

Reviews

Dypedahl, Magne, Hilde Hasselgård and Berit Løken. 2006. *Introducing English Grammar*. Bergen: Fagbok-forlaget. pp. 165.

Introducing English Grammar is a contrastive grammar addressing Norwegian students in teacher education and students taking an introductory English grammar course at college/university level.

The book comprises 16 chapters, each of which ends with a list of relevant terms. There are three appendices: a list of irregular verbs, instructions for punctuation and a list of terms used in the book (English terms with their Norwegian translations and chapter references). In a highly pedagogical manner from the very beginning, the introduction describes language as a unit that can be taken apart into pieces and put back together, and whose entities work at different levels, i.e. the notion of hierarchy. Chapters 2 and 3 treat these levels (words, phrases, clauses and sentences) in more detail. Broadly, the description then proceeds through clause elements, clause types and word order to a final chapter on cohesion, coherence and formal vs. informal English. The general approach is descriptive but also functionally oriented. There are frequent comparisons between English and Norwegian, and separate “Notes for learners” highlighting issues known to be problematic for learners. The authors generously give advice on usage also in more general terms, on formal vs. informal style and on differences between British and American English.

The organisation of the book is non-traditional in that several areas that could be expected to be incorporated in larger units are here given separate chapters. Such chapters are “It and There” (hence not discussed with the other pronouns) and “Concord between Subject and Verbal” bringing up areas known to cause difficulties for learners. There are also separate chapters on aspect, modality and the passive that follow the chapter “Verbs, Tense and Time.” This allows for the inclusion of aspects that are sometimes left out in other accounts. For instance, in addition to modal auxiliaries, modal adverbs and modal adjectives are discussed in the chapter on modality. Further, the chapter on concord brings up agreement in relative clauses and with nominalised adjectives which may give a more extensive comprehension of the concept. Pronouns and determiners are dealt with together in one chapter, and relative pronouns,

only briefly mentioned along with the other pronouns, are thoroughly described in the chapter devoted to dependent clauses.

Writing a pedagogical, contrastive grammar forces the authors to make a certain selection of topics, so instead of giving a full account of the language the book focuses particularly on aspects that tend to be difficult for the foreign learner. However, the descriptions and explanations are sometimes relatively brief and some issues may require a more detailed account in order to be sufficient for the first term student. For instance, the chapter on pronouns and determiners, a large area, leaves it to the student to find any potential differences in usage and meaning between most of the indefinite pronouns and quantifying determiners (only *some* and *any* are described). Furthermore, both the formation of conditional sequences and the subjunctive seem to have been omitted. Nevertheless, the information given is presented in a clear, accessible and straightforward manner in which the links between form, meaning, function and usage are described in a way that would facilitate learning. The description is also illustrated by well chosen examples. What I would wish for, however, is a package of exercises to complement this account. All in all, the book should be a useful and valuable tool for the first term student and help prepare the ground for further studies.

Anna-Lena Fredriksson
Göteborg University, Sweden