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An Analysis of Three Approaches to Grammar with Recommendations for a Multiphasal Grammar

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AN ANALYSIS OF THREE APPROACHES TO GRAMMAR WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A MULTIPHASAL GRAMMAR

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This thesis is approved as a creditable and independent investigation by a candidate for the degree, Master of Arts, and is acceptable as meeting the thesis requirements for this degree, but without implying that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

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FOREWORD

Modern man is a product of biological evolution, but he is also a product of language. Over millions of years, man evolved, slowly, haltingly, from the single-celled protozoa through a vast number of increasingly complex creatures, whose ability to survive was great but whose ability to think was meager, into an animal capable of developing speech and culture. So long as the evolution of modern man relied on biological change, it was slow; but when human development came to rely more on social change than on biological change, more on new knowledge and new ways of thinking than on more brain cells and opposable thumbs, man evolved faster and faster. Man can now think more than he has before because he has more to think with and more to think about. The knowledge explosion proceeds at a dizzying speed. There are more great scientists and scholars living today than in all the previous centuries combined, and more highly literate men than in any previous society. And the pace is accelerating.

Through science, technology, education, and communication, man is increasing and refining culture in all parts of the world, and his basic tool is language. Obviously, then, we must know more about language, the invention with which man made himself "human." We must know more as students of language and as citizens of the modern world, for language is both a subject of study in itself and the means of gathering, analyzing, and disseminating information in all fields.[1]

[1]Charlton Laird and Robert M. Gorrell, eds., Introduction entitled: "Man, Mind, and Language," Reading About Language (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), p. 23.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A significant challenge has been presented to all who are in any way involved with language study. The challenge is based on what Dr. W. Nelson Francis describes as "a long overdue revolution . . . in the study of English grammar--a revolution as sweeping in its consequences as the Darwinian revolution in biology."[2] Particularly does this challenge concern the teaching of English, because "it presents the necessity of radically revising both the substance and the methods of . . . teaching."[3]

Because we are in a time of increasing political, social, and technological complexity, educators must strive for condensation and simplification of their methods in order to give the student all the skills, the knowledge, the perceptions, and the principles that he needs to cope with such complexity. Teachers of English are not exempt from this requirement. School grammar, in fact, stands at the crossroads of complexity and simplicity, of the old and the new, of the half-right and the accurate, and just what to do with it has created quite a stir among modern linguistic scholars.

[2]W. Nelson Francis, "Revolution in Grammar," in Readings in Applied English Linguistics, ed. Harold B. Allen, 2nd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1964), p. 69.

[3]Francis, p. 69.

School grammar as most students know it

> . . . is the result of a necessity to prescribe something in order to prevent administrative chaos, and to provide the vaguely competent teacher with something to say. It has moved further and further away from the reality of the language and closer and closer to a set of inflexible rules designed to preserve the language from debasement. Although its aims were altruistic, its methods were so far from being realistic that school grammar has only succeeded in debasing itself.[4]

Today the teacher is confronted with three approaches to the teaching of grammar, all of which contain useful concepts; it is the major contention of this study that the best of each of these approaches may be the desired choice. It is the intention of this paper to propose a multiphasal grammar and to show that such a grammar seems to be the ultimate direction for the teaching of the English language. This multiphasal grammar will combine the best of the three approaches: the most useful and logical elements of traditional nomenclature; the structuralists' emphasis on the sound of language, based on the three mechanisms of intonation: pitch, stress, and juncture, as well as their attitude toward uniform correctness; and the transformational approach to syntax.

This author believes that a multiphasal grammar will be more teachable, more efficient, and better received in the public school than the grammar, basically traditional, that is being taught today. For decades, the word grammar has had a distasteful connotation. Teachers as well as students find the study of grammar boring and

[4]Joseph Aurbach et. al., Transformational Grammar: A Guide for Teachers (Washington, D.C.: English Language Services, 1968), p. 4.

generally unproductive through no fault of the subject matter; rather the fault lies in antiquated and basically inadequate techniques and approaches.

According to Aurbach, teachers often claim to lack interest in theories of language; instead they are concerned only with methodology and with teaching linguistic dictates by rote.

> But this is a dangerous admission. It suggests . . . that teachers are so "ignorant" of language that they think there isn't any theory: that teachers think language is so different from other disciplines that no theory is necessary; that teachers think that any native speaker of a given language is a competent teacher of that language, etc. No self-respecting chemistry teacher would say that he is only concerned with the applications of chemistry, not with its theory. We send people to graduate schools to study other modern languages in theory before we allow them to teach those languages. While it is true that school grammar has been so little a real subject, . . . we do recognize that language has some kind of underlying theory and that language study can be interesting. The tragedy has been that American students have generally discovered that fact only when they have undertaken the study of a foreign language.[5]

With a revised theory of grammar that begins with the language itself, teachers will have to familiarize themselves with it both theoretically and practically in order to teach it. Grammar from the point of view of the traditionalists is too limited for today's student. A teacher must get involved with the whole act of communication and be prepared to teach it thoroughly so that the student will be able "to communicate most effectively in the context of the culture within which he will be expected to operate."[6]

[5]Aurbach, pp. 8-9.

[6]Aurbach, pp. 8-9.

It is hoped that those involved in teaching, particularly those who have been trained in the traditional methodology, will be able to break away from using an unsatisfactory system and to turn toward the utilization of a multiphasal system for the benefit of the student. This multiphasal grammar should bring the way in which grammar is taught into harmony with the description of the language provided by twentieth century linguistic research.

In order for there to be a common ground for understanding, a list of definitions of terms is provided--a list that includes grammar as it is considered by a variorum of accepted critics, as well as a definition of the term as it is used in this paper.

Following these definitions, this chapter presents a brief discussion of the history of the English language and grammar as background for historical material presented in subsequent chapters. Chapter II presents a history of traditional grammar; Chapter III, a history of the structural approach; and Chapter IV, a history of transformational grammar.

DEFINITIONS

> Grammar is not a set of definitions or a handbook of language etiquette. It is an intricate system of recurring structural patterns.[7]

[7]Verna L. Newsome, "Preface," Structural Grammar in the Classroom (Oshkosh, Wisconsin: Wisconsin State College, 1962), p. iv.

> The system of organization of any language is the grammar of that language. Various means may be used to analyze and sort out the grammar or system of any given language.[8]

> A grammar is no more than a theory of language which attempts to account for what speakers of that language do with it. A grammar may be said to be "good" or "bad" in direct proportion to the exactness with which it accounts for linguistic events.[9]

> The first thing we mean by "grammar" is the set of formal patterns in which the words of a language are arranged in order to convey larger meanings. . . . call it "Grammar 1."
>
> The second meaning of "grammar" --call it "Grammar 2" --is the branch of linguistic science which is concerned with the description, analysis, and formulization of formal language patterns.
>
> The third sense in which people use the word "grammar" is "linguistic etiquette." This we may call "Grammar 3."[10]

Obviously, there is more than one acceptable concept of the term grammar. In this paper grammar will be used for the most part to mean the description of the language, and multiphasal grammar will then mean that description which most accurately represents the language as it is used today and which draws on selected materials from the three most common approaches to grammar today, namely, the traditional, the structural, and the transformational.

[8]Jeanne H. Herndon, A Survey of Modern Grammars (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 4.

[9]Aurbach, p. 6.

[10]Francis, p. 70.

History of the English Language and Its Grammar

For a complete, detailed, and informative discussion of the history of the language, see Jespersen's Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin, 1964. For purposes here, a briefer historical discussion is more appropriate, particularly since this study subsequently focuses attention primarily on the fact that traditional grammar did not grow out of or with the developing language, but was arbitrarily imposed upon it.

There is no positive knowledge of whether languages derive from a single common denominator or from several. It is known, however, that of all the languages and dialects spoken, most of them can be placed into historically related groups, usually described as "families." English has been labelled as a member of the Indo-European family of languages. "It is now generally held that the Indo-European home was in central or southeastern Europe, though some scholars contend that it was farther to the north."[11]

The Indo-European family has two distinguishing features: all of its languages are inflectional in structure, and they have a common word stock.

> The term inflectional means that such syntactic distinctions as gender, number, case, mood, tense, and so forth, are usually indicated by varying the form of a single word or word-base.

[11]Stuart Robertson and Frederic G. Cassidy, "The Ancestry of English," First Perspectives on Language, ed. William C. Doster, 2nd ed. (New York: American Book, 1969), p. 27.

> Thus, in English inflection, we add -s to a noun base to differentiate the plural from the singular, or -ed to a verb base to indicate past tense. English inflection uses endings almost entirely, though . . . inflection may come also at the beginning of words or within them.[12]

Spoken English is divided into three major periods: the Old English Period, A.D. 450-1066; the Middle English Period, 1066-1500; the Modern English Period, 1500-the present. The Old English scholars were neither concerned with too much analytical dissection of their language nor with a systematized organization of vocabulary; therefore any structural knowledge of the language of this period has been deduced basically from a few English translations of works in other languages, a few written records, and a scarce amount of Old English literature.[13]

English was created out of an accumulation of dialects, all of which differed both geographically and socially. An intense investigation has been done on one of these dialects, that of the West Saxon area, spoken during the latter half of the ninth century, and located in the southwest corner of the island. Due to the wisdom of Alfred the Great (West Saxon ruler, A.D. 871-899), there exists a rich collection of old English writings based on the literature, history, and language of Alfred's people. This period made use of the Runic alphabet and later incorporated Roman symbols. It was a tremendously inflected period, more so than either of the next two. The verbs were

[12]Robertson and Cassidy, p. 31.

[13]Herndon, p. 29.

either weak verbs which had past and participle forms made by adding dental suffixes to the stem form; or strong verbs which had past and participle forms that involved changing the vowel in the root verb. As for syntax, word order was varied; inflectional labels determined relationships, but there was no formal order as there is in Modern English.

The Middle English Period was greatly influenced by the conditions resulting from the Norman Conquest. The primary feature of the first half of this period was the progressive extinction of the Old English inflectional systems; the primary feature of the latter half of the period was the evolution of the London dialect as standard English. Scholars use the language of Chaucer as a basis for comparing the Old English language and the Modern English language with this middle period. Specific qualities were headlined by very irregular spelling and distinct and dramatic pronunciation, which heavily emphasized the final -e on all words. With the increased loss of inflection, the responsibility for order within the sentence began to fall on the shoulders of the function of the individual word. Word order was not, as yet, clearly defined, but there was the beginning of a conventional syntax.[14]

With the invention of the printing press and the popularization of education, a standard dialect became a necessity. Also, with an increase in communications and open trade both within England and between England and other countries, English became a more versatile

[14]Herndon, pp. 41-46.

language. While the scholarly languages remained Latin and Greek, English translations of all printed matter were vastly available.[15]

From the 1500's on, English experienced a tremendous rebirth. Most important was the Great Vowel Shift which involved changes in the pronunciation of the long vowels in English. The Shift took approximately 250 years to complete, but once complete, efforts to improve the language were centered on attempts to establish some grammatical rules. Because scholars were so deeply involved with Latin, they spontaneously applied Latin grammar rules to Modern English, thus giving the traditional language its (as Herndon describes it) decidedly Latinate flavor.[16]

Once a set of formal rules for English was established, a program of English instruction within the schools was created. The original program, with a few necessary changes, is still being used today, and is commonly referred to as traditional grammar. By looking first at this traditional grammar, two important points can be learned: first, it provides an analysis, though somewhat arbitrary and inadequate, of the basic grammar of the language; and second, it presents the same problems that faced teachers and grammarians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as well as of the twentieth century.[17]

[15]Herndon, p. 46.

[16]Herndon, p. 47.

[17]Herndon, p. 51.

Herndon has cited the goals of the teachers of the 1400 and 1500's as:

1. Establishing for English a position of dignity and respect among the languages of the Western World.
2. Establishing ground rules for the standard or prestige dialect which was the social goal of the parents of their students.
3. Devising methods of presenting the facts of English grammar that would be most efficient for both teacher and students.
4. Organizing the study of English grammar for English speaking students.[18]

Herndon presents the problems of these teachers and grammarians as:

1. The fact that for centuries "grammar" had been synonymous with Latin grammar, the knowledge of which was the mark of the educated man.
2. Schools were becoming open to greater numbers of students from the lower and middle classes, with education serving as a means of upward social mobility. For the new masses of students, the study of English grammar was not so much an objective study of the communicative skills of man as it was a utilitarian mastery of the kind of language that would enable them to succeed educationally, socially, economically, and politically.
3. Since Latin grammar was a part of the curriculum of English schools, the terminology and the methods of discussing Latin grammar were already understood and respected by teachers and were a part of every student's educational life.
4. Teaching Latin was simply a matter of presenting established, unchanging rules of a "dead" language, that is, one not spoken by any people as their everyday medium of communication and, therefore, not subject to shifts in meaning and usage. Teaching English was a matter of presenting the rules for a language that the students themselves knew and used daily with a wide range of individual differences. A living, changing language is much harder to pin down, especially for native speakers who bring other convictions about that language and other language habits into the classroom with them.[19]

[18]Herndon, p. 51.

[19]Herndon, pp. 51-52.

The traditional school grammar was based on "the commonly known Latin grammar for terminology and method, the prestige of recognized English writers and poets for criteria of usage and meaning, and the lever of social pressure for establishing themselves [the teachers] as arbiters of English grammar."[20]

It is possible for students today to see how these criteria were chosen. As Herndon points out, students first of all could deal with both Latin and English, using the same terminology and the same rules-for-grammar plan of attack. The harmful action done to English grammar was in the irrational degree to which English was juggled to harmonize the existing distinctions between Latin and English.[21]

Second, because certain social, economic, and political factors had brought about a prestige dialect, the teachers were not to blame at this particular point. What indeed they did deserve blame for was putting into textbooks rigid and fixed rules based on a one-time acceptable standard, while custom and usage continued to change.[22]

Third, since there had never been an effective argument against the use of these rigid rules to satisfy a classroom situation, it seemed only logical and simple to have students memorize vigorously "notional definitions of parts of speech and grammatical constructions" regardless of the fact that they "often were circular and uncertain

[20]Herndon, p. 52.

[21]Herndon, p. 52.

[22]Herndon, p. 53.

and subject to great numbers of 'exceptions.'"[23] Of course, such logic was arbitrarily imposed on the student, unfortunately too often to the student's disadvantage.

Twentieth century linguistic research has begun to present a solution to the problem of an inadequate grammar for classroom use. The remaining chapters explore the best features of three grammars to propose adoption of a trend which appears to be in the making.

[23] Herndon, p. 53.

CHAPTER II

THE FUNCTION OF TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR IN A MULTIPHASAL GRAMMAR

Of the three modes of grammar to be examined, the traditional grammar is undoubtedly the most commonly known and the most widely used system of grammar. Without negating the fact that within the traditional grammar many variables do exist, a basic scheme can be projected from which some logical discussion can come about. Because the vocabulary of any area of learning makes available all the experience of the past with that area, it is fortunate that the best element of traditional grammar is its nomenclature, one that is logical and meaningful enough to be utilized in any new description of the language. Because this nomenclature is familiar, it provides the scholar with just the right vocabulary to both praise and attack traditional grammar. First, however, before either praise or attack be launched, a brief outline of the history of traditional grammar reaching back beyond the origins of English is in order. Such a history will reveal its philosophy, its origin, its strengths, and its weaknesses.

To the Greeks, who originated the term, grammar included both the study and the art of language. Additions to this definition came from various sources. The Alexandrian grammarians (356-323 B.C.) assimilated into the art of grammar what is now recognized as philology, literary criticism, rhetoric, and linguistics. In the first century

A.D., Quintilian, the Roman rhetorician, initiated the process of specialization by dividing grammar into two specific areas--the study of literature from a broad spectrum and the study of correct speech and correct writing as a specialized science.[24] Significant is this concept of correctness, a concept that has haunted linguists and grammarians from Quintilian to those of today, and still haunts the English classroom.

The first definitive set of so-called "parts of speech" was designed by Aristotle, the Greek philosopher (384-322 B.C.). He created a set of four parts of speech--noun, verb, conjunction, and article--and explained them as follows:

Noun: "a sound significant by convention, which has no reference to time, and of which no part is significant apart from the rest."

Verb: "that which, in addition to its proper meaning, carries with it the notion of time. No part of it has independent meaning, and it is a sign of something said of something else."[25]

Conjunction: literally "ligament," . . . a non-significant sound serving to connect two or more significant sounds; it includes not only the regular connectives . . . but also particles . . . later . . . classified as prepositions.

Article: literally "joint," . . . a non-significant sound serving to mark the beginning, end, or dividing-point

[24]Charles V. Hartung, "The Persistence of Tradition in Grammar," Readings in Applied English Linguistics, ed. Harold B. Allen, 2nd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1964), p. 16.

[25]Aristotle, De Interpretations, trans. E. M. Edghill, in Hartung, p. 18.

of a sentence; it includes words . . . later to be . . . personal and relative pronouns.[26]

Aristotle's definitions gave a sound beginning to grammatical reasoning based on logic. For example, with his description of noun, he concentrated on the semantic properties of the word, and for reasons of logic, authorities point out that Aristotle considered only the nominative form to be a proper noun.[27]

After Aristotle, the Greek philosophers, particularly the Stoics (a group founded by Zeno c. 308 B.C.), became deeply involved in grammar. The most tangible contributions were made by the Alexandrian grammarians and were presented by Dionysius Thrax (c. 100 B.C.), in his Art of Grammar, considered by scholars as the first complete text of Greek grammar and as tremendously influential among published grammars.[28] In fact, it was probably the basis for all modern school grammars.[29] Thus, the classical mold to which English grammar was to be subjected begins here.

Dionysius is credited with making the methodology of grammar an analytical procedure. He increased Aristotle's four parts of speech to eight and included definitions for both word and sentence:

[26]Aristotle, De Poetica, trans. Ingram Bywater, in Hartung, p. 19.

[27]Hartung, p. 20.

[28]Hartung, p. 20; Otto Jespersen, Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin (London: George Allen & Urwin, 1964), p. 20.

[29]Bonfante Giuliano, "Grammar," The Encyclopedia Americana, 1958 ed., 13 (New York: Americana Corporation, 1958), p. 114.

Word:	the smallest part of an ordered sentence.
Sentence:	a combination of words expressing a thought complete in itself.
Noun:	indicates a concrete body, 'stone,' or an abstract thing, 'education,' and is characterized by case and number.
Verb:	lacks case, admits tense, person, and number, and indicates action and passion.
Participle:	shares the properties of both nouns and verbs with the exception of person and mood.
Article:	capable of inflection similar to a noun and is distinguished also by its syntactical position preceding the noun.
Pronoun:	indicates definite persons and serves as a substitute for the noun.
Prepositions and Conjunctions:	serve syntactical functions as connectives.
Adverbs:	uninflected parts of speech defined by relations to the verbs.[30]

Although Dionysius expanded the definitions of parts of speech, using formal, lexical, and syntactical criteria, it is not easy to be totally grateful for his contributions because he was not consistent in applying these criteria to all of his eight parts of speech. Instead, he arbitrarily applied the criteria wherever he wanted. A careful screening of the Dionysian framework of classification will show that it is perfectly beautiful for describing Greek, and scholars note that Greek was the language on which it was based.[31] Unfortunately this Greek-based framework was ultimately used to teach English; thus we have the continuation of an arbitrary imposition of foreign grammar on English.

[30]"The Grammar of Dionysius Thrax," trans. Thos. Davidson, in Hartung, p. 20.

[31]Hartung, p. 21.

Following Dionysius, there actually was not much change effected in grammar until the Port Royal Grammarians (c. 1660), literary men of considerable influence--Jansenists--who headquartered at the Port Royal Court near Versailles.[32] These men approached grammar from a scheme of logic. Their works were a description of language-states, and their program was meticulously synchronic. Saussure (Swiss savant, 1740-1799), went as far as to say that the Port Royal Grammar attempted to characterize the state of French under Louis XIV and to specify its value.[33]

Claude Lancelot's Grammaire Generale et Raisonne (c. 1685) is the most common example of Port Royal grammar. Lancelot adhered to the belief that "particular languages are individual forms taken by an underlying oneness common to the race."[34] He pursued this idea of universality, which can be traced to the ancients; Lancelot's followers, then, were stimulated by the linguistic environment existing in Western Europe throughout the Middle Ages:

> Latin was the vehicle of learning, the vernacular was the vehicle of commerce and daily living. Even after full dignity was accorded to each of the common languages and Latin was no

[32]William Rose Benet, "Port Royal," The Reader's Encyclopedia (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1948), p. 871.

[33]Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics, trans Wade Baskin, eds. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 82.

[34]Dwight Bolinger, Aspects of Language (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), p. 185.

> longer regarded as superior--well into modern times--the sense of community among European scholars persisted.[35]

The Port Royal grammarians had this "strong sense of community" and thus were very influential among scholars. Ultimately their work, particularly their methods of syntax, spilled over into English school grammar. By characterization, Port Royal grammar was a system in which:

> . . . purely formal elements of accidence and syntax as well as the lexical properties of words are not considered essential. The verb, for example, is defined as a word whose principal function is to signify affirmation, and definitions based on formal and lexical criteria are dismissed as false. . . . By such reasoning the Port Royal grammarians discounted the importance of form and lexical meaning as criteria for defining the parts of speech, and pointed up the importance of the logical relationships of words in the structure of thought.[36]

It is evident that their approach had merit, but was not complete.

The greatest competitor of the Port Royal theory of logical relationships was Dionysius, whose ideas were maintained in the Latin grammars. The reasons why Latin grammar tended to dominate the scene were as follows:

> Whereas the Port Royal grammarians were interested primarily in demonstrating the general philosophical functions of linguistic form, practical grammarians were concerned mainly with devising prescriptive rules that would provide a guide to usage. For this reason they preferred simple categorical statements supported by examples of correct and incorrect usage to abstract reasoning based on principles of logic.[37]

[35]Bolinger, p. 186.

[36]Hartung, p. 22.

[37]Hartung, p. 23.

Again, the concept of prescriptions concerning right and wrong is apparent.

Bishop Lowth (c. 1790), was the next important figure among designers of grammatical analysis, and he was dominant in linguistic circles for over one hundred years. He was a practicalist and followed a very elementary Latin grammar system. Critics claim that Lowth's definitions for the parts of speech were even more simple than any in the Latin grammars. Perhaps Lowth elected simplicity because of the basic simplicity of the English scheme of inflections; Lowth could, and did, therefore, omit references to inflections and did omit an account of the morphological or logical properties of parts of speech. He based his definitions on the most minimal of lexical and syntactical criteria. Despite the lack of strength in his definitions, which appear merely as labels provided for the organization of prescriptive statements, Lowth's definitions have prevailed as the standard definitions most regularly applied in the school grammars, even to the present.[38]

Lowth's grammar was prevalent for over one hundred years. Finally, in 1891, a new text was able to break through what has been referred to as "the midsummer madness of grammar" in the nineteenth century. The text was A New English Grammar by Henry Sweet (1845-1912), founder of modern phonetics. Sweet's basic premise was that the first duty of the linguist was to observe. He worked empirically, and although he did adopt the parts-of-speech approach to the methodology

[38]Hartung, p. 23.

of grammar, he preached that no part of speech, not even the verb, could be assumed for all languages.[39]

It should be underscored that Sweet implanted the scientific spirit into English grammar. He was influenced by the Port Royal grammarians; thus, his was an analytical description of the language-based parts of speech defined by form, function, and meaning. The only problem with Sweet was that he was not consistent; he did things conveniently and arbitrarily.[40] This process of arbitrary determination of what English grammar should be so that it never described the distinctiveness of a living English is what has made traditional grammar inadequate. Scholars have found that while Sweet analyzed the parts of speech by means of form, function, and meaning, he did not even pretend to keep the categories separated. He also was known for not discriminating the logical properties of discourse from grammatical and semantic properties. Sweet discusses the logical uses of the noun under <u>form</u>, those of the adjective under <u>meaning</u>, and those of the verb under <u>function</u>. Sweet justified his arbitrary choices by saying that language is an imperfect instrument of thought.[41]

Perhaps Sweet could justify his inconsistencies to himself and to part of his public, but not to everyone. Otto Jespersen (1920's)

[39]Simeon Potter, <u>Modern Linguistics</u> (New York: W. W. Norton, 1964), p. 99.

[40]Potter, p. 60.

[41]Hartung, p. 24.

was one not so easily convinced. Jespersen developed a grammar, The Philosophy of Grammar (London, 1924), in which he placed a great deal of emphasis on formal criteria particularly relevant to individual languages, as he proceeded to reveal many of the inadequacies of traditional grammar. Jespersen agreed with Sweet on using the three categories of form, function, and meaning, but Jespersen did not place much value on specific definitions for the various parts of speech. He believed there could be no satisfactory classification of words based on short, easily applied definitions; rather, he believed that there could be satisfactory empirical evidence with which to identify word classes. He then went into a detailed examination of the particular principles of classification, discovering that:

> Man is a classifying animal: in one sense it may be said that the whole process of speaking is nothing but distributing phenomena, of which no two are alike in every respect, into different classes on the strength of perceived similarities and dissimilarities. The classifying instinct often manifests itself in bringing words together in form which have something in common as regards signification. . . . . and sometimes it is impossible for us to say in what way the likeness in form has come about: we can only state the fact that at a given time the words in question have a more or less close resemblance.[42]

To summarize Jespersen, one would say that his theories involved keeping minimal emphasis on the classification of parts of speech and maximum emphasis on the study of formal criteria in grammatical analysis. Actually he pioneered in the linguistic study that foretold the so-called new linguistics.[43]

[42]Jespersen, p. 389.

[43]Hartung, p. 26.

The twentieth century has seen many of these "new linguistic" scholars since Jespersen. A complete listing of these eminent philosophers would not be suitable for the purposes of this study. Instead, it presents a limited number of academicians whose traditional rationale focuses primarily upon the parts-of-speech approach to grammar. This author is very much concerned with the traditional parts-of-speech approach, particularly as it is being taught in American classrooms today, because it may be doing an extreme injustice to the students as well as to the grammar. Consequently, the next consideration is logically an evaluation of both the weaknesses and the strengths of traditional grammar.

What is the major weakness of the traditional parts-of-speech approach? If a brief look at the history of this tradition is not enough to make apparent the reasons for its inadequacies, then a few pointed remarks will be offered. First of all, the formal, traditional English grammar which is currently taught in many American schools, is actually an outgrowth of the formal Latin grammar used by schoolmasters in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The schoolmasters of two hundred years ago can perhaps be justified, but a strict program of Latin-based grammar in the American schools now seems nothing more than an illogical imposition of an arbitrary system upon helpless students. Francis explains:

> . . . The grammarians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who formulated the traditional grammar of English looked for the devices and distinctions of Latin grammar in English, and where they did not actually find them they imagined or created them. Of course, since English is a member of the Indo-European family of language, to which Latin and Greek also belong, it did have many grammatical elements in common with them. But many of

these had been obscured or wholly lost as a result of the extensive changes that had taken place in English--changes that the early grammarians inevitably conceived of as degeneration. They felt that it was their function to resist further change, if not to repair the damage already done. So preoccupied were they with the grammar of Latin as the ideal that they overlooked in large part the exceedingly complex and delicate system that English had substituted for the Indo-European grammar it has abandoned. . . .[44]

Herndon agrees with Francis that English grammar is Latin-based. However, she brings up another important point--the establishment of a need for correctness:

When the first grammars of English were written, decisions as to which forms and constructions were subject to approval or rejection were usually based on analogy with Latin forms and constructions. Having elected to utilize the terminology of Latin grammar, early writers of English grammars chose also to adopt the logical principles of Latin grammar. Where English usage differed from Latin usage, it was presumed to be wrong, to need correction. . . .[45]

A frequently cited illustration by Herndon and many others to explain correctness is this:

English word order places objects after verbs in simple statements. English speakers therefore commonly used the objective form of the first person pronoun when making the simple statement, "It's me." Grammarians were quick to point out that the first person pronoun referred to the logical subject of the statement and, on the basis of this logic, the form demanded was the nominative and the correct statement was, therefore, "It's I."[46]

It is almost universally known that classroom textbooks in grammar emphasize the need for correctness in the various areas of

[44]Francis, "Revolution in Grammar," p. 72.

[45]Herndon, p. 61.

[46]Herndon, p. 61.

spelling, pronunciation, and punctuation as though correctness were a matter of law and order. The emphasis on correctness has lingered for more than two centuries because the textbooks

> . . . fell into the hands of schoolmen who perpetuated them as stylebooks--not as records of what speakers did but as models of what speakers, especially schoolboys, ought to do. Where usage differed from the books, usage was corrupt. So traditional grammar drew farther and farther away from language, as it was, and more and more it became a policeman of correctness.[47]

How awkward it must be for an English teacher to go into the classroom with a theory of grammar that is outdated and sometimes inaccurate. In a time when freedom is a major issue among students, how can a teacher expect the students to accept a grammar that allows no freedom at all. Many teachers are aware of deficiencies in their approach, but avoid doing anything about them; they, therefore, spend time on literature and perspiration on grammar. Maybe a three-week unit of repetitious grammar consisting of spelling and vocabulary is created out of necessity in the high school, but usually very little time is spent studying the traditional grammar. As Bolinger says:

> To anyone who has gone through a language course since the early 1950's, "traditional grammar" doubtless has a bad sound. Textbooks and teachers using supposedly up-to-date methods in teaching foreign languages or English mention traditional grammar either unfavorably or not at all; it embodies, for them, all the outmoded practices of reciting grammatical paradigms, translating to English instead of learning to speak, and worrying about what language ought to do rather than what it does.[48]

Saussure was, in his day, also critical of traditional grammar:

[47]Bolinger, pp. 186-187.

[48]Bolinger, p. 185.

> Traditional grammar neglects whole parts of language, such as word formation; it is normative and assumes the role of prescribing rules, not of recording facts; it lacks overall perspective; often it is unable even to separate the written from the spoken word . . . .[49]

Selecting one grammatical system in preference to any other is a task requiring much research by the teacher, but it is a task that must not be avoided. Herndon eloquently describes the situation, "Many teachers find the task of emptying the ocean of modern grammatical 'errors' with the teaspoon of traditional rules to be both frustrating and doomed to ultimate failure--some even question the desirability of doing so."[50] Fortunately, those in the field of linguistic research are desperately trying to make the teacher's task less problematic. Constantly the field is being widened with new discoveries and techniques, all aimed at a more effective way of describing and teaching the grammar of English. Hopefully someday soon there will be a sufficient answer. Before the structural approach is studied, it then behooves us to look at what is good about the traditional familiar nomenclature and concept of parts of speech.

It is cumbersome to break from tradition, any tradition, even though to do so would perhaps be extremely advantageous. In traditional English, the parts-of-speech approach has more than two thousand years of practical application behind it, plus the support of the majority of teachers and students of linguistic methodology. How is such a record to be erased? The answer is not to erase it, but to

[49]de Saussure, p. 82.

[50]Herndon, p. 61.

add to it, if not in the same way, then in a more relevant way--by taking the very best from the old and incorporating it with the new. What is there that is best about the traditional grammar; what does it have that has enabled this grammar to survive the tests of time? It has a nomenclature which has twofold value: first, it is familiar; and second, it is intrinsically meaningful. In discussing the first category of familiarity, Sumner Ives says:

> To a person whose habits have been developed in the intellectual climate of Western culture, a division of the words in his vocabulary into the traditional eight parts of speech makes a kind of sense. These categories seem to have a kind of logical validity arising from the nature of human thought.[51]

Despite all the inadequacies and shortcomings of the traditional grammar, this powerful nomenclature has been its redeeming force among the challenging modern grammars. Because of the familiarity of the nomenclature, many modern grammarians hesitate to claim superiority for their terminology because the new expressions often create chaos in a learning situation. The period of adjustment, for both the student and the instructor, is unnecessarily lengthened by unfamiliar nomenclature, simply because neither party can easily accept something new over something old. Modern grammarians are continually trying to overcome this stumbling block. If the traditional nomenclature is applied in the modern techniques, both the student and the teacher are able to make a much smoother transition in accepting the new

[51]Sumner Ives, "Defining Parts of Speech in English," Introductory Language Essays, ed. Dudley Bailey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), p. 145.

approach and subsequently whatever new terminology is needed. During the transition, the strength of familiarity is enough to both sustain and encourage the student to pursue his grammatical inquisitions.

The traditional nomenclature alone makes meaningful to the modern scholar all that has been written about English usage and rhetoric during the centuries of development of what may be the most sophisticated of modern languages. If scholars and researchers do not retain some of the old terminology, all this heritage will eventually be difficult to understand and interpret. The fact that the traditional nomenclature is intrinsically meaningful is best proved by example. The term noun (Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, College ed., 1968) comes from the Latin nomen, meaning name. When a student thinks of something that generally names something else, he can also think of a noun. He does not have to think of a noun as abstract, collective, common, compound, concrete, derivative, diminutive, material, participial, primary, proper, or simple, but, just as a namer. With pronoun, the thinking process is much the same. Originally from the French pronom and Latin pronomer, pro, for + nomen, noun, a pronoun is considered as something which can be used instead of a noun. Again the student need not at the outset consider a pronoun as any of the adjectival, adverbial, demonstrative, distributive, emphatic, indefinite, interrogative, personal, possessive, reciprocal, reflexive, or relative pronouns, but just as that slotfiller that can substitute for a noun. With the part of speech known as a conjunction the thinking process is again the same. Conjunction comes from the Latin conjunctio, the past

participle of conjungere, which is derived from com meaning together, and jungere, meaning to join. "In grammar, a conjunction is an uninflected word used to connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences; connective . . ."[52] The student need only apply the idea of something that connects or joins other things together, and he will be able to apply the term conjunction in any grammatical situation.

What does verb imply? Originally verb came from the Latin verbum meaning a word; "in grammar, verb is any of a class of words expressing action, existence, or occurrence. . . ."[53] It is traditionally a part of speech "which asserts, declares, or predicates."[54] Since the verb is one of the two most important words in the sentence, this is a logical name for what it represents, much more logical than the structuralist name--form class 2.

What does transitive imply? The term comes from Latin, transitus, the past participle of transire; trans-, over, across + ire, to go, and is defined as "expressing an action that is thought of as passing over to and taking effect on some person or thing."[55] This is exactly what the transitive verb does and therefore the student finds his explanation of the transitive verb in the term itself. The same

[52]Webster's, p. 310

[53]Webster's, p. 1618.

[54]"Verb," March's Thesaurus and Dictionary of the English Language, p. 1138.

[55]Webster's, p. 1547.

thing applies to the term intransitive which merely means not transitive.

Although Latin grammar was imposed arbitrarily on the English language and continued to be used in this country through the efforts of the nineteenth century school teachers and regardless of the fact that it is inadequate as a description of English, much of the nomenclature should be retained because of its built-in meanings. Furthermore, it does make readily available and meaningful the linguistic scholarship of the past. There is another consideration. Perhaps the use of traditional nomenclature, alongside the new nomenclature and adapted to it, will ease the tensions existing in linguistic and educational circles.

CHAPTER III

THE FUNCTION OF STRUCTURAL LINGUISTICS IN A MULTIPHASAL GRAMMAR

In order to appreciate any of the contemporary approaches to grammar, the scholar and teacher of grammar must keep in mind that he may not wish to eliminate all of the traditional methodology, but to be selective and particular about what is retained. It might be helpful to refer to Bolinger who said:

> Traditional grammar was at its best in describing the inflections, idioms, and sentence forms of particular languages, especially the differences from language to language in Europe; this had a practical purpose too, for it put the emphasis on what had to be learned if one already knew French and wanted to study Italian. . . . But there were weaknesses . . . the weaknesses stemmed from the fact that traditional grammar was neither empirical nor experimental. It assumed that language was a system embodied in the writings of the best authors, something to be sheltered from change. . . .[56]

This "sheltered from change" idea was the chief fallacy of traditional grammar, because it neglected an important fact about language--that it is spoken, spoken by human beings who are always subject to change; thus language is always in the process of change and its spoken qualities cannot be ignored in a description of the way in which it operates--in other words, its grammar.

The basic premise of the modern grammarians has been to make the approach to grammar one that fits a spoken language. They do not

[56]Bolinger, p. 186.

say that written English is to be neglected, but that any accurate description of the language must not neglect the spoken forms. An interest in the structure, the form, the sound, and an accurate description of the language as it is used by the speaker rather than an interest in the correctness and perfection of the writer has been the spark lighting a fire within the twentieth century grammarians and causing them to realize how unfair the past arbitrary impositions of prescriptive rules for correct grammar have been on those who were speaking the language more and writing it less.

This interest in the spoken language began approximately in 1910 and is credited to American anthropologists who were studying the culture of American Indians. Franz Boas and Edward Sapir are the two men most noted for their anthropological studies in linguistics. Boas was a German-born anthropologist who spent most of his life studying American Indian cultures. He recognized very early in his career that "the language of a culture was its most distinctive creation."[57] Sapir, Boas' student, has been considered by various authorities as "one of those rare men among scientists and scholars who are spoken of by their colleagues in terms of genius."[58] Boas, Sapir, and their colleagues were interested in the shape of the language rather than a set of grammatical rules and explanations that had turned English, a living, growing language, into a deformed offshoot of Latin, a dead language. They discovered that the way to arrive at the grammar of a

[57]Bolinger, p. 190.

[58]Bolinger, p. 191.

language is by listening to it--transcribing it--and discovering its patterns--its built-in characterists. They went to the Indians to record what might be a dying language and discovered the methods by which English should be analyzed and described.

Now, how did these men arrive at this logical and long-delayed conclusion? Because the Indian languages were dying out, these men determined to record them before they were completely gone. To their astonishment, these scholars discovered intricate language systems, some even more highly inflected than Greek, and all made up of highly complex sound structures involving the "human articulatory apparatus" in ways never before imagined.[59]

While working specifically with the Athabaskan family of American Indian languages, Edward Sapir (Language, 1921), came to the realization that a Latin-based grammar was no longer feasible for a vastly changing American language; instead, some kind of structural approach needed to be devised. Sapir was struck very forcibly with this when he discovered that he just could not use Latin grammar when he tried to "record, analyze, and describe" the Indian languages.[60] If Latin grammar was inadequate for Indian languages, could it not be equally inadequate for other languages?

[59]Paul Roberts, "Foreword," A Linguistics Reader, ed. Graham Wilson (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. XV.

[60]Charles C. Fries, Linguistics: The Study of Language (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), pp. 60-61.

Soon scholars like Roberts were pointing out the inadequacies of the Latin-based grammars. Two quotations from Roberts seem relevant here:

> . . . the grammars were mostly amateurish, dashed off by people who did not in fact devote their lives to the nature of language or think very seriously about it. They often gave wholesome advice on how to use who and whom, but they did very little to illuminate the structure of English. . . .[61]

> . . . You can describe Italian pretty well on the Latin model, and maybe you can get by describing English that way if you don't mind quite a few grotesqueries, but when you come to Algonquian, Potawatomi, and Kechua, Latin is largely irrelevant. You have to work out the structure without much help from traditional studies. . . .[62]

Coinciding with the early anthropological studies of the structure of our language was the work of missionaries. Their studies are regarded as equally valuable to the advent of structuralism. An obvious notion has been pointed out by the scholars--that being, "If one wishes to convert a people to Christianity, it is, if not indispensable, at least highly desirable to acquaint them with the Bible, and this means translating the Bible into their language, and that means learning their language."[63] The missionaries, of course, made it their business to learn the Indian languages, and their efforts added tremendously to both the knowledge of world languages and to the technique of language description.

[61]Roberts, "Foreword," p. XVI.

[62]Roberts, "Foreword," p. XVII.

[63]Roberts, "Foreword," p. XVII.

In addition to missionary and cultural endeavors, scholars of language have contributed to language description and are also credited with the ultimate birth of this "special academic discipline" known as structural linguistics.

Before looking at an analysis of structuralism, it is well to note two distinguishing characteristics about this approach: first, structuralism concentrates primarily on the spoken language and only secondarily on the written language; second, the attitude of the structuralists toward correctness is completely different from the attitude of the traditionalists. Both these qualities will be developed shortly. But this author wants to interrupt the train of thought momentarily in order to share some opinions by Dr. Verna L. Newsome, who is a noted structural linguist and highly regarded by her colleagues. She lists some weaknesses of traditional grammar that will be referred to from time to time. Newsome represents fairly the majority of structural linguists and their best thought.

Newsome: "Some Weaknesses in Traditional Grammar"

1. The usual definitions of the eight parts of speech are unsatisfactory. Some definitions are circulatory and vague; moreover, there is no single criterion for classification. Nouns and verbs are classified according to meaning; pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions according to function; and interjections according to emotional intensity.

2. Definitions based upon meaning are not only vague but unverifiable because there is little assurance that a word has the same meaning for everyone. . . .

3. The shift from meaning to function in defining pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions creates the difficulty of overlapping categories.

4. An adjective is defined as word that modifies a noun or a pronoun; and an adverb as a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Hence, in the sentence, "My brother's classmate visited five state parks last summer," brother's and state should be classified as adjectives and summer as an adverb. Logically, then, my and last must be adverbs because my modifies an adjective and last an adverb. However, most grammarians would call my a pronoun in the possessive case and last an adjective. On the basis of semantics, . . . the words brother's, state, and summer qualify as nouns because they are name words. Which classification is to take precedence--function or meaning?

. . . . . .

The inexactness of the pronoun definition has made it necessary to resort to lists of the different kinds of pronouns: personal, interrogative, relative, demonstrative, and indefinite--a vast omnibus group including all pronouns which do not fit into any category.

5. Definitions based on function should reveal structural relationships, but frequently they are too vague and abstract to do so. For example . . . . The definition of a conjunction as a word that connects words or groups of words in a sentence does not clearly differentiate it from a preposition. . . . In the sentence, "He walked through the park," through seems to meet the requirements of a conjunction by connecting walked and park.

6. Though these familiar definitions based upon meaning and function are useful in describing parts of speech, they do not clearly distinguish each part of speech from every other part of speech as true definitions should do. Interjections, introducing a third category--intensity of emotion--overlap most other parts of speech: "Heavens!" (noun); "Fine!" (adjective); "Look!" (verb); "Certainly!" (adverb).

7. The customary semantic definition of a sentence as the expression of a complete thought cannot be tested because of the uncertainty of what a complete thought is. Then, too, many sentences get part of their meaning from what precedes or what follows.

. . . . . .

The classification of sentences as declarative, interrogative, and imperative names the functions of these types of sentences but does not describe their variant structures or the different responses which they elicit from the listener.

8. The history of English grammar accounts for most of its shortcomings, for its terminology and concepts are based upon Latin grammar, a fairly accurate description of that highly inflected language but ill-adapted to English with its limited inflections. It was natural that the earliest English grammarians should have used Latin grammar as a model, since throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance grammar was a generic term which meant Latin grammar. But it was unfortunate that English should have been forced into that Procrustean bed where it has writhed through the years.[64]

This author completely agrees, particularly with the last comment, and hopes to show what has been done by the structuralists and the transformationalists to take grammar out of its Procrustean bed and into its Promethean stage.

This list of weaknesses of the traditional approach indicates rather strongly that the only logical move would be to try correcting or eliminating them for the sake of the student in today's classroom. Obviously the student can not work effectively with them as they are. The structuralists made an attempt at new definitions in hopes that theirs would provide a more workable criteria for understanding how the language sounds. They felt their definitions would be better for the student because by understanding the sounds of his language, the student could use it to a greater extent. Although many grammarians agree with studying of the sounds, they are not so sure that they fully agree with the structural definitions that follow. They prefer perhaps the structural approach to the sound system, with explanations based on traditional nomenclature. Students of grammar and teachers must keep in mind at all times the number one reason that encouraged

[64]Newsome, pp. 3-4.

structural study--to learn how the language sounds, rather than how the language is written. If teachers can maintain an awareness that language is always spoken before it is written, then they surely will be more adequately fulfilling their duty to their students instead of arbitrarily imposing a grammar on them that they themselves do not fully believe in.

The first differentiating factor about structural linguistics is that all the formulas evolve from the basic concept of the phoneme. Roberts describes the phoneme as "a bundle of similar sounds which seem identical to the native speaker of the language but which may sound dissimilar to a speaker of a different language."[65] Structural linguistics, then, is composed of two branches: phonology and grammar. Phonology involves studying the specific sounds uttered by the speakers of the language; grammar involves both morphology, the structure of specific words, and syntax, the structure of specific groups of words. Newsome explains this more clearly:

> . . . individual sounds follow certain patterns in combining into units to form words or smaller elements from which words are built. Words, in turn, are arranged in recurring patterns to form syntactic structures. Together these word patterns and syntactic patterns form a multi-layered structure, which constitutes the interlocking grammatical system of a language.[66]

The structuralists believe that if one could understand the sounds of his language, then he could use the language to communicate more efficiently. By approaching language analytically, teachers could more

[65]Roberts, "Foreword," p. XVIII.

[66]Newsome, p. 4.

positively demonstrate a system of grammar to their students than has been previously possible when teachers used the unintelligible parts of speech and the obscure ideas of meaning and function.[67]

It seems reasonable to believe that when a student learns to understand the sound system of his language, he will understand the grammar of his language more easily. This he is not able to do with traditional grammar which does not provide any means of thought coordination for the student. There are too many "exceptions" in the parts-of-speech approach and not enough "building blocks" provided for the student to proceed logically from a thought, to a vocalized sound, to a word, to eventually, an organized sequence of words that communicate his original thought.

Modern grammarians have tried to create a pattern of building blocks for the student. The structuralists begin with vocalized sounds and call them phonemes:

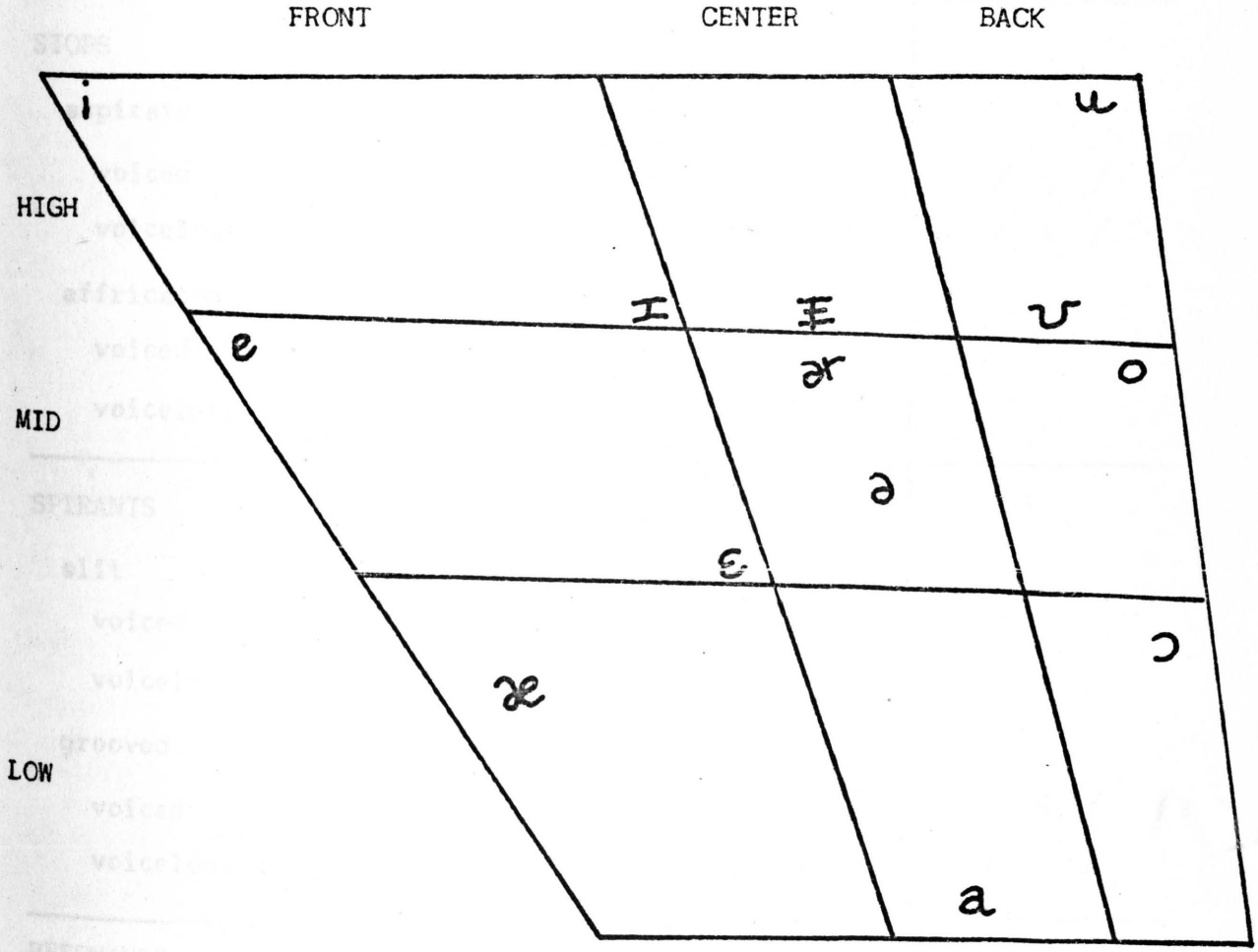
> . . . speech sounds that signal a difference in meaning. Consider . . . the words dime and dine. They sound exactly alike except for the /m/ and the /n/, yet their meanings are different. Therefore it must be the /m/ and /n/ which make the difference in meaning, and these two . . . are thereby established as English phonemes.[68]

There are thirteen vowel phonemes and twenty-four consonant phonemes in our language. The students may still recognize them all by the basic 26 letters of the alphabet, but the 37 phonemes are much more descriptive of the actual sounds of the language. (See following charts.)

[67]Laird and Gorrell, p. 211.

[68]Stageberg, Norman C. An Introductory English Grammar (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), p. 8.

CHART OF ENGLISH VOWEL PHONEMES[69]



[69]Stageberg, p. 16.

CHART OF ENGLISH CONSONANTS AND THEIR PHONETIC SYMBOLS[70]

	FRONT	MIDDLE	BACK
STOPS			
aspirated			
voiced	/ b /	/ d /	/ g /
voiceless	/ p /	/ t /	/ k /
affricated			
voiced		/ ʤ /	
voiceless		/ ʧ /	
SPIRANTS			
slit			
voiced	/ v /	/ ð /	
voiceless	/ f /	/ e /	/ h /
grooved			
voiced		/ z /	/ ž /
voiceless		/ s /	/ š /
RESONANTS			
lateral (voiced)		/ l /	
nasal (voiced)	/ m /	/ n /	/ ŋ /
median (voiced)	/ w /	/ r /	/ y /

[70]Ralph M. Williams, Phonetic Spelling for College Students (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 8.

From the phonemes which signal isolated sounds that have no meaning in themselves, structuralists proceed to those sequences of sounds that do have meaning in themselves, or morphemes. Traditionally morphemes are known as words or parts of words such as roots, suffixes, and prefixes. By definition, a morpheme is:

> . . . a short segment of language that meets these three criteria:
>
> 1. It is a word, or part of a word that has meaning.
> 2. It cannot be divided into smaller meaningful parts without violation of its meaning or without meaningless remainders.
> 3. It recurs in differing verbal environments with a relatively stable meaning. . . . Morphemes are of two kinds, free and bound. A free morpheme is one that can be uttered alone with meaning. For instance, . . . "Eat" . . . is a free morpheme. A bound morpheme, unlike the free, cannot be uttered alone with meaning. It is always annexed to one or more morphemes to form a word. . . . a few examples . . . pre-view, play-ed, activ-ity, super-vise, con-, -vene.[71]

Modern linguists believe that if word structure is presented to the student through the use of phonemes and morphemes, the student can achieve a higher degree of personal manipulation of his language than he could from knowing only the traditional parts-of-speech approach. These linguists also prefer the structural parts-of-speech approach because it covers more information and is more logically detailed than the traditional eight.

From the structural morpheme the linguist proceeds to the structural form-classes, which still retain traditional nomenclature and are known as the form-classes of noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. When presenting these form-classes to students, teachers may describe

[71]Stageberg, p. 87.

them as "large," "open," and "hospitable to strangers;" any new word may enter the English language as a member of one of these classes, and usually the first group selected is that of the noun form-class. Each form-class also has its correlative position class; the position classes are respectively labelled nominal, verbal, adjectival, and adverbial. The traditional part of speech known as pronoun is categorized by structuralists not as an individual form-class but as a small, closed subclass of nouns. Pronouns are given both nominal and adjectival positions, and the class is closed because there are only eight pronouns and no other words, new or old, will ever be pronouns.[72]

> Pronouns are limited to eight words on the basis of their inflections: the seven personal pronouns--I, we, you, he, she, it, they--and who. All but you and it have objective forms: me, us, him, her, them, and whom. Five of these pronouns have two possessive forms: my/mine; our/ours; your/yours; her/hers; their/theirs. The possessive form which precedes a noun is called a noun-determiner; "my book, your pen, their rights." The possessive form which appears without a noun is called a pronoun: "This is mine, ours, yours, hers, theirs."[73]

It is interesting to note again the retention of traditional nomenclature for the parts of speech, although this was not done by the first structuralists. Stageberg says the reasoning behind the retention is that, "As native speakers we already have an operational command of the parts of speech."[74] This supports the strength of familiar nomenclature discussed in the previous chapter.

[72]Stageberg, pp. 195-196.

[73]Newsome, pp. 6-7.

[74]Stageberg, p. 191.

Structuralists work with two more parts of speech: verb-adverbial composites and qualifiers. By definition, those forms are identified as follows:

> A verb-adverbial composite consists of two words, a verb followed by an adverbial like up, down, in, out, over. There are two kinds, intransitive and transitive . . .[75]

> The qualifier position is the one just before an adjectival or an adverbial. . . . uninflected words like very, quite, and rather can be called qualifiers; and when an inflected word like pretty and mighty appears in the same position, consider it a qualifier by position. . . .[76]

Up to now this chapter has discussed only the form-class parts of speech. Structuralists also have structure classes--small, closed groups that rarely gain new membership. Three structure classes are recognized as the traditional auxiliaries, prepositions, and determiners. The fourth structure class is known as qualifiers. All of these classes recognize their members only in terms of position, because none of them have characteristics of form in common.[77]

These structural definitions seem much more logical than the traditional definitions of the eight parts of speech, and students will readily accept them as so because of their natural description of English rather than their being some arbitrary translation of Latin grammar into English. Students, under the structural system, learn to listen to what they are saying and to formulate meaningful sequences of thoughts from two major word categories--form-class words and structure-class words. Perhaps the following example will better

[75]Stageberg, p. 220.

[76]Stageberg, pp. 226-227.

[77]Stageberg, p. 226.

illustrate both kinds of word classes: "That old stone house on the hill which was built by my grandfather has been sold recently."[78] Those nine words that are underlined are structure words, and the remaining eight words are form words, namely adjectives, nouns, verbs, and adverbs.

Another facet of the structural approach to grammar, which this author believes is very important and worthwhile, yet which is neglected by the traditionalists, is the use of pitch, stress, and juncture--all features of intonation and all three signals for the student to apply in order to sound out and understand a sequence of thoughts. Stress is extremely important in classifying words. There are four main kinds of stress in English, ranging from weakest--minimal stress--to strongest--primary stress. They are usually charted as follows:

Primary, marked by the acute accent /ˊ/
Secondary, marked by the circumflex accent /ˆ/
Tertiary, marked by the grave accent /ˋ/
Weakest, or zero, marked by a breve or left unmarked /˘/

A one-syllable word in isolation has primary stress: Jóhn, gó, dóg. Words of more than one syllable may have any combination of primary, tertiary, and weakest stress: àccĭdéntălly; bĕgínnĭng; cònstĭtùtĭon-álĭty; cúnnìnglў. Secondary stress, infrequent when a word is cited in isolation, usually occurs in a structural group of words. For example, a secondary primary stress pattern is characteristic of a word modifier of a noun plus a noun (unless that modifier is a noun-determiner) in contrast to a primary tertiary stress pattern, which

[78]Newsome, p. 6.

distinguishes a compound noun. If the following paired structures are read aloud, the differences in stress will be apparent:

Modifier plus Noun	Compound Noun
˘ a blue bird	˘ a bluebird
˘ a green house	˘ a greenhouse[79]

Norman C. Stageberg agrees with and supports in theory the thesis of Newsome, but his definition of stress is a little different. Stageberg describes stress as referring to the degree of prominence a syllable has. In any utterance there may be as many degrees of stress as there are syllables, but many of the differences will be slight and even imperceptible. Stageberg makes a distinction between individual words and word groups and sentences. With the individual words, he applies only three stresses: primary / ´ /; mid stress / ` /; and weak / ˘ /, all of which are illustrated by the word legendary: légĕndàry. For word groups and sentences, he applies four stresses, adding to the three former, a secondary stress / ^ /.[80] Stageberg's mid stress for words is the same as Newsome's tertiary stress.

Stageberg goes on to discuss what many English words have, a shifting stress. He explains that in isolation or before weakly stressed syllables, these words have a primary stress on the last syllable, like unknówn. But when they are used before a stressed syllable, this primary stress is shifted toward the front of the word, as in: The ûnknòwn thíef is still ùnknówn. In the first unknown of

[79]Newsome, p. 10.

[80]Stageberg, pp. 44-48.

the sentence, front-shifting has occurred because of the primary stress on thief. The stress on un- has been demoted from primary to secondary, but this syllable still has the strongest stress in the word, in contrast with the second unknown.[81]

Paul Roberts defines stress as follows:

> Stress is simply the loudness or softness with which we utter the different syllables in the speech stream. . . . For instance, if we use the word subject as a noun, we pronounce the sub louder than the ject: What's the súbject? But if we use it as a verb, we pronounce it as a verb, we pronounce the ject part louder: We'll subjéct him to an examination.[82]

Roberts applies the same four stress signals that Newsome uses (see previous listing) and justifies the importance of stress as a nonsense-preventing mechanism. Without an organized stress pattern, the results could be chaotic. He uses the example of a writing desk. There is nothing at all odd about receiving a "wríting dèsk" for Christmas; but there is much surprise at the gift of a "wrîting désk."[83]

Pitch is the second feature of intonation. It is created from the vibration of the sounds as they are emitted from a human mouth. A fast vibration, equivalent to at least 800 times a second, is

[81]Stageberg, p. 45.

[82]Paul Roberts, "Intonation," Introductory Readings on Language, eds. Wallace L. Anderson and Norman C. Stageberg, 3rd ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 424.

[83]Roberts, "Intonation," p. 424.

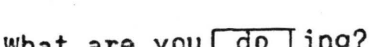
considered high pitch; a slow vibration, equivalent to about 200 times a second, is considered a low pitch.

Pitch is perhaps the most commonly known of the intonation features because those people who are able to hear are also able to recognize the difference between a man's and woman's voice and between an adult's and a child's voice. What is not commonly known is that every speaker, no matter at what level of speech he speaks, makes use of "four contrasting pitch points or pitch phonemes." The various levels of pitch are classified by number rather than name, and are arranged on a scale of 4 to 1, with 4 being the highest level. Roberts explains:

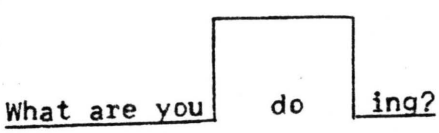
> We can also indicate them by drawing lines above and below the letters. A line just over the letters means pitch /3/; a line well above the letters means pitch /4/; a line just under the letters means pitch /2/; and a line well below the letters means pitch /1/.[84]

The simplest examples to understand are again taken from Roberts:

> . . . The sentence "What are you doing?" could be said in several ways, but the most common way would be to begin on pitch /2/, to stay on that until the stressed syllable is reached, to rise to /3/ on the stressed syllable, and then to fall to /1/. Like this:

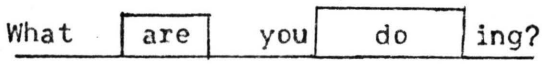


> . . . One could put a note of panic into the question "What are you doing?" by rising to the fourth pitch instead of the third:

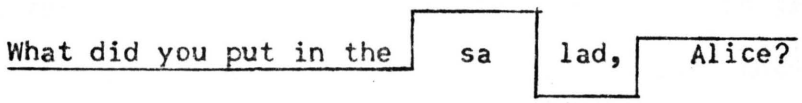


[84]Roberts, "Intonation," p. 425.

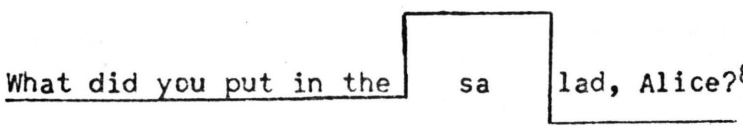
Or if one is just sort of exasperated with the other person and what he's doing, he might say:



Often we make jokes by deliberately using the wrong pitch. Here's one:



In place of:



The last or third feature of intonation is juncture, which is a way of breaking or stopping the speech flow. There are four kinds of juncture, it is important to note, as there are four stresses and four pitches. Specific names for each juncture are derived from those symbols which are used to signify each juncture:

The first juncture is called plus juncture because it is marked with a plus sign: / + /.

The second juncture is called single bar juncture. It is marked with one upright line or bar: / | /.

The third juncture is called double bar juncture. It is marked with two upright lines: /|| /.

The last juncture is called double cross juncture. It is marked with two crossing lines: / # /.

Plus juncture is a special kind of break between phonemes. It is the difference between I scream and ice cream. . . . it breaks up the phonemic flow and makes words, although the phonemic words are not always identical with the ones we commonly write. The other junctures come at the end of groups of words. These

[85]Roberts, "Intonation," p. 426.

> junctures are closely tied up with stress and pitch. If a sentence has only one primary (loudest) stress, then we won't have any junctures inside the sentence. But if we have two primary stresses, then we will have a single bar or double bar juncture between them. . . . Double bar juncture corresponds more or less to a comma in writing. Double cross juncture is a slight drop in pitch. . . . its usual place is at the end of a sentence. By and large, double cross junctures in speech correspond to semicolons and periods in writing.[86]

What merit is there in the structural approach to grammar? He who seeks the answer must look directly at the fact that this approach deals primarily with the sounds of language and tries to make the student aware not only of why he says things, but how he says things; the student is made aware of how the sounds of his language can be manipulated to form the most logical patterns of grammar.

Ferdinand de Saussure gives a statement that summarizes the main premise of structural grammar:

> Language might be called the domain of articulations. . . . Each linguistic term is a member, an articulus in which an idea is fixed in a sound and a sound becomes the sign of an idea. Language can also be compared with a sheet of paper: thought is the front and the sound the back; one cannot cut the front without cutting the back at the same time; likewise in language, one can neither divide sound from thought nor thought from sound; the division could be accomplished only abstractedly, and the result would be either pure psychology or pure phonology.[87]

The beginning of this chapter indicated that the structural approach to grammar involved two ideas: first that language was spoken before it was written and therefore should be studied according to sounds rather than print; second, language should not be considered in

[86]Roberts, "Intonation," pp. 427-428.

[87]de Saussure, p. 113.

terms of right or wrong, correct or incorrect, because language is produced by human beings who can never be always "correct." Perhaps with Saussure's last comment, there has been enough said about the former point; a few more remarks are still in order, however, about the latter point. Paul Roberts has this to say:

> The debate about correctness has been with us much longer than the debate about structure, but it seems no nearer conclusion. The difficulty seems to be at least partly a matter of misunderstanding, for which linguists are . . . partly to blame. For one thing, linguists use the terms "correct and "incorrect," but their usage departs considerably from the common one. By "incorrect English" a linguist is likely to mean such a mistake as might be made by a foreigner or a child learning the language. Thus both "I it bought" and "I buyed it" are incorrect sentences. But a linguist, as a linguist, would not say that "I done it" or "I brung it" are incorrect sentences. They are correct in relation to the dialects in which they occur, and the question of whether the dialects are admired in the nation as a whole is a sociological, not a linguistic, question.[88]

Hulon Willis, a structural grammarian interested particularly in composition, believes that the traditional imposition of correctness is damaging to student writing. Willis argues:

> By concentrating on variations in usage rather than on the whole of sentence structure, the grammar-approach has led to the belief that choosing the "correct" form . . . is the key to good writing. Such a belief is not only false but downright harmful, for it hinders a student's progress in composition by diverting his attention from the much more important aspects of sentence composition: clarity, precision, and maturity. Good writing requires reasonably standard usage, but standard usage will not by itself make writing good.[89]

[88]Paul Roberts, "The Relation of Linguistics to the Teaching of English," Readings in Applied English Linguistics, ed. Harold B. Allen, 2nd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1964), p. 400.

[89]Hulon Willis, Structural Grammar and Composition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), p. 17.

This author completely agrees that stressing "correctness" is harmful. To be preferred in the classroom would be the application of all that is sound and valuable from the traditional nomenclature, the structural approach to the sound system of the English language, and the transformational approach to syntax, which shall be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

THE FUNCTION OF TRANSFORMATIONAL GRAMMAR IN A MULTIPHASAL GRAMMAR

A progressive linguistic movement based on the structuralist approach maintained itself until the early 1950's. Then, to use the words of Bolinger, "signs of restiveness began to disturb the calm of structuralism and by the end of the decade were blown into a storm."[90] What were some of the underlying causes for this upheaval? First, European linguistic scholars, as a result of research in the United States, had found a somewhat common ground for communicating to American scholars more easily and more frequently than before the results of their own linguistic research. Second, there was an increasing communication between linguists and psychologists, mathematicians, logicians, and communications engineers. Such communication led to the discovery of a need for a more scientific approach to grammar, particularly because certain flaws in the structuralist program were becoming apparent. The following queries were arising:

1. Why should the sequence of phoneme-to-sentence, which might be useful for an anthropological linguist or for a missionary facing a tribe of hostile Indians, necessarily have any relevance to linguistic theory? Why not assume an interrelated system that is simply "there" and no part of which can be fully understood without a grasp of the whole? In diagramming it or writing a description of it one might want for the sake of convenience to scan up or down (most formal

[90]Bolinger, p. 200.

representations look as if they proceeded from more inclusive or less inclusive), but no priority would be implied. Some structuralists were quite willing to go along with this criticism.

2. Why should it be necessary to dig up--or even expect to be able to dig up--an audible structural signal for every linguistic class? Why not accept the intuition of native speakers, in whose speech linguistic classes are seen to agree in subtle ways even though there is no apparent physical basis for the agreement, and carry on from there? That is what traditional grammar had always done, and it seemed to work, perhaps because it was close to the inwardness of language.

3. Why should the basis of linguistic theory be so narrowly defined that it could draw only upon those things that emerged from the field work carried on by linguists, avoiding universals as if they did not exist, and fearing abstract concepts just because they had once been used--and abused--by old-fashioned Latinizing grammar? Other sciences would have been paralyzed without abstract theory.

4. How could a frame so confined as that of immediate constitutents be expected to fit comfortably around the whole of syntax, when there are many important relationships that escape it? The classic example is the relationship between the active and the passive voice: George sees Mary, Mary is seen by George. An immediate-constitutent analysis of these two sentences tells nothing about their underlying kinship.

5. Why should all the energies of linguists be spent in gathering more and more examples? The younger linguists had harsh words for specimen-grubbers. It seemed to them that we already had a superabundance of scattered facts and now it was time to fit the facts into a system.[91]

One man in particular took it upon himself to answer these questions and give to linguistic scholarship a wide range of scientific principles from which a theoretical, yet accurate, description of the language could come about. This man was Noam Chomsky, who developed a generative-transformational theory of language (Syntactic Structures, The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1957). For purposes here, this formal

[91]Bolinger, pp. 200-201.

linguistic theory shall be called simply transformational grammar. Chomsky, who received his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania, has been described as the linguistic Galileo, Lavoisier, and Freud.[92] Chomsky picked up where the structuralists left off; "structural linguistics started with phonology and worked up, so to speak, toward syntax, but it didn't always arrive."[93] Chomsky began with syntax, the order by which sentence units are organized into sentences.

While the "structural linguists were more or less successfully portrayed as champions of an anything-goes school of language,"[94] Chomsky and his proponents created an aura of sophisticated scientific discipline for the school of language. Goodman explains the difference between the two approaches in this way, "Structural grammar attempts to give rules for automatically analyzing arbitrarily given sentences. By contrast, transformational grammar gives rules for producing or generating sentences automatically. In so doing, it assigns each generated sentence an analysis."[95]

In designing the transformational approach, Chomsky employed eight assumptions about what is involved in the description of a language. These are presented in summary form by Owen Thomas:

[92]Roberts, "Foreword," p. xx.

[93]Roberts, "Foreword," p. xviii.

[94]Roberts, "Foreword," p. xx.

[95]Ralph M. Goodman, "A Look at Transformational Grammar," An Introductory English Grammar, ed. Norman C. Stageberg (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), p. 287.

1. The native speaker of English is a fertile source of examples of his own language. To limit him to a corpus other than himself is to sacrifice a change for much valuable information. Every grammarian knows this, whether his theory suggests it or not.

2. Our frequent inability to manipulate properly any but the simplest English structures shows that we are not invariably grammatical in any meaningful sense of the word.

3. If we stop our analysis after describing the phonology, morphology, and syntax, we have perhaps organized our materials; but we have not produced a grammar. A grammar must specify the sentences in a language.

4. The sentence, rather than the sound, is the natural and proper place to begin work on a grammar.

5. Methodology, far from being a machine for discovering truth, is only a tentative way of looking for it. The scientist finds truth by hypothesis and deduction, and frequently cannot even describe the steps by which he has arrived at it.

6. No one has ever shown any statistical correlation between frequency of occurrence and grammatical importance. Fortunately few of us ever use such simple minded sentences as Dogs bark. These can be found in beginning language texts, and grammatically they are of great importance because they are usually kernel sentences around which elaborate statements are built.

7. Language can be considered binary only at certain levels.

8. The attraction of economy suggests that we think of A dollar was found by him as being structurally related to He found a dollar.[96]

From these eight points, it can be surmised that transformational grammar is favorably applicable for classroom use because first, this grammar advocates that each user of a language must be able to shape it to his own needs and purposes by a process of transformation and generation; and second, that the user of a language needs an

[96]Owen Thomas, "Generative Grammar: Toward Unification and Simplification," A Linguistics Reader, ed. Graham Wilson (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 193.

understanding of how to transform a finite number of sentences into an infinite number, since needs for and purposes of language, as well as ideas to be expressed by language, are, after all, infinite--never finite.

The 1950's, as previously indicated, is a good starting point for a discussion of the history of transformational grammar. Prior to Chomsky, most linguistic research was conducted strictly in the vein of the structuralists. What inspired the theories of the 50's was the discovery of limitations of the structural approach in the field of syntax. While the sounds of language were being analyzed to the point of excellence, there was nothing sufficient to take the sound structure into the sentence structure--there were only "examples and hints concerning the regular and productive syntactic processes."[97]

Chomsky indicates an awareness of this deficiency when he says:

> A fully adequate grammar must assign to each of an infinite range of sentences a structural description indicating how this sentence is understood by the ideal speaker-hearer. This is the traditional problem of descriptive linguistics, and traditional grammars give a wealth of information concerning structural descriptions of sentences. However, valuable as they obviously are, traditional grammars are deficient in that they leave unexpressed many of the basic regularities of the language with which they are concerned. This fact is particularly clear on the level of syntax, where no traditional or structuralist grammar goes beyond classification of particular examples to the stage of formulation of generative rules on any significant scale.[98]

Chomsky continues:

> . . . by a generative grammar I mean simply a system of rules that in some explicit and well-defined way assigns structural

[97]Noam Chomsky, Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1967), p. 5.

[98]Chomsky, pp. 4-5.

> descriptions to sentences. Obviously, every speaker of a language has mastered and internalized a generative grammar that expresses his knowledge of his language. This is not to say that he is aware of the rules of the grammar or even that he can become aware of them, or that his statements about his intuitive knowledge of the language are necessarily accurate. Any interesting generative grammar will be dealing, for the most part, with mental processes that are far beyond the level of actual or even potential consciousness; furthermore, it is quite apparent that a speaker's reports and viewpoints about his behavior and his competence may be in error. Thus a generative grammar attempts to specify what the speaker actually knows, not what he may report about his knowledge.[99]

One can juxtapose these last two opinions of Chomsky by noting that his ultimate grammatical goal is the formulation of a system that reflects the actual knowledge of the speaker-hearer about the structure of his language. He would prefer this system to the traditional methodology which is deficient in its recognition of the language structure.

Robert P. Stockwell was one of the earliest exponents of Chomsky. He provides an excellent interpretation of the generative school of linguistics for the teacher, and this author would like to share some of his discussion. Stockwell begins by explaining, "the distinguishing claim of Chomsky's group is . . . that a generative grammar should be of a certain form--namely, a type of rule known as a 'transformational rule.'"[100] Stockwell explains further:

> The object of investigation of grammatical studies is sentencehood in natural languages. . . . To say that a

[99]Chomsky, p. 8.

[100]Robert P. Stockwell, "The Counterrevolution: Generative Grammar," Reading About Language, eds. Charlton Laird and Robert M. Gorrell (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1971), pp. 217-218.

> descriptive account of the grammar of a language is "generative," therefore, is really to say no more about it than that it provides an explicit enumeration of its own claims about the structure of that language--such claims as what the sentences of the language are, what the internal structure of each sentence is, how each sentence is realized phonetically, how each sentence is interpreted semantically, which sentences are interpreted similarly, which ones are interpreted differently in spite of surface similarity, and so on--through a wide range of information about sentences that is clearly available to speakers and necessary for their understanding of the language.[101]

The value of transformational (generative) grammar then seems to lie in giving the user all the tools for effecting an optimum use of the language.

Chomsky was looking also for a grammar that would associate language with human behavior. He worked under the premise that "ordinary, everyday communication in language--virtually every such act of communication--is a creative performance by rules of . . . abstractness and complexity. . . ."[102]

This chapter mentioned earlier that Chomsky made a scientific discipline out of the study of grammar. How did he accomplish this? As Stockwell interpreted, Chomsky concentrated on "sentencehood" and found the following to be true:

> There are exceedingly tight restrictions on what arrangements of words are possible in sentences. The grammatical study of a particular language is the attempt to characterize these restrictions in detail for that language. . . . For the statement of such restrictions to be of scientific value, it must be absolutely explicit: it must make clear exactly what properties of the grammar of the language are covered by the descriptive account itself, as distinct from what information an intelligent human user of an <u>in</u>explicit description can

[101]Stockwell, p. 218.

[102]Stockwell, p. 222.

> infer about the language . . . . It seems obvious that this property, the property of explicitness and therefore of potential empirical validation, is the least that can be asked of a scientific theory.[103]

All along, this study has been discussing transformational grammar as a descriptive approach to "sentencehood." Also, this author has tried to make it explicit that this approach is the most scientific method of the three. The transformational grammarians may rightfully claim their grammar scientific because of the precise, systematic organization with which they analyze sentence construction, namely their formulas or rules, the latter being defined as: ". . . a method or principle of action, or a common or regular course of procedure. . . . not . . . an authoritative direction or enactment. The rules are not orders to be obeyed but descriptions of parts, patterns, and processes that can be observed in actual English sentences."[104] Perhaps it is only fair to say at this point that the transformationalist has all along used traditional nomenclature and reworked much of it to serve his own purposes. Furthermore, he denies none of the best features of structural linguistics.

Aurbach provides further clarification of the Chomsky rationale:

> Syntax is concerned with the order in which the smaller units of language are arranged into sentences. For example, morphemes and words are combined in certain patterns and through certain processes to form phrases, and phrases are combined into larger units called kernel sentences. We can rearrange the order of the items in a kernel sentence, add, delete, or substitute items, or combine two or more kernels to form more complicated sentences called transformations. Most of the sentences in English are transformations. The word syntax is a label for the arranging

[103]Stockwell, pp. 218-219.

[104]Aurbach, p. 18.

and combining of units, as a matter of fact, the word comes from the Greek, syn- meaning together, and tassein meaning to arrange.

> The smaller units must be arranged systematically into certain patterns if they are to form grammatical English sentences. It is these patterns and processes which are the subject matter of grammar as the linguist views it. There are two kinds of patterns: basic and transformed; . . . . The patterns of basic sentences are described by . . . kernel rules. The patterns of transformed sentences are described by transformational rules.[105]

The entire transformational approach to the study of syntax is carried out by means of an order of rules. The transformationalist enters the study of grammar with the kernel sentence, which is "a simple, basic statement made up of two main parts--a noun phrase that functions as the subject, followed by a verb phrase that functions as the predicate."[106] There are six basic criteria for the kernel sentence:

1. Kernel sentences have a fixed order; that is, the subject is followed by the predicate: The theater is vast is a kernel sentence, but Vast is the theater is not.

2. Kernel sentences are active, not passive: The pitcher threw a strike is a kernel sentence, but A strike is thrown by the pitcher is not.

3. Kernel sentences are statements, not questions: The baby is tired is a kernel sentence, but Is the baby tired? is not.

4. Kernel sentences are affirmative rather than negative: The tea is weak is a kernel. . . , but The tea is not weak is not.

5. Kernel sentences begin with the subject: The relatives are upstairs is a kernel, but There were some relatives upstairs is not.

[105] Aurbach, p. 15.

[106] Aurbach, p. 15.

6. Kernel sentences contain only one predication: The telephone rang is a kernel, but The telephone rang, and somebody lifted the receiver is not.[107]

The transformational rule for the kernel sentence is written as: sentence → noun phrase + verb phrase, or S → NP + VP. The symbol (→) means "consists of," "is made up of," or "is written as."[108]

(See Chart on following page.)

All sentences which are not kernels are considered as transformations of the kernels, which is exactly what the transformationalist moves into after discussing the kernels. Transformational sentences are basically those sentence structures which have been rearranged from kernel sentences and which do not follow any of the order of kernel sentences. There are two types of transformations--single-base transformations which "operate upon a kernel string of elements underlying a sentence" and double-base transformations which "operate upon two or more strings to produce an output sentence.[109] Transformations are thus formed by adding, deleting, substituting, rearranging, or combining the elements of kernel sentences.[110]

The major single-base transformations are as follows:

1. Sentences in which the predicate is followed by the subject: Measureless is his courage.
2. Question-transformations: Did the wolves howl?

[107]Aurbach, pp. 15-17.

[108]Aurbach, p. 19.

[109]Aurbach, p. 77.

[110]Aurbach, p. 77.

The following chart which is essentially the same as provided by other transformationalists, presents a good summary of the basic sentence patterns in English and the four types of basic sentences described in Aurbach:

	Slot 1 Subject	Slot 2 Tense and be or verbal	Slot 3 Complement or Direct Object	Slot 4 Optional Adverbial
Basic Sentence Type BE	NP	be	NP Adj Adv-p	(Adv)
	My cousin	was	the leader happy in Phoenix	(usually) (last year)
Basic Sentence Type V-I	NP	VI	null particle Adv-p	(Adv)
	Marie	came stood went	by to the door	(often) (at noon) (quietly) (upstairs)
Basic Sentence Type V-T	NP	VT	NP as direct object. (Other comps. are added to this inc. particle, ind. obj., and object comps (tr)	(Adv)
	Ed	opened	the box	(frequently) (last year) (hopefully) (on the plane)
Basic Sentence Type V-L	NP	VL-linking	NP Adj	(Adv)
	Ann	became seemed	a nurse happy	(last year) (there) [111]

[111] Aurbach, pp. 76-77.

3. Passive transformations: The card was sent by the office.

4. Negative-transformations: Talk does not seem futile.

5. There-transformations: There were sixty people in the auditorium.

The manner of writing single-base transformations can be illustrated as follows:

1. Rearrangement of Elements:

   Marie stood by quietly. $\rightrightarrows$ Quietly Marie stood by.

2. Passive Transformation:

   NP_1 + Aux + VT + NP_2 $\rightrightarrows$ NP_2 + Aux + be + en + VT + (by + NP_1)

   Firemen rescued the child. $\rightrightarrows$ The child was rescued by the firemen.

3. There transformation:

   Det + noun + Aux + be + adv-p $\rightrightarrows$ There + Aux + be + Det + N + Adv-p.

   A visitor was upstairs. $\rightrightarrows$ There was a visitor upstairs.[112]

Aurbach and other grammarians provide excellent illustrations for some of the countless double-base transformations. Some examples follow:

Double-base transformation using the relative pronoun WHO:

The girl played the violin $\rightrightarrows$ who played the violin

Insert: [The girl] played the violin.

↘

[who] played the violin

[112] Aurbach, pp. 78-80.

Consumer: The girl is my cousin.

Output: The girl who played the violin is my cousin.[113]

Double-base transformation involving an adverb clause:

Insert: John was very tired.

he was very tired.

Matrex or Consumer: John went home

Result or Output: John went home because (sub. conj.) he was very tired.[114]

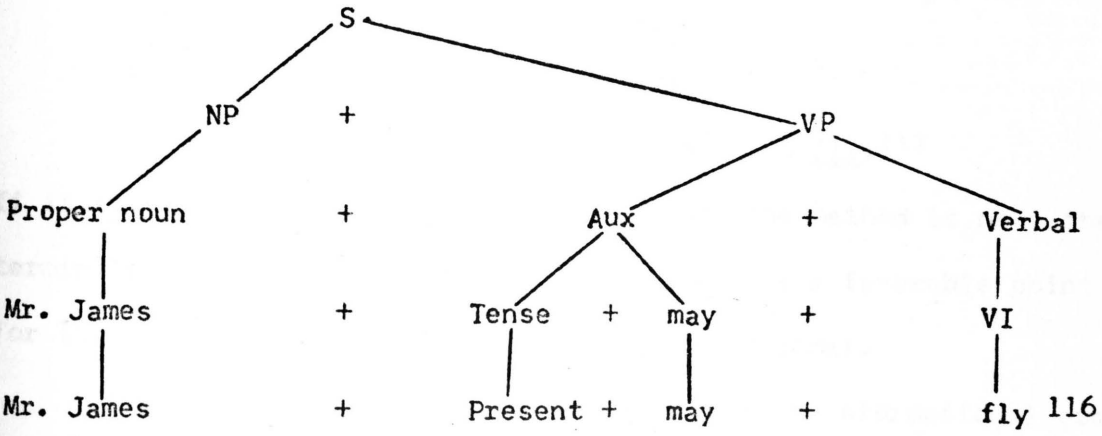
The transformationalist also has a system of diagramming which helps achieve understanding of the basic structures of the English sentence. These diagrams are called tree diagrams, or branching trees, or trees of derivation, or derivational trees,[115] and are particularly useful with the simpler sentences for the beginning student. The tree diagram seems easier for the student to follow than the traditional diagram because there is a separate position for each word in the sentence as well as a position for tense. There follows an illustration that exemplifies this system:

[113]Aurbach, p. 84.

[114]Aurbach, p. 84; Herbert R. Eschlinan, Robert C. Jones, and Thommy R. Burkett, Generative English Handbook (Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1968), p. 45.

[115]Aurbach, p. 59.

Mr. James may fly.



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The final line of the diagram presents the culmination of all the branches of the tree diagram, or the application of the kernel rules, and is thus labeled the K-terminal string.

One important point about the system of tree diagramming which makes it a strong and worthwhile teaching instrument is the fact that the student is taught how to read the diagram as well as how to write it. For instance, the student is taught to read the diagram above by the following pattern:

Sentence consists of noun phrase plus verb phrase.

Noun phrase consists of proper noun.

Verb phrase consists of auxiliary plus verbal.

Proper noun consists of Mr. James.

Auxiliary consists of tense plus modal.

Verbal consists of intransitive verb.

[116]Aurbach, p. 60.

Tense consists of present.

Modal consists of may.

Intransitive verb consists of fly.

The K-terminal string consists of:

Mr. James plus present plus may plus fly.[117]

It is also interesting to note that although the method is new, the terminology is mostly traditional. This fact is a favorable point for the use and development of a multiphasal grammar.

Perhaps one last point in the theory of transformational grammar should be discussed. It concerns the idea that every English sentence has both pronunciation and meaning. Goodman explains this concept thus: "Robert hunted the bear. The pronunciation of this sentence consists of the pronunciation of its individual words and the sequence in which they are spoken. Thus its pronunciation consists of /rabərt/, /hʌntɪd/, /ðə/, and /bɛr/ in the sequence given. Its meaning indicates that Robert is the hunter and the bear is the one hunted."[118]

From this, one would naturally wonder how there could be automatic indication of pronunciation and meaning for the immense number of possible English sentences. The transformationalists supply an answer in that they believe

> . . . each sentence has an abstract grammatical structure called deep structure, which determines its meaning, and another grammatical structure called surface structure, which determines its pronunciation. . . . Deep structure has two parts, called

[117] Aurbach, p. 60.

[118] Goodman, p. 292.

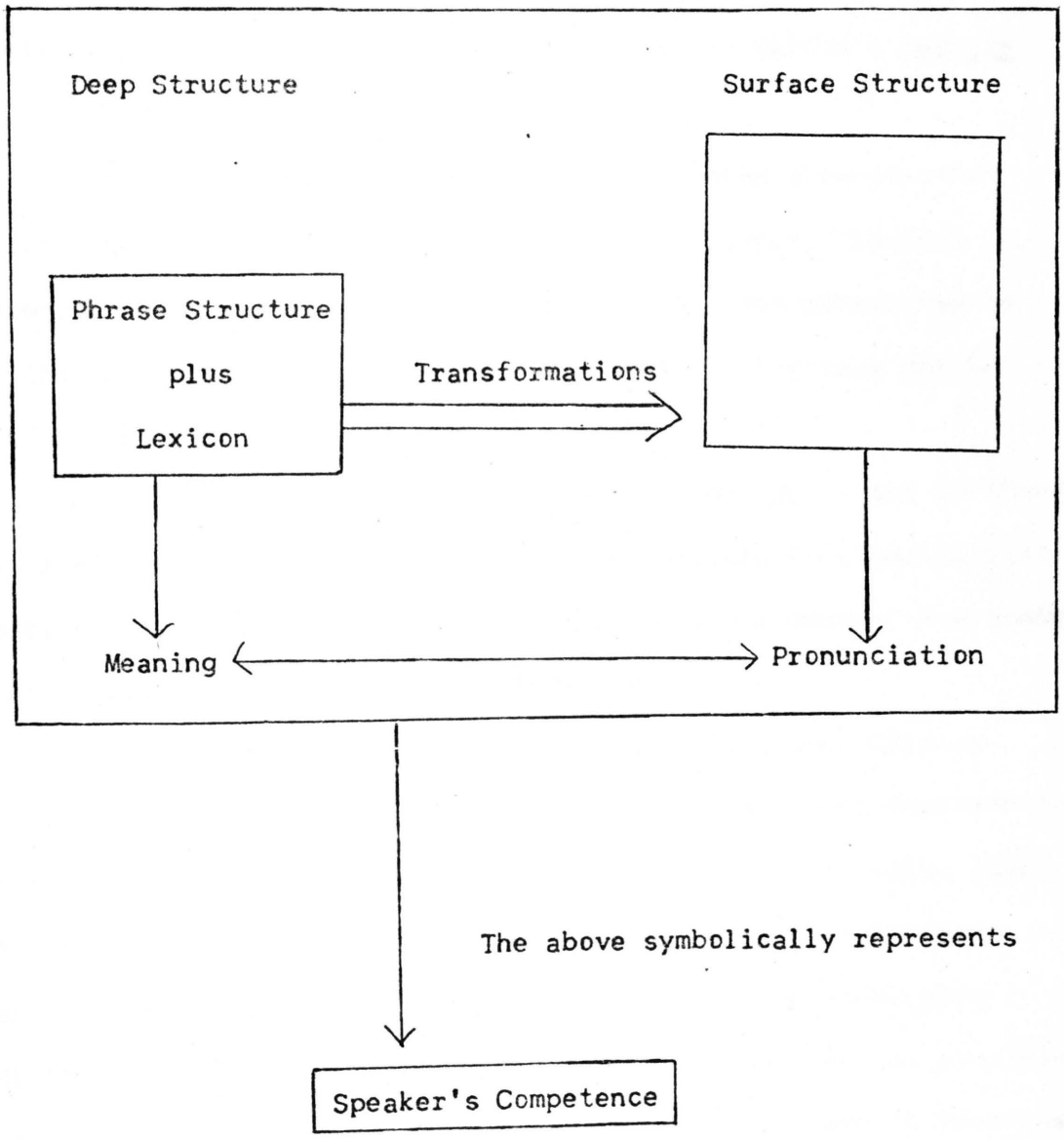
> components. One component, the dictionary, or lexicon, ... contains all the words and morphemes in English. . . . The second component of deep structure, called phrase structure, gives the abstract grammatical framework of all the sentences of English. More specifically, [it] provides all the basic grammatical constituents, such as noun phrase, verb phrase noun, verb, and adjective, and specifies the relationship of these constituents to one another.[119]

Goodman provides a schematic summary of all this in the chart on the following page.

Of course, the transformationalist is also interested in phonology and morphology, as is the structuralist, but his accurate description of syntax is his basic contribution to a multiphasal grammar.

The preceding illustrations of phrases of transformational grammar make considerable use of symbols. These symbols provide excellent representational tools in the classroom. Students respond to them well. Using symbols makes it very easy to present categories and relationships. For instance, the phrase structure rules of a generative grammar begin with the notation: S→NP + VP. This symbol stands for: "A kernel sentence in English consists of a noun phrase and a verb phrase. Either 'phrase' may consist of a single word or several, but both the noun phrase and the verb phrase must be present. The noun phrase comes first. Therefore, a kernel sentence is made up of a noun phrase followed by a verb phrase; sentence may be rewritten

[119]Goodman, p. 293.



[120]Goodman, p. 298.

noun phrase plus verb phrase."[121] All of this is included in the symbolic notation S→ NP + VP. The little arrow is called a rewrite arrow.

The system of notation continues by expanding elements that appear to the right of the rewrite arrow. For example, the next two rewrite rules might take the form NP→ D + N (noun phrase may be rewritten determiner plus noun) and VP→ A + MV (Verb phrase may be rewritten auxiliary plus main verb structure).

The entire transformational-grammar methodology is set up through a system of symbols. All of them should be retained in a multiphasal grammar, particularly for their scientific value and because the symbols help to describe clearly the language system.

There are countless numbers of charts, rules, and formulas that could be used here to illustrate the transformational approach to grammar. But more important than illustrations are some evaluations of this approach. For instance, what are some of its outstanding features? First, transformational grammarians are concerned with making the learning of language as quick and as effortless as possible. They also want the student to be able to use what he knows in learning new things--particularly in syntax--to be able to produce and understand new sentences without ever having heard them before. Being able to produce something new is the most important quality about transformational grammar. Any teacher should feel it is his duty and responsibility to provide students with those tools necessary for them to

[121]Herndon, p. 126.

create. The human mind is capable of many things, and the English language is an infinite resource of materials; so, by combining the mind and language, the teacher has excellent tools with which to begin work.

Second, the transformational approach to syntax is very logical. There are no exceptions; instead, there are rules for everything, but the rules are not arbitrary do's and don't's and therefore illogical. They do make much sense, because they accurately describe the sentence-making mechanism of the language. This author has taught both the traditional approach and the transformational approach to syntax to students on the junior high school level; in her judgment, the latter approach was much more warmly received. The students used the phrase structure rules for kernel sentences readily and soon almost automatically. The students also seemed to enjoy writing the transformations, both at the blackboard and in composition at their desks. She can honestly say that going to English class for her students, and for her, in the transformational group was far from a chore and very much a pleasure.

Third, in the transformational approach, language takes on a human quality. That is, transformationalists study language as behavior, and in this way, by giving language this quality of being alive, the study of language becomes more meaningful, especially to the student. Roberts once said that "the best reason for studying the nature of language is . . . (that) it teaches you something of what it is like to be a human being." This writer understands Roberts to

mean that once the student becomes aware of how creatively powerful language can be, how very much he individually can do with his language, particularly his inherent "sentence-making mechanism," the more the student will come to know about himself.

The traditional grammarians probably never tried to promote self-knowledge. Maybe they were not aware of the necessity of "knowing thyself," or maybe they did not care; whatever the case, they failed at reaching the student because they set down rules for construction that were fixed and had no room to go anywhere. The structural linguists, by means of an intense investigation of the sound patterns of language, did a better job, but not a complete job of providing the student with some means of making his language less enclosed. How did the transformationalists succeed where the structuralists could not? Note the following illustration:

> Structural linguists had confined themselves, at least in theory, to describing the sentences found in corpora. A corpus might be a set of tapes of conversations by speakers of Navajo. Or it might be the complete works of Jonathan Swift. Whatever it was, the structuralist, kept within it, describing the sentences as accurately as possible and making inventories of their elements. He never tried to predict what a Navajo or Jonathan Swift would have said if he had said something else. The transformationalist tries to do just that. His intent is to project, from a finite set of known sentences, an illimitable number of others and to show that these will be accepted as grammatical when and if they are ever used.[122]

Of course transformational grammar theory does not alone solve all the problems in making grammar a <u>description</u> of the language. But, of course, neither does the structuralist approach nor the traditional approach, by themselves, even begin to solve all the problems. The

[122]Roberts, "Foreword," p. xxiv.

last decade has been seeing linguistic advancements in the fields of Stratificational Grammar and Tagmemics, but these are not as yet standardized nor uncomplicated enough for purposes of discussion. A multiphasal grammar should at the present stay within the realms of traditional, structural, and transformational grammars. In fact, it should be obvious by now that the process of linguistic analysis plus experimentation has inevitably produced a multiphasal approach which should continue to be the basic approach to all linguistic scholarship and classroom instruction.

CHAPTER V

A PULLING TOGETHER AND A LOOK AHEAD

The major tasks of this thesis have been to analyze and evaluate three approaches to the study of English grammar, to investigate the current state of linguistic scholarship and its educational possibilities, and to explore the possibility and feasibility of the use of a multiphasal grammar in the public schools of this country. The study has revealed that twentieth century linguistic research has almost unavoidably moved in the direction of a multiphasal grammar and that such a grammar gives to the scholars and public school teachers the possibility of choosing the best features of three approaches, which in combination adequately and accurately describe the English language and should make it pedagogically effective. This is not to say that the final chapter has been written on research on English grammar. The nature of a living language is growth and change.

Because I feel so deeply involved and personally committed to the worth of this multiphasal grammar, I am forsaking the third person stance here to reveal that involvement and to express some ideas for public school acceptance of the newer approaches to instruction in grammar.

Before going directly into these ideas, I feel compelled to mention that I was particularly inspired to carry out my investigations by Dr. Jeanne Herndon, author of A Survey of Modern Grammars and

currently with the English Department at Oregon State University, to whom I went for advice. Dr. Herndon replied:

> I think the project is a very good one both as a learning experience for you and as a contribution to scholarship in the field. I wish there were more people willing to do a bit of inventory-taking from time to time before launching into the promotion of new panaceas for the problems of explaining how the English language works.
>
> Several very worthy people have embarked on the quest for a Holy Grail grammar of English in recent years. I have the profoundest reservations about whether such a thing is possible--or, for that matter, whether it is really desirable. The language is far too varied and complex to be neatly catalogued--a fact that I find neither frustrating nor discouraging but, rather, endlessly fascinating. I am part of a small and not-very-influential minority, however. We Americans are so intent on getting organized that I'm sure there will be bigger and better multiphasal grammars each year. . . . You may find . . . that you are more impressed with the work of a single group (even among those who claim to be eclectic, there are factions) but stay on the fence as long as you possibly can.[123]

I have tried "to stay on the fence," as it were, but I must admit that the theories of the transformational grammarians have captivated me more than any others. It would seem that the next step to be taken would be in the direction of offering some suggestions to teachers who are faced with the problem of teaching an English grammar to eager students, yet, who are unsure of which methodology to apply.

In order to offer any suggestions, I should first consider why teachers shy away from the new linguistics. Of the endless reasons, those most often given are as follows:

[123]Jeanne Herndon, personal letter to Rose M. Kessler, Feb. 25, 1971.

1. There is not enough statistical proof that the structural or transformational approach to grammar is decidedly better than the traditional methodology.
2. Students do learn grammar from the old-school; so if something works, why change it? Why not let well enough alone?
3. I was never exposed to the new linguistics in college, and now I do not have the time or the patience to go back to school for special courses.
4. As long as we have such a good traditional curriculum organized which we have used for years, why should we invest in all those new texts when we do not really understand them?

It is of course perfectly understandable why teachers espouse these beliefs. Although I do not propose to have all the answers, I do feel that the reasons given above are simply poor excuses. I shall attempt in the following to answer those reasons or excuses:

1. Statistical proof of any validity requires many years of examination; since the newer grammars have existed for barely twenty-five years, they cannot be compared to the statistics available on the old grammar which has been around for centuries. In fact, of the statistics that do exist for new grammar, there is evidence that it provides a more accurate description of the language. This is a point I have tried to show throughout this study.

2. The only way progress can come about is through change. It is inexcusable that a teacher, dedicated to the promotion of learning, experimentation, and ultimately progress, would stand in the way of change. The worst that can be done to the teaching of grammar is to leave it alone. Language is not a dead commodity; it is constantly growing and changing and is therefore, very much alive. As teachers, we should always be aware of this living quality in our grammar, and do all that we can to further this growth process. If this requires change, then by all means, we must be willing to change.

3. Teachers in most states in this country are required by law to update their credentials, but even if they were not, a sincere teacher should consider keeping up-to-date, a continuous necessity if he is to perform to his highest capacities his duties to his students.

4. The fourth negative reason is perhaps the most ridiculous attitude anyone involved in education can have. How can a teacher justify a lack of interest in new textbooks? Lack of understanding is not enough. I am an advocate of a policy of the teacher learning along with the students. One should never avoid a plan of study that he has never before tried. In teaching, one is never too old to learn.

These are only a few suggestions for today's teachers who are faced with the decision of selecting the most adequate grammar for their students. I realize, of course, that I can not force my opinions on anyone else. What I can do, and what I have done, however, is to express my belief in the strength of a multiphasal approach to grammar and to urge an open-minded attitude. Any approach to grammar, whether it be traditional, structural, transformational, or any combination thereof, has only one goal, to promote a better use of and understanding of the language. If a teacher would always keep this goal in mind, there would be less hesitancy on his part to experiment with the new systems of grammar.

The preceding chapters have explained both advantages and disadvantages of some of the methodology employed within these three approaches. In order to avoid repetition, I would like to offer, finally, two noteworthy opinions about the teaching system which express clearly my thoughts for teachers:

> More seriously (and this is where we lose many who are constitutionally unable to live with uncertainty) we have to realize that in language and rhetoric, there are no pre-determined right answers. There are only better or worse questions, interesting and uninteresting answers. . . . No answers have the kind of finality and certitude that so many insecure students--and teachers--want and seem to need. When a teacher is satisfied that he can tell a student to spell a word in a certain way because that is the way it is spelled in the dictionary, when he insists on teaching and evaluating papers on the basis of absolutes, both student and teacher fail to achieve the qualities of an educated human being. There are only problems to solve, questions to ask about the problem, and ways to evaluate possible answers. . . . Once we depart from the kind of traditional

grammar taught in most schoolrooms for the last hundred or so years, there are no "right" answers. There are only a multitude of answers produced by various kinds of questions asked from different points of view.[124]

Every time we speak, we must decide which language patterns to use, but when we decide, we're making social choices, not grammatical ones. Kids in school need to learn that it is a mistake to use ain't in some circles and learning this they're learning about the power structure of our society, not about the grammatical structure of English.

To sum up: Language is a social phenomenon, an activity that people engage in. We pass judgment on each other's language behavior, just as we pass on each other's eating and dressing and dancing and so on. The occasion and the company are factors in determining the correctness or propriety of any linguistic act; what is right one time may be wrong another time. This picture of language makes some people very nervous; nevertheless, until we find out who owns the English language, it's the only possible objective answer.

Where does this leave the teacher? What should he teach? Are there no rules?

Yes, of course, there are rules. But they are the kind of rules we are familiar with in books of etiquette--that is, proper behavior. We are here concerned with one sub-branch of that study--proper language behavior.

There is a large body of language patterns which educated people have been trained (at home or in school) to prefer. A student who does not have these patterns under control when he comes to school must be made competent to handle them. If he comes in saying, "I seen him," he must be equipped to say, "I saw him," whenever and whereever "I saw him" is appropriate.

Notice that he need not give up saying, "I seen him," when it is appropriate; you need not insist that he replace "I seen him" with "I saw him" if this produces crises of divided loyalty. All you really have to do is add "I saw him" to his grammatical repertory.

[124]J. M. Williams, The New English: Structure, Form, Style. (New York: The Free Press, 1970), p. ix.

The one thing to be shunned and avoided is the attempt to justify the preferences of the power system. Harranguing the poor kid about the wickedness of "I seen him" will either depress him or antagonize him.

If the time and effort wasted in this rationalizing process were devoted to equipping him to say, "I saw him," the teaching of English would be both more efficient and more humane.[125]

[125] James C. Bostain, "The Dream World of English Grammar," First Perspectives on Language, ed. William C. Doster, 2nd ed. (New York: American Book Company, 1969), pp. 75-76.

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