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N. F. BLAKE

M
MACMILLAN

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1988 978-0-333-39920-0

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First published 1988 by
THE MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2XS
and London
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

ISBN 978-0-333-39921-7 ISBN 978-1-349-19006-5 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-19006-5

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library.

Reprinted 1992

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For Dorinda Jane

Preface

There are many reasons why you should want to pick up a book which has *Grammar* in its title, and those reasons are so diverse that it is not possible for a single book to satisfy them all. So I need to offer a brief explanation as to why I have written this particular grammar. The study of English grammar has proceeded in the following two ways recently. Modern linguists have been obsessed with the theoretical problems of language and so have proposed new theoretical methodologies for analysing language. These have sometimes spawned grammars, which are difficult for those with no linguistic background to follow since such readers do not understand some of the preconceptions which lie behind them. On the other hand, full descriptions of English have been written such as the one by Professor Quirk and his colleagues. These often have a somewhat eclectic methodology, for they use not only traditional terminology but also some more modern terms. Those who come new to the study of the English language find both approaches rather daunting, because they have been taught neither. It is clear that there is room for an introduction to the study of English grammar which starts with traditional approaches and then incorporates some of the newer terms from modern linguistics. The new A level English Language papers established by the Joint Matriculation Board (Manchester) and the University of London Examinations Board provide a good example of this need. This book has been written with this kind of need in mind. Readers who find it helpful, but who feel modification might make the book even more useful, are invited to write to me with their suggestions.

I am indebted to my colleagues and to my students in the

Department of English Language at Sheffield University for their ideas and support with this volume. I am also grateful to many of the participants at conferences we have organised on the JMB A level English Language course for their comments, which have often helped me in deciding what to include and how to put it. I am particularly grateful to Sandra Burton, who has once again produced such excellent copy for the publishers.

NFB