

It is extraordinarily difficult to write an introductory textbook on Linguistics – I mean a *really* introductory book, taking nothing for granted – because of the precarious balance which has to be maintained between overestimating the audience and oversimplifying the material. Oversimplification is perhaps an obvious danger – particularly these days, when the subject is developing so rapidly. The danger of overestimating one's audience is not so obvious, however. In an informal survey of sixth-formers' reactions to linguistic terminology some time ago, in which I presented them with an introductory book on linguistics and asked them to pick out and comment upon terms which they felt unsure about, it was most illuminating to see that few cited terms like 'phoneme' or 'allomorphy' (these were accepted as obviously technical terms, which they had to make an effort to understand). No, the terms raised were of the sort 'native speaker', 'informant', 'structure' – terms which many people would hardly construe as 'technical' at all, and which would tend not to be explained in an introductory book.

Miss Wallwork's book is I think the best I have seen as regards maintaining the above balance at a genuinely introductory level. She covers a great deal of ground, and presents everything in an admirably clear style. I have already tried it out on a few 'naive native speakers', and they had no trouble with it. It is obviously a book to be recommended to all beginners' classes. The few criticisms I feel have to be made will not reduce the book's general value and impact for the reader, as they are largely concerned with questions of emphasis; but I think it is important for the teacher who proposes to make use of this book to be fully aware of the perspective which he will have to add.

One thing to look out for is the parochiality of her viewpoint at many places. 'Linguists prefer, on the whole' she says (109), to use 'register' in a way she has just been discussing; but what needs to be made clear is that only a minority of the world's linguists make use of the term (or even the concept) at all. Again, in discussing the role of linguistics in ELT, she gives the unfortunate impression that the Nuffield Programme at University College London is the only relevant project (147); one would expect at least a mention of the vast schemes afoot in the United States. These are just two examples which indicate that this is very much a British account of linguistics. One might guess as much from reading her Introduction, but if she is really aware of this bias, then something ought to have been said more explicitly.

Most of the detailed points I would raise are in connexion with the chapters on 'the sounds of language'. Here she begins with a major distinction between 'segmental' and 'supra-segmental' phonemes (23). This boldface dichotomy immediately strikes the reader as being a central, organizing principle behind the chapters, and Miss Wallwork does in fact say that both types of phoneme are 'equally important' (25). But actually she is only paying lip-service to the notion of supra-segmental phoneme, for when she does get down to discussing non-segmental phonology, it is under the heading of 'stress and intonation', and the term 'phoneme' is never more mentioned (the rather vacuous words 'factors' and 'components' (47) being used instead). If one doesn't believe in phonemic intonation (and all of Miss Wallwork's terminology, transcription, and general approach suggest that she doesn't), then why introduce the boldface distinction at all? A simple opposition between segmental (phonemic) phonology and non-segmental phonology would be more consistent, and (as I believe) theoretically more satisfactory.

While on the intonation section, I would strongly dispute the claim that the attitudinal (and the like) interpretations of intonational contrasts are based on rules which 'are as much linguistic rules as the so-called "rules" of grammar' (49). There are important differences in kind between intonational and grammatical contrasts; and a sufficiently large number of scholars take this view to require some qualification to be made to the above statement. Also, Miss Wallwork's examples of attitudinal implication of various tones (54) are poor; and her use of the term 'intonation group' to refer to the utterance on which a tune is used and not to the structural characteristics of the tune itself is strange (50).

There are one or two other phonetic points. The cardinal diagrams are badly out of proportion (if this is deliberate, it seems quite unnecessary); there is a paragraph on pitch which is very oddly introduced into the middle of a section dealing with segmental articulatory characteristics (34); the first use of the phrase 'narrow phonetic transcription' (20, cf. also 23) is unexplained, though this is by no means self-evident to the beginner; and why, after using Daniel Jones's transcription throughout, does she at the very end of the phonetics chapter refer the interested reader to Gimson's book, which uses a different system? (45)

Some of the more misleading simplifications could have been easily avoided by the addition of an adverb or two, and perhaps the second edition will do this. For example, there is the definition of pitch with reference to vocal cord vibration only (34), or the statement that 'whom' is now rare except in writing (but the prepositional constructions - 'to whom', etc. - are by no means rare, especially in formal speech (16)). The unfortunate analogy between speech and fingerprints turns up again (99). And there are a few oddities in the discussion of various grammars. One type of grammar is called 'scientific' (i.e. it 'attempts to provide a logical and self-consistent account of how language works' (120)); now, whatever 'how language works' means, there is an unfortunate (and I'm sure quite unintentional) impression given that 'scientific' grammars are being opposed to the grammars already mentioned, which include 'generative' and 'descriptive' grammars! Another unexpected thing is to be told that traditional grammar is scientific also, and has 'a solid theoretical basis' (120). Now this is surely untrue for the kind of traditional grammar Miss Wallwork is talking about (unless 'solid' means 'dense' here?). It is the very *absence* of explicit and precise theory in traditional grammar which makes linguists so unhappy with it, as she is well aware from the subsequent discussion. But the term 'scientific' should not be loosely used in this way.

There is a short section of suggestions for further reading and a short bibliography, though this contains a few errors. Enkvist should be added to Gregory & Spencer for the book on *Linguistics and Style*; the authors H. and H. E. Palmer are the same; and the entry for Quirk & Crystal is back to front. Finally, it is odd to give beginners the De Saussure *Cours* in the 1965 French edition, when the cheap translation is available; and the new editions of Quirk and Strang should be mentioned.

It is not normal to spend so much space in an academic journal on introductory books of this kind. That I have done so simply substantiates my view that this book is an important contribution to the literature at this level.

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(Received 18 August, 1969)