

Workshop proposal

Björn Wiemer (U Mainz), wiemerb@uni-mainz.de
 Gilles Authier (EPHE, Paris), gilles.authier@gmail.com
 John Peterson (U Kiel), jpeterson@isfas.uni-kiel.de

Discovering (micro-)areal patterns in Eurasia

The past 20-30 years have witnessed an enormous increase of interest in areal biases of grammatical patterns. For example, Europe has been identified as exceptional if we compare the features of ‘Standard Average European’ (SAE) with their world-wide distribution, e.g. relative pronouns, possessive verbs and the grammatical paradigms based on these (perfects, causatives); Haspelmath (2001), Heine/Kuteva (2006). At the same time, the “SAE-periphery” in Eastern Europe turns out to form merely part of larger clines which stretch over Eurasia; e.g. non-nominative experiencers, the preference for non-finite predicates in diverse clause types, locative comparatives, etc. On the other hand, areal clines and clusters within Europe (and adjacent parts of Asia) show that larger areas can be very heterogeneous internally; compare, e.g., external possessors (Van de Velde/Lamiroy 2017), reflexive-reciprocal polysemy (Wiemer, forthcoming: §5.3), future gram types (Wiemer/Hansen 2012: 104-112; Wiemer, forthcoming: §4). Therefore, regardless of how fine-grained criteria are and how the limits of a particular linguistic area are defined, any purported area can only sensibly be evaluated against the background of its neighboring/surrounding areas (Wiemer 2004). For this reason attempts to define linguistic areas usually end up with relatively arbitrary decisions concerning the defining criteria, the number of language varieties, and/or the size of the area itself (Bisang 2006; Stolz 2006; Wiemer/Wächli 2012: 14-18).

Analogical problems in determining areal relationships have also recently become apparent in dialect geography aided by dialectometrical methods (Heeringa/Nerbonne 2001; Szmrecsanyi 2013). The latter can in principle be compared with methods applied in macro-areal typology (Nichols 1992; Bickel 2015). However, the question arises as to whether methods of the latter domain can reasonably be applied to much smaller areas, and opinions differ considerably here: While some scholars are optimistic that the methods of macro-areal typology are equally apt for discovering micro-areal clines and clusters (Borin 2013: 5, among others), others are more skeptical (e.g., Dahl 2001; Wälchli 2012). This is primarily because macro-areal patterns usually result from cumulative effects occurring at different places and times within a larger area, whereas in micro-areas, in particular in dialect continua, the “constant spread of a feature across an originally homogeneous area from a single starting point”, i.e. the wave model, seems to provide a more adequate explanation (Wälchli 2012: 264f.). This, however, is an empirical question which to our knowledge has rarely, if ever, been seriously tested.

Moreover, one should neither deal only with spectacular cases nor disregard the possibility that diffusion and genealogical affiliation need not contradict one another but may also reinforce one another (Dahl 2001: 1457). This applies not only for larger areas (Wälchli 2012) but also for variation within dialect continua. In addition, the latter may intersect with larger areas beyond a closely related group (e.g., Balkan and South Slavic features overlay, perfect > past in Central Europe), and areas may differ with respect to their diastatic (i.e. societal) diversification, a dimension that tends to be neglected both in macro- and micro-areal studies.

Against this background, we can state the following for three larger regions in Eurasia:

- Northern Eurasia has often been the focus of studies concerning Transeurasian areal studies. However, many of these studies have concentrated on procedures that help to prove (or reject) hypotheses concerning the genealogical relationship of Japonic to Altaic

(Johanson/Robbeets (eds.) 2010; Robbeets 2015), and on studies showing the differentiation of Uralic, Turkic and Mongolic, particularly in terms of grammaticalization (Robbeets/Cuyckens (eds.) 2013; Robbeets/Bisang (eds.) 2014).

- The relation of Eastern Europe to the Caucasus on the one hand and to the western part of Europe on the other has recently been highlighted in Arkadiev's (2015) study on verbal preverbs and prefixes and their role in the rise of aspect systems. At the micro-areal level, Authier/Maisak (2011) have demonstrated convergence phenomena in the Caucasus in the TAM-domain, while Authier (2010) shows morphological 'matter' borrowing between genealogically unrelated languages.
- South Asia has long been viewed by many as a language area (Emeneau 1956), although when compared with neighboring regions, the case is much less clear than originally supposed (Masica 1976). Recent studies therefore tend to focus more on micro-areas of the region, focusing both on convergences (Peterson 2017a) but also highlighting major divisions within individual genealogical groups presumed to result from substrate effects (Peterson 2017b).

The workshop is intended to foster dialogue between specialists in language (sub-) families of Eurasia, areal linguistics/dialect geography, and quantitative linguistics. Participants should share an interest in diachronic developments and (diastratic and diatopic) variation and appreciate the role of language contact in structural change.

The workshop invites contributions addressing at least one area and/or language group in Eurasia which focus on one or more of the following topics:

- Which methods allow us to identify hidden or complex patterns in areas of different geographical scope, demographic/linguistic density and diastratic diversification? Both macro-areal and micro-areal studies are welcome.
- Can methods used in macro-areal research be applied to micro-areas and to areas with a high number of closely related varieties? This includes dialect continua, possibly intertwining with larger areal clines.
- How does free variation become meaningful (e.g., by being lexicalized from phonetic or morphological variants)?
- Can we determine in which situations some language A triggers or reinforces minor (phonological, morphological and/or syntactic) patterns in another language B? More specifically, does A influence the productivity of some pattern in B and/or its status in B's grammar? Have there been chain effects between adjacent languages yielding a family resemblance of linguistic structures over larger areas? How can we distinguish contact-induced features from inherited features and from the influence of general communicative and/or cognitive factors? What role does frequency play?

Contributions on phenomena from all areas of grammar are welcome, especially those dealing with verb morphology/categories, clausal complementation and/or analyses based on feature aggregates.

(950 words)

References

- Arkadiev [Arkad'ev], Peter M. 2015: *Areal'naja tipologija prefiks'al'nogo perfekтива*. Moskva: Jazyki slavjanskoj kul'tury.
- Authier, Gilles 2010: Azeri morphology in Kryz (East-Caucasian). *Turkic Languages* 14, 14–42.
- Authier, Gilles & Timur Maisak (eds.) 2011: *Tense, mood, aspect and finiteness in East Caucasian languages*. Bochum: Brockmeyer.

- Bickel, Balthasar 2015: Distributional typology: statistical inquiries into the dynamics of linguistic diversity. In: Heine, Bernd & Heiko Narrog (eds.): *Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Analysis* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford U.P.
- Bisang, Walter 2006: Contact-Induced Convergences: Typology and Areality. In: Brown, Keith (ed.): *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, 2nd ed., vol. 3. Oxford: Elsevier, 88-101.
- Borin, Lars 2013: The why and how of measuring linguistic differences. In: Borin, Lars & Anju Saxena (eds.): *Approaches to Measuring Linguistic Differences*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 3-25.
- Dahl, Östen 2001: Principles of areal typology. In: Haspelmath, Martin, Ekkehard König, Wolfgang Österreicher & Wolfgang Raible (eds.): *Language Typology and Language Universals (An International Handbook)*, vol. 2. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1456-1470.
- Emeneau, Murray B. 1956: India as a linguistic area. *Language* 32, 3-16.
- Haspelmath, Martin 2001: The European linguistic area: Standard Average European. In: Haspelmath, Martin, Ekkehard König, Wulf Österreicher & Wolfgang Raible (eds.): *Language Typology and Language Universals (An International Handbook)*, vol. 2. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1492-1510.
- Heeringa, Wilbert & John Nerbonne 2001: Dialect areas and dialect continua. *Language Variation and Change* 13, 375-400.
- Heine, Bernd & Tania Kuteva 2006: *The Changing Languages of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford U.P.
- Johanson, Lars & Martine Robbeets (eds.) 2010: *Transeurasian verbal morphology in a comparative perspective: genealogy, contact, chance*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Masica, Colin P. 1976: *Defining a linguistic area. South Asia*. Chicago: Chicago U.P.
- Nichols, Johanna 1992: *Linguistic diversity in space and time*. Chicago: Chicago U.P.
- Peterson, John. 2017a: Jharkhand as a 'linguistic area' – Language contact between Indo-Aryan and Munda in eastern-central South Asia. In: Hickey, Raymond (ed.): *The Cambridge handbook of areal linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 551-574.
- Peterson, John. 2017b: Fitting the pieces together. Towards a linguistic prehistory of eastern-central South Asia (and beyond). *Journal of South Asian Languages and Linguistics* 4-2, 211-257.
- Robbeets, Martine 2015: *Diachrony of verb morphology: Japanese and the other Transeurasian languages*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Robbeets, Martine & Hubert Cuyckens (eds.) 2013: *Shared Grammaticalization (With special focus on the Transeurasian languages)*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins.
- Robbeets, Martine & Walter Bisang (eds.) 2014: *Paradigm Change (In the Transeurasian languages and beyond)*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins.
- Stolz, Thomas 2006: All or Nothing. In: Matras, Yaron, April McMahon & Nigel Vincent (eds.): *Linguistic Areas (Convergence in Historical and Typological Perspective)*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 32-50.
- Szmrecsanyi, Benedikt 2013: *Grammatical variation in British English Dialects (A Study in Corpus-Based Dialectometry)*. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P.
- Van de Velde, Freek & Béatrice Lamiroy 2017: External possessors in West Germanic and Romance: Differential speed in the drift toward NP configurationality. In: Van Olmen, Daniel, Hubert Cuyckens & Lobke Ghesquière (eds.): *Aspects of Grammaticalization. (Inter)Subjectification and Directionality*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 353-400.
- Wälchli, Bernhard 2012: Grammaticalization clines in space: Zooming in on synchronic traces of diffusion processes. In: Wiemer, Björn, Bernhard Wälchli & Björn Hansen (eds.): *Grammatical Replication and Borrowability in Language Contact*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 233-272.
- Wiemer, Björn 2004: Population linguistics on a micro-scale. Lessons to be learnt from Baltic and Slavic dialects in contact. In: Kortmann, Bernd (ed.): *Dialectology Meets Typology (Dialect Grammar from a Cross-Linguistic Perspective)*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 497-526.
- Wiemer, Björn (forthcoming): *Matrěška* and areal clusters involving varieties of Slavic: On methodology and data treatment. In: Danylenko, Andrii & Motoki Nomachi (eds.): *Slavic in the Language Map of Europe*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton (*TiLSM*).
- Wiemer, Björn & Björn Hansen 2012: Assessing the range of contact-induced grammaticalization in Slavonic. In: Wiemer, Björn, Bernhard Wälchli & Björn Hansen (eds.): *Grammatical Replication and Borrowability in Language Contact*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 67-155.

Wiemer, Björn & Bernhard Wälchli 2012: Contact-induced grammatical change: Diverse phenomena, diverse perspectives. In: Wiemer, Björn, Bernhard Wälchli & Björn Hansen (eds.): *Grammatical Replication and Borrowability in Language Contact*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 3–64.