

## Book Reviews

LÓPEZ GARCÍA, ÁNGEL (1994/1996). *Gramática del español. I. La oración compuesta & II. La oración simple*. Arco/Libros. Madrid. 2 vols. Páginas, 476 & 616.

The inception of a new metalinguistic cycle taking place in the eighties at the University of Valencia occurred within a new general epistemological context, one in which new approaches sought to ground their appeal against the backdrop of the still reigning structuralist paradigm and the deeply stagnant generative paradigm. With some reluctance, they all had to accept that in order to reconstruct effectively a grammatical system, heed was to be paid to the realm of communication, that is 'parole'. It is from this vantage point that one can grasp the significance of professor Angel López García's work devoted to the study of Spanish Grammar, a work spanning two decades and culminating in the two volumes of his Spanish Grammar reviewed here. (These two volumes will soon be complemented by a third one, dealing with parts of speech).

The incorporation of *langue* to *parole*, which drives the metagrammatical endeavour of the author, is not given a wholly uniform and even treatment throughout the work; in fact, this is not the major aim of the work. Rather than follow the traditional tack of starting with linguistic products or means at the disposal of the speaker, the author reverses the direction: to use the terminology of Charaudeau, the means are now 'perceived' by the addressor (active source)/utterer (passive source)/interpreter (passive object)/addressee (active object). From this conception arise the foundational categories identified by the author: turn, utterance, sentence, phrase. As a result, the old grammatical categories used in the Spanish tradition (eg. subordination, coordination, transitivity, intransitivity, copulative, etc), which are based on digitalized symmetrical functional criteria (ie. binary adscription), or on rough-and ready utterance-based class differences, progressively disappear as soon as the perceptual environment of any grammatical component is entered into. Such an environment is strongly mediated by the perceptual, encoding and interpretive components of the

speaker's cognitive activity. This metalinguistic change coincides with a stage in grammatical theorizing in which the absence of a pragmatic component is evident, resulting in a narrow-minded conception of the grammatical system whose implementation makes the descriptive problem even worse (classification of complex and compound sentences, attribution, passive..).

Having got rid of this tradition-laden baggage, the author sets out on his metasemiotic journey well-furnished with a whole new outfit. Unlike most well-known grammars of Spanish, which are conceived in terms of a set of distinct grammatical devices, López García's proposal contemplates three major levels: (a) an algebraic-algorithmic level (dominant in his early work entitled *Para una Gramática Liminar*, 1980); (b) a semiotic level (visible in his *Fundamentos de lingüística perceptiva*, 1989); and (c) a perceptive implementation level, which underlies the work under review. While in the first work the author lays down the internal logic of the ensuing work, in his second work he shows how the initial computation is realized, and in the third he shows the implementation of the resulting perceptive representation, laid out in terms of figures and grounds. Whereas *Liminar Grammar* arose as an algorithm-driven metalinguistic model, this *Spanish Grammar* is oriented towards the specification of the perceptive representation of the linguistic information and the processes and procedures involved in cognition. Each of the three levels has its own role to play, although they are interwoven logically and causally. Hence no particular level of description is independent from the others. An implicit mathematical theory underlies this grammar. Evidently, different algebraic procedures may lend themselves more naturally to their implementation in different perceptive bases, and, therefore, perceptual information has an effect on the initial algorithmic hypotheses.

In accordance with the epistemological assumptions underlying the theory, the aim of mathematically-based grammatical models is to analyse formally the grammatical problems which the system is trying to solve, rather than expound the very methods by which they are solved. Hence the author's choice of a psycholinguistic theory as a theory of performance in Spanish, instead of a choice of a theory of syntactic competence, which would have been more akin to a theoretical logical-algebraic level. The Spanish grammar proposed by the author is a grammar concerned with how grammatical structures are actually computed in Spanish: a real epistemic challenge. Such

radical assumptions can be found already in the descriptive algorithmic levels proposed by the author in his earliest works (four operational levels of deductive inference: government, agreement, order and profference). It is from this level that arise notions such as systemic efficiency (manifest, for instance, in so-called "compound balanced expressions"), diminishment of returns under difficult conditions ("inversion of perceptive schemas"), etc.

The work's orientation requires relevant psychological evidence. Doubtless, psychological data seem to be most pertinent at the level of the compound sentence. However, this data is also relevantly extended to the domains of the complex and the simple sentence. In a purely deductive-algebraic framework, this grammar would have turned out to have consisted of just a set of axioms or a set of rewriting rules. But in a psychology-enriched framework, the author can show how long the Spanish speaker's computation takes, and how the execution of the computation is affected by attentional (focalising) factors) as well as memory (ultimately inferential) factors; in other words: by performance factors. The question raised by the author from the beginning is not just how computing takes place (categorical analysis), but what function is computed (identification of functions in sentence perception: oblique objects, predicates, implements, etc). In sum, this work is a grammar written having in mind the act of information transmission, regardless of how the information is represented.

The approach used by the author is not just from "outside in" (ie. from uttering to utterances, from addressor-message-addressee to the internal configuration of the message itself), but also "top-down" (ie. from a strategy oriented towards the discovery of perceptive algorithms). The perceptive algorithms implemented in the work belong to several types:

- a "transformation" perceptive algorithm, which consists of the design of a goal and a set of rule-constrained operations, whose implementation transforms the initial state in the goal. The algorithmic formula of this first perceptive strategy is of the kind  $A::B:C::D$ , where the two middle terms (B and C) hold an explicit relationship of exchange; the speaker's task is to find two unknown terms (A and D) which are in a new, still nonexistent, relationship (alternations of speech turns). The author

accounts for this first strategy by introducing the definition of 'turn', a unit resulting from a co-participatory 'exchange'.

- an "inductive" perceptive algorithm, deployed to enable the speaker to find structural (not content) analogies between elements belonging to different domains. The algorithmic formula of this second perceptive strategy is of the kind **A:B::C:D**, where the first two terms (A and B) hold an explicit relationship (act of uttering); the speaker must discover an unknown term (D), the focus, which holds a presupposition-based relationship to C, analogically similar to the first relationship (utterance); the author accounts for this second strategy by introducing the definition 'expression', a unit resulting from a later interpretive process.

- an "ordering" perceptive algorithm, deployed to enable the Spanish speaker to rearrange a series of previously set elements so as to meet a given speech condition. The algorithmic formula of this third perceptive strategy is of the kind **A:B:C**, where four terms (A,B,C,D) hold an explicit relationship (utterance) and the speaker is supposed to rearrange them internally, either completely (sentence) or partly (phrase). The author accounts for this third strategy by introducing the notions 'sentence and its inversion correlate, 'phrase', units in charge of internally ordering minimally the contextual levels of arrangement, agreement and government.

The tabulation of these algorithmic types yields the following schematic relationships as the basic framework developed by the author:

PERCEPTIVE ALGORITHMS	GRAMMATICAL INVESTIGATION	GRAMMATICAL UNITS
transformation	compound sentence	exchange/turn
induction	simple sentence	acto of uttering/utterance
arrangement	word classes	sentence/phrase

From this standpoint, several itineraries are suggested by the author

inside and around the grammatical-communicative system of Spanish: predication types, context-determination types, expression types (such as concession, purpose, comparison, relativity) and sentence function types. This descriptive tour is not meant to simply identify the pertinent category at work but to shed light on the perceptive-creative process through an analysis of a corpus of data gathered by the author. We see here converging the linguist, the philologist and the textologist, whose combined efforts prove essential for the purpose of studying the rationale behind the grammatical investigation and its underlying psychological processes.

The gestalt-like grounds on which this grammar is based stand in stark contrast to the associationistic basis of the traditional grammars of Spanish. In the new grammatical thinking espoused by the author, this means that, in the final analysis, the solution to problems of current grammatical theorizing concerning the Spanish language cannot just be a mechanical deployment of past experience (in the form of reproductive thought). Rather, it is inseparable from a consideration of creative novelty. From this the interrelationship of all levels can be highlighted. But this point serves to set it apart from other psychology-based models such as schema theory or prototype theory. In particular, the underlying thrust of the author's proposed model reveals what those alternative models lack, since they overlook the primary descriptive level which is the target of most psychological grammatical theorizing. The main achievement of the work reviewed here is its recognition of the fact that a full-fledged description of any language, not just Spanish, calls for new analytical and conceptual tools capable of accounting for perceptive variables, which are inherently dynamic, as evinced by speakers' actual performance.

Daniel Jorques Jiménez (Universidad de Valencia)