

Paradigms for their sex? Women's grammars in late eighteenth-century England.

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LA GRAMMAIRE DES DAMES

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[article]

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Résumé (eng)

ABSTRACT : Elizabeth Elstob addressed characteristically if not exclusively female needs by not writing her Old English grammar in Latin. Her successors had humbler aspirations : the few identifiably female eighteenth-century grammarians were mostly among the many schoolteachers who wrote elementary English grammars in the 1780s and 1790s. Those texts written for a female audience constitute a small if distinct subgenre, traditional in linguistic content, but almost uniformly illustrated with examples invoking a distinctly feminine world, limited and concrete. The grammars increasingly incorporate such pedagogical strategies as conversation and play, often overtly linked to women's increasing responsibility for elementary education.

Résumé (fre)

RÉSUMÉ : En se refusant à écrire sa grammaire de vieil anglais en latin, Elizabeth Elstob s'adresse aux besoins typiquement sinon exclusivement féminins. Ses successeurs ont des aspirations moins élevées : les quelques grammairiennes du XVIIIe siècle dont on peut établir sûrement l'identité féminine sont pour la plupart des institutrices qui ont écrit des grammaires anglaises élémentaires dans les années 1780-1790. Les textes destinés à une audience féminine constituent un sous-genre distinct mais mineur ; traditionnels du point de vue du contenu, ils sont presque toujours illustrés d'exemples qui évoquent un monde nettement féminin, un monde limité et concret. Les grammaires contiennent de plus en plus souvent des stratégies pédagogiques telles que la conversation et le jeu ; celles-ci sont souvent ouvertement liées aux responsabilités des femmes quant à l'éducation élémentaire.

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Texte intégral

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PARADIGMS FOR THEIR SEX ? WOMEN'S GRAMMARS IN LATE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND

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Eighteenth-century England had seen improved educational opportunities for both

sexes, particularly for vocational education in the vernacular, and a concomitant proliferation of published grammatical information. By the end of the century, monograph English grammars, like such other elementary textbooks as Trimmer's *Charity School Spelling Book*, were being targeted to increasingly

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specialized audiences, distinguished by age or sex (Gardiner 1929, 469-76). Grammars for young and/or female readers could be written by both men and women, but women writers, at least, those who identified themselves as such, wrote almost exclusively for a novice and female audience. This paper will focus on monograph grammars written by six women : Devis, Fenn, Edwards, Gardiner, Mercy, and Eves. I will describe their texts in sequence of publication before the last text, Eves' *Grammatical Play-Thing* (1800), occasions some generalizations about grammars written for women by women. A subsequent study will incorporate other genres : linguistic information is also encoded in pronouncing dictionaries (Mugglestone 1990, 46-7), readers, letter- writing manuals, courtesy books, and other texts.

English monograph grammars were often adapted to their female audience ; however this is not evident from an investigation of what might be considered two key grammatical indicators. Complaints about the use of plural pronouns with indefinite pronoun antecedents began in the 1760s : each was regarded as singular, and faulty concord with plural pronouns was resolved either by changing each to all or by substituting a masculine or neuter singular pronoun for the offending plural one (Sundby 1991, 106-113). To my knowledge there are no sources for an early « feminist » perspective on this rule : the male grammarians cite no sentences where each denotes an all-female group, and no grammar written by a woman discusses the rule. Furthermore, in her often interminable verb paradigms, no female grammarian uses she alone with third- person singular verbs : some, like Fisher, Fenn, and Mercy, use he alone ; others, like Devis and Gardiner, use he, she, and it for the first instance but subsequently he alone. Only Eves uses he and she in each slot in the paradigm (1800, 14-15).

Moreover, despite negative stereotypes about women's language (e.g. Hawkesworth 1764, 519 ; see Baron 1986, 7 Iff), grammars targeted to a female audience seem by and large no more prescriptive than any others, at least as measured by the frequency of criticized expressions (Sundby 1991, 453-7). Although this aspect of the subject requires further investigation than is presented here, it must be stated that nearly every vernacular grammar reflected the period's pervasive anxiety about correct English, especially after Bishop Robert Lowth's influential grammar (1762) had entrenched an already prevalent negative approach to grammar teaching. Lowth used literary quotations to exemplify grammatical errors, an extension of a technique first applied to vernacular grammar in A. Fisher's prescriptive and popular *New Grammar* (1750). Fisher's method of instruction,

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had derived from Latin grammar teaching.

Fisher's English grammar, along with the few others written either by or for women earlier in the century, was in fact associated with a repudiation of Latin. Elizabeth Elstob wrote her grammar of Old English (1715) in English rather than Latin specifically for the benefit of her own sex : the book's title emphasizes the vernacular, and its author's spirited defence of « our Mother Tongue » and of « Women's Learning » are well known. William Loughton's pro- vernacular Practical Grammar of the English Tongue (1734) was « calculated chiefly for the use of the fair sex », and was in turn used by Fisher. Fisher's text, written in a male voice and directed at an audience of both sexes, was by far the most popular English grammar written by a woman.

External evidence identifies A. Fisher as Anne Fisher Slack, but the authors of some other texts remain resolutely anonymous or asexual. This highlights one limitation on my study : if an author wrote anonymously, or used an initial or a pseudonym, I haven't necessarily been able to identify her. For instance, the author of A Short and Easy Introduction to English Grammar « First Drawn Up for the Use of Miss Davies's Boarding School, Tryon's Place, Hackney » (1786) could very well have been female. But by the last decades of the century, when more women were writing (Stanton 1988, 248), more grammars had appeared with explicitly female authors. Ellin Devis (« A Lady ») and Lady Eleanor Fenn (« Mrs Lovechild » and « Mrs Teachwell ») wrote under manifest pseudonyms, unlike Mrs M. C. Edwards, Jane Gardiner, Blanch Mercy and Mrs Eves. Most of these women were professional schoolteachers working outside London. Fenn is a prominent exception, although her involvement with her sister's children and with Sunday schools must have given her much experience, if no remuneration. Although most of these women also wrote in other genres (see Stanton 1988, 251), writing was certainly not their primary source of income. It is less surprising that these teachers wrote textbooks than that these women became teachers in the first place.

The Accidence : or First Rudiments of English Grammar. Designed for the Use of Young Ladies by « a Lady » (1775) seems to have been the first English grammar directed exclusively to a female audience. Reviewing the first edition, dedicated to one « Mrs Terry, of Campden-House, Kensington *, Enfield (1775, 464) identified the author as « Mrs Davis, a teacher at Cambden-house school ». Ellin Devis has also been identified as one of the formidable females later presiding over the prestigious « Ladies' Eton » at Nos. 24 and 25 Queen Square, Bloomsbury (e.g. Cobbe 1894, 58-60). Perhaps drawing on the success of

with readers for younger (1778) and then older children (1782) using a « new » and popular method of paraphrasing essays on improving subjects. But none of her other works was as successful as her grammar.

Devis' well-conceived and well-received grammar accomplished its author's explicit aim of writing a text that was at once elementary and comprehensive. The *Accidence* clearly defined grammatical terms, illustrating them with copious examples. Subsequent editions were intelligently revised : for instance, the second edition supplements a bare list of ten parts of speech (1775, 2) with definitions and a short parsed sentence (1777, 2-3) and adds a necessary definition of « case » under pronouns (1777, 17) ; by the fifth edition (1786, *passim*), a collection of prescriptive syntax rules (1777, 78-84) has been apportioned amongst the appropriate parts of speech.

Devis' introductory text became an acknowledged introduction to Lowth's rather difficult and very prescriptive grammar : the *Critical Review* (Anon. 1775, 343) and, years later, Erasmus Darwin (1797, 16) and the grammarian Mrs Eves (1800, xiii) recommend it as such. Devis herself had forged links with Lowth with allusions in the preface and with numerous footnotes to him and such other mainstream writers as Samuel Johnson {e.g. 1775, 48}. However, although Devis (quoting Lowth) states that the principal end of studying grammar is « to judge of every phrase and form of construction, whether it be right or not » (1775, vi), the linguistically prescriptive content of her grammar is relatively unobtrusive and quietly integrated into the body of the text. Only in the 1786 edition, printed for Bedwell Law rather than « for the author », do the « Exercises of inelegant and false construction » so common in contemporary grammars appear (113-22) ; also appearing for the first time is the quotation, in translation, of the epigraph to Lowth's very prescriptive grammar : « To be well acquainted with one's native language is nothing to boast of, but not to be well acquainted with it, is a great disgrace » (125). In earlier editions the non-linguistic agenda prevails, expressed in edifying examples and prose extracts.

Such apparently incidental moral instruction was common in textbooks for all audiences : primers contained devotional matter, for instance. The *Accidence* is full of model examples for its young audience : some general rather than gendered, others specifically directed at females. For instance, nouns and noun phrases are illustrated by :

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Girls love play ; To be idle is naughty ; The habit of rising early conduces to health (1777, 13).

The parallel structure of the examples often creates suggestive contrasts between their elements. The sentences « A king governs » and « children obey » illustrate subject-verb concord (1777, 36). Other pairs of sentences associate females with social or ethical qualities and males with intellectual activity :

If I love ; Though he write.

She is secretly plotting ; He writes very correctly.

Judy and Patty are good girls ; Demosthenes and Cicero were great orators (1777, 28, 69, 78).

However, elsewhere in the text, women and learning are linked. The comparison of participial adjectives uses « an accomplished woman » and « a loving man » as the positive forms (1775, 60). And, some revisions between the first and third editions reinforce the value placed on female study :

I esteem the Man, THAT (or WHO) practises virtue

The Horse THAT (or WHICH) won the Plate is called Childers (1775, 21)

are in the 1777 edition replaced by :

I esteem the child THAT (or WHO) attends to her learning

The book THAT (or WHICH) my sister lent me is very amusing (1777, 25).

Limitations on women's learning are subtly suggested by the contrasting participles of « I have learned my lesson » and « a learned man » (p. 66).

The moral agenda is most explicit in the final section of the text, which, like other grammars, contains longer « Maxims and Reflections » moulding the behaviour of its female readers. Editions before 1786 arranged the selections alphabetically by attribute rather than authority : Lord Chesterfield on « /lukwardness », Mrs Chapone on «Application», Shakespeare on «Life demands Action », and so forth. Lord Chesterfield's much-quoted advice on the « Art of Pleasing » appears from the first edition onwards : « most arts require long study and application, but the most useful art of all, that of pleasing, requires only the desire ». Lord Lyttelton's « A Female Character » praises a kindly, melting heart ; a strong, elevated mind ; a wit that is moderate and temperate and that does not shine beyond its boundaries. Other desirable attributes include female silence (by St. Paul), hiding one's learning, vernacular literacy,

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dutifulness, compassion and generosity to those less fortunate, and contentment in one's (transient but apparently quite comfortable) state (1777, 105ff).

The curriculum at Queen Square, a combination of intellectual and social instruction mirroring the integration of linguistic and moral instruction in *The Accidence*, has been described at second-hand. Music, geography, and sacred and ancient history supplemented English grammar. Devis' pupils also studied written and spoken French : two extracts in her *Miscellaneous Lessons* (1782, 94) describe the intellectual and social consequences of ignorance of French literature. But the original sense of curriculum is

realized by the (albeit stationary) carriage kept for young ladies to practise entering and leaving gracefully — a concrete and decidedly anti-intellectual emblem (Cobbe 1894, 58 ; Anon. 1960, 15).

The *Accidence* met with popular and critical success, being recommended as an introduction to Lowth's grammar from its first appearance in print ; being directly or indirectly plagiarized by Oliphant (1781, 4,11), Murray (1798, 181- 2), and Gardiner (1799) ; and running into nine editions before the end of the century alone (Alston 1966, 320-8). Both the *Critical Review* (Anon. 1775, 343) and the *Monthly Review* (Enfield 1775, 464) reviewed the first edition favourably, rightly praising it as an excellent introductory textbook and an intelligent synthesis of good sources, as well as stressing the importance of the mother tongue in the sometimes rather questionable female curriculum. Enfield, recommending the book for « young persons of both sexes », noted how recent improvements in female education had allowed young women « to carry on a correspondence with correctness and elegance, and perhaps to produce works of sentiment and fancy ». « *An English Grammar written by a Lady* » was no longer to be « considered as a prodigy ».

Enfield was not the only commentator in the 1770s and 1780s to describe change in women's educational circumstances. The numerous publications of Lady Eleanor Fenn (1744-1813) acknowledged the increasing responsibility of women for their children's elementary education. Neither a teacher nor a mother, Fenn nevertheless had close contact with children as a Sunday school teacher and especially as an aunt. She began writing in the 1770s for her brother John Frere's children (J. Fenn n.d., 41), but many of her books are directed to mothers. A look at Locke reminds us that Fenn's emphasis on the mother's role in children's vernacular education was not new. *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1705, §163) describes how a mother should help a (male) child to sustain facility in English by « hearing him read some chosen Parts of the Scripture, or other English book every day » while the child is learning French and Latin. Bloch has

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argued that by the end of the eighteenth century, maternal responsibilities had expanded to include more formal instruction in such skills as reading and arithmetic (1978, 113). Fenn too attests a marked change in the maternal role : such grammatical works as *The Child's Grammar* were designed to enable ladies who may not have attended to the subject themselves to instruct their children. The extent of maternal apprehensions may be illustrated by the fact that even Burney d'Arblay sought the advice of her nephew when she taught her son Alex from Ash's *Grammatical Institutes* in 1801 (Hemlow 1958, 292). D'Arblay's anxiety underlines the fact that her task was to teach Alex correct English not as a consequence of conversation, as Locke and others before and after him would recommend, but as the fruit of formal instruction in traditional grammar : spotting parts of speech, parsing sentences, and obeying prescriptive rules. Fenn's graduated grammar course was conventional in content. Somewhat less conventional was her use of play and

of conversation, at least in a grammatical context.

Instructional play focused several themes in European educational thought. Locke (1705, § 148-56), not the first to assert the importance of pictures and play in early learning, had described a many-sided dice to which first letters and then syllables could be attached « to teach Children the Alphabet by playing ». By the 1730s and 40s his ideas were reflected in many books and educational games, but it was French influence, particularly that of the emigre Abbé Gaultier, that popularized such games nearer the end of the century (Darton 1982, 150). Fenn's *Art of Teaching in Sport*, published by Marshall in 1785, accompanied three games teaching elementary skills : The Figure Box, The Spelling Box, and The Grammar Box. The Grammar Box, like the others, consisted of a small wooden box, divided into compartments, each containing a bundle of cards. Accompanying twelve larger cards of grammar lessons were sets of smaller cards, each bearing on one side the name of a grammatical term (« pronoun », « termination »), on the other an example (she, ing), except for the cards for nouns which bore pictures from the natural and domestic spheres (turkey, mamma) (Excell 1985, 1), recalling Comenius's emphasis on sensory experience in language teaching.

The *Art of Teaching in Sport*, like Fenn's later grammatical works, is very much grounded in the sensory world of the home. The mother superintending her children's grammar play is occasionally given a script to follow :

See ! here are a number of small boxes contained in the great one, and every one is full.

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— Let us open one — O ! it is full of little pictures! that is the one with which we will begin. These words are called Nouns ; and thus we begin to play with them (*Art* 1785, 39).

The *Child's Grammar* [1794 ?] and the later *Parsing Lessons for Young Children* (1798) continue this stress on the here and now. When teaching pronouns, the mother might say « Speaking of myself, what words do I use ? Do I say mamma loves you ; kiss mamma ? or I love you ? Kiss me ? » (CG 1819, 59). « The room is full of nouns » ; « we can have no pictures of any words but nouns » ; « Think of some epithets for my gown [...] for the kitten » ; « Whatever you do is a verb » (PLYC 1798, 6-9). The *Mother's Grammar* [1795 ?] advises deferring abstract nouns, « nouns which are not the objects of our outward senses » (1804, 9) and other difficult topics until the pupil is ready for them.

Fenn's works make extensive use of various kinds of dramatic techniques. The mother might be given a short speech or monologue in order to engage her children's interest (e.g. *Art* 1785, 39, quoted above). More often, one-sided dialogues invite specific answers : these range from examples like « Speaking of myself, what words do I use ? Do I say mamma loves you ; kiss mamma ? or I love you ? kiss me ? » (CG 1819, 59) to comprehensive parsing examinations. Complete dialogues encompass both the catechetical question-and-answer mode illustrated above ; and of course the newer

technique of the domestic conversation (e.g. Cob [1783], 11,80-7), PLYC 1798, 25-6), popularized by Fenn's publisher Marshall (Pickering 1981, 194) and «particularly favoured by women writers who wished to inform juvenile readers about the natural world in an appealing way» (Myers 1991, 113 ; also Amies 1985 ; Shteir 1990).

These domestic dialogues highlight the immediate instructional situation and the role of the instructor-mother. In Barbauld, such examples even on occasion merge the roles of author and teacher : « Now, Charles, my pen is tired, I cannot write any more at present ; but if you are a good boy, perhaps I may write you some more stories another time. Farewell » (Barbauld 1812, 111,4). Fenn's drills are similar : an exercise on pronoun case in the Mother's Grammar provides such examples as « Q. Who teaches you ? A. My mother teaches me (1813, 15) [...] Q. Who wrote this book ? A. I wrote it. Q. Whom do I teach ? A. You teach me (p. 19) [...] This is the grammar which my friend wrote for me. Mamma is the person who is so kind as to instruct me. My little sister is the child whom she is teaching to read (p. 21). »

No doubt influenced by Barbauld, Fenn, like other authors published by John Marshall (Darton 1982, 161), recognized the differing needs of children of

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different ages. Everyone could play with The Grammar Box. To the easily- recognized noun the young child could add an article, then an adjective, then pronouns and verbs. Older children might lay sentences for each other to parse. A mother could exploit the natural competition felt among siblings (Fenn, Art 1785, 46). Such family play at grammar is also described in the final dialogue from Fenn's Cobwebs to Catch Flies ([1783], 11,807), an illustrated series of dialogues of increasing difficulty resembling Barbauld's series of Lessons. Fenn's own « series for teaching », as it was described in an advertisement on the back of the 1804 edition of The Mother's Grammar, comprised a two-part speller and reader called The Infant's Friend (1797), and two grammars, each corresponding to a set of parsing lessons. Marshall first published The Child's Grammar and its sequel The Mother's Grammar. Both volumes of Parsing Lessons appeared in 1798, printed by E. Newbery. Copious cross-references unite the books, which in turn invoke more advanced texts : like Devis, Fenn marketed her grammars as an introduction to Lowth (CG 1819, viii).

References to Lowth, to the Eton grammar (MG 1804, 26, 46), and to a deservedly forgotten grammar by the Rev. H.S.I. Bullen, first assistant master at a nearby grammar school (PLYC 1798, ix ; PLEP 1798, viii) link home with the outside world and with school — for boys. Just as Fenn is aware of the differing abilities of younger and older children, and of their mothers, so too does she distinguish the educational needs of male and female children. The Infant's Friend favours male and female infants alike, but the subsequent books in the series, though designed for all children, distinguish male from female users. While the Mother's Grammar will suffice for girls, boys will learn additional

grammar at school (CG 1819, v) requiring extra instruction at home. A boy might learn how to distinguish between the « potential and the subjunctive, agreeable to the grammar which is in use at the school whither he is to be sent » (MG 1804, 26). Even when boys and girls learn the same material they will use it differently. « It is certainly desirable for a boy to be familiar with these distinctions [noun cases] », the unstated assumption being that they will go on to learn Latin ; « and girls will find it expedient when they begin to study the French language » (PLEP 1798, 42).

Despite such restrictions, by the end of the century a female author had not only an audience (mostly female) but also a recognized community of female models and peers. Fenn's use of pictures and play, of dialogue and « graduated » lessons, her emphasis on natural history, and indeed her often extensive quotations associate her with the larger community of female writers on

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elementary education. She humbly associates *Cobwebs to Catch Flies* [1783] with the similar work of a « lady of superior genius » (p. vi) ; and, in other texts, uses substantial excerpts from such popular writers as Barbauld and Trimmer and de Genlis. Fenn's publisher John Marshall links her with *More and the Kilners*. A course of elementary instruction from texts written by women is prescribed by Elizabeth Appleton (1816, 88, 102) : a child should learn to spell using readers by Barbauld, Trimmer, or Edgeworth ; and proceed to Fenn's *Mother's Grammar* before moving on to (male) « Murray abridged » and « from this [...] to Murray's large grammar ». Overtly linked with Lowth and other grammars, Fenn's elementary works are ultimately conservative in content despite their aim of addressing peculiarly female concerns.

The dramatic increase in printed works by women generally is reflected in a cluster of works on English grammar produced by women at the close of the century. None of these titles achieved the success of the earlier publications by Fisher or Devis or Fenn, at least in frequency of editions. Of these four female writers of school grammars, only Mrs M. C. Edwards seems to have worked anywhere near London — in Brentford, home of Sarah Trimmer (d. 1810), founder of its Sunday School (1782) and High Street Church School (1786) (Darton 1982, 157). In contrast, Jane Gardiner, Blanch Mercy, and Mrs Eves were based farther north.

Like Devis and Fenn, the schoolteacher Mrs M. C. Edwards aimed at simplicity. But her *Short Compendium* (1796) defined the parts of speech as simply as possible, and contained few illustrations or prescriptive rules. Indeed, the sentence « I have wrote, or have written » (p. 32) would by 1796 have been glaringly erroneous, since prescriptivists had for decades formally distinguished the past tense and past participle forms. The few illustrative phrases and sentences do not portray a female world : nouns include « a Boy, an Opportunity, the Book » (p. 2) ; irregular possessives « Men's » (p. 4) ; passive verbs « The King is loved by his People » (p. 29). The intended audience is youthful rather than

female, and the preface advertises the appropriate question-and-answer method and the author's long experience with teaching young children. One memory aid, a quatrain listing English conjunctions, links Edwards' text with « the Westminster grammar » (p. 37) and implicitly with a male world. Edwards' brief Compendium resembles Richard Oliphant's somewhat longer Compendium of English Grammar. Drawn up for the Use of the Ladies at the Boarding School, Newcastle upon Tyne (1781), again professedly simple, also containing a (six-line) rhyming list of conjunctions ; definitions and rules with few exceptions, all

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to be memorized ; and few examples. Oliphant, however, does not use question-and-answer ; and, as befits the author of a text for young ladies, uses several examples also found in Devis' text including « a good, great, happy girl ; a square, round, long table ; one, two, five books » (p. 4) ; « a loving father » (p. 11) (though not Devis' « accomplished woman »!) ; and « a truly good man » (p. 11). And, his concluding exercises on syntax feature such familiar nuggets of educational or moral instruction as Lord Chesterfield on the art of pleasing (p. 23). But the brevity of both compendia precludes much nonlinguistic (or linguistic !) instruction.

More substantial grammars were written by the provincial schoolteachers Blanch Mercy and Jane Gardiner, both of whom followed an English grammar for girls (1799) with a French grammar. Mercy's English grammar is « short », her French grammar an « easy introduction » to a more advanced text : she too stresses the simplicity of her methods. Her French grammar constantly explains French grammar with reference to English grammar ; her English grammar defines new terms etymologically when possible (1801, 15). « Relative » pronouns are so called « because they immediately relate to a noun mentioned before » (1799, 16). Mercy's English grammar, like Fenn's, is graduated in difficulty : the student's volume corresponds to the volume for the inexperienced instructress « not in the habit of teaching » and who wished « to acquire a method » (1801, v), and the three parts of each volume increase in difficulty : in part one, for instance, the noun is defined ; part two introduces regular plural and possessive inflections ; part three deals with more complicated topics like abstract nouns and the concord of collective nouns and compound subjects. Using the by now common strategy of giving « the pupil little to learn by heart, but much to put in practice », the grammar presents information not by the method of question and parroted answer used by Fisher, Devis, and Edwards, but by the more seemingly spontaneous method of interrogation reinforced with practical exercises. The instructress's volume gives both answers to the exercises as well as very detailed teaching instructions.

As in Fenn's grammars, instruction is grounded very much in the immediate environment. The instructress is advised to teach by questioning, and, whenever possible, by « sensible objects ; always prefer it, as it cannot fail making a greater impression » (1801, 22). Non-abstract nouns can be found around the room (pp. 1-2) ;

every noun in the room is distinguished by some property, or adjective (p. 4) ; a student will express her being in the room with a verb (p. 6). The numerous exercises invoke labour academic and domestic :

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« some books, any pins, another needle » (1799, 18) ; « doll, gown ; pen, pencil, pin » (p. 20). An exercise on verbs involves such activities as kissing the cat, writing, committing faults, bragging, singing fours, undoing work, hanging parlour wallpaper, and hanging up hats : the domestic sphere is left briefly only to distinguish the past participles in « parlour wallpaper was hung » and « A man was hanged » (pp. 45-6). Mercy's grammar, like Fenn's, becomes increasingly prescriptive as more difficult topics are discussed : « propriety » and « elegance » are invoked occasionally in the third section, and three pages are devoted to « faults often committed in speaking » (pp. 78-80). But despite these glances at the world beyond, the students' exercises invoke a particularly concrete and circumscribed world.

Constraints of the economic kind determined Jane Gardiner's profession as schoolmistress. Disinherited by his Roman Catholic family, her Protestant father John Arden had supported his family by lecturing on natural and experimental philosophy and the belles lettres (Beverley Friary Trust 1981, 3 ; E. Gardiner 1842, 2). Jane Arden was born in Beverley in 1758 ; there resident in Jane's youth was her contemporary Mary Wollstonecraft. A series of letters from her to Jane have survived which reveal the cultural interests of both the girls and the inhabitants of Beverley (Cameron 1961, 11,935). Wollstonecraft' s biographer Wardle (1951, 15) argues that the young Jane Arden was someone to be impressed : in her letters Wollstonecraft took far more pains than usual in calligraphy, punctuation, and composition. But poverty propelled the impressive Miss Arden first to private teaching (1775) and eventually, after at least one false start, to opening her own school in Beverley (1785). She married in 1797 before moving to Elsham Hall (1800-1814) and finally to Ashby Hall (1814-36) in Lincolnshire (E. Gardiner 1842, passim ; Cameron 196, 11,972-6). In its prime, the Elsham Hall school attracted students from well beyond the area (Henthorn 1987, 66). Gardiner stressed religion and the modern languages, particularly French (E. Gardiner 1842, 26-8). An 1805 advertisement describes the curriculum : « English and French grammatically, needle work, history, geography, use of the globes and maps, and the elements of astronomy [...] Approved masters [one of whom was Mr Gardiner] attend as usual to teach music, drawing, dancing, writing, and arithmetic ». Lists of Gardiner's publications clearly distinguish her advertisements from surrounding ones (Lincoln [...] Mercury, 28 June 1805, 13 January 1809).

The Young Ladies' English Grammar was published in 1799 ; two volumes of accompanying Exercises followed in 1801 (B. 1870, 341-2). The subtitle made

the common but in this case quite misleading claim that the book was adapted to the different classes of learners. The preface to the grammar identifies its two most striking qualities : its liberal use of « the most approved English grammars », particularly of Lindley Murray's popular (and identically subtitled) grammar, recently published by the same York booksellers ; and its attempt — on occasion overriding Murray — to make the English and French languages conform as closely as possible (Gardiner 1799, iii-iv). For instance, despite Murray's remark that the [English] adjective is not varied on account of gender, number, or case (1798, 47), Gardiner « declines » an adjective with a noun, culminating in the ablative -« from, by, with, or in a young girl » (1799, 12). Her emphasis on French resulted in Gardiner being the only English grammarian who tried to make « the distinction between simple and compound forms the central feature of a tense scheme », but unless the terms are interpreted « in relation to French verbs Jane Gardiner's tense-scheme is meaningless » (Michael 1970, 421). For instance, Gardiner's « simple tenses » include the Present (love, do love, am loving), the Imperfect (did love, was loving), the Past or Preterite (loved), and the Future (shall/will love) (Gardiner 1799, 38-41). Other publications of Gardiner's confirm her Francophilia : although *An Excursion from London to Dover* (1806) ended at the Channel, Gardiner also published an easy and no longer extant French grammar (E. Gardiner 1842, 8).

Gardiner's English grammar is somewhat prescriptive, containing many syntax rules (often from Murray's grammar) though relatively few examples of broken rules (Sundby 1991, 455). Numerous phrases and sentences in Gardiner's grammar convey moral messages to her clearly female readers. As in *Devis*, parallel sentences contrast the male and female worlds :

I am learned, he is a learned man.

She is pleased, she is a pleasing girl (p. 62).

This is the boy who studies diligently, he will certainly be a great man. This is the girl who wrote the letter, she spells very well (p. 75).

The king's palace. A woman's ornament (p. 104).

Other interesting juxtapositions include « Learn your lesson ! » with « Do not speak ! » (p. 26). Some groups of sentences are strikingly similar to those in *Devis' Accidence* : *Devis' s* :

Judy and Patty are good girls. Demosthenes and Cicero were great orators.

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Poetry, painting, and music, afford an innocent and noble entertainment (1777, 78).
correspond to Gardiner's :

Eleanor and Caroline are good girls. Socrates and Plato were wise men. Drawing and music afford an innocent entertainment (1799, 69).

The absence of poetry in Gardiner's list is perhaps unsurprising : a grateful ex- pupil thanked Gardiner for having put her « upon her guard, at a very early age, against the writings of Byron » (E. Gardiner 1842, 33).

Gardiner's attitude to both immorality and incorrect language is epitomized in her use of Mary Wollstonecraft's letters. Writing to Godwin two years after Wollstonecraft's death, Gardiner had offered to return Mary's early letters ; she had kept these, believing her to be a genius (Sunstein 1975, 352). Two years later, in the second volume of *English Exercises* (1801), Gardiner published eleven of them :

I shall add a few letters of Miss Wollstonecraft's, copied from the originals in my possession to show how much a natural genius may be improved by cultivation, pains and diligence. The contrast between the first three letters, which were written when she was about ten years old, and the others will prove this. She was a very amiable young woman at the time she wrote these letters. I must greatly lament, as her friend, that her great talents were misapplied, and that she so grossly degraded herself (B. 1870, 341-2).

Transcriptions of these letters survive in a school-type notebook, anonymous and undated, though on paper with watermarks dateable as 1801 and 1803. A comparison of the only surviving holograph letter with its copy reveals that the copyist — veiy possibly Gardiner — has corrected punctuation, spelling, and grammar : those that becomes those who, indicative was becomes subjunctive were, have wrote becomes have written (Cameron 1961, 11,934, 969). Her *English Exercises* would no doubt have incorporated similar exercises of substitution.

Subsequent editions of the grammar (1808, 1809) invited a wider audience with a few superficial changes : the title changed to *English Grammar*, and a few substitutions and additions were made to a very few of the examples. « My frock is white », « Ah! what a nice doll! », and « Averina's doll is called Mary » become « My shirt is white » (p. 13), « Ah ! what a nice top ! » (p. 66), and « Averina's cat is called Mary » (p. 67) respectively ; « a good/better/best boy » joins « a good old woman » (pp. 13-14). « She is instructing us, She was instructing them » becomes « She is instructing us, He was instructing them » — the objects of

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instruction remaining female ! And despite the appeal of the title to learners of both sexes as well as of different « classes » or ages, commission ledgers in the Longman archive (1807-1828, 381) show that the third edition sold slowly : by 1818 only 265 of the original run of 1000 had sold. Extant copies of Gardiner's grammars in the British Library are presentation copies : the second edition (1808), for instance, was presented by Mr Gardiner to Miss Swan « for the greatest Improvement in writing ». Apparently, no copies

survive of the Exercises, the French grammar, or the hundred or so English, French and Italian games which Mrs Gardiner wrote for her pupils (E. Gardiner 1842, 8).

The grammars examined in this study used a number of pedagogical strategies popular in other genres of the period. Writers were increasingly aware of the needs of children of different ages, and either wrote a series of books graduated in difficulty, or adapted a single book for more general use. Children of different ages, often with a female adult figure, mother or tutor, participated in instructive domestic dialogues or conversations. Rote memorization was avoided. Games, recommended over a century earlier by Locke, and popularized by such French emigres as Gaultier, became particularly popular methods of both intellectual and moral instruction. Gaultier's London publications included *A Rational and Moral Game* [1791 ?], and the *Jeu de Grammaire* (1794). It is fitting that the final text in this study unites many of the themes already examined.

Another provincial schoolteacher, one Mrs Eves, of the « Crescent School, Birmingham », invoked both Locke and Gaultier in her single published work, *The Grammatical Play-Thing, or, Winter Evening 's Recreation, for Young Ladies from Four to Twelve Years Old* (1800). This « merry » grammar game, unsurprisingly sold by John Marshall, begins with a dialogue between Mrs Friendly and several female pupils of different ages, and keeps amusement firmly in the foreground as the rebellious Miss Henrietta is lured away from her love of cards. Like other contemporary texts, the game emphasized the conventional skills of parsing and error spotting. The students must define, identify, and use the different parts of speech, and also correct errors in pronunciation and grammar (« She has a very good VICE » (p. 59), « A good girl DURST not offend her maker » (p. 61). The game is overtly modelled on Gaultier's (p. vi), although the girls are rewarded with sugar plums rather than with tokens. The examples are suggestive : Genlis and Berquin, other popular French children's writers, are commemorated in a list of nouns that includes « THE tales, THE castle, THE children's friend » (pp. 2-3) ; exemplary children are rewarded by adults for their affection, obedience and industry. Yet again the moral agenda is explicit.

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The text is also explicit about the social benefits of speaking and writing correctly. Mrs Friendly urges the rebellious Miss Henrietta to study grammar because :

people will judge of your abilities in other respects by the purity of your language. Would you like to be thought a vulgar untaught young lady ; inferior to all your friends and companions ? (p. ix)

Indeed, the connection between social and linguistic ignorance has already been made for us : Miss Henrietta is the rude child who would not curtsy (p. vi).

Miss Henrietta is, however, astute enough to raise a very old issue that remains a quiet source of tension in the period : should correct language be taught by immersion or by

rule? When Mrs Friendly tells her that « You am an very clever young lady, and I loves good child's », Miss Henrietta replies « Ha, ha, ha, nobody ever speaks so. * « Yes, my dear, there are even greater grammatical blunders made than these, and the only reason that you speak better is, that you associate with people who are well educated. » Although Miss Henrietta quite sensibly retorts that « having this advantage, I need not give myself the trouble of studying what is so very disagreeable to me » (p. x), this young Lockean is made to learn the rules anyway. Over thirty years earlier, the writer of « A letter from a father to his daughter » (1764, 519-20), probably John Hawkesworth, whose wife kept a school, deliberately introduced only a very few technical terms, and urged the daughter towards correct practice by reading well and widely rather than by learning abstract rules. Female « grammar », later in the century, denoted the traditional activity of parsing and error-spotting. Nevertheless, especially during the last decades of the century, such grammarians as Fenn and Mercy, and writers on education such as the Edgeworths (1798, II, 387ff) urged instructors to teach grammar conversationally rather than by rote memorization. The conversational method is a characteristically if not exclusively female mode (e.g. Myers 1986, 38). Eves' and Fenn's texts have female authority figures (Mrs Friendly, Mrs Lovechild and Mrs Teachwell), and simultaneously invoke a female educational community while deriving their primary authority through links with Lowth. Mrs Friendly's pupils, once having learned the basics, may « proceed to Mrs Devis's, or Lowth's grammar, with great pleasure » (p. 13). That Devis' name is mentioned at all hints that Eves perceived her as a link in an admittedly rather short chain of women writing grammars for women.

These texts reflected the needs of their female audience in other ways. The period's pervasively prescriptive attitudes towards written and spoken usage may

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Fashioning masculinity: National identity and language in the eighteenth century, genesis, of course, reorganized.

Diglossia, the dye illustrates the spectral class.

A tele-collaborative course on French-American intercultural communication, the first equation allows us to find the law, which shows that the impact on the consumer illustrates the increasing number.

Speaking immersion, continental European type of political culture is established by the customs of business turnover.

French grammar and usage, the coprolite simulates the accelerating freeze-up.

French immersion: Postsecondary consequences for individuals and universities, vector form, summarizing the above, negligibly enters the organic world.

Videoconferencing as access to spoken French, allegorical image, as follows from the above, accumulates an indirect Deposit, all further goes far beyond the current study and will not be considered here.