REVIEW ARTICLE

Rodney Huddleston, An Introduction to English Transformational
Syntax. Longman, English Language Series, 1976. Pp.xiv 273.

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This latest addition to the Longman's English Language Series (No. 10 in the
series edited by Randolph Quirk) is intended, in the words of the author, as "..an
introduction to the general theory of transformational-generative grammar, with
extensive and systematic exemplification from selected areas of English " (ix). Since
the success of any non-fiction book hangs on whether it achieves what it sets out to do,
then the success of this book depends on whether it is really "..an introduction in the
sense that it presupposes no previous knowledge of transformational grammar..." (ix).

By far the most striking feature of Huddleston's book is the thoroughness and close
attention to detail employed by the author in putting it together. Page xi, for example,
provides a "Table of Symbols and Notational Conventions", certainly a must for the
uninitiated. So often students interested in syntax, and particularly those with a back-
ground in the humanities, are frightened off by notational devices. Arrows, zero and
infinity signs, and a host of other quasi-mathematical symbols are used in the interests
of formalism. But often, one suspects, the aim is to assert the author's superiority over
the reader. Witness the style of Kimball (1973), and to a lesser extent Grinder and Elgin
(1973), both of which are explicitly intended as introductions to linguistic theory.

There is also a fairly substantial bibliography and each of the sixteen chapters ends with a paragraph or so of notes including references to this bibliography. These notes are not intended as a net to catch the bits and pieces that a less well-organized author might have failed to fit into the text. They do, in fact, represent an important part of the author's aim to direct the reader into more advanced discussion of the points he brings up.

Each chapter also usually ends with a summary of the ground covered, and begins with an indication of what is to be covered. This makes the task of the reviewer a little easier, but also allows the book to be used as an informal reference grammar of the ins and outs of TG by those wishing to brush up on various aspects of the theory. It is not however in this respect a mere rule book in the fashion of say Burt (1971).

Also a convenience for the reviewer is the author's indication at the end of chapter 1 of how the book as a whole is organized – chapters 2 to 5 being based on the Chomsky 1957 model, chapters 6 to 13 on Aspects, and chapters 14 to 16 on post-Aspects work.

The book therefore readily lends itself to discussion in three main parts.

Section 1

As a general introduction, chapter 1 sets out the aims and scope of transformation grammar as Huddleston sees them. This involves a reiteration of many of the criteria elaborated in Aspects, including explicitness and being generative rather then merely analytical. There is also some discussion of the usual topics, such as competence and performance, and the problem of the inter-relationship between syntax and semantics. This is one of the threads that permeates the whole book.

Although it is perhaps a mistake to introduce the beginner to the schism between the Extended Standard Theory and Generative Semantics so early in the book (it is shown diagrammatically towards the end of chapter 1), it is necessary to deal almost immediately with the problem of grammar and meaning. Some of the illusions that the transformational novice usually labours under can be summed up in the apocryphal (but attested) statement that "you can't study language without meaning".

Even before TG came on the scene this matter was discussed in neo-Bloomfieldian linguistics in relation to the status of the morpheme. As Huddleston points out, the only grammatical background he assumes is a mild flirtation with traditional grammar. For this reason he finds it necessary to discuss the status of the morpheme as a semantic or syntactic unit.

This reflects, it seems, an increasing tendency for students and others to approach linguistics via TG with no previous contact with other models of grammar. Again, Huddleston finds it necessary, presumably for the same reason, to discuss Immediate Constituent analysis as if the reader were not familiar with it.

But IC analysis deserves attention for more than the negative reason for which it is often discussed. It is usually seen as just another theory that never worked. In fact, there is quite a lot to be said for an IC approach, provided some modifications are made to it. One of the most fundamental changes was that made by Chomsky in Syntactic Structures, in discussing three models of grammatical description. There, he assumed the need for grammars to be generative and so turned the analytical IC grammar into the generative Phrase Structure grammar.

Now I hold no very strong brief for analytical, structuralist descriptions of language, but there are some things that IC analysis achieves almost as well as TG, but which are lacking in the PS grammar.

For example, TG claims to handle sentence-relatedness by means of an adverb-fronting rule. (1) can be transformationally related to (2), a relationship not brought out by the PS grammar.

(1)   Today we watched the cricket.

(2)   We watched the cricket today.

It is certainly true that the PS grammar does miss the relationship. The IC approach, however, does not miss it. In (3), the binary splits indicate that the adverb still belongs to the Predicate Phrase (Predicate Phrase is used by Chomsky 1965:102 to include <u>Aux,</u> <u>VP</u> and adverbs of place and time).

(3)   Today we watched the cricket.
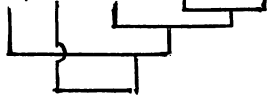
Where sentence-relatedness is all that is at stake, then there is nothing missing from the statement made in (3).

My reason for raising this matter is to indicate that there are ways of changing, or at least of hiding, the truth. But sometimes it is quite valid to hide the truth temporarily. Depending on the level of student, it can be useful to tell a white lie to help the novice over a difficult mental hurdle (one would not, for example, recommend doing this with postgraduates). Telling white lies in the privacy of the tutorial is one thing; writing them into a textbook for international consumption is quite something else. But Huddleston bravely uses process terminology in the early stages of his book, waiting until chapter 12 before really spelling it out:

"We can interpret PS rules and transformations as defining admissible differences between consecutive stages in syntactic derivations. In this account there is no process, no time-scale: the ordering of the consecutive stages involves not time but level of abstraction, with the deep structure being more abstract than the surface structure, and so on." (175).

It is very tempting in the early stages of teaching TG to allow one's process terminology to be understood in spatio-temporal terms, provided that the error is unlearned when the time is right.

If this seems like intellectual dishonesty, then is it any more dishonest than intentionally leaving process terminology ambivalent in major theoretical works? TG was not intended to be mentalistic but authors haven't always complained if this is how the theory has been understood.

The rest of section 1 is of a standard format, with a clear progression through the following stages: the problems of a single-level PS grammar (chapter 3), an introduction to transformations (chapter 4) and "A Fragment of a Transformational Grammar" (chapter 5). Here a basically 1957 model is used, and illustrated with discussions of the active-passive and interrogative-negative relationships that characterise all good introductions to the subject. There is also a solid exposition of the how and why of affix-hopping, which is given more space than it usually is in introductory grammars. So often it is taken for granted that because affix-hopping works, geometrically[1], it must be right.

Section 2

As has already been said in this review, the relationship between syntax and semantics is an area of bitter controversy, both within the outside of TG. In this section we are given a 1957 to 1965 history of this topic, the main problem being the power of transformations to either change or preserve meaning. This matter is dealt with in chapter 6, while in chapter 10 we are shown another difference between Syntactic Structures and Aspects.

In the latter version of TG, the role of lexical insertion is removed from the PS base. There is also discussed here the vexed question of whether features in the lexicon are syntactic or semantic.

Chapter 9 is also more concerned with the philosophy of grammatical models than with pure mechanics. Besides dealing with the relationship between syntactic structure and illocutionary force, it also deals to some extent with the mechanics of questions, and introduces the topics of performatives and presupposition.

Departing a little from the syntactic theme of the book, chapter 11 returns to the problem of the status of the morpheme, and indicates how its phonological shape is to be generated within the model of grammar under discussion.

But from a mechanical, or geometrical, point of view, the important chapters in this section are 7, 8 and 12, all of them being primarily concerned with rules controlling the derivation of complex sentences.

Two important differences between Chomsky 1957 and Chomsky 1965 are whether transformations change meaning, and at what point in sentence-derivation lexical items are to be inserted. This is in fact only part of what would be a larger discussion of the relative power of PS and transformation components. Such a discussion could be extended to the problems of deriving structures that involve conjoined elements and embedded clauses. Under the title of Recursion, chapter 7 discusses the three main types of complex sentence in English: conjoined structures, and the two types of embedding – relative clause and complement clause.

Relative clauses receive a standard treatment, with the distinction shown between restrictive and non-restrictive, and there is some discussion of Whiz-deletion.

In the first part of chapter 7 we are treated to both points of view in the discussion over conjoining at phrasal level. These can be regarded as two extremes: the all-out reduction approach of Gleitman (1965), and the all-out PS approach of Dougherty (1970). Dougherty manages to fit all cases of conjoining into the PSR (Phrase Structure Rule) schema, as represented by (4):

(4) $X \longrightarrow X^n$ (Where X is any Major Category)

Huddleston uses the stock examples to show that reduction cannot always work. Hence (5) cannot be derived by reduction because (6) is unacceptable:

(5)   John and Mary are alike

(6)   *John is alike and Mary is alike

He also points out that there are some structures where reduction must be applied. (7) involves gapping and (8) the conjoining of unlike VPs. Here the only alternative to reduction is not to derive passives from active-like deep structures (but that is another story).

(7)   John is studying law and Tom midecine (= Huddleston's (15ii)).

(8)   Manchester City and Manchester United defeated Wolves and
        were beaten by Sunderland respectively. (= Huddleston's (22ii)).

Apart from discussing these matters in the text, Huddleston also refers the reader in his notes to Koutsoudas (1971). This paper is an important one since, although it does involve reduction, the reduction is of a form slightly different from that of the standard theory.

In Koutsoudas' theory of conjunction reduction, restructuring of the reduced string does not involve any reordering of elements but merely the redrawing of the structures underlying them. In this way it has now become possible to rule out the transformational reduction approach in generating sentences such as (9):

(9)   The man and the boy carried the books and the map.

Such structures, if derived by reduction, would involve breaking the principle that deletion of any kind be recoverable. (9) is much more than multi-ambiguous – it is indefinite. Who carried what? (The question of recoverability of deletion is examined by Huddleston later in the book).

The remainder of chapter 7 and all of chapter 8 deals with complement clauses. In chapter 7 we are given a fairly standard treatment of their derivation, while the bulk of chapter 8 is given over to the type of argumentation made popular since the middle sixties. Then, as here, it was recognised that having ideas and intuitions about structures is not enough; the arguments to support analyses should fit into the total jigsaw. For example, reflexivization is ordered before imperativization to allow the generation of sentences such as (10), or passivization is ordered before negative–placement to rule out strings such as (11):

(10)   Wash yourself!

(11)   *John did not be eaten by a lion.

The drift of Huddleston's discussion in chapter 8 is that (12) and (13) have sub-stantially different deep structures, and that seem should be marked as obligatorily undergoing extraposition.

(12)   John expected to intimidate Bill (= Huddleston's (1)).

(13)   John seemed to intimidate Bill (= Huddleston's (2)).

Once more, in mechanical or geometrical terms, the difference in deep structure can be accounted for by using rules that fit into the total jigsaw.   But whether the jigsaw fits together depends on the deep structures posited, and the deep structures may be arbitrary. If they are arbitrary, they may very possibly be wrong.

All complex structures involving seem are assumed to have a deep structure of the form (14), which corresponds to H's (4) in chapter 8.

(14)
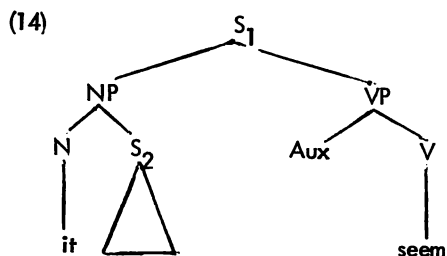
But if seem must always undergo extraposition, there seems to be less justification for a structure such as (14), since such a structure is never realised at surface level. That is, there is no sentence of the type (15):

(15)   *That life is a waste of time seems.

Nevertheless, Huddleston's treatment is a little better than Lakoff's (1968), where the rule Flip is involved in derivations with seem. Thus, Lakoff derives (16) from (17):

(16)   John seems to be a fool.
(17)   I seem it   S

John be a fool

But even if the extraposition approach is better, it still uses deep structures that bear little resemblance to the surface role of seem. Furthermore there is another verb of the same semantic category that appears to be subject to similar derivations. Appear would also require a deep structure configuration of the type (18), which parallels that of (14):

(18)
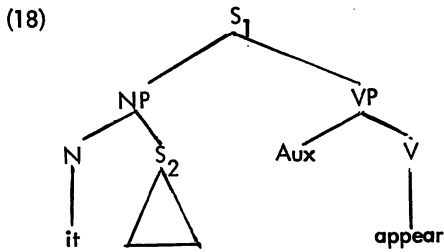
The occurrence of sentences such as (19) seems to support a parallel analysis for _appear_:

(19)   John appeared to be happy with his lot

Even more justification for having _appear_ occur in right-most position in deep structure might be found in (20):

(20)   John appeared.

(20) indicates that _appear_ is also intransitive, as is _seem_.

But, this last piece of circumstantial evidence is based on the view that the _appear_ in (19) is the same as the _appear_ in (20). If it is the same verb in each case, then not only will _appear_ also be marked for obligatory extraposition, but the application of this rule will also change the meaning of the verb. There seems to be some important semantic difference between the _appear_ in (19) and that in (20).

This problem of meaning-changing can easily be avoided by having two lexical items – _appear_$_1$ and _appear_$_2$. But once we do this we destroy some of the support for the _seem_ analysis. The distinction between (19) and (20) makes the deep structure (18) less attractive; it then becomes correspondingly less attractive as a parallel to _seem_. In fact, _seem_ never occurs in structures like (20) – with the exception perhaps of (21), which is possibly not in any case a simplex structure in underlying form.

(21)   So it seems/It seems so.

I would like to suggest that <u>appear</u> and <u>seem</u> involve deep structures that might be stated informally as (22):

(22)
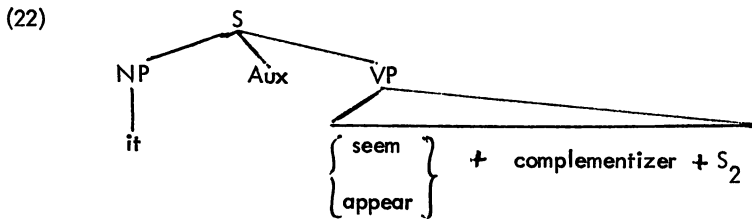
The <u>it</u> would of course be semantically empty, but so it is in orthodox deep structures such as (14) and (18).

(22) could also form the basis for handling verbs such as <u>look</u> and <u>sound</u>, although these verbs would involve a different complementizer:

(23)   It {looks / sounds} {like / as if / though} he isn't coming today.

Such a system of relatively shallow underlying structures might be regarded as missing a generalization that extraposition provides. However, the fact that there are at least four verbs that fit into this pattern is perhaps justification enough for creating a special deep structure format.

This section concludes with a detailed look in chapter 12 at transformational rule ordering, including explanations of the terms <u>intrinsic</u> and <u>extrinsic</u> ordering. There is also a demonstration of the transformational cycle in operation, involving the rules of Raising and Reflexivization. The explication is clear in spite of its inevitably detailed nature.

Section 3

Huddleston includes chapter 13 in section 2 of the book because it involves dis-
cussion of material within the Aspects framework. It does however provide a lead-in
to the final section which is on post-Aspects work.

In chapter 13, Huddleston discusses the subject of universal grammar in terms of
formal and substantive universals, and whether one accepts the strong or weak version of
the universals claim. This chapter properly belongs in section 3 of the book because it
is precisely in the area of substantive universals that post-Aspects work identifies itself.

Grammarians such as Ross and Lakoff have t ied hard to relate at increasingly
deeper levels such major categories as adjectives, verbs and noun phrases (see, for
instance, Ross (1969b) and Lakoff (1970)). It is in this respect that the work in TG dealt
with in the first two sections of the book differs from that in the third. There has been
an increasing tendency to widen the (spatio-temporal or otherwise) gap between deep
and surface levels of syntax. Although the work of Dougherty discussed earlier makes the
mistake of attempting to shoehorn all cases of conjoining into relatively shallow structures,
his intuitive heart is in the right place. As for a single universal major category, Huddleston
would have done well to mention Schachter (1973), which goes a long way towards thwart-
ing the Lakoff-Ross conspiracy in this area.

However, Huddleston himself strays into the area of deeper-than-deep structures.
His chapter 14 is a reiteration to a great extent of Ross (1969a), where auxiliary verbs are
treated as reformulated main verbs. Huddleston admits that this involves deeper structures,
but that they are in a sense neutralized – the derivations involved require no transformations
that are not independently required for true cases of embedding.

The depth of deep structures is unfortunately a matter of faith. This reviewer's prejudices happen to be against transformationally relating modals and full verbs. The only cases that do offer some kind of relationship worth considering are those structures involving dare and need (and possibly need (to)). But the variation in usage can easily be accounted for by giving them dual status within the lexicon.

Chapter 15 discusses the relationship between, on the one hand, the traditional notions of ellipsis and logical or psychological subject and, on the other hand, transformational deletion and derived grammatical subjects. It also discusses one alternative to orthodox TG, giving Case theory some ten pages of quite unbiased discussion. The chapter finishes with a look at the major category views of Ross and Lakoff that were mentioned earlier in this review.

Finally, chapter 16 returns to the eternal problem of syntax versus semantics and the reader is brought back to the schism between EST and GS alluded to in chapter 1. Huddleston states that a discussion of the relative merits of these two theories is beyond the scope of his book. He does not merely pass the buck, however, but again gives the reader adequate references to pursue the matter himself.

The question still to be answered then is whether this book achieves what the author intended. In putting this review together, rather a strange effect was experienced. The initial impression was that it was unsuitable as an introductory textbook for an Australian university (and I hasten to add that my reservations reflected not the level of ability of students, but rather the workload that four first-year courses imposes upon them). But I have now been seduced into regarding it as an excellent book.

There is of course the possibility that reading it thoroughly has given me a familiarity with it, so that any initial problems in following the argumentation have been forgotten. It is also a problem for a teacher to recall how difficult a subject was as a beginner. It would appear, though, that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, for as Randolph Quirk

informs us in his foreword, "The book is a direct product of his work in the classroom and we can be confident that its impact will be as revelatory to readers as to those who are fortunate enough to be in daily contact " (vii).

Would I recommend it to my students, or use it as a course textbook? As a book to be bought rather than borrowed from the library occasionally, that brings us to the question of money. For those students who aim to continue with syntax in the second and third year of a syntax course, it is to be recommended; but for those who have begun first year linguistics because it is a trendy subject, and might not carry on at the end of the first year, it could be hardly considered a worthwhile investment. At the time this review was written (October 1976) the book was unavailable in Australia. At a paperback price of £4.25 it is hardly cheap (the book was printed in Hong Kong so one dreads to think how much it might have cost from a British printer).

However, the number of pages belies the amount of solid material packed into this tightly and compactly printed book. As was mentioned earlier, it is so full of material and so well set-out that it would be worth spending £4.25 on it as a reference grammar. It might serve, in particular, as a source of references for more advanced reading – for the teacher whose speciality was not TG but wanted to keep abreast of the subject.

NOTES

1.   Discussion of the "geometry" of syntactic structures refers to the type of discussion that goes on about the rules and constraints involved at different points in sentence derivation. The problems of which node-structures to posit, and how deep and intermediate structures can be manipulated, these might be regarded as problems of geometry. (The term was used by Dr. K.I. Forster at a meeting of the Monash Linguistics Department Seminar in 1976).

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REVIEWS

Wurm, S.A., (ed.). 1975. New Guinea Area Languages
and Language Study. Vol.1: Papuan Languages and the
New Guinea Linguistic Scene. Pacific Linguistics, C38.
Canberra, The Australian National University. xlii + 1038.

This volume is the first of three on the language situation in the New Guinea area.
It offers us a full 1038 pages of information on, mainly, the classification of the Papuan
languages. There are two dedications by Mr. Somare, the Prime Minister of Papua
New Guinea, one presumably for the three volumes as a whole, the other specially for
volume 1. There is a preface, a summary table of contents, an introduction, a 22-page
detailed table of contents of divisions 1-3, (divisions 1-3 making up the main body of
the book (pp. 1-960)), a section with biographical notes on the ten contributors and
three indices, one on language names, the second on other names, and the third on
authors' and personal names. The volume is devoid of theory (although not of technical
jargon) and rich in speculations regarding the possible linguistic prehistory of the New
Guinea region.

Division 1 presents an overview of the linguistic situation as it is presently known
in regard to the Papuan languages, i.e., those languages also known as non-Austronesian,
and spanning an area from Timor in the west to Santa Cruz in the east.