Finally, a short remark on methodology in handling complicated crosslinguistic data is in order. Simplicity, as an essential art of science, is a long-pursued aim of generative grammar. Therefore a desirable result would be to reduce complex visibles to simple invisibles, rather than taking the surface disharmonic order to be real. In this light, P's taking the surface position of SFPs at face value seems unsatisfactory. In addition, the head parameter as a crucial grammatical principle might, to a large extent, be preserved. Nevertheless, the book elegantly sheds new light on how to DO syntax for languages with impoverished morphology such as Chinese. Hence, it is a must-read for students and scholars interested in Chinese syntax.

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Evolutionary syntax. By LJILJANA PROGOVAC. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pp. xv, 261. ISBN 9780198736554. $50.

Reviewed by BARBARA CITKO, *University of Washington–Seattle*

This book, published within the series 'Oxford studies in evolutionary syntax', is a very valuable contribution to the research on the evolution of language. In broad terms, Progovac takes a gradualist stance (see also Pinker & Bloom 1990, Jackendoff 2002, Newmeyer 2005, Heine & Kuteva 2007, among many others), arguing for well-defined intermediate stages in the evolution of language, positing the existence of proto-language (and outlining its structure), and suggesting a plausible evolutionary path from proto-language to modern languages. This view is a departure from the so-called saltationalist approaches (see, for example, Fitch et al. 2005, Berwick & Chomsky 2016), the proponents of which essentially reject the existence of intermediate evolutionary stages.[1] The idea that language evolved gradually, and that the remnants of earlier stages

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[1] [Editor's note] Berwick & Chomsky 2016 is also reviewed in this issue of *Language*.

are still present in the form of so-called living fossils, is not unique to P's proposal (see, for example, Jackendoff 2002). What strikes me as the book's most valuable contribution is an in-depth empirical study of two such living fossils (i.e. root small clauses and exocentric compounds), a very concrete proposal of what the stages were, and a wealth of empirical data to support the existence of living fossils in a variety of languages. While the core data in the book come from English and Serbian, supporting evidence from other Slavic languages (Polish, Russian, Macedonian), Romance languages, Riau Indonesian, Nicaraguan Sign Language, Chinese, and Twi, among others, adds a welcome crosslinguistic perspective.

In addition to linguistics, P includes insights from the fields of evolutionary biology, genetics, and neuroscience, with an eye toward encouraging cross-disciplinary research into the fundamental questions surrounding the evolution of language. Individual chapters, while focusing on syntax, provide additional evidence from language acquisition, neurolinguistic, processing, and animal communication studies to support the main claims. The appendix, coauthored with Noa Ofen, outlines possible directions for neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic research to test the hypothesis that the living fossils exist and are processed differently from their full-fledged hierarchical counterparts.

Ch. 1, 'Introduction', provides a general overview of the proposal, previews the main points of the subsequent chapters, and provides a rationale for using internal reconstruction as the primary research tool. The internal reconstruction method takes a given structure as primary relative to another structure if the former can exist independently of the latter but not vice versa (9).

Ch. 2, 'The small (clause) beginnings', focuses on so-called root small clauses as remnants of the paratactic proto-syntax stage. These come in the following varieties: 'Mad Magazine' sentences (*Him retire*), imperative/optative ones (*Family first!*), and participial ones (*Point taken*). They tend to be morphologically simple, they cannot be embedded, they do not allow their subparts to be questioned, and they can be concatenated with at most one other small clause, resulting in somewhat formulaic combinations (e.g. *Easy come, easy go*). In addition to impoverished syntax, such small clauses tend to have 'specialized' meanings, often expressing incredulity, commands, or wishes. In this chapter (and throughout the monograph), P thoughtfully acknowledges exceptions, such as the fact that many types of small clauses can be easily embedded (e.g. *I consider syntax fun*) and contain a source of case or functional structure (e.g. instrumental case in Russian or functional particles like the English *as*), or the fact that some sequences of three (rather than two) small clause combinations are also possible. The existence of such exceptions is an important aspect of the proposal that fossils did not get replaced by their more complex counterparts. Hence, the full-fledged small clauses are not expected to exhibit the same properties as their proto-syntactic 'counterparts'.

Ch. 3, 'The intransitive two-word stage: Absolutives, unaccusatives, and middles as precursors to transitivity', strengthens the case for a two-word paratactic stage. It continues the discussion of small clauses, focusing on their internal structure: in particular on what P refers to as 'absolutive-like syntax', where a single argument can function either as a subject or an object. The choice between the two interpretations is guided by context, sometimes resulting in ambiguity. This chapter also outlines the evolutionary path toward transitivity, suggesting that transitivity can be viewed as a consequence of the emergence of hierarchical structure, with middles illustrating the transitional stage.

Ch. 4, 'Parataxis and coordination as precursors to hierarchy: Evolving recursive grammars', builds on the discussion of small clauses in Chs. 2 and 3 and motivates three distinct stages in the evolution of language (in addition to the obvious one-word stage): (i) the paratactic proto-syntax stage, (ii) the proto-coordination stage, and (iii) the hierarchical/subordination stage. It also develops an interesting hypothesis that the syntactic operations of adjunction, coordination, and subordination provide an illustration of what was available at each evolutionary stage.

The first stage, the paratactic stage, is hypothesized to have involved a simple concatenation operation and no hierarchy or headedness. On this view, the first syntactic operation was a kind of concatenation operation P refers to as 'proto-Merge'. The second stage, the proto-coordination stage, was a stage in which various type of linkers (including linking morphemes in compounds)

emerged. However, there was still no hierarchy at this stage. The third stage, the specific functional category stage, involved the emergence of full-fledged hierarchical structure, mediated by functional categories such as Tense or Complementizer heads. This stage is also the stage where movement might have arisen, as these functional categories provided landing sites for moved elements.

Ch. 5, 'Islandhood (subjacency) as an epiphenomenon of evolutionary tinkering', provides an interesting perspective on the existence of island constraints in the grammar. It argues that islands are remnants of the evolutionary stage in which parataxis was a primary way of combining elements. On this view, constructions that could be argued to be paratactic in the relevant sense will constitute islands. It is thus quite natural, P argues, for adjuncts and coordinate structures to be islands, if adjunction and coordination are indeed remnants of paratactic syntax. It is not clear, however, why islands should be so pervasive in modern languages, since arguably not all coordination or adjunction structures involve parataxis any more (see, for example, arguments for a hierarchical structure for coordination in Progovac 1998a,b). While the evolutionary perspective on islandhood is quite intriguing, it raises interesting questions involving types of islands, crosslinguistic variation, and the precise correlation between the level of syntactic integration and the presence or absence of island effects. The view presented in this chapter does not exclude the existence of more than one type of island, as some islands (such as WH-islands or subject islands) do not seem to easily fit the evolutionary scenario suggested here. Perhaps some islands are the result of earlier paratactic stages, and others evolved through some other means.

Ch. 6, 'Exocentric VN compounds: The best fossils', is a case study in exocentric verb-noun compounds such as *turn-coat* or *pick pocket*. If these compounds are the product of the proto-syntax stage, their exocentric nature falls out naturally; headedness emerged later, together with the emergence of hierarchical structure. There are a number of properties that such compounds have that suggest they are the product of proto-syntax: they consist of two elements, with the noun having absolutive-like properties and the single nominal being interpreted as either a subject (as in *turn-table* or *copy-cat*) or an object (as in *pick pocket*, *turn-coat*) and sometimes ambiguous between the two interpretations. P carefully contrasts these types of compounds with other more structured VN compounds, such as the *-er* compounds in English (i.e. *truck-driver*, *meat-eater*) and their Serbian equivalents. The chapter also tackles the question of what role natural selection might have played in the emergence of these compounds, suggesting that they 'may have been an adaptive way to compete for status and sex in ancient times' (168). The fact that such compounds tend to have derogatory meanings and are often used as insults and/or commands adds plausibility to this view.

Ch. 7, 'The plausibility of natural selection for syntax', discusses the role natural selection might have played in the progression from one stage to the next, arguing that communicative advantages (such as reduction in vagueness or increase in expressive power) were the driving forces. This chapter also positions the stages within the timeline of human evolution, carefully demonstrating how the existence of distinct stages is compatible with several distinct evolutionary scenarios.

In conclusion, P offers a plausible and intriguing perspective on the evolution of language, arguing explicitly for a gradualist, natural-selection-driven approach, stating it in minimalist terms, and thus showing that a gradualist perspective can be compatible with the minimalist view of language. The proposal not only is well argued and supported with a wealth of data, but also is presented in a very engaging and accessible way, making it of interest and relevance to linguists and nonlinguists alike.

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The language of fraud cases. By ROGER SHUY. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pp. 301. ISBN 9780190270643. $99 (Hb).

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Most of Roger Shuy's book, *The language of fraud cases*, describes cases in which S was involved as a linguistic expert, called by parties who were accused of some kind of fraud. Written in a journalistic style to engage readers from multiple disciplines, the book is a recent addition to a series of books that S has written over the past decade, describing his experiences as an expert witness. Other books in the series describe murder cases (2014), bribery cases (2013), sexual misconduct cases (2012), perjury cases (2011), and defamation cases (2010).

The case narratives most often describe a hypervigilant investigator or cooperating witness interpreting the target's ambiguous or incomplete statements to confirm the suspicion that the target of the investigation has indeed committed a fraud. The parties under investigation were ultimately seen by prosecutors as having lied or having been deceptive in some other way about being engaged in illegal activity.

S's analyses of these cases attempt to turn the government's narrative on its head. It is the investigator and the cooperating witness who act deceitfully, according to S. And indeed they do act deceitfully. In one case after another, the investigator resorts to double entendre, incomplete statements, and sudden changes in topic in efforts to lure the target into revealing a criminal agenda. The target believes himself to be participating in one speech event (see Hymes 1972), such as negotiation or receiving the report of a subordinate, while the speech event in which the investigator is involved is a fishing expedition to trap the target into an admission. Often, these efforts take the form of creating opportunities for the target to confirm the investigator's view that the target has engaged or is planning to engage in illegal activity. One must commit a fraud to uncover a fraud, standard law enforcement practices would hold. S suggests that this position is wrongful in principle, and ineffective in that it frequently leads to the prosecution of innocent people, since the government sets low standards for determining when it has actually uncovered a fraud.

Ch. 1 summarizes the law of fraud and the nature of linguistic inquiry in determining whether a fraud has been committed. Fraud is a crime of dishonesty. One commits a fraud by making false or misleading statements to another. If the victim of the fraud reasonably relies on the false or misleading statements and is thereby injured, a fraud has been committed. Some laws make it a crime to engage in a scheme to commit a fraud, which means that the fraud does not have to be successful to be illegal. Other laws require that the fraud be carried out.

Fraud is not the same as lying and does not require a lie, if we understand a lie to be a statement that the speaker believes is false but utters in an effort to pass it off as the truth. If a person makes a false statement, he does not commit a fraud if the statement does not induce a victim to act to