María José López-Couso, **Belén Méndez-Naya, Paloma Núñez-Pertejo and Ignacio Palacios-Martínez** (eds.). *Corpus linguistics on the move. Exploring and understanding English through corpora.* Leiden: Brill/Rodopi. 2016. 368 pp. ISBN13 9-789-004-308077. Reviewed by **Lene Nordrum**, Lund University.

The collection of studies in *Corpus linguistics on the move: Exploring and understanding English through corpora* represents a selection of the papers presented at the 34th ICAME conference in Santiago de Compostela in May 2013. The volume includes a wide number of topics, divided into four general themes: 1) Issues in corpus compilation, 2) Investigating register variation through corpora, 3) Corpora and grammar: examining grammatical variation in space and 4) Corpus insights into the pragmatics of spoken English. As the editors **María José López-Couso**, **Belén Méndez-Naya**, **Paloma Núñez-Pertejo** and **Ignacio Palacios-Martínez** state in their introduction to the volume, there is a great deal of overlap between the sections, but the division still feels natural and provides some guidance to readers interested in specific topics. From a global perspective, a strength of the volume is that despite the wide range of topics covered in the four sections, the chapters share a solid descriptive purpose, bringing a sense of unity to the volume.

Part 1. Issues in corpus compilation
The three corpus projects presented in Part 1 represent specialized corpora collected "with a clear goal in mind" (Sinclair 2001: xi). **Anita Auer**, **Moragh Gordon** and **Mike Olson** report on a project compiled to answer questions regarding the development of Standard English. The corpus includes historical texts from four urban centers, York, Bristol, Coventry and Norwich from the period 1400–1700, comprising both manuscripts and digitalized texts from other historical corpora. The chapter faithfully describes problems in transcription of historical texts and shows the user benefits of the customized XML-editor developed for the project. The descriptions are accessible even to novice corpus compilers, which is a true strength. A limitation is the poor quality of the potentially illustrative figures. This problem emerges throughout the book, however,

notably in Chapter 9, Fig. 9.7 and Chapter 15, Fig. 15.2, and can most likely be attributed to the publisher.

Martti Mäkinen and **Turo Hiltunen** describe their compilation of a corpus of student texts written by L2 users of English at Hanken School of Economics, Helsinki, Finland, *The Hanken Corpus of Academic Written English for Economics*. Although belonging to the category of learner corpora, the corpus was compiled to address questions beyond L2 users' interlanguage development, a typical focus of learner corpus research. Of particular interest are novice L2 writers' choices in discipline-specific texts as well as how such choices can be contrasted and described in relation to choices made by expert disciplinary writers, both native and non-native. A rewarding aspect of the chapter is the discussion of how such comparisons can be problematic both from the perspective of genre and from the perspective of discipline.

Mikko Laitinen documents a corpus project of English texts written by advanced English speakers in non-instructional settings in Sweden and Finland. As a study of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), the corpus was compiled to answer questions of a variationist and diachronic character: What types of Englishes emerge in a globalized world, and how do they relate to language change – both in relation to standard English and other English varieties? Although limited in quantitative terms, Laitinen is able to show some interesting results suggesting that Swedish and Finnish ELF differ from the English produced by advanced Swedish and Finnish L2 speakers in university settings.

Part 2. Investigating register variation through corpora

Part 2 starts with three chapters exploring questions related to English L2 writer development. **Pieter de Haan** addresses the syntactic complexity of verb phrases in advanced Dutch EFL writing. A strength of the chapter is the careful qualitative analysis of quantitative results where it is demonstrated that the author's choice of perspective might influence the syntactic profile of his or her text. Specifically, de Haan shows that choosing a personal perspective can reduce syntactic complexity. de Haan's results are of particular interest for longitudinal studies of writer development. One danger in such projects is that texts collected in different stages of the study allow for widely different types of perspectives (for instance through different prompts), which can skew results.

Hilde Hasselgård studies metadiscourse in papers written by Norwegian L2 students in linguistics and business, comparing the L2 writing in the two disciplines with each other as well as with novice and expert L1 papers. Hasselgård finds that papers in linguistics include more metadiscourse than business papers, both in novice and expert writing, and that novice writers tend to use more meta-

discourse than expert writers. The focus on disciplinary writing and writing development is kept in Turo Hiltunen's paper, which addresses the use of the passive in student and expert writing in medicine, physics, law and literary criticism. Hiltunen's study is exemplary in the way quantitative findings are discussed in light of the wider perspective of socio-cultural perspectives and genre theory, notably by taking into account Becher and Trowler's (2001) highly influential classification of academic disciplines along the two axes hard/soft and pure/applied. One point is the potentially problematic status of the research article as an ideal for student genres, as well as the lack of research on genre-expectations on student genres such as the Master's thesis (see also Samraj 2012). Both Hasselgård's and Hiltunen's studies are of direct interest to the teaching of disciplinary writing in that they serve as a reminder of differences in discourse style developed in different disciplinary cultures.

Antoinette Renouf shifts the perspective from L2 to L1 English. She explores so-called *hapax legomena*, words occurring only once in a corpus, in texts from *The Independent* and *The Guardian* between 1984 and 2012, and explores reasons why some neologisms remain a hapax, i.e., why they are not repeated. The study contributes with the intriguing question of why something does not happen, which, although theoretically as interesting as the study of what happens, remains a rare perspective in corpus research.

Part 3. Corpora and grammar: Examining grammatical variation in space
Part 3 includes four chapters on grammatical variation in Englishes from the inner- and outer circles. **Johan Elsness** uses a combination of an elicitation test and corpus data to shed light on how the two most common verb forms for past reference in English, the simple past (preterite) and the present perfect, are used in South African English. Elsness finds that there is a difference in the use of these forms along sociolinguistic variables: White South African English is more in line with developments in British English, and Black South African English is more in line with developments in American English. In essence, Elsness' data suggest that British English and White South African English tend to use the present tense in more situations than in American English and Black South African English, which tend to have more restrictions on the present perfect. The study is a good example of the benefits and use of mixed-method studies.

Eduardo Coto-Villalibre considers constructions with *get* followed by a past participle (*get done*) in Hong Kong English. More specifically, Coto-Villalibre investigates *get*-constructions with different degrees of passiveness and contrasts findings from Hong Kong English with British and Indian English.

The study challenges previous claims that the *get*-passive is used predominantly in adversative contexts and also that it is associated with animate subjects. Interestingly, the study suggests that Indian English is a forerunner in introducing inanimate subjects in *get*-passives, which is surprising from the perspective that Indian English is associated with more conservative language (the colonial lag). A note is that the *get*-construction has also been viewed as a middle construction in the literature (Mitkovska and Bužarovska 2012), which seems to be in line with Coto-Villalibre's discussion of the *get*-construction involving different degrees of passiveness.

In Chapter 11, **Marianne Hundt** explores grammatical variation in time rather than in space. She looks at article use in constructions with single-role predicate nouns in American English, as exemplified in the first part of the title of the chapter: *Who is the/a/ø professor at your university?* Hundt shows that at least for some single role predicates, there is a tendency for a diachronic increase of both the indefinite and the definite article – but that variables such as type of copula verb, lexical item (e.g. *professor* vs. *president*), and modification within the noun phrase can play a role in variation. Using a construction grammar perspective, Hundt convincingly argues that lexical items such as *teacher* and *father* may have been incorporated in single role predicate constructions, allowing for variation in article use for these nouns in present-day English.

Jill Bowie and **Bas Aarts** end Part 3 with a study of clause fragments in English dialogue. Their chapter includes a description of the discourse functions of fragments, arguing that fragments are related to previous discourse turns by means of only a few grammatical links, notably *extension*, where the fragment serves as an addition to an antecedent in a previous discourse segment, a synchronic relation, and *matches,* where the fragment can be viewed as a paradigmatic replacement of an antecedent structure. Beyond the descriptive merit of Bowie and Aarts' investigation, their study contributes with the theoretical implication that fragments cannot likely be explained through a strict ellipsis account.

Part 4. Corpus insights into the pragmatics of spoken English

In Part 4 of the book, the main focus shifts from grammar to pragmatics in spoken data, through time or through space. **Beatriz Mato-Míguez** considers the expression of directive meaning by imperatives, conditionals, and insubordinate *if*-clauses in spoken British English. She traces the different constructions through time and shows that so-called insubordinate *if*-clauses are used for directive speech acts, but tend to be used for requests rather than other directive speech acts. As Mato-Míguez points out, the tentative results from spoken Brit-

ish English are interesting to explore further in other varieties of English, and it can be added that they are also of interest from the point of view of intercultural communication as well as the emerging field of interlanguage pragmatics.

Bianca Widlitzki and **Magnus Huber** provide a tour of taboo language from the proceedings of the Old Bailey, London's central criminal court between the years 1720 and 1913. Their results show that swearing occurred mostly in reported speech and that there was a diachronic development of less swearing and increased censorship of swearing over the period. This development is tentatively attributed to social pressure on both the genre of trial proceedings and the individual speaker. Another finding is that the function of swearing changed over time – notably, curses declined (e.g. *damn you*!) while slot-fillers (e.g. *bloody*) increased. A surprising finding in the Old Bailey material is that women were more inclined to use bad language than men, which seems to be a finding of particular interest to future interdisciplinary studies.

The volume ends with **Siân Alsop**'s systematic study of humor episodes in a corpus of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) engineering lectures in the UK, Malaysia and New Zealand, annotated for type of humor. The study points to differences in how humor is used in the three different settings – both from the perspective of the lecturers and the students. As expected, the UK lecturers used irony/sarcasm to a greater extent than their colleagues from New Zealand and Malaysia. More surprising, perhaps, is that the Malaysian lecturers used word play more often than their New Zealand and UK colleagues. In terms of student response, the chapter includes an awareness note to all lecturers in that less than half of the humor episodes elicited student laughter. Moreover, the students in the different cultural contexts tended to laugh at different types of humor. Beyond the immediate applied value of Alsop's study for engineering education, the study describes a type of top-down corpora (Biber et al. 2007) where annotation departs from function rather than form, which is particularly useful for studies of different lexico-grammatical expressions for the same communicative function.

The volume *Corpus linguistics on the move: Exploring and understanding English through corpora* informs the reader on the workings of English both in terms of diachronic development and synchronic variance, often by exploring and nuancing descriptions and claims made in standard reference grammars. The volume is thus highly interesting to English scholars and English teachers alike. From the perspective of today's general acceptance of the pluricentricity of English, a particular strength of the volume is the description of Global English, both in terms of outer circles variants and English as a Lingua Franca. A note is that most studies stay close to their immediate results and/or descrip-

tive frameworks, which means that theoretical integration is often downplayed. The descriptive emphasis is of tremendous value for English studies, however – not the least since it addresses questions of the type often posed by English students and the general public. In sum, the 14 studies presented in the volume compose a solid collection of papers that truly contribute to our current understanding of the English language in all its forms – a good move for corpus linguistics.

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