

in general, and LmodE in particular. Furthermore, given the already highlighted variety of different and partly new scientific approaches, Kytö and Smitterberg have produced a volume which is of interest to everyone who wants to broaden their scope on modern linguistic research methods.

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Paloma Núñez-Pertejo, María José López-Couso, Belén Méndez-Naya and Javier Pérez-Guerra (eds.), *Crossing linguistic boundaries: Systemic, synchronic and diachronic variation in English*. London: Bloomsbury, 2020. Pp. xiv + 269. ISBN 9781350053854 (Hardback).

Reviewed by Charlotte Maekelberghé , KU Leuven

This volume brings together eleven studies, each addressing aspects of linguistic variation and change across linguistic domains. It is the second book published in honor of Teresa Fanego, following a collection of contributions on clausal subordination (Seoane *et al.*

2018). The present volume thereby takes a significantly wider scope, covering ‘a wealth of theoretical perspectives’, as the editors put it. Thus, the collection includes chapters on the prosody, syntax, semantics and pragmatics of English from synchronic, diachronic and diatopic perspectives. What unites the contributions is their shared focus on variation in areas of intersection between these domains. Indeed, as the title of the volume suggests, all contributions succeed in ‘crossing boundaries’ of some sort, ranging from the well-trodden ground of the syntax–semantics interface over the relation between prosody and semantics to the interaction between grammar and discourse traditions. The crossing of boundaries can be interpreted quite literally as well, as four of the eleven studies focus on linguistic variation across World Englishes.

Given the volume’s broad variety of topics, the Introduction does not intend to elaborate on its central theme, but instead offers a comprehensive summary of the contributions, which are organized into two parts. The first part of the volume, ‘Tensioning the system’, comprises seven chapters which explore how tensions between different parts of the linguistic system contribute to the development of new forms and meanings. The second part, ‘Synchronic and diachronic variation’, brings together four contributions which take a more sociolinguistic perspective by examining lexical and morphosyntactic variation across varieties of English.

The first two chapters of part I are concerned with the relation between the domains of semantics and pragmatics on the one hand, and (supra-)segmental phonology on the other. Raymond Hickey opens up new avenues for the study of idioms and fixed expressions in his exploratory analysis of interactions between prosodic structure and semantics (‘Prosodic templates in English idioms and fixed expressions’). The chapter starts from the observation that the (relatively) fixed nature of idioms not only pertains to their non-compositional meaning, but also to their prosodic structure. To demonstrate how the ‘fixedness’ of these expressions is related to specific prosodic patterns, Hickey presents a taxonomy of three main prosodic templates, viz. two-foot, three-foot and four-foot fixed expressions. One type of fixed expression where the link between prosodic structure and semantics is especially prominent, Hickey argues, is that of three-item lists such as *born, bred and buttered* or *Tom, Dick and Harry*, where the prosodic template is said to reflect the conceptual structure of completeness. Similarly, rhyme and alliteration can contribute to the cohesion of fixed expressions on a phonetic level, which might motivate the classification of some items as fixed expressions (e.g. *crystal clear*), while others are more typically viewed as collocations (e.g. *squeaky clean*).

Cutting across the boundaries of phonetics and lexicology, Gunnel Tottie studies the lexicalization of the vocalizations *uh* and *um* in her chapter ‘Word-search as word-formation? The case of *uh* and *um*’. While abundant in speech, *uh* and *um* can also be used intentionally in written language, in which case they are said to function as stance adverbs. The focus of this study is on the sentence-medial use of these items, which are typically deployed as more ‘tongue-in-cheek’ markers of the writer’s attitude (e.g. *Holyfield agreed to show his dancing, um, skills*). While previous research has argued that this particular function of written *uh(m)* is modelled after its word-search

function in spoken conversation, Tottie finds that this use of spoken *uh(m)* is actually rather infrequent. She suggests, however, that the salience and noticeability of the word-search function – which scopes over content words – might have motivated its adoption in written language.

The following two chapters zoom in on the determiner slot of noun phrases. In ‘Demonstratives licensed by cultural co-presence’, Ryan Doran and Gregory Ward present a synchronic analysis of non-deictic uses of demonstratives which are licensed by *cultural* co-presence rather than by private shared knowledge between speaker and hearer. By means of a qualitative analysis of referential (e.g. *Looking forward to that beer at the end of the day*) and predicative uses of these demonstratives (e.g. *Everyone thinks I'm this New Yorker*), the authors convincingly demonstrate the specific conditions under which these uses can occur. In the former case, the demonstrative noun phrase evokes a culturally familiar scenario, while the predicative demonstratives are used to predicate a property of the referent that is associated with social or cultural stereotypes. The authors point out that this predicative use is different from the ‘indefinite-*this*’ form (e.g. *I saw this weird guy today*), which, they argue, introduces a discourse-new topic without eliciting any sociocultural meaning. In light of this observation, it would be interesting to further explore the contribution of the copular construction to the sociocultural interpretation of demonstratives.

In ‘The fall and rise of English *any*’, Nikolaus Ritt, Andreas Baumann and Christina Prömer examine the intriguing frequency trajectory of *any* between Old and Modern English, and more particularly its largely overlooked drop in frequency during the Early Middle English period. The development of *any* is shown to be strongly intertwined with the grammaticalization of *án*, the Old English ancestor of *one* and *a(n)*. *An* originally functioned as a numeral with indefinite, individualizing and exclusive reference, coexisting alongside non-exclusive *any*. As *án* gradually lost its meaning of exclusiveness from Old English onwards, its reduced variant form *a(n)* competed with *any* over similar contexts, which most likely contributed to the latter’s decline in frequency. That *any* nevertheless persisted and gained in frequency again can be attributed to the fact that the grammaticalization of *án* resulted in two separate forms, viz. the exclusive numeral *one* and the semantically vague indefinite article *a(n)*, neither of which fully competed with *any*. The case of *any* nicely illustrates how changes in one linguistic item can also affect its close neighbors, and underscores the importance of studying linguistic items in relation to their broader systemic environment.

A similar point is made in ‘Revisiting ‘*it*-extraposition’: The historical development of constructions with matrices (*it*)/(*there*) *be* + noun phrase followed by a complement clause’, by Kristin Davidse and An Van linden. Their focus is on the historical development of complementation constructions with predicative and existential matrices, such as *It's no wonder Norwegians hunt whales* and *There is no doubt Petite Margot has a big race in her*. The study challenges traditional accounts which treat the pattern with a predicative matrix clause as a separate construction involving *it*-extraposition (Huddleston & Pullum *et al.* 2002: 1403), proposing instead that both patterns can be subsumed under one macro-construction. On the basis of data from the YCOE,

PPCME2, PPCEME and CMLETEV corpora, Davidse and Van Linden trace the history of matrices with the nouns *wonder* and *two/doubt* from Old English to Present-day English, providing structural and semantic evidence in support of their claim. Structurally, both patterns are shown to have parenthetical and juxtaposed variants as paradigmatic alternates, which would be consistent with a shared schematic structure of ‘matrix clause + complement clause’. In addition, both complementation constructions allow for a lexical as well as a grammatical reading, expressing either a state of emotion or cognition, or functioning as interpersonal qualifiers. The formal and semantic particularities of either matrix type, then, are described at a meso-constructural level, resulting in a comprehensive account of the patterns at different levels of schematicity.

In the chapter ‘On grammatical change and discourse environments’, Bert Cornillie investigates the role of discourse environments in language change, with particular attention to the discourse traditions as well as the cultural and sociohistorical context which form the backdrop of linguistic developments. Firstly, the notion of discourse is argued to be relevant to historical linguistics in several ways, as it not only serves as a proxy for identifying communities of speakers, but also as a model to operationalize concepts such as Communicative Immediacy or Distance (Koch & Oesterreicher 1985) and Labov’s notion of change from above or below. The chapter then presents a contrastive analysis of the grammaticalization of Spanish *amenazar* and English *threaten* into auxiliaries with a subjective reading. While the subjective reading is shown to be the result of functional borrowing from Latin, first attested in Latin discourse traditions such as dictionaries, the specific syntactic pattern of auxiliary + infinitive is said to be a case of vernacular syntactic elaboration, whereby writers consciously introduce linguistic innovations into the vernacular language. Interestingly, this syntactic innovation takes place much earlier in Spanish than in English – an observation which is tentatively attributed to Spain’s thriving political and cultural scene at the end of the fifteenth century, which would have encouraged cultural and linguistic innovation.

Concluding the first part of the volume is Diana Lewis’ chapter ‘Grammaticalizing adverbs of English: The case of *still*’, which examines the semantic and syntactic expansion of the adverb *still* during the Modern English period. Adverbial *still* is a highly polysemous item in Present-day English, having temporal and spatial as well as comparative, concessive and evaluative uses. The study adopts a ‘forward-looking’ perspective on the evolution of *still*, suggesting that the focus should not lie exclusively on the emergence of grammatical, discourse-marking uses as the endpoint of a certain origin sense, but rather on the polysemous semantic space as a whole, taking into account other, co-evolving senses. The development of discourse-marking functions and the concomitant scope expansion of *still* has been linked to the adverb’s shift from clause-medial to clause-initial or peripheral positions, but it is found that these innovations did not take place simultaneously. Instead, the discourse function is shown to develop first, often through association with counter-expectational contexts and (structural) reanalysis of collocations with adversative markers such as *but*, *yet* and *though*. The picture that thus emerges is one of gradual and small-step change, in

which particular contexts allow for ambiguity between older and newer uses for extended periods of time, after which the newer sense eventually consolidates through repetition in usage, and comes to exist alongside the older use.

While part I predominantly zooms in on intra-systemic variation, the studies in part II of the volume also factor in inter-systemic or regional variation. In ‘How British is Gibraltar British?’, Manfred Krüg, Ole Schützler and Valentin Werner examine the lexical choices made by speakers of Gibraltar English (GibE) in cases where a (traditionally more) British or American variant coexist. Given Gibraltar’s political status as a British Overseas Territory, a linguistic orientation towards British English is expected. On the basis of the lexical part of the Bamberg questionnaire, ratings for 68 lexical binaries were collected with a representative sample of the Gibraltar population, and subsequently compared to reference data from British and American English speakers. An explorative aggregative data analysis revealed that most GibE raters can be situated between the poles of British and American English, with an overall preference for British lexical variants. Further fine-grained analyses were then applied to test the effect of sociolinguistic factors on ratings, showing that a trend towards Americanization is especially found among younger men. Variation among individual lexical items was attested, as well, with particular lexical binaries displaying diverging diachronic tendencies and synchronic evaluations.

Lucía Loureiro-Porto’s study focuses on the occurrence of singular *they* in Asian Englishes spoken in Hong Kong, India and Singapore (‘Singular *they* in Asian Englishes: A case of linguistic democratization?’). While the origins of singular *they* can be traced back to the fourteenth century, its use was stifled by eighteenth-century prescriptive traditions, which put forward generic *he* as the standard epicene or gender-neutral pronoun. Singular *they* has seen a revival since the 1970s, however, when it came to be promoted as an inclusive pronoun in the context of non-sexist language reforms and language democratization. With singular *they* now being generally accepted in Standard English, the question remains to what extent its use has also spread in outer-circle varieties of English. Based on data from the ICE corpora, the study finds that the relative frequency of singular *they* is lower in the three Asian Englishes under consideration than in British English. Among the three varieties, singular *they* is most common in Hong Kong English, where we also find the most uses of singular *they* with antecedents which preclude any plural interpretation. After ruling out substratum language contact and evolutionary phase as possible explanatory factors, the author concludes that the process of language democratization seems to be more prevalent in Hong Kong English, but suggests that further research should be expanded to include alternatives to singular *they*, most notably generic *he* and the coordinate construction *he or she*.

The notion of constructional variation across World Englishes is explicitly addressed in Marianne Hundt’s chapter on mandative constructions, which homes in on the alternation between mandative subjunctives on the one hand and periphrastic constructions with *should* on the other (e.g. *Saudi King Salman ordered that women (should) be allowed to drive cars*). The study reconciles previous descriptive, corpus-based research on the mandative

subjunctive with studies which have looked into regional variation in mandative constructions. Based on data from the ICE corpora and, in a follow-up study, the GloWbE corpus, Hundt assesses the relative importance of contextual and extralinguistic variables in predicting the choice between the subjunctive and periphrastic construction, as well as the interactions between them. Multivariate analyses reveal that the lexical trigger for the mandative construction is in fact the strongest predictor across all varieties, but that with semantically weaker triggers such as *suggest* there is more interaction between regional variety and lexical item. These region-specific effects, it is argued, are best accounted for in a Construction Grammar framework, which allows for a more nuanced perspective on constructional variation at different levels of abstraction.

Concluding the volume is the chapter ‘The stative progressive in Singapore English: A panchronic perspective’ by Debra Ziegeler and Christophe Lenoble. This final chapter brings together most of the central themes of the volume, taking a diachronic perspective in order to understand synchronic, regional variation. Of particular interest in this study are extended uses of the progressive in international varieties of English, such as stative progressives which express a permanent state (e.g. *he is not having any education*), or which combine with less agentive subjects (e.g. *I’m having a cold*). Such uses are uncommon in standard varieties of English, where stative progressives are usually limited to contexts which evoke a dynamic, temporally delimited interpretation (e.g. *I’m having a good time*) or which express the speaker’s subjective opinion (e.g. *she was being nose-y*). On the basis of corpus data, it is shown that a significant portion of the stative progressives in Singapore English occur with the lexeme *having*, which furthermore have a tendency to express adversity (e.g. *you are having pimples on your face*). One possible explanation for such uses might be that the speaker wishes to counterbalance the unpleasantness of the situation by linking it with a marker of temporary duration. As for other, non-adversative uses found in outer-circle varieties of English, the hypothesis of historical replication is put forward. From a diachronic perspective, extended uses of the stative progressive reflect the early stages of development of the progressive, which originally allowed for a broader range of imperfective uses and only later underwent a gradual process of aspectual narrowing. This path of development, the authors argue, is consistent with a reanalysis of the progressive along a noun–verb continuum. Possibly, then, these earlier diachronic stages, which are consistent with the lexical aspect of the stative verb, are replicated in the new, international varieties of English.

Owing to its thematic diversity, the present volume serves as a useful resource for researchers interested in current topics in English linguistics, from both a theoretical and methodological perspective. The volume’s focus on areas of intersection in the domains of phonology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics offers new opportunities for the study of linguistic variation and change, but also reveals its challenges. Thus, the contributions highlight the importance of exploring underresearched areas of intersection (Hickey), studying (grammaticalizing) linguistic items in relation to their systemic environment (Ritt, Baumann and Prömer; Davidse and Van Ilden; Lewis) as well as their broader discourse and sociocultural context (Tottie; Doran and Ward;

Cornillie; Loureiro-Porto), and applying meticulous data analysis and rigorous methodology to identify systematic patterns of variation (Krug, Schützler and Werner; Hundt; Ziegeler and Lenoble).

Overall, it can be concluded that this volume, through its scope and contributions, offers an excellent tribute to Teresa Fanego (to whom the volume is dedicated), whose pioneering work as a founder of the research unit Variation, Language Change and Grammaticalization at the University of Santiago de Compostela has influenced and connected a broad range of linguistic domains.

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Ira Noveck, *Experimental Pragmatics: The making of a cognitive science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. 274. ISBN 9781107084902.

Reviewed by Enrique del Teso , University of Oviedo

Every scientific theory has to be testable. Popper (1935) would say the statement that does not allow testability cannot be scientific or have empirical value; a testable and verifiable statement may have empirical value and not be scientific, only a testable and falsifiable statement may be scientific. The experimentation refers to all the activities that test scientific theories and data. We should then say that there is no theory that does not have its corresponding experimental task. This is in principle the case in most scientific