

ence of Roman Jakobson". *On Language* Roman Jakobson, 1–45. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press.

Weinreich, Uriel, William Labov & Martin I. Herzog. 1968. "Empirical Foundations for a Theory of Language Change". Lehmann & Malkiel 1968. 95–188.

Wilbur, Terence H. 1977. *The Lautgesetz-Controversy: A Documentation*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Winters, Margaret E. 1992. "Diachrony within Synchrony: The Challenge of Cognitive Grammar". *Thirty Years of Linguistic Evolution, Studies in Honour of René Dirven on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday* ed. by Martin Pütz, 503–512. Amsterdam & Philadelphia. John Benjamins.

Wolf, George. 1999. "A Glance at the History of Linguistics: Saussure and Historical-Comparativism". Embleton et al. 1999. 129–137.

Robert W. Murray, Calgary (Canada)

253. Konzepte von der Historizität von Sprachen und von Sprachgeschichte

Redaktioneller Hinweis: Aus terminlich-technischen Gründen muß der an dieser Stelle vorgesehene Artikel leider entfallen.

Editorial note: Due to circumstances beyond our control, the article originally scheduled to be published here has to be omitted.

Avis de la rédaction: En raison d'impératifs de production et de la prescription de délais, l'article prévu ici ne peut être publié.

254. The investigation of diachronic variety in languages: Traditions and recent developments

1. Introduction
2. The use of the apparent time
3. Longitudinal studies
4. Variatologist studies of historical data
5. Conclusion
6. Bibliography

1. Introduction

In the second half of the 20th century a new course for the study of language change was charted by sociolinguistics, chief among them William Labov (b. 1927). The sociolinguistic approach to language change accepts many of the assumptions and theories of traditional historical linguistics. However, the two approaches differ fundamentally in terms of their understanding of linguistic variation. "Variation", as it will be used here, includes differential usage both across and within individual speakers of a language. Thus, it encompasses differences of dialect as well as of register or style.

Traditional historical linguists along with most linguists involved in the synchronic study of language operate under what Chambers (1995: 12) has labeled the axiom of categoricity: "the simplifying assumption that data for linguistic analysis must be regularized to eliminate real-world variability". At the heart of this assumption lies the belief that the language system is fundamentally homogenous, a notion captured by Saussure's '*langue*' and Chomsky's 'competence' or 'I-language'. Sociolinguistics reject this view and maintain instead that variation is an essential component of any language system.

In their seminal 1968 paper, Weinreich, Labov and Herzog highlighted the centrality of variation to linguistic study (p. 101):

"The key to a rational conception of language change" indeed, of language itself "is the possibility of describing orderly differentiation in a language serving a community. We will argue that native-like command of heterogenous structures is not