

## REVIEWS

*THE SOUNDS OF ENGLISH AND GERMAN*, A systematic analysis of the contrasts between the sound systems. William G. Moulton. Contrastive Structure Series. University of Chicago Press, 1962. Pp. xiii, 145.

THIS VOLUME is the first in the series of contrastive analyses, the purpose of which is largely pedagogical, published by the Center for Applied Linguistics.

The main problem to be faced at the outset of undertaking such a study is: What kind of English should be compared with what kind of German? This is, of course, a basically insoluble problem; the author's compromise solution was to use as a guide for English, Thomas, An Introduction to the Phonetics of American English, and Kenyon and Knott, A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English, plus the major features of Kurath and McDavid, The Pronunciation of English in the Atlantic States, and for German, Siebs, Deutsche Hochsprache, Bühnenaussprache. Allowance for some of the main divergences from these standards has been made in the discussion and notes.

The book is organized under twelve headings: 1. An Introduction, expanding the general precepts of contrastive analysis and the basic tenets of linguistics (e.g., concepts such as "distinctive," "contrastive," "complementary distribution," etc.); 2. Phonetics: The Consonants; 3. Phonemics: The Consonants of English; 4. Phonemics: The Consonants of German; 5. Contrastive Analysis: The Consonants; 6. Phonetics: The Vowels; 7. Phonemics: The Vowels of German; 8. Phonemics: The Vowels of English; 9. Contrastive Analysis: The Vowels; 10. Stress; 11. Intonation; 12. Juncture. Thus, in the treatment of segmental phonemes the chapters on analysis of the individual language precede the chapters on comparison, while in the treatment of the suprasegmentals the analysis and comparison are handled in the same chapter. The reason for this is that Moulton seems to believe the suprasegmentals of German and English are essentially identical; the difference is in their distribution (e.g., on the level of the suprasegmental morphemes which they produce.)

The segmental phonemes are broken down into distinctive features--although this seems of little value for the purpose of the

contrastive analysis, especially since /l/, /r/, /j/, /th/ are grouped in a series which--in contrast to stops, fricatives, sibilants, nasals--is simply labeled "other" (pp. 18 and 23). German /x/, /ç/ are set up as different phonemes on the basis of minimal pairs like tauchen (diving) vs. Tauchen (small cord). The contrastive analysis of consonants clearly shows /ç/ and /x/ as major problems for speakers of English.

In the analysis of German vowels the conventional difference of long vs. short is explained as lower and central/higher and less central, lax/tense, short/long. A phoneme /ɛ/ (usually ä in orthography) is assumed--which is doubtful.

The English system utilized is primarily of the type of Pike's and Kurath's analyses, but it assumes two central vowels, /ɜ/, /ʌ/, in phonemic contrast: furry /fɜri/ vs. hurry /hʌri/ in parts of the Atlantic Seaboard (p. 78, 79). Excessive use is made of the concept of neutralization in describing the occurrence of vowels before r, and of unstressed vowels. The Trager-Smith system is mentioned, but rejected in spite of certain pedagogical advantages (it would show English /i/, /e/, etc. as diphthongs, contrasting them with the non-diphthongal /i/, /e/ of German), because it is not phonemic, but is rather a "transcriptional arsenal" (p. 90).

The contrastive analysis makes the problems concerning the vowels extremely clear--eg., the German ü, ö; the problem caused by German /ə/, /ʌ/ (bitte, bitter) both being in the allophonic range of English /ə/.

In the chapters on suprasegmentals, the author is extremely cautious, emphasizing that his presentation is tentative. As a matter of fact, in the section on intonation, he invites the teachers, to whom the book is primarily addressed, to watch their students' intonation mistakes, so that they can contribute to the solution of the linguistic problem (p. 137). Conflicts in the use of suprasegmentals are surprisingly few, and consist chiefly of different kinds of intonation on semantically identical statements, and accentuation of compound words. The only severe juncture conflict is in the use in German of open juncture before vowels, e.g., bereisen vs. vereisen (p. 145) (an even better example would have been verreisen vs. vereisen).

All in all, the book is well-written, extremely useful, and avoids "talking down" to teachers. It is very helpful pedagogically, and includes useful advice on pronunciation problems, usually taking at least the first step in suggesting a pedagogical remedy--some type of contrastive drill, or auditory discrimination drill. Especially for German teachers, this volume is a very good

introduction to phonetics and phonemics (although it may not satisfy all linguists) for it shows that linguistics can help to solve a problem on a practical level before an ultimate answer or ultimate agreement is reached on the level of theory and interpretation.

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