

REVIEWS

On the Analysis of the Literary Text. By Wiesław Krajka and Andrzej Zgorzelski. Pp. 176. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1984.¹ Reviewed by Wojciech Kalaga, University of Silesia, Katowice.

Within the framework of university curricula for departments of modern languages and literatures the role of literary theory should go far beyond a mere introduction to the field and to the critical jargon of the *meta*. The theory of literature should not only provide the student with a basic terminological apparatus, but should also stimulate conceptual, interdisciplinary thinking which would both encourage and enable the student to view literary phenomena against the background of culture conceived in a systemic manner. While courses assigned for Polish departments give sufficient teaching time for a realization of those objectives (Handke 1978), the course in literary theory in English departments has been limited to about 60–90 hours.

The teacher at an English department faces, therefore, the problem of what kind of approach to choose: whether to give an outline of the history of poetics, or an introductory course on concepts and terminology, or a course in stylistics, or a historical survey of methodologies, or perhaps an introductory course in one uniform and coherent methodology. This last option seems most advantageous from the standpoint of the goals mentioned in the preceding paragraph and, if combined with classes in practical analysis of texts, it may at least approximate the achievement of those goals.

Luckily for the teacher who decides upon this option, the scarcity of suitable English texts generally available in Poland has been recently made up for by the publication of W. Krajka and A. Zgorzelski's handbook *On the Analysis of the Literary Text*. From the didactic point of view, this is a very useful publication not only because of the competent selection of issues most fundamental for a freshman in literary studies, but also because of the decisively pragmatic, or "applied", attitude of its authors. The usefulness of the handbook, as I gather from my own experience with it, consists primarily in the three basic functions that it can successfully perform, namely: corrective, cognitive, and practical. Each of these functions seems equally important for an effective teaching of the subject, particularly at an initial stage.

As a corrective tool, *On the Analysis* aims at weeding out the erroneous notions and beliefs that a student may have acquired in his pre-academic education and experience. The attitude of the authors can be most condensely describe as anti-genetic, anti-psychologicistic, anti-biographical, anti-referential, anti-intentional, anti-affective, and anti-impulsive. Each of the *anti*-s is consistently aimed at doing away with the respective idol of a more or less powerful fallacy. The student is warned against identifying a literary work with either the intention of its author or the experience of its readers, against identifying the actual personalities of the writer and the reader with their implied counterparts emerging from the text, against an undue emphasis on extratextual questions of the origin of the work, of the biography of the author, or of the psychology of characters consi-

¹ A corrected and extended version of *O analizie tekstu literackiego*, Lublin: UMCS, 1974, translated into English by Artur Bleim.

dered for its own sake. While stressing the functionality of each element within the structure of the text, the authors try to demonstrate the inadequacy of the old dichotomy between form and content by pointing to the semantic significance of what — within the framework of that dichotomy — would have been considered merely ornamental.

The corrective and cognitive values of the book are, of course, inseparable and are both rooted in its methodological stance. A brief look at the table of contents and the key words there: mechanism, function, text, structure, hierarchy, system, relationship, will tell us that this stance is structuralist and semiotic. Such a conjecture is further confirmed by theoretical discussions and exemplary analyses of texts. Even when the authors use or refer to methodologies or approaches different or independent of structuralism (e.g., Ingarden's concept of intentional mode of existence, or the question of generic evolution), these borrowings are always given a systemic and structuralist-semiotic tinge.

The book is divided into two parts of which the first focuses on general questions of ontology, structure, and the systemic functioning of literary texts, while the second deals with a selection of more specific problems of poetics, genre studies, and criticism. Almost each theoretical chapter discussing a particular issue is followed by sample analyses which exemplify a practical application of the apparatus introduced in that chapter. This pragmatic tendency does not in any way undermine the cognitive value of theoretical chapters themselves: in fact, each of them can be used as a complete and independent unit. In its theoretical framework, *On the Analysis* does not aspire to innovation or originality. On the contrary, it simplifies — as its authors say — the ideas advanced by outstanding scholars in the field. Simplification, however, does not mean triviality: through a consistent and carefully planned discussion the student of literature is introduced to the problems that he may find most essential in his academic progress.

Chapter One, "The Poetic Function of a Verbal Text" — based on Jakobson's famous paper "Linguistics and Poetics" — views the literary text as one of the elements of the general pattern of communication, the other elements being: encoder, decoder, context, code, and contact. Consequently, the student is acquainted with the six respective functions of language. The strongest emphasis is given, of course, to the poetic function, construed as a result of "superimposed organization [...] characteristic only of a given text" (13). A brief discussion of the oppositions: selection vs. combination, and equivalence vs. contiguity explains the mechanisms of poeticity (the projection of the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection upon the axis of combination), and further establishes the supremacy of the poetic function as the *differentia specifica* of literature. The literary work is defined as "a text encoded in accordance with certain sign systems, which by virtue of the dominance of the poetic function contains a certain amount of additional information and thus becomes the source of aesthetic experience of the decoder" (16).

This concept of the literary work is further developed in Chapter Two ("The Text as Structure. The Hierarchy of Structures") where the text is seen in a holistic manner as a structure of elements related in a manifold of ways: "A literary work exists as a structure, that is, it constitutes a particular kind of unity, a whole. This term means that a text is a set of elements and relations rather than a simple sum of them, because the whole structure exhibits certain properties which cannot be traced back to its component parts" (19). Particular emphasis is given to the semantic functionality of each element and each relation within a structure, and to their hierarchical ordering dependent on the text's organizing principles. Text construed as structure is then set against other types of structures ranging from a single sound, word, or sentence to a literature of a period, art, and culture in general. Each level or factor of such a universal hierarchy of structures is considered both as a structural whole in its own right, and as an element of a higher-level structure. Even though the discussion is carried out in abstract terms, the authors never

abandon their pragmatic aims: what follows is a series of directives concerning the usefulness and applicability of the general scheme in actual research.

The discussion of the text as an element of communication is completed in Chapter Three ("Secondary Modelling System") in which textual structure is seen — against a broad cultural background — as a point of intersection of a variety of semiotic codes, or systems. A sign system of a text is, therefore, a "supersystem." Consequently, "such a 'supersystem' in which a sign functions simultaneously in various codes is called 'a secondary modelling system' in contradistinction to 'primary systems' where the meaning of a sign is determined by one code" (43). According to the authors, "in art objects a secondary modelling system is created for the one and only use in a given structure" (43). This concept of a secondary modeling system as a phenomenon uniquely related to a single work of art, though it relies on Lotman's original idea, at the same time significantly differs from it. The question to what extent the text is either a realization of a system or its alteration, or, to use Eco's terms, whether it performs a code-abiding operation or a code-making one, or both, cannot be discussed here. The concept presented in *On the Analysis* is useful because it draws the student's attention to the phenomenon essential for a comprehensive understanding of literature, art, and culture. It may have been worthwhile perhaps to set this concept more distinctly against Lotman's or Barthes' conception because such a juxtaposition would better bring out the originality of the idea — however controversial — of the secondary modelling system construed as a unique event.

What must be emphasized is that all the three chapters of the first part focus on the essential qualities of the literary work but at the same time enable the student to see the work in the broadest context of cultural structure and codes. While preserving the uniqueness of the text, the authors consider it as only one amongst many products of human semiotic activity: as only one amongst the multitude of elements of the general structure of the realm of thought. In the second part of the book, the authors move from the essential to the particular, and concentrate on specifically textual internal relations, generic problems, and evaluation.

Chapter Four ("Relations in the Sphere of Elements Distinguished by Poetics") deals with several issues of which the most general one is perhaps the differentiation between structure and composition. The authors are right in saying that "the interchangeable use of these two terms has become one of the causes of the general methodological confusion in literary studies" (73), and begin with an attempt to clarify the difference. While both concepts are of semantic nature (i. e., "their component parts are meaningful elements within a whole," 74), their character differs in that whereas structure refers to the work as a simultaneous entity (its elements "are defined from the point of view of the whole work, in a way a 'bird's eye view'," 74), composition refers to the linear or sequential organization of the work ("to the linear sequence of a certain organizing axis or to the sequence of motifs," 74). Other issues related to composition and discussed more or less extensively include: the dichotomy between the narrative plane and the fictional plane, the temporal dualism of the literary work (the narrative time vs. the time of the story), the compositional arrangement of narrated events, the setting etc. Following a discussion of the point of view in fiction, important clarification is made within the general pattern of literary communication: between the personal author, the implied author, and the narrator on the one hand, and an individual reader, the implied reader, and the addressee on the other hand. Types of basic linguistic modes of narrative discourse are distinguished (narration, dialogue, monologue) and mutually related and, finally, a brief typology of narration is suggested.

In Chapter Five ("Genealogical Relations"), which is based largely on the ideas put forward by C. Zgorzelski and I. Opacki, we move from internal relations within the

literary work to the problems of generic classification. The main value of the chapter lies in drawing the student's attention to the inadequacy of traditional typologies: static in nature and based on a variety of indiscreet criteria. Instead, the authors propose to "understand literature rather as a unified 'space' in which each given point 'W' (work) might be defined in reference to the three 'dimensions' of the dramatical, epical, and lyrical. This would mean, of course, that no particular literary work can exist beyond the suggested 'space', and that the majority of the texts possess the features of all the three kinds in differing percentages" (108). Within such a framework, genre is construed as a dynamic category subject to change: it "is envisaged as a diachronic system which manifests itself in a sequence of synchronic structures" (111). Such a concept isomorphically falls within the general structuralist stance of the book and allows one to view generic problems in a uniform manner on both the synchronic and diachronic axes.

The final chapter ("Evaluation in the Analysis of the Literary Text") is instructive in a twofold way. It is instructive because it contains important distinctions (e. g., Ingardenian differentiation between artistic and aesthetic values) and establishes the primacy of aesthetic judgements over sociological, philosophical, psychoanalytical etc. with respect of the "literariness" of the work; but it is also instructive because it reflects a relative inefficacy of the structuralist-semiotic approach with respect to questions of aesthetic axiology. The significance of observations pertaining to aesthetics that have been made on structuralist-semiotic grounds cannot be denied, e. g., Mukařovský's analysis of aesthetic value in terms of the relationship between "the immanent properties of artistic structure and the historically changing awareness of the readers" (170) (rather than in terms of the properties of isolated texts themselves), or the semiotic thesis that "high informativeness (and consequently a high artistic value) is a property of texts in which powerful internal tensions appear, i. e., texts which contain a considerable number of meaningful elements" (171). It is also true that structuralist analyses are genuinely capable of revealing and demonstrating the multiplicity of internal tensions, the internal complexities, and the dynamic quality of a literary structure which, in the final analysis, become factors evocative of aesthetic experience. We have to admit, however, and so do the authors, that such a "multiplicity of internal tensions, the degree of internal complexity and dynamization of a literary structure are the criteria which so far have not been transformed into practical tools for measuring the artistic and aesthetic values of a literary text" (171), if "measuring" is possible here at all. This last statement does not make the chapter less useful than others; on the contrary, it puts the methodology presented in the book into a broader perspective and points to those areas where its precise apparatus has as yet been insufficient.

The usefulness of this approach is otherwise demonstrated and tested in numerous and extensive analyses accompanying particular chapters. In fact, unlike in this review, much more space is devoted in the book to explication of both poetry and prose than to theory. In accordance with the authors' conviction that "contact with a concrete literary text constitutes the beginning of the study of literature" analyses "are given the foremost position" (8) and fulfil the third function of the triad I have mentioned earlier: the practical one. I will not go into a detailed discussion of those interpretations: I liked some of them very much while some others seemed to me arguable. My subjective view, however, is far less important than the general tenor of the analyses themselves. Their main value as practical and didactic instruments consists in that they:

- 1) consistently use the apparatus introduced in theoretical chapters, illustrate its possible application, and represent a uniform methodological standpoint;
- 2) show the functionality of elements within larger structures and the reciprocal

semantic determination of those elements by the dominating structure, thus emphasizing the significance of internal relations within the work and the work's internal organization;

- 3) frequently refer to structures larger than a single text and preserve a systemic perspective.

In this way, they become an inevitable part of the handbook and may be used by the student as master patterns to be followed in his first attempts at coherent, structure-oriented, and non-impressive critical efforts.

The English translation of *On the Analysis* is fluent and communicative, but a more careful proofreading could have eliminated certain errors and inadequacies. There occur phrases which — though understandable to a Polish reader of the book may sound unnatural or unfamiliar to a native speaker of English, e. g., "literaryhistorical" (*historycznoliteracki*), "unscientific" (*nienaukowy* in the sense of lacking precision), "researcher" (*badacz* in the humanities), "English philology" (which does not connote in the same way as *filologia angielska*), "genological" (as referring to genre; "genological" does not seem to be English: the closest equivalent of Polish *genologiczny* is "generic"), "so to say" instead of "so to speak", "connotative function" instead of conative function in Jakobson's pattern, which is rather a serious slip.

All in all, as an aid in teaching literary theory, *On the Analysis* is a very useful book, but it requires a broad theoretical background from the instructor. Frequently, concepts are introduced which refer the reader to issues of notable complexity and call for elucidation in the classroom. Terms like "quasi-denotation" or "pseudo-denotation", which are not explained in the text, carry important ontological and epistemological implications, and may function as starting-points for a discussion of intentionality, fictionality, referentiality, or phenomenological theory. Certain groups of terms, which are pregnant with conceptual ambiguity, may — if not defined — give rise to misunderstandings, e. g., code — system, action — plot — story, etc.; others raise questions of interlingual equivalence, thus reaching into contrasting regions of different critical traditions (e. g., *gatunek* — *rodzaj* vs. genre — kind, *ja liryczne* vs. persona or lyrical "I", etc.). As the authors indicate in the Introduction, the book does contain "a number of 'places of indeterminacy'" (8) which have to be filled in the actual didactic "concretization." Some of those indeterminacies could have been eliminated, some others must be there for the simple reason of selectivity which is always necessary in preparing this kind of handbook. Yet, even though *On the Analysis* does not take into consideration many new developments in structuralist, semiotic, and post-structuralist studies, it gives the student a substantial body of relevant material, and encourages further theoretical pursuit. It can be used effectively as a propedeutic handbook and, if supplemented with additional reading, also as a pre-text for more advanced discussions of those issues which have been signalled rather than thoroughly analysed, or whose presentation requires greater scrutiny.

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The Linguistic Atlas of Scotland. Scots Section. Volume III: Phonology. Edited with an Introduction by J. Y. Mather and H. H. Speitel. Cartography by G. W. Leslie. Foreword by David Abercrombie. Pp. XVIII+398. London: Croom Helm, 1986. Reviewed by Wolfgang Viereck, University of Bamberg.

In this third volume of the *Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* the results of the phonological investigation of the Scots section of the Linguistic Survey of Scotland are presented. The term phonological requires some comment. The *Linguistic Atlas of England*, published in 1978, also contains phonological maps, which, however, are completely different from the Scottish ones. By phonological the editors of the English atlas mean 'phonetic-historical', whereas in the Scottish atlas phonological means 'phonemic'. Thus, the theoretical postulates were completely different in the two projects and, consequently, the data was elicited in different ways, only the direct method being the same. Whereas the fieldworkers of the English survey noted the informants' responses in detailed phonetic transcription, as they were interested in parole, J. C. Catford, to whom the Scottish Survey owes much of its theoretical basis, believed that a phonetic transcription would be prone to too many mistakes and should therefore not be used. In view of the 'personal boundaries' created by the fieldworkers of the English survey and other inconsistencies in their transcriptions repeatedly commented on by the editors of the English dialect materials, there is doubtless some truth in Catford's argument. Since he was interested in discovering the system, or rather, the systems of Scots dialects and in comparing their patterns (cf. Catford 1957), a phonological questionnaire, unique in dialectological work, was devised on structural lines. It is reproduced together with adapted entries and notes on pp. 377-392 of the atlas.

Sections 0 to 10 of the questionnaire deal with the systems of stressed vowels occurring in various environments. Section 0 shows vowels before /t/, section 1 before /d/, in section 2 the vowel is in final position, section 3 vowels before /r/, section 4 before /z, v, ð/, section 5 before /p, b, m/, section 6 before /k, g, ŋ/, section 7 before /l/, section 8 before /n/, section 9 before /s, f, θ/, section 10 before /x/. These sections contain a large number of potential minimally contrasting groups of words. Only the results pertaining to these 11 sections are published in the atlas, and not those of sections 11, dealing with words ending in unstressed -y and intended to elicit information on vowel-harmony, 12, covering other unstressed vowels, and 13 and 14, designed to elicit the main features of the Scots systems of pronouns and deictics.

17 fieldworkers collected the data, five of whom investigated only one locality. At the other extreme is the senior editor, J. Y. Mather, with 90 localities. One wonders why this burden was so unevenly distributed and, particularly, why so many were asked to do so little. This procedure raises certain doubts about the consistency of informant selection and about the validity of the data obtained, especially since the fieldworkers pronounced the words in question in Standard English and asked their informants to repeat them in their dialect. Can we really assume, as the editors do in their Introduction on p. XII, that the informant's response is not vitiated or contaminated thereby?

Altogether 188 informants were interviewed, of whom 135 were male and 53 female. 27 were over 80, 118 were aged between 60 and 80, 41 between 40 and 60, and one each was aged 26 and 36. The dialect aimed at is the traditional one in rural Scotland and Northern Ireland. The editors realise, however, that the 'pure' dialect is "potential rather than actual in a given informant" (p. XII). The area covered in the phonological investigation differs from the lexical one (whose results were largely published in 1975 and 1977) in that urban centres and the industrialised 'central belt' between Edinburgh and Glasgow as well as northern England (except two localities) were eschewed.

How is the material presented in the atlas? In order to compare polysystems, the concept of the polyphoneme was created. The polyphoneme is symbolised by capital letters in reverse slants, e. g. \A\, and consists of one or more phonemes. The phonemes are assigned to polyphonemes mainly on phonetic and historical criteria. Yet placements were also made on slot filling, majority and even arbitrary decisions (p. XIV)! A system of maximally 10 polyphonemes is established, which is presented in a table together with some typical representations and historical sources. It shows that the same phonemes were assigned to different polyphonemes in different places, e. g. /I/ to \I\ and /Y/, /æ/ to \E\ and \A\, /ε/ to \E\ and /Y/, /εI/ to \E\ and \OI\, \OI\ on pp. XIV f. occurs later in the lists of responses as \OE\.

The polyphonemes, once established, allow the editors "to compare system with system and place with place, and enable us to map differences in the number of constituents (phonemes) and distributional differences over the corpus of words" (p. XIII). This is quite an advance over the diasystem originally suggested by Uriel Weinreich. It turns out that the number of phonemes per polyphoneme may vary in the same locality from system (section) to system. Thus in Berwick-on-Tweed the polyphoneme \A\ has one phoneme /a/ in system 3 (before /-r/, e. g. in *barn*), two in system 5 (before /p, b, m/, namely /a/, e. g. in *ham* and /a/ in *calm*, and none in systems 2 (vowel in final position as in *snow, law*) and 4 (vowel before /z, v, p/ as in *cause, was*). The latter systems have /o, o', subsumed under the polyphoneme \O\, This is in contrast to the findings of the *Linguistic Atlas of England*, which reports [a:] in *snow* on Map 190b for close-by Lowick in Northumberland. Since the informant categories and the time at which the interviews were conducted were the same in both projects, the different findings raise questions of reliability in both surveys. On sampling procedures the editors of the Scottish atlas have this to say: "Usually, one single local informant was used who therefore defined for us the local dialect" (p. XII)!

As to comparison of place with place, the polyphoneme \A\, as noted above, has two phonemes in system 5, namely /a/ and /a/, in Berwick-on-Tweed, but only one, /ä/ (*ham, calm*), in nearby Ladykirk in Berwickshire. With regard to distribution or incidence, different polyphonemes may be involved in the same words. Thus, in the border area *cause* may contain the polyphonemes \A\ and \O\, The largest part of the 'atlas' (pp. 1-208) is taken up by lists of responses, locality by locality. The member phonemes of all ten polyphonemes are given for all 11 sections (systems) of the questionnaire together with the questionnaire items in which the phonemes occurred. The locality lists conclude with a few notes, mainly on consonantal features.

The symbol maps are in three parts, two sections of 'systemic maps' and one section of 'word maps'. The first sets of the systemic maps are of two types. "The first shows the total of all the phonemes in a system. The second shows an adjusted total, i. e. where, within a section, a phoneme is attested in only one item ... it has been excluded from the computation, except where such a phoneme is the sole member of a polyphoneme" (p. 214). The greatest number of contrasts, i. e. the largest systems, appear in section 0 (vowels before /-t/) with 21 (total) or 17 (adjusted) phonemes in Kirriemuir, Angus. The second set of the systemic maps shows the numbers of phonemes to each polyphoneme in a section. On some maps variation is so rare that the information was not worth mapping at all. Thus, on the first map there is only one phoneme to the polyphoneme \I\ in section 0 (i. e. before /-t/) in the whole area investigated except in Dounreay in Caithness, where there are two. Finally, the word maps show the distribution of polyphonemes in 175 words.

H. B. Allen (not Allan) (pp. XII and XVII) is one of the rare typographical errors in the book, which is very well produced.

As David Abercrombie, one of the founding members of the Linguistic Survey of Scotland in 1948, informs us in his Foreword the Survey "was shortly to be disbanded as a separate department. This is sad news indeed but this work will continue within the School of Scottish Studies" (p. VII). We surely hope so as there is still so much to be done.

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Language Variety in the South: Perspectives in Black and White. Edited by Michael B. Montgomery and Guy Bailey. Foreword by James B. McMillan. Pp. XIV + 427. University, AL.: The University of Alabama Press, 1986. Reviewed by Wolfgang Viereck, University of Bamberg.

As James B. McMillan notes in the Foreword to the book, "Southern American English has been studied more intensively, over a longer period of time, than any other North American dialect ..." (p. IX). Proof of this is provided by McMillan himself, who, in 1971, published the first book-length bibliography of an American region's speech, comprising 1, 113 items. This is to appear in a second edition, updated by Michael Montgomery, that will contain about three times as many entries. Montgomery also edits the *Southern English Newsletter*, which appears at irregular intervals and contains interesting news on research on Southern American English. In its first issue he reports on the conference on "Language Variety in the South: Perspectives in Black and White" that he convened in 1981 at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. It has taken him and his co-editor five years to publish the proceedings in the book under review here.

In their informative Introduction the editors distinguish four distinct stages in the study of black-white speech relationships in the South. "These stages have supplemented, rather than superseded, each other; each has been characterized by different approaches and analytical tools, different methodologies, and different goals. Consequently, each stage has produced quite different claims and conclusions" (p. 3). The first was the (early) dialect geographers' position, focusing on vocabulary, pronunciation and morphology and concluding that — with the exception of Gullah (see below) — the language system of blacks is the same as that of whites. Differences are quantitative, not qualitative. Then followed the creolist stage. Creolists were mainly concerned with making claims about the grammatical system of blacks and asserted that Black English constitutes a different system with a different underlying structure from that of whites. The third stage is characterized by a series of intensive sociolinguistic surveys of black speakers in Northern cities during the late 1960s and the final stage began in the mid-

1970s with intensive studies carried out in Southern communities. "Research in this stage is plentiful and eclectic and explores new aspects of the problem, analyzing old data in new ways, discovering new data sources, and using more varied approaches" (p. 21).

Much of the research of this fourth stage is mirrored in this volume. Some studies are based on the large-scale projects LAMSAS, LAGS and DARE, namely George Dorrill "A comparison of stressed vowels of black and white speakers in the South" (using LAMSAS data), Guy Bailey and Marvin Bassett "Invariant *be* in the lower South" (demonstrating the great potentials of LAGS, whose tape-recorded interviews often also included large amounts of free conversation), and Joan Hall "Black speech: lexical evidence from DARE" (showing with a number of "race maps" which terms are used only by blacks). Another large-scale project, LANCS, includes data from one Southern state, Kentucky. In "Kentucky verb forms" the late Raven McDavid, Jr. and Virginia McDavid analyze the preterite and past participle forms of 38 verbs.

Further synchronic studies use a variety of methodological approaches. A variable rule analysis is used by Ronald Butters and Ruth Nix in "The English of blacks in Wilmington, North Carolina" and by John Rickford in "Some principles for the study of black and white speech in the South", while Harmon Boertien follows a transformational argumentation in "Constituent structure of double modals". In her paper "Competing norms in the white speech of Anniston, Alabama" Crawford Feagin studies language variation in terms of the relationship of speakers to one another, using the network model developed by Milroy 1980 in her research in Belfast. Boyd Davis carried out his research reported in "The talking world map: eliciting Southern adolescent language" within an ethnographic framework that emphasizes linguistic function rather than linguistic forms. Also within the primarily synchronic domain are Michael Miller "The greatest blemish: plurals in *-sp, -st, -sk*", discussing the occurrence of monosyllabic and disyllabic plurals in the speech of blacks and whites in Augusta, Georgia, Earl Schrock, Jr., "Some features of the *be* verb in the speech of blacks of Pope County, Arkansas", and Elisabeth Sommer, who, in "Variation in Southern Urban English", restricts herself to data elicited from schoolchildren in Atlanta.

Understandably, the creolized speech on the offshore islands of South Carolina and Georgia, called Gullah or Geechee, continues to attract attention. Rickford in the paper mentioned above, Patricia Nichols in "Prepositions in black and white English of coastal South Carolina", and Patricia Jones-Jackson, discussing the pronominal system in "On the status of Gullah on the Sea Islands" deal with it in this collection of essays, as does Frederic Cassidy in his contribution "Some similarities between Gullah and Caribbean creoles", thus broadening the regional outlook and adding a historical dimension. Ian Hancock's study "On the classification of Afro-Seminole creole" spoken in south-west Texas and Glenn Gilbert's paper "The English of the Brandywine population: a triracial isolate [of mixed white, black, and Amerindian ancestry] in southern Maryland" may shed some light on a possible relationship between Gullah and inland varieties.

Of specific diachronic concern are furthermore Fay Boyd Vaughn-Cooke "Lexical diffusion: evidence from a decreolizing variety of Black English", discussing a resyllabification process (i.e. deletion/addition of a syllable) of the type **vaded ~ invaded, *cause ~ because* etc. in working-class black speakers in Franklin County, Mississippi, and Joutonne Brewer "Durative marker or hypercorrection? The case of *-s* in the WPA Ex-Slave Narratives".

The volume concludes with three pedagogically oriented papers (Jerrie Scott "Mixed dialects in the composition classroom", Ceil Lucas "'I ain't got none/ You don't have any': noticing and correcting variation in the classroom", and Charles E. Billiard

"Correlates among social dialects, language development, and reading achievement of urban children") and a paper addressing general methodological questions by Walt Wolfram entitled "Black-white dimensions in a sociolinguistic text bias". This contains one of the rare typographical errors of the book: *text* should read *test*.

As is to be expected, papers vary in quality. On the weak side from a linguist's viewpoint are data-poor, even data-absent papers from the last-mentioned category. On the other hand, Gilbert hardly goes beyond a mere listing of phonological and syntactical features typical of the speech of his informants. Methodologically weak is Vaughn-Cooke's contribution, especially the discussion of the historical aspects of resyllabification. Although the initial unstressed syllable is reported to have disappeared often in dialectal British English (cf. Wright 1905, § 232), the author ignores the speech of whites in the American South completely in order to keep up the Creole hypothesis with regard to the origin of Black English and produces three (!) examples of black speech from early literary records, the least reliable source. The discussion would have benefitted greatly from an examination of the corpus that Brewer analyzed in her paper. Also, Vaughn-Cooke must be reminded of Hancock's statement on p. 90 in this volume that "Black English — which that speech has become today in the United States and Canada ... — never had a wholly Creole origin".

However, these reservations should not detract from the merits of the book. The vast majority of the papers are very convincing indeed. By providing a name and, above all, a subject index the editors have increased the usability of their volume. It is a welcome and recommendable publication.

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