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Foreword

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Émilie Aussant, Jean-Luc Chevillard (dir.)

Extended Grammars

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Foreword

On the occasion of the 14th International Conference on the History of Language Sciences (ICHoLS), which took place in Paris from 2017 August 28th to September 1st (<https://ichols14.sciencesconf.org>), we organised an open workshop on the topic of “Extended Grammars”. This workshop was intended as an opportunity for having presentations dedicated to case studies of various configurations illustrating what Sylvain Auroux has discussed inside the section « La grammaire latine étendue » on pp. 82–85 of his 1994 book *La Révolution Technologique de la Grammatisation*. Briefly explained, “Extended Grammars” are grammatical descriptions of various languages which make use of tools initially developed in and/or for another language.

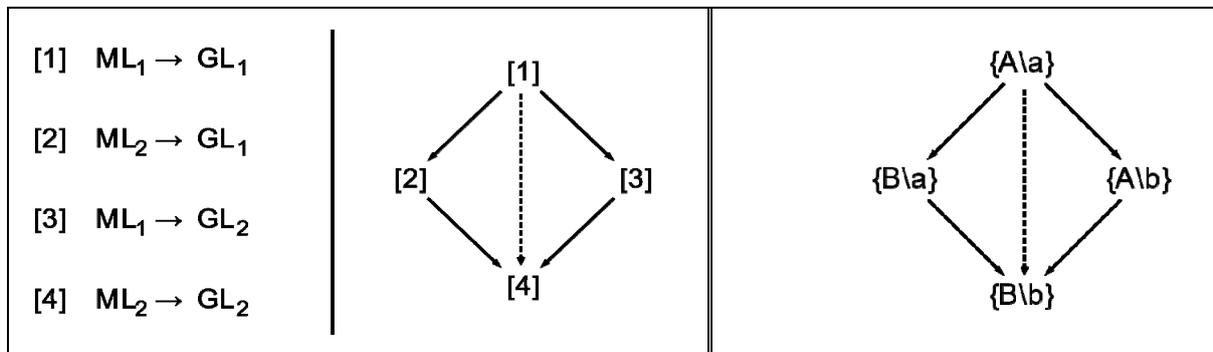


Figure 1:

Going from one grammar to another one, step by step (after Auroux 1994: 82–85)

Figure 2:

compact notation for the Auroux diagram (lowercase letters stand for object languages and capital letters stand for the corresponding metalanguages)

Making use of a series of formulaic representations, reproduced here in the left half of Figure 1 (above), and for which we have provided alternative illustrations in a more compact notation inside Figure 2 (also above), Auroux takes as his starting point a grammar of an object-language which he calls L_1 and which we represent by “a” in Figure 2. Inside Auroux’s formula [1], GL_1 stands for a Grammar of L_1 , and ML_1 stands for a L_1 -based Metalanguage, to which we refer

as “A” inside Figure 2, for the sake of compactness. After that, Auroux introduces a second object-language, which he calls L_2 and considers two distinct possible paths for the creation of a grammar of L_2 composed in a L_2 -based metalanguage. Inside Figure 2, we represent such a grammar by the symbol $\{B \setminus b\}$, where the notation “b” has been substituted for “ L_2 ” and where “B” stands for a b-based metalanguage which is used for describing language b. If we follow the first path, which goes from [1] to [4] by going through stage [2], we first face the task of describing language a, by means of language b which forces us to expand the expressive capacity of b. Unable to rely only on the epilinguistic potential of language b, those who face the challenge have to coin an explicit technical/grammatical vocabulary in b, either by borrowing from A or through calques, and through this process B is created, and stage [2] is reached, which we represent inside Figure 2 by the symbol $\{B \setminus a\}$. After that, the new challenge is to succeed in doing for language b what has been achieved for language a, which can of course be very difficult if the structures of languages a and b are very different. We leave it to the reader to imagine what has to be done if the second path is followed, going through [3] in Figure 1 and through $\{A \setminus b\}$ in Figure 2.

In the context of the ICHoLS workshop, we were hoping, on the one hand, to increase¹ the documentation bearing on the transfer of grammatical models, including for instance case studies where the starting point would be grammars of Arabic or of Sanskrit taken as models (but any proposal in which an original research pertaining to a case of transfer, past or contemporary, was documented accurately was accepted). We also hoped, on the other hand, to offer some preliminary answers to the following questions:

- (Q1) How did the transition from “extended Latin grammar” to contemporary linguistic description occur?
- (Q2) Can all endogenous linguistic traditions (Arabic, Greek, Latin, Sanskrit) serve as the basis for an extension?
- (Q3) What connections can be established between inventories of languages (linguistic compilations) and the extension of models? How far were linguistic inventories able to escape from existing frameworks?

Twenty-one proposals were submitted. This issue of the *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft* brings together a selection of nine papers presented at the workshop. We shall not attempt in this very brief introduction to accurately summarize those nine papers, but we shall rather try to compare them, with respect to some very general parameters, referring to those papers by means of a set of abbreviations, which are, in the alphabetical order, CM, CS, EA, GF, JA, KA, PS, TP & VA, based on the names of their authors.² If we briefly attempt to compare them in a minimal manner, the following can be stated:

¹) A certain amount of work has already been done: see the references cited in the bibliography.

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- Approximately ten object languages (OL) are represented in the sample offered in this issue of the *Beiträge*, namely, in the alphabetical order: f = French (CS); h = Hindi (EA); k = Konkani (GF); m = Malayalam (EA); m2 = Marathi (GF); n = Nahuatl (KA); pb = Portuguese from Brasil (JA); t = Tamil (CM, VA); v = Vietnamese (TP); vs = Vedic Sanskrit (PS). However, it is not always easy to make a precise count of languages, when diglossic situations are involved, as is the case for instance in the article by KA about (classical) Nahuatl, which also involves a discussion of the Nahua languages.
 - 10 Eight effective meta-languages (EML) are involved in the sample, namely: F = French (CS); H = Hindi (EA); L = Latin (TP); P = Portuguese (CM, GF), PB = Portuguese from Brasil (JA), S = Sanskrit (EA, PS), SP = Spanish (KA) and T = Tamil (VA).

15 As is seen from this summary, our expectations were not completely fulfilled, because no presentation involves the Arabic model of grammar. There is nevertheless quite a lot of variety, as can be seen from the following two charts, where we have introduced, in addition to the EML (Effective Meta-Language), another layer, tentatively called GML (Ghost Meta-Language), which is Latin (=L) for those grammars that use Portuguese, Spanish, French or English as a meta-language and which is Sanskrit (=S) for some of the others.

Grammars (& article authors)	{P\t} (CS), {P\k} (GF), {P\m2} (GF)	{SP\n} (KA)	{L\v} preceded by {P\v} (TP)	{PB\pb} (JA)	{F\f} (CS)
EML	P = Portuguese	SP = Spanish	L = Latin (and P)	PB	F = French
GML	L = Latin			English & Latin	Latin and Greek

20 Chart 1: Grammars belonging to the Extended Latin Grammar (ELG) model

Grammars (& article authors)	{T\t} (VA)	{H\h} (EA)	{S\m} (EA)	{S\s} (PS)
EML	T = Tamil	H = Hindi	Sanskrit (and Tamil)	S = Sanskrit
GML	S = Sanskrit			Sanskrit and Greek (Indo-Europeanist perspective)

Chart 2: Grammars belonging to the Extended Sanskrit Grammar (ESG) model

2) CM, CS, EA, GF, JA, KA, PS, TP and VA stand respectively for Cristina Muru, Claudia Schweitzer, Émilie Aussant, Gonçalo Fernandes, José Edicarlos de Aquino, Karla Janiré Avilés González, Peter Scharf, Thi Kieu Ly Pham and Victor B. D'Avella.

After this very shallow beginning of a comparison between the nine papers, we must now try to make a few concluding remarks, rather intended as possible angles of approach towards the reading of the nine papers. One of them has to do with the Meta-Language drift which is alluded to in some of the papers, and concerning which additional evidence can be provided. That drift is for instance the one which takes place concerning Vietnamese when Portuguese is progressively replaced by Latin in published books, as explained in TP's article. If we also take the example of Tamil, the drift is exemplified by the fact that the two 17th cent. missionary grammarians studied by CM write in Portuguese but take their theoretical compass from the Latin grammar composed in Latin by Manuel Álvares (1526–1583), which belong to the {L\l} type. This can be contrasted on the one hand with the fact that in the 16th cent., Henrique Henriques (1520–1600), who is the first westerner to write about Tamil, only refers, as a model, to João de Barros (1496–1570), whose 1540 *Grammatica da Lingua Portuguesa* (see Vermeer 1982: 5 and see Gonçalves 1998: 384) belongs to the {P\p} type. This can also be contrasted with the fact that in the 18th century, C. J. Beschi, who is the most famous missionary Tamil grammarian (see Chevillard 1992) will no longer write in Portuguese but will write three distinct grammars of Tamil in Latin (and also compose a Tamil grammar in Tamil). The collective historical drift is also what leads Sylvain Auroux to add a fifth line to the previous four reproduced in Figure 1 at the beginning of this foreword, namely:

$$[5] \quad ML_x \rightarrow GL_{i,j, \dots, k}$$

This represents the case of a Language X being used as a metalanguage for describing, in a contrastive manner, a set of languages {i, j, ... k}, which will render the task of comparing all those object languages easy. In the early modern period, the language X would tend to be Latin, just as nowadays, it would tend to be English, and we might want to add that the answer to question Q1 (see above) is probably hidden in a detailed study of the episodes of that drift.

Another point which should also be mentioned is that the drift illustrated by the change of metalanguage is, to some extent, part of a more general normalizing, or standardizing tendency. Writers of grammar are not necessarily aware of the fact that they are, by their very activity, the instruments of “change”, this being the general label under which “standardization”, alias “normalization” falls. Descriptive linguists would probably not find that historical truth palatable, if applied/applicable to them. And therefore, the evidence contained in the article written by PS, in his active deconstruction of what he considers as current myth, should be a welcome reminder of the fact that, frequently, as a late colleague of us was fond of saying, adapting to the language sciences the statement of a well-known German philosopher, “La tradition est oubli des origines”.

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