

Book reviews

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Peter Bakker & Maarten Mous (Eds.), *Mixed languages: 15 case studies in language intertwining*. (Studies in language and language use, 13.) Amsterdam: Institute for Functional Research into Language and Language Use (IFOTT), 1994. vii + 244pp.

This volume grew out of a workshop devoted to mixed languages held in Leiden in 1993. If anyone still doubts the existence of mixed languages, some of the fifteen papers here settle the question conclusively, but raise many other awkward problems.

The languages presented here are temporally and geographically diverse. Armana-Akkadian (Maarten Kossman, 169-173) dates from around 1400 BC, while Media Lengua (Pieter Muysken, 201-205) emerged in this century. There are languages from Indonesia: Petjo (Hadewych van Rheeden, 223-237) and Javindo (Miel de Gruiter, 151-159); Copper Island Aleut is from the Bering Strait (Evgenij Golovko, 113-121); Michif (Peter Bakker, 13-33) is from North America, Island Carib (Berend Hoff, 161-168) from the Caribbean, Callahuaya (Pieter Muysken, 207-211) and Media Lengua from South America; mixed varieties of Romani (Norbert Boretzky & Birgit Igla, 35-68) are or were spoken in various locations from the Basque country and Britain to Iran; Armana-Akkadian was written and possibly spoken in the Near East three and a half millenia ago; three African mixed languages are Ilwana (Derek Nurse, 213-222), KiMwani (Thilo C. Schadeberg, 239-244) and Ma'a/Mbugu (Maarten Mous, 175-200); Europe is represented by Maltese (A. J. Drewes, 83-111), Shelta (Anthony Grant, 123-150), Angloromani (Boretzky & Igla, above) and Stedsk (Cor van Bree, 69-82).

The articles are preceded by an introduction (1-11), wherein the editors raise most of the obvious questions. The first, quite properly, is the definition of a "mixed language". The term "language intertwining" is proposed for processes which produce languages combining the grammatical system (the morphology and syntax — and, we are told, the phonology, although this is presumably a slip: what is meant is the phonology of the grammatical and other morphemes involved) of one language and the lexicon (and the appropriate phonology?) of another. And indeed, most of the languages discussed here have genetic connections with two languages, on the basis of the lexicon, especially the core vocabulary, on one hand and on the basis of grammatical features, in particular morphological similarities, on the other. What then of massive lexical borrowing? Ilwana and Maltese may be instances of the latter: for example, about 45%-50% of the Maltese lexicon is of Romance origin, but only three

words on the Swadesh 100 list are not Western Arabic. Given that in the mixed languages around 90% of the lexicon is from one source, that the core vocabulary tends to be from that same source, and that there do not appear to be cases which fall between the 45% - 90% range, according to Bakker & Mous (5-6), one might wish to consider that a language with around 90% of its lexicon from one source and its grammatical morphemes from another would belong in the category of "mixed languages".

The editors raise other questions. Is it possible to recognise a mixed language if one of its sources is unknown? (Even if no other trace of the Algonquian languages existed, Michif, with its French nouns and Cree verbs, would be instantly recognised as being something other than French.) Is a language "mixed" when the source languages are similar? (KiMwani [two Bantu languages] and Stedsk [two West Germanic languages] are examples; this matter is returned to below.) Is the presence of affix morphology a prerequisite for recognising that the source grammar is different from the lexifier language? (The example of the Dutch-lexicon Petjo is instructive, its grammatical source being Malay.) How many languages may be involved? (No satisfactory answer, according to the editors; this too is returned to below.) Finally, is "mixed language" a category that can be defined linguistically, as opposed to socio-historically and/or socio-linguistically? (For example: languages which developed as a result of mixed marriages or from the secret languages of nomadic people; languages which developed slowly as opposed to abruptly; mixed languages which are the sole L1 as opposed to those that co-exist with dominant unmixed languages.)

Most of the languages represented in this book have a single grammatical source, but some, such as Stedsk (Town Frisian) show "mixture in the grammar" (7), while others, such as Michif, have two grammatical components (in the Michif case, the nominal grammar is essentially French, the verbal grammar is Cree; these two components interact in various ways: Michif nouns are specified for French gender, in order to select the correct French determiner, and for Cree gender so as to select the correct Cree verb forms). This range inevitably suggests that the languages here do not form a coherent class, except insofar as all are, in some sense, contact-induced and therefore susceptible to explanations allying careful and detailed historical (social and demographic) enquiry with an explicit linguistic hypothesis. A language such as Maltese seems to display a massive amount of lexical borrowing, but is clearly a Western Arabic language. Stedsk shows the essence a highest common factor phenomenon whose effects can be seen in a great many "colonial" contexts (Fiji Hindi, Mauritian Bhojpuri, Australian or South African English, and so on). When languages come into contact, in the brain of a bilingual, there are always transfers from the L1 to the L2 (and vice versa in certain circumstances, such as when the L2 is the more often used language). This is an individual phenomenon and one

which obeys certain constraints. What is retained in a new vernacular arising from the interaction of many bilinguals is a group phenomenon, and this obeys other constraints of which the major one is frequency. These are precisely the same factors which direct the formation of the so-called "creole" languages, which are not considered in this book.

If cases of massive borrowing (two languages involved, borrower and lender) and of koineisation (usually involving more than two dialects or closely related languages) are put aside, there remains nonetheless a residue of cases which probably have less to do with linguistic than with social factors. It appears to be the case that such languages as Michif and Anglo-Romani are the result of deliberate group decisions, by groups containing many bilinguals, for reasons of group solidarity, a new group identity, concealment, and so forth. There are two languages involved, but the borrowing is systematic. Almost all the content words of Anglo-Romani are Romani (the grammar is English), most of those of Media Lengua are Spanish (grammar: Quechua), most of those of Petjo are Dutch (grammar: Malay). The results are in all cases remarkably similar, clearly reflect an aspect of human behaviour worthy of study, and the term "intertwined language" is as good as any. Provided that such languages are consistently distinguished from other contact-induced vernaculars in the elaboration of which group identity is not the primary motivator, their study can only be a positive gain.

While the scope and quality of the articles in this volume vary considerably, all are of interest. The collection succeeds, almost in spite of itself, in establishing that intertwined languages are a reality, even if not all the languages considered here are examples thereof (as Nurse, for example, points out for Ilwana, 221).

Claire Moyse-Faurie, *Le xârâcùù, langue de Thio-Canala (Nouvelle-Calédonie). Elements de syntaxe.* (Langues et cultures du Pacifique, 10) Paris: Peeters, 1995. 256pp.

The Xârâcùù region lies between the Ajië speaking area to the north and the Drubéa region to the south, and covers about 820km² of both coasts and the central mountain range of southern New Caledonia. Culturally homogeneous, the region is less so linguistically. Ignoring French, Xârâcùù is a vehicular language for the approximately 7 000 Kanaks in the area, being the L1 of some 5 000 of them and an L2 for numbers of speakers of Ajië, Xâÿââ, Cîîrî and Xârâgurè. The rugged terrain, the consequent geographical dispersion of speakers, and a number of relatively isolated enclaves account for the existence of phonetic and lexical differences from valley to valley.

Two maps and a brief introduction (8-16) localise the language and provide a phonological sketch and introduction to the orthography currently

used by many speakers and for the illustrative material in the book. The canonical syllable is (C)V, there are 17 short and 17 long vowels and 26 consonants. It is not a tone language, but has demarcative stress. The introduction also lists the word classes and provides some basic information which is expanded upon in the body of the work.

The grammar claims modestly to be a preliminary description of the general syntactic features of the language. In fact, it often goes further than that. The various word classes are defined, simple sentences and transformations thereof as well as embedded structures are presented (without any theoretical handwaving), and both NP and VP studied in considerable detail. Morphological variants are dealt with as they arise, this being a relatively unimportant feature of Xârâcùù, but word formation strategies are a major feature, a chapter each being devoted to derivation and composition.

Chapter 1 (17-63) describes the Noun Phrase, but also provides some comparative data from other New Caledonian (and occasionally other) languages to throw light on possible historical developments such as the distribution of possessive determination over various classes of nouns (19-22). The presentation in this chapter prefigures the rest of the book: it is clear and comprehensive, the semantic dimensions of procedures are described where relevant, and the illustrative material is appropriate and clearly glossed. The pronouns are dealt with in the short chapter following (65-68).

Chapter 3 (69-124) deals with the Verb Phrase. (Verbs and nouns are distinct word classes, taking different determiners, but either may function as predicate head.) A feature of this chapter is the description of serial verbs (98-105): these are distinct from compound verbs, which involve formal changes of various kinds. There are various collocations with different semantic correlates, describing simultaneous or consecutive actions, and often a specialisation of either the first or second verb with quite specific meanings (thus the verb *jaé* '(sur)pass' for the comparative and superlative, 102). The tense/aspect system is described (115-123): it is no doubt a reflection on this reviewer rather than on the author (or the language!) to say that, following a long tradition in descriptions of New Caledonian languages, this section bristles with detail requiring a certain amount of effort to penetrate; this is one of the few parts of the book where a little more illustrative material would have been welcome.

The fourth chapter (125-140) covers adverbials, the fifth (141-147) concerns non-verbal predicate heads (numerals, nominals, and presentative elements), the sixth coordinate and subordinate clauses (149-156), and the seventh (157-177) transformations (interrogatives, thematisations, emphasis, a variety of clefting, and so on).

Chapter 8 (179-190) describes derivation by reduplication and by affixation, and 9 (191-209) verbal and nominal compounding. The book concludes with the text of a legend with interlinear glosses and running translation (213-220), two appendices (221-246 — the first lists dependent

Book Reviews

and independent nouns, the second compound verbs), a bibliography, and a detailed 8 pp. table of contents which works fairly well as an index. The bibliography lists many works that are not referred to in the text and a Louis Bo cannot have published in 1892, 1936 and 1991. This very minor glitch cannot detract from a volume which meets the high standards of the work produced by the "Océanie" Department of the Laboratoire de Langues et Civilisations à Tradition Orale (CNRS, Paris).

Xârâcùù is conspicuously lacking in one feature. The general Melanesian pattern, and one which has been reconstructed for proto-New Caledonian, is Predicate - Subject word order, with a dependent subject pronoun preceding the predicate head and indexing the following subject. This pattern subsists in Xârâcùù, but only as a thematisation (173-174); in other contexts the traditional word order has been replaced by Subject - Predicate with no trace of indexation. Similar word order change has been reported for other Melanesian languages, especially those situated in the southern half of the island, and is presumably a contact-induced feature. Note that Tayo, the French-lexicon contact-induced vernacular spoken at St. Louis, near Nouméa, retains the traditional word order in some contexts; in other contexts there appears to be a state of flux whereby subject-initial NPs are either thematised (by the use of a special indexing pronoun *le*) or merely indexed (3sg *la*, 3pl *sa/sola*), but in any event preposed to the predicate. Since Xârâcùù was one of the input languages in the formation of Tayo, it may be assumed that the change in Xârâcùù occurred after European settlement.

The volume is a most welcome addition to the literature. It complements the previously published dictionary by Moyse-Faurie and Marie-Adèle Néchéro-Jorédié (Nouméa: Edipop, 1989)