
Analyzing the Grammar of English: A Brief Undergraduate Textbook

Review by Neil J. Anderson,
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ANALYZING THE GRAMMAR OF ENGLISH: A BRIEF UNDERGRADUATE TEXTBOOK. Richard V. Teschner and Eston Evans. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1993. 313 pp. \$23.95.

Analyzing the Grammar of English: A Brief Undergraduate Textbook (abbreviated by the authors as AGE:BUT) is a textbook intended for undergraduate students majoring in fields of study in which an analysis of English grammar plays an important role (i.e., linguistics and education). The text is not intended to be a complete grammar reference, but serves as an exercise book which examines basic concepts of English grammar. It has been used as a text for advanced level ESL learners studying grammar, although this is not the primary intended audience. The text assumes a 15 week academic calendar.

Analyzing the Grammar of English consists of eight chapters: (1) Analyzing English; (2) Verbs and Tenses, Forms and Functions; (3) Basic Structures, Do Support, Negation, Auxiliaries, Responses, Emphasis Contraction; (4) Modals, Prepositional and Particle Verbs, Transitivity and Voice, Conditionality; (5) Some Components of the Noun Phrase, Form and Functions; (6) Adjectives and Relative Clauses; (7) Adverbs, It and There: Referentials and Non-Referentials, Clefts; and (8) Embedded Sentences: Coordination and Subordination. An appendix is also included which contains a verb matrix with the complementation patterns that verbs co-occur with.

Chapter One: Analyzing English, begins by providing an overview of ways in which language is analyzed. A discussion of the grammatical categories to describe parts of speech in English is addressed next. A basic discussion of word order follows. The chapter continues with a discussion of the sounds of English. With this foundation, the reader is prepared to take different areas of English grammar and discuss them in more detail.

Each chapter contains a brief explanation of a principle followed by exercises in which the student can apply the principle. The chapter on adjectives and relative clauses (chapter 6) provides an example of how each chapter is structured in order to teach an aspect of English grammar. The six exercises in this chapter move from recognition of types of adjectives to recognition and production of comparative/superlative forms. The exercises then continue with recognition and production of relative clauses. The exercises typically include both recognition and production tasks.

Analyzing the Grammar of English accomplishes its intended purpose. The text serves an undergraduate audience best; it is filled with exercises which allow the student to apply the principles being taught, and it does not intend to cover all aspects of English grammar.

The text has perforated pages which can be easily removed. Students can complete the exercises in the book and then remove them to be reviewed by peers in the classroom or by the instructor. Programs at the undergraduate level that spend time examining the grammar of English would benefit from Teschner and Evans' text.

About the Reviewer

Neil J. Anderson, Ph.D. is a TESL/TEFL teacher trainer at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. In addition to teaching courses on the role of grammar in ESL/EFL classrooms, his research interests include language learning strategies and second language reading.

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