language shift, areas which were pioneered respectively by Uriel Weinreich and Joshua Fishman in their attempts to study linguistic change and retention of linguistic features, including lexical, among immigrants in a host language environment. Consequently, B’s monograph is a valuable study in its contribution to better familiarity with Maltese outside of its environment, the Maltese Islands.

B has coined the term ‘Maltraljan’ to designate Australian Maltese as a language as opposed to speakers of Maltese in Australia, an adjectival form similar to the widely used ‘Westralian’ (for Western Australian) (4, n. 14). Since this is an important coinage used by B throughout his study, one would expect it to have been introduced and explained at first mention. I have found that various textual errors detract from the quality of this work overall: the prose is uneven, at times awkward; the punctuation marks, especially commas, are often misplaced, thus leading to infelicities or ambiguities. Careful editorial attention could have avoided some orthographic and typographical errors and run-on words. From pp. 130–39, the bottom page numbers were either partially, or wholly, cut off. [Mohammed Sawaie, University of Virginia.]


Eloise Jelinek, the honoree of this festschrift, is best known for her formal treatment of phenomena that traditionally fall under the province of functionalist linguists. These include the interaction of discourse functions and grammar and the nature of information structure, among other things, which she has applied creatively to the analysis of Native American, Semitic, and Australian languages. It is only fitting, then, that her three colleagues who edited this volume should have picked as a unifying theme the extension of the sorts of analyses that Jelinek has put forward in her work, in particular the consideration of more general questions about how ‘function might be formalized’. About half of the contributions are by her fellow Arizonans, the other half from a wide spectrum of linguists, most of whom have made their mark in Native American linguistics.

The volume begins with an introduction by the editors (1–8), which sketches the formalist-functionalist divide within linguistics and comments on the growing interest among formal linguists in the discourse functions of grammatical structure—a fact for which Jelinek is attributed (correctly) a great deal of credit. The essays of Part 1, ‘The pronominal argument hypothesis’ (PAH), center around this hypothesis, which is perhaps Jelinek’s most noteworthy contribution to grammatical theory. In short, PAH posits that languages fall into two classes. Lexical argument languages (the majority) allow full lexical NPs to occur in argument position, while pronominal argument languages allow only pronouns to occur in that position. The full NPs themselves are adjoined in dislocated structures. These different analyses allow the distinct properties of what have been called ‘non-configurational’ and ‘configurational’ languages respectively to be captured in an elegant manner. Ken Hale, in ‘The significance of Eloise Jelinek’s pronominal argument hypothesis’ (11–43), shows how the PAH can provide an elegant alternative to his own head movement analysis of Navajo. Emmon Bach, in ‘Categories and pronominal arguments’ (45–49), raises the question of whether the PAH has implications for word structure differences between polysynthetic and analytic languages. Keren Rice’s chapter, ‘Doubling by agreement in Slave (Northern Athapaskan)’ (52–78), which in fact adopts an alternative to the PAH, focuses on the differences in pronominal markers between Northern Athapaskan languages, like Slave, and those of the American Southwest, like Navajo. The next chapter, ‘Quasoi objects in St’át’imcets: On the (semi)-independence of agreement and case’ (80–106), by Henry Davis and Lisa Matthewson, argues that the PAH is challenged by data from St’át’imcets (Lil’looet Salish), where DPs function as arguments but are not associated with agreement morphology. And Mark C. Baker, in ‘Agreement, dislocation, and partial configurationality’ (107–32), investigates (and points out problems with) one component of the PAH, namely that full arguments occur dislocated as adjuncts in pronominal argument languages. Part 2, ‘Interfaces’, contains contributions dealing with the syntax-discourse and phonology-phonetics boundaries. Molly Diesing’s ‘Multiple multiple questions’ (135–53) treats multiple fronting in Yidish, and Lynn Nichols’s ‘Attitude evaluation in complex NPs’ (155–64) relates the semantic properties of propositional attitudes to aspects of morphosyntactic structure. ‘Topic-focus articulation and degrees of salience in the Prague dependency treebank’, by Petr Cigala, Eva Hajičová, and Eva Buráňová (165–77), provides a ‘Praguean’ slant to some of the issues of interest to Jelinek. Part 2 is rounded out by chapters contributed by: Colleen M. Fitzgerald, ‘Word order and discourse genre in Totonac O’odham’ (180–89); Joyce McDonough, ‘The protody of interrogative and focus constructions in Navajo’ (191–206); Jane H. Hill, ‘Subject number agreement, grammaticalization, and transitivity in the Cupeño verb construction’ (207–26); Diana Archangeli, ‘Lexical irregularity in OT: DOT vs. variable constraint ranking’ (227–44); and Natasha Warner, ‘Rapid perceptibility as a factor
underlying universals of vowel inventories’ (245–61).

Part 3 is entitled ‘Foundational issues’. Its first chapter, ‘Argument hierarchies and the mapping principle’ (265–96), is by ELOISE JELINEK (!) and ANDREW CARNIE. An amusing footnote explains how Jelinek was tricked into contributing to her own fest-schrift and how the editors insisted that the chapter be included despite her ‘vehement’ protests. SIMIN KARIMI, in ‘Focus movement and the nature of uninterpretable features’ (297–306), criticizes the misuse of such features within the minimalist program, while D. TERENCE LANGENDOEN’s chapter ‘Merge’ (307–18) develops further the mechanics of that operation within the program. The final two chapters are by MICHAEL HAMMOND and THOMAS G. BEVER. The former, ‘Phonotactics and probabilistic ranking’ (319–32), is a contribution to the growing literature on stochastic versions of optimality theory, and the latter, ‘Deconstructing functionalist explanations of linguistic universals’ (333–51), speculates on the cognitive bases of functional explanations. The volume closes with a reference list and name and subject indices (353–75).

As is the case with most festschrifts, the contributions to this volume display a wide range in both subject matter and degree of general interest. However, the fact that the majority deal with syntax-discourse interactions in the grammars of Native American languages means that the volume should find a niche audience who will appreciate the high quality of contributions devoted to that topic. [FREDERICK J. NEWMeyer, University of Washington.]


There are many questions surrounding the field of first language research: Is language innate? What is the importance of motherese or parental input? How do children learn two languages simultaneously? How do children learn about the aspects of language that are not obvious in the input? Are there crosslinguistic similarities in first language acquisition?

This book is a collection of short research reports by some of the major researchers in the field of first language acquisition (FLA). The contributors come from sixteen different countries and discuss seventeen different languages (e.g. English, Turkish, Taiwanese, French, Japanese, Hindi, and Icelandic), making the volume a truly crosslinguistic one.

The papers focus on general and particular aspects of language acquisition and feature a variety of domains, research questions, and social dimensions.

The volume, however, is not organized to reflect this—neither by the approach, domain, nor research question. This lack of organization may be due to the number of papers included in the volume and also their complexity, as some papers cover multiple areas. While there is a general index at the back of the volume, I do think that more of an attempt could have been made to link the papers together.

Each of the twenty-seven papers is short and presents the authors’ recent research and findings in regard to a specific question. While all of the other papers are autonomous, the first four papers are the result of a special workshop on transitivity and verb arguments, convened by the editor. The workshop was intended as an opportunity for researchers with divergent positions to get together to compare ideas. The first of these papers provides an introduction to the workshop, a summary of each of the three presenting researchers’ viewpoints and methods, and some ideas for future investigation.

The following twenty-three papers cover a range of topics, including bilingualism, use of tense in narratives, the learning of inflection agreement from parental input, the verb lexicon, and children’s knowledge of word order. There is also a range of methodologies, such as naturalistic and experimental approaches, as well as longitudinal and cross-sectional studies. But again, each of these is presented autonomously, making no reference to other papers in the volume.

In short, a diverse range of questions, domains, views, and languages is covered, likely to interest anyone in the field of FLA, though scholars new to the field of FLA and (applied) linguistics may find themselves overwhelmed by the in-depth linguistic research presented here. [CARRIE ALLYN ANKERSTEIN, University of Sheffield.]


This impressive volume aims to understand the structure and historical development of over 3000 toponyms collected by the author from an area of ca. 150 square kilometers in the west of Lewis, one of the northernmost islands in the Hebrides chain to the northwest of the Scottish mainland. These names are of immense historical and cultural significance for the lightly populated rural communities within the registry of Carloway, which remains substantially Gaelic-speaking (though all Gaelic speakers are bilingual), especially since many of the names have already been forgotten by all but the oldest generation.