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***Language Ecology for the 21st Century: Linguistic Conflicts and Social Environments*. Ed. By Wim Vandebussche, Ernst Håkon Jahr and Peter Trudgill. Oslo: Novus Press, 2013.**

In 1971 Einar Haugen wrote his first essay on what he called 'the ecology of language'. Over the following decades this term 'ecology' came to mean different things to different scholars. In recent years, with a growing interest in developing an evolutionary model for language change, ecology has even acquired new connotations not really elaborated in Haugen's original proposal (see Croft 2000, Mufwene 2008, Ansaldo 2009). The book under review collates 11 essays that tap into Haugen's concepts and at times evaluate them, often applying (parts of) them, and almost without failure illustrating the inquisitive power of an ecological approach to the study of language.

It is difficult not to see the origins of Haugen's idea as a reaction to Chomsky's notion of UG and the study of grammar in terms of a 'monolithic, de-contextualized, static entity' it inevitably promotes (Eliasson: 16). What Haugen was clearly interested in was not so much the allegedly universal nature of human language, but rather the heterogeneous aspect of language in relation to its human context. In order to promote this domain of study he phrased 10 fundamental research questions that constitute a recurrent theme throughout the book. These questions concern themselves with a number of linguistic disciplines spanning the breadth and depth of our field, such as: (i) historical and typological classification, (ii) users and usage modalities, (iii) variation, (iv) education and policy, and (v) attitudes. Irrespectively of subjective scholarly preferences, one thing is clear: we are dealing with much more than a metaphor here, as these questions span historical, sociological as well as typological concerns for language, its variation and its varieties of codes (Eliasson: 21). The first chapter does a thorough job of not only revisiting the applications of ecology in Haugen's own work, but also illustrating the many novel ideas subsequent scholars were able to develop based on the original proposal. It also highlights a particularly interesting aspect present in Haugen's early work on bilingualism – the psycholinguistic one, whose potential remains still partially untapped.

The second chapter by Versteegh constitutes in my view one of the gems of this collection. The focus of this study is one ecological factor that remains yet understudied: kinship. It is difficult not to accept the premise of this study: in understanding language change, surely we must first of all understand the context in which children receive their primary socialization: the household (Versteegh: 65). With this in mind, the author leads us through a fascinating discussion of residence patterns and kinship system. It turns out that when we compare the two predominant systems, i.e. patrilocality and matrilocality (the former being far more frequent), a number of differences emerge. It seems that matriloal communities imply more demographic stability and therefore a more homogenous linguistic environment than patrilocal ones. The latter involve more movement of people and therefore a higher degree of exposure to strangers – and linguistic diversity – in the group. There is also the reflection that mothers may in general be more influential than fathers in terms of socialization. To be

sure, these correlations need large-scale testing for corroboration, and the author is careful in not attributing them more value than due. But in his illustration of the relationship between kinship and convergence (p. 76-82) he clearly shows the power of this ecological factor for our understanding of language change. When discussing the Papuan languages of Bird's Head, for example (based on the work of Reesink 1998), we note how children are raised learning the mother's language while needing to communicate within their father's linguistic group. This leads on the one hand to grammatical convergence of the type that Ross (2001) identifies as *metatypy*. On the other hand we have a lack of lexical convergence – or lexical maintenance – that can be explained in terms of identity retention, or even secrecy. This tension between accommodation and retention has puzzled contact linguistics for quite a while (see Ansaldo 2009), but receives a powerful explanation in terms of kinship and residence patterns. In particular in the field of contact linguistics the actual nature of the languages being transmitted has often been solved simplistically in terms of an abstract grammar attributed to the group in question. A more ethnographically accurate take on this, based on detailed observation of household patterns, clearly has much to offer.

Another impressive application of Haugen's framework, indeed in Deumert's own words, Haugen's 'intellectual project' (Deumert: 210), is chapter 9, which presents an ecological painting of South Africa based on Haugen's original 10 research questions. The 10 questions are re-grouped by the author into three areas, which deal respectively with diversity, hierarchies, and resistance in South Africa's linguistic ecology. Diversity is treated very comprehensively in the first part of this study, and includes, in addition to the better known language families, notes on migrant languages such as Dravidian and Sinitic, as well as contact languages and lingua franca, such as the crystallized pidgin Fanakalo (p. 216). In the second part we are treated to a crisp discussion of the colonial heritage that still exists in South Africa's linguistic ecology and the covert tensions between colonial and indigeneous languages. The third part of this chapter examines heteroglossia as an act of resistance to linguistic hegemony, in particular in the form of *tsotsitaal* (lit. 'gangster-talk'), a continuum of urban varieties, youth slangs and secret codes. In doing this the author highlights the importance of habitat in the choice of language: from a formal environment [school-English], to a local [township-*tsotsitaal*], to a heritage one [Gauteng-Xhosa].

The importance of place strikes me as the potentially most intriguing ecological factor that emerges from this collection. This theme underlies Meyerhoff's chapter, which I also wish to single out as particularly innovative in the book. In chapter 11 we look at Bequia English as spoken in St Vincent and the Grenadines. The purpose of the author is to show the indexical value of three variables that unmistakably identify their speakers in terms of place (Meyerhoff: 276). This is not to say that in Bequian place is the only significant social factor; gender, for example, is too. However gender appears not to play a role in linguistic variation, unlike place of origin, which is interpreted as indicating a strong affiliation with the home village.

The fact that I have chosen to highlight three contributions is not meant to detract from the other contributions to this collection, all of which are with their own merits. Some are more sociolinguistically inclined, such as the European perspectives presented by Argenter, Rambø, and Jahr respectively. The first is a comprehensive historical perspective on the linguistic ecology of Iberia, from the Middle Ages to present day; the second is a detailed sociolinguistic study of contact between Middle Low German and Scandinavian in the Late Middle Ages; and the third is a retrospective on the dialect situation of Norway, a theme dear to Haugen and still highly relevant in the book under review. Other chapters are more conceptually focused, such as Darqueness' analysis of profiling, which revisits Haarmann's and Edwards' approaches to multilingualism and minority languages respectively in the light of Haugens research agenda. In chapter 5 Trudgill applies the notion of distance to a number of contexts in an analysis of language status, from Norway to the Netherlands as well as the Caribbean and New Zealand, among others. All these authors successfully celebrate the far-ranging, challenging and inspiring richness of Haugen's project. Together with the non-European perspectives in the final chapters, which also include contemporary and comprehensive takes on the Māori language (Harlow and Barbour), and the ecology of Botswana (Andersson), the reader is also led to the realization of the wide applicability of Haugen's framework, a truly rich research program that has yielded much inspirational work, and which still has a partially untapped potential for deepening our understanding and appreciation of language and its human environment. It is clear that the ecological approach to language has gone way beyond what has traditionally been covered by sociolinguistics; in promoting and engaging with descriptive, historical and applied domains in the study of language, Language Ecology offers – far from a mere metaphor – an ambitious intellectual mind-set capable of advancing our discipline towards the paradigm change we have been waiting for since Haugen first conceived of it.

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