

## REVIEW

**AN INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTIC SYNERGETICS  
BY T. DOMBROVAN<sup>1</sup>**

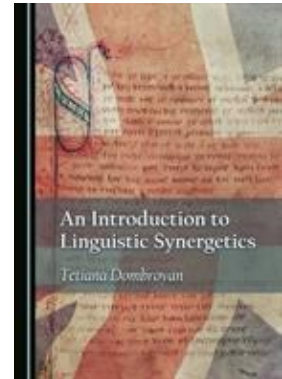
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**Oksana Babelyuk**

Prof., DSc, Lviv State University of Life Safety, Ukraine  
e-mail: [babelyuko@gmail.com](mailto:babelyuko@gmail.com), [orcid.org/0000-0003-4837-1225](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4837-1225)

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“Why does language change over time? What are the triggers and mechanisms of changes on different language levels such as phonemic, morphemic, lexical, and syntactic? Why is lexis subject to rapid changes and innovations while syntactic constructions tend to retain certain stability throughout centuries? How did it come about that within a few centuries the English language has changed its grammatical system from synthetic to analytical?” These and some other questions get close consideration in the book “An Introduction to Linguistic Synergetics” by Tetiana Dombrovan (ISBN: 1-5275-0570-7 ISBN13: 978-1-5275-0570-4) (<https://www.cambridgescholars.com/product/978-1-5275-0570-4>).

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Tetiana Dombrovan is a well-known linguist in Ukraine. She is the head of the English Philology and Translation Studies Chair at Odesa National Polytechnic University (Ukraine). The author’s spheres of scientific interest include historical linguistics, English grammar, linguistic synergetics. Her doctoral thesis (“A Synergetic Model of the Development of the English Language” 2014) advances diachronic linguosynergetics by modeling the history of the English language as a synergetic process with a special focus laid on outlining principles and mechanisms of language change and development.

The book was released by Cambridge Scholars Publishing (<https://www.cambridgescholars.com>) – an independent academic publisher (since 2001), founded by former lecturers and researchers from the University of Cambridge, aiming to provide a forward-thinking publishing service that champions original thinking (<https://www.cambridgescholars.com/pages/who-are-cambridge-scholars-publishing>). Since the time when it first came out on 17 January 2018, “An Introduction to Linguistic Synergetics” has been cited 22 times according to (<https://scholar.google.co.uk/citations?user=SMwXuzYAAAAJ&hl=en>). This shows that the book is of significant interest to researchers.

As the author says in the Preface, the questions posed at the beginning of the book came from her interest in the theory of language development and motivated her to look for a new approach to the issues of language change (p. vii).

The book can be viewed as an introduction to a novel methodology of language development studies, namely, diachronic linguosynergetics. The Table of Contents includes, besides Preface and Acknowledgements, four chapters, References, and Index.

Chapter One “Synergetics: The Study of Complexity” (pp. 1–26) considers synergetics from a historical retrospective, dwelling upon its status and tasks, outlining its peculiar features and key concepts, disclosing the interdisciplinary essence of synergetics and the application of its methodology in sciences.

Chapter Two seeks an answer to the question “What is Linguistic Synergetics?” The reader will find here a definition of linguistic synergetics (“a methodological approach to the description of the dynamic space of language”, p. 29), a wide range of its possible applications to language studies (pp. 29–32), the main aims and tasks of linguistic synergetics, among which is “to reveal, describe, and explain the mechanism of the inner dynamic structure of a language” (p. 32). For me, the most noteworthy is the author’s revealing of the synergetic essence of a language system, including its fractal-type structure, on the one hand, and the scale-free network organization, on the other (pp. 33–48).

Chapter Three entitled “Diachronic Synergetics: A Few Notes on the Development of the English Language” (pp. 49–96) is a great bonus for a historical linguist. In this chapter, the author explains why “appropriate division into periods” can never be achieved, how the historical changes within vowels and consonants can be viewed from a different – synergetic – perspective, and what stands behind the changes in the structure of words or their grammatical categories.

Chapter Four “A Synergetic Model of Language Development” (pp. 97–124) is also based on the history of English and represents the overall evolution of the language in the three perspectives: 1) Language Development as a Synchronisation of Tempo-Worlds in the Grammatical System; 2) Language Development as a Change of the Parameter Pattern of the Language System, and 3) Language Development as a Change of the States of the Language Mega-System.

The “References” section contains a list of academic works by linguists and, mostly, non-linguists, whose findings and reflections contributed to the theoretical and methodological foundation of the research presented in the book.

“An Introduction to Linguistic Synergetics” has a good layout with a handful of illustrations, eighteen figures, and twenty-eight tables to make reading easier, even for a non-specialist. I would also like to mention the clarity of definitions and of the author’s style, on the whole. Each chapter is subdivided into sections dealing with one or two issues, gradually leading the reader from a simpler notion to more difficult ones. All this enables to expand the audience of the book, including, besides experienced linguists, a wide range of university students researching complex systems of different ontologies, language included.