

The evolution of functional left peripheries in Hungarian syntax. Ed. by KATALIN É. KISS. (Oxford studies in diachronic & historical linguistics.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 263. ISBN 9780198709855. \$110 (Hb).

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This is the first English language book on Hungarian diachronic syntax in the generative framework. It summarizes the outstanding achievements of a four-year OTKA (Hungarian Scientific Research Fund) project on diachronic syntax of Hungarian, carried out at the Research Institute for Linguistics under the leadership of Katalin É. Kiss. The book is a somewhat more concise version of the Hungarian publication É. Kiss 2014, adapted to an international readership.

The book provides an empirical overview of the syntactic changes in Hungarian, covering the following five major areas: basic sentence structure, DP structure, quantification, PP structure, and subordination. The book's title is slightly misleading since the volume is not explicitly about the functional left periphery in all of the above areas, but rather about the development of functional material (in the left periphery or elsewhere) that is closely linked to historical change and grammaticalization. The diachronic data studied are texts originating between the end of the twelfth century and the end of the sixteenth century, from the second half of the Old Hungarian period (which roughly corresponds to six centuries between c. 900 and 1500) and the beginning of the Middle Hungarian era that followed it. In this period, the most important documents comprise forty-seven hand-written codices (Old Hungarian) and printed books in various genres (Middle Hungarian). These texts were annotated and entered into a corpus built for the project (currently available for the Hungarian-speaking audience at <http://oldhungariancorpus.nytud.hu>). The building of the corpus itself was a massive undertaking, the details of which (the process of digitalization, problems of character recognition, text encoding, annotation, etc.) are documented by ESZTER SIMON in the appendix to the volume.

The five chapters detailing historical change in Hungarian share a methodology. The reconstruction of the Proto-Hungarian language (with no surviving documents) is based on the S-curve method (Croft 2000): new constructions first spread slowly, then fast, then slowly again, while old constructions are ousted following the reverse pattern. Using the backward extension of these curves, as well as comparisons with the Ob-Ugric sister languages Khanti and Mansi, the research established several features of Proto-Hungarian and Old/Middle Hungarian.

The following gives a brief summary of the chapter contents. Ch. 1 by KATALIN É. KISS argues that Hungarian has changed from an SOV to an SVO language, a change that went hand in hand with the disappearance of unmarked objects and the appearance of the modern Hungarian left periphery. Possibly, rightward-dislocated phrases came to be reanalyzed as base-generated arguments, bringing about the reanalysis of preverbal elements as A-bar constituents, resulting in a Topic-Focus-V-X order (rather than, strictly speaking, SVO). The change must have taken place before the start of the Old Hungarian period since the fifty clauses of the first Old Hungarian document already utilize every clausal functional projection that is attested in Modern Hungarian. Although the head-final nature of Proto-Hungarian is argued for on the basis of evidence that VP, TP, and CP were all head-final in that period, the role of Tense is neglected throughout in the change from SOV to the Old Hungarian structure. Note that there is precious little on this topic even in the highly relevant chapter on finite and nonfinite subordination apart from an important, though rather brief, observation, claiming that 'Old Hungarian was not an OV language any more, yet auxiliaries strictly followed the main verb, which means that VP was not head final, but TP/AspP still was' (n. 17, p. 182).

The paper also provides a detailed account of the development of object agreement, which is descended from topic-verb agreement in Proto-Hungarian, where the subject was a primary topic, and the object a focus or a secondary topic, which triggered agreement only in the latter case (an instance of differential object agreement). By the twelfth century, agreement with the primary topic generalized as subject agreement and agreement with the secondary topic as object agreement.

The last chapter, by JÚLIA BÁCSKAI-ATKÁRI and ÉVA DÉKÁNY, provides an exhaustive characterization of nonfinite clauses, which served as the primary means of subordination in the Proto-Hungarian period, and a description of the complementizer system in the Old/Middle Hungarian period. It follows from the nature of the two sections that the one on nonfinite clauses is concerned more with the evolution of the Tense-*v*-V system, while the section on finite subordination is concerned more with that of the CP system. In the excellent introduction to nonfinite clauses the reader learns about the obsolete gerund, as well as eight distinct types of adjectival and adverbial participles, some of which have lost their original functions, or the ability to agree, or have become fully obsolete. It is pointed out that PRO and overt subjects were not in complementary distribution and that nominative case on the subject did not depend on there being subject agreement on the participles; this has repercussions for theories of structural case. In the second part of the chapter the discussion remains narrowly limited to the development of complementizers (and relative pronouns), but with crystal clear results: it is shown that complementizers developed from A-bar moved material (*hogy* from ‘how’, *ha* from ‘when’, *mint* from ‘how’, and *mert* from ‘why’, and grammaticalized as lower or higher C heads, the combinations of which gave rise to a variety of attested symmetrical combinations through the centuries (*hogyha/hahogy*, *mintha/hamint*, *hogymint/minthogy*, etc.). Working through all attested combinations and their history, Bácskai-Atkári and Dékány aptly show that Hungarian developed a split CP system in subordinate clauses and lower complementizers could be reanalyzed as higher ones.

While the book is almost typo-free, there are some inconsistencies in the glosses that are unfortunate for the non-Hungarian readership. The glosses of the paradigm of (synchronic) pronominal objects on pp. 22–23 (see also example 1 above copied from the book) are far from transparent: *engem*, the first singular object pronoun, is glossed as ‘me’ and *téged* (2SG) as ‘you-ACC’, while neither carries the accusative *-t* ending. *Minket* (1PL), *őt* (3SG), and *őket* (3PL) are glossed ‘us/him/them’, respectively, even though they all have accusative *-t* at the end, just like *titeket* (2PL), which is glossed ‘you-PL-ACC’. For a clearer overview of the individual morphemes, the reader should consult p. 24, where the 1SG and 2SG object pronouns are glossed morpheme by morpheme, and p. 60, where the same is present in connection with the possessive affix that appeared in some of them (a relic of a once productive definiteness marking). Let us add here that while the book is full of interesting data and analyses, the nonnative reader would have been better served by a more extensive hyphenation of the morphemes in the Hungarian examples, corresponding to that of the glosses, as well as in the several tables and tree diagrams showing the development of complex conjunctions. Finally, some of the chapters are not consistent enough in distinguishing functional labels, such as Spec, and categorial ones, such as DP, in the tree diagrams.

Even though the goal of the book is to provide a descriptive overview of the historic changes, it would have been helpful for theoretically oriented readers if the book had provided a summary of all principles of syntactic change that proved useful in the analysis. The economy principles of structural change in van Gelderen 2008—that is, that adjuncts become specifiers, specifiers heads, and lower heads higher heads—are occasionally referred to as active in the diachrony of Hungarian, but there is no reflection on the choice of these principles: were these the only ones that were in line with the findings? Or were they the only ones that were considered? And if so, why?

Despite the minor shortcomings mentioned above, this book is a landmark in the Hungarian generative tradition: it offers an informed view on the development of certain aspects of Hungarian syntax and will provide a lasting impetus for future studies on language change in Hungarian and the Finno-Ugric family of languages.

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Confusion of tongues: A theory of normative language. By STEPHEN FINLAY. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 288. ISBN 9780199347490. \$69 (Hb).

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We begin with *good*. *Good*, Finlay suggests, is an incomplete predicate. When we say something is good we are saying something of this form.

- (1) It is good for e if p.

Where p is some proposition (for *good*, he argues, is fundamentally expressive of a propositional operator), and e is some end salient in the context. Such salience is a slippery thing. Sometimes *Drinking a lot of gin is good* might be relative to the end of having fun. But we can still ask *Drinking a lot of gin may be fun, but is it good?* to raise the question of its conduciveness to some other end comparable in eligibility for salience, such as health perhaps. So we have a form of reductive naturalism that offers to defuse the OPEN QUESTION ARGUMENT. Or at least we do when we complete the reduction in the way F proposes.

- (2) 'It is good for e if p' means that p increases the probability of e.

Or more precisely:

- (3) 'It is good for e if p' means that $\text{pr}(e/p \ \& \ b) > \text{pr}(e/\sim p \ \& \ b)$.

Where b specifies certain background conditions.

Along the way in discussing *good*, F has a swipe at the Aristotelian moral functionalist. A sentence saying *X is a good K*, where K is some functional kind, has both a functional reading, where the end served by the state of affairs denoted by p in which X features as a K is that end e_K specified by the function of K; and a nonfunctional reading, where X is something that happens to be a K featuring in some state of affairs good for some contextually salient e. F now claims we can distinguish these readings in the following way. On a nonfunctional reading, X being a good (or bad) K entails X being a K. On a functional reading, it does not. (This test is credited to Shyam Nair.) To be a good (or bad) person, he then proposes, entails being a person. Likewise, to be a good (or bad) human being entails being a good human being. Goodbye moral functionalism. It would be good to see this very quick argument slowed down a bit. As it stands, I am not quite clear what the rules would be for seeking counterexamples. An ice-axe is not a weapon, but it may be a good weapon. Only, if it is a good weapon, it surely is a weapon. Do we take *weapon* here to mean something made for a martial purpose or something serviceable to one? On the latter understanding, *weapon* surely still counts as a functional kind, but it is hard here to see how a good weapon could fail to be a weapon. Maybe things get clearer if we accentuate the negative. A postage stamp is a really bad weapon. Indeed, it is (partly for that reason) not a weapon at all.

We turn next to *ought*. F focuses on the instrumental conditional.

- (4) If Max wants to evade arrest, then he ought to mingle with the crowd.

F tackles this in two steps. The first offers an analysis of the more straightforward:

- (5) If Max is going to evade arrest, then he has to mingle with the crowd.