

Current Trends in Diachronic Semantics and Pragmatics



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Reviews

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Brill. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Current Trends in Diachronic Semantics and Pragmatics, Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen, Jacqueline Visconti, Bruce Fraser, Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen, Kerstin Fischer, The focus of this volume is on semantic and pragmatic change, its causes and mechanisms. The papers gathered here offer both theoretical proposals of more general scope and in-depth studies of language-specific cases of meaning change in particular notional domains. The analyses include data from English, several Romance languages, German, Scandinavian languages, and Oceanic languages. Detailed case-studies covering central semantic domains, such as concession, evidentiality, intensification, modality, negation, scalarity, subjectivity, and temporality, allow the authors to test and refine current models of semantic change, by focusing, for instance, on the respective roles of speakers and hearers in the process and on the relationship between semantic and syntactic reanalysis. Key theoretical notions, such as presuppositions, paradigms, word order, and discourse status are revisited in a diachronic perspective to provide innovative accounts of causes and motivations for linguistic changes. A prominent theme is the evolution of procedural meanings of various kinds. Thus, several papers feature different types of pragmatic markers as their object of study, while others are concerned with items and constructions expressing modality, evidentiality, negation, and relational meanings. Closely related themes are: the interface between semantics and pragmatics/discourse, with figurative uses of language, rhetorical-argumentational strategies, discourse traditions, information structure, and the importance of dialogic contexts in change playing a salient role in several papers; the relationship between meaning change and processes such as grammaticalization, subjectification and pragmaticalization; and, the thorny issue of the categorization of linguistic items such as discourse markers or modal particles, evidentials or epistemic modals, to which the diachronic data are shown to contribute substantially. The volume will be of interest to graduate students and researchers in the fields of semantics,...

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