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Describing Morphosyntax: A Guide for Field Linguists. THOMAS E. PAYNE. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp. xvi + 413. $69.95 (cloth), $26.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Jack B. Martin, *College of William and Mary*

Linguistics programs in North American universities generally provide students with an introduction to the field, "core" courses in phonology and syntax (the latter typically focusing on English), and a smattering of side dishes chosen from phonetics, morphology, semantics, historical linguistics, typology, sociolinguistics, field methods, and (if students are lucky) anthropological linguistics.

Recent years have seen a return of interest in "descriptive linguistics," the study of the methods by which a linguist determines the relationship between form and function in a language and presents that knowledge to others. Descriptive and typological studies have, in turn, led to a greater understanding of such "exotic" phenomena as noun classes, ergativity, incorporation, serial verbs, and switch reference. And yet, at many schools, there is no single course in which this rich body of information is presented. As a result, there is a growing need for a general course in undergraduate and even graduate programs in which students learn about the range of grammatical devices found in the world's languages.

Thomas E. Payne has addressed this need by writing what might be thought of as a textbook for a grammar of language. The course he envisions is one in which readers are equipped with a reference grammar of a language in addition to the text. The instructor moves to a new topic each week corresponding to the chapters in the text and to the sections one might find in a reference grammar. Students then apply that knowledge to their chosen language, presumably summarizing the results in the form of a sketch. Students or readers thus learn something of the diversity of constructions used for specific functions in language, a little about their chosen languages, and a great deal about the art of describing a language.

Payne has divided the book into twelve chapters. In chapter 1, he outlines the demographic and ethnographic information that a linguist might investigate. In addition to notes on genetic affiliation and previous research, he encourages linguists to treat multilingualism, the contexts of language use, viability, code-switching, and dialects in their reference grammars and sketches. Chapter 2 takes up the typology of morphological processes. Payne introduces such basic terms as "root," "stem," and "clitic," Comrie's (1989) indexes of synthesis and fusion, and Nichols's (1986) distinction between "head" and "dependent" marking. Chapter 3 deals with parts of speech and common subcategories within a theory of prototypes. Following Givón (1984), Payne

claims that the grammatical distinction found in some languages between noun, adjective, and verb reflects a cline of time stability. Chapter 4 summarizes Greenberg's (1963) findings regarding correlations in constituent order in languages, so that readers will be able to evaluate the ways in which a particular language is "head-initial" or "head-final." Chapters 5 and 6 deal with the grammar of nouns and noun phrases and predicate nominal constructions, exploring compounding, denominalization, number, case, determiners, possessors, and noun class, in addition to locative, existential, and possessive constructions.

Chapter 7, "Grammatical Relations," introduces the labels S (intransitive subject), A (transitive subject), and P (object) to explain the distinction between ergative-absolutive phenomena and nominative-accusative phenomena, as well as split intransitivity and split ergativity. Chapter 8, another key chapter, uses the familiar metaphor of "valence" to group processes into "valence-increasing devices" (causative, applicative, and possessor raising) and "valence-decreasing devices" (reflexive, middle, passive, inverse, and antipassive). Chapter 9 describes operations affecting verbs and verb phrases, from nominalization to tense, aspect, evidentiality and modality, location, direction, and participant reference. Chapter 10 sorts out such terms as "topic," "focus," and "new information," among others. Serial verbs, subordinate clauses of various types, and coordination are discussed in chapter 11. Chapter 12 concludes with a discussion of discourse analysis and genres, in part so that readers will know to elicit conversations, historical narratives, etc., in addition to folk stories and myths. Two useful appendices are included, the first dealing with the role of elicited and text data, and the second providing a list of sample reference grammars.

In every chapter, the data are rich, unusually diverse, and surprisingly accessible. Especially noteworthy is the inclusion of short questions at the ends of sections to move the reader from the passive role of learner to the active role of author. This makes it seem easy to go out and look for split ergativity or noun incorporation in a particular language, though the real trick is often finding a way to get past these labels. My only specific complaints are: first, that categories such as passive are defined as though these categories existed outside of particular languages (I would rather have students learn about the complexities of the Greek middle than about someone's "universal" definition of middle); and, second, the questions readers are encouraged to address are those that functionalists have found interesting, though there is a larger body of work on anaphora, clause union, clitics, control, gapping, quantification, quantifier float, etc., that should not be ignored in a reference grammar.

Although I have described the book as a textbook, it has not been marketed that way. This is not surprising, as there is currently no place in the standard curriculum for this topic—the book does not deal specifically with field methods (there is no information on planning a dialect survey or on choice of software, for example) or with syntax (there is virtually no information on constituency); it overlaps with some typology texts (especially Whaley 1997), but does not specifically deal with forming generalizations across languages. Instead, Payne seeks to cultivate a basic knowledge of grammatical constructions that will assist a fieldworker in learning how a particular language functions. Perhaps linguistics programs will one day have a place for such an important course.

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Color and Cognition in Mesoamerica: Constructing Categories as Vantages. ROBERT E. MACLAURY. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997. Pp. xix + 616. $85.00 (cloth).

Reviewed by Nobuko Adachi, *Illinois State University*

In this significant and important work on color terminology systems, Robert E. MacLaury provides a new approach to how the human mind in different cultures and languages comprehends the substantive world. This new proposal, which he terms "vantage theory," is the result of his working with a monumental data set that he gathered with his colleagues in Mexico and Guatemala between 1978 and 1981. During this fieldwork, they interviewed some 900 speakers of 116 languages and dialects. Data from over 200 non-Mesoamerican languages (especially from the Pacific Northwest) is also considered in this book. By itself, the data and ethnography found in this volume are a great contribution to the anthropological literature. MacLaury's data, combined with the findings of the World Color Survey (Kay, Berlin, and Merrifield 1991), now form the basis of a rich source of information for future researchers in cognitive science, anthropology, linguistics, and psychology. But the raw data are actually not the most important contribution of this book. MacLaury attempts to solve one of the oldest controversies in anthropological linguistics—the riddle of color nomenclature—and he does so by proposing a major new theory of categorization and classification.

Color naming has been an attractive research topic in anthropology ever since the late nineteenth century, when early ethnologists reported that people in the non- Western world had different ways of dividing up the color spectrum. For instance, medieval Japanese had a single color term *ao* (literally, 'blue') to refer to both blue and green; to the people of these times, "green" was seen as a kind of blue, much like "navy" or "sky blue" are seen as kinds of blue today in modern English. The ancient Greeks apparently had a similar system. But early anthropologists were surprised to find that many contemporary cultures named colors in exactly this way. (In fact, this blue-green combination is so common in the world that researchers have given it its own name, "grue.")

The question now was, what did this mean for how languages, cultures, and individuals create categories? As many of the ways of naming color were apparently so different from those found in the West, most linguists and anthropologists took these findings to be evidence for the so-called relativist hypothesis: that cultures could name colors without constraint and that human beings could "think" about color in almost limitless ways. In the 1950s, color nomenclature also seemed to be the best empirical evidence for the so-called Sapir-Whorf hypothesis—the idea that language in many ways determines psychological perception.