This new and important study of semantic change examines how new meanings arise through language use, especially the various ways in which speakers and writers experiment with uses of words and constructions in the flow of strategic interaction with addressees.

In the last few decades there has been growing interest in exploring systematicities in semantic change from a number of perspectives including theories of metaphor, pragmatic inferencing, and grammaticalization. As in earlier studies, these have for the most part been based on data taken out of context. This book is the first detailed examination of semantic change from the perspective of historical pragmatics and discourse analysis. Drawing on extensive corpus data from over a thousand years of English and Japanese textual history, Traugott and Dasher show that most changes in meaning originate in and are motivated by the associative flow of speech.

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SEMANTIC CHANGE

ELIZABETH CLOSS TRAUGOTT
RICHARD B. DASHER
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The focus of this work is recent developments in cross-linguistic research on historical semantics and pragmatics, with special reference to the histories of English and Japanese. The framework can be characterized as “integrative functionalist” (Croft 1995) in that we consider linguistic phenomena to be systematic and partly arbitrary, but so closely tied to cognitive and social factors as not to be self-contained; they are therefore in part nonarbitrary. One of the linguist’s tasks is to determine what is arbitrary, what is not, and how to account for the differences.

We see semantic change (change in code) as arising out of the pragmatic uses to which speakers or writers and addressees or readers put language, and most especially out of the preferred strategies that speakers/writers use in communicating with addressees. The changes discussed in this book are tendencies that are remarkably widely attested, but that can be violated under particular, often social, circumstances ranging from shifts in ideological values to the development of various technologies. “Regularity” is to be understood as typical change, or frequent replication across time and across languages, not as analogous to the Neogrammian idea of unexceptionless change in phonology.

Richard Dasher takes prime responsibility for the Japanese data, Elizabeth Traugott for the remainder, but both have discussed all the material presented here in countless meetings over nearly fifteen years. The ideas presented here have been explored in several venues. It would be impossible to thank and acknowledge the contribution of all those who have helped make this a better book than it would have been otherwise, but Joan Bybee, Maria Cuenca, Bernd Heine, Paul Kiparsky, Roger Lass, Nina Lin, Alain Peyraube, Eve Sweetser, Chaofen Sun, Shiao-Wei Tham, and Yo Matsumoto deserve special mention, and especially Brady Clark, Andrew Garrett, and Nigel Vincent who gave extensive advice on pre-final drafts. Elizabeth Traugott owes a particular debt to her coauthors on various other occasions: Paul Hopper, Ekkehard König, Rachel Nordlinger, Whitney Tabor, and above all to Scott Schwenter without whose inspiration, intellectual
Preface and acknowledgments

congening, and friendly challenges this book would not have come to fruition. Juno Nakamura gave invaluable help with preparing the manuscript and the indices. Citi Potts saved us from many errors at the copy-editing stage, and Andrew Winnard of Cambridge University Press supervised the production. To all our deepest appreciation.
CONVENTIONS

Here we outline conventions of transcription and periodization for the three languages most fully discussed in this book: Chinese, English, and Japanese.

All languages including Japanese, Chinese, and Greek are transcribed in the Roman alphabet. Macrons indicating reconstructed vowel length are omitted.

All dates of the language stages should be considered to be approximate. Some texts from early in a language stage may show relatively more characteristics of the previous language stage. Some may be deliberately archaizing.

(i) Conventions for Chinese

The transcription employed for Chinese examples is the pinyin system of romanization, used in the People's Republic of China. The tone marks of the romanization are omitted.

Approximate stages in the history of Chinese are as in (1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Stage</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Ending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAC Pre-Archaic Chinese</td>
<td>1400 BC</td>
<td>1100 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC Early Archaic Chinese</td>
<td>1100 BC</td>
<td>500 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC Late Archaic Chinese</td>
<td>500 BC</td>
<td>200 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMC Early Middle Chinese</td>
<td>200 BC</td>
<td>600 AC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMC Late Middle Chinese</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMan Mand Early Mandarin</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MdMand Modern Mandarin</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Conventions for English

Old English is transcribed without macrons or abbreviations other than ampersand.

Approximate stages in the history of English are given in (2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Stage</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Ending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OE Old English</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>1150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOE Early Old English</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOE Late Old English</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conventions

ME Middle English 1150 1500
EME Early Middle English 1150 1300
LME Late Middle English 1370 1500
EMdE Early Modern English 1500 1770
MdE Modern English 1770 1970
PDE Present Day English 1970 present

Dating Old English texts is notoriously controversial. Dates of composition differ extensively from dates of manuscripts. In the case of the epic poem *Beowulf*, the manuscript dates from about 1000, but the date of composition is presumably significantly earlier. Scholars disagree on whether it was composed in the eighth or ninth century (see Bjork and Obermeier 1997); we accept the eighth century date. The dating suggested in this book provides specific dates of composition where reasonably well established; otherwise, we use the dating conventions adopted for the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts (see Rissanen, Kytö, and Palander-Collin 1993) or by the editions from which texts are cited.

(iii) Conventions for Japanese

For Japanese linguistic items, phonemic transcription is used. Thus, for example, the syllables [fu] and [tsu] in Modern Japanese are written as *hu* and *tu*, respectively. Transcriptions of linguistic items from previous stages of Japanese for the most part follow the orthographic conventions of the language at the time, but these may be modified for clarity, e.g. when discussing the history of a single item across several language stages. In particular, the phonological system change of */F/* (bilabial fricative; in preliterary times most likely a stop) to */h/* (which spread at different times depending on the following vowel) is captured by using *F* for Old Japanese transcriptions, *h* for later premodern periods of the language, and the current phonemic shape for the form in the present day language, e.g. *tamaFu* “give” (Old Japanese) > *tamahu* (Late Old Japanese–Early Modern Japanese) > *tamau* (Modern Japanese). Transcriptions of Old Japanese in the present work do not distinguish between the *koo* (A) and *otu* (B) series of vowels.

For Japanese author and book names, including those of primary texts, the modified Hepburn romanization system (see Masuda 1974) is used in order to clarify references to proper nouns that are best known in this transcription. Double vowels, however, are used instead of macrons.

Approximate stages in the history of Japanese (Jp.) are given in (3):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Stage</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Ending</th>
<th>Corresponding Historical Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OJ Old Jp.</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>Nara Period 710–794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOJ Late Old Jp.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>Heian Period 794–1192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMJ Early Middle Jp.</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>1330</td>
<td>Kamakura Period 1192–1333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMJ Late Middle Jp.</td>
<td>1330</td>
<td>1610</td>
<td>Muromachi Period 1333–1603</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The extent to which periodization is arbitrary for any particular text is well illustrated by the Kyogen plays. They are considered to be representative of the colloquial language of theLate Middle Japanese period, despite the fact that the written texts of the plays stem from the early seventeenth century. In fact, the language of the plays reflects some layering of Early Modern Japanese elements over a basic language model from the Late Middle Japanese period, plus some set “stage language” phrases (Koyama 1960: 27).
# ABBREVIATIONS

*Linguistic terms, languages, dictionaries (for full dictionary entries, see Secondary references)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABL</td>
<td>ablative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD/R</td>
<td>addressee/reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD/R+</td>
<td>addressee/reader and associated social group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td>adverbial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AffADHON</td>
<td>affixal addressee honorific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSOC</td>
<td>associative (includes genitive uses)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>conceptual category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAUS</td>
<td>causative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDE</td>
<td>conceptualized described event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch.</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPAR</td>
<td>comparative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONDIT</td>
<td>conditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>copula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-Ref</td>
<td>conceptualized referent (in figures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-Ref P</td>
<td>conceptualized referent person (in figures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSE</td>
<td>conceptualized speech event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESID</td>
<td>desiderative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DO</td>
<td>direct object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOE</td>
<td>Dictionary of Old English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du.</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>epistemic adverbial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>Early Archaic Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMand</td>
<td>Early Mandarin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMC</td>
<td>Early Middle Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMdE</td>
<td>Early Modern English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMdJ</td>
<td>Early Modern Japanese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Abbreviations

EME Early Middle English
EMJ Early Middle Japanese
EMPH emphatic (particle)
Eng. English
EOE Early Old English
EXCL exclusive (focus particle)
FOC focus (particle)
Fr. French
FTA face threatening act
FUT future
GER gerund (verb form)
GIIN generalized invited inference
Gk. Greek
Gm. German
HONP honorific prefix
HUMIL humiliative subject
IE Indo-European
IIN invited inference
IITSC Invited Inferencing Theory of Semantic Change
IMP imperative
INCL inclusive (focus particle)
INDEF indefinite
INTENT intentional
Jp. Japanese
L lexeme
LAC Late Archaic Chinese
Lat. Latin
LexADHON lexical addressee honorific
LME Late Middle English
LMC Late Middle Chinese
LMJ Late Middle Japanese
LOC locative
LOE Late Old English
LOJ Late Old Japanese
M coded abstract meaningful element
MA manner adverb(ial)
MdE Modern English
MdJ Modern Japanese
MdMand Modern Mandarin
ME Middle English
### Abbreviations

- **MED** Middle English Dictionary
- **M-heuristic** Manner-heuristic
- **MJ** Middle Japanese
- **nec** necessity (in figures)
- **NEG** negative
- **NKD** Nihon Kokugo Daiziten
- **NP** noun phrase
- **OBJ** object
- **OE** Old English
- **OED** Oxford English Dictionary
- **OJ** Old Japanese
- **P** phonological element
- **PAC** Pre-Archaic Chinese
- **PASS** passive morpheme
- **PDE** Present-Day English
- **PDJ** Present-Day Japanese
- **PERF** perfect (tense/aspect)
- **PFV** perfective
- **POL** polite
- **POSS** possibility (in figures)
- **POTEN** potential (affix)
- **PP** prepositional phrase
- **PROB** probability (verb suffix)
- **PTC** particle
- **Q** question (particle)
- **Q-heuristic** Quantity-heuristic
- **QUOT** quotative (particle)
- **RA** respect adverbial (adverbial of “respect in which”)
- **Ref action** conceptualized referred-to action (in figures)
- **RESP** respectful (suffix, formulaic expression, etc.)
- **R-heuristic** Relevance-heuristic
- **S** (morpho)syntactic component
- **SAV** speech act verb (nonperformative)
- **SD** social deictic
- **s-o** scope over (in figures)
- **SP/W** speaker/writer
- **SP/W+** speaker/writer and associated social group
- **SUBJ Ref** conceptualized subject referent (in figures)
- **SUBJUNCT** subjunctive
- **s-w** scope within (in figures)
Abbreviations

TOP topic (particle)
T-V “familiar vs. formal” forms of the second person singular
V POL very polite
VRESP very respectful

Symbols

‡ is linked to
→ is realized as
> changes to
=> invites the inference
- morpheme boundary in original language
: morpheme boundary in English gloss
/ poetic lines breaks in Japanese texts
X/Y both X and Y (in Figures)
—— attested as semanticized, and continues to period specified
(in figures)
--- = sporadic use; probably not fully semanticized (in figures)
->- = increase in strength of change (in figures)