GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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Historical linguistics is that area of the study of language concerned with the way languages change over time, looking both at the distant past and at the present day, and taking as its point of departure the truism that the only constant in language is that it is always changing. Historical linguistics is also the area of linguistics that placed the field on a scientific footing in the nineteenth century, through the recognition of regularities in language change that allowed for the reconstruction of the prehistory of many languages. This positioning of the field, moreover, has led to the present place of linguistics within the scope of intellectual investigation as bridging the humanities (since language is a quintessentially human phenomenon), the social sciences (since language exists not only in the minds of speakers but also in the interactions speakers have with one another), and the natural sciences (since language production and perception have distinct physical bases).

We have assembled here, in the volumes that make up this collection, 105 readings that, taken together, are designed to offer the reader a set of crucial materials that both lay the groundwork for historical linguistic investigation and point the way to advanced study of language history, language relationships, and language change more generally. By way of introducing this collection of critical readings of historical linguistics, we offer an overview of the field, touching on its conceptual foundations, its place vis-à-vis the rest of linguistics, and its current state. We then turn our attention to the collection itself, discussing what we considered as constituting "critical concepts" and offering some insight into the decision-making process as to what to include and what to exclude. In the course of this introduction, some of the readings contained in this collection are referred to; we signal those works with an asterisk before the year (e.g. Labov *2007 [Ch. 8]).

1. Historical linguistics: disciplinary and conceptual bases

The field of historical linguistics takes in the study of both language change and language history, two distinct but related enterprises. The relationship between them becomes evident when we realize that what we know about language

change emerges from the study of the way in which particular languages have developed and changed over time. Knowledge of language change in general thus depends on the investigation of the passage of individual languages through time, with attention not just to what is different from stage to stage but also to what remains the same.

At the same time, without a sense of what sorts of developments are possible and what sorts are impossible, we cannot fully characterize any language-particular phenomena we might be interested in. For instance, historical linguists have come to the understanding that sound changes tend to involve small adjustments that can accumulate and thus potentially result in an outcome that is phonetically quite far from the starting point. For instance, while a change of [s] to [r] might appear to be achievable in a single step,[1] it seems rather to involve several adjustments in sequence, specifically *s* > *z* > *ž* > *r*. Armed with this viewpoint, and with an understanding of clear cases like this, one can confront rather drastic accumulations of adjustments and make sense of them. For example, the change of Proto-Indo-European word-initial **dw* into Armenian *erk* would be bizarre if viewed as a single step, yet as the cumulative effect of several changes it becomes understandable.[2] Ideas about language change in general therefore inform our understanding of particular developments in a given language.

Such a *diachronic* ("through-time", from the Greek) consideration of language is the foundation of historical linguistics. From this examination of language across time, we learn not only about changes but also about pockets of stability within individual languages and, possibly, within language in general.

Still, in order to be able to say anything coherent about language through time, we have to be able to establish a connection of lineal descent between a language at one stage of its development and a form that we consider to be a later stage of the same language. What "lineal descent" means here is that the language has been passed down in an unbroken line of transmission from generation to generation; the speakers in each new generation in a sense recreate the language based on the ambient linguistic input that they take in from around them, but the features of the language (i.e. words, pronunciations, constructions, meanings, grammatical material, etc.) will, in the usual case, be carried forward to the new generation in the transmission. In many instances, such "vertical" connections are taken for granted: it seems clear, for example, that the English spoken in the British Isles in the eighth century AD is somehow an antecedent stage to the English spoken in the United States in the twenty-first century, and we routinely assume that to indeed be the case. Such an assumption is certainly reasonable, and in any case, without it, there is no basis for tracing historical development. The claim, for instance, that present-day English in the state of Ohio represents an altered form of some specific and identifiable varieties of the English of Britain 1,300 years earlier is based upon this assumption. Yet one must remember that these often are no more than reasonable

assumptions, since in most cases there is a lack of independent supporting evidence.

When we are not dealing with vertical links between stages, but rather are trying to infer a starting point for a vertical line of descent by making comparisons of a "horizontal" nature across languages (or dialects even),[3] it can be harder to be certain that the comparisons are valid. But when we can establish for certain that the comparisons actually do involve sets of "related" languages—linguists use the technical term *genetic* or *genealogical relationship* here—that derive from the same starting point, that is, from the same proto-language, then to the extent that, via the method of comparative reconstruction, we can be sure as to just what that proto-language looked like, we learn about diachronic development and thus about language change and, by the same token, language stability. That is, the differences and similarities that can be observed between such genetically related languages constitute indirect evidence for language change, and thus are, and have been, one of the primary focal points of research in historical linguistics.

Moreover, the backdrop of language relatedness and of the correspondences among languages that are present—"inherited", one could say—by virtue of the languages being genetically related offers the opportunity to determine another source of correspondence and similarity. In particular, when parallel features across genealogically related languages, especially geographically contiguous languages, can be shown not to be characteristics inherited from a common proto-language, then generally we can recognize those characteristics as being caused by contact among speakers of different languages (or dialects).[4] Such contact-induced characteristics would have secondarily diffused across lines of genetic relatedness (transmission). We say "secondarily" here since we recognize the family-tree-like relationships (see note 3) created by lines of transmission to offer the best first approximation of how languages are related to one another. Others, however, have taken diffusion to be the basic way in which languages relate to each other; see especially Schmidt (1872), who via his Wave Theory model of language differentiation proposed that innovations spread from a point of origination outward across language divisions. Some have seen the Wave Theory as a competitor to the tree model, but our view is that the positing of family trees and the recognition of paths of diffusion are really responding to different types of questions about language history and to different types of historical events. Moreover, what we see as important about the recognition of diffusion is that it opens up a line of inquiry that has at its basis the social facts of speaker-to-speaker contact.[5]

The default assumption that is made here is that characteristics will be inherited in the transmission process down a line of descent so that, all things being equal, the language of one generation and the language of a subsequent generation will be essentially the same. It is necessary to say "essentially" here since an examination of any language over time will reveal changes across generations of transmission. Innovative pronunciations, new meanings, novel usages,

and so on can enter the stream of transmission at any time. These innovations are sometimes contact-induced, as suggested above, but at other times are simply system-internal developments (sometimes referred to as "evolutive change", following Andersen *1973 [Ch. 4]). Moreover, the social angle on language change introduced in a consideration of contact-induced change actually turns out to be crucial even in the case of internally motivated innovations, since in the typical case they spread from their initial locus of innovation and by contact among speakers reach some subset, or even the whole, of the members within a speech community.

Historical linguistics thus has multiple foci, including language relatedness, language history (including prehistory), language stability, language change (in all components of a language), language contact, diffusion of innovations, and ties between the history of languages and other (external) historical events, among others.

2. Historical linguistics and the field of linguistics, Part 1

For a long period in the history of the field of linguistics, especially during what may be called the "modern" era from the early nineteenth century to the present, historical linguistics *was* linguistics and virtually all research in linguistic areas necessarily had a historical component to it. The stunning successes of nineteenth-century linguists (see the discussion below in section 5 and references in Volumes XXX) uncovering aspects of the prehistory of various familiar and less familiar languages of western Europe and beyond fueled a surge of interest in the systematic investigation of language more generally. Even with the recognition of the importance of synchronic analysis in linguistics fostered by the work of Ferdinand de Saussure,[6] this historical orientation continued to dominate well into the middle of the twentieth century. Beginning especially with the rise of generative grammar in the mid-1950s, however, there was a noticeable shift in general interest among linguists toward the synchronic and away from the diachronic, as measured in part by the sorts of articles that were published in linguistics journals and the emergence of new journals devoted almost exclusively to generative topics.[7] The altered status of historical linguistics from the 1960s into the latter part of the twentieth century was commented on as follows by Calvert Watkins (1989: 784): "it is possible to get a PhD degree in linguistics at a number of fine and distinguished American universities without ever taking a course in historical linguistics, and there are good linguists teaching in my own department [at Harvard University] who have never had such a course."

Nonetheless, historical linguistics is hardly on its deathbed, and in fact there are numerous indicators of a robustness to this subdiscipline that are significant, even if they do not show it to occupy the central position in the field that it once did. For instance, there is the biennial International Conference on Historical Linguistics (ICHL) that has drawn increasingly larger crowds in its

21 instantiations to date (most recently in Oslo in August 2013), related publications in John Benjamins' "Current Issues in Linguistic Theory" series which selected papers from every ICHL since ICHL 3 (1977) and occasional special thematic volumes from various ICHL workshops appear, a flourishing journal dedicated to historical linguistics (*Diachronica*, published by Benjamins, now appearing in four issues per year) and two new journals with a similar focus (*Journal of Historical Linguistics*, published by Benjamins, and *Language Dynamics and Change*, published by Brill), and even an electronic listserv (histling-l@mailman.rice.edu) with numerous subscribers and regular announcements and discussion of historical matters.

Moreover, two subfields that are relevant for historical linguistics have stimulated considerable interest in the last 30 or so years, namely the study of language contact, now often referred to as "contact linguistics", and the study of "grammaticalization". Language contact has of course been a subject of great concern to historical linguists for years (as well as linguistics in general, e.g. Weinreich 1953), but is now established as a legitimate subfield in its own right, with several textbooks and surveys having appeared in recent years (e.g. Thomason & Kaufman *1988 [Ch. 94], Thomason 2001, Winford 2003, Matras 2009, Hickey 2010) and even its own "Critical Concepts" collection (*Contact Languages*, edited by John Holm and published in 2009). Even though contact linguistics focuses in part on the synchronic side of language contact situations, dealing with issues regarding multilingualism, code-switching, and the like, the importance that understanding language contact has for understanding language change is now widely recognized.

The study of grammaticalization, by which is meant most generally how grammatical markers and devices arise in language, also has a synchronic side to it, to the extent that advocates of this approach to the study of grammar tackle questions having to do with emergent grammar, usage-based grammar, the relationship of language use and understanding to general communicative and cognitive strategies, and so on. But the historical side of how grammar develops, and thus how grammatical change is effected, constituted the original impetus behind the emergence of grammaticalization as a field of intense interest in the latter part of the twentieth century on into the present. There is now, for instance, a biennial conference (New Reflections on Grammaticalization), as well as reference materials that include a compendium of attested types of grammatical changes (Heine & Kuteva 2002), a plethora of edited volumes on the subject arising out of specialized workshops, and the like. This area too offers a sense of renewed robustness to the general field of historical linguistics.[8]

The fact that language necessarily has history, in that it exists within time and within particular social settings that themselves are subject to change, means that the historical side to the investigation of language will always be relevant to linguistics. Thus, even with changes over the years in terms of its centrality to the field at large, it seems clear that there will always be a place for historical linguistics within linguistics.

3. Historical linguistics and the field of linguistics, Part 2

It can further be argued that it is altogether fitting for historical linguistics always to have a place at the larger table of linguistic investigation. Among the motivating factors for this view has been the recognition that language change can reveal something about the psychological/cognitive side of language, contributing to our understanding of the way in which grammars are formulated.

Kiparsky (1968: 174) characterized this relationship quite forcefully and eloquently when he said that "language change offers a window on the form of linguistic competence". To make clear what is meant by this statement, we start with the view by which diachrony is seen as the movement through successive synchronic states. Each synchronic state is governed by various principles (i.e. rules, constraints, what-have-you, whether innate in any sense or derivable from general cognitive abilities or from the dynamics of human interaction) that determine the form that a grammar of a language can take when (re)created by speakers as they acquire their language in the cross-generational transmission process (see above, section 1); such a grammar constitutes the entity that can be considered "human linguistic competence". These principles define the limits on the notion of "possible human language", and under the reasonable assumption that languages can only change from one possible human language state into another possible state, it follows that language change can only take place within those limits, whether one is dealing with internally induced evolutive change (transmission) or with externally induced contact-related change (diffusion), with categorical change or with variation-based change.

Still, looking to diachrony for the testing of models of linguistic competence at a synchronic level creates the potential for problems. Studies such as Klima (1964), Kiparsky (1968), and King (1969), representing early work applying the principles of generative grammar to historical developments in various languages, promoted the view that change in language was to be equated with change in the grammatical constructs that were required by generative theory for a theoretically based description of the phenomena under examination. Theories change, however, and the apparatus they require can change accordingly, so that tying accounts of language change to particular theories, as attractive as this work made it seem, meant that there were no fixed accounts; they were as variable as the theories. Kiparsky (1968 and 1971), for example, insightfully made use of notions such as rule ordering from the then-current version of generative phonology, but when phonological rules were replaced by constraints in optimality theory, rule reordering was replaced by constraint reranking as a characterization of change.

Despite such problems, language change, in both its processes and its results, can still be recognized as a testing ground for the limits of possibility for human language, and thereby offers insights into the form of linguistic competence, even if the exact form in question may itself be subject to change. And there are also other areas that can be informed by the evidence from language change.

That is, in addition to the potential that historical linguistic data offer for understanding the formal dimension to the structure of language, there is also the social side of language to consider. Weinreich, Labov, and Herzog (*1968 [Ch. 83]) present several basic issues that, with the exception of the first, are largely social in nature, and that must be confronted in a consideration of language change. These are found in the excerpts from this classic article included in Volume VI, but they are important enough to be worth mentioning here too:

- *The constraints problem*: What are the general constraints on change, if any, that determine possible and impossible changes and directions of change?
- *The transition problem*: By what route does language change?
- *The embedding problem*: How is a given language change embedded in the surrounding system of linguistic and social relations?
- *The evaluation problem*: How do members of a speech community evaluate a given change, and what is the effect of this evaluation on the change?
- *The actuation problem*: Why did a given linguistic change occur at the particular time and place that it did?

Inasmuch as these "problems" depend on an assumption of language as necessarily embedded in social structure, the form of linguistic competence that they envision is one in which social factors are a key component to any adequate account of a given linguistic phenomenon.

Given these potential contributions on both the theoretical and social dimensions of language, linguists will always do well to look to language change, regardless of their primary focus. Language change provides another type of data relevant for evaluating claims about linguistic structure, both in its representation and its relation to its social milieu.

4. What one needs to know in historical linguistics: the collection itself

Mastering any discipline or even subdiscipline means mastering not only the conceptual foundations of the field but also the particular methodologies associated with it. Moreover, these principles and methods typically have yielded a set of results and findings that have informed and generally continue to inform the course of subsequent investigations. Learning the foundations, the methods, and the results is thus a key part of learning any field of scientific or humanistic inquiry.

In the case of historical linguistics, some of the basic principles were enunciated, and associated methods developed over 150 years ago, and yet they have shown remarkable durability and are valid even today. In particular, the principle of the regularity of sound change, for instance, as discussed in section 5 below, paved the way for the establishment of linguistics as a science, since it gave a predictive basis to the study of sound change and offered a principled way to

evaluate competing hypotheses. Moreover, the Comparative Method, also developed in the nineteenth century, has proven, despite challenges to its validity (e.g. Durie and Ross 1996), to be the single most effective way of reaching back across centuries to recapture detailed aspects of the history and prehistory—including fine points of phonological, morphological, syntactic, and even metrical and poetic structure—of particular languages and groups of genetically related languages.[9]

More recently, advances in our understanding of phonetics have sharpened considerably the view of sound change (as most clearly delineated in Ohala *1981 [Ch. 10]) and of how regularity can be achieved by languages and by speakers. Further, a recognition of the role of variation in language change and the emergence of a keener sense of how to model the social side of the diffusion of innovations (as exemplified best in the studies in Labov *1963 [Ch. 18], *1981 [Ch. 54], and *2007 [Ch. 8]) not only have opened a new area of historical investigation in variationist-based sociophonetics but they have also come to shed light on how nonphonetic innovations spread through a speech community.

Various new methods involving computational modeling and the application of powerful mathematical algorithms to historical linguistic problems have also been devised (as shown in Ringe, Warnow and Taylor 2002 and Gray and Atkinson *2003 [Ch. 28], as well as other studies included in Volume III). These have provided the field with a set of techniques and results that are complementary to the findings arrived at through more traditional methods.

Accordingly, all of these key areas, covering basic principles, methods, and results, are represented in some way or another in this collection of readings.

The guiding basis for our selections, working within inevitable length restrictions, was above all, not surprisingly, an admittedly somewhat subjective sense of how "critical" a given reading was. We paid attention to whether it contributed to essential foundational building blocks for the discipline or instead advanced a particular methodology or yielded some important result.[10] The extent to which a work has had an impact on the field and is cited in the literature matters, to be sure, as an index of importance, though not as a strict criterion or threshold that a work had to measure up to. Rather, the works we include either are widely cited, or should be.

To some extent, what we have ended up with is a collection that is heavy on methods, reflecting our belief that sound results emerge only from sound methodological practices. This means too that it is heavy on what might be viewed as the methods and practices (and results) of "traditional historical linguistics", reflecting our belief that not only we but also future generations of scholars can learn from the time-tested formulations of our intellectual ancestors in the nineteenth century. Moreover, any advances, we believe, rest on a firm and solid understanding of what our predecessors have posited; for instance, measures of the validity of recent work on computational approaches to linguistic origins and linguistic phylogeny, which are well represented in Volume XI, rest largely on

how well they mesh, or fail to, with results obtained by other methods in prior scholarly generations, results that depend on such traditional methods as the Comparative Method.

It is also the case that the field has advanced by looking at problems in particular languages and extracting general principles and methods from them, and this is especially true of the great works of the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, we have decided to focus more on readings that talk about the principles and methods rather than on ones that actually solve problems in particular languages (though the two sorts of enterprises are clearly related).

With these guiding principles to arrive at the articles to be included, we then divided up the field of historical linguistics into the following sections; each section gives coverage to a key area and together they cover the field as we see it:

VOLUME I CONCEPTUAL BASES AND CAUSES OF CHANGE

1 Conceptual Bases

VOLUME II CONCEPTUAL BASES AND CAUSES OF CHANGE

2 Causes of change

- 2.1 Physiological factors
- 2.2 Psychological/cognitive factors
- 2.3 Functional factors
- 2.4 Social factors (see also Volume VI)

VOLUME III METHODS IN HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS

3 Language relatedness/language families

- 3.1 Comparative method and family tree models (Language relationships
- 3.2 Computational/statistical/mathematical methods (and models)
- 3.3 Results: some controversial cases (Language relationships

4 Further on methods: reconstruction

- 4.1 Reconstruction: comparative and internal, at the phonological level and beyond
- 4.2 Typologically based methodology in reconstruction

VOLUME IV TYPES AND OUTCOMES OF CHANGE

5 Sound change
6 Morphological change: analogy and grammaticalization

VOLUME V TYPES AND OUTCOMES OF CHANGE

7 Syntactic change
8 Semantic/lexical change

VOLUME VI THE SOCIAL DIMENSION TO LANGUAGE CHANGE

9 Socio-historical linguistics

- 9.1 Relationship between synchronic variation and change
- 9.2 Diffusion of innovations
- 9.3 Linguistic areas

10 Language/dialect contact

- 10.1 Borrowing and other contact-induced changes
- 10.2 Language shift and language death
- 10.3 Contact outcomes, pidginization, and creolization

11 Historical linguistics and (pre)history and culture

We recognize that many of the selected items could fit into several different sections but naturally could end up in only one. Labov (*1963 [Ch. 18]) is such an item, since it could fit into Social factors (Volume IV, Part 2.4), or Sound change (Volume IV, Part 5). To some extent, the final choice was arbitrary and was driven by content-related factors such as the main point of the selection and its biggest area of influence, but also collection-internal factors such as balance across the various subsections.

Users of this collection may notice that our selection of readings is skewed toward items that base their presentation on material from the Indo-European language family. We acknowledge this, and note various reasons for it. First, this is the language family that we know best, so it is only natural that we would look there for relevant works. But more important, it is what a great many of the key principles and relevant methods are based on historically, since the early giants in the field were working on and were most familiar with languages within this family. Moreover, Indo-European is still the language family that is the best known and the most thoroughly studied, so it still provides the model of what one would want to achieve for all languages and language families.

Finally, it is simply the case that for many language families, there is no history per se, only reconstructed—and thus hypothetical, even if well-founded—prehistory, so that there is a potential for circularity in methods and results if based on reconstructions alone; the abundance of historical records for many Indo-European languages is thus an invaluable way to offer a control on methods. That said, we include material on non-Indo-European languages where there are suitable readings that advance theory and method and that offer some test of the application of Indo-European-derived methods outside of this family.

5. And, what we were unable to include

Despite the sizeable roster of what is included in these volumes, there were many very worthwhile, interesting, and in their own way important topics and articles that could not be included; after all, we would have been straining the notion of critical concepts if it took 4,000 pages to encompass all of them. Thus, the complement to the previous section on what we decided to include is an account of what we would have liked to include but were unable to because of space limitations. Therefore, in order to give these topics some recognition, we discuss here what we would have included had we had a complete carte blanche.[11]

For one thing, we would have included truly historical classics such as Grimm (1819), Grassmann (1863) and Verner (1875), in which great discoveries about linguistic history that constituted major contributions to our field and to our understanding of language change were first published. While papers from nearly 150 years ago might seem to offer little to a modern science of the twenty-first century, we contend—as noted above in section 4—that papers such as these from the past do still play an important role in the field of historical linguistics; in this way, historical linguistics is different from a field like, say, syntax, where papers from even as recently as the 1950s are just of historical value, if even that.[12]

The classic works we mention above helped to develop the critical notion of the regularity of sound change, a principle associated with the Neogrammarian school of linguistics[13] that states that a given sound change affects all—not some, not half, not 98 per cent, but every single one—of the potential candidates that meet the structural description of the change. Almost from the first formulations of this principle (see e.g. Leskien 1876, Osthoff and Brugmann 1878), questions about the validity of this Neogrammarian view of sound change have been raised (e.g. Schuchardt 1885). Nonetheless, the importance cannot be denied of recognizing a particular type of historical event that leads to change in a language and involves systematic (i.e. regular) and phonetically driven adjustment of sounds. This principle, even though contested in various ways over the years, has, in our view (see also Labov *1981 [Ch. 54]), withstood the test of time and, moreover, serves as a foundation for historical linguistic research in many respects.

For one thing, it provided scholars with a predictive tool based upon which they could say with confidence that such-and-such an outcome is expected in this word or ending, and thus it gave a basis for principled decisions about etymologies or particular historical developments: a hypothesis that depended on sporadic, nonregular sound change could be rejected in favor of one that was consistent with regularity. It also allowed for recognition of a "division of labor" in processes of linguistic change, enabling linguists to readily distinguish between analogical change and sound change, and between borrowings and inherited material, distinctions that are crucial to a full understanding of the historical development of particular languages. More generally, it also allowed for a division of labor in causation, with sound change being associated with physiological (i.e. phonetic) factors, analogy with cognitive and conceptual factors, and borrowing (contact-induced change) with social factors.

Moreover, the predictive power of the notion of the regularity of sound change did not put just historical linguistics on a solid intellectual footing. Indeed, it can be argued that it offered a foundation for all of linguistics to be treated as a scientific enterprise by providing the first clear instance in linguistic argumentation of the application of the scientific methodology of the collection of data, the formulation of hypotheses in accordance with the observed data, and the testing of hypotheses against additional data.[14]

Thus, without the Neogrammarian notion of the regularity of sound change, linguistics as a whole, not just historical linguistics, would be a very different sort of enterprise; hence foundational Neogrammarian works are highly relevant in historical linguistics today, despite their age. Still, the ease of access to these works now,[15] as well as the fact that subsequent studies that we did include built on them in often very overt ways and demonstrated their utility, means that including them in a collection of this sort, despite their critical nature, is superfluous. Nonetheless, we urge all readers to have a look at them and to judge for themselves.

Among other sorts of classic works and topics that we had to largely exclude even though they contributed to the establishment of historical linguistics was the general topic of dealing with texts. We felt it was important to recognize that the roots of (Western) comparative/historical linguistics lie in philology—the careful interpretation of the languages of texts—and specifically in the work of Classical philologists of the nineteenth century whose study of Greek and Latin and then Sanskrit fueled the shift to *comparative* philology (a term still used by some universities, e.g. the University of Oxford, to describe, even if not to officially label, the historical linguistics track within their overall linguistics curriculum). To that end, our original idea had been to showcase some of the ways that philology and the careful attention to textual interpretation and to details and accuracy in citing textual material can matter in doing certain types of historical linguistic research. We were particularly enamored of Kiparsky (1972), for instance, for its demonstration that understanding the poetic structure of a text can offer insight into the way poetic language developed. Similarly,

Twaddell (1938) with its insistence on textual accuracy made an important point. Moreover, the lesson to be drawn from Russom (*1982 [Ch. 9]) (included in Volume I as a brief example of this topic area) is classic: arguments about whether Old English had an indirect passive (of the type *John was given the book by Mary*), and thus about how the passive construction developed over the history of English, had been marred in part by a misunderstanding of what a scribal abbreviation stood for! Such errors show the philological equivalent of the computer adage about "garbage in, garbage out".

As an addendum to philological works in our original plan were a few key articles on decipherment, since we viewed decipherment as the first step in philology. Decipherment involves securing the linguistic identity of a "text" (in whatever form), and from that identification flow comparisons with later stages of a language and/or with related languages. Among the important—and just plain fascinating—decipherments was that described in the 1953 articles by Michael Ventris and John Chadwick, that is, their discovery that the Linear B tablets of Bronze Age Greece (*c*. fifteenth century BC) were in fact the earliest known examples of the Greek language. Justeson and Kaufman (1993), on the decipherment of an inscription on a stele from Meso-America as an old variety of Olmec, is a more recent demonstration of the power of decipherment to advance the historical side of historical linguistics with regard to a particular language and language family. Nonetheless, in the end, such works, as interesting as they are, simply could not be included.

Another Part that was originally intended but ultimately cut was one on language ideology and its relation to language change, encompassing prescriptivism, standardization, diglossia, attitudes about language, and the like. We saw this as relevant since these are external forces that shape individuals' decisions and choices about the use of particular varieties and variants; in that way, they can contribute to wholesale language shift and even language abandonment. The changes that they might inspire are perhaps more at the level of social consciousness, even if they start with individual choices, in the sense that if some speakers opt for "gender-neutral" terminology such as *mail carrier* instead of *mailman*, they have effected a change in the language for an overt reason, and in a way that makes a statement, whereas a shift from a strong (ablaut) past tense to a weak (dental-suffix) past tense in English, as with *clomb* giving way to *climbed* in Early Modern English, is neutral as to its impact on society at large.

In a sense, even though we see the potential importance for language change in such ideologically inspired notions, they are more focused on synchrony than on diachrony. They do show that synchronic choices have diachronic consequences, but that is to be expected if, as Joseph and Janda (*1988: 194 [Ch. 62]) put it, "language change is necessarily something that always takes place in the present and is therefore governed in every instance by constraints on synchronic grammars".[16] For that reason too, a planned Part on code-switching and bilingualism, with such key articles as Poplack (1980), was ultimately scuttled,[17] even though, to follow the reasoning of Weinreich (1953), one has to think of

language contact as taking place in the mind of the speaker of two (or more) languages. In that way, one can locate contact-induced change in bilingualism, allowing for what is perhaps a generous definition of "bilingual" in which there is not perfect coordinate bilingualism but rather some functional degree of competence in a language other than one's mother tongue.

Finally, in terms of specific topics that were excluded in the end, what might be seen as the ultimate historical question as far as language is concerned, but one for which there is really no available answer, is the origin of language. This is a matter that has fascinated linguists and nonlinguists alike for centuries, and thus we intended to include a few key articles that addressed the topic in a rational and principled way, such as Hockett (1960), an influential work that developed a set of "design features" for communication systems, by way of distinguishing human language from other animal communication. Nonetheless, as clever and interesting as some of the answers are that have been offered over the years regarding the origin of language, not only is much about this still unknown, but much will also remain unknowable. For that reason, when push came to shove, this planned Part was eliminated.

Readers should also notice that we do not have any selections that cover the basics of language change, such as labels for different types of sound changes with examples[18]—that is, the sort of material that is found in every textbook on historical linguistics. Such notions and concepts are of course critical to a full appreciation of historical linguistics, but as we approached this collection, we considered it to be aimed at advanced students and scholars who are ready to go beyond what the standard textbooks offer. We saw our job thus as not to start at ground zero but rather to assemble materials that are follow-up readings that explore key issues in greater depth or in a more technical way than an introductory textbook can. We refer readers looking for a start in the field to any of several fine historical linguistics textbooks.[19]

6. Conclusion

We have argued here, and indeed take the position via the works collected here, that for all the fact that historical linguistics is a coherent and independent intellectual pursuit in its own right, there is an integral connection between it and more synchronically oriented linguistic investigations. Nonetheless, we close this introductory essay with a few examples of synchronic analyses that are drastically at odds with history, and yet in that way the[illegible] important for a full appreciation of the interplay between diachrony and synchrony.

For instance, the element *to* that marks infinitives in Modern English, as in *I ran (in order) to catch the bus*, clearly has its origins in the preposition *to* that occurred in Old English with a dative case of a deverbal noun; yet Pullum (1982) argued for an analysis of modern infinitival *to* as a verb, and in particular an auxiliary verb (AUX). Similarly, Stewart and Joseph (2009) argued that contemporary Scots Gaelic is best analyzed as having fourteen cases in the

pronominal system, a development out of what had been a system of five cases along with combinations of prepositions and weak pronominal objects.

These analyses (and others like them) were not diachronically focused in and of themselves, yet they show that synchronic analysis is relevant for historical linguistics in two ways. First, in order to judge the nature of a given change, one needs to know how best to analyze a synchronic endpoint (as well, of course, as the starting point!). Second, they show how different the synchronic status of a form can be from its historical origins and thus demonstrate how far reanalysis can go.[20]

Thus, just as linguistic change helps to test, again and again, the upper limits on the synchronically relevant notion of a possible human language, so too does synchrony test the limits on what constitutes a possible linguistic change. The critical concepts for historical linguistics contained in these volumes are thus really critical concepts for all of linguistics, synchronic as well as diachronic, and we offer these concepts to readers with that goal in mind.

Notes

1 This is a change found in Latin, in West Germanic, in some dialects of Ancient Greek, and elsewhere.
2 Hock (1991: 583–84) accounts for *#dw* > *#erk* via a sequence of independently motivated sound changes in Armenian, specifically **d* > *t*, **w* > *g*, *tg* > *tk*, *tk* > *rk*, *#rk* > *#erk-*.
3 *Vertical* and *horizontal* here derive from the usual practice among linguists of representing related languages in a family tree (*Stammbaum*) type model, where time lies along the vertical axis so that lineal descent is vertical, and related languages are laid out horizontally.
4 With genealogically unrelated languages, possible inheritance from a common proto-language is, of course, not an issue, so contact, and thus diffusion from one language to another, must be considered. But hovering over every situation, both those involving related languages and those involving unrelated languages, is the possibility of independent innovation in each language; in such cases language typology and a sense of what are common and natural developments for languages to undergo can be indispensable.
5 We thus follow Labov (*2007 [Ch. 8]) with its terminological breakthrough, distinguishing *transmission* and *diffusion* as fundamental ways in which language change progresses.
6 As embodied most dramatically in his *Cours de linguistique générale* (de Saussure *1916 [Chs 1 and 2], excerpted here in Volume I).
7 For instance, *Linguistic Inquiry*, which began publication in 1970.
8 This sense of robustness is also supported by even newer subfields that have recently come into focus. One of these is the study of "historical sociolinguistics", as evidenced by the establishment of the Historical Sociolinguistics Network in 2005 and the email list, annual summer schools, conferences, and publications (including a *Handbook*, Hernández-Campoy & Conde-Silvestre 2012) in this area that have followed. Another new focal area is "historical corpus linguistics", which takes advantage of the digitization of massive amounts of historical data in recent years and the attendant research possibilities.
9 Watkins (1995: 4) eloquently characterizes the Comparative Method thus: "The Comparative Method is not very complicated, yet it is one of the most powerful

theories of human language put forth so far and the theory that has stood the test of time the longest." Watkins's own application of the method to the development of a comparative Indo-European poetics stands as forceful testimony to its value, and its validity.

10 In this regard, the importance of nineteenth-century works in historical linguistics, even though relatively early, can be likened to the situation in film. In that arena, a film such as *Citizen Kane* (from 1941) is still to be rated as among the very best ever, since it was in some sense a foundational work that set the pace for many others after it, even though from a cinematographic point of view, for instance, it has been surpassed by numerous less memorable films of the present day.

11 In terms of individual articles omitted, as opposed to whole topics, space considerations eventually militated against including Kiparsky (1968 and 1971); even though these were important works in early applications of generative grammar to linguistic change, as indicated in section 3 above, they were too long to include *in toto* and there was no easy way of excerpting them suitably. The fact that other readings contain discussion of this approach (e.g. Jasanoff *1971 [Ch. 53]) means that this viewpoint is represented. Additionally, the inclusion of other works by Kiparsky means that this important contributor to historical linguistics is represented in the collection.

12 The Critical Concepts for Synta lection has no readings from before the 1950s, for instance.

13 "Neogrammarian" here refers to the group of nineteenth-century linguists, located mostly in Leipzig, such as Karl Brugmann, August Leskien, Hermann Osthoff, Hermann Paul, and others, who formulated the principle of the "exceptionlessness" (*Ausnahmslösigkeit*) of sound change. Included among Neogrammarians are numerous later linguists, but perhaps foremost among them was Leonard Bloomfield, one of the key figures in the development of linguistics in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century.

14 Eric Hamp (p.c.) believes that the formulation of Verner's Law (Verner 1875), by which voiceless fricatives following unaccented syllables in pre-Germanic became voiced, is a model of how the scientific method works in historical linguistics, in that a hypothesis was pursued and tested and ultimately found to provide the right basis for a solution. He feels, moreover, that this should be taught in high school science classes alongside such staples of the history of the "hard sciences" as Boyle's Law (regarding pressure and volume of an ideal gas being inversely proportional, with temperature held constant).

15 In addition to the original publications being freely available online in most cases at sites like http://archive.org/ or http://books.google.com/, English translations of many of these works have been published in Lehmann (1967), which can itself be found online at http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/lrc/books/readT.html, the website of the Language Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin, founded by Winfred Lehmann.

16 Note the defense by Janda and Joseph (2003: 175, n. 137) of this notion in light of criticism leveled against it by Lass (1997:10).

17 However, Silva-Corvalan (*1986 [Ch. 96]), another key article dealing with bilingualism, was able to be included here in Volume VI in section 10.1 Borrowing and other contact-induced changes.

18 With the exception of the presentation of some basic concepts in the excerpts from de Saussure (*1916 [Chs 1 and 2]).

19 For instance, Arlotto (1972), Jeffers and Lehiste (1979), Anttila (1989), Hock (1991), McMahon (1994), Trask (1996), Campbell (2004), Hock and Joseph (2009), and Crowley and Bowern (2010). Mention should also be made of a truly classic work,

the eleven chapters on historical linguistics in Bloomfield (1933) (reprinted as a separate book, Bloomfield 1965).

20 They thus offer a cautionary note to the notion of "possible language change" mentioned above: any such constraints may only be relevant for a given step in a chain of accumulated changes, but it may also be the case, at some point, that a drastic "overhaul" of a given stage may occur. Could a preposition turn into an AUX in one step? Probably not, or perhaps better, probably not without some other changes occurring around it that facilitate such a reanalysis.

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