Mushin, Ilana and Brett Baker (eds) 2008. *Discourse and Grammar in Australian Languages*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. [Studies in Language Companion Series 104]. x+239 pp. (ISBN 978 90 272 05711)

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Discourse and Grammar in Australian Languages is a collected volume of seven studies which explore the interplay between grammatical structure and discourse structure in Indigenous Australian languages. The intersection between grammar and discourse is an under-studied area in the Australian context, so this book is a much needed and excellent contribution both for the Australianist research community and for typological and comparative work in this domain.

Descriptive work on Australian languages has generated interesting problems for morpho-syntactic theory, most prominently the issue of non-configurationality. A key part of the account of non-configurationality for Australian languages is the claim that constituent order is not determined by grammatical relations, but rather by pragmatic-discourse conditions. While this claim has been widespread, little has been done to rigorously and empirically account for these conditions. In addition to matters of configurationality, other features of Australian languages call for the particular investigation of information packaging and reference as tackled by this volume. Such characteristics include: noun class markers and classifier constructions, complex and/or unusual NP structures (e.g. discontinuous NPs, kin dyad constructions, inclusory constructions), high levels of ellipsis, intricate kinship systems, and highly developed case marking systems.

In recent years this gap in the understanding of discourse-related phenomena has increasingly been noted (see the survey in Gaby 2008) and work has begun to remedy it — this volume and the Australianist workshop (held in 2004) at which many of these papers were initially presented represent part of this effort. Burgeoning research in this domain includes contributions from Austin (2001), Blythe (2009) and Verstraete and De Cock (2008), as well as other offerings from the authors of this volume, such as Garde (2003, 2008), Kim et al. (2001), Simpson (2006), Mushin (2005a,b) and Mushin and Simpson (2008).

It is perhaps unsurprising that discourse and pragmatic phenomena have until now been somewhat neglected by the Australianist community (though there have been exceptions to this, such as McGregor's work (e.g. 1987, 1988, 1990) and Heath's (1984) important study of discourse structure in Nunggubuyu).

Discourse-pragmatic work has become increasingly feasible as the field of Australian language studies matures, and the groundwork of a good body of comprehensive morpho-syntactic descriptions has been laid. Additionally, many linguists in Australia, as elsewhere, are now increasingly involved in documentary, maintenance and/or revitalisation efforts. This focus on comprehensive documentation has increased interest in the exploration of the language system as a whole, along with types of and variation in language usage.

The papers in the volume are primarily descriptive and most deal with the online implementation of a particular feature or resource in actual language use. Eleven Australian languages are investigated. Most chapters investigate one language, though two contributions (Simpson and Mushin, Baker) are comparative studies looking at four and three languages apiece. The volume's language sample is somewhat skewed towards non-Pama-Nyungan languages, with only Gaby and Stirling's chapters on Kuuk Thaayorre and Kala Lagaw Ya respectively focusing entirely on Pama-Nyungan languages. The majority of the data comes from fieldwork carried out by the individual authors, most of whom are long-term fieldworkers on the languages of study.

The collection of seven papers is accompanied by an introductory chapter by the editors. This briefly overviews some of the broad recurrent themes in the literature on discourse related phenomena, and the uptake of these in the enclosed studies. The chapters cover two broad domains: information packaging, in particular word order realisation, and reference formulation and tracking. Most explore both to some degree given that they are fundamentally interrelated. Five of the contributions — chapters by Brett Baker, Claire Bowern, Alice Gaby, Ilana Mushin, and Jane Simpson and Ilana Mushin's co-authored piece — grapple with information packaging. Four chapters — Baker and Bowern once again and additionally Murray Garde's and Lesley Stirling's pieces — explore formulation and employment of referential expressions.

The introduction also provides some background information on Australian languages, including an overview of the typological features relevant to the papers that follow and the wider theoretical interest in such features. This discussion focuses on non-configurationality and case relations. Most valuably, the introduction includes a survey of the work to date on the relationship between discourse and grammar in Australian languages. This is presented under five subheadings: word order, referring expressions, ellipsis, morphological markers of information status and prosody. It provides a comprehensive summary of discourse related work in the Australian context, while at the same time indicating where the volume's contributions sit in relation to this existing research and what gaps remain to be filled. In this way it is programmatic, providing information on tantalising gaps and open questions, as well as suggestions for ways

forward for future work in this domain. It is sure to prove a useful and much cited piece.

Turning to the discussion of the individual papers, the first offering by Simpson and Mushin is a strong start to the volume, and a substantial contribution to the understanding of the conditioning of word order in Australian languages. Word order realisation is a theoretical hotspot at the grammar and discourse interface, particularly in Australianist studies given the prevalence of non-configurational languages. As noted above, there has been relatively scant work investigating the nature of the pragmatic-discourse factors which have been claimed to govern word order in many Australian languages. This paper not only tackles this under-explored area, but also takes a cross-linguistic perspective looking at the syntactic and contextual pressures which condition the placement of constituents in clause-initial position in four languages: Warlpiri, Jiwarli, Nyangumarta and Garrwa. This language sample was selected to compare and contrast typological differences in pronominal systems, word order preferences and grammaticalisation of Wackernagel's position. The authors also go a long way to ensure comparability with previous studies on this topic — in the selection of categories for investigation, quantity of data, and in some instances the actual re-use and re-analysis of data from prior work. In so doing they strengthen their results.

The findings from this paper and others in the volume (Bowern, Mushin) reveal a more complex story behind the description of Australian languages as having 'free word order'. Simpson and Mushin demonstrate that in the languages they study there are a number of obligatory initial constituents, such as interrogatives and negators. They argue that it is the same principle of prominence governing the obligatorily initial constituents which also governs the movement and variation in the order of other types of constituents. Examples of contexts of prominence are: answers to questions where there is new answered information in initial position, some contrastive constructions, and shifts in perspective and topic. Discourse organisation is the other variable which Simpson and Mushin find conditions initial position, for instance locative and temporal phrases which have scene setting and linking functions. The paper demonstrates striking homogeneity in this patterning of initial position.

The third chapter, by Claire Bowern, continues to demonstrate the complexities of how speakers choose the realisation and placement of constituent forms at both the clause level and verb level. Bowern's contribution takes the reader to northwestern Australia to look at Bardi and explore the status of free pronouns and bound pronominal agreement markers and their respective contribution to discourse reference. Throughout the discussion Bowern considers the relevance her observations have for the Pronominal Argument Hypothesis (Jelinek 1984, Baker 1996) in relation to Bardi. Here she finds mixed results — some characteristics of the pronominal agreement markers support the theory, while the characteristics of free pronouns do not. This issue is not entirely resolved in the chapter; Bowern concludes by outlining several possible ways to advance the analysis, leaving the questions that remain for future work.

In the second part of the chapter, Bowern looks at the functions of pronominal agreement markers and free overt nominal material. In Bardi these two systems and the categories within them have a range of complementary functions and distinctions. This paper nicely highlights the intricacies of the interrelationship between the referential functions of argument structure, verb agreement morphology, and the realisation or omission of free nominal material, which is undoubtedly particularly rich in polysynthetic non-configurational languages such as Bardi. To summarise part of this complicated system: first and second person object marking have a range of quite specific discourse functions, such as only being used for speech act participants and occurring where there is contrast between person in subject and object pronouns. Third person agreement object marking is not sensitive to discourse roles in the same way, instead being concerned with definiteness and quantification. Free nominals have their own workload, bearing most of the reference tracking duties. One lesson from Bowern's chapter and others in this volume is how such complexities in the division of labour between resources could easily be overlooked if one proceeds without examining the system as a whole, exploring the relative functions and distributions of various referential components in tandem, i.e. word order, verbal morphology and overt nominal material.

The next chapter by Mushin is a complement to Simpson and Mushin's joint contribution outlined above. Here Mushin continues the investigation of constituent order variation in Garrwa, one of the languages compared in chapter two. Once again this discussion highlights the close associations between pragmatics and syntax. This is the key theme of the first half of the volume, with the second half being weighted towards referential formulation.

The paper explores patterns of variation in the distribution of two tense/aspect (TA) clitics. The canonical location of these TA clitics is within a second position clitic complex (i.e. Wackernagel's clitics). This is a key grammatical unit composed of pronominal and tense/aspect information hosted by the first position constituent. The association of the first clausal constituent with pragmatic markedness (Payne 1992) or *kontrast* (Vallduví & Vilkuna 1998) in Garrwa was firmly established in Simpson and Mushin's earlier chapter — evidence for this is revisited here. One question Mushin poses is, given that TA clitics typically reside in the second position complex hosted by this initial constituent, when they are realised outside this complex do they retain any of the pragmatic weight inherited from their canonical home? The findings here reveal "diverging paths" of language change and function for the two forms. These have their roots in the origin of the

forms as different grammatical categories (aspect/mood and tense) rather than via any association with the clause initial slot. However, discourse-pragmatics plays a more crucial role in the variation of TA placement within an individual piece of discourse. Mushin finds that speakers employ shifts in TA clitics as part of the repertoire of rhetorical devices used to signal perspective shifts and elaboration.

In chapter five, Alice Gaby looks at case systems in the Cape York Peninsula west coast language of Kuuk Thaayorre. The chapter explores "optional" ergative marking (following McGregor 1992). Ergative marking is optional in that the ergative morpheme is not obligatorily present on all transitive subjects, and additionally, the subject of intransitive clauses may be in some instances ergative marked. Gaby argues that in these instances speakers employ ergative marking for pragmatic rather than syntactic purposes, in particular encoding information about expectedness. The ergative marker on an intransitive subject indicates the referent is unexpected, while its absence from a transitive clause signals the subject is expected. Expectedness is construed as the degree to which the identity of the subject corresponds to the addressee's expectations — expectations built up by discourse context and world knowledge. For instance, an unexpected subject is ambiguous or potentially hard to retrieve, on the other hand, an expected subject is high in animacy and engaged in an expected activity for an entity of its type (e.g. many men threw the boomerang, hawks fossick for scraps).

Studies on a number of other Australian languages of late have also observed optional ergative systems (McGregor 1998, 2006, Pensalfini 1999, Schultze-Berndt 2006, papers in McGregor and Verstraete forthcoming). Like Gaby, many of these studies demonstrate that the distribution of case marking is determined by a combination of grammatical functions and discourse-pragmatics. Gaby's chapter provides a survey of much of this literature. This paper and the growing body of work referenced have theoretical implications for our understanding of the nature of core grammatical functions, demonstrating that case marking is not always determined by grammatical relations and valency (as has long been held). Gaby focuses a substantive part of the chapter's attention on the implications the described system has for the analysis of ergative morphology in Kuuk Thaayorre.

Chapter 6 by Brett Baker considers and compares the function of alternate forms in the prefixal noun class (NC) system in three Southern Arnhem Land varieties, Ngalakgan, Wubuy and Marra. Baker characterises these NC forms as articles. Throughout the chapter, he compares them with, and gains insights from, looking to the article systems found in well-known European languages like English and French. Baker produces a substantial and thorough going discussion that works its way through a number of aspects of the formal semantics of nominal reference: number, quantification, generic or kind references. A crucial characteristic of the NC system are sets of alternate forms encoding the information status of the referent, namely topic and focus distinctions. Unusually, it is the form corresponding to topic, and thus signalling assumed information, which is also employed for certain non-specific references (e.g. have you got any fish?). Baker spends the bulk of the chapter exploring the basis of this association. He develops an account which argues that the topic form has functions as a scope restrictor in negative and interrogative constructions, generating complex nominal expressions without violating the non-configurational patterning of these languages. Baker concludes his chapter with a comment that speaks just as poignantly for many other contributions in this volume: (p163) "...it is apparent that these languages have both a more constrained, a more richly interpreted, array of referential expressions than the existing accounts would lead us to expect".

The last two chapters of the volume explore the relationship between various referential options available to speakers. Both Stirling's and Garde's focus is on the online functional pressures on referential selection, rather than on providing a formal description of the syntactic form or status of various reference constructions. Garde looks at the domain of person reference, while Stirling investigates a particular construction type she labels "double reference" which is predominantly used as a person reference strategy. Both consider many of the classic organising principles in this domain, such as accessibility and levels of activation, competing forces of minimisation vs. recognisability in reference formulation, iconicity and markedness.

Stirling's chapter looks at the form and placement of the double reference construction in narratives in Kala Lagaw Ya, a language of the Western Torres Strait. Double reference clauses "incorporate reference to the same participant occurring in the same grammatical function via the use of two distinct nominal expressions", e.g. she, the child or she, Adhibuya. Stirling treats this topic in a systematic and empirically rigorous way, applying several types of analyses to the issue at hand. This paper has three main analytical parts. Stirling first provides a brief description of the form of these constructions, various combinations of pronouns and types of lexical NPs in different grammatical functions. She then moves on to spend the body of the paper on distributional analyses of referential distance and potential interference (Givon 1983). Stirling employs these two quantitative approaches in an attempt to explore some common hypotheses about the functional value of reference types relevant to this construction, e.g. the use of a pronoun to indicate accessibility of a referent, augmented forms having emphatic and highlighting functions. These analyses have mixed results; in particular the potential inference analysis does not provide concrete findings.

Lastly, Stirling undertakes an episodic analysis of one narrative looking at the occurrence of double reference constructions in the narrative's macrostructure (here Stirling follows Labov & Waletzky 1967, Labov 1972). It is this final approach which yields the strongest and most interesting results. Double reference is found

to have a restricted distribution in the text's structure — for example, there are strong tendencies for double reference to occur in the initial clause of an episode and to occur in "highlight" or "highpoint" episodes (Labov & Waletzky 1967).

This chapter demonstrates the importance of investigating the global structure of a narrative or interaction, and how some phenomena cannot be properly accounted for without considering higher-level discourse organisation (Mushin's work on intra-textual variation in chapter four also speaks to this point). Despite the fact most of the morpho-syntactic descriptions of Australian languages are based on narrative data and the better part of the documentary corpora of Australian languages consists of narratives, there is very little work describing the structure and form of such material. What fragments of work there are in this vein, such as Stirling's offering, show that to adequately move beyond descriptions of form and account for functional value, a better understanding of higher level structures (sequence organisation in interaction and episode structure in narrative) is required.

In the final chapter, Murray Garde explores the cultural and linguistic forces which shape referential expression in Bininj Kunwok conversation (following Enfield and Stivers 2007, and Levinson 2007). This paper contributes to a new comparative approach to language use in conversation (Enfield and Stivers 2007, Sidnell in press, Stivers et al. 2009). This paper consists of ethnographic details on naming conventions and social organisation, a sketch of the complex Binini Kunwok person reference repertoire, and analysed extracts of natural conversation. It differs from the other contributions; like Stirling, the other chapters rely substantially on narrative data as opposed to the 'everyday' interactional material examined by Garde. The author borrows from the conversation analysis tradition both in the type of data employed and in the style of the chapter's presentation. He illuminates his discussion of a range of observations via the detailed examination of a series of exchanges from a telephone conversation (following classic conversational analytic work like Schegloff 1967 and 1968) discussing funeral arrangements. This context is clearly particularly sensitive to cultural conditioning, thus allowing Garde to look at grammar — culture interactions and the influence these two forces exert on person reference choices.

Garde focuses on circumspection and reliance on common ground between interlocutors in contexts where reference to proper names and other forms of direct reference are restricted — such as is the case in Bininj Kunwok interactions regarding funeral arrangements. Avoidance taboos associated with proper names have been widely noted far back in ethnographic and anthropological records on Aboriginal Australia, as have inventories of naming strategies (Thomson 1946, Stanner 1936). However, Garde's chapter is a unique offering following this tradition, in that it provides an in-depth examination of how referential choices unfold online by examining interaction turn-by-turn. The key concluding observation of the paper is that circumspect alternatives to proper noun references, such as pronouns, demonstratives and kin terms, fulfil many of the same preferences as proper names. They are minimal and sufficiently recognitional. They have a greater reliance on common-ground than proper nouns but have the additional benefit of encoding specific cultural information and practices.

In summary, the volume brings together a collection of excellent studies based on primary fieldwork, each a news-filled offering on discourse-grammar phenomena, for instance: Simpson and Mushin's chapter tackle the high profile but under-investigated area of word order realisation; Gaby's chapter is part of the recent growing body of work revealing the pragmatic sensitivity of domains once steadfastly held to be core grammatical relations; Garde's provides a rare offering detailing conversational organisation; Bowern, Baker and Stirling provide descriptions of complex referential expressions, providing evidence which counter the often under-determined accounts of complex nominal structures in Australian languages.

As described in the above summaries, the chapters cover a wide range of topics. For each contribution, the authors bring their own methodological and theoretical perspectives to bear on their chosen question or item of investigation. The volume is broadly unified by the discourse-grammar domain of investigation, by overlap in some of the phenomena explored, and areally by the focus on Australian languages. However, as is often the case with volumes that come out of an assortment of workshop presentations, the sample of topics and languages is one of convenience. Thus, the volume does not seek to cross-linguistically compare or survey certain features or answer particular questions in a coordinated way. However, regardless of disparate approaches, each of these chapters repeatedly and convincingly demonstrates the complex interplay of grammatical structure with pragmatic-discourse factors. This emphasises the truly multi-stratal nature of many aspects of language and its use. This volume is testament to the richness and importance of work in this domain.

Many of the papers share strengths. They present detailed analysis of primary data based on fieldwork by the authors. They account in detail for their methodological approach and the type and nature of the data employed — this is particularly crucial given the importance of context of actual language use in this domain. The authors are sensitive to the cross-linguistic implications of their findings and provide comparative information on related varieties, other Australian languages or languages further afield. In addition, a number of the contributions feature extremely useful surveys or overviews of existing work on other Australian languages in the same domain, e.g. Simpson and Mushin on word order conditioning and Gaby on pragmatic case marking.

The editor's state in the introduction (p3) "one of our aims in putting this collection together is to encourage more research in this area to the benefit of the theoretical areas of typology, syntax, pragmatics, discourse analysis and historical linguistics, as well as enriching our knowledge of Australian language grammar and its uses". I am convinced that the volume will fulfil this aim and that this flourishing research direction will continue to grow and produce further outstanding work.

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