Diachronic Morphology in Cross-Linguistic Perspective

Although morphological change has been much studied, there have been few attempts in recent years to investigate and correlate the findings cross-linguistically from a wide range of languages or to establish from the various results convincing principles of morphological change. Such general principles are needed to provide a framework for current and future research. The purpose of the research described here is to investigate diachronic morphology generally. More specifically, the project seeks to (a) investigate morphological change in a wide variety of languages, (b) identify universal principles of morphological change, and (c) determine what are possible and impossible morphological changes. Among the specific goals are (a) characterization of morphological evolution, including mechanisms of morphological change and sources of new morphological categories, (b) a statement of constraints on morphological change, (c) determination of possible morphological changes, (d) explanation of change, and (e) relation of the resulting view to theories of grammar.

The method used is that developed and used in Harris and Campbell, 1995, *Historical Syntax in Cross-Linguistic Perspective*; this inductive method involves comparison of similar changes in a wide variety of unrelated or distantly related languages with the goal of finding shared characteristics. Among the topics being studied are processes that affect paradigms, processes that change or maintain the order of morphemes, and processes that lead to the creation of "form classes" or "slots".

Selected publications from this project:

Trapped Morphology. (Alice C. Harris and Jan Terje Faarlund.) *Journal of Linguistics* 42: 289-315. 2006.

Diachronic Morphological Typology. (Alice C. Harris and Zheng Xu*.) Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. by Keith Brown, 509-515. Oxford: Elsevier. 2006.

On the Explanation of Typologically Unusual Structures. *Linguistic Universals and Language Change*, ed. by Jeff Good, 54-76. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2008.

Explaining Exuberant Agreement. *Grammatical Change and Linguistic Theory: The Rosendal Papers*, edited by Thórhallur Eythórsson, 265-283. Amsterdam: Benjamins. 2008.

Origins of Differential Unaccusative/Unergative Case Marking: Implications for Innateness. *Hypothesis A/ Hypothesis B: Linguistic Explorations in Honor of David M. Perlmutter*, ed. by Donna B. Gerdts, John C. Moore, and Maria Polinsky, 203-220. Current Studies in Linguistics 49. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 2010.

Reconstruction in Syntax: Reconstruction of Patterns. *Principles of Syntactic Reconstruction*, ed. by Gisella Ferraresi and Maria Goldbach. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 73-95. 2008.

Light Verbs as Classifiers in Udi. *Diachronica* 25, guest editor, Claire Bowern, 213-241. 2008.

On the Fused Pronoun in Andi, Avar and Andian Languages. *Essais de typologie et de linguistique générale: Mélanges offerts à Denis Creissels*, ed. by Franck Floricic, 251-267.   Presses de l'Ecole Normale Supérieure. 2010.

Explaining Typologically Unusual Structures: The Role of Probability. *Rethinking Universals: How Rarities Affect Linguistic Theory*, (Empirical Approaches to Linguistic Typology, 45), ed. by Jan Wohlgemuth and Michael Cysouw, 91-103. Berlin / New York: de Gruyter Mouton. 2010.