

*Langage et cognition: Introduction au programme minimaliste de la grammaire générative.* By JEAN-YVES POLLOCK. Preface by NOAM CHOMSKY. (Psychologie et Sciences de la Pensée) Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. 1997. xxii + 241 pp. 138 F.

Countering a perceived lack of interest (if not hostility) in France (see also fn. 1, p. 110), Jean-Yves Pollock's text and Noam Chomsky's preface have the dual aim of defending the generative conception of the language faculty and linguistic inquiry, and of sketching recent 'minimalist' developments in syntactic theory. Aimed explicitly at the uninitiated, there is, apart from Chapter 13, little original research here. Pollock very successfully guides the reader through a number of major threads of current syntactic thinking and provides extremely useful annotated guides to further reading (primarily in English) on the topics covered (although reference to a dozen unpublished manuscripts seems inappropriate in an introductory text).

In Chomsky's preface and Pollock's first two chapters, the study of the mental organ known as the language faculty is presented as a branch of cognitive psychology in which Universal Grammar (UG) is viewed as a species-specific genetically endowed initial state that underlies the deep properties common to all languages, and the job of the linguist is to determine how individual grammars come to have the properties they do on the basis of UG and exposure to primary linguistic data: that is, how children acquire language given the poverty of the stimulus beyond the arbitrary and the irregular. Chapters 3 and 4 introduce hierarchical X-bar constituent structure and category membership, while Chapters 5 and 6 deal with how grammatical properties map lexical items onto syntactic structure. Chapter 7 introduces the (now somewhat outdated) concept of (syntactic) level of representation and uses NP- and V-movement as applications of Move- $\alpha$ , the transformational component linking D-Structure and S-Structure. Chapter 8 tackles the structurally determined properties of co-reference relations (Binding Theory). Chapters 9–11 introduce the interface levels (central to the more recent Minimalist Program) PF and LF and the Principle of Full Interpretation (FI), and motivates economy-constrained (c)overt movement to satisfy FI by deleting uninterpretable morphological features via Checking. Chapters 12 and 13 discuss the core topic of verb syntax with contrastive exemplification from Romance and Germanic. Chapter 12 relates syntactic movement to morphological strength; Chapter 13 presents original research, including discussion of the diachronic syntax of French infinitives, *pro*-drop, and an interesting approach to overt subject pronouns in Italian as topics. Chapter 14 tackles A-bar movement, again in terms of Checking theory. The closing two chapters place current research into its historical context, consider future developments, and offer a brief summary.

It seems to me that Pollock has very successfully achieved his aim of offering an overview of the essential features of contemporary Chomskyan syntactic theory for the beginning student or lay reader. The text is accessible, and contextualizes old and new while retaining overall coherence. Even the original material in Chapter 13 sits comfortably within an introductory text.

As for my criticisms, I would first mention that the index is useless, containing only authors' names. The typos are generally unobtrusive, but the use of PRO for *pro* on page 125 is unfortunate. The use of *to hit* in footnote 1 on page 52 is British English too. The decision to change from consecutive footnote numbering within each chapter to consecutive footnote numbering on each page unnecessarily upsets the author's cross-referencing system (see p. 114 and fn. 1, p. 70). The author's suggestion (p. 115) that the reader read section 1 of Chapter 12 before reading section 2.3 of Chapter 10 is rather odd.

As for content proper, the sideswipes at Optimality Theory on page 135 and at monostratal frameworks on page 155 are unwarranted. The claim (p. 48) that *ronfler* and *éternuer* denote psychological states seems hard to justify. I fail to see how (30a/b) on page 90 accounts for the contrast between (28a/b). The use of *both* Attract and Greed is problematic, since if one assumes Greed, Attract is impossible. Finally, the assumption that the diachronic change in French from *ne Vinf pas* to *ne pas Vinf* reflects the loss of verb movement is unjustified; elsewhere, it has been argued to be due to the introduction of *pas*-raising.

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