

BERND KORTMANN, *Adverbial subordination. A typology and history of adverbial subordinators based on European languages*. (Empirical Approaches to Language Typology, 18.) Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997. xxiii + 425 pp.

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Kortmann's study of the morphological and semantic properties of adverbial subordinators (ASs) in 46 living and three extinct European languages (pp. 33–51) is one of the results of the research project "Typology of European Languages" (EUROTYP), an ambitious and challenging program initiated to study regularities, patterns, and limits in cross-linguistic variation in the languages of Europe. In accordance with this framework of an "areal typology", as this interface between "functional typology" and "areal linguistics" is dubbed, the cross-linguistic analyses and conclusions found in the book are basically of two kinds. First, typological generalizations claimed to hold for all or at least a large number of the languages of Europe (pp. 99–211; summarized as mainly implicational "Euroversals" on pp. 271–88). Second, descriptions of areal patterns and characteristics, as found in the Balkan *Sprachbund* (pp. 229–38) or a large European convergence area which is related to Whorf's notion of "Standard Average European" (pp. 238–70). Besides this focus on language synchrony, Kortmann also examines the history of ASs, in particular through an investigation of the development of the inventory of ASs from Old English to Present-Day English (pp. 289–335).

For a radically empirical study of this kind, a number of delimitations and categorizations are obviously vital. Thus the quantitative analyses are restricted to 2043 "prototypical ASs" that do not belong to a "marked register" (e.g., dialect, archaic usage). "Multi-word expressions" are counted only if they exhibit a certain degree of semantic or syntactic independence (pp. 55–79; for EUROTYP findings concerning other forms of adverbial subordination cf. van der Auwera 1998).

Kortmann's main aim is the "idea of making morphological and semantic properties of adverbial subordinators quantifiable" (p. 34) and accordingly he develops a fine-grained system for both the form-related (morphological complexity, formatives, syntactic polyfunctionality; pp. 77–9) and meaning-related classifications of ASs. The semantic space of interclausal relations is thus divided into 32 relations pertaining to the basic domains TIME, CCC (causal, conditional, concessive relations), MODAL and a rather mixed group OTHER (Place, Substitution, Preference, etc.; pp. 79–97).

Kortmann's extensive cross-linguistic morphological analysis of ASs (pp. 99–136) shows that the dominant type of AS in the European languages is a one-word item which belongs to this grammatical category only and expresses no more than one interclausal relation (pp. 101–12; Euroversals 3 and 4 on pp. 273–4). Adpositions (mainly prepositions), adverbs, interrogatives, relativizers, and complementizers are the source categories from which the ASs are most frequently constructed and to which syntactically polyfunctional ASs most frequently belong (pp. 108–12). ASs conform in an exemplary way to hypothesized semiotic principles of markedness and iconicity, such as an equilibrium of form and function. The inverse relation between formal complexity and both semantic and syntactic versatility, for example, is confirmed by a strong correlation between a high degree of morphological complexity of an AS and its monofunctionality (pp. 113–36).

In a not always fully convincing cognitive discussion of ASs, quantitative analyses of the internal organization of the semantic space of interclausal relations as well as the cognitive status of the different relations and their semantic affinities (pp. 137–211) seem to confirm the intuition of a layered structure in this domain. Interclausal relations differ markedly with regard to their “cognitive basicness or centrality for human reasoning” and also their “cognitive complexity or specificity”. Assumed linguistic reflexes of “cognitive basicness”—the availability of highly grammaticalized, preferably monomorphemic or single-word items (“lexical primes code cognitive primes”; p. 342), their frequency of use, and their time stability—yield the assumption of a core of twelve basic relations (Cause, Condition, Concession, Result, Purpose; Simultaneity Overlap, Simultaneity Duration, Anteriority, Immediate Anteriority, Terminus ad quem, Place, and Similarity) and several layers of more and more peripheral ones. While most of the “basic” relations also show a low degree of “complexity” (allegedly coded by morphologically complex ASs or “special purpose subordinators”), “cognitive basicness” and “cognitive complexity” have nevertheless to be kept separate, since Concession, for example, exhibits “a high degree of cognitive complexity, and yet clearly belongs to the core set of cognitively basic relations” (p. 342).

The semantic affinities between the different interclausal relations (pp. 175–211) are, of course, strongest within the four postulated networks (temporal, CCC, modal, and locative relations). Network-transcending changes are shown to be generally unidirectional, so that we can distinguish between source (locative, modal) and goal (CCC) domains. The CCC relations constitute the prototypical goal network, i.e.

endpoints of network-transcending semantic changes. Since the affinities are strongest between the temporal and the CCC networks, original temporal ASs often develop CCC readings.

The great value of the inductive approach and the statistical rigor of these parts of the book is that the claims and hypotheses of previous studies, which according to Kortmann were “based on intuitions alone” (p. 341), are now formulated on a broad empirical basis and are thus made quantifiable. Kortmann presents his results as empirical data, supported by statistical tables brimming with figures, numbers, proportions, percentages with two decimal places, but almost no linguistic material or analysis—apart from a number of examples from the “metalanguage” English. Although the reader is guided in an exemplary way through the numbers and percentages by means of most helpful introductions and summaries, the book in large sections reads like a study on mathematics and statistics, but not linguistics. These tables seem to endorse Kortmann’s recurrent assertion that we are presented with “hard-and-fast evidence” and almost make us forget that the input of the database has not been made transparent to the reader (only two pages are spent on the explanation of the “grammar-cum-dictionary method” (p. 54) used for eliciting the data) and also another caveat, the narrow definition of ASs, especially where phrasal items are concerned. Thus, for example, the status of Old English *forþæm be/þæt*, a frequent conjunction, is doubted while the structurally identical French *parce que* or the similar Old English constructions *wiþ þæm þe* and *mid þæm þy* are included (p. 292).

Considering the large scale of the study, Kortmann’s radically empirical approach and his perceptive methodology are absolutely admirable. It would have been useful, however, if the linguistic data had been presented in a more transparent (and perhaps also less rigorous) way—in particular, since the linguistic information given in some places exhibits a certain degree of arbitrariness, even for well-investigated languages such as English or the Romance languages.<sup>1</sup> Let me mention just a few examples: items like English *directly*, *immediately*, *just so (that)*, *without*, which recently seem to have adopted an AS-function in informal registers, are counted, whereas English *albeit*, an AS still frequently employed in formal registers, has been filtered out because it is “archaic” (p. 73, pp. 75–6). The distinction between “one-word” and “multi-word” ASs, a feature regarded as extremely important not only for the formal but also cognitive analysis (cf., e.g., p. 129, p. 145), becomes problematic when Spanish *porque* and Portuguese *porque* (“one-word” ASs) and French *parce que* (“multi-word” AS; *lorsque* and *puisque* are “one-word” ASs) appear in entirely different categories. Orthographic conventions only may (but certainly need not necessarily)

testify to the more lexicalized or grammaticalized quality of a linguistic item. This becomes even more problematic in view of the fact that some of the languages investigated are predominantly spoken languages with nothing like a fixed orthography. For the diachronic English material it would have been advantageous to know why *by* . . . *by* ('the . . . the') is not included or why the Old Norse loan *though* is considered a direct continuation of Old English *þeah* (p. 292, p. 297). Though Kortmann plainly states that "extensive illustration of individual readings of individual subordinators in the various periods of English will . . . be avoided" (p. 291), the linguistic facts are generally largely transparent for the development of ASs in English (pp. 291–335). Diachronically, the development of ASs (not only in English) testifies to "functional differentiation" and "semantic strengthening", i.e. a development away from polymorphemic one-word subordinators towards phrasal subordinators through a steady increase in morphological complexity of the items and a steady decrease in their syntactic and semantic polyfunctionality (p. 106). Middle English not surprisingly emerges as the period in which the modern inventory of ASs was established. That Early Modern English has by far the largest inventory of ASs (most of which have not survived to Present-Day English) should probably be attributed not only to the fact that EModE was "essentially a period of experiment and transition" (p. 302), but also to the strong influence of Latin, especially Ciceronian style, on the syntax and especially clause linkage in written registers of this period.

Indeed, language contact and the impact of the classical "guiding" or "roof languages" Classical Greek and Latin (pp. 256–70) turn out to be essential for the distribution of areal phenomena, all of which are well illustrated by schematic areal maps. The areal distribution of morphosemantic properties of ASs provides additional evidence not only for the well-known Balkan *Sprachbund* (pp. 229–38), but also suggests that the languages of Europe are organized into a core of Western and Central European languages, and a periphery located on the geographical fringes of Europe (Basque, Celtic, insular Scandinavian, Baltic, Uralic (except for Hungarian), Altaic, Caucasian, Indo-Iranian; cf. pp. 238–54). The core can again be subdivided into a western (including all classic representatives of Whorf's "Standard Average European" and Polish [Roman Catholic!]) and an eastern part (Balkan languages, including Hungarian and Russian). While languages in the western part often have twice as many ASs with a CCC rather than temporal reading, CCC subordinators outnumber temporal relations to a much smaller extent in the Eastern half (pp. 265–70). Since the AS inventories of Latin and Classical Greek exhibit a similar strong contrast, Kortmann suggests that these

languages may have served as models in the domain of ASs. The division into a western and an eastern part thus reflects *Kulturbünde*, shared linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Roman Church, Roman Law; Orthodox Church). This sociohistorical explanation is all the more appropriate since ASs, like all complex embedding constructions, are a special feature of written language whose development in Europe is known to have followed classical models (Bible translations, “learned style”, etc.). The “roof languages” in my opinion may therefore be responsible not only for these convergence features, but may have also shaped their morphological make-up. Given this importance of contact-instigated convergence, the appropriateness of ASs for a more narrow typological investigation, which preferably deals with genetically and areally unrelated languages, becomes doubtful.

Kortmann set out with the idea of making morphological, semantic, and cognitive features of ASs quantifiable, and he has certainly achieved his aim with an impressive study yielding a number of challenging results (only a few of which could be summarized here). Despite the high number of contact-instigated features in the field of ASs, typological statements are still possible, as Kortmann’s postulation of 34 basic “Euroversals” shows. These “Euroversals”, together with the other stimulating results of this important contribution to typological study, will serve as an indispensable basis not only for smaller-scale detailed investigations of ASs in individual languages, but also for studies which test the validity of these European features in a universal perspective.

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#### ENDNOTE

<sup>1</sup>The data used are published separately by LINCOM Europa. Unfortunately, this publisher—located in Unterschleissheim, 15 km away from Munich—has not been able to supply me with the originally promised diskette, despite three telephone calls and letters.

#### REFERENCES

- van der Auwera, Johan, with Dónall P. Ó Baoill, eds. 1998. *Adverbial constructions in the languages of Europe*. (Empirical Approaches to Language Typology, Eurotyp 20-3.) Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.