

*Foundations of French Syntax*. By MICHAEL ALLAN JONES. (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics) Cambridge, New York, and Melbourne: Cambridge University Press. 1996. xxvi + 557 pp. £50 (paperbound £17.95).

Michael Jones's weighty addition to this series is surprising for three reasons. It addresses one language, combines generative syntax (accessibly motivated and introduced in Chapter 1) with traditional grammar, and explicitly targets foreign language learners: this is as much a teaching grammar ('When referring to inanimate entities as subjects of *être*, *ce* tends to be overused by English students of French' (p. 303)) and style guide ('It is probably best not to imitate this usage' (p. 115)) as a syntax textbook. In these terms, and given that no linguistics background is assumed, the text is generally successful in its mission to combine empirical description with theoretical explanation, and admirably fills a major gap in the market.

Chapters 2–4 are about verbs, starting with a taxonomy in Chapter 2 in terms of state, process, and action as well as argument structure and including discussion of auxiliaries. Chapter 3 deals with voice, treating passivization first, structurally, in terms of case-driven object raising, and then from a discourse perspective. The chapter also includes extensive discussion of *la voix pronominale* and impersonal constructions. Chapter 4's Reichenbachian discussion of tense attains complexity without the help of generativism. The treatment of aspect includes rather opaque discussion of verbal paradigms and (in)compatibilities with adverbial expressions, while the treatment of mood tackles the (un)predictability of the indicative/subjunctive distinction quite interestingly (for example, *espérer v. souhaiter*). Nominal expressions are dealt with in Chapters 5 (full noun phrases, including abstract discussion of the role of determiners) and 6 (pronouns, with interesting treatment of problems such as *ça* and the interpretation/ordering/incompatibilities of clitics). Adjectives, adverbs, and negation are justifiably lumped together in Chapter 7. Adjective position and combination are handled perceptively though descriptively, and X-bar theory might also have been exploited to explain instances of adjective incompatibility. Adverb and negative placement are not surprisingly given standard treatments in terms of verb movement.

In contrast, prepositions struggle to warrant their own Chapter 8: the treatment of this traditional problem area is largely aimed at the practical needs of anglophone learners. Of theoretical interest is Jones's suggestion that the class of prepositions might be enlarged, although I admit to a certain scepticism towards some of the conclusions. Infinitival clauses are tackled in Chapter 9, including modals and the extremely complex issues surrounding *faire faire* and *laisser faire* constructions, and so on. Theory-internal issues surrounding control and raising are also discussed. Simple and complex inversion are tackled admirably, while QU-movement (as found in interrogatives and relatives) receives a surprisingly soft-core treatment in Chapter 10.

Anglophone readers will no doubt appreciate the effort to highlight (and sometimes explain) differences between English and French, and Jones is by and large gentle on non-specialists in syntax. However, more theoretically minded readers will be frustrated in that substantive issues of little practical consequence are brushed under the carpet: 'In practice, it does not seem to matter much how we