

A grammar of Bella Coola. By PHILIP W. DAVIS and ROSS SAUNDERS. (University of Montana occasional papers in linguistics, 13.) Missoula, MT: University of Montana, 1997. Pp. viii, 190. Paper \$20.00.

It might be expected that Davis and Saunder's grammar of Bella Coola (an isolate Salish language spoken in British Columbia) would be a compilation of their years of work on the language, cast in the form of a reference grammar. This is not the case. Rather than the traditional practice of devoting a chapter in turn to phonetics, phonology, morphology, and syntax, the authors focus exclusively on the morphosyntax of this polysynthetic language. Moreover, this grammar is steeped in a theoretical position not often taken in Salish studies, an analysis couched strictly in terms of semantics and pragmatics, to the point of shunning terms like *subject* and *object*. Their goal seems to be to provide both an accessible introduction to Bella Coola morphosyntax for the nonspecialist and a comprehensive analysis of the same from a particular theoretical viewpoint.

The introductory chapter (1–22) begins by offering brief remarks on the Salish language family, Bella Coola's place in that family, previous scholarship, and the current status of this endangered language. However, the major purpose of the chapter is to introduce D & S's approach and to familiarize the reader, via examples from English, with some of the terminology employed by the authors.

Ch. 2 (23–82) explores the organization of simple sentences. Some space is devoted to further elaboration of the theoretical approach and its attendant terminology. Though at times the exposition can present difficulties, the careful reader is rewarded with inter-

esting insights into the semantic and/or pragmatic motivations of a number of grammatical aspects: word order variation, alternations in the language's complex verbal morphology, core versus oblique case assignment, and the choice of prepositions used in oblique cases.

Ch. 3 (83–134), 'The participant', examines the use of lexical items, relative clauses, pronouns, and zero anaphora for referencing participants in clauses. In keeping with the approach taken in the rest of the book, these modes of reference, and modification, are discussed in terms of their felicity of use. Additionally, the rich system of deictic affixes is explored in detail.

The final chapter (135–84) focuses on complex expressions, utterances with more than one clause (or in D & S's terms, 'proposition'). Complement clauses, manner adverbials, coordination, and cause and effect relationships between clauses are discussed as well as negated clauses, which constitute complex expressions in Bella Coola, according to the authors' analysis.

As is often the case in works with multiple goals, D & S's grammar is at times uneven in how it views its readers. Sometimes, concepts are so carefully explained and exemplified that an undergraduate student with no knowledge of Salish would understand them clearly. In other instances, even the specialist will feel that she or he must review some of the authors' previous publications in order to appreciate the ramifications of some statement. Nevertheless, to have D & S's fully articulated theoretical model presented and grounded in a thorough analysis of the data is a welcome addition to Salish studies. [MICHAEL DARNELL, *University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.*]