Comptes-rendus • Reviews

Allison Wray. 2001. *Formulaic Language and the Lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xi + 332pp.

Reviewed by Tom Cobb, Université du Québec à Montréal

It is almost twenty years since the "lexical phrase" burst onto the applied linguistics stage, with a chapter by Pawley and Syder (1983) in an otherwise forgotten volume for language teachers. The concept has implications which, if taken seriously, could revolutionize our views of language use, acquisition, and pedagogy, and possibly even human cognitive architecture. Phrase theory stands on its head the notion that normal language use involves mainly the assembly of primitive linguistic units through the application of grammatical rules, re-describing it as the production and reception of precast lexical strings of various lengths with only occasional recourse to grammatical operations. The proof of the phrasal pudding, so to speak, is twofold. First, it is doubtful whether people have the memory resources needed for online language processing on a grammatical or analytic basis alone, i.e. without recourse to many largish chunks of language that are accessed whole, like words. Second, while a grammar may make indefinitely many word combinations possible, only a fraction of these will ever see the light of day. *Would you like to become my spouse?* and *Will you marry me?* are equally acceptable, grammatically, but one of them is almost always used, the other almost never. There has long been interest in the role of lexicalized phrases in language use, of course, but until recently no means of proving that it was more than a marginal phenomenon. It was only with the computer analysis of large corpora, for example by applied linguists working on the COBUILD and related projects in the late 1980s, that the extent of our reliance on precast, formulaic language became clear. With the phenomenon thus noted (by Pawley and Syder) and the extent of it validated (by the corpus studies), the next task was presumably to work out its implications, establish methods of investigating it, and propose hypotheses about what it means, and this was the task Alison Wray set herself in her book-length treatment.

As Wray argues in a compendious review of the lexical phrase research, phrase theory has implications for language use at all levels. As mature native speakers of a language, we apparently produce and interpret "ready made surface structures" (p. 13) for nearly all of our communicative functions (*burst onto the stage, otherwise forgotten, stands on its head, proof of the pudding, see the light of day*), retrieving sometimes quite lengthy strings from memory as single lexical units, while using our "live grammar and lexicon" (p. 33) sparingly, mainly for stitching the precasts together. We thereby reserve our main energies for idea generation and interpretation, and of course for an occasional

novel construction, should the need arise (novel constructions commonly being *where the meat of an utterance lies* and requiring some effort to interpret, particularly if bearing a mixed metaphor or other sign of on-the-fly assembly). As language learners, we apparently learn our first languages largely through hearing, storing, and reproducing recurring extended whole sequences corresponding to recurring extended whole contexts and situations, presumably on an associative rather than instinctual basis, committing these to analysis only on an as-needs basis. As cognitive systems, we are apparently more reliant on massive and possibly redundant information storage than we are on streamlined computation from primitive units, as we used to think when Chomskyans ruled the roost.

Thus Pawley and Syder's chapter on phrases and second language pedagogy had implications far beyond its brief, surely a case of the tail wagging the dog. Despite this, the implications of phrase theory still remain to be worked out for language pedagogy itself. Outstanding questions include these:

1. Does phrase learning function for second language learners as it does for first language learners?
2. To what extent should lexical phrases be included in a language learning syllabus?
3. Does whole-phrase learning eventually lead to grammatical analysis of phrases and re-use of constituents?

It is not only in second language studies that the (re)discovery of the lexical phrase has introduced a new set of difficult issues. Also affected and disrupted to varying degrees are linguistics proper, the modeling of normal and abnormal language functioning, cognitive theory, and possibly others. It is predictable, then, with the lexical phrase being approached from several perspectives that terminology and methodology might both stand in need of a tidy-up, and this is where Wray's ambitious task begins. Her goal is nothing less than to organize and synthesize recent work on the lexical phrase, and following that to offer an explanatory model that puts it all together and secures the way forward for future researchers.

Wray begins at the beginning, looking first at the problem of determination. How do we know when a word string is a lexical phrase, accessed whole rather than grammatically generated? A good deal of hard thinking has gone into this question in recent years, and interesting approaches have been explored, including the examination of speech rate (lexical phrases run fast and slur their consonants), pausing (lexical phrases have fewer pauses), and corpus frequency studies (lexical phrases can be counted by software that extracts all strings of length$>$ x and frequency $>$ y). As already mentioned, phrase frequency was an early proof in the phrase argument (*Will you marry me?* outnumbering alternate

formulations in any large corpus). Wray, however, is not merely summarizing the phrase research, moving it forward, and the frequency issue presents a good example of this.

Phrase recurrence, I was interested to learn, does not in itself indicate that a phrase is being processed as a single lexical item. To know if this is the case, you need to know the pragmatic intent behind a particular utterance, and the art of corpus tagging has not yet advanced to this point. For an example (mine, not hers), *Shut your mouth* is probably a lexical unit if the intent is to make someone stop talking, but a generated sentence if the dentist is signalling a time-out from oral surgery. In other words, the same string may function as a unit in some contexts but not in others, so that what counts as a lexical phrase can only be characterized dynamically, and the lexicon must be considered multi-representational.

Wray examines the phrase issue in a number of research contexts: first language acquisition, adult first language functioning, second language acquisition, and impaired language functioning (having already published widely in all these areas). Her text, while complex, is readable, mainly because of the lively examples supporting the main points. To sample one or two, the multi-representationality just mentioned comes to life in examples from aphasic patients, such as one who frequently resorted to the phrase *son of a bitch* while unable to identify his own *son* in a photograph; or from normal language users, who typically cannot tell you what *Rice Krispies* are made of, since their representation of the lexicalized unit does not necessarily make contact with *rice* and *crisp* stored elsewhere in the lexicon. The text is also studded with syntheses of research findings at an appropriate level of detail and with an always obvious relevance. The reader moves easily between examples, findings, and big picture topics, in much the same way the author proposes language users move between on-line computation from primitive units and wholesale dealing in larger chunks, according to the need.

And what is the need for formulaic language in human communication? Wray considers several possibilities, such as the easier online language processing already mentioned, and finds none of them adequate to account for the extent of the phenomenon. The most novel part of her treatment is to propose a unifying explanation for the prominence of formulaic language, which, unexpectedly, is unrelated to language processing per se. Lexical phrases, she argues, are used mainly for signalling group membership and specifically for "the promotion of self." When we want to get our needs met, issue orders, or manipulate others, we do not trust to novel constructions, which may go awry 'twixt speaker and hearer, but instead to precast whole constructions known in advance to both parties.

While Wray argues the self-promotion explanation long and well, in the end I found myself unconvinced. For one thing, any explanation positing a

single drive as the basic motivator of human behaviour (like Freud's "sex drive" or Marx's "mode of production") is vulnerable to Popper's charge of unfalsifiablilty. As already mentioned, there seem to be basic problems with empirical testing of several of the most interesting ideas about phrases, and this is especially true where the goal is unification and model building. Still, whatever the eventual fate of this particular explanation, Wray's attempt to gather the pieces together and make sense of them is bound to be the point of departure for the next major expedition into phrase territory.

As a second language specialist, I noticed that when Wray deals with second language research it is not particularly with the goal of producing a set of pedagogical implications for language teaching. Her goal is mainly to provide psycholinguistic explanation, and second language learning is just one of her several data sources. Nevertheless, most of the questions about phrases and language teaching that I set out above receive some sort of answer along the way. Unfortunately, none of the answers serve to make second language learning or teaching seem any easier.

1. Does phrase learning function for second language learners as it does for first language learners?

   A recurring theme in the analysis is that lexical phrases are mainly learned prior to the acquisition of literacy, because written language makes the separation of individual words very clear. Since most people attempting to learn a second language have already acquired literacy in their first, and are likely to use literacy as a primary aid in acquiring their second, it is unlikely that phrases will play the same roles in second language acquisition and functioning as they did in first language acquisition. Second language learners are much more likely to be forced to resort to a classic Chomskyan grammar-and-lexicon mode of language use as their principle option, with all the psycho- and socio-linguistic difficulties this entails.

2. Should lexical phrases be included in the language learning syllabus?

   Many pedagogical applied linguists assume that a syllabus of selected phrases should be taught to L2 learners as a sort of vocabulary, (e.g., Nattinger and deCarrico, 1992, p. 32, and of course Pawley and Syder, 1983). However, Wray seems sceptical about this. For one thing, as noted in the discussion of literacy just above, post-childhood learners tend to be at a stage where analytic approaches to learning are somewhat inevitable.

   A practical problem with teaching phrases is the sheer number of them: the number of identifiable phrases that can be formed from, say, 3000 high-frequency words is truly stupendous (ten phrases per word, according to Mel'čuk, 1998, cited p. 283). Given that not all learners manage

to learn 3000 basic words *qua* words, the idea of building a second phrasicon through deliberate instruction seems problematic.

Still more problematic is the possibility that, if we accept the self-interest explanation Wray offers, then we really would have no way of knowing what an appropriate target for a second language phrasicon might be. An extremely fluid and dynamic picture of phrasicon-lexicon interactions is built up over the pages of this book, with "formulaic sequences as just one of many solutions which arise for an individual on a particular occasion in the course of protecting his or her interests" (p. 211). This implies that we really have no native-speaker standards for any performance components below the level of overall success in using the language to promote one's interests, and therefore we have no way of grading or sequencing a phrase-based syllabus for second language learners.

3. Does whole-phrase learning eventually lead to grammatical analysis of said phrases and re-use of constituents?

   Few would deny that beginning language learners might usefully be provided with some amount of formulaic language, for initial communicative purposes, that goes beyond what their interlanguage grammars could independently generate at that stage (*Could you tell me the time?* etc.) Less obvious is whether it can be assumed that such constructions will later be analysed (so that *could you* recombines as *could he, you could*, and so on). There are some problems in principle standing in the way of this happening. One stems from the fact that the grammatical analysis of phrases is not always possible. For example, *implications need to be worked out* can be fully regrammaticalized, e.g., rendered in active voice; *rule the roost* can receive only minor modification, such as person, tense, and extra modifiers; *'twixt X and Y* while relying on a remote literary allusion will accept any two nouns, but no modifiers; *the tail wagging the dog* can hardly be modified at all, except in humour; and *by and large* is unmodifiable, if not ungrammatical. In other words, the second language learner's task is not only to commit some holistic phrases to analysis, but before that to decide when this is and is not possible — with, presumably, insufficient means for doing so.

As noted above, pedagogical applied linguists rediscovered the lexical phrase without apparently doing much with it, perhaps for the good reason that there is not much that *can* be done with it. This is despite the fact that non-idiomaticity is normally the final issue for advanced learners (Granger, 1998), or maybe it only is for their teachers.

This review has turned out longer than I expected, but I have hardly sampled from the book's revelations and revolutions, and then only from my own point

of view. Readers involved in any aspect of language as communication should read this book, which is bound to become a classic of our field that will be cited for years to come. It may even be re-issued, at which time its publishers might consider completing their work on the names index, where at present one can attach page numbers to only two names, Baudelaire and Field Marshall Montgomery, but to none of the host of language specialists extensively cited — including Chomsky and the author herself.

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F. Cicurel et M. Doury (réd.). 2001. *Interactions et discours professionnels : Usages et transmissions*. Dans la collection *Les Carnets du Cediscor* 7. Paris, Presses de la Sorbonne nouvelle. 212p.

Compte-rendu de Sylvie Roy, University of Calgary

Ce carnet du *Cediscor* a été mis en oeuvre par le Centre de recherches sur les discours ordinaires et spécialisés de l'université de la Sorbonne à Paris. Il s'adresse plus particulièrement à ceux qui souhaitent en savoir davantage sur l'analyse de discours linguistique et pragmatique en situation professionnelle. Les analyses présentées dans le document sont très bien exécutées et elles démontrent un travail minutieux d'experts en la matière. Le document comprend deux sections avec une bibliographie pour chacune des parties. À la fin du volume, les résumés des différents chapitres sont présentés. Ces derniers permettent au lecteur de mieux choisir les textes qui pourraient l'intéresser.

La première partie comprend quatre articles traitant d'une analyse plus linguistique que pragmatique. Les auteurs traitent leurs données à partir d'un même corpus. Ce dernier est constitué de séquences d'enseignement du français langue étrangère en vue d'une formation professionnelle. Pour débuter, Cicurel décrit les caractéristiques d'une interaction en français langue professionnelle. Cette explication représente en quelque sorte une introduction aux chapitres subséquents de la première partie. Ensuite, Cicurel démontre comment les enseignants utilisent différents univers de référence afin d'aider les apprenants à comprendre certains concepts du monde professionnel. Pour parvenir à comprendre le sens de ces univers de référence, l'apprenant doit reconnaître dans quel monde se situe l'énoncé: le texte sur lequel on travaille dans la salle

de classe, le système de la langue, le monde extérieur ou le monde de la classe (p. 28). Le passage d'un univers à l'autre peut donc occasionner des imprécisions chez les apprenants. Par suite d'une analyse des univers de référence, Cicurel mentionne que la pratique de la lecture en enseignement est en décalage par rapport à l'utilisation de la langue dans un monde professionnel. Malheureusement, les liens entre les univers de référence et le monde de la lecture restent peu évidents à la lecture de l'article car l'auteure saute d'un aspect (les univers de références) à un autre (la lecture) sans y insérer de liens apparents.

Blondel, pour sa part, démontre comment les enseignants en tant qu'experts doivent changer et adapter leurs discours pour les rendre compréhensibles aux apprenants. Dans ce cas, les altérations sont définies comme étant une activité d'un sujet qui, par transformations, rend autre un discours d'origine (pris dans Peytard, page 15). Cet article est bien écrit et démontre comment un enseignant construit son discours d'expert et comment il mène les reformulations du langage professionnel pour les adapter aux apprenants.

Pour sa part, Cucunuba traite du rôle des énoncés à caractère commentatif utilisés par les enseignants pour permettre un apprentissage des vocables spécialisés. Les énoncés commentatifs peuvent se retrouver dans le discours de l'enseignant soit en ce qui a trait à la forme, soit du point de vue du contenu afin d'aider les apprenants de langue seconde à acquérir le langage d'un domaine spécialisé. L'auteure termine son article en mentionnant un point important : il serait intéressant d'examiner l'utilisation des énoncés à caractère commentatif avec des apprenants qui connaissent préalablement le domaine spécialisé et d'autres qui ne le connaissent pas.

Causa, quant à elle, examine la notion de simplification et de complexification utilisée par l'enseignant dans une classe de langue. Elle démontre qu'il existe une variété de formes pour ces notions et qu'elles dépendront du contexte d'enseignement.

Enfin, Ishikawa examine l'utilisation du métalangage utilisé par l'enseignant pour transmettre du savoir-faire et du savoir-dire spécialisés. L'apprentissage d'un savoir spécialisé n'est pas stable car il dépend des apprenants. Tout au cours de cette première partie, nous pouvons nous questionner sur qui sont les apprenants. Comment le contexte et les différents acteurs peuvent-ils influencer l'analyse du discours comme telle ? Tel que mentionné, cette première partie constitue davantage une analyse linguistique que pragmatique et il aurait été intéressant d'en savoir davantage sur les apprenants impliqués dans le corpus ayant alimenté les analyses de cette première partie.

Les deux premiers chapitres de la deuxième partie sont de lecture fort agréable. Kerbrat-Orecchioni est une auteure dont nous pouvons apprécier les écrits. Son article traite de la politesse dans de petits commerces français. Elle amorce son article par une mise en contexte et elle démontre ensuite comment

les participants essaient de garder une relation harmonieuse lors d'une interaction pour sauver la face. Doury offre également un article intéressant. Elle commence par situer le lecteur dans un contexte particulier; ensuite, elle explique l'interaction argumentative dans un commerce d'habitués. Le commerçant participe à une discussion argumentative, tout en essayant de conserver une cordialité envers les habitués de son commerce. Traverso, pour sa part, donne un point de vue intéressant sur la négociation dans un commerce en Syrie. Cet article s'avère différent des autres puisqu'il fait apparaître la notion d'interculturel. L'article nous révèle des différences culturelles importantes chez les marchands syriens en ce qui concerne la négociation. Nous avons apprécié que l'auteure mentionne ses propres représentations culturelles face à la négociation. Sitri étudie les situations argumentatives et recherche les marques linguistiques des procédés d'exclusion. Par contre, les citations fournies sont particulièrement difficiles à comprendre et il aurait été plus adéquat d'alléger quelque peu les conventions de transcription, beaucoup trop complexes.

Les deux derniers chapitres font référence aux rituels qui peuvent exister dans les conférences internationales et dans les exposés scientifiques. Cali montre l'existence d'un rituel particulier lors de conférences internationales. Elle démontre que la face se révèle un lieu privilégié d'émergence et de focalisation du rituel. Enfin, Miecznikowski et ses collaborateurs montrent comment un exposé académique constitue une activité interactionnelle accomplie en contexte.

En somme, la collection de textes est bien organisée. Il existe toutefois un certain « jargon » scientifique dans ce genre d'analyse de discours, surtout dans la première partie de l'ouvrage. Les lecteurs devront se familiariser avec les termes pour mieux comprendre le contenu. De plus, ceux qui s'intéressent à une analyse du discours faisant le lien avec un contexte social plus large seront déçus. La référence à une situation sociale est très peu documentée dans ce genre d'analyse du discours.

Néanmoins, je recommande fortement ce numéro des Carnets du *Cediscor*, que j'ai eu le plaisir de découvrir, à tous ceux qui optent pour une analyse de discours de préférence linguistique et pragmatique.

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John Algeo (ed.). 2001. *The Cambridge History of the English Language*. Vol. 6: *English in North America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xxxii + 625pp.

Reviewed by Leslie Sheldon, University of Strathclyde, Glascow

This volume in the prestigious *Cambridge History of the English Language* series traces the history of English in North America from its "British" background, as well as charting linguistic and cultural influences from a wide range of other sources: for example French (Cajun and Quebecois), Hawaiian, Black English and First Nations languages (all 350–500 of them). In this book, sixteen leading authorities consider how lexis, grammar, spelling, and usage in both the standard language and regional/social dialects have evolved in response to these. Separate chapters deal with African-American English, Canadian English and Newfoundland English; there are also suggestions for further reading, a glossary of linguistic terms, and a very extensive bibliography. The volume basically attempts to show how North American English has reached its current state (and even its world status), on the basis of evidence discernible to historical linguists.

As the General Editor indicates in the *Preface*, the aim is for the series as a whole to be "stimulating and fruitful [. . .] the final goal must be to stimulate interest in a subject in which much work remains to be done, both theoretically and empirically." (xiii–xiv) In the main, *English in North America* achieves this well, with a combination of cogently-presented, rigorous linguistics scholarship, complemented by discussion of some of the potentially controversial issues surrounding previous attempts to chart the developmentof North American English(es), in particular surrounding the "strong form" of Fischer's (1989) theory regarding the four waves of English, Irish and Scots settlement which purportedly account for the major characteristics of the main American dialects (a premise which the Volume Editor accepts as valid). The well-written sections in the volume cover a range of scholarly areas, including "British and American, continuity and divergence", "British and Irish antecedents", "Americanisms", "Grammatical structure", "Spelling", and a consideration of "American English Abroad".

According to the Press Release provided by Cambridge University Press, the series as a whole is "the first multi-volume work to provide a full and authoritative account of the history of English. Each chapter gives a chronologically-oriented presentation of the data, surveys scholarship in the area and takes full account of the impact of current and developing linguistic theory on the interpretation of the data. The chapters have been written so as to be accessible to both specialists and non-specialists". Though the "blurb" is in fact largely true, this is a series which, given the high per-volume price, is most likely to be purchased for institutional collections rather by individuals, however keen.

As one would expect, the emphasis is overwhelmingly on the historical development of American dialects, only two of the fourteen articles dealing with "Canadian English" (Brinton and Fee) and "Newfoundland English" (Kirwin). One should also perhaps not be surprised that discussion of the often uneasy/inconsistent amalgam of American and British pronunciation/spelling/usage forms found in the varieties of Canadian English, *does* ultimately come round to that old chestnut, the Canadian *eh*. In this case, though, the reader is informed by Brinton and Fee that "Survey evidence suggests that this usage is more common in the lower socioeconomic class" (p. 433). I am not aware exactly how *the* (emphasis mine) "lower" socioeconomic class is defined in more precise social-scientific terms (e.g. according to salary, economic consumption, ethnicity, educational level, for example?), but this somewhat inflammatory, stigmatizing observation evinces a single, disappointing lack of rigour in a collection of essays which otherwise hit the mark as being scholarly, objective, accessible and (in the words of the volume editor) "authorative" but "not prescriptive" (p. xiii).

The same article also indicates that government policies on bilingualism, immigration and multiculturalism (as well as the politics of Quebec nationalism) have had an effect on the development of the Canadian dialect (as a variant of Northern US English); though one is probably inclined to accept this as an intuitively valid generalisation, it might have been useful to have explored in the article the putative linguistic detail of these influences.

As with the articles that discuss American English, the two contributions relating to Canada can occasionally be a fascinating treasure-trove of detailed linguistic data; for example, the "collision" process whereby the meanings of French lexis in Quebec are sometimes transferred to similar English words (e.g. *primordial* is used to mean 'crucial', *co-ordinates* to mean 'name, address, phone number' and so on). Words like *chesterfield* (for sofa/couch) are apparently archaic (along with many thousands of "Canadianisms" catalogued first by Avis in 1967).

Though Volume VI contains worthy and, for the most part, thorough articles which unravel the various linguistic and historical threads which have made North American English(es) what they are today, what seems to be missing from this volume is a discussion of the influence, in particular, of "American English" on ICT (Information and Communication Technology) and cyber-environments — especially given the primacy of American English in PC hardware/software and on the Web. As the volume editor observes, the reason English has become so widespread over the past three hundred years is due to political, cultural and economic (rather than merely linguistic) considerations. This needs to be explored in terms of what is happening in "cyberspace", specifically, in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Algeo mentions the Internet in passing in his consideration of the "External History" of North American English, but there is much more that could be said, the Web currently being a very productive nursery for new vocabulary, usage, discourses and genres (some involving a combination of text and mood/semantic graphical markers called "emoticons"), which in turn demand a new kind of "e-literacy" (Lotherington, 2001; Sheldon, 2001; Warschauer, 1999) If, as McLuhan claimed, the medium is indeed the message, then the Internet (and the electronic "spaces" found in software programs — which are replete with toolbars, scrolling arrows, hotlinks, drop-down menus engaged by right or left mouse-clicks) is having an even greater fundamental effect on the English language and communication — and on a planetary scale — than conventional exchanges of paper text. The importance of American English in this context, and the languagechange that is occurring, thus deserves detailed consideration (which would possibly be a useful addition to any future edition of *English in North America*).

A particularly compelling and timely article in the collection is Mufwene's consideration of African-American English (AAE), not only from the perspective of its numerous linguistic features discussed, such as pronunciation and structure (e.g. predication and the presence/absence of the copula), but the skewed investigative attitudes to the target dialect which, it is felt, have resulted in numerous research gaps. Starting with a consideration of what could only be termed "racist linguistics" in the nineteenth century (though Mufwene does not explicitly use this label), which proposed that AAE was a kind of "failed English" arising because of the putative intellectual deficits stereotypically ascribed to blacks (e.g. by Gonzales, Adam, Baissac), the article shows that "Black English" (or Black English Vernacular, Ebonics, Black Dialect, Black Idiom, Black Talk — take your pick) evinces a heretofore unappreciated internal diversity and complexity. The author shows, for example, how AAE developed as a kind of "counterlanguage" (based on Southern American English), which was used by slaves to conceal meanings from White Authority, and the article also describes the "toast" phenomenon, a oral literary form of narrative, communal street epic describing the success of the oppressed/exploited against "the Establishment", which has remained largely uninvestigated.

In addition to a discussion of the creole-versus-dialect controversy surrounding the origins/development of AAE, the article maintains that very few features of this version of American English have actually been analysed in their own terms (especially with regard to semantics and pragmatics), the emphasis instead being on showing the *differences* between white and AAE speech patterns. Linguists have also seemingly neglected the actual linguistic changes and evolution evident in AAE across the generations and, to perhaps compound matters, have often focused on the speech of male "street" adolescents

(for whatever procedural reasons) as being representative of the black linguistic experience in the United States.

In basic terms, *English in North America* represents a successful finishing touch to the *Cambridge History of the English Language* series with (to use a cliché) "something for everyone", the intended provision of solid scholarship and some provocative discussion having been accomplished. This volume is a very useful addition to any departmental or institutional library.

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J. Richards and T. Rogers. 2001. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 270pp.

Reviewed by Jeff Verbeem, Brock University

Over a decade and a half has passed since the original publication of *Approaches and methods in language teaching* and much has happened in language teaching in that time. Fans of the popular original will rejoice then at the release of this second edition, which again provides a broad and accessible survey of the ideas that influence informed language teaching, now — as the authors observe — in its "post-methods era". Extensively rewritten, lengthened by about 100 pages, and divided into 3 parts, this second edition reflects in its extensive revisions the many developments that second or foreign language teaching has seen since 1986. Nevertheless, the new book also retains much the same format as the original.

Now with updated reference lists, Chapters 1 through 4 from the first edition make up Part 1. Readers only interested in investigating particular methods are recommended not to skip Chapter 2, which is still arguably the most important one in the book. Here the authors seek to "clarify the relationship between approach and method and present a model for the description, analysis, and comparison of methods" (p. 18). Revising the model originally proposed by Anthony (1963), the authors define a method as consisting of three

elements: approach, design, and procedure. An *approach*, in their conceptualization, refers to a method's associated theories about language and learning. *Design* refers to the organization of these theories in objectives, syllabus, types of classroom activities, and the roles envisioned for teachers, learners, and instructional materials. *Procedure* is the realization of a method's approach and design in classroom teaching practice. "Thus a method is theoretically related to an approach, is organizationally determined by a design, and practically realized in a procedure" (p. 20).

Thereafter, with the exception of Chapter 3 (which combines the Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching), each method is dealt with in a separate chapter, which begins with an informative discussion of the method's theoretical and historical background. Any roots the method may have in psychology, education, or linguistics are also identified. Following the descriptive model outlined in Chapter 2, the method's approach, design and procedures are then examined, with the latter typically receiving a relatively short treatment. Since "few methods are explicit with respect to all of these dimensions" (p. 32), the authors seek where possible to elicit the "missing" elements or subelements from the literature. For example, in the chapter on Communicative Language Teaching they usefully name three principles that comprise its theory of learning: the principles of communication, of task, and of meaningfulness.

The conclusion to each chapter notes the characteristics of the approach or method that has either aided or abetted its wider acceptance. In addition, the authors here attempt to categorize the chapter's subject as either an approach or a method, which is where an understanding of their descriptive model becomes important in order to avoid confusion for the reader. They state, for example, that "[Neurolinguistic Programming] is not a language teaching method" (p. 130) and "Communicative Language Teaching is best considered an approach rather than a method" (p. 172). What is meant according to their definitions, of course, is that these methods are *incomplete at the level of design*, and are thus best thought of as approaches. (For the purpose of this review, however, I use the terms method and approach interchangeably.)

Part 2 of the book focuses on methods that do not currently enjoy widespread use and that, for the most part "were either developed outside of mainstream language teaching or represent an application in language teaching of educational principles developed elsewhere" (p. 71). Here we find shorter treatments of the original chapters devoted to the so-called designer methods of the 1970s and 1980s: Total Physical Response, Silent Way, Counseling Learning, and Suggestopedia. In addition, there are new chapters devoted to the relatively unproven language teaching approaches and methods of today, namely, Neurolinguistic Programming, Multiple Intelligences, Whole Language, Competency-Based Language Teaching and the Lexical Approach.

The chapters that make up Part 3 describe modern communicative approaches. I would argue in passing that the original chapter on CLT, presented here with updated references, remains the best part of the book. It provides an insightful overview of the messy and sometimes conflicting collection of principles and ideas that together constitute the dominant paradigm in language teaching. We are also presented with detailed and well-written accounts of approaches that share many of the basic principles of CLT, including the original chapter on the Natural Approach, as well as new ones devoted to Cooperative Language Learning, Content-Based Instruction, and Task-Based Language Teaching. Like all of the chapters in the book, they are highly readable and thoroughly referenced. Surprisingly, however, there is no discussion of many of the "hot" topics in second or foreign language teaching, such as the impact of computers or focus on form.

The conclusion has been rewritten with a discussion of the "post-methods era", highlighting the factors that tend to limit the shelf life of methods that are explicit at the level of design and procedure. These methods prescribe a set of practices that are viewed as universally applicable, and which therefore tend to ignore contextual factors and research evidence that may throw their claims into question. Acknowledging that novice teachers initially require the specific guidance offered by a well-defined method, the authors believe that teachers should be encouraged to creatively adapt and combine various methods and approaches: "As the teacher gains experience and knowledge, he or she will begin to develop an individual approach or personal method of teaching, one that draws on an established approach or method but that also uniquely reflects the teacher's individual beliefs, values, principles, and experiences" (p. 251). The book closes with a list of factors that will shape language teaching into the future, though it does not make any solid predictions.

The authors state that this book is intended "to give the teacher or teacher trainee a straightforward introduction to commonly and less-commonly used methods, and a set of criteria to critically read, observe, analyze, and question approaches and methods" (p. ix). As we have seen, given the comparatively cursory treatment to procedure, the authors are not concerned with training readers in applying any particular methods or approaches. Thus, while this book may help trainees choose a method to get them through their initiation period in the language classroom, they will have to learn the actual teaching techniques elsewhere. Based on this point, I argue that trainees may find the conclusion found in the first edition more helpful, as it provides suggestions for factors to consider in choosing an appropriate method for a particular teaching situation.

Turning to their choice of content in the second edition, the authors have definitely emphasized breadth over depth. Counting the brief treatments given to Grammar Translation and the Direct Method, there are nineteen methods

covered here in just over 250 pages, which can be read easily within a week or two. The methods given the longest treatment — those found in Part 3 — are only about twenty pages long. Thus, teacher educators using

identification of characteristics that contribute to a method's longevity allows the readers to make their own predictions. Most teachers experience periods when established techniques seem to lose their effectiveness, or become too predictable. The book is not designed to create converts to any particular approach, but the succinct and dispassionate treatment given here to a wide variety of methods can provide teachers with new perspectives on their teaching at every level.

What we have then with this second edition is essentially a condensed text/reference book that does a commendable job of illustrating the distinctions among the various theories and priorities that underlie a wide range of methods and approaches in second language teaching. This book may be of limited practical use to new teachers. However, I would suggest it to teacher educators who require supplementary resources to fill in the details ignored by practical course books. I would also recommend this book to teachers seeking either an improved understanding of the methods they use now, or suggestions for new directions to explore.

eferences

Anthony, Edward. 1963. "Approach, method, and technique." *English Language Teaching Journal* 17:63–67. [Reprinted in Harold B. Allen and Russell N. Campbell (eds.), *Teaching English as a Second Language: A Book of Readings*. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill International.]

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