REVIEWS

Andrew Radford, *Relative clauses: Structure and variation in everyday English*
(Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 161). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
2019. Pp. xi + 314.

Reviewed by ROBERT D. BORSLEY, University of Essex
& Bangor University

Andrew Radford is well known for his textbook introductions to what Culicover
& Jackendoff (2005: 3 fn.1) call Mainstream Generative Grammar (MGG), 'the
line of research most closely associated with Noam Chomsky'.[1] For nearly 40
years, his books have made some complex ideas accessible to students. But unlike
many working in MGG, who favour a little data and a lot of theorizing, Radford
loves getting his hands dirty with data. Thus, for example, he is well known
for his work on children's early syntax (Radford 1990). In the present book, he
focuses on a very specific kind of data: live unscripted radio and TV broadcasts,
especially commentary on soccer and cricket, supplemented by Internet data. The
book consists of four chapters: an introductory chapter setting out the theoretical
background, a chapter on relative clauses containing some kind of resumptive
element, a chapter looking at preposition doubling and related phenomena in
relative clauses, and a chapter on relative clauses which seem to contain neither
a gap nor a resumptive element. It concludes with a brief epilogue. The book
is based on a fascinating body of data, which should be of interest to anyone
interested in naturally occurring English. The discussion of the data will be of
considerable interest to proponents of MGG. Outsiders, however, may well feel
that it has some important weaknesses and limitations.

The main focus of Chapter 1 is the approach to relative clauses that is assumed
in the following chapters. Radford adopts the cartographic version of MGG, in
which the left periphery of the sentence involves a complex hierarchy of phrases
– RelP, ForceP, ModP, WhP, FinP and others. Among other things, this makes it to
quite easy to handle examples like the following, where a relative clause contains
an interrogative and an imperative:

(1)   It's one of them situations now [where Harry, what does he do?]
                                        (Ray Parlour, Talksport Radio)

(2)   The top speed (which please don't try to reach) is 220 miles an hour
                                        (Ferrari test driver, BBC Radio 5)

However, it means that simple relative clauses have a mass of invisible struc-
ture, a position which would not find favour outside MGG. Following standard

---

[1] I am grateful to Andrew Radford and Rui Chaves for helpful comments on an earlier version of
this review. I alone am responsible for what appears here.

217

MGG practice, Radford refers here to interrogative and imperative 'force'. This is unfortunate terminology. Interrogative is a sentence type which can have a number of illocutionary forces: question, request, suggestion, etc., and much the same is true of imperative (see e.g. Huddleston & Pullum Huddleston et al. 2002: Chapter 10).

Radford also assumes, following Kayne (1994), that the antecedent of a relative clause may originate inside the clause as a complement of the relative pronoun. In support of this idea, he cites examples like the following:

(3)   The photos of himself which Jim took are great.

Here, *himself* is not c-commanded by its antecedent on the surface, but it will be in its original position if it has originated inside the clause. The problem with this argument is that there are examples where a reflexive is not c-commanded by its antecedent for which no movement analysis is plausible. Pollard & Sag (1992: 272) cite examples like the following:

(4)   The picture of himself in Newsweek dominated John's thoughts.

(5)   The picture of himself in Newsweek shattered the peace of mind that John had spent the last six months trying to restore.

There may be good arguments for the idea that the antecedent of relative clause can originate inside the clause, but this is not one.

In Chapter 2, Radford looks at relative clauses containing not a gap but a resumptive element of some kind. This may be a pronoun, as in (6), a demonstrative, or a nominal, as in (7).

(6)   Bar a couple of bites on my leg, [which God knows where *they* happened], I haven't found mosquitoes to be a problem

(Ian Abrahams, Talksport Radio)

(7)   That was a game [that we should have put *the game* out of reach]

(Mark Schwarzer, Sky Sports TV)

As Radford notes, there has been a long debate about whether resumptive elements are grammatical in English or performance errors of some kind. His view is that they are grammatical but 'stigmatised in much the same way as other colloquialisms such as *gonna/gotta/wanna*' (55–56). This seems questionable. Prescriptivists clearly can and do object to contracted forms like *gonna*, but resumptive elements are not one of the things they standardly object to. It is not obvious how they would object. Clearly not by using the term 'resumptive', which means nothing to most people.

Assuming that examples like these are grammatical, Radford considers what sort of analysis would be appropriate. He argues convincingly against a movement analysis, noting among other things that they would require some 'spellout magic'. However, this suggests that such examples are rather different

218

to superficially similar examples in languages in which resumption is a normal feature. There is considerable evidence that gaps and resumptives involve the same mechanism in such languages, which in MGG means movement; see e.g. Aoun, Choueiri & Hornstein (2001) and Alotaibi & Borsley (2013) on Arabic, and Willis (2011) and Borsley (2013) on Welsh. It looks, then, as if what we have in Radford's data may not be ordinary resumption of the kind that occurs in these languages. The fact that the data involves resumptive nominals as well as resumptive pronouns also points to this conclusion. As far as I am aware, languages which have resumption as a normal feature have resumptive pronouns but not resumptive nominals. It seems to me that this casts some doubt on the assumption that the examples that are the focus of this chapter are grammatical.

In Chapter 3, Radford turns to preposition doubling, as in (8), examples with two different prepositions, such as (9), and examples where a preposition is missing, such as (10), where, as indicated, *by* seems to be missing.

(8)   From which club did the Arsenal sign him from?

(Alan Brazil, Talksport Radio)

(9)   There's another poll [*of which* the conservatives will be concerned *about*]
(Eleanor Oldroyd, BBC Radio 5)

(10)   And of course he got one of the three goals [*which* Spurs beat Burnley
       <by>]

(Danny Kelly, Talksport Radio)

He concludes that examples like (9) and (10) are performance errors but suggests that this is not the case with examples like (8). He notes that they might be viewed as blends, errors which arise where a speaker has two different target structures in mind and produces a hybrid structure with properties of both. However, he argues against this view, citing the research of Radford, Felser & Boxell (2012), whose informants found such examples acceptable. He proposes that they are grammatical and that they involve what he calls 'redundant spellout'. Normally all the copies left behind by a moved constituent are deleted. But here the lowest copy of a moved PP is not deleted in its entirety. Rather, just the complement of the preposition is deleted, and the preposition remains. If the findings of Radford et al. (2012) are seen as decisive, then some such analysis seems necessary. However, Rui Chaves has pointed out to me that it is well-known that high frequency and highly predictable words are more likely to be skipped during reading (Rayner & Duffy 1986, Rayner & Pollatsek 1987, Henderson & Ferreira 1990). Hence, it is possible that subjects systematically failed to notice the repeated prepositions. This suggests that the findings of Radford, Felser and Boxell do not necessarily establish that these examples are grammatical. If they are seen as grammatical, then something like 'redundant spellout' is necessary. But this is a rather obscure notion. It is not really clear how it is supposed to work or why it doesn't happen elsewhere. Are there cases where a VP is moved and the verb within the copy that is left behind is not deleted? If not, why not? In contrast,

219

if these examples are seen as errors, then the notion of a blend provides a plausible explanation. It seems to me, then, that these examples could well be performance errors.

In Chapter 4, Radford considers what he calls gapless relatives, relatives with no obvious gap and also, unlike those discussed in Chapter 2, no resumptive element. Here is a typical example:

(11)   It's a decision [that I know where they were coming from]
<div align="right">(Paul Nixon, BBC Radio 5)</div>

He assumes that examples in which a normally obligatory preposition is missing represent processing errors. An example is as follows, with *about* missing:

(12)   The one Bangladesh batsman [*that* England would have been worried] is back in the pavilion
<div align="right">(Michael Vaughan, BBC Radio 5 Sports Extra)</div>

However, he assumes without much argument that other gapless examples are grammatical and considers what sort of analysis might be appropriate. He considers and rejects a number of analyses in which they in fact contain a gap which is the object of an invisible preposition. Instead, he argues for an analysis in which the relation between the relative clause and its antecedent is determined by pragmatic inferencing (216). It is worth noting that whether or not such examples are grammatical, they must be interpreted when they occur, and it seems reasonable to propose that pragmatic inferencing is crucial here.

I have suggested in the preceding paragraphs that many of the examples that Radford sees as grammatical may in fact be performance errors. It would be interesting to see more investigation of this matter. It would be good, for example, if some of the commentators could be asked about some of their utterances. Would some of them agree that some of their utterances are not what they would have said if they had been under less pressure? It would also be interesting, if possible, to compare the utterances the commentators produce in commentary with the utterances that they produce in less pressured situations. For example, it might be interesting to compare the language that cricket commentator Jonathan Agnew produces when commentating with the language he produces when interviewing guests, something that he does regularly. There might well be interesting differences in the area of relative clauses.

Obviously, if the various types of example are grammatical, analyses are necessary. But analyses are also valuable if the crucial examples are performance errors of some kind since it is important to consider exactly how such examples differ from broadly similar grammatical examples. As noted above, Radford considers what sort of analyses are appropriate. However, he does not provide analyses in the sense of sets of formal rules or constraints which identify precisely what is and is not possible. In other words, he does not do the sort of thing that

<div align="center">220</div>

Sag (1997) did for relative clauses in Standard English. It would be interesting to see analyses in this sense for the phenomena.

How well equipped is MGG to provide analyses for the data? For the framework assumed in Sag (1997), a grammar involves a complex system of phrase types or constructions. Within this framework, the relative clauses discussed in Chapters 2 and 4 might involve one or more phrase types similar to those proposed by Sag but differing at least in not involving a gap. MGG of course has no time for constructions and claims that the grammar is just a few general mechanisms such Merge, Agree, and Move. What actually happens in syntax is determined by the lexical elements with which these mechanisms interact. In the case of relative clauses this is mainly invisible functional heads. Thus, it is these functional heads that would be central to a real analysis. It would presumably be possible to provide such an analysis with a precise specification of the properties of the functional heads, but this is something that never seems to be done in MGG work, and this book is no exception.

Thus, I have a number of reservations about this book. Nevertheless, it is an important work. Even if one is sceptical about the value of MGG, the detailed exploration of the analytic options that MGG makes available is of considerable interest, and even if one doubts whether various types of example are grammatical, the data that is presented here is fascinating. This may well be what is of most lasting value in the book, and it may well be that psycholinguists will derive most benefit from it. The nature of speech production is a central concern for psycholinguists, and one question here is: what happens when speakers have to communicate complex ideas in pressured situations? This book shows in great detail some of the things that happen.

REFERENCES

Alotaibi, Mansour & Robert D. Borsley. 2013. Gaps and resumptive pronouns in Modern Standard Arabic. In Stefan Müller (ed.), *Proceedings of the 20th International Conference on Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar*, 6–26. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.

Aoun, Joseph, Lina Choueiri & Norbert Hornstein. 2001. Resumption, movement, and derivational economy. *Linguistic Inquiry* 32, 371–403.

Borsley, Robert D. 2013. On the nature of Welsh unbounded dependencies. *Lingua* 133, 1–29.

Culicover, Peter W. & Ray Jackendoff. 2005. *Simpler syntax*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Henderson, John M. & Fernanda Ferreira. 1990. Effects of foveal processing difficulty on the perceptual span in reading: Implications for attention and eye movement control. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, & Cognition* 16, 417–429.

Huddleston, Rodney D. & Geoffrey K. Pullum et al. 2002. *The Cambridge grammar of the English language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kayne, Richard S. 1994. *The antisymmetry of syntax*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Pollard, Carl & Ivan A. Sag. 1992. Anaphors in English and the scope of binding theory. *Linguistic Inquiry* 23, 261–303.

Radford, Andrew. 1990. *Syntactic theory and the acquisition of English syntax: The nature of early child grammars of English*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Radford, Andrew, Claudia Felser & Oliver Boxell. 2012. Preposition copying and pruning in present-day English. *English Language and Linguistics* 16, 403–426.

Rayner, Keith & Susan A. Duffy. 1986. Lexical complexity and fixation times in reading: Effects of word frequency, verb complexity, and lexical ambiguity. *Memory & Cognition* 14, 191–201.

Rayner, Keith & Alexander Pollatsek. 1987. Eye movements in reading: A tutorial review. In Max Colsheart (ed.), *Attention and performance XII: The psychology of reading* (Psychology Library Editions: Cognitive Science), 327–362. London: Erlbaum.

Sag, Ivan A. 1997. English relative clause constructions. *Journal of Linguistics* 33, 431–484.

Willis, David W. E. 2011. The limits of resumption in Welsh *wh*-dependencies. In Alain Rouveret (ed.), *Resumptive pronouns at the interfaces*, 189–222. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Author's address: School of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics, Bangor University,
                     Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG, UK
                     rborsley@essex.ac.uk

Helen Sauntson, *Language, sexuality and education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. xi + 204.

Reviewed by AIMEE BAILEY, University of Nottingham

Language, Sexuality and Education examines how sexuality discourses are constructed and experienced in contemporary secondary schools. The book explores six years' worth of research in UK and US cities in which Helen Sauntson interviewed educators and young people, captured classroom interaction and reviewed curriculum documents. It adroitly illustrates, above all else, the illocutionary silencing of sexual diversity in schools and its real-world implications for both pupils and educators. While this silence is perhaps nothing new, it is significant in an increasingly complex era for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) identities. For example, young people are more likely than ever to see LGBT+ people in the media, yet children's picture books about gay penguins still lead to protests outside schools over 'indoctrination'.

The introductory chapter jumps straight into the political context, with Sauntson noting the resurgence of discriminatory discourses following the Trump election in the United States and the Brexit vote in the United Kingdom, which contributes to the sense of insecurity around sexual equality issues. Such a sense of insecurity is reflected in the gap between policy and attitudes, a point which is underscored by a wealth of recent statistics and the words of participants from the research. Importantly here, Sauntson argues that linguistic research needs to go beyond simply focusing on explicitly homophobic language, to encompass the 'often more subtle but just as damaging' ways sexuality is constructed in schools (7). For this reason, a critical focus on heteronormativity is most useful. Heteronormativity refers to the discursive construction of certain forms of heterosexuality – monogamous, reproductive and involving conventional gender roles – as natural, normal or preferable to other expressions of sexual identity. The book sets out to denaturalise and challenge the dominance of such constructions. For readers who are less familiar with queer linguistic research in this area, the

222