

Book Reviews

DOI: 10.1017.S0142716403210080

Investigations in clinical phonetics and linguistics. Fay Windsor, M. Louise Kelly, and Nigel Hewitt (Eds.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2002.

This volume consists of 38 papers presented at the summer 2000 meeting of the International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association, hosted by Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh. The scope of the collection is ambitious in many respects. All levels of linguistic analysis are covered, from pragmatics through to acoustics, although approximately two thirds of the papers deal with phonology and phonetics. The full range of ages is represented, from a paper by John Locke on the functions of infant babbling through to Jacqueline Guendozi and Nicole Muller's paper on repair strategies in the conversation of an elderly subject with Alzheimer disease. The majority of the papers consider developmental and acquired disorders, although a few consider normal and bilingual language development. Although English is the most frequently studied language, data from Arabic, Greek, Korean, Portugese, Putonghua, Swedish, and several other languages are also featured. The editors are justly proud of the international feel to the research, with contributors working on five continents.

The five papers on specific language impairment (SLI) illustrate the wide-ranging nature of the work presented in this volume. Of the five, one considers syntax, two morphology, one semantics, and one phonology. Data are from Greek, Norwegian, French, German, and English, and a number of different theoretical positions are defended. Stavroula Stavrakaki's paper on sentence comprehension in Greek SLI children presents evidence that these children find certain syntactic constructions (simple active sentences with clitics, long-distance who-object questions and passive sentences) particularly difficult in comparison to their language-matched controls. Stavrakaki claims that the nature of the deficit is syntactic and that the noninterpretable features of grammar are specifically affected (in the sense of the Minimalist Program, Chomsky, 1998). Kirsten Meyer Bjerkan defends the view that the deficit in SLI is not language specific but rather results from a limitation on general processing capacity. Her paper looks at the influence of phonological and frequency factors on regular and irregular past tense acquisition in Norwegian. She argues that Norwegian SLI children have difficulty in perceiving past tense morphemes with low perceptual salience and that they are only able to focus on frequency factors, as these are the most prominent aspect of the inflectional system. Christelle Mailart and Marie-Anne Schelstraete look at the effect of manipulating memory load, specifically, the order, number, and nature of the elements held in working memory, during comprehension tasks in French. They find that increasing the

load on working memory leads to a significant drop in comprehension performance. They argue that the burden on working memory interacts with performance in a manner that cannot be accounted for by any linguistic explanation of the deficit in SLI but that is predicted by a more general processing capacity limitation.

Petra Schulz, Zvi Penner, and Karin Wymann look at the comprehension of German resultative verbs in normally developing and language-impaired children and find that their SLI subjects lag behind their normally developing peers in accepting an endstate interpretation of end-state oriented verbs such as *aufmachen*. They interpret this finding as indicating that the SLI children's learning strategy does not consider the hierarchy of subevents that is required for the correct interpretation of such verbs, so they cannot build up complete semantic representations of them. The final paper on SLI is by Kristine Yont, Adele Miccio, and Lynne Hewitt, who consider phonological breakdowns in SLI. The authors remark that, although most studies of phonology assess the performance of SLI subjects on single-word naming tasks, phonological errors also occur above the word level. They provide examples of between-word harmony and reduplication gathered from connected speech, and use these to argue for the assessment of phonological skills using conversational speech sampling. Although the papers on SLI differ in the rigour of their presentation, they represent a cross section of the variety of interpretations for this notoriously heterogeneous disorder.

Among the papers that address phonology, the one I found the most interesting employs insight gained from linguistic theory to devise successful therapy. Raquel Anderson uses the notion of markedness to show that when Spanish onset clusters that are highly marked for sonority are targeted for intervention, relatively less marked structures improve without direct targeting: They are remedied for free, as it were. This is exactly what good linguistic theory should do: It should inform therapy. The reverse is also true: successful therapy should inform our linguistic theories, and this paper gives support to the validity of markedness as a theoretical construct. A paper by Haruko Miyakoda considers the influence of syllable structure and orthography on speech errors in Japanese. Other papers in this collection would have benefited from Anderson and Miyakoda's rigorous use of linguistic theory as a framework for their research.

Toward the phonetics end of the collection, Fiona Gibbon argues for the use of phonetic analysis in providing an accurate description of children's phonological disorders. She uses various types of evidence to claim that impaired tongue movements (as revealed by electropalatography) are more widespread than evidence based solely on transcription-based analyses might suggest. The interface between phonetics and phonology is likely to be particularly fruitful in future research on phonological disorders. Also in the area of phonetics, Tara Whitehill and Joyce Chun offer a very clear methodology for rating intelligibility and acceptability in speakers with cleft palate.

As is inevitable with collections of this sort, the quality of the contributions is mixed, but there should be something of interest to anyone who is carrying out research in the field of clinical linguistics and phonetics. The papers are, on the whole, well written and clearly presented, despite the occasional error

missed in the editorial process. The length of each paper is generally a very manageable 10 to 15 pages, and there are good author and subject indexes. It is a pity that the papers are not formally grouped into topics of interest, such as SLI or bilingual development. Such a grouping would enable readers to find at a glance the contributions that are relevant to them. If grouped in this way, a short overview of each section would give coherence and would be particularly valuable for topics outside the reader's own area of expertise. Although the breadth of the collection is one of its strengths, its lack of organization is a weakness. Overall, though, there is much that is worth reading here.

REFERENCE

Chomsky, N. (1988). *Minimalist inquiries: The framework*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Chloe Marshall
University College London