Alston’s Bibliography – English Grammars

This volume is devoted exclusively to English grammars written in English by Englishmen, Americans, and in one or two cases foreigners, as well as a very few grammars written in Latin by native speakers.

[…] the following sorts of books are specifically excluded here:

1. spelling-books containing abstracts of grammar;
2. miscellaneous works, epistolary manuals, &c., containing brief grammars;
3. dictionaries containing grammars;
4. polyglot grammars;
5. grammars of English written in foreign languages, as well as grammars written in Latin by foreigners and published abroad.

(Alston 1965:I.xiv)

ECEG

- Eighteenth-Century English Grammars Database
  A new electronic data source for the study of 18thc English grammars (bibliographic information) and grammar-writers (biographic information)

- Aims:
  i. to revisit and update Alston’s early bibliographic work
  ii. to provide an up-to-date resource for the study of the 18thc grammatical tradition at macro- and micro-level

The term ‘English Grammar’

The standard textbook begins with a chapter on sounds and spelling, proceeds with the parts of speech and syntax, and ends up with a list of improper expressions. The more ambitious grammars include prosody, word-formation, punctuation, abbreviations and contractions, exercises of parsing, grammatical figures and rhetorical terms, versification, observations on style, directions for writing, and other subjects still. Clearly, the eighteenth-century grammar book was a flexible tool. It would be, considering how grammar was defined.

(Sundby et al. 1991: 4-5)
The term ‘English Grammar’

Criteria

i. It deals with morphology and syntax
   - excluded:
     - discussion/criticism of language usage
       Johnson Grammatical Commentaries (1718)
     - universal grammar
       Harris Hermes: Or, a Philosophical Inquiry Concerning Language and Universal Grammar (1751)
     - style
       Blair Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1783)

ii. It is written in English

iii. It is written by native speakers
   - ‘naturalized English speakers’
     Maittaire The English Grammar (1712)

iv. It is printed in the British Isles and America
   - exceptions
     Brittain Rudiments of English grammar (1788) Louvain
The database

(November 2008)
ECEG – the CCC approach to PoX

ECEG – Fields

Grammars
1. Title
2. Year
3. Edition (first extant)
4. Editions (other)
5. Place of Printing
6. Printers
7. Booksellers
8. Price
9. Type of work
10. Target Audience
11. Divisions of grammar
12. Subsidiary contents

Authors
13. Name
14. Gender
15. Place of Birth
16. Occupation
17. Biographic details

Other
18. Libraries
19. References
20. Comments

Grammars – Title, Year & Edition

Year | Edition | Title
--- | --- | ---
1736 | 1 | Fisher 1745?

Grammars – Editions

year | n. place | description
--- | --- | ---
• corrected, improved, revised, with additions ....
• American editions
• under a new title
• no copy located
Grammars – Printing details

Place of Printing (CCC)

Grammars – Types & Contents

Subsidiary Contents

Webster 1784

Grammars – Type of Work

Type Work

Division Grammar

i. English Grammar
ii. Polyglot Grammar
iii. Dictionary
iv. Spelling Book
v. Language Work
vi. Letter-Writing Manual
vii. Book of Exercises
viii. Miscellany

3 mss

Grammars – Contents

Orthography
Ortohepy
Etymology
Syntax
Prosody

Punctuation
Rhetoric
Exx ‘bad’ English
Use of capital letters

Webster 1784
Research - past

- Analysis of biographic details of grammar-writers
  - Locative factors
  - Co-relation authors-works
  - Occupation

Locative factors

- PoB ~ Place of Birth
- PoL ~ Place where they lived and/or taught and/or wrote
- PoP ~ Place of Printing

A three-fold analysis:
- Country
- County
- Cities/Towns

British Isles (historical counties)
- England
- Scotland
- Wales
- Ireland (North & South)

Beyond the British Isles
- America (North America; Caribbean Islands)
- Foreign

Co-relation Authors – Works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One work</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than one work</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Occupation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research – present

Check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammars</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition (first extant)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editions (other)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of Printing</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booksellers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Refining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammars</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition (first extant)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editions (other)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of Printing</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booksellers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research – future

- Social networks
  - North-west & north-east/Scotland printers
  - Newcastle grammarians

- History of the book
  - Target audience & price

ECEG (ICAME 2009)
Going Public

- July 2010
  - Free electronic format
  - User-friendly
  - Browseable and searchable

- Now
  - http://tinyurl.com/ECEG-database
  - Access Request Form
  - ECEG-mailing list
    eceg@manchester.ac.uk

Contribution & Value

- Methodology
  - Relational
  - Thematic fields

- Contents
  - Comprehensive
    - Grammars
      - Grammar-writers
        - Grammar-writing practices

Contacts

- http://tinyurl.com/ECEG-database
- María E. Rodríguez-Gil
  (University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria)
  erodriguez@las-palmas.uned.es

- Nuria Yáñez-Bouza
  (University of Manchester)
  Nuria.Yanez-Bouza@manchester.ac.uk

References

Secondary Sources

Primary Sources