

Reviews

An Introduction to Psycholinguistics. Danny D. Steinberg. New York: Longman, 1993. 266 pp.

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A new addition to Longman's Learning about Language series is Danny D. Steinberg's *An Introduction to Psycholinguistics*. This text is most suitable for first-year undergraduate students, targeting those who are interested in how linguistics overlaps with psychology but who have little knowledge of the field. *JALT Journal* readers will appreciate that a quarter of the material is devoted to second-language issues, and may be pleased to discover that the author, who teaches at a Japanese university, draws most of his examples from Japanese and English. The book is divided into three sections and is generally very readable, with discussion questions and a list of suggested readings following each chapter. Subject and author indexes are also provided, and should help the reader navigate the wide range of information presented.

Part 1, First Language, introduces the reader to psycholinguistics. In Chapter 1 the author starts at the point of children's first-language acquisition. Dealing separately with language production and understanding, he continues by ascending the levels of speech acquisition, loosely but regularly referring to the primacy of understanding. Proceeding to the acquisition of comprehension, the author explains more thoroughly how understanding and memory relate to language learning. Finally, Steinberg examines the kind of speech which young children usually receive, and the relevance of imitation and correction to the acquisition process. A weakness of the chapter is that while the author is certainly correct in reminding the reader that comprehension is a precursor of speech, his very insistence upon this fact, combined with his constant foreshadowing of its formal presentation, risks creating the impression that he has put the cart before the horse in his organization of the chapter. Nevertheless, Steinberg's communication of the material does allow readers to leave Chapter 1 with a good grasp of the topic.

The second chapter shifts the psycholinguistic periscope away from human beings and toward animal communication, opening with a collection of studies where researchers have tried to achieve communication with animals. Although the author advances from study to study by

leaps rather than at a steady trot, each independent piece of research receives a thorough analysis. Steinberg next jumps back to the more primitive forms of animal communication found in the wild, then forward to the most promising animal language research which has arisen to date, perhaps raising organizational questions similar to those mentioned above. This chapter, however, offers the reader a first glimpse of the author's concern for the objective presentation of controversy, and those who believe that animals may have language are therefore given full voice before the pessimism of the author and of other researchers comes to prevail.

Chapter 3 is morbidly fascinating. Providing in abundance the continuity missing from the preceding chapter, the author compares the linguistic progress of four "wild children" who were deprived of language in the early years of their lives. After the cases are contrasted in terms of the age of onset of deprivation, its duration, and the estimated extent of physical, social, and psychological trauma, a possible critical age beyond which first-language learning becomes difficult is tentatively set at between approximately seven and twelve years old.

In the final chapter of Part 1, the author introduces the language forms used by the deaf, gaining a strong, authoritative voice. As he contrasts gestures with signs, distinguishes among different types of sign language, and discusses the methods used by the deaf to communicate with the hearing community, Steinberg joins those whose language is non-spoken in their ongoing campaign for linguistic respectability. Particular attention is paid to a mode of first-language instruction where "words are to be addressed to [the] eye instead of [the] ear" (p. 86, quoting Alexander Graham Bell). Non-spoken language appears to hold a great interest for the author, and his consideration of it is an interesting constant throughout the entire text.

The middle chapters of the book examine the role that the mind and brain play with regard to language, elucidating issues which provide the backbone for first- and second-language learning. The first of these, Chapter 5, traces the evolution of Noam Chomsky's mental grammar theories. Steinberg explains Chomsky's distinction between linguistic competence, which denotes language-users' grammatical knowledge, and performance, the part of competence involving translation between thought and speech. Through a challenging presentation of Chomsky's theories, the reader is exposed to the assertion that not only do sets of mental rules represent the syntax, meaning, and sound of an infinite number of sentences, but also that syntax is the key element from which meaning and sound proceed. The chapter closes with the arguments of

those who maintain that meaning, not syntax, is primary in sentence creation. Unfortunately, Chapter 5 is perhaps the weakest in the book. Abandoning his clear, common-sense tone at a point where readers are probably in greatest need of it, the author seems driven into a dry, distant style by the technicality of his subject matter. It is inarguable that finding anecdotes for grammar is no easy task, but this stylistic shift is also marked by sentences which are denser in content and by occasional oversights in term definition. The material is further complicated by an impatient tendency to hint at information which is to follow later in this and the next chapter. The combined effect of these factors is that the true newcomer to the field may find much of the discussion here inaccessible without help. This fact, however, is largely unimportant to Steinberg's greater message, which comes to light in Chapter 6.

The purpose of Chapter 6 is to lay to rest Chomsky's claim that his system of rules is psychologically relevant. Although Chomsky himself recognizes that his grammar does not intermediate between sound and meaning and therefore cannot describe actual language-user performance, he insists that it does exist in people's minds as a sort of reference table. Via insightful reasoning and a look at several features of language performance, the author attacks this "resource" grammar in favor of one which is directly involved in the performance process. Throughout his critique, Steinberg expresses only the greatest respect for Chomsky, providing a possible explanation for the difficulties of Chapter 5. That is, given both the author's energetic assault on Chomsky's grammatical theories and his high regard for the linguist himself, it appears that a main goal of Chapter 5 may be to do justice to a great man's intellect. This well-intentioned attempt at balance, however, seems more likely to bewilder many readers rather than to dazzle them.

Steinberg waxes philosophical in Chapter 7, tackling the question of whether language arises from intelligence or from innate knowledge. After comparing Empiricism, which asserts that humans are born with a "blank slate," and traditional Rationalism, which holds that basic knowledge is inborn, the author focuses on the language portion of Chomsky's revised Rationalism, known as Universal Grammar (UG). Each of Chomsky's arguments in favor of UG meets with a convincing counter-argument, and the chapter eventually arrives at the conclusion that it is as impossible to explain the origin of language as it is to explain the origin of infinity. Last, almost as an afterthought, Steinberg defines and contrasts Mentalism and Behaviorism, terms first used in Chapter 4.

Chapter 8 addresses another area of psycholinguistic controversy, that of the relationship between thought and language. The unadorned

clarity of Steinberg's analysis as he challenges the causal role first of speech and then of language in creating thought makes his ultimate rejection of the two theories seem unavoidable. Language, he concludes, can influence our beliefs and provide us with new ideas, but it is not involved in the development of thought. The very simplicity of the author's arguments here, however, may leave him open to charges of caricaturization, and some of the theorists whom he mentions might take issue with his portrayal of their ideas. Nevertheless, the humor which he brings to the topic can be quite entertaining, as he asks the reader to picture "hordes of Mongols and Huns . . . good people at heart, perhaps, but helpless captives of their own bloodthirsty subject-predicate view of the universe, and, hence, forever doomed to burn and pillage!" (p. 166).

Moving on to the biological aspects of psycholinguistics in Chapter 9, the author uses a down-to-earth discussion of right- and left-handedness to arouse the reader's interest in the brain. Its anatomy, hemispheric dominance, and lateralization of function are examined, with special emphasis on language areas. The effect of brain maturation on language learning is also considered. The latter half of the chapter addresses language disorders, or aphasias, as well as various scientific methods of investigating them, and finishes by raising questions regarding the mind and free will. An impressive feature of this chapter is the recency of its data, with some sources from 1993.

The last section of the text should be the most interesting to *JALT Journal* readers, dealing as it does with the learning and teaching of a second language and with bilingualism. Part 3 is ushered in by Chapter 10 and its scrutiny of the commonly-held assumption that children are better second-language learners than are adults. The author shows that children outperform adults in motor skills (affecting pronunciation) and rote memory, but that adults excel at intellectual processing. Steinberg goes on to reveal how natural language-learning contexts favor children, while a classroom situation is more suitable to older individuals. In his final synthesis of the social and psychological factors relevant to second-language learning, the reader discovers that in a natural context, younger does indeed mean better, but that the optimal age to learn language in a classroom should be about twelve. Further, it is noted that if a critical age for second-language learning exists, it applies only to pronunciation.

In Chapter 11, the author advances from second-language learning to its teaching. He highlights five "dimensions," such as language mode (speech vs. reading) and psychological viewpoint (Mentalist vs. Behav-

iorist), which assist his characterization of traditional and contemporary teaching methods. Nine different approaches are analyzed, and while Steinberg may take issue with some of their features, his attitude remains open-minded and descriptive, rather than prescriptive. Practically speaking, Chapter 11 is highly informative, although its lack of a graphic or written summary may pose some difficulties for the newcomer.

The terminus of Steinberg's introduction to psycholinguistics is the topic of bilingualism, with the definition of "bilingual" widening to include sign language users and those with fluent reading and writing skills. The reader encounters research, sometimes shockingly inept, related to the influence of early second-language acquisition on children's linguistic and intellectual development, and learns that no negative effects have been found. In light of this fact and the obvious benefits of knowing a second language, early second-language exposure is advocated. In closing, after a discussion of the simultaneous and sequential learning of two languages, Steinberg looks at the ways in which familiarity with a first language can both facilitate and cause problems with the use of a second one.

Steinberg's humor and personal involvement in *An Introduction to Psycholinguistics* are enjoyable elements of the book. He includes numerous asides from his own life, and his tone often combines an enthusiasm to share interesting information with the reassurance that soon everything will make perfect sense. Unfortunately, the author's eagerness sometimes reveals itself in organizational problems like the "foreshadowing" noted above (Chapters 1 and 5). In several instances, the existence of a glossary would have solved the difficulty. In others, even if a glossary had been included, much of the "hinting" might still have proven frustrating to readers who do not yet feel completely at home with the main topic. These readers, however, are of course free to disregard information for which they do not feel ready, and more knowledgeable ones may see this phenomenon as an attempt at cohesiveness.

Yet a problem that I have with the text is that I do not find it particularly cohesive. While the author has a gift for effective analogy and offers a wide range of material in a usually straightforward and highly intelligent manner, he generally neglects the introduction, transitions, and conclusions which would tie the book together and communicate a sense of psycholinguistics as a distinct field. The abrupt end of the last page is most glaring in this respect. It's as if each chapter were a single bit of fabric with its own embroidered design, but instead of stitching the pieces together to form a quilt, Steinberg has chosen to

line them up side-by-side. On the other hand, in stating that “every chapter . . . is self-sufficient and can be read directly” (xi), the author indicates that this arrangement was in fact a choice, and therefore may be only a matter of taste. Some might even find Steinberg’s style a more “scientific” one. In any case, the book lends itself well to the typical one class/one topic structure of a college course, and instructors who adopt it should have little difficulty in re-arranging the chapters as they see fit and supplying the continuity which they deem necessary.

The message which Steinberg does effectively convey about psycholinguistics in general is that most all of its sub-fields are alive with heated debate. When he presents charged issues, the author usually does his best to remain objective and often couches his own point of view in the opinion, or even the assumed opinion, of others, through expressions such as “I am sure Terrace would point out . . .” (p. 37). Steinberg meets his self-imposed challenge to take readers “to the heart of . . . contemporary controversy” (xi), widening the field of conflict by listing numerous members of competing theoretical camps. And while some may grumble that many of these names are not referenced elsewhere in the book and seem to be for recognition value alone, others could rebut that each chapter includes only the suggested readings which Steinberg felt would be especially helpful.

The author’s stated goal of helping readers learn “to think for themselves and conduct inquiries on their own” (xi) is less fully achieved, however. Some discussion questions do demand reflection beyond the scope of the material covered, and some methodological criticism is indeed presented. But the data interpretation which would promote the development of scientific thought is not consistently present in the text. This characteristic, however, may simply reflect a more theoretical and philosophical approach to the field, which newcomers may in fact find more appealing.

An Introduction to Psycholinguistics is a difficult work about which to generalize, in that each chapter truly does seem to be an independent entity: the organization of Chapter 1 may be questionable, yet that of Chapter 7 is extremely well-structured; Chapter 5 has been accused of complexity, but Chapter 8, of simplicity. What, then, can be said about the text as a whole? It certainly contains an intelligent analysis of the most central questions of a diverse field, and provides readers with a good basis for more advanced study. For those who wonder whether damage to the brain affects kanji and kana knowledge in the same way, whether a shake of the head means “no” in Sri Lanka, and whether Dr. Doolittle really did know something we don’t, Steinberg’s text offers possible answers.

Transcending Stereotypes: Discovering Japanese Culture and Education.

Barbara Finkelstein, Anne M. Imamura, and Joseph J. Tobin (Eds.).
Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, 1991. 221 pp. \$29.95.

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Foreign teachers in Japan and teachers of Japanese students abroad may have noticed how few books written for them provide more than glimpses into Japanese educational culture. Yet in the classroom, they may find themselves groping to identify cultural assumptions that only their students seem to share. Failure to clarify these assumptions may lead to unsatisfactory and even stereotyped explanations of student behavior.

This book is highly recommended to both groups of teachers. A publication produced under the auspices of the International Center for the Study of Education Policy and Human Values at the University of Maryland, it represents the experience the Center has gained through its many research and curriculum development programs with educators in Japan. Although the book speaks directly, on occasion, to an American audience, its depth and scope will appeal to a broader one.

Organized into five sections, most of the 28 articles in the volume (including section introductions) are short yet thought-provokingly written. Even the articles not primarily concerned with education, but rather with the culture that contextualizes it, may prompt teachers to take a fresh look at their own teaching approaches and practices.

The first section, Japanese Culture, begins at the roots: the childhood learning of *amae* (presuming on the benevolence of others), *sempai/kobai* relationships, and the outer and inner realms of *tatemaie/honne* and *omote/ura*. It shows why the Japanese so willingly honor their expected roles in society, why they value formality and informality more equally than do Westerners, and why the group, rather than the individual, is often the locus of social obligations. Through these and other insights, there emerges a cultural mirror for Western notions of privacy, personal accountability, and self-reliance. The reflection is notably clear in Takeo Doi's revelations of culture shock as a guest in an American home.

Although most articles in this section are neutral or positive in tone, "Inside and Outside" deals with the negative effects of *uchi/soto* thinking on Japan's global relationships. In it, two Japanese scholars discredit

notions of Japanese uniqueness, particularly that of a genetically transmitted Japanese essence (which could imply that foreigners are biologically incapable of understanding things Japanese).

The second section, Family and Society, does not survey the topic as a whole, but instead seeks to dispel the misleading "submissive female" stereotype by concentrating on the social roles of Japanese women. Truly, women have been the driving force within the Japanese family and, however underrepresented they have been in business and politics, their influence extends well beyond the home in significant ways. Considering the title of the section, however, the tokenism to which the roles of men in the modern family are treated is curious.

"New Lifestyles for Housewives" profiles women pursuing diverse combinations of interests in work, community affairs, and personal development. Seen in the Japanese context, where interdependency is valued over independence and self-interest is eschewed in favor of collective benefit, these outside interests often connect with family life. The most striking example is "The Education Mother" (*kyoiku mama*), which details the all-consuming responsibilities of women who face with their children an intensely competitive academic environment.

"The Persistence of Ie" serves as a coda for the first two sections. It traces the precedents for group loyalty, adherence to hierarchy, and the preservation of harmony to a centuries-old lineal family system. The endurance of these values both stems from, and reinforces, the continuing stability of the family, making it less surprising when Japanese women forgo what they see as the burdens of a full-time career to marry and raise children.

The remaining two-thirds of the book turn to Japanese education proper, first by putting the reader "up close" to the experiences of everyday school life. The fourth section, Education and Cultural Transmission, moves up the path from pre-schools to universities, where continuous attention is given to the formation of group consciousness, the development of discipline, and the belief that effort, rather than ability, is the key to success—a belief not often well understood by Western teachers.

"Nursery Schools," "Forming Groups," and "The Spirit of *Gambaru*" show how group consciousness develops from an early age. Contrary to their strong authoritarian image, teachers in early educational settings give children a good measure of responsibility and control so that they may learn to work well in groups. Children rotate leadership in games, chores, and other activities, often with scarce resources or unwieldy objects that must be managed through concerted effort.

Children are also left to resolve conflicts in which they or others are involved. Never assumed to be intentionally bad, Japanese children learn good behavior through the consequences of their own actions. This contrasts starkly with the West, where teachers often intervene with explicit statements of right and wrong.

Another contrasting view concerns class size. For Japanese teachers who consider relations among students more important than those between students and themselves, large classes are seen as advantageously reflecting the challenge of successful interactions in society as a whole. Although they would enjoy smaller classes, these teachers point out that the parent-like, individual attention given in Western classrooms would not satisfy this aim.

"Learning Skills and Attitudes in Japanese Early Education Settings" describes approaches to learner motivation, discipline/concentration, and self-monitoring, drawing parallels between conventional schooling and the traditional Suzuki method of music instruction. Some comparisons are close: in both settings school and home-practice drills are central to the development of early discipline and single-minded concentration. Other comparisons are in substance more situation-dependent. In the Suzuki school, where a student cannot play an instrument at all until motivation is assured, the connection between group membership and motivation is clear; the rites of passage into regular school membership are by contrast more a matter of ritual than of proven interest. In both contexts there is also *hansei* (self-reflection, sometimes regret), but self-evaluation in musical performance is no doubt very different from that of large group *hansei* at the end of a school trip or other event.

"Examination Rituals and Group Life" progresses to the stage most widely covered by the media: preparation for college entrance exams. Author Nobuo Shimahara states that admission to high-ranking colleges, and on to prestigious companies, have virtually become cultural goals, making exam success an issue that profoundly affects the lives of the young and their families. Schools are judged according to how far they bring students to meet the challenge through group discipline, repetitive drilling, and mock tests (see his comparisons of three high schools). In this exam system, students are extrinsically motivated, the method is rote memorization, and education is seen primarily as a short-term means to an end. Recognizing this, reformers have proposed a shift to more contemplative, lifelong learning. Shimahara points out, however, that until the interdependency of business, education, and the exam system gives way, no meaningful change can be expected.

Shimahara's article serves as a prelude to the fourth section, Education Policy and the Dilemmas of Reform. Taking as its main theme Japan's ongoing conflict between the ideologies of equality and merit, this section provides a number of perspectives for the everyday workings described in the previous section.

In "Education Policy Dilemmas as Historic Constructions" Hidenori Fujita contends that in spite of the gradual shift toward equality in Japan's schooling over the past century, education has continued to function as a hierarchical instrument of social differentiation. As evidence, he points to the roles of schools as agents of moral discipline and ritualized control, the government-mandated curriculum, and, of course, the exam orientation—all of which originated in the Meiji Era. Although reforms have eliminated the multi-tracked, ability-based elitism of that time, Fujita suggests that egalitarianism has been compromised by the difficulty of the curriculum and the emergence of *juku* (cram schools) and *yobiko* (college prep schools) which cater to the examination system.

Ryoko Kato Tsuneyoshi delves into more recent debate on this issue, including the prospects for Japan/U.S. educational crossovers. She states that while both countries have looked to each other for solutions to their respective educational problems, their approaches serve such different needs and belief systems as to call into question the feasibility of such an exchange. In the U.S., where ability differences are considered primary determinants of school and career paths, the issue becomes one of fairness to all cultures within that country. By contrast, Japan's emphasis on effort, as well as its monoculturalism, claims equal opportunity through uniformity in curricula and schools. Tsuneyoshi maintains, therefore, that basic Japanese values would be threatened by more individual-centered reforms that take inspiration from the West.

Kazuyuki Kitamura finds more unity than divisiveness in another duality: that between Japan's public schools and its burgeoning private sector. In his view, *juku* and *yobiko* provide an outlet for both high- and low-achieving students, allowing public schools to maintain their egalitarianism while feeding students into them. However, because private schools and universities have enjoyed dramatic increases in enrollment and greater influence over students' academic careers, he, like Fujita, suggests that public schooling has been gradually losing its authority.

The above two sections paint a much more complex picture of Japanese education than do the media-inspired images of an economic engine, egalitarian utopia, or living hell (see also the article on *ronin*). Making the case against stereotypes, editor Barbara Finkelstein includes,

as an example, an excerpt from a U.S. State Department report on Japanese education. Comparing it to the other articles, one is reminded that stereotypes are often exaggerated truths, built on a seeming wealth of superficial understanding.

The final section, Intergroup Tensions in Japanese School and Society, takes a look at more specific problems: the educational discrimination of minorities, the sad and occasionally brutal outcomes of *ijime* (bullying), and the readjustment difficulties of students returning from family transfers abroad. The first two of these topics are treated in some detail, but understanding the quandary facing returnees requires more than the mere two pages that topic is given.

As diverse as they may seem, these problems do share important commonalities. All of them are far from being settled; when they are addressed, as in campaigns to prevent discrimination against Koreans, *Burakumin*, and other minorities, as well as assistance to returnee students, the impetus usually comes from local governments or individual institutions. Also, those at a disadvantage are either ignored, as is often the case for both bullied children and minorities, or they are expected (most unrealistically) to relinquish any knowledge or behaviors at variance with prescribed norms, as in the case of returnee children.

In the final article, Teruhisa Horio attributes this violence and neglect to pressures from both Japan's meritocracy and its egalitarian conformity. Taking as central the right of every child to learn in ways that promote critical capacities and a broad social conscience, he serves an indictment to state control and censorship, the examination system, and its elite progeny. He thus echoes concerns voiced by Shimahara and Fujita, but places them in a broader political context. The real struggle, he says, is between democratic self-government and a state that has retained enough of its pre-war powers to violate the freedoms of children, teachers, and textbook writers. To Horio, then, educational reforms not born of populism and a concern for citizens' rights are bound to be futile.

This book covers a great deal of ground in 218 pages of text. It presents many essentials of Japanese culture, both in education and in society at large, as well as a wide range of views on the links between cultural identity and educational goals. The strongest views are expressed by Japanese authors. Along with experienced Western colleagues, they have achieved the overall purpose of the book: to disempower stereotypes of Japanese education.

A romanized glossary of Japanese terms is included at the back of the book but is, unfortunately, its greatest disappointment. It is hard to

imagine how this list could be useful. Although it contains practically every Japanese term in the volume, many of the glosses are incomplete and sometimes misleading. To give just one example, *haragei* is glossed literally as belly art, but the uninformed reader, for whom the glossary should be especially intended, will surely be left mystified. As no page indexing is provided for this or any other terms (or topics, for that matter), one cannot relate them back to the contexts in which they make sense. Careful explanation, combined with page indexing, would have added a valuable feature to the book. It might even have served as a check for accuracy (*yochien*/kindergarten and *hoikuen*/nursery school are correctly glossed here but meanings are mistakenly traded on page 78).

In spite of its occasional flaws, this book goes a long way toward illuminating the complex interrelationship between culture and education in Japan. Moreover, it provides impetus and direction for further exploration, based on the premise that effective teaching necessarily involves knowing the people one is teaching.

Introducing Discourse Analysis. David Nunan. London: Penguin, 1993.
134 pp. ¥1340.

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The field of discourse analysis, especially as it relates to language teaching, is currently enjoying an acceleration of activity if the recent publication of numerous books can be taken as a guide. Moreover, as seminal topics such as negotiation of meaning, authenticity, language awareness, and genre are discussed and refined with reference to discourse analysis frameworks in order to pave the way for new approaches in the classroom, it seems reasonable to believe that a language education professional will benefit from a basic understanding of this field. For that reason alone we can applaud this handy little addition to the literature specifically written for language teachers.

In *Introducing Discourse Analysis*, one of the five titles in Penguin's *Introducing Applied Linguistics* series, David Nunan has provided a basis for familiarity with key concepts while including sample texts to be used as illustrations. The "data," as such exemplar texts are sometimes

called, are from both the author's data bank and secondary sources, and include both oral and written language. The book is divided into four chapters: an introduction and series of definitions; a chapter on linguistic elements; a chapter on how language users frame and interpret discourse; and a final chapter on the childhood development of discourse competence. The general structure of the book opens with a framing of the key concepts, followed by micro-level approaches to language in text. This is followed by a series of macro-level approaches and a conclusion in the form of an application of some of the preceding theory. There is a short glossary at the conclusion.

Nunan has provided reference to recent predecessors in the field, notably Cook, McCarthy, and Hatch, as well as to earlier trailblazers such as Halliday, Widdowson, Brown and Yule, and Levinson. The question that will be asked is what makes this book different (other than its brevity) from these others? As Michael Hoey (1991) writes: "any new publication in the field has to perhaps justify its existence. Earlier works needed to defend their discipline; current works need to defend themselves against the charge of superfluity" (p. 3).

In opening the discussion of what comprises discourse analysis, Nunan summarizes numerous studies that disagree about the interchangeability of the terms "text" and "discourse." Nunan's definitions are as follows: (a) text: "any written record of a communicative event" and (b) discourse: "the interpretation of the communicative event in context" (pp. 6-7). He then critiques the assertion made by some linguists that a text or piece of discourse consists of more than one sentence, and that the sentences combine to form a meaningful whole (the concept of "meaningful whole" being determined as "commonsensical"). Nunan draws attention to the fact that one-word texts can be argued to exist, and that "text" can also be defined as including "taped records of pieces of communication."

Those who have tried to answer the question, "What is discourse analysis?" probably agree that the definitions chosen matter less than the examples, activities, or tasks that are included with them. In other words, those reading this book from a truly introductory vantage point are likely to need to get their hands dirty with analytical tasks, and the sooner the better. This book then appears to follow the pattern set in the earlier works by the authors noted above by providing the reader with texts and question-guided activities. *Introducing Discourse Analysis* is an introductory text, so it may be unfair to expect it to explore new tacks in depth. On the other hand, one who has read some of the above authors may be left wishing that this book were somewhat more explicit

in reassessing some of the definitions offered herein. Why, for example, is the notion of “commonsensical” given short shrift, when Chapter 3, which makes up roughly one third of this book, is entitled “Making sense of discourse”?

Recent works by Norman Fairclough (1989, 1992), for example, deal explicitly with the notions of common sense and how combinations of language and thought are maintained and transformed. Such perspectives, referred to as critical linguistics or critical discourse analysis, find no mention in this book. It may be argued of course that such areas of study fall into higher levels of discussion of discourse analysis. On the other hand, it can also be argued that “non-critical” approaches to discourse analysis oversimplify either the individual orientation to construction of discourse or the constraining strength of social variables. Fairclough (1992) writes: “In using the term ‘discourse,’ I am proposing to regard language use as a form of social practice, rather than a purely individual activity or a reflex of situation variables” (p. 63).

Another book in the Penguin series, Ronald Carter’s (1993) *Introducing Applied Linguistics*, an A-to-Z glossary of useful terms, maintains that there is “[a] premise that systems and uses of language are not neutral” (p. 17). Nunan’s omission of this dimension of discourse analysis is a grave matter. Many of the elements dealt with in Chapter 3 (speech acts, schema and frame theory, discourse processing, top-down and bottom-up approaches, conversational analysis, and intercultural communication) have their primary origin in fields other than linguistics, so in some sense the matter of selection for inclusion in such a book is crucial. Neutrality is a constant source of discussion in books on theoretical topics. Is it more useful if points are honed around particular models or positions, while making clear to the reader what is being discarded? Or, is it possible, in trying to summarize this topic in a concise form, to do little more than give signposts as to where the more substantial arguments will be found? Of concern is whether or not the author gives enough space to amplifying the strengths and weaknesses of the various models which he introduces in rapid succession. Readers can make their own choice as to whether they prefer the capsule view.

Nunan sets his model of discourse in line with a communicative approach. Hence he presents classification of discourse types in terms of the “communicative job they are doing” (p. 16). The distinction between transactional and interpersonal language is noted, and in his discussion of genre in Chapter 2, Nunan writes: “The communi-

cative purpose will also be reflected in the basic building blocks of the discourse[:] . . . different types of communicative events . . . will have [their] own characteristics" (p. 49).

If one looks for a direction that Nunan is pointing to for analysis of discourse with regard to language teaching/learning it would probably most likely be found in the final chapter, which focuses on developing discourse competence. Nunan provides several longer examples of analysis related to conversations between small children and parents. The issue he wants to illustrate is the necessity for explicit instruction in discourse processing. To quote the final paragraph in part: "[T]he ability to perceive relationships across sentence boundaries is an important skill which children need to acquire" (p. 112). Nunan continues by saying that failing this, students will have academic difficulties.

A likely corollary might be that the more teachers know about and can help students take an active part in developing competence in discourse processing strategies, the more likely they are to succeed. Indeed this seems to be the implicit hypothesis of this and other books. As Carter writes: "[Communicative] methodologies stress the processes of communication and aim to engage learners actively in tasks such as problem solving, information retrieval, and social exchanges. One of the main challenges for the communicative approach is to relate the functions of language with the correct use of structures" (1993, p. 11). Thus a new phase will start as text writers, course designers, and classroom teachers struggle to create ways for discourse analysis to be integrated into the syllabuses.

As a result, if *Introducing Discourse Analysis* allows significant numbers of teachers to start answering these kinds of questions on their own, then it has done a service. Even if readers feel that a lot of this ground is covered elsewhere, Nunan has helped by writing a book that frames the scope of discourse analysis so that it works directly in the service of one of the prevailing trends of the day: the emphasis on a communicative paradigm of language learning.

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Process Writing, one of the Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers series, serves as an innovative resource book for writing teachers, providing a variety of techniques and activities along with examples from actual writing classrooms. White and Arndt advocate a process-focused approach which views writing as a problem-solving process. In a product-centered approach, the outcome of writing is most important. In contrast, a process-focused approach puts more emphasis on the writing process itself and encourages the students to spend more time in preparation for writing. This approach is most valuable if we assume that writing is a thinking process. Unless writers are aware of the purpose, direction, and audience of writing, the composition will fail to fulfill its communicative purpose.

The book consists of six main sections which focus on each of the following writing processes: generating, focusing, structuring, drafting, evaluating, and reviewing. Each section begins with a brief theoretical background which is followed by an outline of activities and examples. In this book, what is known as the pre-writing stage is split into three processes, and post-writing activities are divided into two. Therefore, the authors elaborate each process thoroughly, and have achieved the goal of the book: to help teachers implement process-focused instruction.

In the introduction White and Arndt emphasize changing the traditional roles of teacher and student so that a collaborative, workshop atmosphere can be built upon. The teacher becomes a reader and responder, and the students are communicators of their experiences, ideas, attitudes, and feelings. This helps to create a non-threatening classroom environment. Consequently, conveying the intended meaning is the first priority, and grammatical errors are not targeted as long as writers can adequately convey the intended meaning.

In addition, the activities presented in this book require pair or group work. Through discussing and working with classmates, the students engage in a creative process, so that the class becomes "a communicative experience" (p. 3) in a real sense and ensures more flexible classroom management. Thus, *Process Writing* will be especially valuable for

those teachers who feel restricted by the dictates of existing writing curricula or by their own more traditional assumptions as to the nature of the writing process.

Because writing is a highly complex cognitive activity, L2 learners sometimes find it painful or boring. In the first chapter, White and Arndt argue that writing can be exciting if students are given the freedom to explore their own creative processes. The authors suggest "composing aloud" activities to make the students aware of their own thinking processes. In recording the free flow of thoughts that come into their minds and then analyzing them, they can reconstruct their thoughts and improve their writing. Students come to realize what they really want to tell readers and are able to compose their ideas more clearly and explicitly.

Following the model of writing White and Arndt propose, Chapters 2 to 7 introduce each process in sequence. Chapter 2 is the first step in pre-writing activities known as "Generating." Because getting started is often a difficult task, the authors suggest such activities as brainstorming, making notes, using visuals, and using role plays and simulations. By getting involved in these kinds of activities, students discover a topic, identify a purpose, and become aware of their audience. Guided and unguided discovery techniques are introduced, both of which facilitate generating ideas.

Once writers have enough ideas to communicate, they need a focus. Chapter 3, "Focusing," contains four main sections: discovering main ideas, considering purpose, considering audience, and considering form. These are the essential components of writing. "Writing a letter to a newspaper" (p. 53) is one of the most functional and practical activities for helping students develop a sense of purpose and an awareness of their audience. Another type of activity, "Viewpoints on places," is an effective way of "demonstrating the difference which viewpoint can make to the writer's description and to the reader's interpretation" (p. 66).

The final stage of pre-writing activities is called structuring. In Chapter 4, students start preparing a first draft. The main purpose of this process is to select ideas and arrange them in order. Using a "spidergram" (p. 81) and other charts for grouping information, the students develop a framework for writing and complete a plan for the first draft. This process is often neglected because of time constraints. However, the authors show that it is essential to writing a logical and well-organized composition.

After students have explored their ideas as thoroughly as possible and have completed the structuring process, they are ready to write.

Chapter 5, "Drafting," shows effective ways of "beginning, adding and ending" (p. 102). At this stage, White and Arndt claim, writers should make the transition from focusing on their own writing process to focusing on the reader. It is the readers who make decisions on whether or not the composition is interesting enough to keep on reading. Furthermore, writing at least three drafts is recommended in order to get the best results possible. Techniques such as "matching openings and endings" (pp. 106-107) and "the mini-saga" (p. 112) are excellent ways of learning a sense of wholeness, the meaning of various vocabulary items, and how to analyze the writing from the viewpoint of the reader.

White and Arndt describe "Evaluating" and "Re-viewing" as parts of the post-writing process, in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively. They suggest certain principles of error treatment in which the content and how the writer presents the information are the first priority in the evaluation process—rather than mechanics and grammar. Moreover, the authors point out that it is the students themselves who decide if they have achieved their goals in writing. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their own writing process and to become their own critics. As such, our job as writing teachers is to help students become autonomous writers in the L2.

Chapter 6 includes three ways of giving feedback: teacher to student, teacher to class, and student to student. The checklist provided on page 118 is useful for content evaluation. Guidelines for teacher responses to students' work (p. 125) are also specific and of value. Conferencing is another technique suggested for evaluation, as it enables the teacher and student to negotiate on a face-to-face basis.

White and Arndt discuss reviewing in Chapter 7. This process is part of the final stage of the whole writing process. As their model (p. 4) indicates, however, the writing process is recursive rather than linear. Reviewing in this model feeds back to the four different processes of generating, focusing, structuring, and drafting. In this way writers can return to any of the original processes where reinforcement is necessary. The reviewing process is a means of examining the text again "with a new pair of eyes" (p. 136), and has two objectives: (a) to develop critical ability and (b) to increase linguistic knowledge. Hence, two kinds of activities are provided. One is putting scrambled paragraphs in order and segmenting a text; the other is analyzing linguistic features in a variety of written texts.

Finally, White and Arndt maintain that the reviewing process, as well as the writing process as a whole, moves from top-down skills of content, organization, and word choice, to bottom-up skills of

syntax, grammar, and mechanics. Communication is more important than grammatical accuracy. Up to this point in the book, the authors put emphasis on top-down skills. But in the final stage, grammatical accuracy and mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are focused upon. However, the authors again urge that teachers concentrate more on global errors than on local or specific ones, citing the evidence that local errors cause the fewest problems.

Process Writing exhaustively discusses every step of the writing process, including not only the theoretical background but also practical ideas with many lesson formats. The activities are well designed for developing both top-down skills and bottom-up skills in writing. Therefore, it can best be used as a reference book for writing instruction. At the same time, any of the exercises can be used to reinforce students' writing sub-skills. As the authors point out, the activities presented may need to be modified "according to the level, interests, and requirements of each teaching context" (p. 6). On the other hand, if examples were provided based on three different levels of writing skill—beginning, intermediate, and advanced—it would be easier for teachers to put the techniques provided into daily practice. Still *Process Writing* is a most valuable book in teaching writing skills and is highly recommended for all ESL/EFL teachers.

Cooperative Development: Professional Self-Development Through Cooperation with Colleagues. Julian Edge. Essex: Longman, 1992. 106 pp.

Reviewed by

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"How do I know what I think until I hear what I say?" (p. 7) might best sum up the message of this book written for teachers. I recommend it for its clear language, organized format, and practical exercises, which aim to guide the reader in developing awareness of strengths and skills in oneself and others, to enhance the reader's listening ability, and to foster self-confidence.

Edge states in Part 1 that to become better teachers we must first be open to becoming better people. We must be willing to think out

carefully where we are and where we are going as teachers and as people, what we are doing in the classroom and why. To do this we need a new way of studying ourselves because we are seeking a new way of learning that involves neither book knowledge nor experiential knowledge, but a way of pulling the two together to produce a third knowledge. When we try to express our ideas on a topic coherently, we are compelled to bring together our book learning and our experience and then express the result as a unified whole to another person.

Therefore, as Steve Cornwell (personal communication, 1992) notes, "We cannot do this kind of thinking in isolation. We need someone to listen to us supportively and make us feel well-listened to, so that we feel free to explore our classroom activities, ourselves, and our values." This does not mean we work with someone who wants to change us, but with someone who allows us to remain in control of and, therefore, responsible for our own development. Otherwise, we relinquish that control to the most recent trend in textbooks, method, or personality. As Freire (1990) states:

since dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized, this dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one person's "depositing" ideas in another, nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be "consumed" by the discussants. (p. 77)

How can we achieve this new kind of thinking and dialogue? Edge uses the terms "Understander" and "Speaker" throughout this book to designate the two roles of individuals who engage in this unique dialogue. The author explains that in many cultures when two people sit and talk together, the Understander is thinking about what he is going to say and how he is going to fit that into the conversation once the partner finishes. As a result, linguistic space is usually equally shared. In Cooperative Development (CD) the Understander not only deliberately tries to make as much space as possible for the Speaker, but also, at the same time, actively works to help the Speaker use that space creatively. To help achieve this support and space, discipline must be maintained in CD through observing the rules of respect, empathy, and honesty. A perceptive comment on honesty and its opposite points out that dishonesty is an attitude of pretending to reflect back what the Speaker says while actually trying to lead the Speaker around to the Understander's way of thinking by implication or suggestion.

Discipline is further maintained through a number of interactive techniques: space, commentaries, open questions, silence, and so forth. Let us examine a couple of these techniques. Space is guaranteed by means of some agreed upon signal. For example, if the Understander infringes upon the Speaker's space, the Speaker lifts a hand or says, "Hold off a little." The use of open questions invites the Speaker to say more. The author states that closed questions could be used by the Understander to control the Speaker's thinking because they require simple statements of facts, or answers that decide between choices selected by the Understander.

Twenty-eight activities in all offer the reader ample opportunity to develop the three central abilities of Cooperative Development; that is, Exploration (Part 2), Discovery (Part 3), and Action (Part 4). Their total comprises what Edge terms as the nine moves. In Part 2, the first 15 activities will help the Understander learn the first three moves of attending, reflecting, and focusing, so that the Speaker feels listened to and, hence, free to explore. Some exercises, based on theories of body language by Allan Peases, lead the partners to practice and discuss the effect of positive and negative body language. For example, in one exercise, the Understander crosses his arms, leans back, looks at the ceiling, and thinks of impatience, boredom, and frustration, and allows his body to show these attitudes, while showing no facial expression. Another exercise has the Understander practice repeating back some statement made by the Speaker on teaching problems, and then analyzes what was said to see if it caught the Speaker's mood or whether it used the same kind of language, slang, or terminology as the Speaker.

Seven activities in Part 3 develop the Speaker's ability to "discover" (to use Edge's term), as the Understander thematizes and challenges, and the Speaker discloses. In one exercise the Understander practices thematizing, or connecting separate points the Speaker has made. For example, the Speaker complains that her students are good at grammar, but just cannot put a word down on paper when they try to write. Later, the Speaker might say that her students have trouble reading because they are always looking up words in the dictionary. The Understander might say something like, "I hear you saying that there are usually quite a few words they don't know. Is that right?" The Understander might then ask if the Speaker thinks there is a connection between the two statements. The Speaker might not see a relationship, or if so, only an insignificant one, or could perceive that simply a lack of vocabulary is hindering students in their reading and writing.

In Part 4 the author explains the third ability of CD, the action which is the entire aim of CD, and which involves the Understander in the Speaker's goal-setting, trialing, and planning. One exercise leads the Speaker to complete sentences such as, "As a teacher, the type of activity I most enjoy is . . ." or "One aspect of my teaching that I'm really pleased about is. . . ." After completing all 10 sentences, the Speaker chooses one to talk in depth about with the Understander.

In the final section, entitled Sources, Edge lists the people and publications that have contributed to the evolution of his thoughts on Cooperative Development. The bibliography is extensive and should provide direction to anyone wishing to read further on the topic.

This book seems to view teaching as an art or craft emphasizing individual responsibility, as opposed to either a kind of science that is based on research, or a theory or philosophy, both of which provide ready-made solutions. As Richards and Freeman (1993) note:

When teaching is seen as an essentially individual undertaking, the skills of self-assessment, reflection, and analysis take on central importance. Through such attention to individual practice the teacher develops both technical proficiency and pedagogical understanding. Yet attention also brings with it the responsibility to think carefully and critically about what one is doing and the outcomes which one is achieving. (p. 206)

For those of us teaching overseas, this responsibility must, of necessity, rest on our shoulders because we alone understand the unique situation inside our overseas or international classrooms. As teachers overseas, especially Americans like this reviewer, perhaps one of the greatest benefits of the practice of Cooperative Development might be to expand our ability to empathize. Because many of our early life experiences, thoughts, even values, are different from those of our students, the extension of sympathy is not enough in cross-cultural settings. Therefore, we must use our imagination to cross the cultural boundary and experience understanding in many areas of difference. As Steward and Bennett (1991) point out, "Empathy assumes that the self is different from others; therefore, the shared qualities of subjective individualism upon which Americans build their interface of sympathy is not available" (p. 152). Steward and Bennett focus on the difficulties Americans, in particular, have in developing cultural self-awareness because they tend to interpret cultural factors as personality characteristics. As a result, Americans often seem to be insensitive to the social origins of cultural patterns. With this book, perhaps, serving as a bridge,

we can learn how to stretch ourselves at times to reach the place where our students are.

While Edge's book resembles the recently published *New Ways in Teacher Education* (Freeman & Cornwell, 1993) in that it encourages personal responsibility for teacher development through exercises and narratives, it differs in that its tone and style are overall much more personal and sympathetic, leading to a deeper self-awareness. It is of interest to note that *New Ways in Teacher Education* does include one chapter based on the work of Edge and Kolb entitled, "Attending to Colleagues: A Technique to Encourage Respect and Development." In fact, Edge writes that the work of some of his colleagues in the area of CD, "encouraged me to believe that I was not indulging myself in a strictly culture-bound form of activity" (p. 94). This educator has run workshops in Brazil, Poland, India, Pakistan, and Japan, as well as with multinational groups in Britain, and finds that, "it [is] easy to celebrate our cultural diversity while celebrating our common humanity, while celebrating our individual differences" (p. 94).

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Language in Action: An Introduction to Modern Linguistics. Joanne Kenworthy. New York: Longman, 1991. 132 pp.

Reviewed by
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Matsuyama JALT Chapter

Modern linguistics is a wide and growing discipline with numerous branches. *Language in Action* is a slender introductory volume aimed at first-year undergraduate students who may be combining linguistics with other subjects, but it is also useful for the general reader with an interest

in understanding the basics of modern linguistics. The book covers the core areas of the subject and also includes brief descriptions and explanations of smaller key fields. Linguistic terminology is explained clearly and introduced gradually as the reader proceeds: we are not immediately confronted with an incomprehensible list of linguistic jargon. The book is organized into four chapters: words, sounds, sentences, and texts and conversations. Each chapter ends with a "language in action" section which attempts to make the concepts discussed as relevant as possible by primarily looking at real examples from English, but also using some examples from other languages.

In the introduction, Kenworthy describes her aim as being "to present a survey of modern linguistics . . . [and] to give a picture of how linguists work." Linguistics is the scientific study of language, yet Kenworthy emphasizes that however technical and analytical linguistics may become, language is essentially a means of communication between people. Kenworthy does an admirable job in holding to this principle throughout her book by remembering always who her audience is, thereby placing priority on clarity of language and simplicity of examples.

Kenworthy's first chapter examines how linguists study words, their meaning, and their structure. De Saussure's concept of a word as an arbitrary linguistic sign is introduced, which leads into a discussion of definitions and semantics. Kenworthy gives one of the clearest explanations of componential analysis that I have read. Hyponymy, incompatibility, antonymy, and synonymy are presented as other techniques of studying the relationships between words. Brief explanations are illustrated with ample examples, and Kenworthy also draws our attention to the problems and limitations of some of the techniques and theories put forward. An interesting and detailed study of the word "enthusiasm" (pp. 15-19) is given as an example, reviewing some of the previously presented ideas and showing clearly how both the word's meaning and the society in which it is used have changed over time. The following "words in action" section suggests more emphasis on examples of words in use. However, it is not apparent how this first "in action" section differs significantly from the preceding sections.

Chapter 2 concentrates on phonetics and phonology. Acoustic and auditory phonetics are mentioned, but articulatory phonetics provide the main focus. Place and manner of articulation are described clearly and simply, yet the grid showing place of vowel articulation (p. 43) is not quite so easily understood due to ambiguous labeling and a printing error. Moving from a discussion of basic sound units to the different sound systems in different languages (comparative phonology),

Kenworthy introduces phonemes and allophones. She shows how, in English, the different allophones of /t/ do not alter the identity of a word, whereas in Lak (a Caucasian mountain language), “/S/ with lip-rounding and /S/ without lip-rounding are two different phonemes” (p. 49). A useful comparison is drawn between distinctive feature analysis and componential analysis, which was covered in Chapter 1. Being able to break sounds down into smaller features (voicing, place and manner of articulation, etc.) helps to explain “some of the patterns in pronunciation in terms of processes” (p. 53). The concluding section of Chapter 2 is essentially devoted to sociolinguistics. Prestige accents in Great Britain and the U.S. are compared in a discussion of post-vocalic /r/. The British RP (received pronunciation) accent which is /r/-less, is considered to hold prestige status for native speakers. By contrast, in the eastern states of America, the prestige feature is the pronunciation of a post-vocalic /r/.

Kenworthy launches into a discussion of syntax in Chapter 3, beginning with an examination of the behavior of words within a sentence. She remarks that “syntactic behavior is the primary criterion used by modern linguists in establishing classes” such as adjectives, nouns, and prepositions (p. 59). This leads smoothly into a closer study of the behavior of three word classes: personal pronouns, nouns, and verbs. In this way she shows how linguists establish grammatical categories such as person, number, gender, and tense. In the section on nouns, Kenworthy explains in some detail the concepts of countable and mass nouns. Here she makes the point that this type of knowledge is unconscious for native speakers and it is the linguist’s goal “to represent everything the native speaker knows (consciously and unconsciously) about the English grammatical system” (p. 65). Using the example of negation in English, she shows the process which linguists go through to construct grammar rules for a language. From this she moves on to discussing the internal structure of sentences, which leads to such notions as noun phrase and verb phrase. The final section of the chapter shows some of the previously described elements in action. She illustrates how English speakers sometimes exploit personal pronouns to achieve particular effects: for example, the doctor who asks, “How are we feeling today?” (p. 92), or the politician who uses the term “we” to create solidarity. The text is further enlivened by hypothetical and real examples concerning passives and negatives.

The fourth chapter explores “how sentences are combined in sequence to produce cohesive and coherent stretches of language” (p. 111). This is done firstly by considering written texts and secondly by looking at dis-

course analysis. As techniques for text analysis, Kenworthy introduces us to four grammatical cohesive devices as identified by Halliday and Hansan: conjunction, substitution, ellipsis, and co-reference. These are illustrated with several short texts. Kenworthy then uses a longer text to demonstrate that although cohesion is expected between paragraphs, this may not always be evident: "The coherence of a text exists at a much deeper level" (p. 106). Kenworthy points out that semantic relations, background knowledge, and general patterns (e.g., the problem-solution pattern) are important elements in understanding and analyzing texts. She also notes that in the speech act we are faced with numerous choices and social constraints in conveying our intentions. As in written texts, conversations have structures and patterns. Speakers understand the patterns by relying on their expectations. If these expectations are not met, another meaning can be construed. Kenworthy explains the cooperative principles at work in a conversation, and outlines H. P. Grice's conversational maxims. As Kenworthy herself points out, the whole of Chapter 4 is really about language in action, so there is no real change in focus for the last "in action" section. However, she does present two more particularly interesting examples in this section to illustrate how speakers make choices in language use to achieve specific aims.

In her brief concluding remarks Kenworthy underlines that linguists examine language through both formalist and functionalist perspectives. Although she does not devote much time to the study of sociolinguistics, her writing does reflect the concept that language as a whole should be viewed in its social context. The function of language is human communication and this pervades all aspects of its study. The social element appears to some degree in each chapter of this book, and the "in action" sections serve to emphasize this point. The search for linguistic universals and the linguist's goal of constructing rules to represent native speakers' knowledge are presented and illustrated throughout the text.

Language in Action introduces us to many aspects of modern linguistics and demonstrates how linguists work. Obviously, the book being introductory in nature, many of the concepts are not explained in great detail. My main criticism would be that there are no references for further reading. The interested and motivated reader has few points of reference to indicate in which direction to go next, and the first-year undergraduate student will soon need to consult a more meaty text. However, *Language in Action* does serve as an excellent base upon which to build. The book's greatest strengths are its clear, thoroughly comprehensible language and numerous illustrative examples, which make it a highly readable and enjoyable introduction to linguistics.

Aspect in the English Verb: Process and Result in Language. Yishai Tobin.
New York: Longman, 1993. 398 pp. ¥6,160.

Reviewed by
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Linguists and grammarians alike will welcome this new addition to the Longman Linguistics series. A landmark work in the field, *Aspect in the English Verb* provides a detailed and exhaustive study of the grammatical category of aspect and its relevancy to English. Although this work requires substantial knowledge on the part of the reader, those who feel overwhelmed by the content should not despair, but rather be encouraged to do the necessary background reading to build an understanding of aspect. Bright (1992), for example, offers an esoteric survey article on tense and aspect in the *International Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. This might be followed by the practitioner-oriented work of Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983) and Bardovi-Harlig (1992a, 1992b), as well as the research presented by Binnick (1991). Whereas Binnick provides a comprehensive historical and theoretical framework for verbal aspect, Tobin takes what may be called a case-study approach by focusing on troublesome lexical pairs. He clearly sets out the objective of the book in the introduction:

The purpose of this proposed volume is to concentrate on the concept of Process versus Result—in its own right—as a fundamental semantic and syntactic feature found in both the grammar and lexicon which may be realized by specific phonological and morphological forms in probably all languages, and in both the lexicon and grammar of English in particular. (p. 19)

Part I of *Aspect in the English Verb* is a review of basic notions relating to aspect (or a crash course for the uninitiated) and includes arguments and counter arguments for the inclusion of aspect in the study of English. Major debates on the interpretation of aspect and its usefulness as a linguistic tool are enumerated by drawing on a wide range of languages. Readers with some knowledge of how aspect is used in various languages will be better positioned to appreciate Tobin's arguments in this section.

Parts II through VII take a case-study approach to the application of the concepts of Process versus Result in the lexicon and in grammar. Part II looks at the performative verbs *do* and *make*, a troublesome lexical pair for many non-native speakers of English since they are used in many

colloquial expressions and idioms of common currency. A good yardstick for competent non-native readers might be to turn to Table 2.1 (p. 44), skim the *do/make* idioms to gauge comprehension, and then make a decision based on that exercise whether or not to proceed with the text.

The format of each chapter follows a similar, though not identical, pattern: (a) an introduction to the problem; (b) a traditional analysis of the problem; (c) a neotraditional analysis; (d) Tobin's analysis invoking the concepts of Process and Result; (e) a micro- and macro-level analysis of the lexical pair under study; and (f) a summary and conclusion. In Tobin's words:

We view our analysis as a "unitary" sign-oriented or semiotic analysis based on the theoretical and methodological concepts of invariance versus variation . . . distinctive feature theory and markedness. Our analysis is based on the postulation of an invariant meaning composed of a *general semantic domain* shared by both forms and the postulation of distinctive semantic features that are placed in an asymmetric markedness relationship which systematically distinguishes between them. (p. 47, emphasis added)

Part III considers sensory verbs. One chapter is devoted to *look* vs. *see*, and a second chapter explores *listen* vs. *hear*. Understanding gradually emerges from a plethora of explicated, contextualized, and actual-use examples, illustrating the multiple meanings of the lexical items. The approach moves first from sign to text and then from text to sign. A careful reading demands a breadth of sociocultural knowledge which Tobin readily anticipates and supplies.

The speech act verbs *say* vs. *tell* and *speak* vs. *talk* comprise Part IV—Chapters 5 and 6, respectively. Tobin states that the data led to the finding that:

it is invariant meaning which motivates the choice and the distribution of opposed linguistic signs in both spoken and written texts. The non-random distribution of these forms in texts reflects asymmetry of the markedness relationship of their invariant meanings. (p. 157)

Part V shifts the focus from the lexicon to grammar and deals with three aspectual verbal pairs in individual chapters: *begin* vs. *start*; *end* vs. *finish*; and *shut* vs. *close*. He concentrates on "the formal syntactic and semantic aspects" (p. 189) of *begin* and *start* in an attempt to resolve some of the controversy surrounding this pair. Chapters 8 and 9

follow suit, applying the concepts of invariance, markedness, and distinctive feature theory to an analysis and explanation of semantic domains.

Part VI effectively looks not at finite verbal pairs, but rather at verbal auxiliaries. Chapter 10 examines the semantics of auxiliariation with *do* (process) vs. *get* (result), and Chapter 11 continues this process with the *be* vs. *have* vs. *get* auxiliary system. The thesis is that "auxiliary use is directly motivated by marked vs. unmarked invariant meanings" (p. 245).

Intriguing in its proposition, Part VII shows how certain linguistic puzzles may be unraveled by having recourse to the notion of Process and Result, rather than to phonological criteria. In a search for isomorphy, so-called "irregular" verbs and infinitives are contrasted. Tobin, however, cautions that this approach "should be viewed as only a first step in an attempt to extend the concepts of Process and Result in language . . . to new areas of research on verbal aspect in English and other languages" (p. 350).

Detailed chapter notes, a comprehensive bibliography, and name and subject indexes thoroughly support this work. Of immediate and practical interest to the classroom teacher might be the ample figures, tables, and illustrative texts which contrast appropriate (and inappropriate) uses of lexical pairs. Consideration for the reader is also evident in the formatting, with clearly marked sections, smooth transitions between chapters, and the use of highlighting and capitalization to indicate how a written text might be verbally delivered.

Aspect in the English Verb will be of great interest to readers searching for the meaning of aspect in the system of the English verb. However, extensive background knowledge is assumed and, without it, the details of Tobin's alternative method to the analysis of aspect will be difficult for the average reader to follow.

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Historical Linguistics: Problems and Perspectives. Charles Jones (Ed.).
London: Longman, 1993. 405 pp.

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Historical linguistics is concerned with the ways in which languages change or maintain their structure over the passage of time. Like several other areas of scholarship, the field has a long tradition stretching into antiquity, but a short history as an organized discipline (Bynon, 1977). Progress in the field over the past two decades has been charted by a series of International Conferences on Historical Linguistics. The first, held in 1973, resulted in a published Proceedings (Anderson & Jones, 1974) that presented a fair overview of the state of the art at that time. Now, some 20 years later, Charles Jones has again taken upon himself the responsibility of gathering contributions from leading theorists and researchers and presenting them in *Historical Linguistics: Problems and Perspectives*.

The book, while attractively presented, has some of the feeling of a battlefield communiqué. It is short on editorial explanation, integration, and interpretation. There is no overall introduction or concluding statement, only a two page preface. The twelve chapters that make up the volume are presented in alphabetical order by authors' names. There are no editor-written introductions to individual chapters, and the index is rather small, containing fewer than 300 entries for a work with 400 pages of text. Further, there is no name index, a serious shortcoming. Like almost all compilations, there is a great deal of unevenness among individual contributions. Given these general characteristics then, what does the book have to offer?

The first chapter, by John Anderson, discusses syntactic change beginning with English language modals, concluding that their development does not constitute a major restructuring of syntax, only a minimal realigning of lexical classes that have existed throughout the history of the language. He then goes on to discuss the conflation of infinitives and the differentiation of gerunds and participles. His position, in opposition to that of Lightfoot (1979), is that much significant syntactic variation and change is due to minimal modifications in the spoken language. Further, the limits of possible syntactical change can be set through a restrictive theory of syntax such as that developed within Notional Grammar.

The second chapter, "Change and Metatheory at the Beginning of the 1990s: The Primacy of History" by Raimo Antilla, is a very idiosyncratic, polemical analysis that goes beyond historical linguistics to critique the current status of linguistics in general. Antilla, author of the influential *Historical and Comparative Linguistics* (1989), uses a writing style that is informal, and his chapter fairly bristles with "in your face" assertions that some readers might wish to challenge. For example, in his first paragraph Antilla states, "The 1960s had really nothing to say about historical linguistics," that theory at that time was openly innatist and "directly hostile to history," and that "transformational theory was/is a direct continuation of behaviourism" (p. 43). Going on from there in this lively style, Antilla's argument seems to be that Chomskyan theoretical linguists are wrong (p. 48) and that linguistics is (or should be) of the humanities, not the sciences (pp. 46-48).

Bernard Comrie's contribution, "Typology and Reconstruction," is well written and clearly reasoned. Typology, which aims to classify languages by their structural properties, is presented here in terms of what it has contributed to historical linguistics through constraining language reconstructions. He concludes with a caveat: "Possibly every language is implausible in at least one area of its grammar, and there is no reason to believe that this is less true of reconstructed languages" (pp. 95-96).

Patricia Donegan's chapter, "On the Phonetic Basis of Phonological Change," is an important one. Echoing a theme also presented by Antilla (p. 45), the author argues that some linguists have been "reinventing the wheel," that is, reaching conclusions that were familiar territory to our intellectual ancestors. In Donegan's case this has to do with the recognition that sound changes in a language result from a failure of the speakers to overcome their preprogrammed internal system of phonetic tendencies. This point of view, the Natural Phonology Model developed in association with David Stampe, has been fully expounded in their *The Study of Natural Phonology* (1979).

In Chapter 5, Nancy Dorian presents an argument against dichotomies of thought in understanding language phenomena. She is specifically concerned with notions about internally and externally motivated change in language contact settings. Based on her own study of East Sutherland Scottish Gaelic in contact with standard English, Dorian argues that inadequate field work can lead researchers to construct dichotomies of (mis)understanding that more in-depth study would reveal to be false, or at least falsely misleading.

Roger Lass's chapter, "How Real(ist) Are Reconstructions?" could per-

haps serve as an introduction to the entire volume. Author of *On Explaining Language Change* (1980), Lass steps back and gives a metatheoretical look at the field of historical linguistics that highlights and questions some accepted dogma. He also presents "a minor rational reconstruction of some of the most important underlying tenets of comparative method and related techniques" (p. 157). Lass's ideas are well presented and worthy of careful study.

Chapters 7 and 8 share a similar point of view in that they tie language change phenomena to users of languages. That is, both David Lightfoot (Chapter 7, "Why UG Needs a Learning Theory: Triggering Verb Movement") and James Milroy (Chapter 8, "On the Social Origins of Language Change") understand and emphasize that language change results from and is a human activity. Lightfoot's position is psychological. He concludes that changes in language usage may result from reasons that differ greatly from any information on those changes that is available to the linguist. Milroy's point of view is basically sociological. He argues "that language change is one of the things that is negotiated by speakers in the course of speech-exchange" (p. 217).

John Ohala (Chapter 9, "The Phonetics of Sound Change") focuses on the value of studying the limits of possible sound changes on improving historical reconstructions of languages. His discussion includes an important psychological analysis of what goes on between speaker and listener and has parallels with ideas in the chapters by Lass and Milroy. Ohala's contribution has the added feature of explicitly addressing the question of the relevance of historical phonology to practical domains such as communication disorders and speech technology.

In Chapter 10, Wayne O'Neil presents a focused examination of Nicaraguan English, "what it is and how it got to be whatever it is" (p. 279). While O'Neil's main concern is with grammar, perhaps his most thought-provoking comment concerns the nature of the identity of this (or any) creole: should it be considered a separate language or a variety of English? His conclusion: "There is nothing linguistically serious at stake in this variation of usage. For whether we choose to call Nicaraguan English a separate language distinct from other Englishes of the world, as I believe we should, is a matter of politics and not of linguistic theory" (p. 280).

Chapter 11, "Language Change and Language Improvement," is by Theo Vennemann. In it the author examines polar positions on the nature of language change, that is, should we view change as a matter of caprice and/or fashion, or does documented historical variation have a function and represent a true "improvement?" Echoing Dorian's earlier

warning about the dangers of dichotomous thinking, Vennemann recognizes that these two positions “overlap, and together they do not exhaust their domain” (p. 320). Having acknowledged this, the author goes on to argue that language change often does represent an attempt by speakers (consciously or unconsciously) to improve inefficient aspects of their language.

In the final chapter (“Bidirectional Diffusion in Sound Change”), William Wang and Chinfa Lien discuss the implications of a theory of contact-induced sound (tone) changes in the Chaozhou dialect of southern Min Chinese. Two somewhat opposing positions are presented: a Lexical Diffusion and a Neogrammarian Hypothesis. After examining the evidence, Wang and Lien conclude that only a Lexical Diffusion approach is sufficiently rich and sophisticated enough to account for the observed changes.

Checking the dates of publication in the reference lists of the 12 chapters of *Historical Linguistics* does show that the information contained in the volume is up-to-date. However, the main feeling the reader comes away with after studying the book is frustration with the lack of a unifying or integrating point of view. The editor in his preface acknowledges this and makes no apologies for it. In his words:

This collection represents the ways in which some of today's foremost scholars of language change view their discipline and its future development; that they do so in as diverse a fashion as that witnessed in the *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Historical Linguistics* says something about the inherent complexity of the subject itself and perhaps serves to dampen still further that expectation of explanation that so many of us felt would spring from what seemed to be the qualitatively different impetus to theories of language change provided by the “new” theoretical models of the 1960s and 1970s. (p. xi)

In light of such a pessimistic assessment one is tempted to throw up one's hands and exclaim, “So much for progress!” However, familiarity with developments in other disciplines—for example, psychology, sociology, and anthropology—shows a similar pattern of growth, from an initial enthusiasm to unfulfilled expectations. In all of these cases, however, this development *does* represent progress and growth. Becoming aware of the limitations of knowledge together with areas of ignorance is a necessary step on the path to further enlightenment.

Historical Linguistics: Problems and Perspectives is not an easy book. It was written by and intended for specialists. As a progress report on the discipline it is timely and reasonably comprehensive.

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