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This volume was published in the aftermath of the International Conference on English Historical Linguistics, which took place in Essen in 2016. It thus represents a cross section of the research going on in the field of English historical morphosyntax. Since the book covers different topics, the introduction is not a state-of-the-art overview, but very briefly situates the contributions within the larger field of English historical linguistics. The thirteen contributions are grouped under three headings: nominal constructions, verbal constructions, and adverbs and adverbials, and the editors provide short summaries of each article. In the following I also summarize each article, but focus on providing some information about data, methods, and results as well. Obviously, the summaries do not do justice to the complexities of the research, but are meant as an aid to understanding how research is carried out in the field. At the end I provide some general comments.

Elżbieta Adamczyk’s contribution concerns changes in the nominal morphology of Old English. Old English nouns belonged to declensional classes that depended on the original stem type, but the system was unstable. Adamczyk proposes three factors that led to the restructuring of the nominal morphology. The first is frequency of occurrence, and a correlation is shown between the level of innovation in the Old English nominative and accusative plural and the proportion of plurals: the declensional classes that are less frequent in the plural show a high level of innovation in their plural paradigms. The second factor is morphophonological salience: the more salient inflectional markers resist analogical pressure. Salience is defined according to certain criteria such as zero marking, suffixation, and consonant and vocalic stem modulation. The third factor is the analogical pressure on neutral forms in the paradigms, analogy being triggered by cross-paradigmatic similarities: the higher the percentage of neutral forms in the paradigm, the higher the percentage of innovation. Adamczyk also considers how the interaction between fre-
quency and morphophonological salience shapes the system. Her approach is usage-based, so analogy is viewed as a functional mechanism resulting in functional forms being favored over less functional forms.

Nouns and case are also the topic of Kirsten Middeke’s chapter, in which she considers the instrumental case in Old English and the issue of whether it is a separate case or subsumed under the dative. After an initial discussion of ‘vestigial’ case, she provides a distributional analysis of frequencies and collexemes (e.g. Stefanowitsch & Gries 2003), comparing the dative and the instrumental cases. She looks at which nouns occur with the instrumental and dative determiners, and with instrumental-case adjectives. The finding is that the Old English instrumental expresses time in particular, but also manner and place, and importantly that it fulfills functions that are distinct from the dative. Middeke then moves on to a discussion about the productivity of the functional differences observed, in view of the fact that the instrumental on the one hand is never obligatory, and on the other hand is semantically restricted. Here she concludes that the instrumental is partially productive. The overall conclusion is that the opposition between the instrumental and the dative is ‘vestigial’, since the instrumental-dative opposition was optional. However, the instrumental contributes functions that are distinct from those of the dative, which means that the instrumental case is a separate category in the case system.

Jerzy Nykiel studies the pronouns one and other with initial th- and t- in Middle English, that is, thone, thother, tone, tother. After presenting corpus data showing the distribution, Nykiel discusses the origin of the pronouns and the two possible ways in which they could have arisen, either by reduction of the definite article or by misanalysis due to incorrect syllable division. He finds that reduction was responsible for the formation of thone and thother, while the formation of tone and tother may have been due in part to reduction and in part to misanalysis. A comparison is then made with the lifespan of reduced th’ in general, that is, th’ with a noun as host. Finally, Nykiel relates the findings to the DP cycle (Lyons 1999, van Gelderen 2011). As regards thone and thother, they show cliticization of the article, which is an expected stage in the DP cycle. Tone and tother, by contrast, are often preceded by a definite determiner. Such cases either can be analyzed as cases of double definiteness, since a stage in the DP cycle is renewal of definiteness by an additional definiteness marker, or alternatively tone/tother may be analyzed as lexicalized pronouns, with a fossilized t- incorporated into the structure of the pronoun and thus not contributing definiteness. Nykiel concludes, however, that the former is the more likely interpretation.

The similarities between Old English and Old Frisian are the topic of Rebecca Colleran’s study, in which she considers two hypotheses, that is, whether Old English and Old Frisian had a common Anglo-Frisian ancestor, or whether they were rather neighbors in a North Sea dialect continuum. The aim is to explore, in a methodologically rigorous way, grammaticalization as a diagnostic tool for distinguishing between inheritance, contact, and postseparation drift. After a discussion of various scenarios, resulting in a presentation of the diagnostic criteria, she uses as test cases two grammaticalizations that Old English and Old Frisian shared, namely the use of aga(n) ‘have to’ as an auxiliary, and the present participle as verb complement. Colleran finds that in both test cases the grammaticalizations are globally shared, meaning that they share form, function, and distribution, which is one of the diagnostics. In addition, the development of aga(n) shows all of the intermediate stages of grammaticalization in both languages, another diagnostic, and the participle as complement is a bound morpheme, which is also a diagnostic indicating that the languages are genealogically related. The findings thus provide strong support for the Anglo-Frisian hypothesis.

Another contribution dealing with the verbal domain and grammaticalization is Ilse Wischer’s semantic and syntactic analysis of Old English wolde and sceolde, that is, the past tenses of willan ‘will’ and *sculan ‘shall’. The Present-day English modals are grammaticalized forms of the Old English premodals, and establishing how far the grammaticalization process had come in the earliest stages has been a topic of research. The focus has been on present-tense forms, while past-tense forms have been less studied. Wischer first presents the theoretical foundations of the study, that is, how grammaticalization theory can account for the evolution of modal verbs, and she shows how the two verbs have taken different paths toward epistemic modality. Then she
analyzes the empirical data, which consist of past-tense forms of willan and *sculan from poetry texts in the Dictionary of Old English corpus. The results of the empirical analysis enable her to conclude that wolde and sceolde are primarily used as auxiliaries in Old English poetry, but with some differences in the type of modality expressed. In addition, the use of wolde and sceolde with non-past-time reference expressing future in the past probably contributed to the development of will/shall as future markers, although the forms differ somewhat with respect to the degree of bleaching in such contexts.

Verbs and modality are also the focus of attention in Sofia Bemposta-Rivas’s corpus-based account of the verbs dare, tharf, and need in Middle English and Early Modern English. In grammaticalization theory, the unidirectionality principle states that changes move from more to less lexical or from less to more grammatical (Börjars & Vincent 2011). Dare is an exception (Beths 1999, Schlüter 2010), and Bemposta-Rivas investigates why dare first embarks upon a grammaticalization path, but then reacquires lexical features in the late Middle English period. A central point is that dare must be studied in conjunction with the verbs tharf ‘to be obliged to do something’ and need. After considering morphological, syntactic, and semantic features, as well as orthography and phonology, Bemposta-Rivas finds that dare and tharf, originally two distinct verbs, are confused in Middle English, due to similarities in spelling and pronunciation, as well as influence from the verb need, which, like tharf, expresses obligation and possibility. With dare being used in tharf’s domain, the use of tharf decreases. Then need begins to compete with tharf, pushing tharf toward obsOLEcence. Since dare is already used in the field of ‘necessity’, it acquires certain complementation patterns from need and develops lexical verb features, which stops its progress along the grammaticalization path.

Using the Corpus of Middle English prose and verse, Judith Huber considers the factors that predict be versus have + past participle in Middle English, and puts two different accounts to the test. The starting point is Los’s (2015) hypothesis that ‘Aktionsart might be responsible: manner-of-motion verbs combine with have when they express process, and with be when they express change of location. In addition, McFadden and Alexiadou’s (2006, 2010) argument that counterfactuality played the main role is considered, as well as the form of the auxiliary (past, present, infinitive). Huber then looks at attestations of the motion verbs climb, creep, leap, run, ride, sail, swim, and walk. After a discussion of the results for the single variables, and narrowing down the data set in several control steps, Huber evaluates the effects of the different factors in a logistic regression analysis, finding that counterfactual semantics almost categorically predicts have. Aktionsart is also a reliable predictor, with have being used in ‘process’ contexts and be in ‘change of location’ contexts. A third clear predictor is auxiliary form: past tense predicts have. Huber’s analysis lends support both to traditional accounts of the development of the auxiliaries and to McFadden and Alexiadou’s alternative scenario.

Nuria Calvo Cortes takes the topic of be and have + past participle into the modern period in her study of eleven motion verbs in Jane Austen’s letters and novels: arrive, become, come, enter, fall, go, get, grow, pass, return, and run. Her approach is rooted in cognitive linguistics (Talmy 2000), and she therefore carries out an analysis of how the semantic components of motion situations, figure, ground, and path, affect the choice of auxiliary verb. Three hypotheses are considered: (i) the novels are more conservative than the letters, (ii) the novels are more faithful to the grammar rules of the time, and (iii) the lexical elements of the components of motion situations, being more or less physical or metaphorical, influence the choice of auxiliary. Calvo Cortes finds that there is a higher frequency of have in the novels than in the letters, which might be due to a higher degree of conservatism in the novels, caused by either editorial interventions or the author’s own consciousness of grammar rules. She also finds that the choice of auxiliary verb is conditioned by the components of motion situations in Austen’s writings, though further work is needed to establish whether this holds more generally as well.

Sarah Schwarz examines central get-passives in the Corpus of historical American English and compares them to be-passives, looking for evidence of grammaticalization. After retrieving data from four time periods (1870s, 1910s, 1950s, 1990s) and four genres (fiction, magazines, newspapers, nonfiction) and estimating the normalized frequency, Schwarz is able to present an overview of the diachronic development. There is a dramatic increase in the use of the get-
passive, with the least formal genre, fiction, taking the lead, and the most formal, nonfiction, being the most reluctant get user. At the same time, the frequency of the be-passive decreases, but there is no causal relation between the two developments. Schwarz then considers the situation type of get-passives, as well as subject type and the past participle collocates of both get- and be-passives. Based on changes in situation type, she finds that informal language paves the way for the increase in get-passives. Weakened restrictions on the use of specific subject types provide evidence of semantic bleaching. Finally, a wider range of past participles used with get indicates increased productivity of the get-passive. Taken together, these factors are signs of the continuing grammaticalization of the get-passive.

With Susanne Chrambach’s contribution, we move into the realm of adverbials and the ordering preference of time and place adverbials with respect to each other in the history of English. In Present-day English adverbial clusters, place adverbials usually precede time adverbials, whereas it was the other way around in Old English. In tracing the development, Chrambach takes corpus data, first extracted via queries and then processed manually, and annotates them for fifteen different features. Then a binary logistic regression model is used to establish how the features can predict adverbial order, on the assumption that the process is multifactorial. Chrambach’s general approach is functional, seeking to account for the mechanisms that lead to one order being preferred over the other. She finds that one factor in particular, obligatoriness, is highly influential in all periods of the language, followed by realization form. The effect of these factors can be related to the proximity principle (Hasselgård 2010), the principle of end weight, and the principle of given-before-new. Chrambach shows that the change in the ordering preference is gradual, with the reversal taking place at the end of the Middle English period and being linked to the increasingly fixed position of the lexical verb.

Ole Schützler’s chapter considers concessive clauses introduced by the conjunctions even though, although, and though in American English from 1860 to the present day. The data are taken from the Corpus of historical American English. To study the interaction between different parameters, Schützler uses an advanced multifactorial approach that includes syntactic and semantic criteria, as well as a diachronic perspective. The syntactic criteria are choice of subordinator, complement structure, complement length, and position of the subordinate clause. In addition, Schützler distinguishes between three semantic types of concessives: content, epistemic, and speech-act concessives. His results show that the relative frequency of speech-act concessives increases over the period, as does the frequency of finite clauses. Complement length also increases, but only in the even though clause variant. The main aim is to predict which variables have the greatest impact on the probability of final position for the clause. Schützler is able to show that even though connectives, especially epistemic and contact concessives, are more likely to appear in final position than although and though connectives. The length of the clause also pushes it toward final position. Diachronically, however, final placement is disfavored, but this effect is largely counterbalanced by the other factors.

Günter Rohdenburg explores intensifier marking in Modern English, more specifically the factors involved in the spread of the adverbial marker -ly, as in, for example, extreme angry vs. extremely angry, between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The hypothesis is that it is the degree of ‘verbality’ of the intensified element that determines whether the intensifier is suffixed. Consequently, Rohdenburg sets out to test this by distinguishing between various types of intensified elements: present and past participles, attributive and predicative adjectives, adverbs associated with predicative past participles, and prepositional phrases used predicatively. On the basis of the empirical study, Rohdenburg finds that verbality is indeed at play in marking the intensifier adverbially; for example, the proportion of intensifiers with -ly is high with predicative past participles and prepositional phrases, intermediate with predicative adjectives and present participles, and low with attributive adjectives, past participles, and present participles. However, manner adverbs do not behave according to the predictions. Rohdenburg concludes by suggesting that the diffusion of intensifier marking happened in successive stages.

The final chapter in the collection is by Uwe Vosberg and Günter Rohdenburg and concerns the evolution of the construction far from + being/∅ + predicative phrase in British and American English from the seventeenth century until the present day. The data are analyzed with the com-
plexity principle (Rohdenburg 1996, 2016, among others) in mind, according to which the presence of being in the construction would correlate with the morphosyntactic complexity of the predicative. In addition, the degree of clausal integration of far from is taken into account. Vosberg and Rohdenburg find that the degree of cognitive accessibility related to frequency, the morphological makeup of the adjective, and various syntactic constraints are all found to play a role in the loss or retention of being. In general, being is indeed kept in more complex structures. As regards the historical development, it is first shown that across the time period there is a marked decline in the use of being in British English far from constructions in which the predicative is an adjective. When this is compared with the development in American English, it emerges that the ‘lag and overtake scenario’ (Hundt 2009) applies, with American English lagging behind until the second half of the eighteenth century in the advance of the zero variant, before overtaking British English.

It is clear that this is a well-edited volume. All of the contributions are of high quality, which means that the editors had the reviewing process well in hand and that the authors revised their papers according to the feedback they received. Anyone who has edited a book will recognize the work that goes into a consistently high-quality collection of this kind. There are a few typos in the book as a whole, but nothing that detracts from the overall impression of a sound piece of editorial work.

Although this is a collection of articles covering a variety of topics, there is a nice coherence to it when the articles are read in succession. The book moves steadily, and often chronologically in terms of time periods, from nouns to verbs to adverbs and adverbials, expanding the reader’s horizon on the way and giving insights into what kinds of topics are of interest to researchers at the moment. However, what makes article collections like this one particularly useful, in my opinion, is the methodological and theoretical insights gained from them.

The contributions make use of a range of different corpora, such as the Dictionary of Old English corpus, the York-Toronto-Helsinki parsed corpus of Old English prose, the Penn-Helsinki corpus of parsed Middle English prose, the Corpus of Middle English prose and verse, the Penn-Helsinki parsed corpus of Early Modern English, the Parsed corpus of early English correspondence, Frisian language databases, the Corpus of historical American English, the British national corpus, and the Oxford English dictionary, as well as numerous electronic resources for magazines, newspapers, and literary texts. The volume is therefore solidly empirical throughout and based on corpus linguistics methods. These days it is unthinkable not to make use of the electronic resources available, as they have opened up research avenues that would otherwise have been impossible to pursue. The authors show how they collect the data, they present the data clearly, and in many cases, they perform quite advanced statistical tests to reveal connections that are not visible from the raw data alone, or from simple calculations of percentages. In other words, in this volume readers can find useful information about suitable methods for their own work.

The book also presents a range of theoretical perspectives, including functionalism, minimalism, grammaticalization theory, construction grammar, and cognitive linguistics. Readers looking for hardcore Chomskyan generative linguistics, however, will not find it here. Each contribution also contains reflections on possibilities for further research.

All in all, the volume is an excellent representative of the important genre of conference proceedings. In the field of historical linguistics, such volumes usually offer a wide range of studies dealing with various linguistic aspects on the basis of a range of theoretical perspectives, using different data and often quite advanced methods. As such they constitute an invaluable source of knowledge and inspiration, and this volume is no exception.

REFERENCES


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With its wide appeal across multiple audiences and its focused and coherent content, this book is an essential volume of the ‘Comparative handbooks of linguistics’ series published by De Gruyter Mouton. Thirteen syntactic theories are each represented by a chapter detailing the theory’s own perspective on goals, data, conceptual tools, and evaluative criteria, together with an analysis of the sentence After Mary introduced herself to the audience, she turned to a man that she had met before, to illustrate how different theories treat the same material. Following these theoretical chapters are six chapters of metatheoretical commentary, drawing on the philosophy of science to provoke foundational questions seldom asked in linguistic theorizing.

Of the broadly comparable books cited in the introduction, this one is most reminiscent of Stefan Müller’s magisterial textbook Grammatical theory, now in its fourth edition (2020); both share in combining broad coverage of theories and metatheoretical analysis putting theories in context. Yet Kertész, Moravcsik, and Rákosi’s compendium fills a different niche, as it is neither a textbook nor a work written from a single author’s point of view. Rather, the chapters on theory are a carefully curated collection written by proponents of the respective theories, explicitly ad-