might suggest some answers.

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EMMA MOORE, *Socio-syntax: Exploring the social life of grammar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024. Pp. 256. Hb. £95.

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Drawing on insights from dialectology, discourse analysis, and variationist sociolinguistics, this ambitious new book sets out to provide the first comprehensive account of the social meaning of grammatical variation.

Combining ethnography with detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis, the approach espoused by Moore is most closely allied with scholarship in Third Wave sociolinguistics. Particular attention is paid to the ways in which speakers jointly manipulate the grammatical resources at their disposal to engage in local stylistic practices that create social meaning (12–13) and construct individual and group identities. The focus on the social meaning of grammar, however, by no means implies that structural considerations are relegated to secondary importance. On the contrary, one of the author's central claims is that the syntactic structure of a grammatical form can come with 'in-built dispositions to certain pragmatic functions' (10) and is key to understanding the kinds of social meanings that different syntactic configurations may generate in interactive discourse.

The specific linguistic focus is on four grammatical features: non-standard *were*, negative concord, right dislocation, and tag questions. The array of grammatical features incorporated into the analysis enables the author to probe whether different grammatical forms acquire social meaning in the same way.

The corpus on which the investigation is based was compiled from the speech of twenty-seven female adolescents, aged between thirteen and fifteen, observed and