R. D. Fulk, *An Introductory Grammar of Old English with an Anthology of Readings*, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (ACMRS): Tempe, Arizona 2014. 332 pp.

The history of the English language (HEL) is taught at English departments the world over, and English historical linguistics is a discipline with a very active international research community. The focus of research in the field seems to have gravitated from the earlier, medieval varieties to Early and, quite recently, Late Modern English. This trend notwithstanding, there is still a demand for textbooks about Old English, the earliest stage in the history of the language. A very recent addition to the library of student grammars is *An Introductory Grammar of Old English with an Anthology of Readings* by Robert Dennis Fulk, Professor of English at Indiana University Bloomington. This review of the *Grammar* proceeds from a short note on the author and on the reviewer's method to a survey of the contents of the book, followed by a discussion and evaluation of the volume, with a few general observations on Old English teaching materials.

Professor Fulk is ideally suited for writing a grammar of Old English and compiling an anthology of Anglo-Saxon literature to accompany the linguistic description. In addition to Old English language and literature, he specialises in Germanic languages, comparative Indo-European linguistics, and Irish and Welsh. In addition to the *Grammar*, his recent work on HEL includes books on literary history,[1] Middle English,[2] Old

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[1] R. D. Fulk & Christopher M. Cain, *A History of Old English Literature*, Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester 2013.
[2] R. D. Fulk, *An Introduction to Middle English: Grammar, Texts*, Broadview Press: Peterborough, Ontario 2012.

English morphology,[3] and *Beowulf*.[4] Since Fulk, as an eminent expert, is well aware that there are a number of introductory textbooks and grammars on the market, it is important to ask how this new volume on Old English stands out from the others. As the proof of the textbook is in the teaching, it would have been ideal to review this volume after putting it to use in class, but that was not possible in practice. It is, however, feasible to compare the *Grammar* with perhaps its closest competitor on the one hand and with what could be called a classic textbook on the other. The volumes which I have had constantly in mind when perusing R. D. Fulk's book are those by Peter S. Baker, whose recent textbook is now in its third edition,[5] and Bruce Mitchell and Fred C. Robinson, whose 'guidebook' has reached its eighth.[6] The second edition of the former is a source of inspiration when I teach HEL, whereas the fourth edition of the latter offered me my first serious exposure to the language and literature of the Anglo-Saxons as an undergraduate. While the grounds for selecting these two books are unashamedly personal, the choices are unlikely to be counter-intuitive or surprising to academics teaching medieval English. Both also contain an anthology of Old English texts, unlike, for example, the introductory textbook by Richard Hogg.[7]

The *Grammar* divides into two main parts, 'I. Grammar' (pp. 1–136) and 'II. Anthology' (pp. 137–222), followed by 'Notes on the Texts' (pp. 223–250), 'Glossary' (pp. 251–324), a list of names (pp. 325–329) and a 'Grammatical Index' (pp. 330–332). The last item in the table of contents, entitled 'Resources for Anglo-Saxonists', turns out to be simply the URL of a web page containing a bibliography much more thorough than the 'Works Cited' in the book (pp. xi–xii) and a description of resources available for the study of Old English language, literature and manuscripts. The main focus of what follows lies on the Grammar and the Anthology.

The grammar section is, not unexpectedly, the lengthiest part of the book, composed of an 'Introduction' (pp. 3–7, §§1–8), twenty-one chapters (pp. 8–106), and three appendices (pp. 107–136). The introduction provides

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[3] Richard M. Hogg & R. D. Fulk, *A Grammar of Old English, Volume 2: Morphology*, Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester 2011.

[4] R. D. Fulk, Robert E. Bjork & John D. Niles (eds), *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, University of Toronto Press: Toronto 2008.

[5] Peter S. Baker, *Introduction to Old English*, Blackwell: Malden 2007.

[6] Bruce Mitchell & Fred C. Robinson, *A Guide to Old English: Fourth Edition Revised with Prose and Verse Texts and Glossary*, Blackwell: Oxford 1986.

[7] Richard Hogg, *An Introduction to Old English*, Second Edition Revised by Rhona Alcorn, Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh 2012.

the basics of the kingdoms, dialects and literary culture of Anglo-Saxon England and of the prehistory of Old English. Chapter I (pp. 8–15, §§9–24) defines basic phonetic terms and describes letter-sound correspondences, also acknowledging the disputes surrounding Old English pronunciation, the diphthongs in particular, while Ch. II (pp. 16–20, §§25–31) introduces key terms of nominal inflection and provides the first of the noun paradigms, which is – of course – the strong masculine *a*-stem, accompanied by the inflected forms of the demonstrative. Ch. III (pp. 21–25, §§32–38) covers an abundance of topics: neuter *a*-stems, uses of demonstratives, prepositions which take the accusative and the dative, the difference between strong and weak verbs, and first and second person pronouns. This feature of the grammar – fitting a range of grammatical and, very often, phonological topics and several parts of speech into a single chapter – will be discussed further below. The chapters are very short, not more than five pages from Ch. II onwards (for example Ch. XXI, pp. 102–106, §§134–138), but quite dense. In addition to information about grammar and phonology, the chapters also contain short exercises and readings. The readings vary from eight to 29 lines in length and are mostly excerpted from Genesis (particularly chapter 19, i.e. the Sodom story) in the early part of the grammar and exclusively from *Apollonius of Tyre* from Ch. IX until the end. These (p. viii) 'graduated readings', preceded by 'elements of grammar', are a key feature of the book. They become longer and more complex towards the end, providing examples of features discussed in each new chapter and rehearsing topics encountered in previous ones.

The appendices follow the grammar chapters. Appendix A (pp. 107–117, divided into seven sections) deals with historical and prehistorical sound changes: Grimm's and Verner's Laws, the development of consonants, stressed and unstressed vowels, and ablaut alternation. The final section summarises post-Old English phonological changes (p. 115) 'since a knowledge of these very often allows students to recognize the modern reflexes of Old English words', although one might say that a better motivation for beginners is the opposite: understanding how the language has changed may help them to recognize words in Anglo-Saxon literature. The book generally has a West-Saxon emphasis, but as a complement to this completely justifiable feature of the book, characteristics of non-Saxon dialects are introduced in Appendix B (pp. 118–131, seven sections), much of it devoted to samples from Northumbrian, Mercian and Kentish texts, including 'Bede's Death Song',

glosses to two psalms of the Vespasian Psalter, and the will of Lufu. Among the West-Saxon paradigms and text samples, this appendix successfully provides the reader with glimpses of material surviving in other dialects – which can look strikingly different. As the last appendix before the anthology, C (pp. 132–136, two sections) provides an introduction to poetic diction and form, for example, poetic variation, kennings and other compounds and phrases, and alliteration in the on-verse and off-verse. The author admits that (p. 136) 'poetic meter can be a complex topic'. The examples cited are mostly from the verse texts in the following anthology.

The anthology of prose and verse readings makes up a quarter of the book and contains excerpts from sixteen sources, with verse texts following the prose samples. Each reading is prefixed with a short introduction, and the notes section, between the anthology and the glossary, provides information for each text about the manuscript, variants, and translations of selected words and structures, grammatical commentary, explanations of names, and occasionally, corresponding passages in Latin. In the 'Notes', seven pages are devoted to the selection of thirty riddles, while Ælfric's 'Three Estates' only receives a few lines. The riddles (pp. 202–213) included in the anthology are from the Exeter Book,[8] as are three verse texts – *Vainglory* (pp. 195–197), *Soul and Body II* (pp. 198–201) and *The Wanderer* (pp. 219–222). Overall, Fulk's selection of readings reflects both textbook tradition and novel choices. As no anthology of Old English is complete without the Cædmon story, the traditional choices include excerpts from Bede (pp. 139–144; 'Cædmon's Hymn' is on p. 142), and there are also selections from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (pp. 148–152), more specifically the Parker manuscript. In addition to these two sources, Fulk's anthology also shares two verse texts with Baker's and Mitchell and Robinson's selections: *Dream of the Rood* (pp. 214–218) and *The Wanderer* (see above). Fulk includes two texts – the *Passion of Saint Agatha* (pp. 159–165) and the above-mentioned 'Three Estates' (pp. 153–155) – by Ælfric, whose works of course make up a considerable part of the extant body of vernacular literature from Anglo-Saxon England, and another great writer, Wulfstan, is represented by *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (pp. 175–179), his best-known homily, and *De falsis deis* (pp. 180–182). As is suitable for a grammar preferring late-ninth-century West-Saxon forms, there is also Alfred's Preface to the *Pastoral Care* (pp. 145–147); other texts in the anthology

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[8] Exeter, Dean and Chapter MS. 3501, also cited as Cathedral 3501.

sometimes attributed to King Alfred include translations of Orosius (pp. 166–174) and Boethius (pp. 183–188). The remaining readings are the *Vision of Leofric* (pp. 156–158) and a selection of verse from Cynewulf's *Elene* (pp. 189–194). It is worth noting that although *Beowulf* does not appear in the anthology, a fair number of examples are cited from the epic in the grammar chapters and in Appendix C. Excerpts from *Beowulf* are, in contrast, contained in Mitchell and Robinson's *Guide*, which also shares with Fulk's anthology Alfred's preface, Exeter riddles and Boethius; Fulk's readings overlap with Baker's in Orosius and *Sermo Lupi*.

The readings and the notes are followed by the glossary and the list of persons, peoples and places, which make up almost a quarter of the book. Overall, the glossary seems to have a good coverage. Naturally, the student may have some problems in looking words up, but adequate knowledge about the paradigms and variation will remedy this. I could not, however, find anything on Orosius' 'Finnas' in the glossary, nor in the notes or the list of names; Baker's translation is '*Sami* (the Lapps)'[9]. The last part of the book is the index, which is just over two pages, and one third phonology rather than grammar.

The contents of the anthology were already reviewed with respect to overlaps with Baker's on the one hand and Mitchell and Robinson's on the other, but the grammar itself also deserves comparison with the other two books. The grammar parts of these three volumes are similar in terms of size, some one hundred pages each, but they are organised quite differently. As was already indicated above, Fulk's chapters are not on single topics, such as 'Word Formation'[10] or 'Concord',[11] but group together different areas of grammar, typically a mixture of features from different parts of speech, such as Ch. V on 'Weak Nouns · Tense and Aspect · Forms of *beon*' (pp. 31–34, §§46–53). This also means that related topics are spread across the book: for example, strong verb classes are introduced and explained in chapters XI to XIV and weak verbs in chapters XV to XVII, while other verb topics appear in chapters III, V to VII, X, and XVIII to XXI. In contrast, Mitchell and Robinson devote four sections of their chapter 3 to verbs, and Baker, similarly, chapter 7 (but verb topics must appear elsewhere as well). Fulk's choices reflect his plan of proceeding through Old English grammar chapter by chapter while offering graduated readings (see above), but it does mean that using the book not solely as it

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[9] Baker 2007, 299.
[10] Mitchell & Robinson 1986, Ch. 4.
[11] Baker 2007, Ch. 11.

was intended – that is, as a textbook or grammar for students – but also as a reference book may be somewhat difficult, particularly as the index is quite short and cursory. Fortunately, the main topics discussed in the chapters are listed clearly in the table of contents.

Topics and paradigms are thus presented in different orders in the three books. As for the inflections themselves, Fulk's noun paradigms differ from Baker's and Mitchell and Robinson's in that the instrumental case is included, although it was disappearing from the language. The motivation behind its inclusion may be that in chapters II to IV, forms of the demonstrative *se*, *seo*, *þæt* – including a distinct instrumental – are presented in front of the inflected nouns. This is an excellent idea pedagogically, as demonstratives obviously appear in this position before head nouns in any text sample that students will read.

A feature which Fulk shares with Mitchell and Robinson but less so with Baker is the presence of phonological information in the grammar chapters. By p. 49, for example, the student is expected to be familiar with (at least) West Germanic gemination, Anglo-Frisian brightening, breaking and front mutation (*i*-umlaut), in addition to noun declensions, pronouns, adjectives, numerals and a number of characteristics of verbs. Sound changes at earlier stages in the history of Germanic languages are often used to explain variation within paradigms. The pedagogical point behind this solution is easy enough to understand, but it is far from certain that students beginning to work on Old English will view the numerous phonology sections as helpful or accessible; they may rather regard this feature of the book as a complication. The transitions, within a single chapter, from paragraph-length subsections on grammar to those on phonology (and back to grammar) may seem abrupt, not least because these subsections do not have headings but are instead numbered – a traditional grammar layout with which 21st-century students are probably not familiar.

In conclusion, this volume is doubtless a grammar of Old English, but it is not just introductory, as the title suggests. It does explain what a case system is and what IPA symbols mean to those whose exposure to linguistics has been minimal, but otherwise the contents go well beyond a mere introduction. The volume could also be described as a textbook of Old English rather than a grammar, since the phonology component is so prominent alongside morphology and syntax. It is, however, a more traditional textbook than, for example, Baker's *Introduction*: in his Preface, Fulk acknowledges his debt to some (p. viii) 'forebears in the history of Old

English pedagogy', grammars written, revised and reprinted from the 1890s onwards,[12] and has modelled his book on such earlier texts. Because of its depth and approach, *An Introductory Grammar of Old English* will find a permanent place in the Old English section of my bookshelf, next to the two books I have referred to above, and others. It is a useful resource for teachers but probably not a textbook I can use with BA-level students without any previous knowledge of the history of English – it is quite a complex book. With MA students, the happy few who choose to venture further into medieval Englishes, the situation would be different, if there were time and resources to devote to a more thorough exploration of Old English. At present, this seems to me an unattainable luxury, but there must still be curricula that allow it; there are certainly academics who would like to teach Old English in detail.

I shall finish with a HEL teacher's wish list for future textbooks of Old English, or the second edition of this grammar. Although no such volume is likely to be a 'Teach Yourself Old English', it would make sense to provide correct or recommended answers to whatever exercises it contains – if not within the book, then on the author's or publisher's website. I would also like to see text samples with *wynn* reproduced as <p>, not transliterated as <w>; this would be more realistic and not difficult to achieve with current technology. A similar reminder of Anglo-Saxon writing culture – and this I point out as a historical contact linguist – would be to include Old English text samples with Latin words and clauses embedded in them. It was gratifying to observe that R. D. Fulk's anthology contains some examples of medieval multilingual practices.

Janne Skaffari, PhD
School of Language, Translation and Literary Studies
University of Tampere
Janne.Skaffari[at]staff.uta.fi

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[12] James W. Bright, *An Anglo-Saxon Reader: With Notes, A Complete Glossary, a Chapter on Versification and an Outline of Anglo-Saxon Grammar*, Henry Holt & Co.: New York 1894.