Book Reviews

Voici un ouvrage assez dense, qui correspond à la thèse de doctorat (profondément remaniée) d'Anne Abeillé. Il s'agit de la présentation d'une 'grammaire' TAG du français, c'est-à-dire un ensemble de descriptions syntaxiques de la langue formalisées selon le modèle des grammaires d'arbres adjoints (cf. Joshi *et al.* 1975), et de sa mise en oeuvre informatique (implémentation et fonctionnement de cette grammaire électronique) développée à l'université Paris VII. Le livre comporte une introduction générale et sept chapitres: les six premiers sont consacrés à l'exposé du modèle et aux analyses linguistiques, le dernier aborde la partie implémentation électronique de la grammaire. Il faut signaler également la bibliographie, abondante (25 pp.), et en annexe des éléments complémentaires qui font de l'ouvrage un bon outil de travail: une documentation sur les propriétés formelles du modèle TAG, le détail des objets constitutifs de la grammaire TAG du français, la liste des figures et un index des notions. Le livre s'adresse plutôt à un public confirmé (étudiants de troisième cycle, chercheurs en syntaxe, informaticiens du TAL) mais diversifié car plusieurs aspects éveillent l'intérêt.

    L'exposé des connaissances actuelles en syntaxe formelle est une des grandes qualités de l'ouvrage. L'introduction générale, très claire, énonce les enjeux que représente l'entreprise d'une grammaire électronique du français, entre autres, la place du composant syntaxique dans une application de TAL, les grandes options théoriques pour la représentation des connaissances syntaxiques, les qualités mathématiques attendues ou visées par une grammaire (en tant que représentation formelle des descriptions d'une langue). Cette introduction est suivie du premier chapitre, lequel est une présentation générale du modèle TAG; il porte sur l'organisation du formalisme (des arbres de descriptions syntaxico-lexicales pour primitives, leurs règles de combinaison) et sur les choix théoriques qui guident les analyses syntaxiques présentées dans les chapitres suivants (la bonne formation des descriptions, les grands principes linguistiques tels que la lexicalisation intégrale de la grammaire). Tel qu'il est exploité ici, le modèle TAG se présente au confluent des grammaires syntagmatiques et des grammaires de dépendance et permet, de ce fait, une approche originale des phénomènes analysés. Il possède, en outre, un dispositif de représentation mixte qui allie les qualités des deux grands courants grammaticaux et présente une réelle élégance formelle (cf. ses propriétés mathématiques) qui le fait apprécier du monde informatique. On sera séduit également

par son côté 'formalisme pour une approche lexique-grammaire'. Toutefois, le livre n'est pas un manuel et aussi bien mené soit-il, l'exposé du modèle est trop rapide et dense pour une initiation. Pour pouvoir pleinement profiter du travail présenté, il faudra déjà être à l'aise avec ce type de théorie linguistique (la forme du raisonnement, le mode de représentation) – on pourra se reporter à Abeillé (1993) et Abeillé *et al.* (2000). Pour autant, cette mise en garde ne condamne pas les grammairiens non spécialistes de TAG à écarter les sections introductives; au contraire, le lecteur appréciera l'organisation et la clarté des exposés théoriques menés avec un constant souci de reformuler, de donner des définitions formelles (ou formalisantes) des notions utilisées, des listes de caractéristiques, des points de comparaison théoriques très éclairants (par exemple, d'un modèle à l'autre, la notion de tête, l'usage des traits, les principes de bonne formation, etc.).

Le point fort du livre est sans aucun doute la partie consacrée aux analyses TAG du français. Le chapitre 2 'Structure de la phrase française' soulève la question du découpage en constituants (rappels et remise en cause de ses justifications empiriques), prône la phrase comme projection d'une tête lexicale mais réfute l'existence de SV comme constituant intermédiaire (cf. les arguments empiriques pour une structure plate); le chapitre 3 présente 'les principaux types d'arbres élémentaires associés aux différentes catégories lexicales du français'; le chapitre 4 rend compte des 'familles' lexicales ou regroupement d'arbres élémentaires (au moyen notamment de règles lexicales) et le chapitre 5 propose un traitement 'local' et sans catégorie vide des phénomènes d'extraction et des dépendances non bornées. Il faut signaler la richesse des analyses présentées dans cette partie. Les données convoquées sont très nombreuses, les généralisations descriptives autour du verbe et sa sous-catégorisation sont appréhendées indépendamment du formalisme (toujours appuyées par des listes de propriétés constituant autant de critères opérationnels, sous forme de tests le plus souvent), ce qui les rend en soi particulièrement intéressantes et exploitables. En général, on trouvera une bonne exposition des arguments empiriques et/ou théoriques justifiant les choix d'analyse et de représentation dans le formalisme TAG. Enfin, une des originalités de l'ouvrage réside dans l'intégration des études du lexique-grammaire sur les expressions figées, phénomènes souvent laissés pour compte des autres grammaires d'unification (se concentrant avant tout sur les phénomènes compositionnels). On regrettera, à ce propos, que la part réservée aux traitements sémantiques soit peu développée.

Le dernier aspect traité est l'implémentation de la grammaire française TAG (ou FTAG) – partie qui rend compte des résultats obtenus par un collectif de chercheurs et plusieurs années de développement à l'université Paris VII. Sont évoqués, l'organisation interne de la grammaire électronique (cf. la métagrammaire de Candido, 1999), les choix d'implémentation de la plate-forme logicielle, mais aussi, pour une grammaire de ce type, les différentes stratégies d'analyse utilisées à ce jour et les différentes applications possibles ou en cours de développement. Cette partie, assez rigoureuse, est plutôt destinée aux spécialistes TAL ou aux informaticiens intéressés par les problèmes d'analyse syntaxique en langue naturelle.

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This book is far better described by its secondary title than by its vaguer first title. It comprises a brief introduction plus eight chapters, and also offers a bibliography and glossary of terms. The work approaches its topic from an essentially descriptivist angle.

The first chapter gives a solid, carefully explained account of what might be termed 'consensus' morphology, looking at the problems concerning what gives any language item the status of a word, and describing the differences between free and bound, lexical and grammatical morphs. It provides a good list of the ways in which languages form new words. Apart from its rejection as morphs of items not currently operational in the language (the author, taking a structuralist-descriptivist line, is not willing to see forms such as 'respire' and 'conspire' as analysable into two parts), little or none of this chapter would be challenged by linguists of any of the main schools of thought.

In the second chapter, three basic tests for recognition of morphs are given: the segments involved should be present elsewhere in the language, they should have a sense link, and they should not be further decomposable. The concept of morphemes with allomorphs, conditioned on the basis of sound or of word structure, is defined and exemplified. Application of the tests indicates, for instance, that the 'dé–' of 'détord' is a separate morph with a sense of reversal or contrariness, parallelled in, say, 'défaire', but that the same sequence in 'détermine' is not, at least not in current French. On the other hand, 'pierre' and the 'lith–' of 'lithique' can be seen as allomorphs of one morpheme.

The tricky question of latent consonants in allomorphs occupies the whole of the next chapter, an overview being provided of a range of responses to this problem, including Bloomfield's proposal from the 1930s that masculine adjectives have a subtractive morph that removes the consonantal ending from the feminine form. The transformational-generative Schane-Dell proposals, dating from the 1970s, are looked at in some detail, and shown to fail to predict some real forms. A more recent, multi-layer approach is seen as more satisfactory, and explaining a wider range of phenomena, including liaison forms.

The fourth chapter looks at other problems of analysis. It reiterates the fact that derived words are usually somewhat less arbitrary or more transparent in sense than

those not decomposable into parts. However, there can be differences between the real sense and the one expected from the paradigm or pattern to which a word belongs ('cassation' does not mean act of breaking, nor 'brutaliser', make brutal). Items of identical form but varying category can give a single word two senses; if 'cordage' is from the noun, it means a collection of ropes, if from the verb, the action of making ropes. Different sequences of operations in words with three or more morphs can change the sense. For instance, 'immobilisable' can refer to something that cannot be mobilized or something that can be immobilized, according to whether 'im-' is added before or after '-able'. The author supports this commentary by reference to at least sporadic pronunciations of the first version with a half-open front nasal vowel, rather than a closed front vowel. There are cases where sounds appear or disappear in derivation: 'poli' – 'politesse'; 'magnétique' – 'magnétiser'. There are instances where an apparent derivative exists without a simple form paralleling it: 'invincible' but not 'vincible'; 'dératisation' but not 'ratisation'.

Chapter Five points out that derivation does not necessarily change word class, and lists the possibilities for the major word classes of current French: nouns can be derived from nouns, adjectives and verbs; verbs from verbs, nouns and adjectives; adjectives from adjectives, nouns and verbs, and adverbs from adjectives. Thereafter, lists of the language's principal affixes and their effects are given, with examples. It is striking that for a number of cases it appears logical to think in terms of a circumfix, simultaneous prefixation and suffixation, as the best explanation of forms actually occurring ('large' – 'élargir'; 'climat' – 'acclimater'). The end of the chapter lists affixes that are related to specific levels or registers of language ('sourdingue', 'amerloque').

The sixth chapter looks at the question of conversion, the use of a word in a new word class. This is extremely prevalent in English (think of 'She watered the garden', with the noun used as verb) and has been for a long time (Shakespeare's 'But me no buts, nor uncle me no uncles'). In French it is rarer, but not unknown, mostly involving adjective-to-noun ('un bleu') or verb-to-noun ('des repentirs') conversions.

Pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects are the topic of the next chapter. Some fascinating examples of re-interpretations, analogies and re-divisions of words are given, such as 'bikini' – 'monokini'; 'mouru' for 'mort'; 'un petit noiseau' for 'oiseau'; 'étoile d'araignée' for 'toile'. There are interesting statistics about the clipping of words, including the strong tendency to CVC(C) and CCV(C) patterns ('rab', 'perm'; 'psy', 'prof') and the fact that there is a trend towards final '-o' as a sort of truncation marker not just in learned words ('philo', 'schizo', 'biblio') but also more general ('colo', 'croco'). There is discussion of gaps in the system, often covered by suppletion ('tomber' is linked to 'chute', not to a deverbal noun on the lines of *'tombement'), sometimes not ('boire' has neither a derived nor an unrelated noun to explain the concept of act of drinking).

The last chapter discusses the way in which the French spelling system, despite its strong deviation from the ideal of one sound, one letter and one letter, one sound that underlies all alphabets, is actually very helpful in grasping the morphology of the language. Two examples will illustrate this: one is the retention of silent consonants that are pronounced in other forms of words, for instance, 'bas', 'basse'; 'vend', 'vendons'. The other is the use of alternative spellings to distinguish homophones, for example, 'ceint', 'cinq', 'sain', 'saint', 'sein', 'seign'.

The glossary does not include all, or even a majority, of the technical terms which are introduced in the body of the work, nor does it refer the reader to the first appearance of those terms it does list. This is a pity, because one of the strengths of the work as a

whole is its careful presentation, explanation and exemplification of such items, such as fully to justify its claim to be suited to both a 'public averti' and to teachers and students. Another minor criticism of the work might be that it is somewhat bitty or anecdotal in its structure, organized around separate topics rather than unitary in nature, but in some ways this can actually be seen as increasing its interest, as it makes it possible to dip into a topic without having to read solidly from A to Z.

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Bauvois, Cécile, *Ni d'Eve, ni d'Adam, étude sociolinguistique de douze variables du français.* Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002, 256 pp. 2 7475 3695 5. DOI 10.1017/S0959269504231581

This latest volume in L'Harmattan's 'Espaces Discursifs' series is unusual in that it adopts a variationist approach to French sociolinguistic data. Variationist studies in general and language and gender studies in particular are virtually unknown in the French tradition. Indeed, in her preface to Armstrong, Bauvois and Beeching, 2001, Francoise Gadet remarks 'la sociolinguistique du français, pour l'essentiel, ce n'est pas de l'intérieur de l'hexagone qu'en vient l'initiative'. In the last thirty years or so, a number of sociolinguistic studies have appeared which go beyond the polemical and explore the linguistic features particular to women in a measured and scientific manner. These studies have, however, emerged mainly in 'peripheral' French-speaking countries: in Switzerland, Belgium and Canada. Cécile Bauvois' new sociolinguistic study of phonological variables is no exception to this rule, focusing as it does on the speech of francophone Belgians.

The study charts the variation of the following variables:

a) Non-palatalised/palatalised forms: [dj] − [dʒ] and [tj] − [tʃ]: 'dieu' [dʒø:]; 'tiède' [tʃɛ:d]
b) Bisyllabic/monosyllabic forms: 'lion' (bisyllabic) versus 'hier' (monosyllabic)
c) Variation between semi-consonants [j], [w] or [ɥ] versus [i], [u] or [y], the latter sometimes followed by a semi-consonant [lij], [avuwe]
d) [lj] − [j] in 'escalier', 'milieu' 'million'
e) [i] − [iχ] in 'merci' [mɛʀsiχ]
f) − [pʀ] − [p], − [pl] − [p] − [tʀ] − [t], − [kʀ] − [k], − [kʀ] − [k], − [kl] − [k], − [fʀ] − [f], − [fl] − [f] /ʀ/ and /l/ dropping: 'les gauff' 'au suc'
g) − [b] − [p], − [d] − [t], − [g] − [k], − [v] − f], − [z] − [s], − [ʒ] − [ʃ]; 'marche' for 'marge'; 'carte' for 'carde'
h) Presence or absence of [ə] after a voiced consonant
i) Duration of vowels before a word-final voiced or unvoiced obstruent
j) Silence before an unvoiced or word-final voiced or unvoiced obstruent
k) Duration of sounds corresponding to the graphemes − *é* and *ée* or − *ie* and − *ie*

Bauvois tested the variables in three situations (providing the word whose definition is given by the investigator; reading sentences which end on the same key words; recounting an important event in one's life) with 96 subjects, twelve men and twelve women in each of four social classes. The hypotheses tested and research questions explored are wide-ranging: whether some linguistic variables are more prone than others to gender-asymmetrical usage, whether social and dynamic variables are equally discriminating, and, if so, whether sex-linked variation can be related to these, whether classifying women according to their husband's or their father's job can explain the results of the early sociolinguistic studies, whether women are more sensitive to stylistic variation than men and how sex-linked variation manifests itself in a general way.

It is difficult to summarise the results of the study of such a very wide range of variables. In general, however, the results seem to indicate that gender plays a much smaller role than other social factors, such as social class, educational background, professional prestige and annual salary. It appears from this Belgian data at least that the classification of women according to the jobs of their fathers or husbands has no impact on their more standardised usage. What is more, the Belgian women did not display a greater range of stylistic variation than the men. However, where there was social variation, women tended to adopt a more standard usage than the men (where there were silences before unvoiced consonants, vowels before word-final obstruents and, to a lesser degree, in [lj] − [l] and [dj] − [dʒ] variants).

One could not help finding the results of the study somewhat disappointing, not least because of the relatively small amount of space devoted to their presentation (10 pages), with some discussion in the Conclusion (9 pages). The major contribution of the volume is, I feel, in the review of sociolinguistic theory, particularly variationism, and in its excellent evaluation of methodologies and approaches. Part 1 'La variable 'sexe' 'amounts to 79 pages and is divided into two chapters. Chapter 1 provides a thorough-going review of the early Anglo-Saxon literature (Labov, Wolfram, Fasold and Trudgill), and is the best introduction currently available in French. Gadet, 2003, is also highly recommended but is (of necessity in a 'Collection l'essentiel français' series) less comprehensive on this point. Given the dearth of matter on this written in French, Bauvois' very clear exposition can only be enormously welcome. Chapter 2 reviews the explanations which have traditionally been offered for sex-linked variation, from biological to social factors, considering women's role as educators, their conservatism, their avoidance of characteristically male variants, their social ambitions, linguistic insecurity and social networks. The possibility that sex-linked variation is simply a methodological artefact is also raised. Again, this chapter presents the literature in a way which lends itself to book-lists for French students of language and gender. It is concise, yet comprehensive, highly accessible yet does not beg questions and provides the basis for deeper study through the references in the bibliography. Part 2 'Les autres variables' is divided into three chapters. The first considers social variables such as educational background, profession, salary, social class, personal and family factors, social mobility and subjective evaluations. The second looks in detail at stylistic variation and the third at linguistic variables and how the data were collected and analysed in the present study. Part 3 'La recherche' comprises only two chapters devoted to 'Le cadre' (the sample and the research questions) and the results.

A strong point of the volume is its painstaking coverage of all the factors which might influence the results and the very meticulous descriptions of the collection and analysis of the data. It will certainly be of enormous value to those providing research training

in sociolinguistic methods. Let us hope that it will 'encourager les autres', specifically 'les autres Hexagonaux'. With this volume, not only does Cécile Bauvois 'apporte . . . sa pierre à la construction de la parité entre hommes et femmes', as Marina Yaguello so elegantly styles it in her preface, but she contributes, too, to a new and growing empirical approach to sociolinguistics in French.

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For some things a picture dictionary is useful, almost irreplaceable. For answering questions that start 'what do you call the thing that . . .', or understanding *yaw*, *pitch*, *roll* (395). Of course, there are limitations. It will be essentially a dictionary of nouns, though the *compass card* (23) might have been used to explain 'veer'/'back', 'tourner'/virer'. Furthermore, not all objects that can be pictured are perceived in the same way in different languages. *Frette* (303) is simply a piece of wire to French guitarists, for whom the fingerboard is divided, not by frets, but into 'cases'. Illustrating *suburb*/*banlieue* from a map (431) equates two different sociocultural realities. Even the most tangible objects may be different. The *claw hammer* (220) and the *bricklayer's hammer* (216) are British, but the *marteau de menuisier* (220) is French, as is the *European plug* (198). Some pictures are of dubious utility: one can hardly make out what *yard*/*gare de triage* (430) represents, while *homogenized milk*/*lait homogénéisé* is indistinguishable from the *goat's milk*/*lait de chèvre* beside it (150). Pictures of spices and condiments are unhelpful, though on considering their variety, from *ajowan* (139) to *wasabi* (141), one thinks Toronto rather than Torcy (Seine-et-Marne). Although *VFD* appears under the OUP imprint, it was produced by Montréal-based QA International. Including *bow saw* ('scie à bûches' in the gardening pages of my Castorama catalogue) under 'outdoor leisure' (533) and labelling it *scie de camping* suggests a target audience of Canadians heading for the great outdoors. The *trucks* (364–5) and *school bus* (362) are distinctly North American, and *fig* is listed (137) under 'tropical fruits'. *Backhoe* for *pelleteuse* (399) is American. I am not sure what *lard*/*lard* (149) is supposed to represent, but over here *saindoux* is more usually 'lard' than *shortening*, and I think (148) *linden*/*tilleul* would be better than 'limeflower'. Synonyms, or lack of them, are another weakness of the picture dictionary (though *door*

handle is *poignée de porte* under 'exterior door' (185) and *bec-de-cane* on the next page under 'lock'). *Walking frame/cadre de marche* (466) are more commonly 'Zimmer frame' and 'déambulateur'. The *all-terrain vehicle/véhicule tout-terrain* could have been 'SUV' or 'quatre-quatre', but I insist that the *minibus/fourgonnette* shown (347) is actually a 'people carrier', 'MPV', or 'monospace'. *Cleg* for *taon* (69) is possible, but 'horsefly' is more common; *mantid* should be '(praying) mantis'. 'The world's most trusted dictionaries' claims the front cover. Not totally trustworthy though. The Reviews Editor notes that the cricket illustration (479) shows the square-leg umpire at point (unless one supposes a left-handed batsman). Violins have *tuning pegs*, guitars (except perhaps those of flamenco purists) do not; they have 'machines', correctly labelled *mécaniques* (303). Though in French the pickups may be 'micro grave', 'micro aigu', English identifies them by position (bridge, middle, or neck); *bridge assembly/ensemble du chevalet* does not go into the detail of 'pontet', 'cordier'. I have always heard anglophone drummers refer to a *Charleston cymbal* as the 'high-hat'; the illustration (308) leaves out 'drum riser'. The school (444–5) has a *proctors' office* for the *bureau des surveillants* but no 'préau'. Compared with the *Oxford-Duden*, the coverage is much less detailed, but the pictures, in colour, are larger and clearer. The scope is wide: from astronomy and astronautics, through geography, cartography, geology, meteorology, the environment, plants, animals of various kinds, wild, domestic (surely a French dictionary should show a 'chartreux' beside the *Maine Coon* (87) and the *Siamese?*), and also human (rarely would I translate *raie des fesses* by *anal cleft* (93), by *posterior rugae* (95) never). The food sections are in some respects very full (*kielbasa* (156), *prosciutto*, *chorizo*), in others disappointing: *fromage à tartiner* (150) is not *cream cheese*, and why include *Jarlsberg* (151) but not (say) 'pélardon', 'fourme d'Ambert', or 'morbier'? Houses, furniture, tools are well covered; architecture includes Aztec and Greek temples (with *cathedral*, *synagogue* and *mosque* under 'religion'). Communications, office stationery and automation ('courriel' for *email* is not given, but I welcome *clavardage* (335) for *chat room*), various modes of transport (where *ticket collecting booth* (378) is equated with *guichet de vente de billets*), and different sports: cricket, but also soccer, American football, and (ice) hockey, through to hunting, shooting, trapping and fishing. On the way, shapes, weights, measures and townscapes are covered. I particularly appreciated the flags (448–53), which are indexed with numbers referring to a map showing where the countries are situated. For £19.99, this is a handsome volume, of encyclopedic rather than linguistic interest. One last quibble: is *manhole* (434: *regard*) still in general use?

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Publié la même année que le dictionnaire des arabismes (Makki, 2001), ce livre semble être le produit d'un regain d'intérêt dans tous les domaines pour les relations entre le monde arabe et l'Europe. Il s'agit d'une étude des termes que le français a emprunté à l'arabe depuis le moyen âge jusqu'à nos jours.

Le livre se présente sous la forme d'un glossaire comprenant une liste de 546 mots pris d'ouvrages tels que le Grand Larousse, le Grand Robert, le Robert Historique ou Le Trésor de la Langue Française et recouvrant une gamme de champs sémantiques qui va des sciences exactes à la littérature en passant par les sciences sociales et religieuses.

L'auteur nous apprend que les contacts linguistiques qui s'étaient développés pendant les croisades avaient commencé déjà avant le XIIème siècle grâce aux relations commerciales entre le Proche-Orient et les ports de Provence qui avaient permis la pénétration de mots arabes dans les parlers d'oc. Puis, en raison de l'avancement scientifique du monde arabe et par l'intermédiaire du latin, des mots tels que *zéro, chiffre, algèbre, amiral* nous sont parvenus. Plus tard avec la période coloniale vont pénétrer dans le français de nombreux termes de la langue familière, empruntés de l'arabe parlé dans les pays du Maghreb, tels que *toubib, chouia,* ou *bled*.

Pour chaque entrée le glossaire donne des indications historiques en particulier: la date précise de première attestation du mot, la variété de l'arabe d'où le mot provient avec sa transcription, les variantes graphiques du mot avec les dates auxquelles elles ont été attestées, le champ sémantique auquel le mot appartient et les sources où il a été relevé.

Bien qu'intéressant pour tous ceux qui sont fascinés par l'histoire du vocabulaire du français, ce livre s'adresse surtout, à des chercheurs en études lexicographiques ou étymologiques ou à des lecteurs avertis qui sont intéressés par l'origine des mots et les voies de pénétration des termes arabes dans le français. Ainsi le livre ne donne pas la signification actuelle des mots répertoriés 'car elle est supposée connue des lecteurs' (p. 15). Cela n'est pas gênant pour les termes courants mais il aurait été plus pratique pour les non-spécialistes d'avoir la signification de mots tels que *alcancie, guimbri,* ou *rotte* et de ne pas avoir à 'se référer à un dictionnaire tel que le Lexis', comme le recommande l'auteur (p. 15). Par ailleurs le glossaire comprend des termes utilisés fréquemment en français, tels que *médina, merguez* ou *méchoui* mais aussi des termes se référant à des réalités culturelles du monde arabe qui apparaissent certainement dans les écrits des historiens, sociologues et autres chercheurs ayant séjourné dans les pays arabes. Mais ces termes – par exemple, *rhazal, melah* ou *rezzou* – n'appartiennent pas à la langue française courante et ne présentent pas d'intérêt particulier pour le lecteur novice.

Pour faciliter le travail des chercheurs et leur donner une vue d'ensemble sur l'histoire des emprunts arabes ceux-ci sont présentés ensuite sous forme de listes diverses. D'abord par ordre chronologique (pp. 105–11) puis les variantes graphiques sont présentées par ordre alphabétique (pp. 112–39). Ensuite les termes sont classés par voies de pénétration en emprunts directs ou par langues intermédiaires (pp. 141–51) et enfin la liste est présentée par champs sémantiques (pp. 152–65).

Pour en revenir au début, l'ouvrage commence par une courte mais dense introduction d'une dizaine de pages pour lesquelles l'auteur nous renvoie à une foule de références ou de commentaires explicatifs (pp. 169–99) complétés par des références

bibliographiques, en particulier d'ouvrages italiens. A ce sujet, le livre est parsemé de nombreuses, et parfois longues, citations en italien qu'il aurait été utile de traduire en français pour les lecteurs ne connaissant pas cette langue.

La lecture de ce livre est donc intéressante à plus d'un titre pour les lecteurs curieux. On peut être intéressé par le fait d'apprendre, si on ne le sait pas déjà, que *mousseline* vient du nom de la ville irakienne de Mossoul ou que *mesquin* vient de l'arabe '*meskine*' qui signifie 'pauvre' ou encore que *mohair* vient de *mukhayyer* qui signifie 'choix'. Mais ce livre, riche en informations, s'adresse en premier aux spécialistes et aux étudiants désireux de posséder une base de données comme outil de travail pour leur permettre d'entreprendre leurs recherches dans le domaine de l'histoire des arabismes et des voies qu'ils ont empruntées pour passer dans la langue française.

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As a doctoral dissertation, this work is inevitably a somewhat tightly focused case study, but one which contributes positively to a growing body of work on translation.

Künzli sets out to compare first the strategies adopted, and second the principles applied by two groups of translators to an identical translation task but covering two language pairs. The task used for the experiment was a passage of 'technical' French, namely the brief installation instructions for a multifunctional appliance (telephone, answering machine, fax) for the non-technical user. The two groups of translators concerned are translation students and professional translators, translating from French into German and from French into Swedish respectively. The aim is to compare the groups both in relation to their translation strategies, based partly on their written translations and partly on the basis of their discourse produced through think-aloud protocols, i.e. how informants 'talk their way through the task'.

The book consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 gives an interesting theoretical overview introducing the two models adapted for the analysis of strategies (Chesterman, 1997) and principles (Jääskeläinen, 1999). The methodologies underpinning the gathering and analysis of the data are dealt with in Chapter 2 and the results presented in the next three chapters, each covering one of the three sections into which texts like the chosen

source text may be typically divided: 1) technical description; 2) encouragement to the purchaser to use the appliance; 3) installation instructions. The final chapter synthesises and evaluates the results and outlines possible future directions for research. The French original and the 20 translations are quoted in full in appendices.

The translations are evaluated according to three types of strategy: a) grammatical, i.e. manipulations (or not) of word classes and sentence structure; b) semantic strategies, such as paraphrase, over- or under-translating; c) pragmatic strategies, e.g. information to be included in the target text.

The second part of the experiment is based on a model adapted from psychological studies carried out in the USA and first used in translation studies by Jääskeläinen (1999) and known as think-aloud protocols. The verbalisations produced by informants are categorised as being of three major types: a) procedural, i.e. dealing with points of detail; b) those revealing overall strategies regarding approaches to translation, e.g. technical terms that must be used consistently; c) comments about professional practice, identity or self-image.

The three core chapters analyse the three major functions of a user's instruction text: technical description (Chapter 3); addressing the purchaser (Chapter 4); installation instructions (Chapter 5). Issues arising in Chapter 3 include compounding in the Germanic target languages and the technicality of the descriptions generally used in the respective target cultures, including the legal implications. Chapter 4 deals with the relationship between manufacturer and customer and the more direct personal style associated with modern marketing techniques compared to the traditional impersonal style of technical specifications in both target languages. Chapter 5 focuses on an interesting example of potential ambiguity in the source text.

Each discussion of the translations into a given target language is rounded off by an analysis of the discourse produced through the think-aloud protocol. The most significant findings are the differences between the reactions of the students and professional translators. For instance, students are far less comfortable in dealing with uncertainty and far less consistent in marrying general declarations regarding good practice and nitty-gritty applications than professional translators. The latter group are at the same time far more image-conscious regarding how their output will be viewed by clients.

Altogether the book is a very worthwhile read for students, teachers and, dare I say it, professional translators. Despite its shortcomings, in particular the thesis style presentation which makes for overmuch repetition, and the choice of two relatively similar target languages which produces a limited range of strategic differences, the study is useful for the accessibility of the lessons drawn from the examples (I say this despite knowing no Swedish), its intelligent analysis of a certain text type and the insights into the thinking processes involved in translation. It is most desirable that this approach be applied both to other types of text, and to a wider range of language dyads.

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Labeau, Emmanuelle et Larrivée, Pierre (dir.), *Les temps du passé français et leur enseignement.* (Cahiers Chronos 9). Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002, 180 pp. 9 0420129 94. DOI 10.1017/S0959269504271587

Cet ouvrage est le fruit d'un atelier international qui s'est tenu à l'université d'Aston en mars 1999. Envisagées sous un angle synchronique, évolutif ou contrastif, les études dont est constitué cet ouvrage sont abordées dans l'esprit du dialogue de plus en plus nécessaire entre application et modélisation. Onze chapitres font l'essentiel de cet ouvrage. Les six premiers chapitres présentent des études beaucoup plus théoriques sur les ressemblances et dissemblances entre les divers temps du passé du français. Ces études ont permis à leurs auteurs de montrer les rapports identitaires, dichotomiques ou complémentaires qui existent entre ces temps. Le septième et le huitième chapitre portent sur des études de deux corpus, l'un journalistique, l'autre constitué de matériels pédagogiques. À travers ces études, les auteurs ont essayé d'expliquer le rôle des alternances entre certains temps du passé et de montrer l'impact que l'écart entre manuels et faits de langue pourrait avoir sur les apprenants. Quant aux trois derniers chapitres enfin, ils illustrent l'utilisation des temps du passé par d'authentiques apprenants du français langue seconde/étrangère. Le compte rendu de la séance plénière qui a clôturé l'atelier sert de conclusion à l'ouvrage.

Dans le premier chapitre, Dulcie Engel donne un aperçu général des formes verbales que l'on appelle les nouveaux temps du passé. Pour Engel, cette prolifération de nouveaux temps du passé n'est que la conséquence directe d'une évolution des rôles des différents temps de la langue française. En effet, le présent, le passé composé ainsi que le plus-que-parfait ont vu leur rôle s'élargir tandis que le passé simple et le passé antérieur se limitent à l'écrit. Toutefois, malgré la concurrence à laquelle le passé simple fait face, ce temps connaît une survie assez remarquable.

Dans le deuxième chapitre, Douglas Rideout explore l'opposition perfectif – imperfectif et explique cette dichotomie par la façon dont le locuteur perçoit le rapport entre la structure temporelle interne et le point d'où il contemple la situation. Pour Rideout, le perfectif indique une transition entre situations, alors que l'imperfectif ne révèle que l'existence d'une situation et son déroulement.

Dans le troisième chapitre, Marie-Eve Ritz s'est fixé l'objectif de proposer une représentation sémantique unifiée du passé composé à partir de l'observation des caractéristiques sémantiques de ce temps qui, de prime abord, semblent disparates. Elle relie la lecture temporelle d'une phrase impliquant le passé composé à la prise en considération de plusieurs facteurs dont, le verbe conjugué, les adverbes temporels présents dans la phrase ainsi que les autres phrases avec lesquelles la phrase au passé

composé interagit. Cependant, comme elle le reconnaît elle-même, bien des aspects du passé composé restent encore à clarifier pour en arriver à cet objectif de généralisation sur le passé composé.

L'article de Pierre Larrivée, qui constitue le quatrième chapitre, s'inscrit dans la même perspective de généralisation du comportement sémantique du passé composé entreprise par Ritz. Le passé composé est généralement considéré comme une forme perfective, par opposition à l'imperfectivité de l'imparfait. Toutefois, ainsi que l'a montré Larrivée dans son article, 'le passé composé n'a pas en lui-même de valeur terminative, et ne peut donc être analysé comme représentant perfectif de la sphère du passé'.

Dans le cinquième chapitre, François Labelle base son étude sur une observation contrastive des erreurs d'anglophones, apprenants du français L2, et de celles de francophones, apprenants de l'anglais L2, face à l'emploi que ces deux catégories d'apprenants font des temps du passé de leurs langues secondes respectives. Il en arrive à la conclusion que les erreurs que commet chaque type d'apprenant tiennent de la différence dans le découpage aspectuel (perfectif, imperfectif et neutre) que font les deux langues en présence de leurs registres temporels respectifs.

Dans le chapitre 6, Arie Molendijk propose une réévaluation du fonctionnement du passé simple et de l'imparfait, dans le but de rendre l'examen de ces temps plus « maniable ». Contrairement aux analyses traditionnelles de ces temps qui voudraient que leurs différences d'emploi soient d'ordre aspectuel, l'analyse de Molendijk situe plutôt ces différences au niveau purement temporel. De ce point de vue, le seul critère pour l'emploi de ces deux temps est celui de l'adéquation entre leur contenu sémantique et le rapport logique que la phrase dans laquelle ils se retrouvent est censée établir avec la ou les phrases voisines.

Dans le chapitre 7, Bénédicte Facques s'est penchée sur le rôle des alternances et ruptures temporelles, en l'occurrence, l'alternance passé composé/imparfait (PC/IMP) dans des récits journalistiques. À travers son étude, Facques arrive à la conclusion que cette alternance « ne se réduit pas aux relations prédicatives[. . .]qu'instaurent habituellement les temps du récit », à cause de « l'hétérogénéité temporelle et aspectuelle interne du PC et de l'IMP». S'agissant de la notion de rupture temporelle, elle ne saurait s'appliquer qu'aux seules alternances temporelles qui ont une fonction modalisatrice. Sur un plan pédagogique, l'on gagnerait à exposer les apprenants à des textes contenant en abondance ce phénomène des alternances.

Dans le chapitre 8, Anne Judge examine 'certains problèmes présentés par l'emploi des temps du passé à l'écrit', notamment, l'imparfait, le passé composé, le passé simple, et le présent, dégage l'écart entre ce qu'en disent les manuels scolaires et la réalité, et propose quelques pistes en vue de leur enseignement efficace à des étudiants de niveau avancé. Pour elle, il serait plus commode d'enseigner aux étudiants le système multifocal, à cause de la multiplicité de points de vue qu'il présente, selon le temps employé.

Dans le chapitre 9, Emmanuelle Labeau étudie un corpus de productions écrites par des allophones révélant des problèmes dans la maîtrise des tiroirs du passé par des allophones, notamment en combinaison avec des localisateurs temporels. Après avoir déterminé les facteurs qui influencent le choix du passé composé et de l'imparfait (dont essentiellement le sens du système verbal et les circonstants temporels) et les avoir appliqués à son corpus, Labeau propose des règles d'emploi de ces temps qui soient compatibles avec les dits facteurs.

Dans le chapitre 10, Martin Howard propose une approche lexicale pour une meilleure acquisition du lexique verbal par l'apprenant avancé. De façon générale, l'on considère qu'à ce niveau de son processus, l'apprenant maîtrise parfaitement la morphologie des deux temps du passé (le passé composé et l'imparfait), mais que la fonction de ces deux temps de la langue lui pose des difficultés. De son étude contrastive de trois groupes d'apprenants ayant vécu une immersion à des degrés différents en France, Howard conclut qu'une approche intégrant différents domaines (lexique et morphologie), permettrait davantage de résoudre le problème de la variation marquée dans l'utilisation des temps du passé en français.

Dans le chapitre 11, Urszula Paprocka-Piotrowska présente les premiers résultats d'une étude longitudinale qui vise 'le développement des moyens pour donner l'information temporelle dans les textes narratifs produits par des apprenants polophones'. Il en ressort que 'la mise en place du système aspectuo-temporel ne peut pas être dissociée de l'évolution générale des moyens de donner l'information temporelle'.

Pour l'apprenant du français langue seconde/étrangère, la complexité sémantique et distributionnelle des tiroirs des temps du passé pose un problème évident quant à la parfaite maîtrise de la langue. Le manque d'équivalence forme à forme entre les langues n'aide pas non plus à éviter cet écueil pour l'apprentissage. L'importance de cet ouvrage réside dans toute la lumière qu'il apporte sur cet aspect de la langue française. Aussi bien les enseignants, les chercheurs que les apprenants devraient beaucoup s'en inspirer. L'ouvrage est à conseiller très chaleureusement.

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As Marie-Cecile Leblanc points out early in this book, role-play is far from being a simple or natural learning activity. In fact, it involves juggling several layers of reality, while trying to follow instructions, construct a shared scenario, and communicate with apparent spontaneity in a second language one is still very much in the process of learning. A more formidable set of challenges it is hard to imagine:

Demander à un élève de pratiquer un jeu de rôle à des fins didactiques, c'est le placer dans une situation délicate où il doit mener de front des exigences multiples et parfois contradictoires: il lui est demandé, en incarnant un rôle, de manifester un comportement de joueur. Quand il improvise devant un public qui le regarde, il se trouve en même temps dans la situation d'acteur, alors qu'il n'en est pas un. Enfin, il doit être engagé dans son rôle, mais pas totalement, car il doit garder un comportement d'apprenant et mobiliser dans le jeu son savoir linguistique et culturel. A cela s'ajoutent éventuellement d'autres contraintes édictées par les consignes de départ de l'enseignant, par exemple la demande adressée à l'élève de communiquer de façon spontanée dans une langue

qu'il ne maîtrise pas, de construire un scénario cohérent du début à la fin ou d'endosser, si besoin est, plusieurs rôles à la suite. On prend ainsi la mesure du défi que représente la pratique du jeu de rôle improvisé pour l'apprenant en langue. (p. 11)

Nonetheless, the near-ubiquity of role-play in the language classroom means that Leblanc's attempt to focus attention afresh on this old warhorse is welcome. Her study is clearly organised. It comprises seven chapters. The first sketches the history of role-play, first as a therapeutic and later as a pedagogic tool, focusing in particular on its use in the learning and teaching of languages and distinguishing between it and related phenomena, such as simulations. Chapter 2 sets the context for the study itself, in terms of Leblanc's central reliance on role-play in her professional activity as a teacher of French at the Polytechnic University of Hong Kong. Chapter 3 sketches in a theoretical background to the study, in the shape of Erving Goffman's writings on social interaction, which, for better or for worse, provide Leblanc with one of her central concepts: that of involvement in, or commitment to, a role. Leblanc cites Goffman's definition of this as translated by one of his main French champions, Yves Winkin:

Etre impliqué dans une activité de circonstance signifie y maintenir une certaine attention intellectuelle et affective, une mobilisation de ses ressources psychologiques, en un mot, cela signifie s'y engager. (p. 56)

Leblanc's presentation of Goffman's ideas also provides the opportunity for a definition of what is understood by a role-play, again in terms of frames:

Reprenant les notions goffmanniennes, on peut affirmer que le jeu de rôle constitue une action pilotée qui modalise un cadre primaire et qui, s'il est retransmis à l'écran, est surmodalisable. Il comprend plusieurs cadres avec des formes d'engagement spécifiques à chacun. (p. 59)

Given Goffman's enduring preoccupation with the notion of role, it is quite understandable that an attempt should be made to explore the concept of role-play, using his ideas. Readers may gauge for themselves how enlightening the above definition is from a pedagogical point of view. Whatever the verdict, Chapter 4 contains an interactional analysis of one of the role-plays – 'La demande en mariage' – used by Leblanc with her Chinese learners. Chapter 5 follows this with a synoptic analysis of the other role-plays recorded as part of her study. It again focuses largely on the possible relationships between frames, which she identifies as threefold: dominance, superimposition, and slippage. In Chapter 6, Leblanc considers how and by whom role plays might best be evaluated or assessed, while Chapter 7 develops a set of criteria for assessing the activity of role-players, in terms of their 'engagement dans le jeu[. . .]dans l'apprentissage[. . .]dans le spectacle' (pp. 240–1). Commitment may seem a somewhat oblique criterion on which to base the assessment of a language-learning activity.

To those – like the present reviewer – who would like above all to know whether role-plays are an appropriate way of learning and teaching foreign languages, Leblanc's book – though occasionally informative – is ultimately a disappointment. Interestingly, given her professional situation, Leblanc does consider the extent to which it is transferable across cultures. In her conclusion, however, she simply concedes that 'quant à l'apprentissage linguistique[. . .]il est difficile de dire avec précision ce que les participants apprennent au cours du jeu'(p. 252). Far from defining an effective role-play as one where the participants learn, retain and re-use as many foreign language forms as possible, she does

so in terms of the agility with which they are able to juggle the various frames they are deploying.

le jeu de rôle "parfait" serait celui où chaque participant adopterait un engagement de même intensité dans chacun des cadres – du jeu, du spectacle et de l'apprentissage —, en se comportant à la fois comme un bon "joueur" (improvisant avec aisance), comme un bon "acteur" (plaisant au public) et comme un bon "apprenant" (sachant cacher ses stratégies d'apprentissage). (p. 253)

If the pedagogic applicability of this volume is questionable, so too are some of the theoretical foundations on which it is based. Goffman's frames may have seemed at the outset to offer support, but in retrospect they appear to be more of an encumbrance. There is little doubt of Goffman's seminal importance in a number of fields (not least conversation analysis, two of whose founders Harvey Sacks and Emanuel Schegloff were former students of his). However, though Frame Analysis was first translated into French only in 1991, it was actually first published in 1974. On initial publication and subsequently, it was the subject of quite heavy criticism, among other things for its sheer diffuseness and lack of rigour (see Manning, 1992: 129–32). Nearly thirty years later, frame analysis is a much more systematic affair. If Goffman continues to be read, it is largely for historical reasons.

Leblanc's reliance on a somewhat dated theoretical framework is not so much a personal failing as the symptom of a wider malaise. This affects large parts of the Français Langue Étrangère establishment, which tend to fluctuate uneasily between asserting that learning and teaching French is a special case and espousing – often with some delay – some of the more questionable trends in English language teaching. A case in point is the curious French foible for 'simulations globales'. One of their chief proponents, Jean-Marc Caré, is echoed in this work by Leblanc as asserting that a central feature of role-play is dissension between participants, which obliges them to use language – or non-verbal communication – to try to find a common solution. In Leblanc's words: 'le jeu de rôle tel qu'il est pratiqué en France se démarque nettement du courant méthodologique anglo-saxon qui appelle "jeu de rôle" toute tentative de simuler des petites séquences de communication sans qu'il y ait nécessairement "rupture"(p. 20). Sadly, there is no justification for this particular distinction. To cite Morry Van Ments, one of those listed in Leblanc's own bibliography:

The role-play designer may . . . want to make the role-play interesting and stimulating by building in certain elements of conflict (conflicting motives and emotions, perceptual differences, divergent goals, competition, scarce resources). It is these elements that usually contribute to the problem under review. When this is done the designer may find it useful to build in a potential resolution of the conflict as well. (Van Ments, 1983: 80)

To her credit Leblanc herself is familiar with some more recent developments in Applied Linguistics. In Chapter 4 she deals with features of collaborative learning – scaffolding, clarification or repetition requests, self- and other-correction – that have been argued to lead to second language acquisition (pp. 136–40). And though in this volume her use of the term 'interaction' is that espoused by Goffman, she does appear familiar with the more purely linguistic sense it has now largely assumed, following the work of Michael Long. Nonetheless, in the UK, the most fertile thinking about role-play as a language learning activity took place in the 1970s and 1980s and was undertaken by scholars such as Littlewood, Livingston, Maley and Duff. It is chastening

to have to conclude that, for purely practical purposes, this book adds little to what they had to say.

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This book deals with a highly specialised subject, namely Time, Aspect and Tenses, and their relation with non-verbal temporal references within the sentence. It is based on fourteen papers given at the Chronos conference held in Nice in May 2000. The papers are varied in theoretical approach, and, in a number of cases, concern academic debates which have been going on for some years (in particular between Anne-Marie Berthonneau and Georges Kleiber, on the one hand, and Co Vet on the other). In such cases each 'contestant' restates their argument, based on previous research, and then presents new research to further their argument. This book, therefore, enables the reader to keep abreast of some of the most topical debates raging within this narrow field. It deals mainly with French, although there are four chapters on other languages (Modern Hindi, Vedic, Russian, and three African languages). My one regret is that all contributions deal with specific uses of different tenses in particular contexts; none consider tenses as forming systems to be seen in their entirety, which I feel to be a much neglected area of research, and one which may help to solve some of the more intractable problems tackled here.

From the French language specialist's point of view, it does contain some interesting points for those wondering why, for example, *un instant de plus et le train déraillait* may refer to something non-factual (see both the Anne-Marie Berthonneau/Georges Kleiber chapter and the Co Vet chapter for different explanations, Co Vet using the same examples as his academic opponents). In both cases, the analysis involves comparing the use of the imperfect and the past historic, which, in itself, is of interest since so many of the other papers deal with the same issue, albeit in different contexts. Thus Myriam Bras, Anne Le Draoulec and Laure Vieu deal with the odd cases in which the use of the imperfect and the past historic appear in coordinated constructions. Jacques Bres

and Carl Vetters concentrate on defining the underlying features of the past historic, both reaching similar conclusions (namely that the past historic does not in itself imply progression, although its aspectual connotations make it particularly apt to do so, which explains why in some rare cases the past historic may express simultaneity or even regression). Carl Vetters' chapter also contains some interesting pages comparing the non-correspondence between the English simple past and the past historic (pp. 118–19).

Many of the chapters take lexical and pragmatic factors into account. Indeed some concentrate purely on the non-verbal expression of temporality. Thus Dany Amiot, having summarised some of the points made previously in a PhD on the different usage of *pré, ante-* and *avant*, goes on to study the same phenomenon in relation to *post-, après* and *arrière*. As a result, explanations are given as to why *postromantisme, postbiblique* and *postindustriel* are possible but not **postdemain*, and other similar phenomena. Laurence José analyses, in a similar manner, why *l'an dernier* is possible but not **l'instant dernier*.

At a more theoretical level, Denis Paillard discusses the problem of suffixation and prefixation in forming imperfective and perfective pairs of verbs in Russian. And Denis Creissels discusses the grammaticalisation of verbs signifying *être semblable à* or *être égal à* using examples borrowed from Bambara, Tswana, Ngbandi, Melanisian Pidgin English, Dutch and Old English. Finally, Hans Kronning tries to find a universal definition of what constitutes an auxiliary. This is all quite heavy stuff! The injunctive in Vedic (by Alain Christol) and the use of the aorist and the expression of the non-factual in Modern Hindi (by Annie Montaut) are also quite difficult to read for those not familiar with those languages, or not into typological linguistics. Another difficult chapter in this context, because of its very different nature, is Paul Laurendeau's study of implication and inference in oral discourse. On the other hand, Paul Meyer's study of tenses in the *bande dessinée* is written in a lighter vein, but is certainly not lacking in interest.

The editors have grouped these chapters under four headings. The first deals with specific tenses (or *tiroirs*). The second deals with tenses within discourse and narration. The third concentrates more on the lexical elements, and the fourth, which includes only two chapters, simply lists the concepts in their titles. Although such divisions tend to be helpful for the reader, in this case they correspond to no more than a cline, going from tense forms to a lexical dimension, with the last section being of a somewhat different nature. All in all, this is a theoretical book meant for scholars specialising in tenses, but containing many points of interest to a much broader audience.

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This book comprises five scholarly articles (organised into three sections) on French and English comparative grammar. In the first section, entitled 'De la phrase au groupe

nominal', Liliane Haegeman (pp. 15–51) shows how verb positions in constructions such as *Marie mange souvent du poisson* as opposed to *Marie often eats fish* are determined by morphology: the 'strong' nature of French verb flexion attracts the verb to the head, to become part of a 'flexion phrase' (**Marie mange** *souvent du poisson*), whereas the 'weak' nature of English verb flexion does not have the same effect (*Marie **often eats fish***). In attempting to extend this observation to the study of nouns, Haegeman is unable to arrive at the same conclusions. For example, the fact that word order remains unaltered in other languages where agreement occurs between nouns and corresponding determiners and adjectives (e.g. *das frische Brot* in German) would suggest that morphological constraints alone cannot account for the noun–adjective positions in French and English.

In the first article of the second section ('Structure et interprétation du groupe nominal'), Denis Bouchard (pp. 55–95) considers the expression of number in French and English. He sets out from the observation that it is the determiner rather than the noun which carries the essential information in French (e.g. *je déteste **les** castors* as opposed to *I hate **beavers** [z]*). Thus bare noun phrases, stripped of the information otherwise communicated by the determiner, are essentially restricted to non-expandable intensive constructions (e.g. identity or a particular role or function), whereas in English, they appear less constrained, having three separate uses (species: *beavers are on the verge of extinction*; generic: *cats are mammals*; existential: *dogs are barking outside*). Finally, Bouchard considers how another language, Italian, differs from both French and English. In the second article, Marie-Thérèse Vinet (pp. 97–128) looks in detail at a certain type of noun phrase found in both English (UK and USA) and French (France and Quebec) which makes use of the preposition *de* or *of* in embedding the predicate to the left of the subject (e.g. *c'est une fille* + *la fille est drôle* = *c'est une drôle de fille*). In terms of qualitative expression, similarities are observed between the two languages on points such as prosody, metaphorical interpretation, positiveness (e.g. *ton phénomène de fille* but not **ton probable phénomène de fille; he's a gem of an employee* but not **he's a probable gem of an employee*) and evaluative nature (i.e. *ton phénomène de fille* but not **ton médecin de fille*). As for quantitative expression, similarities can also be seen (e.g. *j'ai beaucoup d'amis* but not **j'ai très beaucoup d'amis; I have a lot of friends* but not * *I have a very lot of friends*). Two main differences are observed: (i) English requires a second indefinite article in phrases such as *a hell of **a** dog* (as opposed to *un diable de (****un**) chien*) and (ii) there is no English equivalent for constructions like *j'ai grand de cuisine* (cf. **I have big of kitchen*).

In the first article of the third section ('Structure et interprétation de la phrase'), Philip Miller and Brian Lowrey (pp. 131–88) deal with the complementation of perception verbs, looking in particular at 'comptes rendus de perception directe' or CRPDs (e.g. *il a vu Pierre partir*). The authors, who usefully discuss their corpus in some detail, look at three problems concerning: (i) what is actually perceived, (ii) the extent to which negation can be included in CRPDs and (iii) stative verbs (e.g. **j'ai vu Jean savoir le problème*). Their conclusions are interesting and suggest previous research has been a little too cautious in ruling out certain possibilities (notably concerning negation). For Miller and Lowrey, the striking similarities between French and English are proof of the essentially semantic, and not syntactic, nature of the phenomena in question. In the final article, Anne Zribi-Hertz (pp. 189–227) deals with the problem of reflexivity in the contrasting case of *Thomas a honte de **lui*** (*lui* = Thomas or someone else) and *Thomas is ashamed of **him*** (*him* = someone else, i.e. not Thomas). Zribi-Hertz discusses problems with existing theory before going on to show how, with the use of diachronic

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data, English and French diverge grammatically on these points (i.e. *lui*, *lui-même*; *him*, *himself*).

Publications of this nature can often result in collections of highly individual articles which relate to some common theme. However, this is not the case here, where the articles, arranged into sections, come together nicely and are accompanied by a useful introduction (pp. 5–11) and 'bilan' (albeit rather short: pp. 229–31), along with a handy double index (authors' names and notions). The presentation is generally clear and there are few errors. Whilst this book highlights many intriguing aspects of French and English grammar, frequent wider references and mention of other languages (Danish, Dutch, Flemish, Greek, German, Italian, Russian) show the contribution of comparative studies to general linguistic theory. Finally, just as the amateur naturalist or lay person, say, can appreciate specific scientific accounts of flora and fauna (not necessarily in the same way as the scientist), so the non-generativist (like myself) or non-French–English specialist should find this book interesting, fascinating, even, although a little hard going at times.

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Ploog, Katja, *Le Français à Abidjan. Pour une approche syntaxique du non-standard*. Paris: CNRS Editions, 2002, 326 pp. 2 271 05968 2. DOI 10.1017/S0959269504311580

Cet ouvrage − tiré d'une thèse de doctorat − est, à n'en pas douter, une contribution importante à l'étude des variétés de français non hexagonales et plus particulièrement à l'une des variétés du français d'Abidjan (*l'abidjanais* selon la propre dénomination de l'auteur). Le défi de Ploog est double: le choix de décrire une variété de langue exclusivement orale qui, comme elle le rappelle (chapitre 1), suscite encore chez beaucoup de linguistes français une appréciation dubitative, et celui de s'attaquer à une variété de français africain non standard. Si les Français se targuent encore aujourd'hui de la vitalité de leur langue hors de leurs frontières nationales, force est de constater que la langue à laquelle ils font référence ressort souvent du mythe − un français 'fictif' − et n'a que peu à voir avec la variété fortement indigénéisée décrite par Ploog. Si *l'abidjanais* apparaît au regard des autres variétés de français d'Afrique marginal et singulier, il constitue un exemple remarquable d'appropriation d'une langue dans un contexte urbain à forte densité humaine (plus de 4 millions d'habitants) et culturellement extrêmement hétérogène.

L'approche syntaxique de Ploog, à travers l'analyse du premier actant, est un apport louable dans le champ d'étude sur le(s) français d'Afrique où les analyses syntaxiques restent, comparativement aux études sur le lexique, encore trop rares.

Le premier tiers de l'ouvrage (chapitres 2 à 4) est constitué de considérations méthodologiques sur l'enquête de terrain, le choix de la population d'enquête (les

bakroman: des enfants de la rue déscolarisés et en rupture familiale), et l'archivage des données linguistiques et extralinguistiques (référenciation des locuteurs et des situations de production, notation des interventions et des énoncés). Ce travail d'archivage minutieux témoigne de la grande sensibilité de Ploog au terrain et de son approche multidimensionnelle des locuteurs et de leurs productions linguistiques. Les annexes (notamment la 3e et la 4e) sont fort appréciables et dévoilent le travail précis et extrêmement fouillé effectué par la chercheuse de terrain et l'analyste, même si l'on regrettera l'absence d'un repérage plus systématique dans le corps du texte (ex: astérisque pour renvoyer au glossaire en fin de volume) permettant de faire davantage dialoguer texte et post-texte.

Parmi toutes les questions méthodologiques soulevées par Ploog, l'un des points qui a retenu notre attention concerne celui de la transcription et des problèmes que pose la mise en signes graphiques d'une variété de langue non standard. L'auteur insiste (chapitre 3) sur les problèmes pratiques et les enjeux théoriques que pose la transcription notamment dans la représentation que celle-ci donne de la langue. Cependant, le choix de reproduire les interventions de l'enquêtrice dans une écriture orthographique normée alors que celles des enquêtés sont retranscrites phonétiquement (cf. annexe 2 p. 270) nous semble aller à l'encontre du souci de l'auteur de ne pas présenter une image stigmatisante ('petit nègre') de la variété décrite. Bien que ses propres interventions ne constituent pas des objets d'analyse pour Ploog, cette mise en signe différentielle de la voix des interactants (enquêtés *vs* enquêtrice) conduit insensiblement à une stéréotypie péjorative des enquêtés et charge la transcription d'une certaine 'pesanteur idéologique' (Gueunier, 1978).

L'une des grandes qualités de l'ouvrage nous semble résider dans l'approche à la fois qualitative et quantitative des données linguistiques. La prise en compte, dans la description syntaxique, d'éléments extralinguistiques, le questionnement sur l'incidence des dispositifs d'enquêtes (l'interview formelle, l'observation), sur le matériau linguistique enregistré, l'attention portée au genre discursif (ex: narration) permettent d'inscrire les données dans la dynamique de leur production et de restituer les locuteurs dans leur singularité. La variété de langue décrite par Ploog n'est jamais réduite à un système mais au contraire envisagée dans sa pluridimensionnalité: linguistique, discursive et sociale.

Les contraintes éditoriales ne nous permettant pas de nous attarder sur les analyses fines de Ploog sur le premier actant (chapitres 5 à 8) nous nous contenterons d'insister sur le fait qu'elle procède, au fur et à mesure de sa description, à une mise en question des outils théoriques et des catégories grammaticales qu'elle utilise. On regrettera néanmoins que cette réflexion sur les catégories ne se poursuive pas au-delà des catégories linguistiques: si l'auteur ne se laisse jamais aller, dans sa description, à des généralisations trop hâtives on pourrait lui reprocher l'utilisation de catégories englobantes comme 'tiers monde' (p. 13) — en référence à la Côte d'Ivoire — qui mérite, nous semble-t-il, d'être aussi questionnée, d'autant plus quand la démarche descriptive revendique une posture endogène à l'objet d'étude.

Le travail de Ploog est une invitation lancée aux autres chercheurs s'intéressant aux variétés de français d'Afrique à décrire de façon systématique ces variétés afin de pouvoir procéder à des études comparatives qui nous renseigneraient sur l'appropriation de locuteurs non-natifs ou néo-natifs de français. Plus largement, elle est une pierre à l'édifice encore fragile des études sur le français tel qu'il se parle, ici et/ou ailleurs.

RÉFÉRENCE

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This is Volume 2 in the Peter Lang series *Études contrastives*, and it comprises 'les actes du colloque franco-hongrois sur la traduction', held at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales in Paris in October 2001. Given that few readers will be familiar with Hungarian, a radically different language from French or English, interest in this volume is likely to be limited. However, amongst the 37 papers presented, keen students of translation are bound to find items which catch their attention, or which throw a new and different light on preoccupations common to all translators. My personal preferences went to Agota Kristof's exploration of a dual-culture author (Cécile Kovácsházy), Miariam Körmendy's analysis of past and present tenses in French starting from a passage by Chateaubriand, Marc Martin's questioning of the French translation of the Shakespearian lines, 'To be or not to be, That is the question', and János Szávai's comments on his 1975 translation into Hungarian of *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (Céline).

The book contains of course, very much more than I can account for here, is well-presented, in spite of a few typographical errors, and would clearly be of interest to Hungarian-speakers, but also to those focusing particularly on cross-cultural transfer.

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Over the past five years the IJSL has published a number of thematic issues which provide an *état-présent* of sociolinguistic research in particular countries (including some in West

Africa and the Middle East) and whose contribution has been insufficiently recognised by the international community. It might seem paradoxical that, after Croatia (2001), Iran (2001) and Denmark (2003), we now find an issue devoted to sociolinguistics in France. Perhaps this reflects a feeling that, despite the unrivalled quality and quantity of French linguistic research, too little of it engages with research in the outside world, partly because of a preference for working in parameters set strictly within the Hexagon, and partly, it must be said, because of a reluctance to read and publish in English. Andrée Tabouret-Keller and Françoise Gadet have long regretted this state of affairs, and this admirable volume, dedicated to the memory of Pierre Achard (1942–97) and presented entirely in English, is the result of their desire to bring French methodologies and French data more firmly to the attention of a non-French-speaking public. The contributors are all established scholars, an indication of the editors' wish to engage a debate at the highest level.

The volume opens (pp. 3–16) with the editors' preface entitled 'A French taste for theories'. This title is not well chosen, for, while it flatters a long-established self-image, there is no evidence that French sociolinguists have any greater predilection for theory than those working in other traditions. Indeed, the preface ends with the statement that the six articles contained in the volume are in some way 'rooted in politics' (the loss of regional languages, the plight of immigrant children, the inequalities of certain diglossic societies), suggesting that they are not so theoretical after all. The problem the editors are confronting is that sociolinguistics has had a greater struggle to establish itself in France than in most other countries – in a culture where prescriptivism and the pressure for linguistic uniformity have for so long been predominant, and in a linguistic tradition anchored in Saussurean structuralism, an approach devoted to the heterogeneity and variability of language was bound to meet strong resistance. Moreover, the sort of *sociolinguistique engagée* practised by J.-B. Marcellesi and the Rouen school in the early days of French sociolinguistics was calculated to scare off even the most sympathetic recruits to the discipline. For all that, the level of pertinent generalisation achieved in this volume is on the whole extremely high. The first three studies concern general theoretical issues in sociolinguistics – the notion of variability, the role of speaker attitudes and the relationship between social and linguistic structure. The second three concern the two-way interaction between sociolinguistic theory and its application to specific problems.

Françoise Gadet asks whether there is a French theory of variation (pp. 17–40). Despite society's overwhelming preoccupation with linguistic homogeneity, French linguistics shows some concern for variability, notably spatial variation, differences between speech and writing and language change. However, approaches to variation do not as a rule follow the Labovian paradigm. After a perceptive analysis of the core components of Labov's concept of variation, Gadet indicates that its essential features (correlating the incidence of particular variants with extralinguistic factors and variable rules) have not been taken up seriously in France. She shares many of the misgivings of her compatriots when it comes to applying Labov's notion of the sociolinguistic variable (and semantic neutrality) above the level of phonology. The French approach to variation favours above all the elaboration of panlectal grammars, and diversity in patterns of meaning, which are rather less amenable to the quantitative approach espoused by Labov.

Nicole Gueunier's 'Attitudes and representations in sociolinguistics' (pp. 41–62), with its echoes of the Lacanian *imaginaire* and the shift from object to subject in social science,

is on the face of it, more specifically French. The method is overtly qualitative, seeing linguistic behaviour as driven by subjective linguistic attitudes which in turn reflect deeper 'representations' of language. Gueunier analyses these representations in terms of 'universal figurative types', though she does not reveal the extent to which they are shared within the speech community and how this may be gauged. The notion invites comparison with Labov's 'shared evaluative norms', with Milroy's 'community norms' and Trudgill's 'language myths'.

Patrick Renaud's essay on 'Gabriel Manessy: the foundations of open linguistics' (pp. 63–80) is a posthumous homage to an under-rated linguist who died prematurely in 1996. Like most of the authors in this volume, Manessy rejected some of the central tenets of Saussurean structuralism, notably the distinction internal – external and the marginalisation of meaning. On the basis of work on French-based creoles, Manessy explained the structural differences between pidgins (the products of vehicularisation) and creoles (the products of vernacularisation) as being the result of different patterns of group-structure and speaker-interaction. His ideas on 'open linguistics' seem to coincide interestingly with Andersen's (1988) concept of 'open' and 'closed' dialects. Manessy's prime area of attention was French in Africa. In his attempts to explain the special characteristics of these varieties, he rejected the exogenous influence of substrate languages in favour of the endogenous influence of the prevailing culture. In contrast to Sapir-Whorf, culture informs the language and not the other way round.

'Praxematics: a linguistics of the social production of meaning' (pp. 81–104) is the weak link in a chain which elsewhere in the book is exceptionally strong. This may be the consequence of this paper's being written by four authors (Jeanne-Marie Barbéris, Jacques Brès, Robert Lafont and Paul Siblot), but the result is a sequence of ideas whose coherence the present reviewer found difficult to extract. The starting-point is a political concern with the loss of a regional language and the conflict involved in Occitan-French diglossia. This leads the authors into an idiosyncratic approach to pragmatics and discourse analysis concerned above all with the expression of conflict in conversational interactions and the protection/production of identity.

Louise Dabène's 'From applied linguistics to sociolinguistics' (pp. 105–21) explores in an interesting way the reciprocal effects of sociolinguistic theory and pedagogic practice. As teachers of French to speakers of immigrant languages in Grenoble, Dabène and her team were concerned to adopt not the grammatical approach but the notional-functional approach developed by the Council of Europe. Engaging effectively in sociologically oriented language teaching entailed a detailed analysis of sociolinguistic patterns in the multilingual communities with which they are concerned. Their findings are rich and impressive.

Robert Chaudenson's 'Creolistics and sociolinguistic theories' (pp. 123–46) involves a good deal of perceptive and powerful generalisation, but betrays a deep suspicion of much of the theorisation hitherto elaborated in creole studies. He makes a plea for investigating the development of creole languages strictly within the context of the societies which evolved them. Historical sociolinguistics usually founders on the rock of insufficient data. The early stages of the development of the French-based creoles are relatively well documented, making them useful laboratory investigations of language change. The second part of the paper is devoted to synchronic issues, and a splendidly clear account of the diglossia question, the continuum question and the question of creole language acquisition. Chaudenson questions the now traditional view that pidgins

are first-generation creations, while creoles are their second-generation developments. He maintains that pidgins expand and become more complex as they creolise.

The editors of this volume have not sought to offer an exhaustive description of the current state of French sociolinguistics, preferring instead to highlight the most significant recent contributions to our understanding of language and society. They have succeeded in producing a stimulating volume which indicates clearly the importance not only of French thinking in sociolinguistics but also of French data.

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The sub-title to this study of 179 Luxembourg charters is in some ways misleading: it understates the general importance of the book and the significance of its contribution to the subject, both more properly indicated by the title itself. Whilst a substantial portion of the volume does deal with negation and substantival inflection, and adds useful and hitherto unknown information on both fronts, this major new investigation goes much further than this.

The opening sections (pp. 1–79) are a remarkably and astonishingly well-documented treatment of the general question of 'Skriptaforschung': history of the discipline, the links (often insufficiently developed) between it and historical linguistics more generally, the complexities of the interplay between internal linguistic features (and their evolution) and external factors (social, sociolinguistic, pragmatic). This part of the book is as competent, as thorough, and above all, as clear a treatment of this whole area as I have seen. The main lessons emerging from this are that neither exclusively qualitative nor exclusively quantitative methods are sufficient to take account of (and to analyse satisfactorily) medieval documents; that localisation of documents is crucial but infinitely difficult; that extra-linguistic factors must be taken into account; that variation is not simply diatopic, as so often appears to be believed. These central concerns are then revisited in the remainder of the book with perspicacious treatments of the relationship between philology and *Varietätenlinguistik* (pp. 89–97), of the localisation of documents and the advantages (but also the shortcomings) of Carolus-Barré's approach (pp. 137–9),

and of the need to bring in non-diatopic considerations (p. 168). Central to the book's argument and methodology is the application of quantitative (and thus computerised, in this case TUSTEP) methods to the analysis of variation. Finely-tuned tagging of the corpus permits subsequent investigation under the main headings indicated in the sub-title. Negation and substantive inflections can thereby be explored and quantified in terms of their diachronic development over the period concerned (broadly inconclusive: perhaps the traditional nature of the charters militates against innovation over what is a fairly short time-span), for diatopic variation (more promising) and diastratic variation. In this last, for both negatives (p. 157) and substantives (p. 189) a small sub-group of charters emanating from the royal chancellery displays innovative trends which go to support the suggestion that the chancellery may have played a formative role in the evolution of French. A useful social classification (p. 151) of producers and recipients is provided. Of course in many respects (as Monfrin observed many years ago), 'le personnage important, en toute cette affaire, est celui qui a tenu la plume. Et celui-là, quels que soient nos renseignements sur l'élaboration de l'acte, nous ne le connaissons pour ainsi dire jamais' (cf. p. 135 n.538). This aspect receives detailed and interesting attention in a micro-analysis of individual scribes (pp. 157–67) which gives an idea of what can be achieved by such concentration on essentially idiolectal information.

This section on the scribes is illustrative of one of the main strengths of this authoritative and thought-provoking book: it often does not so much draw conclusions as point the way towards what can be discovered by the application of the type of rigorous methodology which it exemplifies. Rather, methodologies, plural, for Völker (who seems to have read everything possible on the subject) stress the need to draw on a wide range of techniques and methods, and range widely across work in both the Romance and Germanic languages, showing persuasively by example how effective this interdisciplinary approach can be and (indirectly) how effective the Trier Sonderforschungsbereich (SFB 235) has been in developing this type of cooperation. Those working on German (high and low), for example, have been particularly successful in establishing techniques for the identification of elusive individual scribes (pp. 75–8), and Romanists can undoubtedly learn from their approach.

Harald Völker's fine study goes to the heart of many issues central to the history of French or of any other comparable language. This is a book, in short, which anyone working on any aspect of medieval French needs to read.

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Cet ouvrage constitue la publication des actes d'un colloque organisé en avril 2000 par le *Centre de recherches francophones belges* de l'Université d'Edinburgh. Il contient

cinq articles, précédés d'une brève présentation du Centre et d'une introduction par R. Wakely.

Le premier article, 'Le français en Belgique dans la deuxième moitié du XXe siècle' (pp. 1–9), est dû à Albert Doppagne, acteur de premier plan de cette prestigieuse tradition grammaticale belge du *Bon Usage*. Il raconte sa contribution aux manifestations de défense de la langue française et explique le parcours personnel qui l'a conduit d'une vision prescriptiviste de la langue à une vision soucieuse de décrire et de reconnaître la légitimité des particularités régionales. Cet article offre un témoignage précieux sur les circonstances qui ont permis à quelques grammairiens belges d'occuper une position dominante sur le marché de la littérature grammaticale française. En conclusion, l'auteur présente une bibliographie sélective de ses œuvres.

'Diffusion et vitalité des particularités lexicales du français en Belgique: une étude sociolinguistique' (pp. 11–32) est dû à Michel Francart, Geneviève Geron et Régine Wilmet du Groupe de recherche VALIBEL. Mettant en lumière les insuffisances de l'approche lexicologique pratiquée dans les recueils de 'belgicismes' où les types de variantes ne sont pas distingués, cet article nous présente une étude sociolinguistique rigoureuse des emplois réels des particularités lexicales de Belgique francophone grâce à l'élaboration d'une banque de donnée informatisée renseignant sur la connaissance de quelque 3000 items par des locuteurs classés selon l'origine géographique, le sexe, l'âge ou le niveau scolaire. Cet outil permet donc d'établir un instantané statistiquement fiable de la vitalité géographique d'une forme donnée et ouvre des perspectives diverses pour l'étude du français régional.

'Pour une étude du lexique clandestin' (pp. 33–56) de Laurence Rosier se situe dans le cadre d'une recherche sur les dénominations des groupes humains à Bruxelles. Un questionnaire (en annexe) soumis à quelque 200 jeunes Bruxellois ainsi que 18 interviews participantes ont permis de mettre en évidence des centaines d'appellatifs. L'étude, sur la base du corpus rassemblé, propose une description et une ébauche de classification des termes d'assignation clandestins: 'les expressions insultantes non instituées, voire sanctionnées par la loi dans leur usage public [. . .] mais qui sont « en libre circulation » privée' (p. 37). Laurence Rosier commence par s'interroger sur ce qui constitue une injure et, tout en rappelant quelques mécanismes syntaxiques et énonciatifs propices à l'injure (par exemple, l'emploi d'«enclosures» telles que *espèce de*) ainsi que l'existence de 'termes connus et reconnus comme étant *par définition* injurieux' (p. 39), elle fait l'hypothèse que tout 'identitème' peut basculer dans l'injure car la simple catégorisation porte en elle les germes de la dévalorisation.

Dans 'J'enregistre, tu corsètes, il façonne' (pp. 57–80), Dan Van Raemdonck rappelle les débats qui s'attachent aux notions d'usage, de norme ou de faute dans l'histoire de la grammaire. On pourra regretter néanmoins qu'il ne situe pas ces concepts dans le contexte spécifiquement belge. Il aurait pu notamment s'interroger davantage sur les causes du 'divorce entre le discours normatif qui renvoie au modèle français et les normes effectives, telles que le corps social les a construites et les pratique, en se reconnaissant une norme de prestige propre' (Moreau, 1997: 399).

Finalement, Ivan Evrard, dans 'Grammaire scolaire et grammaire scientifique en Belgique: l'exemple de la diathèse' (pp. 81–99), illustre deux approches de la 'diathèse' (voix active et passive et constructions pronominale, impersonnelle et factitive) par la

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comparaison de Grevisse/Goosse (1986) et de Wilmet (1998). Le 'Bon usage' malgré ses tentatives d'insertion de recherches linguistiques pèche par l'absence de vision systématique qui se marque dans le morcellement de la diathèse ou dans la création d'une catégorie atypique pour le complément d'agent. Selon lui, cette atomisation a en outre pour conséquence l'incapacité de 'fournir une clé systématique d'examen, d'intégration ou de rejet des emplois' (p. 82). Ainsi, l'intégration d'un tour en usage en Belgique francophone pour marquer la source d'une permission ou d'une obligation: *Je dois manger des carottes **du docteur*** (exemple 2) serait entièrement livrée à l'arbitraire du grammairien. En revanche, l'appareil conceptuel élaboré dans la 'Grammaire critique du français' permet de réorganiser les données d'une manière cohérente et ne poserait aucun obstacle de principe à l'intégration d'usages exclus par la grammaire normative.

En conclusion, cet ouvrage présente un panorama des recherches menées en Belgique par les successeurs de Grevisse, apporte une contribution à la question de l'identité et de la situation de la langue en Belgique francophone, et met en évidence une tension sous-jacente entre l'approche normative et des approches scientifiques, plus nuancées, mais plus complexes.

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The author's stated purpose for this book is to provide a 'detailed, well-illustrated and useful description of the pronunciation of Modern Standard French' (p. xi) intended for university students of French. Overall, this aim is successfully achieved. The book has a strongly practical orientation, but is not a contrastive study of French and English.

The first two chapters are an extremely succinct statement of the varieties of French and their historical background, of basic notions of orthography and pronunciation together with elements of grammar. The third briefly reviews the basic descriptive units for pronunciation: segments (phonemes here as the book generally remains at

the phonemic, rather than phonetic, level), syllables (with their internal structure), phonological word and phonological phrase. Despite their brevity, and the fact that they are covering well-trodden ground, these chapters offer useful angles on matters such as learned and normal doublets, the range of pronunciations that can be associated with a given lexical item or the commonest syllable types, and problems in respect of syllabification of words with certain combinations of consonants.

The real core of the book, however, comes in the fourth and fifth chapters. These two sections constitute well over half the book's total length, and deal, respectively, with the vocalic and the consonantal phonemes of French. They provide retrospective justification for the tables of phonemes first presented in the third chapter, in the shape of lists of example words showing occurrence in initial, medial and final positions, although these are not always systematically based on minimal pairs.

The chapter dealing with vowels covers a whole list of topics of interest and value to those wishing to achieve an acceptable pronunciation of French. There are details of lengthening in given environments. The problem of the choice of more open or more close mid vowels, affected by vowel harmony, analogy with words from the same family, and the 'loi de position', is extensively discussed and exemplified, as is the trend to merge not just the mid-vowels but also the two As and the two front nasal vowels. There is useful detail on the pronunciation of schwa, with the exceptions to the 'loi des trois consonnes' and examples of the alternation of this sound with fuller vowels in given word families, together with discussion of its tendency to merge with the front rounded oral vowels (or vowel, if half-open and half-close are not distinguished). This chapter also covers the three glides of contemporary French, pointing out the existence of sufficient evidence to justify separating them from the close vowels nearest to them, while recognizing the debatable nature of such a distinction, perhaps even in the case of [j]. The concluding remarks indicate how the vowel system can be simplified from the twelve oral and four nasal inventory of the most carefully pronounced French down to only seven oral and three nasal, thanks to the mergers noted.

Highlights of the chapter on consonants include a good account of consonant clusters in French, noting how certain combinations are learned or foreign in flavour. There is excellent coverage of the 'H aspiré', compared by the author in some ways to a glide. Latent consonants, with their effects in derived words, liaison and enchaînement, are well treated, with good exemplification and discussion.

The sixth chapter covers stress, rhythm and intonation, and is one section of the book where there is some contrastive analysis of French and English, the result of the need to distinguish between the stress timing of English (and its consequent reduction of unstressed vowels) and the syllable timing of French (which preserves unstressed vowels). It looks at the question of the 'accent d'insistance', which seems to have been expanding since the early twentieth century.

The last chapter looks at a number of items on the fringe of language. It covers abbreviations and clippings, noting the widespread occurrence of final '-O' in such words, and their tendency to lose final, rather than initial, syllables. It looks at acronyms, making a useful distinction between those pronounced as a set of individual letters, or spelled acronyms, such as 'BCBG', and those pronounced as whole words, or read acronyms, such as 'OVNI'. It takes a glance at reduplication, usually informal, in its two varieties, partial (where only part of the base word is repeated, for instance, 'dodo') and full (where the whole base is repeated, for example, 'menumenu'). Finally, it gives a brief account of the French equivalent of back slang, 'verlan', noting how the formation

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of its words can cast light on matters such as latent consonants, consonantal clusters and the merger of schwa.

The book comes with a CD-ROM with the voices of five speakers (of whom one is Canadian and one from the Midi) reading a continuous text and diagnostic word lists. Despite using three different computers, all of which were well above the stated minimum system requirements, I was unable to achieve successful playback, receiving a string of messages about script errors and statements that the program had performed an illegal operation. It was equally impossible to play the audio files through standard multimedia programs, because the format appeared to be incompatible. Having written software myself, I am fully aware of how difficult it is to cope with all the possible unforeseen interactions of hardware and programs. It is a pity that there was no 'belt-and-braces' approach on this point, in the form of audio files that would play independently, or even of tracks that could be reproduced on an ordinary CD player. This would have made an excellent book even better.

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