THE GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES OF ENGLISH AND GERMAN,
An analysis of structural differences between the two languages
with emphasis on the problems of German syntax.   Herbert L.
Kufner.   Contrastive Structure Series.   University of Chicago
Press, 1962.   Pp. xi, 95.

THIS is the companion volume to The Sounds of English and Ger-
man, but unlike the latter, it does not claim to be complete.   (Is it
significant that grammar, which includes morphology and syntax,
is presented in only a little more than half the number of pages
devoted to phonology?) This book devotes little space to morpholo-
gy, where traditional description is adequate and where there is
little room for comparison.

The six major headings are: 1. German Sentence Types;
2. German Clauses;   3. Phrase Structure;   4. Parts of Speech;
5. Compulsory Grammatical Categories;   6. Compulsory Semantic
Categories. This outline already shows one major difference from
the volume on phonology, where separate chapters are devoted to
English: here there is no complete or even sketchy analysis of
English.   The book deals with German, references to English are
incidental, and no complete picture of English emerges.

A good feature of the work is that the author (like Moulton)
realizes that solutions on the practical level do not presuppose
solutions on the theoretical level, or even adherence to a definite
principle in the realm of theory.   He never really defines the sen-
tence, and after rejecting the well-known Jespersen definition, and
indicating his hope that a solution may be reached through
Chomsky's methodology (p. 2), he uses intonation contour (which
Moulton called "tentative") as a means of classifying sentences.
On the basis of what is essentially an approach through immediate
constituents, a very short and a very long German sentence are
equated structurally (p. 5); subsequently transform analysis is used
to describe the difference between German and English dependent
questions (p. 17). Kufner uses whatever method fits the situation--
rightly so, since his aim is to offer practical pedagogical assist-
ance to teachers of German.

Some of the highlights of Kufner's presentation follow.

Chapter 1.   The major German sentence types are classified
according to a system of 5 binary contrasts: (1) Pitch contour is
either 3(2)-1↓ or 3(2)-3↑; (2) Either actor-action type (subject and
predicate) or action type (predicate only); (3) imperative or non-
imperative (in the latter case either present-subjunctive or non-
present-subjunctive); (4) Finite verb either first or second element
in the sentence; (5) Sentence begins either with or without a

question expression. Thus, a sentence like "Er geht nach Hause"
is (1) 3-1₁; (2) Actor-Action; (3) Non-imperative (non-present-
subjunctive); (4) Finite Verb second (FV-2); (5) Does not start with
a question word.

Chapter 2. Clauses are described and classified primarily
according to the position of the finite verb. A "clause element" is
defined as any word or group of words which can precede the finite
verb in a clause in which the finite verb is the second element. The
main comparison with English occurs in the area of what Kufner
calls order questions (finite verb in first position: Kommt er nach
Hause ?), and in the transform from statement to direct question to
indirect question.

Chapter 3. Phrases are classified into four categories:
1. Subordinate structure; 2. Coördinate structure (conjunction);
3. Coördinate structure (apposition); 4. Centerless structure. The
major discussion of the differences between English and German
concerns the subordinate structures, where Kufner deals with the
problem of the unrestricted German adjectivals (e.g., meine
kürzlich verstorbene Tante), and with verbal phrases. In the latter,
the discussion turns primarily on the problems of the auxiliary
verbs. Kufner points out that in English, the verb is capable of four
modifications (past, current relevance, limited duration, passivity)
while in German two of these modifications, current relevance (I
have been studying) and limited duration (I am studying), are lack-
ing.

Chapter 4. The chapter on parts of speech is perhaps the
least challenging, dealing as it does with the morphological prob-
lems and well-known differences between German and English
(e.g., declension of adjectives in German but predicate use of ad-
jectives as indeclinable, etc.).

Chapter 5. What Kufner calls compulsory grammatical cate-
gories are evidently simply those categories, such as number,
case, gender, reflexive, which happen to be relevant in a particular
language. In this chapter, as in the following one on semantic cate-
gories, the point of view is more comparative than in the others,
and the discussion is useful.

Chapter 6. The compulsory semantic categories include a
rather wide range of problems: subjunctive, unreal conditions,
forms of politeness, imperative, use of past tenses, choice of
auxiliary, motion in reference to speaker (bringen vs. nehmen),
etc. One gets the impression that this chapter was made to take in
a large series of problems in which the author, as an experienced
teacher of German, knew that comparison with English is essential,
but which somehow did not exactly fit the approach of formal

linguistic analysis to which he "officially" subscribes in the over-all approach of the book. Perhaps this is another way of saying that contrastive analysis, in order to be pedagogically useful, must arbitrarily be based on semantic rather than purely formal criteria. Again, Kufner has perhaps sacrificed the solution of linguistic problems or neatness of analysis to usefulness. (Congratulations!)

In conclusion, it must be said that this is a very good and useful work, which points up the need for a sound theoretical basis for contrastive analysis, while at the same time doing the practical job. It can be criticized for insufficient treatment of English, and some portions of the work sound rather like a non-native speaker who has found out that what he has learned about English is not really true (cf. the discussion of modal auxiliaries where "dare" is first mentioned (p. 36), then dropped (p. 37); and "may not" discussed as expressing "probability of non-occurrence," but then dropped (p. 37) because "younger people" replace it by might.

We can be sure that the book will be used; Kufner does not talk down to teachers, using expressions like "as teachers we may. . .", "as any experienced teacher of German knows. . .", etc. This book will surely make an impact and bring linguists and teachers previously without linguistic training closer together.

We hope that this excellent example will be followed by the rest of the series.

Frieda N. Politzer
University of Michigan