

was understood. Much of grammar remained educationally trivial and irrelevant. With the decline of rhetoric, the psychological, social and literary aspect of speech were lost sight of. A unified literary and linguistic discipline was needed to enliven grammatical education. The reform most advocated between 1711 and 1775 was the reduction of the categories to *four* primary parts of speech, noun, verb, adjective and adverb. Something similar had been earlier proposed by Gill (who added particles), by Wallis and Lane. Blinkered confusion of form and meaning, and a limited understanding of syntax, inhibited such changes. Teachers wanted rule-of-thumb grammars for instruction in the non-conformist English schools.

The reader will profit from the methodical evidence of *English Grammatical Categories*, without having to accept Dr. Michael's discomfiting conclusions. This book should be read by all who desire to dispel illusions about the origins of English grammar.

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Bruce L. Lilies: *An Introduction to Linguistics*. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1975. xiii. 336pp. Paperback.

Albert J. La Valley (ed.): *The New Consciousness*. Winthrop. Massachusetts, 1972. xvii. 567pp. Paperback.

The scientific study of language should be the concern of everybody using it; indeed, our only safeguard against the debasement of language, either through indifferent and insensible utterance of the deliberate distortion of meaning, lies in the systematic establishment of the rules and principles of its usage. Formerly, these rules and principles were specified by the grammarians; since the beginning of this century, the task has been undertaken on a much more scientific basis by the linguists.

Linguistic studies can often become a labyrinth of abstractions and demographies out of which the general reader may despair of ever finding his way; distributional analysis, morphological alternations, phrase structure diagrams, phonometrics, and other constituents of the discipline are often bewildering to all but the specialist. There is good reason, then, to welcome a clear and concise exposition of the work being done by Ferdinand de Saussure's disciples – or his opponents. Bruce Lilies's book is just that sort of exposition. Lilies does not presuppose any previous knowledge of formal studies in grammar or of linguistics *per se*. The only requirement for reading and understanding what he has written is fluency in the English language.

Lilies begins by discussing non-verbal communication and the way we give meaning to such signals as facial expressions and various bodily shakes, rattles, and rolls. Referring to the non-verbal signals that accompany language utterance, he draws attention to the importance of paralinguistic changes in tone and tempo. As an illustration, he quotes the example given by Roman Jakobson of an actor at Stanislavskij's Moscow Theatre who, at his audition, had to make forty different meanings from the phrase 'this evening'. The actor improved on the requirement by writing down fifty different situations in which the phrase might be used and proceeded to utter it in as many different ways.

Although using the generative-transformational model as the basis for his exposition of linguistics, Lilies avoids any extensive theoretical treatment of this model. Chapters dealing with syntax, phonology, and the acquisition of language are consequently written from a pragmatic standpoint and are admirably suited to the practical needs of both language and literature analysts. The section on 'Contemporary Variation' is of particular importance for South African readers, since it deals with Black English (to use Lilies's phrase) and Pidgin English and their various characteristics.

'There is one fact', said Ortega Y Gasset, 'which, whether for good or ill, is of utmost importance in the public life of Europe at the present moment. This fact is the accession of the masses to complete social power'. America, no less than Europe, is witness to this social revolution. The collection of writings in *The New Consciousness* is a cross-section of popular or mass social expression and should be compulsive reading for academics in the humanities. Poets, teachers, novelists, journalists, psychologists, and various cult-figures and leaders have recorded their revolt against an age of technology that has, paradoxically, given them the means to conduct such a revolution.

The first section of the book contains poetry and prose by Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, Allen Ginsberg (who else?), Tom Wolfe, R.D. Laing, and Ken Kesey. The success of Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* is well-known; less well-known, perhaps, is his role as leader of the Merry Pranksters and the director of the Acid Tests. An excerpt from Wolfe's study of Kesey viz. *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* refers to Mountain Girl, a big brunette with a black motorcycle, who was the life and soul of the Pranksters:

Mountain Girl moved into a tent up on a little plateau on the hill behind the house under the redwoods. Page Browning had a tent up there, too. So did Babs and Gretch; Mike Hagen had his

Screw Shack. The Screw Shack was a very stellar – *Mal Function!* – Hagen production. None of the boards lay true and none of the nails ever quite made it all the way in. The boards seemed to be huddled together in a tentative agreement. One day Kesey took a hammer and hit a single nail on the peak of the shack and the whole shack fell down.

'Nothing lasts, Hagen!' yelled Mountain Girl, and her laugh boomed through the redwoods.

(p. 43)

The linking theme in this first section is the attempt to transcend the self of everyday life, to gain 'cosmic insight' by way of transcendental meditation or mostly by the use of LSD.

Part II has to do with cases of social oppression or victimisation and the politics of revolution. Among the writers quoted on these subjects are Stephen Spender, Eldridge Cleaver (founder of the Black Panther movement), Norman Mailer, Richard Wright, and Abbie Hoffman. The prose style of several Negro writers is worth quoting to show the flexibility and meaningfulness of the English language, and to invite comparison with that of local Black writers. Here is Roderick Panell describing how he got 'the munchies':

... got the munchies the other nite and took a bus down to the Subliminal Truck Stop next to the drive-in movie just outside of town.

went in, laid a napkin on the seat (whew). sat down, ordered me some hash brown soup – hungry i was – meant to say 'split pea' but lon chaney split before i could yell 'make that split pea, lon' – saw him pay a dime to get back in the kitchen, so ...

all-american lon came back – he took so long i thought he mighta shaved/showered/powdered up a bit, but he hadn't, yet lon's hair wasn't even dry (whew, funny kitchen!) ... but here he come with m' soup – my bowl of soup – hashed all brown – and i started to eat. But. there were submarines in my soup, movin around & stuff and the prezident said on tee-vee that 'the country just aint at war' so i left.

(p. 315)

Apart from the first-hand accounts of mass culture in America, *The New Consciousness* is concerned with experiments in language usage. Part III is specifically intended to give examples of poetry and prose that break with tradition. Among the various writers in this section are William Carlos Williams, Kurt Vonnegut,

Allen Ginsberg, and Robert Creeley. Of particular note is Richard Brautigan, a novelist who has become a cult-figure in America with his *In Watermelon Sugar* and *Trout Fishing in America* — which has nothing to do with trout fishing.

The penultimate section of this collection contains articles on film-making and directors, both on the level and underground. Prominent figures dealt with include Fritz Lang, Howard Hawks, Josef von Sternberg, and Orson Welles. The account by Andrew Sarris, a leading writer on film in America, of Orson Welles' production of *Mr Arkadin* points to a preoccupation with personality that is characteristic not only of Welles himself but of the majority of writers about *The New Consciousness*:

The key to the director (as well as *Mr. Arkadin*) is revealed when Orson Welles (alias Gregory Arkadin) tells the story of a frog and a scorpion meeting by a river. When the scorpion asks to ride across the river on the frog's back, the frog demurs: 'If I take you on my back, you will sting me, and your sting is fatal.' The scorpion responds with a plausible argument: 'Where is the logic in that? If I sting you, we both will drown.' The frog, a logical creature, then agrees to transport the scorpion, but he no sooner reaches the middle of the river than he feels a deadly sting in his back. 'Where is the logic in this?' croaks the dying frog as he begins to sink below the surface. 'This is my character', replies the doomed scorpion, 'and there is no logic in character.'

(p. 451)

The final section of a most readable book shows the influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau in writings about a return to nature by way of self-sufficiency farming and communes in the woods. The recent experiment conducted by the B.B.C. with a group of people living in pre-historic conditions was no great encouragement for putting the clock back. Somehow we have to make the best of the technological age we live in. There is no escape to yesterday.

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Patricia Hill, *Password*. Penguin, 1978. 33pp. Paperback. R1.65.

The problem with many language teaching books is that they are only as good as the person using them. Some texts, however, lend themselves more readily to better use than others.