BOOK REVIEWS

Elly van Gelderen, ed. *Cyclical Change Continued* (Linguistik
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Elly van Gelderen's *Cyclical Change Continued* (2016) is a collection of case-
studies in grammaticalization from a wide typological range of languages, and as
its title suggests, its main research objective is to advance our current understand-
ing of "cyclicity" in grammaticalization which is defined formally (Minimalist)
in her *Cyclical Change* (2009)[1] and many related works (e.g., van Gelderen 2011,
2015) as the reanalysis of interpretable features as uninterpretable in a structurally
correlated functional position (i-F > u-F) (van Gelderen 2008: 297). This reanaly-
sis not only renews the original syntactic dependency between the lexical item
and its corresponding functional head but also gives rise to the possible recur-
rence and hence "cyclic" change of the same categories (van Gelderen 2009: 8–9,
2011: 19–20). In the opening chapter, van Gelderen makes two programmatic
statements which underlie the chapters of this volume: (1) the search for linguistic
factors that may affect cyclical change in grammaticalization (p. 9), and (2) the
investigation of macrocycles, namely the typological shifts in analyticity and syn-
theticity that are traditionally associated with grammaticalization (pp. 3–8; cf. von
der Gabelentz 1901; Meillet 1921; Hodge 1970). In this review, I propose to eval-
uate van Gelderen (2016) against current research in formal historical syntax
and grammaticalization and point out certain parts of the volume which require
scrutiny and further investigation.

As is characteristic of van Gelderen's work, this volume contains a large
amount of empirical data from a wide range of languages and many original analy-
ses of new typological phenomena, e.g., Mithun's proposal of two rather unusual
and striking cycles (reflexive and distributive) in Iroquian (pp. 31–32), van
Gelderen and Bahtchevanova's analysis of portmanteau morphemes in colloquial

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1. Almost identical titles aside, both *Cyclical Change* (2009) and *Cyclical Change Continued*
(2016) consist of four thematic sections and examine a wide range of typological data from lan-
guages all around the world, not to mention the same contributors (Elly van Gelderen, Johan
van der Auwera, Remus Gergel, Clifton Pye), which suggests very similar research objectives
and agendas with the new volume further developing the notions of "cyclicity" in historical syn-
tax.

French which consist of a combination of preverbal subject and object pronominal clitics (pp. 126–128), Veselinova's typological analysis of a relatively under-explored type of negative cycle known as the Negative Existential Cycle (pp. 139–146), van der Auwera and Vossen's discovery of a possible new type of Jespersen Cycle in Mayan where the negative renewal occurs to the left of the verb in the form of a privative verbal prefix (pp. 210–212), Pye's analysis of Mayan negators which, contrary to the classic Jespersen's Cycle (Jespersen 1917), do not select indefinite pronouns but adverbial clitics as renewers (p. 225ff), and Wood's analysis of English demonstratives (*this, that, thus*) being reanalyzed as adverbial quantifiers in the nominal domain (p. 288ff). Furthermore, many new mechanisms of language change are proposed which not only seek new explanations for the empirical data but also enhance our understanding of grammaticalization, namely language contact, a somewhat underexplored factor in grammaticalization research (though see Matras 2011), which is advocated as a crucial factor in several chapters, e.g., the formation of directional verbal suffixes in Central Pomoan as analysed by Mithun (pp. 38–43), McWhorter's account of radical analyticity in Niger-Congo and Southeast Asian languages (p. 51ff), microvariations in the stages of Jespersen's Cycle in Central American languages as presented by van der Auwera & Vossen (p. 192ff), and various other syntactic factors which either accelerate or decelerate the rate of cyclical change, e.g., Szmrecsanyi's account of the rise and fall of analytic and synthetic structures in the history of English (pp. 101–108), van Gelderen and Bahtchevanova's argument of the catalytic effect of French subject-agreement markers on object-agreement markers (pp. 126–130), Veselinova's distinction between existential and dynamic constructions which seems to block the spread of negative existential verbs and halt the Negative Existential Cycle (p. 158ff), Gergel's comparative analysis of English and German which accounts for the slightly different changes in the etymologically related *rather* and *eher* (p. 320ff), Jędrzejowski's analysis of the cyclic relationship between three German verbal NPIs 'need' (*dürfen, bedürfen, brauchen*) which display similarities and subtle differences (p. 353ff), La Barge's synchronic and diachronic analysis of the layering in the evolution of Chinese future auxiliary *yao* (V > Mod > T(future)) which not only demonstrates categorial "lexical splits" (Roberts & Holmberg 2010) but also shows different strategies of strengthening and renewal (p. 398ff). All this results in a significantly more nuanced account of cyclical change in grammaticalization which fulfils van Gelderen's first research objective (see above).

With regards to the second objective, however, it must be noted that the notion of macrocycles, namely the cyclic relationship between analyticity and syntheticity, is highly controversial and difficult to define, as acknowledged by van Gelderen herself (pp. 5–8). Even so, she and the various authors of this volume may have underestimated the complexity and terminological vagueness of analyticity and

syntheticity in historical syntax, as shown by Ledgeway (2012: 10–29), who provides a very good critique of the notions of analyticity and syntheticity in relation to formal syntactic theory. Ledgeway (2012: 24–29) argues that these terms do not have any explanatory value in accounting for syntactic change and are at best descriptive labels for syntactic structures which need to be accounted for by independent linguistic principles. This is implicit in all the analyses of this volume, as the authors all provide different explanatory mechanisms for their respective case-studies; but the present reviewer would have liked to see this point made much more explicitly so as to avoid attributing erroneous explanatory value to these macrocycles in the form of analytic and synthetic structures.

Secondly, Ledgeway (2012: 21–24) shows convincingly, using Latin/Romance data, that the terms "analytic" and "synthetic" cannot be usefully applied to languages but rather to individual constructions, since analytic and synthetic structures may co-exist synchronically with little to no correlation between them, which ties in with seminal analyses of microparameters as based on the lexicon (Borer 1984; Chomsky 1995). Again, this point is briefly mentioned by van Gelderen (pp. 7–8) and McWhorter (p. 50) but the present reviewer would also have liked to see this emphasized much more so as to avoid making naïve claims of there being "analytic" or "synthetic" languages, as has sometimes been done in the traditional literature (e.g., von Schlegel 1818; Hodge 1970). A third and related point is that even if we restrict "analytic" and "synthetic" to the mere description of individual constructions, Ledgeway (2012: 16–21) argues, again using Latin/Romance data, that these are imprecise terms as morphosyntactic cohesion runs on a continuum and is hence gradable. For this reason, I believe that a more rigorous and sophisticated quantitative method for measuring the morphophonological weight/length of functional morphemes would have benefitted some of the analyses in this volume, especially since van Gelderen (p. 7) expresses dissatisfaction over Greenberg's (1960) classic yet primitive numerical indices for measuring morphemes when more sophisticated and useful quantitative measures of analyticity and syntheticity are available (e.g., Bybee, Pagliuca & Perkins 1991).[2]

The final and most important point pertains to the nature of formal parameters as currently envisaged, which may render the notion of macrocycles problematic if not untenable. As mentioned above, formal parameters are defined within the lexicon, and recent analyses (Roberts 2007, 2012; Roberts & Roussou 2003;

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2. One might also correlate the rate of morphophonological reduction with the frequency effects in grammaticalization, which is not only a very important theme in grammaticalization research ("co-evolution of meaning and form"; Bybee, Pagliuca & Perkins 1994: 18–20) but also a potentially very useful explanatory factor for analyzing analyticity and syntheticity in grammaticalization.

Roberts & Holmberg 2010) classify grammaticalization as a type of microparametric change where individual lexical items undergo categorial change, whereas macroparameters which do effect radical typological changes are defined as the clustering of formally similar microparameters which display similar patterns of parametric setting (Roberts 2012: 321–324; Roberts & Holmberg 2010: 36–51). Under this conception, it may be impossible to argue that grammaticalization affects language typology, unless one can show clearly that there is interaction and possibly clustering between individual microparameters in grammaticalization, which is indeed one of the main research goals of this volume, especially in the three chapters in the second section, 'Macro-cycles' (McWhorter, Szemerenyi, van Gelderen and Bahtchevanova).

Evidence for parametric clustering, however, is not strong since it is subject to alternative explanations. McWhorter's analysis of radical analyticity in languages of Niger-Congo and Southeast Asia rests on his proposal that these languages are formed via adult second-language acquisition under intense language contact, and since it is well-known that in the formation of pidgins and creoles analytic structures abound (Thomason & Kaufman 1988), radical analyticity in these languages seems to be a natural consequence of language contact and need not suggest that analytic structures all develop *en masse*. Similarly, Szmrecsanyi's proposal of a cyclic development of analyticity and syntheticity in the history of English does not suggest that analytic and synthetic structures all rise and fall at the same rate either, since a closer examination of the diachronic frequencies of the individual constructions actually shows divergent behaviour (p. 106–108). The strongest and most striking evidence for parametric clustering in grammaticalization is presented in van Gelderen and Bahtchevanova's portmanteau analysis of French subject and object pronominal clitics, which does seem to indicate that the subject-agreement parameter and the object-agreement parameter are interrelated, since Minimality in verb movement (V-to-T) entails that finite verbs traverse both the object-agreement (AgrO) and subject-agreement (AgrS) heads successively in forming person-agreement affixes (p. 131–133):

(1) Je   le   voi-s
     1SG PRO.3SG.MASC see-PRES.1SG
     'I see him' [ʒləvwa]   (p. 127)

However, the Romance data needs to be nuanced, since there are Romance varieties which have subject-agreement markers but no object-agreement (e.g., Northern Italian dialects; Roberts 2014), as well as numerous Romance varieties which have object clitic pronouns but no subject-agreement markers (Pescarini 2014; Roberts 2016), which suggests that subject-agreement is neither sufficient nor necessary for object-agreement, despite formal similarities between the two

functional heads (AgrS/AgrO) (van Gelderen 2011: 88–90). In order to show that French subject-agreement markers do have a catalytic effect on object-agreement markers due to Minimality of verb movement, one might need to compare object pronominal clitics across Romance languages and show that they are more frequent or salient in French by virtue of subject-agreement markers and then provide an independent explanation for the absence of object-agreement in Romance language that have subject-agreement markers. Until then, there seems to be little evidence in support of parametric clustering in grammaticalization, which leaves macrocycle a misnomer for grammaticalization.

Nonetheless, these criticisms do not deny the sheer empirical range and originality of many of the analyses in this volume, which marks a significant step forward in the field of formal historical syntax. Van Gelderen's *Cyclicity Continued* (2016) is hence a must-read for all formal syntacticians, historical linguists and language typologists, and it now remains for van Gelderen and other researchers of formal historical syntax (present reviewer included) to take this cyclicity enterprise yet further by applying a more rigorous quantitative approach to functional morphemes (see fn. 2) and performing a closer search for parametric clustering that might justify the existence of macrocycles in grammaticalization (Reintges 2012). After all, linguistic cycles (or syntax in general) are recursive and limitless, which means that our endeavours and enthusiasm in this field should also be inexhaustible in order to match the nature of our inquiry.

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