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Neil Smith. 2010. *Acquiring phonology: A cross-generational case study*. In the series *Cambridge Studies in Linguistics* 124. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. xvii + 265. US\$107.00 (hardcover).

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This is the second of two books on phonological acquisition that Neil Smith has authored. The first, *The acquisition of phonology: A case study* (1973), documented the linguistic development of his eldest son, Amahl (A). The present work documents the linguistic development of his son's eldest son, Zachary (Z), in which Smith uses theoretical advancements in the field to reinterpret previous data and to compare it cross-generationally. From the beginning, Smith admits to the possible limitations of his work but makes no apologies for the 'old school' system of diary study he uses as it, too, holds descriptive validity that can be extended to inform theory.

Smith assumes the Chomskyan view of the language faculty and language acquisition, in terms of its innateness, and adopts the Principles and Parameters framework. Departing from Chomsky, however, he maintains that any theory of phonological acquisition that aspires to achieve "psychological reality" must deliberately avoid using rule ordering so as to limit the number of possible learnability issues that accompany processing problems. It is worth noting that Smith does not do away with phonological rules altogether; rather he advocates for the lack of rule ordering in child language acquisition, which places this book in contrast with his first title on the topic.

In the first chapter, Smith explores aspects of phonological acquisition that can be explained in terms of perceptual and motor maturity and gives a quick rundown of the linguistic development timeline. The author also reviews key concepts such as competence and performance, levels of adequacy, levels of representations and their units, learnability, universals, innateness, and continuity.

The second chapter focuses on Smith's past findings, which used a rule-based framework. His major claims were that by the time children begin to speak, their

lexical representations must be identical to that of the adult surface forms the children are receiving as input, and that, because of this, children do not have their own phonological system. Instead, he claimed that the child's perceptual processes filter the received adult production to yield the child's mental representation. This representation is then converted by a smaller set of rules to yield the child's pronunciation. His argument for the child focusing on and manipulating adult language representations comes from three areas: the child's ability to identify contrasts in the adult language that the child did not produce himself/herself, the child's understanding of his/her own speech, and his/her grammatical (morphological) behavior (p. 22). In the third chapter, Smith explores a wider range of theories, contrasting the pros and cons of rule-based theories, parameter setting models, constraint-based theories, and usage-based theories.

Chapter 4 outlines Smith's grandson's linguistic development in 13 stages, beginning with babbling at 6 1/2 months and progressing all the way up to 4 years. Smith uses unordered rules to formalize any apparent irregularities in production at each stage within a generative framework, using "quasi-phonemic representations and distinctive features where appropriate" (p. 51). Some cross-generational comparisons with respect to A's and Z's phonemic inventory development and acquired rules are also discussed in this chapter.

More cross-generational comparisons are made in chapter 5. Smith also discusses the ways in which his own ideas of phonological acquisition have changed since his first study. For example, he still believes that a child's linguistic performance is rule-governed, but he describes this as strictly a matter of performance, or malperformance, and not a reflection of the child's competence. Other departures from his previous work on the topic are the amalgamation of realization rules and phonetic detail rules to one neural network, and a lack of ordering of those rules.

Chapter 6 lists Z's lexicon diachronically and is organized in alphabetical order by word entry and cross-referenced with recording session number. Chapter 7 is an appendix that includes Z's consonant clusters, metalinguistic data assembled by page number, and Z's judgments on word-initial sounds. These two chapters display the sheer amount of data Smith collected and present it in an organized fashion for the reader.

Smith has a clear writing style that is easy to follow. Targeting academics with his objective discussion on competing theories, this book may also prove a useful tool in the classroom for an introductory acquisition course. The third chapter clearly compares the aforementioned theories highlighting their strengths and weaknesses with respect to their application to phonological acquisition. This would certainly benefit students since this skill, relating theory to the world in which we live, is something students generally struggle with. Along the same lines, I very much appreciated Smith's willingness to admit his limits, being open about the possible limitations of the study and his expertise in other theoretical areas.

Despite these advantages, there are a few shortcomings that need to be pointed out. No mention of transcription verification was made nor was an acoustic analysis mentioned, which seems odd considering the availability of free software, such as Praat, which is designed for such analyses. Excluding this type of analysis ignores

cues in the signal that may indicate categorical information. For example, Cohn and Kishel (2003) found that both duration and intensity of contrastive underlying forms showed significant differences in child language output. In addition, Richtsmeier (2010), and references therein, discuss how these variations would not be perceivable solely to the ear, which is precisely why acoustic analyses are so important when investigating categorical information.

The subtitle of the book marks this study as a cross-generational comparison. Though comparisons were made, I was surprised that they were so interspersed and that a greater focus was not placed on them. It would have been useful to have the comparisons all in one spot, say in a chapter devoted to the subject. The author did make good use of them in the fifth chapter to highlight where and why his theoretical assumptions had changed. His reasons for shifting his assumptions were well argued and clearly noted.

In conclusion, there are strengths and limitations to this work as previously noted. Whether or not the data in this book will prove as useful as Smith's first title is not as easy to judge. The absence of acoustic analysis is a serious drawback. That being said, the rich discussion of theories and their implications for the field of phonological acquisition makes this book a valuable addition to the linguistic literature especially for students and instructors of language acquisition.

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Igor A. Mel'čuk. 2012. *Semantics: From meaning to text*. In the series *Studies in language companion series*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins. Pp. xxi + 436. US \$158.00 (hardcover).

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This book is the first volume of Igor Mel'čuk's long-awaited monograph building on his Meaning–Text Theory (MTT) (developed with Alexander Žolkovskij) more than four decades after its launch. MTT was conceived in the context of incipient machine translation research back in the Soviet Union of the 1960s. This theory gave the world the revolutionary idea of lexical functions and allowed for a new description of language in terms of lexemes and their combinatorial qualities. Aimed at developing *interlingua* for the purposes of machine translation, this research sought to present the meaning of utterances in a non-linear way in order to break free from the syntactic rules of specific natural languages. Further, MTT pursued working out a mechanism to solve the problem of the distinctive divisions of reality that exist between