

Grammar and Second Language Teaching: A Book of Readings, by William Rutherford and Michael Sharwood Smith, New York: Newbury House Publishers, 1988, paper, vii, 260 pages, \$30.50 CDN, ISBN 0-06-632494-7.

The editors of this book have compiled a number of articles that focus on different aspects of a pedagogical grammar (PG) which, in this context, refers to 'the means by which acquisition of a second or foreign language grammar may be expressly facilitated' (1). They propose that PG, which takes into account relationships among the formal properties of grammar, could provide the basis for such a theoretical framework. Their working hypothesis centres on a pedagogy that makes use of explicit rules which can be 'raised to consciousness' and the process by which this occurs to show how it can influence foreign or second language teaching. The editors clearly state that they are only at the beginning stages of outlining such a theory.

The book is divided into three sections and contains fifteen articles published elsewhere for the most part within the past ten years. The first section which focuses on theoretical considerations opens with an article by Rutherford in which he briefly traces the history of the development of consciousness raising in the learning of second languages, in particular the changes that took place in attitudes toward pedagogy from classical times to the present. Rutherford mentions that traditionally the focus on grammatical form was considered a necessary, even sufficient, condition for acquiring a second language and that the concern for language use and the role played by consciousness raising in teaching is a relatively recent phenomenon. The latter point is further elaborated on in the chapter by Bley-Vroman who discusses the main characteristics of adult second language learning compared to those found in child language development. He suggests that the well recognized lack of success in adult foreign language learning, unlike that of first language learning which is uniformly successful, results from the fact that accuracy in adults is not accomplished by means of comprehensible input. He hypothesizes that some form of grammatical consciousness raising introduced at appropriate times would improve the adult learner's grammar.

Bialystok describes second language performance using a two-dimensional model of language proficiency. One dimension involves a continuum linking nonanalyzed and analyzed endpoints intersected by another dimension joining nonautomatic and automatic endpoints. She argues that a learner's representation of knowledge can be separated from access to that knowledge, a point that I will take

up below, and that 'each of these variables contributes to the learner's control over that knowledge' (37). Aside from the assumption that language is a structured, generative system, Bialystok claims that she does not take a theoretical position insofar as linguistic description is concerned. However, in her discussion of her model she invokes the linguistic concept of markedness whereby the analyzed endpoint is marked with respect to the nonanalyzed endpoint, and the automatic endpoint is marked with respect to the nonautomatic one. This allows her model to predict that in the development of proficiency in a second language, the unmarked forms of control will precede marked ones. The problem raised here is that although the theory of markedness has certainly proved to be a fruitful line of research, many details of the theory are still in dispute and have yet to be worked out.

The main point that is stressed in the chapter by Sharwood Smith is that consciousness raising is a much more complex process than is often recognized. Nonetheless, he supports the view that language learning can be aided by practice of the rules of grammar that we have explicit knowledge of. This approach is also adopted by Pienemann who probes the relationship between learning and teaching. One of the specific questions he poses concerns the extent to which language acquisition processes depend on the structure of formal input and whether or not a rule can be learned in advance of natural acquisition. He discusses the results of a study based on the developmental stages of a German inversion rule that emerge in Italian speaking children learning German as a second language. The study indicates that instruction can facilitate the acquisition process but that the role played by consciousness raising is highly constrained insofar as the natural acquisition of rule ordering is concerned.

The readings in the second section of the book focus on what PG refers to, as this term has not been used with semantic consistency in the literature. For example, Corder emphasizes that the distinction between a linguistic grammar which he considers to be a reference grammar and a pedagogical grammar which is a more practical grammar normally used in developing the communicative competence of learners, must be clearly indicated. Another point, frequently overlooked in discussions on teaching, is that pedagogical descriptions are aids to learning, not the objects of learning, and in classroom settings it is often the case that description is used as explanation. By way of illustration of how a pedagogical grammar could be effectively used, Corder cites the example of the patterns found in double object verbs in English. He presents a variety of sentences containing a verb that permits the alternation in object patterns (give) and one that does not (explain). Corder proposes that the setting out of such patterns will enable the learner to infer the

rules and that the inclusion of exercises involving some decision of semantic or syntactic processes that a learner has already acquired will 'force' the student to some degree to discover something about double object verbs. His presentation is, in fact, a good description of how the English dative alternation might be taught to students; the explanation for the alternation remains in dispute, as a perusal of the literature will demonstrate. For a recent account that suggests a transformational rather than a lexical analysis within the current theoretical model to account for double object verbs, see Larson (1988). From a pedagogical perspective, on the other hand, what has not been made explicit in the discussion is the relation between exposure to an alternation of this kind and the learner's awareness or knowledge of the constraints operating on the alternation, be they lexical or transformational.

The last section of the book, which concentrates on the realization of pedagogical grammars, provides practical illustrations of how grammar may be presented to students using techniques for facilitating learning based on research findings. The chapters by Sharwood Smith and Rutherford are especially interesting in this regard. It is somewhat puzzling, however, to find included a paper based on a case grammar incorporated within a generative semantics model. The paper in question, originally published in 1981, is by MacKenzie, and is based on a theoretical approach that was ultimately shown to be untenable. A full discussion of the issues involved and the controversy that raged over them can be found in Newmeyer (1980). The editors in their introduction to this section point out that 'since the time of writing, case theory has assumed an important role in Chomskyan generative grammar, though this does not really alter the most essential points that Mackenzie makes' (187), but it is not clear which points they have in mind. Case theory as argued by Chomsky, however, is predicated on syntactic rather than semantic relationships; in any case the predictions that follow from one theory or the other would have serious implications for PG.

The main problem one has with assessing the approach taken in this book stems from the lack of a well-defined theory of PG within the context of second language learning and the role played by consciousness raising, a point which the editors make clear at the onset. Rutherford again underlines the pretheoretical nature of this line of inquiry in the final chapter of the book where he states that the question of what must be raised to consciousness in a learner and how it is accomplished remains open. But to go back a step, can we assume access to unconscious knowledge? Chomsky (1980:244), citing examples from the history of science argues, in fact, that there is no reason to suggest we 'have any privileged access to the principles that enter into our knowledge and use of

language.' As a case in point within the more recent principles-and-parameters model, Chomsky (1988:91) argues that conscious awareness of categories that are empty at surface structure and the principles that govern them is 'beyond the level of possible introspection.' This brings into question the major premise of this book, namely, that unconscious knowledge can be accessed. It may indeed turn out that this is an empirical question, in which case some compelling supporting evidence would have to be produced. There is one final problem concerning the ambiguity associated with the term 'grammar' that must be mentioned. This term refers to either the internalized grammar or the linguist's theory; the context normally determines which one is intended. However, in many of the discussions of PG in the text, the definition of grammar being referred to by various authors is at times unclear.

In general the articles included in this book should be of interest to anyone involved in second language teaching and research. The challenging questions and activities that are included would make this a useful text for students specializing in the field. Although it is less satisfactory from the point of view of theory, the editors have attempted to address the important topic of the relationship between pedagogy and language learning and in this attempt, they have brought out many complex issues that concern instructors, students and theoreticians.

#### REFERENCES

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