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Subject: 16.1399, Review: Historical Ling/Socioling/Semitic Ling:  
Zuckermann

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1)  
Date: 02-May-2005  
From: Joseph Farquharson <[jtfarquharson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jtfarquharson@yahoo.co.uk)>  
Subject: Language Contact and Lexical Enrichment in Israeli Hebrew

-----Message 1 -----  
Date: Mon, 02 May 2005 20:59:30  
From: Joseph Farquharson <[jtfarquharson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jtfarquharson@yahoo.co.uk)>  
Subject: Language Contact and Lexical Enrichment in Israeli Hebrew

AUTHOR: Ghil'ad Zuckermann  
TITLLE: Language Contact and Lexical Enrichment in Israeli Hebrew  
PUBLISHER: Palgrave Macmillan  
YEAR: 2003  
Announced at <http://linguistlist.org/issues/15/15-469.html>

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DESCRIPTION

The 'Introduction' (pp. 1-5) is a brief and lively preface to the entire work which skilfully mixes socio-historical information and a bit of theory. Zuckermann brings his point across by usin

g the Israeli word for "glasses" and possible ways of arriving at its etymology. He introduces the focus of the book as 'a pervasive form of lexical borrowing' (3) which he has termed 'multisourced neologization' (MSN).

Chapter 1 'New Perspectives on Lexical Enrichment' (pp. 6-62) sets the theoretical framework for the rest of the book. The author mentions the traditional structuralist approaches to lexical borrowing and discusses their inadequacy in dealing with cases in which words have multiple sources. He discusses the shortcomings of Haugen's (1950) classifications which he classifies under omission and inappropriate categorization. This chapter, in some fifty-seven pages lays out a detailed theoretical system for looking at and dealing with MSN. Zuckermann divides MSN into three categories (i) phonetic matching (PM); (ii) semanticized phonetic matching (SPM) and (iii) phono-semantic matching (PSM). For many of the categories he sets up a distinction between those used by laymen, those used by purists, and processes which are employed by both groups.

Even though the author states that the book is on Israeli Hebrew, he has drawn so many illustrations from other languages that the work moves out of the territory of the ethnic and parochial into the international sphere. This is due in part though to the nature of Israeli and the number of languages which have influenced it over the decades.

Popular terms such as folk-etymology, lexical conflation, and calquing are nuanced and Zuckermann does an impressive task of clearing up old misconceptions, rejecting "inappropriate categorizations", and expanding categories with the view of creating/using terminology which better capture the linguistic realities.

'The Case of Israeli: Multisourced Neologization (MSN) as an Ideal Technique for Lexical Enrichment' (pp. 63-86) continues and elaborates the work of the preceding chapter by demonstrating how the various processes interact. The author provides the socio-historical background to Israeli and language planning efforts (especially via lexical expansion). We are informed that approximately 17,000 words in the Israeli lexicon are new items. Zuckermann moves on to explore the various strategies employed in Israeli to form MSNs: creating new roots from existing material; blending two independent roots; recycling obsolete lexemes. Of chief interest in this chapter is the discussion of whether Israeli is morphologically predisposed to MSNs based on its socio-historical background and its apophonic morphology.

Chapter 3, 'Addition of Sememe versus Introduction of Lexeme' (pp. 87-122), goes further in nuancing the types of MSNs which occur. Zuckermann distinguishes between those MSNs which introduce a new lexeme (creational MSN) and those which merely add a new sememe by semantic loan or shift. Here he introduces incestuous phono-semantic matching (PSM) which (simply put) takes place where a language borrows from a language a form which it lent to that language at an earlier stage. The incestuous PSMs in Israeli are treated based on whether they have an Indo-European, Semitic, or Nostratic ur-source.

Chapter 4 'MSN in Various Terminological Areas' (pp. 123-147) in a sense, signals the end of the theoretical aspect and turns to more applications. At the very beginning of the chapter we are told that '[folk-etymological nativization] FEN is widespread in those

terminological areas that suffer most from lexical voids within the autochthonous inventory' (p. 123). The author spends time looking at these various terminological areas (zoology, medicine, music, food, computers, toponyms, and anthroponyms), and the history (both internal and external) behind the creation of neologisms within each category.

In chapter 5 'Sociolinguistic Analysis: Attitudes Towards MSN in Reinvented Languages' (pp. 148-186), we are presented with a crucial discussion on the attitude of the various stakeholders to different lexical inventions and to the types of processes used at enriching Israeli and Republican Turkish.. The chapter ends with a treatment of six possible explanations for failed MSNs and four for successful MSNs gaining currency in the speech community.

Chapter 6, 'The Source Languages' (pp. 187-220) shifts the focus a bit from the target language (TL) to the source languages (SL). Zuckermann identifies several languages such as English (American and British), Yiddish, Russian, Polish, German, and French as major resources for lexical enrichment in Israeli. He also picks out an important class which he refers to as "Internationalisms". An internationalism is 'a lexical item which appears -- in various phonetic adaptations -- in many languages, and is often conceived of as international (p. 187). His research for this chapter brings together 111 internationalisms which are tabulated to illustrate his argument.

The 'Statistical Analysis' which is given in chapter 7 (pp. 221-245), presents 186 Israeli MSNs (both successful and failed) in tabulated form. The chapter begins with a two-page key to the table which itself covers six and a half pages. The rest of the chapter is taken up by 23 graphs interposed with sparse explanatory text. The graphs give the reader an idea of the status of MSN in Israeli based on things such as source language, terminological area, semantic classification, lexicopoietic classification, successful/failed, etc.

Chapter 8, 'Conclusions and Theoretical implications' (pp. 246-259) provides a very brief summary of the work and raises several theoretical issues which could not have been answered within the scope of the book. The author revisits topics such as popular etymology and how it is viewed/employed by puristic language planners, linguistic gender, language typology, writing systems, etc. The chapter closes with a statement on areas for future research.

The back matter comprises an appendix of 'Transcription, Transliteration and Translation' conventions (pp. 260-265), a list of references (pp. 266-286), and the Index which goes up to page 194.

#### CORRECTIONS

I have spotted a few "typographical" errors in the book which do not affect the overall quality. On page 188 (line 14), there is an extra "might" which needs to be deleted. On page 102 (line 28), insert "of" between "in the case" and "PE", and page 111 (line 26) "a incestuous" should read "an incestuous". I have not found Wood (1972) in the list of references.

#### EVALUATION

The book is an outstanding piece of scholarship which undoubtedly represents a milestone in the field of lexicology. Zuckermann's attention to details has made the work a mini-encyclopaedia, much in

the tradition of Jewish scholarship. Generally, his etymologies are well thought out and set a standard for current and future research. However, his discussion of the etymology of kidon 'handlebars' (p. 89) is less than convincing.

Given my current work on the (West African) substrate lexical influence in Jamaican Creole (an English-based Creole language spoken in the Caribbean), I would have welcomed a lengthier discussion of lexical conflation in Pidgin and Creole languages which would ultimately channel into the treatment of internationalisms. The issue here is that while lexical conflation through the Congruence Principle can be assumed, we still have not examined whether all or only some of the potential SL forms had an influence on the TL form. In addition, it would have been good if Zuckermann had explicitly informed his readers about the extent to which Wood's claim that 'the methods of classical etymology [...] are not directly applicable to non-conventional languages such as creoles' (p. 55), was refuted or supported by his findings.

Particularly interesting is his presentation of Israeli yovel "anniversary" which is related to the over-etymologized English "jubilee". It demonstrates the need at times to employ copious amounts of cultural and historical information in order to unravel the etymology of one lexical item.

While he painstakingly records references for his Israeli data, not so much care is taken in recording the source of his data from other languages, but this might have added to an already "crowded" text.

In chapter 3, we are introduced to one of the dangers of over-detailing. The sub-section entitled "PSM by semantic shifting that includes semantic loan" might serve more to obscure than to clarify the notions of phono-semantic matching (PSM) and calquing, which were introduced on page 8 and page 39 respectively. The reader has already been asked to consider semantic loans as cases where there is no phonetic similarity between the target language (TL) and the source language (SL) forms, and the TL borrows the SL meaning. I strongly believe that Zuckermann should consider ruling out semantic loan as a part of the explanation after phono-semantic matching has applied. By doing so, the original distinction he sets up would be preserved; i.e. where PSM will apply in those cases where there is a mapping of both form and meaning, and semantic loan will obtain only in those cases where there is no structural similarity, but the semantics of TL is clearly borrowed from SL.

Since we have broached the topic of "over-detailing" I must say that while the theoretical side of the work is much appreciated, the battle to remember the boundaries between small categories and the numerous abbreviations at times proved tedious. However, this has been compensated for by the writer's smooth style and the interesting way in which he has presented the data. The way he pulls bits and pieces of social and political history together, the numerous examples he draws from diverse languages, and the occasional anecdotes all add to the defining characteristics of the work. It would be foolhardy for any lexicographer, lexicologist, etymologist, language planner, morphologist not to have a copy of this book handy. The work is accessible to a general audience though. Zuckermann set himself an ambitious task which he has achieved with astounding brilliance.

REFERENCE

Haugen, Einar (1950) The Analysis of Linguistic Borrowing, Language 26: 210-231.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Joseph T. Farquharson is a PhD candidate in the Department of Language, linguistics and philosophy at the University of the West Indies (Mona). He is about to begin a PhD fellowship at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology (Leipzig, Germany). Joseph is founder and co-ordinator of the Jamaican Lexicography Project (Jamlex).

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