
Reviewed by Sara Gómez-Seibane, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha

The book edited by Beatriz Fernández and Ricardo Etxepare compiles a set of research projects regarding the syntactic nature of datives from a micro-comparative perspective. Directed at linguistic variation and especially syntactic micro-variation researchers, this book is made up of an introduction by the editors, ten chapters with their corresponding references, and an alphabetized index of terms and issues, which makes searching the book’s content considerably easier.

Using the principles and parameters model, this book deals with the syntactic variation understood as an intrinsic element belonging to grammar. Within this conception, the crosslinguistic variation responds to a closed set of parameters in accordance with the principles, rules, and mechanisms of Universal Grammar known as macro-parameters or metaparameters. Nevertheless, the difficulty for formulating parameters which cover a wide domain, mostly in many languages for which the available knowledge is incomplete, has motivated many linguists to pay attention to more limited variation zones. This is one of the reasons there has been an increased interest in studying genetically close languages or dialects of the same language or, in other words, microparameter variation. Along these lines, the crosslinguistic and dialectal syntactic microvariation is revealed as a research tool, which allows both marking out which properties are common and which are specific as well as the possibility of refining the enunciation of the macroparameters.

Within this framework, the contributors of this book analyze the syntactic behavior of datives in European languages such as Serbo-Croatian, French, Basque, Icelandic, Feroese, German, Greek, and Spanish. Among other syntactic behavior, the chapters examine selected and not selected datives in French and the connection of this type of clitics with the evaluative mood in a set of Serbo-Croatian dialects. The papers also describe dative and accusative alternations in different types of predicates in Icelandic and the use of *la/s* as dative (*laísmo*) closely related to other aspects which affect the ditransitive constructions of Spanish. Regarding case marking and agreement, the extension of dative marking to DPs, which express several types of spatial functions, is analyzed in some varieties of the Basque language. Moreover, different models of syncretism are explained for Basque and German.

The chapters in this book are a highly specialized contribution to generative grammar. For this reason, readers need to possess a high level of knowledge of this theoretical focus in order to adequately follow and value the proposals. The result is, most definitely, a work which deeply delves into the syntactic variation of datives and which presents new directions of research for both some of the least described languages—Basque and Serbo-Croatian—and more analyzed languages such as the Romance or Germanic languages.