Edited by Simon Coffey

The History of Grammar in Foreign Language Teaching

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The History of Grammar in Foreign Language Teaching

Languages and Culture in History

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Introduction

Simon Coffey

Abstract

In this Introduction, Coffey sets out the scope of the volume, considering the changes in the way grammar has been defined since its origins, and summarising the valuable contributions of each of the studies presented.

Keywords: Grammar; history of language learning and teaching (HoLLT); language pedagogy; Latin; vernacular languages

Few motifs in the literature on language learning and teaching elicit such contradictory and emotive responses as the term 'grammar', and how this should be taught in language classes (or indeed not) remains a perennial topic of debate in language pedagogy. Yet, despite the numerous reference guides and books of exercises listing grammar rules, the concept itself remains somewhat nebulous and subject to lay judgements around what constitutes grammar. In particular the concept often invokes emotional responses stemming from notions of 'correctness'. In my role as teacher educator, each year I ask my novice teacher students to formulate a definition of 'grammar' and the most common response is as the 'structure' or 'system' of a language. Needless to say, this sets up a series of oppositions (i.e. what would not be deemed structural) and the idea of 'structure' itself gives rise to metaphorical constructions of building, centrality and fixity.

With these definitional dilemmas in mind, the aim of this collection of papers is to provide a concise, historical overview of what grammar has meant at different times and in different pedagogical contexts. Given the vastness of the topic, such an undertaking cannot, of course, claim to be exhaustive, but rather, the volume offers a presentation of cases, each of which, though scholarly and well informed in its own right, will encourage the reader to investigate further the context and issues that are presented.

The way 'grammar' is constructed as a concept is invariably relational, whether seen as a more or less prominent or ancillary element of the classical trivium, or, more recently, as a specialized form of meta-linguistic knowledge usually set in opposition to a more meaning-focused communicative language pedagogy. In this short introduction to the volume, I draw attention to some of the parameters that have structured the development of grammar in terms of geographical and linguistic scope, and by so doing will point to the conceptual and terminological boundaries in the way 'grammar' is defined for our purposes. In particular, I try to convey something of how the term has gained in complexity over time, before offering a consideration of the role of 'grammar' in broader conceptions of education including some abiding tensions such as 'usage-' versus 'rule-' based descriptions and epistemological claims to 'universal' versus 'language-specific' models of grammar and pedagogy.

Clearly, the term 'grammar' has meant different things throughout different periods. Etymologically the word shares its origin with 'graphic' and ultimately derives from *grámma* (γράμμα) meaning 'a written letter, something that is written'. There was, therefore, from the start, an association with 'literacy' or 'being lettered' in the very material sense of scratching out or scoring letters as signs onto wood, pottery (ostraca) or early forms of paper. While the current volume takes as its starting point the pedagogical practices of ancient Greece, formal induction into the technology of literacy practices had of course existed since before the development of the Greek alphabet, itself descendant from proto-systems that can be traced to pictographic and cuneiform scripts. Given that literacy practices were passed on to elite groups it is unsurprising that the ability to read and write (to be 'lettered') became, as it remains, arguably, inextricably linked to the maintenance of power. By the time of classical Greece with its advanced political system and flourishing literary culture, Aristotle used the word 'grammar' to denote formal knowledge of language, but it was not really until the first separate treatises appeared which systematically described language through parts of speech and so forth that we can really start to talk about the *art* of grammar (this is discussed fully in Chapter One). The term was then integrated into the Roman model of Liberal Arts as an integral accompaniment to the other *arts* of the free man viz. logic and rhetoric, and would continue to occupy this canonical position through the Middle Ages and beyond. While taxonomies of 'grammar', referring not exclusively to the written form but to formal knowledge of language as a constituent element of a broader range of classical education, did evolve over the centuries, they

also remained remarkably stable[1], with 'grammar' only recently conceived as a separable focus on form.

For most of Western history of language, 'grammar' has been synonymous with Latin (and to a lesser extent the study of other classical languages). In terms of format, early bilingual grammars, that is from Latin to the vernacular (the students' current language), were intended to teach Latin and followed conventions established since Donatus' *ars grammatica*[2], comprising definitions and descriptions of the individual parts speech followed by word lists (glossaries) and dialogues (colloquies). From the Renaissance[3] vernaculars rose in prominence, as objects of study in their own right, both as mother tongues and as foreign languages, and the ideology of standardized languages took hold, linked to nation-state formation. Latinate taxonomies naturally served as the established model for the writing of the early vernacular grammars, shaping the grammatization[4] of these languages (French, Spanish etc.) as they became codified. But Latin grammars had tended to follow a general orthodox which did not cater specifically to the sensibilities of different first language speakers[5] and this continued in the format of vernacular grammars so that grammatical explanations of modern languages were artificially presented according to conventions established in Latin, notwithstanding the seminal developments in pedagogical practice advocated by Comenius[6]. The application of classical taxonomies has usually been seen as a restriction, although more recently scholars have argued that 'to depict the Latin system as an oppressive model from under whose yoke grammarians needed to escape is to obscure the effect of the grammatization based on the Graeco-Latin tradition and the fact that it created the conditions for a cumulative growth in linguistic knowledge'.[7] One consequence of the dominance of the classical model to describe language was the conception that language 'was endowed with a universal character. Although ancient Latin was, as we call it, a *grammatica*

1   The relative prominence of each art in this triadic relation (the trivium of grammar, logic and rhetoric) was one of the most important debates in linguistic historiography. See Law, *The history of linguistics*.

2   See Raby, this volume.

3   De Clercq, Lioce & Swiggers, 'Grammaire et enseignement du français langue étrangère entre 1500 et 1700'.

4   Auroux 'Le processus de grammatisation et ses enjeux'.

5   Colombat, *La grammaire latine en France à la Renaissance et à l'âge classique*. See also Raby, this volume.

6   See Sadler, *J A Comenius and the concept of universal education*.

7   Raby & Andrieu 'Norms and rules in the history of grammar: French and English handbooks in the seventeenth century', 68. See also Walmsley, this volume.

particularis, it was applied as a *grammatica universalis*'[8] and this universal view only really began to be challenged in the eighteenth century, not least because of the increased contact with non-Indo-European languages.

As our understanding and appreciation of the classical vision of language – and language education – have receded in the modern era, new epistemological paradigms have emerged to frame the relational dynamic of power in the way language is used in interaction, most notably in the recently established fields of applied and sociolinguistics. The way language is perceived as a social resource within these fields of enquiry might be traced to the ethnographic approaches developed within anthropology as much as to twentieth-century developments in psychology and linguistics. Malinowski[9], for instance, finding the established grammatical taxonomy inadequate for writing a grammar of Kiriwina, argued that grammar must be seen within a broader context-specific semantic system.[10] This ethnographic perspective has emphasized synchronic research rather than the historical perspective of traditional philology.[11] Some have argued that, while it is productive to understand language change within the more holistic approaches afforded by recent epistemologies, there is a risk that disciplinary bias towards synchronic methods can slide too far into 'recentism' so that the momentum of historically ingrained beliefs that shape our current attitudes to language and education is misunderstood or underestimated.[12] The focus of this volume is not on the description of language per se, but on how grammar has been codified and communicated to pedagogical ends. In terms of methodology, most of the studies that comprise the current volume follow established historiographical procedures to analyse grammar in the European tradition, and these (by virtue of necessity given the type of documentary evidence available) tend to focus on tracing the evolution of written taxonomies and didactic material. However, language historiographers are not blind to the importance of ecological approaches

8   Ruijsendal, 'History of grammar: Description and classification', 10.

9   Malinowski, 'Classificatory particles'.

10   Throughout the twentieth century to the present day, socially oriented system models have increasingly seen the concept of 'grammar' diversify to encompass context-sensitive descriptions of usage, maybe most famously within functional linguistics models such as Michael Halliday's *systemic functional linguistics.*

11   The difficulty in applying Western grammatical norms to other languages was not, of course, a dilemma new to the twentieth century, and had already been recognized by earlier scholars of non-Indo-European languages, most famously Wilhelm Humboldt.

12   For instance, the recent argument advanced to build an 'applied linguistic historiography', R. Smith. For a discussion of contemporary perceptions of time and the current preoccupation with 'presentism' see Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expériences du temps.*

and most documentary analyses are, to varying degrees, situated in their broader social context of contemporary mores and material affordances and constraints.

The historical study of grammar is inherently interdisciplinary and a primary intention of this collection is to cross disciplinary boundaries and to reflect the different research traditions that have been concerned with investigating grammar. Some contributors are classicists in the language historiographical tradition, while others have a modern languages teaching background and have turned to historical methods to complement synchronic research approaches more commonly associated with current notions of language education research. While the term 'grammar' has developed different meanings according to context, in this volume, we use the term to denote the ways in which language is explained for pedagogical purposes; in other words, how language (*a* language) is represented as a socially constructed set of conventions for talking about language in different pedagogical settings.

The volume does not pretend to offer a solution to perennial questions pertaining to the evolution of language in human beings, how human life is organized through mental representations and how the articulation of these has emerged. However, philosophical and psychological perspectives on language naturally arise where these have implications for beliefs about the purposes and forms of language description in pedagogical contexts. For instance, the way language has been recorded through the codification of grammatical features – and consequently how we learn (about) grammar – has always been structured by broader epistemological and ideological principles, even where these are implicit rather than stated. One such principle includes the ontological distinction between, on the one hand, the belief that words represent an objective reality and, on the other hand, the belief that words represent a mentally constructed perception of reality. Padley[13], for example, characterizes this distinction in terms of language as 'the mirror of thought' or language as the 'mirror of things' in the early modern period, a development explained by broader epistemological currents such as, respectively, the empiricist, scientific model associated with Bacon and Hobbes, that aimed to categorize the physical world, and then the cognitivist, rational model associated with the philosophy of Descartes and Port-Royal. In the first instance, words point to material realities, in the latter, they point to thoughts or mental concepts.[14]

13 Padley, *Grammatical theory in Western Europe 1500-1700. Volume 1.*
14 For a more detailed exposition, see also Law, *The history of linguistics.*

This relation between inner language and material reality has concerned philosophers since Aristotle and has been reinterpreted according to the epistemological context of the time, such as by Christian theologians in the Middle Ages and then humanist scholars of the Renaissance. The traditional categorization of speech into 'parts' or 'categories' which threads through the historical studies in this volume, has at its origin a fundamental linguistic distinction, dating at least from Plato and Aristotle, between nouns and verbs (things and actions). This seemingly common-sense separation cannot be set apart from the logical and philosophical contention that *things* are our primary concepts that other qualities and actions qualify. This analysis has echoed through the generations and persists in the form of pedagogical sequencing of language.

Another guiding principle, this time of a didactic character, is the traditional distinction between 'prescription' and 'description' that any student of linguistics soon encounters. Yet this distinction, traditionally explained as 'rules' versus 'usage', is obviously not clear cut. Treatises on grammar, which are inevitably didactic, have always sought to resolve the tensions between presenting models based on an ideal (a 'right' or 'correct' version of what language forms should be according to a particular author's logic) and how language is actually 'used'. There is an inherent problem in fixing into written rules any model that claims to be based on 'usage' in that rules of use will inevitably be subjective, partial and ephemeral. Conversely, even the most normative models, such as those based on the pursuit of purity and logic through linguistic form (such as the Port-Royal *Grammaire*) provide examples of usage to support their claims.[15]

In either case, any 'description' of language has probably never been exempt from some degree of moral exhortation. This was clear in the classical period where language study was a mental discipline with a defined social and political function, then as the teaching of classical languages were appropriated for theological reasoning in the Christian era, and even through the secularization of the Renaissance which saw the liberal arts emphasized as *studia humanitas* (humanities). With the grammatization of the vernaculars[16], and the desacralizing of taught languages, the moral

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15   See Salmon's chapter on 'Pre-Cartesian Linguistics' for a discussion of the notion of 'surface' and 'deep' structure. Later taken up most famously by Chomsky in support of his theory of transformational grammar, deep structure had been framed as 'underlying propositions' by Port-Royalists, *The Study of Language in 17th-Century England*, 77.
16   Auroux 'Le processus de grammatisation et ses enjeux'.

dimension has become more covert, but can still be recognized in judge-ments of prestige in relation to standard forms and idealized educated speakers.

The twelve papers in this volume are arranged more or less chrono-logically, from classical Greece to the present day, with key developments presented around notable milestones. Of course, this does not mean to imply that the history of grammar has followed a narrowly linear progression, as the evolution of grammar is also circular, where longstanding concepts and pedagogical wisdoms are reimagined and articulated anew to suit different contexts. There is, as already mooted, a European bias in the range of languages represented, and within this range there are many omissions. Czech, German, Italian and Portuguese, for example, are not represented, although these and other European vernaculars have an important and thriving tradition of linguistic and grammatical historiography[17]. Their omission in the current volume can only be explained by the limits of size as well as the limits of the personal scope and professional expertise of the editor. When vernacular European languages developed as powerful unifying symbols of nation in the modern era, they competed for prestige and visibility. It is easy to forget that the rise in the international importance of English is a recent phenomenon and that English had little value as a foreign language compared with other European languages, as testified by John Florio's oft-cited remark from 1578[18] that "it [English] is a language that wyl do you good in England, but passe Dover, it is woorth nothing". While French would enjoy the most sustained pre-eminence overall, other modern languages were also widely learnt at different times and in different regions and developed their own grammar and teaching materials. The famous *questione della lingua* in Italy and the emergence of the Florentine dialect as a literary standard[19] provided a model for other languages to embrace new national literatures as well as, in many cases, a more cohesive cultural and political identity through a shared language. Languages were not constrained by borders, of course, and flourished in cultural and economic spaces of flow and exchange.

With regard to non-Indo-European languages, it is important to note that while 'grammar' is often perceived as a European concept because of its origins, there is a longstanding and ever increasing body of scholarship investigating

the historical grammatization of non-Indo-European languages. As well as the application of Latinate taxonomies to non-Indo-European languages within Europe (Basque etc.), and to languages encountered in colonial settings[20], there is an increasing body of scholarship problematizing the notion of grammatization for non-Indo-European languages such as Chinese.[21]

In the first chapter, Swiggers and Wouters provide a thorough account of the origins of (Western) grammar in Greek antiquity where the study of grammar meant the mastery of classical Greek. In other words, the study of grammar was not to learn a foreign language per se as students were Greek speakers, but neither was its purpose to describe or analyse the spoken form used by students. Study was therefore text-based. The authors describe the progression within the classical didactic system, that the Romans would emulate, from elementary rote-learning of the alphabet and basic literacy skills known as the 'teaching of letters' (*didaskontas grammata*), through the more advanced training in grammar and the study of literary texts taught by the *grammatikos*, culminating in the 'higher education, under the guidance of a professor of rhetoric or philosophy'. Manuals were written to support teaching through descriptive categories and a common metalinguistic framework emerged, although, as the authors point out, teachers modified and expanded definitions to meet the needs of students so that grammar as a discipline constantly evolved. There is now considerable debate around the authenticity of the traditionally recognized foundational text, the grammar manual known as the *Tekhnê grammatikê*. The *Tekhnê*, which survives in various fragments of papyrus records that the authors catalogue, was conventionally attributed to the Alexandrian philologist Dionysius Thrax, who lived in the third century BC, although most linguistic historiographers now believe that most of the original manuscript was produced several centuries later.[22] Whether truly authentic to Dionysius or not, and the first part of the *Tekhnê*, which includes his 'definition of grammar', is mostly regarded as authentic, the manual provides a fascinating example of an early manual and provides the basic structure that would be adopted by virtually all subsequent manuals, including the iconic eight parts of speech.

In Chapter Two, Luhtala provides a detailed analysis of secondary education from the late Roman period to the Middle Ages. Her analysis traces the

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20   See Auroux, 'Le processus de grammatisation'; and Zwartjes, *Portuguese missionary grammars in Asia, Africa and Brazil, 1550-1800*.

21   See McDonald, 'The challenge of a "lacking" language: the historical development of Chinese grammatics'; and Pellin, 'Aspects of the grammatization of the Chinese language'.

22   From the third or fourth century AD. (Luhtala, personal correspondence).

shifts in pedagogy and canonical texts, especially the foundational works of Donatus and Priscian, from late antiquity to the schools that came under the aegis of the great European institutions of learning, starting with those set up by monasteries and cathedrals in the wake of the Carolingian Renaissance. Although different elements of the trivium were emphasized at different times, the elementary courses invariably began with basic grammatical manuals from which increasingly complex rules were learnt by heart alongside commentaries, before moving on to more advanced texts dealing with philosophy and rhetoric. Luhtala wonders, given the relative sophistication of the philosophical doctrine in the texts, how much secondary age boys (of thirteen or fourteen) understood the content. It would be fair to assume that scholarship of this age group consisted largely of rote learning on the understanding that this would lay the foundation for further adult education.

The question of bilingual versus monolingual approaches has remained a perennial topic for debate in the teaching of grammar and Ælfric, an English monk, scholar and teacher living at the end of the tenth century, the focus of Chapman's research presented in Chapter Three, produced what was probably the first bilingual grammar that used the students' own language rather than the target language as the medium of instruction. Written for students of Latin in early tenth-century England, descriptions of the language and grammatical rules are given in contemporary Anglo-Saxon English, itself an indicator that by this time Latin was not used as a first language. That pupils were by this time learning Latin as a 'foreign' language is attested by the then innovative inclusion of full verb paradigms.[23] As Chapman describes, Ælfric adopts a delightfully recognisable approach in the way he addresses the reader directly and peppers his text with humorous anecdotes. We also see how the model of language refers to the lived context of the intended students for, while the learning was always in an ecclesiastical context, Ælfric included a bilingual wordlist of vocabulary that would be meaningful to the students. Moreover, Ælfric conforms to the practice already highlighted in the previous chapter of Christianizing Latin in the way, for instance, that he replaces classical names with biblical.

The authors of the following paper in Chapter Four, Gómez Asencio, Quijada and Swiggers, take us forward to the age of print and the first

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23   It is interesting to note on this point Law's observation that 'the early medieval restructuring of the traditional Roman teaching grammar from a taxonomic account of language in general with reference to Latin, to a detailed account of Latin accidence designed for the foreign learner, resulted in a new genre, the foreign-language grammar, which has remained productive to the present day', Law, 'Effort and achievement in seventeenth-century British linguistics' 52.

printed grammar of a European vernacular: Nebrija's Spanish grammar, *Gramatica sobre la lengua castellana*. Published in 1492, Gómez Asencio, Quijada and Swiggers emphasize the relevance of this date as a turning point in the rise of Castilian Spanish in the wake of the Reconquista and Columbus' 'discovery' of the Americas, both events which reinforced the drive to codify Spanish, already increasingly prominent in parts of Habsburg Europe, notably the Low Countries, then called the Spanish Netherlands. Although not especially successful at the time – appearing only in one edition (in contrast to his earlier grammar for Latin) – Nebrija's *Grammatica* is important historiographically for its stated aims of trying to fix and stabilize (Spanish) language for future generations. The treatise targeted different audiences: native-speakers wishing to have a systematic knowledge of Spanish grammar; those wishing to learn grammar in their native language to facilitate the study of Latin; and those wishing to learn Spanish as a foreign or second language.

In Chapter Five, Raby provides a diachronic account of how grammars for French developed between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, a critical period in the development and codification of vernacular grammars. Raby problematizes the distinction between native and non-native speaker target audiences; the vast majority of the French grammars during this time span did not seem to be oriented towards specific groups of foreign learners, using French as the main or sole metalanguage and taking little account of cross-vernacular comparisons. This is explained not only by the longstanding dominance of French across Europe and beyond but also by the desire to impose its status as a legitimate, grammatized language on a par with Latin. The format of the grammars in this period remained largely stable and it was only during the eighteenth century that French grammars were produced specifically for foreigners on a model based on first language acquisition.

During this period of vernacular grammatization, Latin retained its status as the scholarly lingua franca and in schools of early modern Europe was both the medium of instruction and the principal subject of study.[24] It is important to remember that, certainly in terms of pedagogy of Latin, grammar did not refer exclusively to the technical linguistic elements such as agreement and declensions, but also implied study of literature and analysis of literary texts which went hand in hand with the development

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24   Even during the English Reformation, although preaching was in the vernacular (English), school learning at 'grammar schools', a term which first appeared in the fourteenth century, continued to be conducted in Latin. See Bowen, volume 2.

of rhetorical skills.[25] In Chapter Six, Moul presents the role of grammatical verse in Latin not only for teaching Latin but also Greek and Hebrew. The creative use of verse rather than prose to teach grammar emphasizes the effectiveness of mnemonics and rhyme in language pedagogy while the content of the grammatical verses also reinforced classical references and provided a humorous and memorable way to inculcate moral teaching.

The prominence of French in Imperial Russia is well known and has been the subject of an extensive body of scholarship. Yet how French and other modern languages, notably German, were actually taught, and more especially the role of grammar in language pedagogy, has received little attention. In Chapter Seven, Kislova, Kostina and Rjéoutski present an overview of the grammars available in eighteenth-century Russia. In particular the authors examine the language courses in the elite schools attached to the Academy of Sciences, the Noble Infantry Cadet Corps and the Church seminaries, demonstrating a shift throughout the century towards greater explicit focus on grammatical form for foreign language teaching, bringing foreign language pedagogy more in line with that for Latin teaching. The authors' analysis draws on important tropes that run throughout this volume such as the relationship of native- and non-native-speaking tutors to the languages they teach, and the proficiency and ability of tutors to instruct in spontaneous oral methods in contrast to the relative 'security' of a graded pedagogy structured around written forms.

In Chapter Eight we see an example of a successful late eighteenth-century grammar published in London. Its author, Nicolas Wanostrocht, can be described in many respects as representative of French grammarians living in eighteenth-century England in that he was Protestant, French-native-speaking, and worked as a tutor to a noble family before setting up his own academy. His so-called *Practical Grammar*, first published in 1780, enjoyed a century of re-editions both in England and, from 1805, the US. England had always been a primary site for the production of French grammars and the number of these being published in England, mainly in London, continued to increase exponentially as the eighteenth century progressed. A ground-breaking feature of Wanostrocht's Grammar was the inclusion of 'exercises' in the same volume, and the analysis in this chapter demonstrates the pedagogical intention behind this early template of the grammar-translation manual. Although 'grammar-translation' became widely disparaged as a rigidly delivered school pedagogy in the nineteenth century, evidence offered suggests that grammar exercises were originally

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25   See also Copeland and Sluiter, *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric.*

intended to form part of a more eclectic programme of learning rather than as the sole method. The analysis presented also suggests some of the wider social conditions that account for the Grammar's relative success, such as the system of subscription publication that was a characteristic of the contemporary English book trade, and the fact that Wanostrocht was favourably connected to the nobility and to London's intellectual circles.

In Chapter Nine, Walmsley presents a longitudinal analysis of English metalanguage, that is, the terminology used to denote English grammar and the internal and external forces which helped to shape it. This analysis spans from the late Middle Ages through Lily's iconic grammar for Latin in English to the twentieth century, allowing us not only to see how resistant to change many terms are, but also to understand how the fit between terms and their referents was often approximate and subject to particular constraints. A common theme running through most historical analyses of vernacular grammars is the awkwardness of using Latinate taxonomies for other languages; for example, how to describe the 'article' given that Latin does not have articles. However, as mentioned above, the traditional criticism of early vernacular grammarians and the framing of classical nomenclature as a cumbersome constraint has recently been modified and Walmsley argues that such criticism is not justified by the evidence, which shows that vernacular terms were in fact readily coined to categorize English, even if most of the terms have since been 'weeded out to leave a broad stock of predominantly classical terms'.

The Reform Movement of the late nineteenth century represents an important turning point in how foreign languages were taught in schools across Western Europe, notwithstanding the variation in take up of Reform methods across national contexts. While the broad aims of the Reform Movement are typically characterized as encouraging a shift away from grammar-translation and its focus on writing towards a renewed emphasis on oral language and 'connected' texts, the role of grammar in the toolkit of Reform methods has received little attention. Suso and Valdés Melguizo's analysis in Chapter Ten provides a new and innovative analysis of the role of grammar in the Reform Movement. As their contribution demonstrates, Reformers did not seek to reject grammar teaching per se but to reinvigorate it, loosening the shackles of the traditional deductive model of learning grammatical categories according to the classical taxonomy towards more inductive and 'intuitive' approaches that encouraged learners to see and appropriate grammatical meanings as patterns. This development within the context of the Reform Movement and the corollary 'direct method' paved the way for much of the discussion of the role of grammar in the

twentieth century, where the different pedagogical models have, by turn, reformulated older oral-based methods into differing versions of 'direct method', including the audio-lingual, army method and the more recent communicative approaches.

In Chapter Eleven Hudson takes readers through a reflection on shifting approaches to grammar teaching in English schools over the last hundred years and the relationship between the development of metalinguistic terminology in first language English and school-taught modern languages. Taking as a starting point a number of government-commissioned reports from the early twentieth century which sought to obtain a clear picture of the state of education in English schools (the Leathes Report of 1918 being the first state report commissioned specifically to investigate the state of modern languages in English schools), Hudson traces in broad brush strokes the ever faster development of educational change over the last century. We see how the explicit teaching of grammar is subject to fashions shaped by the wider socio-educational landscape, including the decreased take-up of modern languages in England, particular examination formats and the intermittent rallying cries of disciplinary associations for greater synergy between the different forms of language education.

Most of the contributions in this volume have, in the tradition of historical grammaticography, dealt with written forms of pedagogical grammar[26], and it is probably true to say that the explicit teaching of grammar remains for the most part attached to standardized written forms. Weber's contribution in the final chapter extends this emphasis on the notion of the written standard to present approaches to the teaching of grammar with reference to spoken language in use. Drawing on the case of French as a foreign language, Weber provides a historical overview of the ideology of 'good French' and then situates the importance of including spoken forms, even where these may be considered non-standard, in the language classroom. Spoken grammatical forms, as with the written standard, conform to patterned structures which can be schematized. Weber proposes such a schematized model according to lexical and syntactic categories, a model that is, as Weber points out, not exhaustive but illustrative. While a 'grammar of spoken language' is inevitably subject to greater flux than standardized forms, recent technological innovation such as corpus analysis allows us to rethink how we present communicative models of language as it is actually used. Weber argues for the importance of understanding the plurality of forms

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26   Even where pedagogies might be oral such as the catechetical method. See Luhtala, this volume.

in the pedagogical encounter so that teachers develop a reflexive approach not simply to teaching 'grammar' but *'grammars'*.

Each of the papers presented in the volume presents new insights, whether drawing on completely new material or extending the analysis of more familiar documentary data in new directions. The volume will have achieved its primary aim if it serves as an opportunity for language teachers to reflect on their own and their students' conceptions of grammar and how these shape classroom discourse and teaching methodologies. It is also hoped that the book offers a helpful overview to students and scholars who are relatively new to language historiography, while also making a valuable contribution in its own right to research in the history of language learning and teaching, a field of scholarship that appears to be in good health, as attested by the vigour of its learned societies, well attended colloquia and increasing publications. Collective endeavours such as this volume depend on the good will, wisdom and perseverance that are the cornerstone of all intellectual collaborations. I extend my heartfelt thanks to each contributor, to the series and managing editors at AUP, and especially to the many anonymous reviewers, the unsung heroes who generously gave of their time and without whose intellectual rigour this book would not have been possible.

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