## REVIEWS

KEN LODGE, *A critical introduction to phonetics* (Continuum Critical Introductions to Linguistics). London: Continuum International, 2008. Pp. ix + 244. ISBN: 970-0-8264-8873-2 (hb), 978-0-8264-8874-9 (pb).
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At first glance, this appears to be like any other introductory book on phonetics: it has all the usual chapters and illustrations. A closer look shows significant differences, among them an insistence upon using normal conversational speech as a model rather than citation forms and, despite inclusion of all the usual information about speech at the level of the segment, a focus on nonsegmental phenomena.

In the preface, Ken Lodge lists his basic premises: everyday speech is the true reflection of a linguistic system, speech is not a concatenation of segments, universal characteristics of the phonetics of a linguistic system are poorly understood, and ear-training, production and acoustics should be taught in equal measure.

Enlarging on his third point, the author asserts that the connection between a phonetic and a phonological analysis of a language is not as obvious as most linguists think: '[t]his book . . . tries to avoid presenting the phonetics in such a way as to make mainstream phonology look obvious' (p. x). By this he seems to mean that phonetics is best looked at as a set of gestures which can take up varying amounts of time and are not necessarily timed to begin and end simultaneously with segment boundaries, while phonology tends to divide speech into segmental units. In this, he echoes Firthian sentiments (e.g. Firth 1948), though not overtly (Firth is not mentioned in his bibliography), and the ideas of subsequent nonsegmentally-oriented authors too numerous to mention here. This is not to say that Lodge has not arrived at these opinions independently.

In his first chapter, he discusses the differences between speech and writing, suggesting that a bias towards seeing speech as a series of segments is related to the way we write and that only a minimum amount of information about suprasegmental aspects of language are represented in an alphabetic system. In this chapter, he also defines segmental phonology and suggests readings.

Chapter 2 outlines speech articulation, with many helpful sagittal diagrams. Chapter 3 is titled 'The articulators in combination' and points out that our traditional transcription system allows some combinations (such as voiceless fricatives) to be described relatively easily, whereas other common articulatory combinations (such as frication with attendant creak leading to glottal closure) are not at all easy to represent. He suggests that parametric representations are one way forward.

Chapter 4 deals with transcription of various accents of English as well as of French, German, Modern Greek, and Malay. Chapters 4 and 5 expand on the notion that articulation can have longer and shorter components within a linguistic unit and that these often do not correspond nicely to the phonological segment. He uses the term 'long-domain features' in approximately the same way as Harris (1944) used 'long component', and again evokes a Firthian approach. Chapter 6 introduces prosodic features, again not generally linkable to phonological segments. The timing variations discussed in Chapter 7 are examples of features which do not belong to segments or even syllables.

Otherwise, Chapter 7, perhaps the most singular of the chapters, covers continuous speech phenomena, first examining in great detail the stages that the articulators pass through in producing a short utterance, then outlining some of the expected divergences from citation

 

form in unselfconsciously-produced English and other languages. Chapter 8 looks at varieties of English not covered in Chapter 4 (from Scotland, East Anglia, Jamaica, Kenya), and Chapter 9 deals with acoustic phonetics. Following is a glossary of phonetic terms.

This is a book which repays the attention of the intermediate or advanced student of phonetics who enjoys pondering the complexities in the analysis of sound and sound systems. It will be an eye-opener for those who have not considered the medium and long-term effects produced by articulators of different sizes and shapes moving at different speeds and with different constraints while producing a so-called string of speech sounds.

## References

Firth, J. R. 1948. Sounds and prosodies. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 1948. 127–152.
Harris, Zellig H. 1944. Simultaneous components in phonology. *Language* 20, 181–205.

GEOFFREY S. NATHAN, *Phonology: A Cognitive Grammar introduction* (Cognitive Linguistics in Practice). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2008. Pp. x + 171. ISBN: 0789019097 (pb), 9789027219084 (hb).
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Speaking as a teacher of phonology, I have always found two things difficult: (i) explaining the difference between phonetics and phonology so that the students can really understand and use the difference, and (ii) describing phonological alternations without intimidating students so much that they switch off completely. This book may have provided solutions to both. Using analogies with architecture, Geoffrey Nathan makes a clear distinction between phonetics and phonology (presumably in the belief that ambiguous examples can be handled later, as in Chapter 8, where phonologisation is introduced) and explains what is expected and what is not in a phonological system without committing himself to any particular descriptive format.

The term 'cognitive' in the book's title relates to the notion that phonological systems are not a result of random and unpredictable combinations of oppositions but are shaped by the abilities of the human production and perception systems. In this, as in other ways, Nathan adopts a stance championed by Roman Jakobson and others, including David Stampe, whose Natural Phonology is mentioned frequently in the discussions of the forces which shape a phonological system.

In the first four chapters, Nathan begins with a condensed history of phonology, briefly describing the traditional schools of analysis. Next, he does a quick once-over through articulatory phonetics, though quite rightly insisting that his book is not intended as a phonetics tutor. He then dives into the central subject matter: segmental phonology at several levels – the individual segment, the syllable, the foot, the word – touching on how these can differ across languages.

Chapter 5 points out that phonological features are the traditional units of description in this field of study, despite the fact that the phoneme is the minimal unit of awareness for the ordinary language user. It then introduces the Stampian notion of PROCESSES: automatic and exceptionless variations which govern casual speech but which apply to any type of speech. These include such English features as aspiration (prominent for plosives in stressed syllables, less prominent elsewhere). Nathan argues that these processes occur 'online' and do not reflect the retrieval of alternative forms from our mental databases.