

REVIEWS

Early Middle English Syntax. By Lilo Moessner. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989. Pp. x+217.
Reviewed by Andreas H. Jucker, Justus-Liebig-University, Giessen.

Moessner's description of the syntax of Early Middle English is squarely based on the so-called Axiomatic Functionalism that has been developed by Jan Mulder, now professor emeritus of the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. In the introductory first chapter, Moessner gives a very brief introduction to this theory. The book under review was published in the same year as Mulder's most comprehensive outline of his theory, that is to say his *Foundations of Axiomatic Functionalism* (1989). This means that Moessner could not refer to this book in her text, even though she lists it in her references. In fact in her presentation of Axiomatic Functionalism, she refers mainly to Mulder (1980) and occasionally to Mulder (1988), but in her references she only lists one article by Mulder published in 1968 and the *Foundations of Axiomatic Functionalism* published in 1989. Unfortunately, this makes it difficult to trace her sources.

The way in which Moessner structures her book is designed to take the reader step by step through her material, introducing the more basic constructions first and more complex ones later, in such a way that it should be possible to read the early chapters without having to refer continually to later chapters.

In the second chapter Moessner introduces the compulsory constituents of Early Middle English clauses. The first section introduces the active verbal syntagm, the second section the copulative syntagm and the third the passive syntagm. The third chapter, entitled 'Nominal syntagm' is also split into three sections dealing with the substantival, the adjectival and the pronominal syntagm respectively. The fourth chapter introduces functional syntagms, that is to say the prepositional syntagm, the conjunctive syntagm, the comparative syntagm and the genitive syntagm.

The fifth chapter brings a change of gear. It is entitled 'The predicative syntagm' and introduces its syntactic properties and its constituents, and it develops a classification of eleven different types of verbal syntagms. One example may help to illustrate her classification and to give an idea of the flavour of her prose which is liberally sprinkled with technical terms from Axiomatic Functionalism. Extract (1) is classified as 'passive, non-intransitive, more than one predicative complement'.

- (1) of my seyl y wolde þe were maked a cloth
of my sail I would for – you were made a piece-of-clothing
=I would a garment were made for you of my sail (123)

She analyses syntagms of this type as follows: "The passive syntagm which realizes the predicative nucleus of this type is expanded by two predicative complements. One of them is a prepositional object, the other, either an (ordinary) object, a verbal complement or a prepositional object." (122).

Chapter 6 is devoted to the clause, analysing in turn the possible expansions of the subject, adverbial complements and agent complements. Chapter 7 deals with infinitive constructions, relative constructions and participial constructions. Chapters 8 and 9 do not introduce any new constructions, they deal with conjunctive constructions and with syntagms with coordinated syntagms, respectively. The last chapter, finally, returns to the passive syntagm and analyses constructions which can best be illustrated with the Modern English constructions *he is easy to please* and *the more – the better*.

This brief survey of the book's contents shows some of its strengths and weaknesses. Moessner is very meticulous in listing (and illustrating) all the possible expansions of the syntactic constructions in her data. There is a wealth of illustrative examples for all these constructions, and the reader learns much about obligatory and optional constituents. Unfortunately (at least for the personal interests of this reviewer) she has very little to say on word order regularities and on the subordination of clauses. I would also have liked to learn more about the internal variation of her data and the changes that were under way in the syntax of Early Middle English.

Her data base comprises 33 texts from the 12th and 13th century. This is more than a third of the 80 texts of the early Middle English period listed by Wells in his *Manual of the Writings in Middle English*. Her data base includes both prose texts and verse, and original texts as well as translations. "Heterogeneity was my main concern in the selection of the texts" (21). Nevertheless, she maintains that her descriptive models are representative for the syntactic structures of all extant Early Middle English texts and even for those texts that have not survived or have not yet been discovered. Her aim is not to show the internal variation – social, stylistic, text-typological, regional and diachronic – but to show what is common across all her texts.

Thus she presents a synchronic description of the syntax of English between 1100 and 1300, with only occasional side-glances at earlier or later stages in the development of the English syntax. This is the de Saussurean view in which language is at any given time a system *où tout se tient*, that is to say in which everything holds together in a coherent self-contained structure. However, it is by now one of the uncontroversial facts in linguistics that no language is ever uniform (cf. Milroy 1992:3). Describing such a heterogeneous corpus, therefore, involves a great deal of generalisation and idealisation.

Who will be using this book? As a textbook in the hands of students, it is probably too specific, being restricted as it is to the Early Middle English period and to syntactic constructions. Semantics, phonology and even morphology are completely ignored. It will be useful – and indeed indispensable – mainly as a reference manual. However, there are two serious obstacles which to some extent reduce the book's value as a reference manual.

First, the index, which for many will be the way into this book, is too detailed to be really useful. It appears to have been compiled in a very mechanical manner. The index refers to every single occurrence of a particular term whether or not anything useful can be found about this term on a particular page, and it is given in exactly the form in which it occurs on a particular page. Coordination, for example, is listed both as 'coordinated' and as 'coordination', with 18 and 12 page references respectively. A fair number of these page references are identical for both entries but some references are to a range of pages so that the reader still has to check some 30 different pages (16 per cent of all text pages!). If the reader is undaunted by this, he or she will soon get the feeling of having been led astray because many of the references are quite useless. On p 7, for instance, the term 'coordination' is mentioned among many other terms, and nothing is said about this particular term at all. On p 22 it appears in an outline of what is to follow in subsequent chapters. On pp 25, 31, 83, and 85 and elsewhere it is mentioned in the discussion of individual examples. In none of these instances can the reader get any general information on coordination. If an index is to serve its purpose, it has to be very selective, referring the user to passages in the text which say something about one particular concept. Such a selective index carries the risk of not giving a page reference that one or the other reader still might have found useful but the safe-bet, catch-all type of index provided by Moessner carries the even greater risk of quickly frustrating any prospective user. This book by its very nature as a reference manual depends on a high-quality index.

The second problem concerns the technical framework used by Moessner. She adopts Mulder's Axiomatic Functionalism as her framework of description because "this theory meets the epistemological requirements (...) and allows a consistent, adequate and relatively simple description of EME syntax." (6). For the reader who is prepared to work his or her way through Moessner's book, this is no serious problem even though its idiosyncratic terminology might put off some of the less stout-hearted readers, but to somebody who wants to use this book via the index as a reference manual it may be downright cryptic.

However, in spite of all these misgivings, it must be stressed that the positive aspects of this book by far outweigh its weaknesses. It is certainly a book that will be an important source for linguistic insights into the syntax of the Early Middle English period.

REFERENCES

- Milroy, J. 1992. *Linguistic variation and change: On the historical sociolinguistics of English*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
 Mulder, J. 1989. *Foundations of axiomatic functionalism*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Longman Pronunciation Dictionary. By J.C. Wells. Longman, London 1990. Pp. xxviii+802.
 Reviewed by Włodzimierz Sobkowiak, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań.

LPD was published in 1990 having taken a good few years of the author's dedicated work. It runs into 800 pages and, according to the blurb, contains over 75000 entries. These include technical vocabulary, proper names, initialisms and acronyms, selected English compounds and foreignisms. Thus, in terms of pronunciation, LPD alone is functionally equivalent to two or three independent reference sources, at least for most users.

Wells lists both British (RP and non-RP) and American (General American) pronunciation variants; phonostylistic variation is included as are the most common errors of pronunciation, e.g., *grievous* rendered as /gri:viəs/, suitably marked with an exclamatory mark set in a triangle. Some variation due to automatic phonological processes, e.g., /kən-/ → /kəŋ-/ before /k/ is marked with an arrow. Foreign words and phrases are transcribed in their anglicized version as well as in their original pronunciation.

There are two types of inset boxes in the text of the dictionary. One provides orthoëpic information under the heading *Spelling-to-sound*, where generalizations concerning the phonetic value of letters and letter clusters can be found. These insets are located at the beginning of each letter section. The other type includes general phonetic advice on a variety of topics: assimilation and coarticulation, compounds and phrases, fast/casual speech compression, double consonants, elision, syllables, etc. The language is clear, examples numerous and exposition as lucid as can be without seriously oversimplifying the issues.

These general-advice insets are a feature of the dictionary which I regard very highly. However erratic the pronunciation of English may feel to both natives and foreigners, there are some definite regularities, which, however, dissolve in the compartmentalization of a standard dictionary. So far, readers who are really keen on getting to the 'rules', have had to resign themselves to ploughing through phonetics dictionaries and primers – to most a truly forbidding task. Such readers will certainly appreciate the unifying perspective afforded by Wells's general phonetic remarks.

On the level of details LPD is best seen against the standards set by the renown Everyman's Pronouncing Dictionary of Daniel Jones and Arnold C. Gimson, to which Wells refers a number of times in the Introduction. First, the advantages.

In terms of scope, completeness and amount of detail LPD dramatically supersedes EPD, as should be clear from the discussion above. This is particularly noticeable in the realm of proper names and foreignisms. While the inclusion of new technical terms and other up-to-date vocabulary should be taken for granted, I appreciate the fact that Wells did not shy away from verbal taboo and colloquialisms. Giving up the remnants of Jones's prescriptivism also manifests itself on other levels: the limits of RP are set quite liberally, some common regional variants are listed, and the general approach is thoroughly descriptive, as seen in the parlance of Wells's advisory passages. This empiricism goes as far as to warrant the inclusion of the results of an opinion poll carried out among 275 native speakers of British English, concerning the preferred pronunciation of about a hundred problematic items. In fact, the only prescriptive remarks to be found in LPD concern advice to foreign learners of English.

The treatment of phonostylistic variation is more satisfactory in LPD than in EPD. First, function words, like articles, pronouns, prepositions, etc., which are particularly prone to reduction in fast/casual speech are given especially careful treatment, e.g., under *because* we can find: "*Many speakers use bɪkəz (or bəkəz) as the weak form, bɪ'kəz [...] as the strong form. Some, though, also use an irregular strong form bɪ'kəz, bə'kəz. There are also casual variants kəz, kəz*". Second, EPD was not particularly consistent in its treatment of elision, especially in the case of schwa. Possible schwa-drop was sometimes rendered by italicizing the vowel, sometimes by explicitly listing the reduced variant. It was not clear whether the difference was meant to be significant stylistically or otherwise. Wells uses italics consistently and provides explanations of this usage. Third, colloquial, non-emphatic pronunciation is taken as basic, with small superscript characters showing possible intrusion in slow/careful speech. Fourth, there is explicit treatment (both as an advisory inset and as a diacritic) of 'compression', whereby, depending on the tempo of speech and lexical frequency, vowels are reduced, glided, elided, etc., syllable boundaries re-assigned, sonorants syllabified and desyllabified, and so forth. Wells managed to squeeze all this into a remarkably compact and clear notation, thus avoiding Jones's space-consuming listing of all variants. An example follows:

JONES	WELLS
næfənɪ	næf ^ə n_əl
næfnəl	
næfn̩l	
næfn̩l	
næfənəl	

Wells's schema expands to all of Jones's variants plus the one not accounted for, which is treated as basic in LPD: /næf n əl/. Notice that by using spaces to mark syllable boundaries Wells was able to avoid the explicit syllabicity diacritic: a sonorant in a syllable without a vowel must itself be syllabic. A similarly simple expedient was used to mark contextual stress shift, as in *Japanese*, for example, where primary stress on the last syllable may be dropped in compounds.

A dictionary of pronunciation stands on two legs: one is the underlying phonemic theory, the other is the adopted system of transcription, with the latter being in many ways dependent on the former. It is no surprise to see Wells continue the Jonesian tradition in this respect. The transcription is basically that of EPD, i.e., rooted in the IPA phonemic principle. The most significant point of dissent is the treatment of so-called *weak* vowels: /i/ as opposed to both /ɪ/ and /i:/ and /u/ as opposed to both /ʊ/ and /u:/. These are regarded as products of neutralization of the *long-short* contrast in word-final and prevocalic contexts, e.g.: *happy* /hæpi/, *radiation* /reɪd i eɪf ^ən/, *influence* /ɪn'f lu_ən's/. While on the whole this is, I think, a welcome addition (or alteration) of the traditional system, it may leave a less casual user of the dictionary in the dark concerning the phonemic status of these sounds: if they are allophones of 'short' vowels /ɪ/ and /ʊ/ respectively, as appears from Wells's discussion (p.XIX), why do we need separate symbols instead of a statement of allophonic distribution somewhere in the Introduction. To be consistent, Wells should have included a separate symbol for the neutralized /p-b/ in e.g., *spin*, an option which he considers briefly, but ultimately rejects (p.476, inset). Additionally, with the exception of word-final /i/, there is little phonetic difference between the 'short' vowels /ɪ, ʊ/ and the 'weak' vowels /i, u/, respectively. This is unlike in the case of [ɒ] vs /əʊ/, the former being treated as a variant of the letter (p.XIX). Moreover, it is not even completely clear whether /ɪ/ and /ʊ/ are to be regarded as short or weak (p.XVII). In the Key to phonetic symbols they are listed twice: first as exemplified in *kit, bid, hymn, foot, good, put*, then as contained in *intend, basic, stimulus, educate*. I fail to discern any qualitative difference. Without a more radical revision of the phonemic principle guiding Wells's work, 'weak' vowels are bound to confuse.

This is especially true in view of the fact that the phonemic principle itself is probably too involved to be clearly laid out in a half-page inset (p.533). Readers are bound to run into problems trying to interpret the following, for example: "A phoneme is one of the basic distinctive units *in the phonetics* of a language" [my emphasis - WS].

There are other omissions and indeterminacies which, I believe, are ultimately due to editorial constraints of all kinds, but should, as far as possible, be amended in the future editions. What follows is just a handful of examples.

It is not immediately clear how the author construes the difference between assimilation (pp.46-7 inset) and coarticulation (p.139 inset). While the former is claimed to be a subtype of the latter, I fail to get at the difference between: (1) "the alteration of a speech sound to make it more similar to its neighbours" (assimilation), and (2) "the retention of a phonetic feature that was present in a preceding sound, or the anticipation of a feature that will be needed for a following sound" (coarticulation). Inspecting the examples, one comes to the conclusion that Wells believes assimilation to be phonemic, as opposed to allophonic coarticulation, but all that the readers are offered is this confusing remark (p.139): "For cases where coarticulation is variable, and may lead to the use of *what sounds like a different phoneme* [?, my emphasis - WS] see ASSIMILATION".

Clipped vowels are defined as "pronounced more quickly" than unclipped ones (p.136 inset). While I can understand Wells's desire to avoid possible confusion with 'short' vowels, I still believe the choice of *quick* and *slow*, which spuriously suggest *speed* instead of *length*, is infelicitous.

A diphthong is defined as a complex vowel within one syllable (p.209 inset). The latter, in its turn, is construed to be a group of sounds which "contains one vowel and only one" (p.697 inset), an obvious

circularity. Hopefully, there should be no serious problem here as readers will have an intuitive understanding of the latter concept.

The American English *start* and *lot*, as well as other similar pairs, are transcribed with the same vowel phoneme /ɑ/. Even if this is factually correct, i.e., if the vowels are qualitatively identical, I believe the explicit marking of the long chroneme on *lot* to be an unfortunate decision, considering that the vowel is traditionally regarded as 'short'. Once such allophonic variants as AmE flap, AmE /ɑ:/ or BrE /ɒ/ are provided for it should be easy to adopt /ɑ/, which is not used in Wells's system.

Finally I have some criticism concerning issues of a more technical nature. The blue print marking off the preferred RP variant from the alternatives which are "not recommended as models for learners of English" (p.VIII) is often misaligned. Considering that (1) its function is adequately served by the order of variants, and (2) that in a fair proportion of cases (cp. *national* above) it is technically incapable of fulfilling this function, I suggest that it should be abandoned in the future editions.

Similarly, I believe that giving percentage of usage preferences derived from an opinion poll (see above) is superfluous in this dictionary. Preferred variants can be shown in other ways, and I fail to see how a *postal* poll could yield reliable answers in phonetic matters, e.g., degrees of vowel reduction in *maintain*.

The pronunciation of initialisms (AUT), as opposed to acronyms (ASCII), is a simple sum of the phonetic values of the letters and as such need (should) not be listed in the dictionary. Some abbreviations (DOS) are not only transcribed phonemically but also explained ("*disk operating system*"), others remain uncaptioned (CD-ROM). ROM is inadequately given as "*computer memory*".

Misprints:

- (a) p.XIV, line 30 should read *before*, and not *after* r,
- (b) p.152, *diagram* should be transcribed with an italic /ɪ/, as shown in the entry for this word on page 204,
- (c) p.607, percentages on *room* add up to 101%,
- (d) p.613, line 17 should read *the pronunciation*, and not *the spelling*.

There are doubtless other misprints, which in the first edition of a work of this size are unavoidable. On the whole, however, the editorial level of LPD is commendably high. What is all the more surprising is that Longman do not offer the dictionary in computer-readable form, e.g., as CD-ROM, or on magnetic disk(s). As such, it could function as an excellent linguistic resource not only for the general reading public but also for linguists, especially those interested in the phonostatic aspects of English. Professor Wells's work fully deserves to serve in this capacity.

REFERENCES

Jones, D. and Gimson, A.C. 1984. *Everyman's English pronouncing dictionary*. London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.

Languages in Contact and Contrast. (Trends in Linguistics. Studies and Monographs 54). By Vladimir Ivir and Damir Kalogjera (eds). Berlin - New York: Mouton de Gruyter. 1991. Pp. 502.

Reviewed by Elżbieta Mańczak-Wohlfeld, The Jagellonian University, Cracow.

The need for a new outlook on languages that are in contact and contrast has been very satisfactorily filled by Vladimir Ivir and Damir Kalogjera's edition of forty-two papers collected in the book entitled *Languages in Contact and Contrast*. This volume has been dedicated by both the editors and the authors to Professor Rudolf Filipović, an outstanding Croat linguist, who, besides other research, has initiated

and organized studies in the field of contrastive analysis of English and Serbo-Croatian in his country. The editors have invited scholars of different linguistic orientation to contribute to this volume and this has resulted in a great variety of subjects that reflect mostly synchronic and a few diachronic studies dealing with phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, lexical, pragmatic, sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic (including multilingualism and foreign-language acquisition) as well as stylistic problems of languages in contact.

The range of topics and languages (mostly Indo-European but Turkish and Hebrew are also included) discussed, as well as the different theoretical orientations presented in the volume, are impressive. As in any collection of papers, some of them are more interesting than others, depending, on one's attitude towards linguistics. However, some papers seem to be more original than others. The paper by W. Brown for instance (*Language contact: Some reactions of a contactee*) shows the problem of borrowing from an unusual perspective – that is from the speaker of the donor language; or K. Sajavaara's *English in Finnish: Television subtitles*, unlike most studies of borrowing that usually deal only with loanwords, presents a Finnish project on the impact of English through longer texts such as television subtitles, foreign news heard on the radio and TV, advertisements, instructions, etc. A number of theoretically oriented papers should be highly appreciated as they shed new light on the methodology of the description of languages in contact and contrast like Ivir's *Contrastive method in contact linguistics*, or papers on terminology employed in this branch of linguistics (e.g., R. Bugarski's *Contrastive analysis of terminology and the terminology of contrastive analysis*), or papers that suggest new models to be used in contrastive analyses (e.g., A. Danchev's *Some notes on a Bulgarian model of expanded contrastive analysis*).

The articles have been arranged alphabetically but they would read more easily if the volume were divided according to subject matter, e.g., the process of borrowing, multilingualism, foreign-language acquisition, etc.

The value of the book would also be increased if all the papers were devoted to the problems signalled by both the title of the volume and the *Preface*. Unfortunately, some articles are not even loosely connected with the contrast and contact between languages, e.g., R. Berndt's attractively entitled paper *Fact or not fact – this is the question in the semantic interpretation of gerundive nominals* is in fact restricted to the analysis of gerundive nominals only in English, although its new approach to the problem is welcome, or the highly theoretical as well as highly interesting paper by S. Eliasson presenting a cognitively-based model of phonological analysis (*An outline of a cognitively-based model of phonology*), or S. C. Monson's valuable article on *Dictionary making: The ideal versus reality* concerned with the assessment of monolingual English dictionaries, or finally K. Sørensen's paper entitled *On revived words in the OED Supplement* that points to the little-known tendency observed in the Supplement, namely that a number of lexical items have changed their status from 'archaic' or 'obsolete' to everyday words, which is contrary to the well-known process occurring in the opposite direction. In turn, a couple of articles are only vaguely concerned with the main topic of the book, such as M. Ridjanović's paper (*On the struggle of underlying vowels for a voice in surface phonetic structure*), which describes the phonetic variety of Serbo-Croatian spoken in the city of Sarajevo.

Although, generally speaking, the general level of the papers collected is high, in a few cases one feels dissatisfied as some language problems seem to have only been touched on, whereas the reader would have expected them to be discussed in more depth. For instance in A. Bantaş's *Hypothesis: The notion of 'multibehavior'*, the author advances the hypothesis of the 'multibehaviour' of certain lexical items in English, but only briefly states that the awareness of it might eliminate errors in foreign-language acquisition and might be helpful in contrastive analysis. One would expect more commentary on these matters and contrastive examples would be welcome, e.g., from Rumanian, which happens to be the author's native language.

In addition, *Languages in Contact and Contrast* also prompts a few minor comments on specific points:

1. It is not clear why H. Birnbaum does not follow the style sheet accepted in Anglo-Saxon linguistics as well as in the book reviewed but uses traditional references (pp. 67-8).
2. On p. 180, J. A. Fishman refers to Polish and Austro-Hungarian Galicia, which does not sound very precise, as these were Polish terrains which due to the partition became part of Austro-Hungary in the period of time from 1772 to 1918.
3. On p. 229, F. J. Hausmann contradicts his otherwise correct hypothesis, that in producing

lexicons of collocations one should list basis entries instead of collocators, when he criticizes Frederick's dictionary for starting from the basis which makes F. J. Hausmann "unable to find out the collocator which I do not know".

4. M. Vilke scrupulously defines the difference between foreign language learning and second language learning on p. 484, whereas already on p. 485 she uses the term second language learning in the meaning of 'foreign language learning'.
5. Occasionally one can find some inconsistencies in spelling, e.g., *Anglicism* (p. 20) vs. *anglicism* (p. 23), or *girl-friends* (p. 181) vs. *girlfriends* (p. 182).
6. Here and there one can see some printing mistakes, like *sigle* (p. 281), *excape* (p. 385), or *unter* (p. 497), although as all Mouton de Gruyter's publications, this volume has been printed very decently.

Despite these minor critical remarks, I still think that *Languages in Contact and Contrast* is a very valuable work and I welcome it.