

theoretical model. On the one hand it seems to be relying on logic, and on the other hand on algebra. But the real stumbling-blocks remain; the relationship verbal communication/verbal interaction which is still the hurdle in the study of semantics, in other words it is pragmatics that eludes us. The great service of all the work done up to now is that it has revealed the enormous scale of the problem to be tackled and set up a number of impressive possible avenues. A final word is a plea by your despairing reviewer for works nominally in English to be written really in English, not in some strange Anglo-Germanic hybrid with muddled registers and even more muddled constructions.

Immler, Manfred:

Generative Syntax - Generative Semantik.

München: Wilhelm Fink 1974 (= Uni-Taschenbücher. 207). 228 pp.

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Immler's book is a useful and well organized introduction to the theory of TGG: it combines lucidity with wealth and accuracy of technical details (moreover, in some cases the author integrates data on English which were used for traditional generative argumentation with data from his dissertation 'Deutsche Kausativ-Verben und Probleme der "Tiefenstruktur" in der Generativen Transformationsgrammatik': cf. pp. 146-48 and p. 154) Although the book was written at a period in which the controversy between generative syntax and generative semantics was still alive, looking at it after a few years it appears to be a well-balanced analysis of the two opposing positions, and chiefly a useful work, both to the non-specialist and to the specialist. The former will find in it a key to the understanding of what has become one of the most esoteric branches of Theoretical Linguistics, the latter will have a bibliographically systematic outline of the development of the theory. This development is run through from its earlier stage (linked, as is well known, with Harris' name), when purely formal methods (i.e. distributional methods) were used in the study of linguistic regularities. In the first chapters, Immler points out the characteristics of this stage that have influenced not only Chomsky's earlier production (mainly 'SynStr', where the Harrisian heritage is most evident) but also such a later work as 'Aspects' (for which see ch. 7). Chapters 4-5 deal with an important change introduced by Chomsky in the Harrisian theoretical apparatus: the concept of DS conceived of as an abstract level of representation. As to DS, Immler first reconstructs its formal conditions as set forth in 'SynStr' (pp. 52 ff.) and then criticizes their validity, formulating the following alternative definition of the concept: "The DS of a sentence S_i is that structure P_i related to surface structure S_i only and just by the set of trans-

formations $M_T = \{T_1, \dots, T_n\}$ (p. 156). According to the author, neither

Chomsky nor his scholars have ever defined the set M_T , and, even if they had, we would always be doubtful about the existence in natural languages of such a level of DS as the one formulated in 'SynStr' and 'Aspects'. The above criticism used by Immler to demonstrate that DS is not essential to a theory of GG seems quite weak to me: it might reflect the same realistic point of view which appears elsewhere in the book. The question of whether we can accept the notion of DS, a point that has been greatly debated in the quarrel over generative

syntax and generative semantics, is proposed again in ch. 7, p. 72 and pp. 76-77 and is carried on in ch. 9. Here Immler analyses the main objections made by semanticists to the notion of DS as developed by Chomsky in 'Aspects' till we reach the final question: can DS be maintained? Immler's answer seems to be in the negative (cf. pp. 206-7). Chapters 10-11 deal with the technical apparatus of generative semantics, as well as with the arguments for and against it. Among the arguments against the above theory, a criticism which, in Immler's opinion, constitutes a fundamental weakness of generative semantics, concerns its lack of an autonomous word level (cf. pp. 165-68). In fact, the SR of a lexical unit through semantic atoms does not express its meaning as inclusive of all the individual lexical characteristics, whereas it is these characteristics that break the regularity of the linguistic system "in vielen kleinen Stellen". That is why the semantic structures generated by this theory are normative: generative semantics is unable to capture irregularities that infiltrate the system, in other words, it is unable to capture the meaning nuances that every word takes on in the syntagmatic concatenation with other lexical units. In addition to the problem of relative word autonomy, there is another question which, in Immler's opinion, generative semantics does not deal with adequately: it is the problem of the place of syntax in a GG. Syntax, too, requires a relative autonomy. Thus Immler's conclusion as to this point is that, although a semantically based grammatical theory is a better model, it is erroneous to assume that all language characteristics are determined by semantics (cf. p. 202 and p. 205). On the whole, the contraposition of the two theories aims principally to give some contribution to the question of the form of a theory of natural languages. Rather than the formal aspects of this problem (this seems to be confirmed by the fact that in the book little space is devoted to GGs as formal systems), Immler's main interest seems to be a comparison of both theories as to their psychological implications: the mental processes of the language user are always considered as a decisive criterion in evaluating alternative technical solutions. As a matter of fact, from the very first page Immler stresses the fact that the processes of conversion of a "geistiger Inhalt" into a "sprachlichen Ausdruck" and vice-versa occur in the speaker during communication. Here, as elsewhere in the book, the author seems to reflect his personal ideas on the treatment of the subject. The competence - performance distinction, for example, never becomes clear, so that the reader may be misled as to the place assigned in the theory to Sprachverwendung and to Sprachbewußtsein. Even the treatment of the problem of "directionality" may cause misunderstandings when Immler talks about a directionality of speech acts. Another instance of his realistic approach to GG is also evident when he writes that: "Die verschiedene Wahl der Basisregeln, die GS [generative semantics] und IS [interpretive semantics] vornehmen, hat sehr - wenn man davon ausgeht, daß die Basisregeln einer Grammatik nicht nur irgendwelche willkürlich postulierten Konstrukte sind, sondern eine Realität, nämlich die der Sprachverwendung zugrundeliegenden geistigen Strukturen, abbilden - entscheidende Implikationen: die GS behauptet dann, daß alle sprachlich vermittelte Wahrnehmung der Wirklichkeit einer einzigen Grundstruktur folgt: der eines Prädikats und eines oder mehrerer Argumente, über die durch dieses Prädikat etwas ausgesagt wird. Die IS behauptet auf der anderen Seite, daß es keine unabhängigen Regeln gibt, die die Struktur der Bewußtseinsinhalte, der Bedeutungen festlegen, keine primären Prinzipien also, aufgrund derer wir die Realität zunächst einmal nach gewissen Grundkategorien und den zwischen ihnen be-

tehenden Beziehungen aufgliedern und sie auf eine begriffliche Struktur abbilden, um dieser dann eventuell eine sprachliche Form zu geben" (pp. 212-13). Even if in some cases we can agree with Immer, however, we must be aware of the fact that his perspective does not coincide with the epistemological backgrounds of the traditional generative approach, where modelling leads only to formal representations of a given process: so the algorithms defined by the linguist are "simulations" of unobservable phenomena (those which Immer terms "die der Sprachverwendung zugrundeliegenden geistigen Strukturen") and by no means can be *sic et simpliciter* related to them. Particularly interesting, looking at it from an historical point of view, is the conclusion of the book: it underlines the importance of a pragmatic approach to the study of natural languages as communicative systems.

Notes:

- i) The following abbreviations have been used in the text:
 TGG = Transformational Generative Grammar
 SynStr = Syntactic Structures (Chomsky 1957)
 Aspects = Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (Chomsky 1965)
 DS = Deep Structure
 GG = Generative Grammar
 SR = Semantic Representation.

Alvar, Manuel und Lope Blanch, Juan M.:

En torno a la sociolingüística (= Cuadernos de Lingüística. 3).

México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978. 57 pp.

Alvar, Manuel und López Morales, Humberto:

Estudios sociolingüísticos (Cuadernos de Lingüística. 5).

México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978. 44 pp.

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Beide der beiden rezensierten Hefte enthält zwei nicht neue Arbeiten.

Heft 3: Manuel Alvar: 'Lengua y sociedad'; Erstveröffentlichung in: *Travaux de Linguistique et de Littérature de l'Université de Strasbourg* 14 (1976), pp. 65-64. - Juan M. Lope Blanch: 'La sociolingüística y la dialectología hispánica'; Erstveröffentlichung in: Frances M. Aid, Melvyn C. Resnick u. Bohdan Saciuk (Hrsg.): 1975 *Colloquium on Hispanic Linguistics*. Washington, 1976, pp. 67-90.

Heft 5: Manuel Alvar: 'Actitud del hablante y sociolingüística'; Erstveröffentlichung in: *Travaux de Linguistique et de Littérature de l'Université de Strasbourg* 14 (1976), pp. 67-83. - Humberto López Morales: 'Hacia un concepto de la sociolingüística'; frühere Version in: *Revista Interamericana* 2 (1973), pp. 478-489.

In allen vier Arbeiten sollen grundsätzliche Probleme zur Frage nach dem Gegenstand einer Disziplin Soziolinguistik behandelt werden. Während in den Arbeiten von Lope Blanch und López Morales direkt das Problem einer sinnvollen Abgrenzung der Disziplin behandelt wird, bringen die beiden Arbeiten von Alvar zwar auch ein Bewußtsein dieser Problematik in expliziten Fragen zum Ausdruck, vermeiden jedoch eine eindeutige Stellungnahme, wenn man vom