
Reviewed by Kari E. Haugland, University of Bergen

The subject of this book, which is a revised version of Dons’ doctoral thesis, is the description of English in the earliest grammars. As indicated by the title, the aim is to assess their ‘descriptive adequacy’, defined in Chomskian (1965) terms as correctly representing the native speaker’s intuitions about the language (p. 1). Apart from this terminology, however, the discussion is entirely nonformal. The Early Modern English (EME) period is defined as 1500–1700, thus the study is limited to the period of the infancy of English grammatical description, while the host of (chiefly prescriptive) works published in the eighteenth century falls outside its scope.

Dons’ primary corpus consists of sixteen works, in English or Latin, from Bullokar’s (1586) Bref grammar to Lane’s (1700) Key to the art of letters. Apart from Bullokar’s work and Greaves’ (1594) Grammatica anglicana, the primary texts are all from the seventeenth century. They provide briefer or longer accounts of English grammar, though some primarily focus on other aspects, such as spelling and pronunciation, whereas their treatment of morphology and syntax is very sketchy.

The book is divided into four chapters, an introductory first chapter, two main chapters dealing with parts of speech and syntax respectively, and finally a summary with conclusion. The volume is rounded off by a comprehensive bibliography and name and subject indexes.

The brief first chapter, in addition to an outline of the main purpose of the work, offers a short presentation of each of the grammars included in the main corpus and their authors, as well as the Latin grammars serving as their chief models, those of Lily (or Lily & Colet), Petrus Ramus, and Wilkins.

The emphasis in this study is on parts of speech, covered in the very comprehensive second chapter (124 pp.). The chapter opens with a presentation of the inventory of word classes and their definitions, discussed in relation to the classical models, before turning to the morphological properties and grammatical categories of the individual parts of speech.

Syntax, which is completely neglected, or very briefly dealt with in some of the grammars, is treated in the similarly extensive chapter 3 (94 pp.), discussing features such as word order, participle constructions, object that-clauses, do-periphrasis, a variety of modifier–head structures at phrase level, and, finally, concord and government.

Dons inevitably covers some of the same ground as previous scholars, such as Michael (1970) and Vorlat (1975), particularly in chapters 1 and 2, but unlike Michael, she focuses on the pre-eighteenth-century grammars, and unlike Vorlat, she includes a
discussion of syntax. The main new angle, however, is the evaluation of the descriptive adequacy of the grammarians’ statements about the language by explicitly comparing them with the findings of modern studies of EME usage, and in many cases also with the results of the author’s own investigations of the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*. The EME part of the Helsinki corpus consists of c.550,000 words of text from three different periods (1500–70, 1570–1640, and 1640–1710), where the last two periods roughly correspond to that of the publication of the grammars (p. 2). An interesting alternative test of adequacy is occasionally employed when the grammarians’ own usage, in the grammars or in other works, is compared with their explicit rules or with modern accounts, e.g. for the *his*-genitive (p. 45), or double negatives (p. 150).

For some features, however, only the EME descriptions are presented without any evaluation of their adequacy, e.g. adjectival heads (pp. 162–3), participle constructions (p. 183), and the (in)famous case of postposed prepositions (p. 184). Thus the work appears to aim also at an inventory and classification of the grammatical phenomena that are mentioned in the grammars, regardless of their adequacy status.

The author has uncovered a number of cases where she finds that the EME grammars are more descriptively adequate than modern accounts, i.e. correspond better with usage in the Helsinki corpus (pp. 146, 240). This is not without interest in view of the early grammarians’ rather poor reputation, though it involves relatively minor points, such as demonstrative *yon* *(der)* (p. 75) and relative *the which* (pp. 76–7), as well as omission in the grammars of features which are mentioned in the modern literature as typical of EME, but which are not attested in the Helsinki corpus (*the he* and other premodified pronouns, pp. 163ff.), or which occur only infrequently (double comparatives, pp. 56–60).

It is the nature of reviews to provide some critical observations. My main objection is that, beyond some brief initial remarks, there is little explicit discussion of the central concept ‘descriptive adequacy’ as applied to the corpus material. Obviously, it is here a question of testing against EME linguistic competence as reflected in observed written language, involving, as Dons puts it, the ‘neutralization of observational adequacy and descriptive adequacy’ (p. 1). But the criteria used to evaluate the grammars must be inferred from the discussion of the various grammatical issues. It would therefore appear that descriptions may be considered adequate if they (a) are correct in so far as they correspond to attested usage, (b) are exhaustive, or (c) mention the most frequent traits, rather than exceptions. Violation of the first criterion, which is relatively unproblematic, presumably includes descriptions of English in terms of Latin categories that are not relevant for English (e.g. prepositions governing different cases, pp. 218–19). The last two criteria, which are not applied to the EME linguistic system as a whole, but to the individual topics discussed in the grammars, may to some extent be conflicting. Thus in some contexts, the inclusion of marginal patterns is presented as a positive aspect, reflecting the grammarians’ ‘awareness of unusual realizations’ (p. 185), or their ability to provide ‘an accurate picture of the linguistic reality’ (p. 155). In other cases, such accounts are viewed as representing ‘generalizations of exceptions’ (p. 157). In general, however, exhaustiveness seems to be the ideal aim, but omission of
infrequent phenomena is considered a ‘less grave’ error (p. 46, cf. also pp. 165, 169). However, this leads to some rather arbitrary decisions as to the frequency of occurrence in the Helsinki corpus that is to be regarded as the threshold for adequate inclusion or noninclusion in the grammatical descriptions.

In some cases, the proposed procedure of testing the adequacy of EME accounts against the results of modern studies appears to be reversed. For example, the failure to mention omission of second-person singular pronouns (except in imperatives) in the EME descriptions is considered evidence that nonexpression of the subject was not a prominent feature of contemporary linguistic competence, thereby supporting modern statements to the same effect (p. 149). There is clearly an element of methodological circularity here. The descriptive adequacy of the grammarians is likewise taken for granted, it seems, when contradictory statements in the grammars or a reference in an early grammar and the absence of one in a later, usually dependent, work are read as proof of language change (pp. 52, 77). Similarly, mention of be as a perfective auxiliary with verbs of motion in one of the later grammars (Miège, 1688) is taken as evidence that this usage still occurs at the end of the seventeenth century, while the scarce attention devoted to this topic in the EME sources in general attests, it is claimed, to decreasing use (pp. 194–5). That may well be the case, but such statements suggest that the accounts in the grammars are considered inherently adequate. The conclusion is particularly odd in light of the results reported (p. 193) from Kytö’s (1997) investigation of the Helsinki corpus that be was the preferred perfective auxiliary with verbs of motion until the early nineteenth century.

These methodological quibbles, which concern only a minority of the great number of issues discussed in Dons’ work, do not, of course, appreciably reduce its merits. The main hypothesis in the study is that there is an increase in the descriptive adequacy in the course of the period investigated (p. 1). The hypothesis is confirmed for the period viewed as a whole, yet there is no continuous development throughout the period, as many of the later grammars are less adequate than some of their predecessors (pp. 146, 240, 250).

Like previous scholars, Dons often finds that the EME grammars are clearly not adequate descriptions of English due to their lack of independence from Latin grammar, particularly in their treatment of the parts of speech. Predictably, the EME grammars are less dependent on Latin in their syntactic descriptions, which are therefore found to be ‘more reliable’ (p. 249) (though not, surely, more descriptively adequate in terms of exhaustiveness).

Dons, like Vorlat (1975), has traced not only the influence from the classical models in the individual EME grammars, but also the dependence of some of the later works on earlier sources, which were often extensively copied. Uncritical copying, frequently involving the less adequate descriptions in previous works rather than their strong points, is mentioned as one of the reasons for the lack of continuous progress in EME grammar writing (p. 124).

In the context of plagiarism, the author has made a careful comparison of the grammars of Butler (1634) and Jonson (1640), resulting in an extensive list of
similarities, including many features peculiar to these two grammars alone, or not mentioned in earlier works (pp. 144–6). Since Jonson’s Grammar was only published in the posthumous edition of his Works, Dons concludes that he must have copied Butler (p. 146). She therefore proposes that the date usually assumed for the composition of the second version of Jonson’s grammar (the first was destroyed by fire in 1623), 1632, should be reconsidered (pp. 146, 244). Since Butler’s work was first published in 1633 (not 1634, which is the date of the second edition), this is a question of at most one year, thus well within the period suggested by the ‘circa’ or ‘around’ customarily prefixed to the conjectured date. However, Dons’ findings are of greater interest in response to Britton’s (2002) otherwise convincing plea in favour of a much earlier date for the rewriting of the grammar, viz. shortly after the 1623 fire. The last word is probably not said on this topic.

Throughout the work, Dons repeatedly offers correctives to various factual statements about the EME grammars in previous scholarship, or calls for a reassessment of the merits of individual grammars on specific points. She is largely in favour of a more positive evaluation of the achievements of the EME grammars, and concludes with Algeo (1985: 192), that they ‘contain plenty of evidence of independent [and] critical thought’ (p. 249).

Dons’ work contains an impressive amount of detail that has been systematized, analysed and presented in sensible categories and in a very readable format. The author has likewise aimed at a reader-friendly presentation by including tables summarizing the accounts in the grammars, as well as the Helsinki corpus findings, and there are useful evaluative summaries after each main section and the two main chapters. Quotations from the spelling-reformers among the primary sources are rendered in regularized orthography, and those in Latin are provided with English translations. Thus Dons’ description (p. 17) of Miège’s grammar may well be applied to her own work: it is ‘well-structured and written in a clear style’. Its tidy structure and presentation should make it easily accessible also for those who may wish to use it primarily as a reference work.1

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References


1 For readers who are inclined to read notes, it may be worth observing that from note 12 onwards, there is a mismatch between the numbering in the text and in the Notes section, thus note reference number 12 in the text corresponds to note 13, 13 to note 14, etc.


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Reviewed by Jeremy J. Smith, University of Glasgow

The papers in the volume under review derive from the second Studies in the History of the English Language (SHEL) conference, held in 2002. SHEL began in 2000, with an evangelical brief: to give impetus to an area of study, English historical linguistics, which was seen as lacking in scholarly vigour in North America. Comparisons were made with a perceived contrasting strength in Europe, as witnessed by the long-established International Conferences on English Historical Linguistics (ICEHL), which began in Durham in 1979: ‘The tradition flourished in British and American universities in the 19th century and during the first half of the 20th century, but during the last two decades only in British universities has this kind of scholarship remained in the mainstream of academic life’ (Minkova & Stockwell, 2002: 1). This comparison is perhaps overstated, since the subject is now (unhappily) practised in Britain at an advanced level in comparatively few centres, and the completion of the *Middle English dictionary* in the year when SHEL I was published must surely rank as one of the greatest ever North American contributions to English historical linguistics. But this does not mean that the enterprise is an unnecessary one.
The evidence provided in the current volume is that the SHEL series is, magnificently, succeeding in its aim. The book is divided into four sections: Linguistics and Philology, Corpus- and Text-based Studies, Constraint-based Studies, and Dialectology. These sections reflect areas which are currently attracting very considerable excitement among Anglicists, and in all four there are fascinating insights and new perspectives, either through the analysis of newly available data or from new approaches to well-known problems.

The book is subtitled ‘Unfolding conversations’, and an attractive feature of the book is the inclusion of responses to individual papers with brief rejoinders. Thus (for instance) Donka Minkova’s characteristically rich paper on ‘Philology, linguistics, and the history of [hw]-[w]’ is responded to by Lesley Milroy from a sociohistorical perspective; such a response from such a scholar from such a perspective is perhaps to be expected, but it is no less interesting for that. Similar patterns of presentation and response are offered for other important papers by Susan Fitzmaurice, Geoffrey Russom, and Michael Montgomery and Connie Eble. Some of these responses are formidable contributions to scholarship in their own right, raising very significant questions; thus Robert D. Fulk’s response to Geoffrey Russom ‘raises profound questions about explanation in historical linguistics, most particularly whether the aim of historical linguistics should be to explain the data available or to analyze texts of earlier periods from a realistic historical perspective – that is, whether the primary allegiance of historical linguistics should be to linguistics or to history’ (p. 310). A pleasing feature of these responses is that, even when there is disagreement, there is courtesy; some might find this a disappointment, but the gladiatorial approach to scholarship rarely, in this reviewer’s opinion, sheds much light on problems (though cf., for example, Dinnsen, 1979: x).

Another attractive feature of the book is the attempt at striking a balance between work by well-established scholars and articles by younger ones. In a short review, it is hard to avoid being invidious, so it might be permissible to refer to a paper by one of the latter: David L. White’s ‘Why we should not believe in short diphthongs’. White investigates a classic problem in Old English philology: the status of such spellings as <ea>, <eo>, <ie>. The controversy, of course, stretches back to at least the 1930s (cf. Daunt, 1939). White concludes that ‘short diphthongs, which even believers would have to admit are rare, are beyond rare, for upon critical examination short diphthongs appear to be non-existent’ (p. 59). In order to arrive at this conclusion, he draws upon an impressive range of perspectives: modern phonological and phonetic notions, an understanding of the operation of writing-systems in both English and Celtic studies, and empirical work on languages such as Old Icelandic, Modern Scots and Ancient Greek. I found the argument convincing; the paper is an important invitation to reconsider conventional wisdom. White refers to his Texas doctoral dissertation of 2000; it would be good to see his views gain wider currency.

The volume abounds in such insights. Along with its predecessor (Minkova & Stockwell, 2002), it demonstrates that English historical linguistics in North America
is not only exciting – all readers of this journal would agree with that – but also in excellent health.

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Reviewed by Gabriella Mazzon, University of Naples, Italy

This work is an in-depth study of the spread of to-infinitive constructions during the early stages of the documented history of English, which fruitfully combines a formalist approach with extensive corpus analysis and recourse to other approaches such as pragmatics, discourse analysis, and translation studies. In what follows I will discuss and illustrate the main arguments and the evidence offered in the book.

In part 1, exclusively constituted by an introductory chapter, Los sets out to discuss two widespread assumptions about the onset period of this construction: the categorial status of the to-infinitive as Prepositional Phrase in OE, and the idea that it eventually spread at the expense of the bare infinitive. She reviews previous research on the topic, criticizing several studies pointing at a nominal status of OE infinitives, mainly on methodological grounds, e.g. because of limitations or skewing in the samples or because of the way examples have been classified in those studies. Lack of recognition of such limitations, Los argues, has led to the widespread view that the bare and the to-infinitive were in free distribution in OE, and has created the impression that the bare infinitive was once more frequent than today, which is not necessarily true. The author goes on to posit the alternative assumption that the construction originates as a purpose adjunct, and that it spread at the expense of that-clauses in the subjunctive. She
tries to avoid sample skewing, in particular of the type which results from the inclusion of examples from sources that can be suspected of following their Latin originals too closely. The main hypothesis is that *to* was once analysed as a subjunctive inflection, and was reanalysed as a free word rather earlier than normally assumed.

Part 2 analyses the role of the *to*-infinitive as *goal*. In chapter 2, Los discusses the traditional assumption of the original function of *to*-infinitive as a purpose adjunct (originating from the ‘goal of motion’ initial meaning through grammaticalization), supported by the existence of a similar construction in Gothic. Los criticizes this argument, reminding readers of the fact that Gothic belongs to a different branch of the Germanic languages, and that the only surviving texts are translations from Greek; she adds that many examples of the gothic *du*-construction (much rarer than the OE *to*-infinitive anyway) are not easy to interpret unequivocally. At the same time, she shows that the bare OE infinitive does not seem to express purpose at all, and that most of the cases quoted in the literature appear rather suspect because of close adherence to a Latin source. This is the first argument put forth against the alleged ‘competition’ between the two types of infinitive. Moreover, several examples of bare infinitives quoted are used with a restricted set of matrix verbs, which is a behaviour typical of arguments, while *to*-infinitives occur with a larger number of verb types, which is more typical of adjuncts, which are by definition not subcategorized for by the verb. As concerns the changes in function undergone by the construction, some authors (from Callaway, 1913 to Richardson, 1994) claim that the grammaticalization of some verbs of ‘motion and rest’ into aspectual markers could account for the shift of the bare infinitives accompanying them from purpose adjuncts into imperfect/progressive markers used as complements, which in turn allowed *to*-infinitives to ‘step in’. Los is clearly dissatisfied with this account, especially since in documented OE there does not seem to be any ‘*to*-insertion’, and those few bare infinitives that still could appear connected to the idea of purpose occur in fixed and relic expressions.

In chapter 3 Los discusses the diachronic emergence of an important role of the *to*-infinitive, which it still has today, namely that of *goal*-argument; this role is represented by PDE examples such as (1) and (2).

(1) I tried *to* keep it secret.
(2) He persuaded me *to* keep it secret.

The change concerned, in the first place, ‘conative’ verbs such as *strive, haste, try*, whose thematic structure is sometimes ambiguous between *AGENT-THEME* and *AGENT-GOAL*. The following group of verbs which shows the development in question concerns verbs of ‘persuading and urging’, in which the object (i.e. *me* in (2)) and the *to*-infinitive clause are interpreted as two arguments within GB theory. Los shows that these verbs, although sometimes classified as ‘directives’, have quite a different thematic structure from verbs of ‘commanding’ in OE. The distribution of *to*-infinitives is similar to that of *to*-PP, which seems to indicate that the construction appeared with these verbs probably already in pre-historic times. These verbs can also be followed by subjunctive clauses, which reinforces the author’s hypothesis of an initial overlap between the latter
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and to-infinitives. With these verbs, which are reviewed in detail, we can assume these constructions to have the role of a goal argument, but there are also some ambiguous cases: it is not always clear whether the to-infinitive and the subjunctive clause, for instance, are adjuncts or arguments.

In part 3, the role of the to-infinitive as theme is examined. Chapter 4 analyses the use of to-infinitives with verbs of ‘intention and volition’ like intend, want, or their negative counterparts refuse, avoid, which have in common the fact that they can take as their theme a proposition that refers to a future or hypothetical (and anyway nonactuated) situation. The early spread of to-infinitives with conatives, a subset of these verbs, may be one factor contributing to its extension to the whole set, a fact otherwise made puzzling by the absence of to-PP (the ‘ancestor’ of to-infinitive) in these environments. Los discusses the presence of several instances of these verbs followed by a bare infinitive as cases of direct influence from Latin, and notices that there are hardly any OE verbs that don’t allow to-infinitives, except ‘modal’ verbs, which are characterized by special status. Los further reviews previous accounts of the spread of the to-infinitive with such verbs, and of the process of reanalysis that led to its emergence (Callaway, 1913; Bock, 1931). While she to some extent endorses the idea of reanalysis from to-PP as a purpose adjunct, she argues that the process would have to be somewhat antedated. As for the bare infinitive, she notices again that the competition is illusory here, since only those ‘intention’ verbs that had modal value appear with bare infinitives, such as secan ‘intend’ or wenan ‘hope, expect’, and they lost this collocation when they lost the modal value, in ME times. The real contiguity, Los stresses again, is with subjunctive that-clauses: very few verbs appear with the latter construction, but not with the to-infinitive, and these few are mostly verbs of ‘perception and cognition’ that show a that-clause in the indicative, and only rarely in the subjunctive. The only environment in which the two infinitives seem at one point to have been in competition is a small set of inchoative verbs such as onginnan, originally accompanied by bare infinitives. When, in this construction, these verbs started to behave as perfective auxiliaries, the occurrence with the to-infinitive began to spread as a means of restoring the ingressive meaning, which was undergoing bleaching.

In chapter 5 Los examines verbs of ‘commanding and permitting’, which appear peculiar in that they can be three-place verbs (with agent, recipient, and theme) but also two-place ones (when the focus is on the state of affairs to be achieved, and there is no overt recipient), in which case they appear similar to causative verbs and are followed by bare-infinitival Exceptional Case Marking or by a Small Clause. One reason for this, Los argues, is that performing a command can often be perceived as face-threatening. Politeness rules would then require new euphemistic ways of performing this act to be found, e.g. through the employment of verbs of ‘suggesting or requesting’, which often have no overt recipient. When functioning as three-place predicates, these verbs (in OE e.g. beodan ‘order’, forbeodan ‘forbid’, laetan ‘allow’, reccan ‘direct’) can have an accusative NP as theme, a subjunctive clause or a to-VP, although there are structural features specific for individual verbs that Los discusses separately.
Some verbs can also be said to have double membership, within both this class and that of verbs of ‘persuading and urging’, e.g. hatan ‘command’, læran ‘teach’, wissian ‘guide’, which therefore occur in a wider variety of frames; other verbs seem to vary in the case they accept for NPs. As with the monotransitive ‘intention’ verbs, a process of reanalysis is invoked to explain the emergence of the to-infinitive as an argument of these verbs; but this is again in combination with the presence of an ambiguity in the status of the to-infinitive as an adjunct or argument, especially where there is no overt accusative NP object, otherwise the new construction could not have arisen at all as an alternative to the subjunctive clause. The verbs of ‘commanding and permitting’ can also occur in bare-infinitive Accusative-plus-Infinitive constructions, so the question of the possible ‘competition’ between the two infinitives is to be found again. If bare infinitives can be interpreted as theme in a three-place construction in OE, then this would be another case of coexistence of the two types of infinitive (together with the theme of ‘intention’ verbs) in the same environment. After performing several tests, Los concludes that accusative NPs and ensuing infinitives after these verbs form only one constituent, which can be interpreted as theme – these verbs are therefore set in two-place constructions in these cases, while the dative NP is a recipient and the to-VP is a theme in the other cases. Even for this group, then, the model is the analogy with that-clauses, not with the bare infinitive.

In chapter 6 Los deals with the last group of verbs that can take a to-infinitive as theme argument, i.e. ‘commissive’ verbs such as promise, an interesting group since they still take finite clauses as their preferred complement in PDE, contrary to the other types of verbs examined so far, mainly because the subject is not ‘controlled’ by the main clause so often. This group shows two, not three, arguments, in that it allows [ _ to VP] frames, but not [NP to VP] ones. The semantics involved is similar to that of ‘intention’ verbs, although three subtypes can be distinguished, according to the type of thing promised, i.e. whether an intended action on the part of the speaker (with the modal willan and coreferentiality between matrix and embedded subject), a permission (with mæg or motan, not attested with a to-infinitive in OE), or a state of affairs (with modality indicating futurity and no coreferentiality of subjects, also not occurring with to-infinitive in OE). This heavy presence of modality, Los argues, is another reason for the failed spreading of the to-infinitive in these contexts, since an infinitive may not be informative enough to disambiguate between the various commissive meanings outlined above.

In the fourth part of the volume, Los examines the syntactic status of the to-infinitive, which has allegedly changed in early ME from PP to Inflection Phrase or Complement Clause, with a categorial change of the infinitive itself from N to V. Los holds this hypothesis to be untenable, and she proceeds to demonstrate this in chapter 7, drawing from etymological evidence (showing the unrelatedness of the bare infinitive to the to-infinitive, which was a PP containing a nominalization of a verb), and from various types of structural evidence: the fact that OE to-infinitives are found in coordinated structures with PPs, for instance, cannot be taken as evidence of their equivalent status, since this kind of asymmetry is pretty common even in PDE, given certain
preconditions. Furthermore, *to* itself does not behave as a preposition, since it is only after *ME* that material can be inserted between it and the infinitive (in contrast with *OE* ‘real’ prepositions), and it is rarely omitted in the second conjunct of coordinated infinitives (in contrast with coordinated NPs, in which the preposition can be omitted before the second one). Both types of infinitives fail to occur with determiners or other nominal modifiers, and show only accusative objects, not genitive complements, as they would if they had nominal value (cf. *PDE* *The killing of his dog upset John vs* *Killing his dog upset John*). As concerns placement, too, there is the fact that *to*-infinitives normally appear finally, while PPs occur both before and after the finite verb. Having thus disposed of all the theories suggesting a nominal status, Los proceeds to show that the *OE* *to*-infinitive is actually a clause: its distribution matches that of *that*-subjunctive clauses, with similar behaviour of the respective objects (tending to occur more frequently preverbally); finite and nonfinite relative clauses also show structural similarities. Through comparing two manuscripts of Gregory’s *Dialogues*, Los shows that there are several cases in which a subjunctive *that*-clause in the earlier ms. is replaced by a *to*-infinitive in the later ms., especially in the environment of the verbs examined in the previous chapters. Further inquiry into some *ME* texts shows that during this period the *to*-infinitive gradually replaced the *that*-clause in these environments, while the number of bare infinitives remains more or less stable until later.

In chapter 8 Los goes on to challenge previous claims concerning the categorial status of the *to*-infinitive and the changes it underwent over time. She first argues that the putative dative *-ne* that appears attached to the infinitive in *OE* (which she then reinterprets as a gerund) might have been rather abruptly reanalysed as an inflectional rather than a derivational (i.e. nominalizing) suffix, once it had become sufficiently widespread as to be no longer perceived as category-changing. This, united to the directionality inherent in *to*, created a reference to a future event in the resulting (now verb-based) construction. In this sense, Los argues, the *to* could be interpreted as a prefix conveying a modality similar to that of the subjunctive and therefore, after discussing possible labels, she decides to use $T^\circ$ for this form. Los reviews several studies on the status of *to* both in earlier and in modern English, and claims that a unified analysis is impossible: in the ‘be to’ construction, *to* seems to be an Agreement Phrase, in other cases a CP. Los examines some studies of other Germanic languages, and notices that in these studies there seem to be the same problems as in those on English. The viewing of *to* as a nonfinite modal would allow one to posit very limited syntactic change since *OE*, but only morphological change. Los draws on tests proposed mainly by Pullum (1982) to show that it can have no other status than that of a nonfinite modal, certainly not that of a preposition, in *PDE*. The subjunctive feature, however, was checked covertly and not overtly in *OE*. Los then proceeds to discuss the degree of separability of *to* from its infinitive, which seems to have increased in the course of the centuries, and to postulate the various possible grammars underlying the positional options in *OE* and *ME*, also in relation to the change in frequency of the OV and VO patterns. It was the latter pattern that allowed the reanalysis of *to* as a free word. This went together with a loss
of purposive meaning, shown by the rise of for to as a reinforcement of such a meaning in early ME. It quickly merged with to to produce a complex infinitival marker, but was then as quickly dropped. In the final section of this chapter, Los briefly reviews the grammaticalization of to (from preposition to prefix) and its later degrammaticalization due to loss on the scale of the bondedness parameter (since it becomes a free word again with the appearance of split infinitives) and resemanticization with the purposive element. Fischer (2000) also notes the appearance of wide-scope to (which can be used only before the first of two coordinated infinitives). Degrammaticalization is generally so rare as to have been claimed to be impossible, and this, Los remarks, makes this construction a particularly interesting one.

Part 5 analyses changes in the construction during ME. Chapter 9 is devoted to the analysis of the emergence of the to-infinitival Exceptional Case Marking (ECM) construction in ME after verbs of ‘declaring and believing’, of the type exemplified in (3).

(3) They believe John to be a liar.

In these constructions, the whole NP to VP string seems to be the internal argument of believe, as the NP has accusative case (as shown by the substitution of John with a pronoun like him). This means that the lower clause is IP rather than CP, to allow for its subject to be governed by the higher verb believe. With slightly different semantic and syntactic specifications, this construction also appears in PDE with verbs of ‘wanting’, and of ‘commanding and permitting’, as in (4).

(4) I want you to leave.

A main difference is that the want verbs mostly have active ECM, while believe-type verbs often allow passive ECM, and that the want verbs do not seem to raise the subject of the lower clause to their object so easily (if we interpret the sentence in a Minimalist framework) or to govern it (in a GB frame). Los traces the different types of construction allowed by different verbs in ME, noticing that some rules may have been obscured by changes in the verbs themselves from OE to ME to PDE, but that, even in this case, there seems to be no competition between the new construction and the bare-infinitival ECM that some of these verbs show in OE. A close analysis of a well-sized corpus such as the Paston letters (which also has the advantage of not being strongly influenced by Latin) shows that the to-infinitival constructions with want verbs were more widespread than today, while verbs of ‘commanding and persuading’ continue to show differences in their occurrences with different types of infinitive even in ME, and the fact that these differences have to do with thematic structure is shown by the lack of asymmetric behaviour between Germanic and French verbs (i.e. later loans) in this group. The believe verbs also show varying behaviour across the centuries, but to-infinitival ECM appears later than with the want verbs, and nowadays they mostly show this construction in the passive. Los traces the development of the construction with these verbs, including the restrictions (such as the fact that the preferred infinitive seems to be overwhelmingly be, which casts doubts on the total comparability between
these verbs and others with respect to the value of the to-infinitive they can take), and claims that there is a connection between the rise of to-infinitival ECM and the loss of V2, because this increased the need for new strategies to create subjects. The construction, however, does not seem to be part of everyday speech but to be restricted to learned registers. In some cases (e.g. in the phrase *suppose to – VP*) it seems to be used in a way equivalent to a modal verb, to be a sort of unanalysed chunk. It could therefore be argued not to be part of the core grammar (because the ban on an overt subject seems incompatible with it), but to be a ‘virus’ (Sobin, 1997), restricted to surface structures that are normally prestigious and are not part of child language. Another interesting relationship is that between ECM and the Small Clause, which seems to be an AgrP and is allowed by verbs that allow ECM, while the reverse is not true. Compare (5a) and (5b).

(5) (a) They considered Samantha a fool. (Small Clause)
(b) They considered Samantha to be a fool. (ECM)

This has led some to hypothesize an equivalence (with *to be*-deletion) of the constructions, but Los notices that the correspondence is not perfect. Next, Los examines the ‘be-to-Vinf’ construction in late OE and ME, and distinguishes its role as a predicate or as an argument, according to whether it precedes or follows the finite verb, i.e. whether it conforms to predicate or clausal order. Again, Los draws on the analysis of similar constructions in Dutch to show further structural and semantic differences between the two types of *wesan to-Vinf* (still present in the fossil type *He is to blame*), which was then lost in the course of ME, to be replaced by passivized *to be*-Vinf.

Chapter 10 is devoted to a ‘side effect’ of the development traced in the book, i.e. the loss of the indefinite pronoun *man* (retained in other Germanic languages such as German and Dutch), which was affected by the decline of the subjunctive clause and by the loss of V2. Derived through grammaticalization from the noun *man*, it went on to express a thematic role of AGENT, in a way that seems to go beyond the function of indefinite pronoun, to what Koenig (1999) calls an ‘ultra-indefinite’ similar to French *on*. Its pronominal status is shown by the fact that it precedes the verb, even when there is another constituent in the previous position. Its demise was not due to the rise of competitors such as today’s proform *one*, which was generalized much later, but to the loss of the linguistic niche for this form. Ultra-indefinites do not seem to be compatible with non-V2 languages, and are especially difficult to reconcile with the high prominence of subjects that characterizes PDE, in which the changes in information structure caused by the loss of V2 resulted in an increase in the use of passives. It was the latter that took over many of the functions of *man*. In subordinate clauses in the subjunctive, unaffected by loss of V2 for a longer time, *man* continues to occur with verbs of ‘persuading and urging’ and of ‘commanding and permitting’ as well as with ‘evaluative predicates’: it was then ousted by the increase in *to*-infinitive constructions replacing *that*-clauses in this environment.

In the concluding chapter, Los rounds up her main arguments and results in a clear and systematic way, and acknowledges the fact that exhaustive explanations of
structural phenomena are often reachable only if the functions of constructions are taken into account, allowing for contributions from discourse analysis and pragmatics. This is a step away from ‘pure’ formal accounts, and towards an integration of different approaches, which must be appreciated.

As for the apparatuses accompanying this book, there are some tables giving information on which verbs take which kind of complement alongside the to-infinitive, and others illustrating the functions of the to-infinitive in Gregory’s Dialogues. The list of references is exhaustive, while appendix 1, where a list of the corpora employed is given, could have profited from a little more detail where the author refers to ‘various ME texts’ from electronic sources; especially since Los emphasizes that a thorough study of the construction in ME remains to be done, she could have indicated which texts she has looked at in greater detail. Finally, an objection must also be raised about the index, in which only selected occurrences of the terms seem to have been included, excluding others for no apparent reason (see e.g. gerund: only one occurrence is recorded in the index, and it is not necessarily the most significant one).

Apart from these minor points, this book is generally clear and exhaustive, although it does require some familiarity with recent generative theory and its conventions. The volume represents a very useful addition to the study of early English syntax and a significant contribution towards the overcoming of long-standing ‘lore’ assumptions, which are shown to crumble in the face of extensive corpus study. As mentioned above, the attempt at integrating methods and results from different ways of studying linguistic data is to be appreciated, and renders this volume an even more valuable contribution.

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References
REVIEWS


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These four books, all introducing Old English, demonstrate the commitment of experienced teachers to communicating their enthusiasm to students who, increasingly, arrive in universities with little basic grammatical training. Three are stout course books, whereas Hogg’s Introduction to Old English, a slim, well typeset and pocketable volume, stands apart, a masterly overview of linguistic structures that involves its reader in growing into an understanding of the history of the English language. It may be ‘intended to provide the amount of work which can sensibly be covered in one-term or one-semester courses of the kind common today’, but it could function usefully as required reading alongside any of the other three books.

Hogg provides a clear and highly readable introduction not just to Old English but to English grammar, seeking always to identify continuities as well as differences. Through an astutely chosen succession of snippets of Old English with purposefully literal translations he shows why and how the information presented is necessary and relevant, so that when, in his last pages, he states that ‘the study of Old English is essential for an understanding of the language in which you are reading this text’, he has fully justified this claim. Hogg knows that such terms as paradigm, number, case, and gender need to be explained; he does so palatably and he supplies an essential ‘Glossary of linguistic terms’. The first chapter, on ‘Origins and sources’, is genuinely introductory. Here he locates the beginning of English in Britain, shows why it is to be identified as a Germanic language within Indo-European and describes the Anglo-Saxon settlement. Deliberately, he is succinct also about phonology (in the prefatory note ‘To readers’ he tells us that this is because ‘too great an emphasis on phonology
at a very early stage actually inhibits an understanding of other linguistic matters and even of the reading of original texts’). Rather he focuses on fostering strategies for mapping Old English spellings on to present-day ones, afterwards supplying (§1.7) a fairly comprehensive four-page account of Old English phonology delivered with the warning that the section is technical and that ‘an understanding of key concepts such as the phoneme is important, but outside the scope of this work’. (Later, in §4.5, he does allow himself a ‘phonological interlude’ when discussing i-mutation, but for the most part he steers clear of philological detail. The section is almost a take-it or leave-it add-in, accessible and enriching where phonology is taught, but otherwise tough.) The following six of Hogg’s ten chapters (chapters 2–7) deal with structure. Basic paradigms for nouns, demonstratives and pronouns are explained in chapter 2 and shown at work in a sentence from Ælfric’s story of the Maccabees, with chapter 3 mopping up irregular and minor noun declensions, adjectives, and the verb ‘to be’. Two chapters centred on verbs (chapters 4 and 5) end with discussion as to why ‘the present-day English category of modals sits only uncomfortably into Old English’. Next, chapters 6 and 7, on syntax, move cleverly from issues local to noun phrases and verb phrases to clause organization. The three final chapters are on ‘vocabulary’, ‘variety’, and ‘the future’ respectively. Interesting and doable exercises at the end of each chapter reinforce their content. Overall the emphasis is on language and language history, and somehow it is symptomatic that the only complete text included is Cædmon’s Hymn, in contrasting versions that allow consideration of evidence for dialect and date. Hogg rarely nods: I spotted a moment of indecision (‘no few good’, p. 155); and Chad was long dead by the tenth century (p. 126).

In his section on ‘Recommended reading’ Hogg draws attention (p. 155) to ‘a large number of collections of texts which might be mentioned, but they are largely redundant given the presence of Mitchell and Robinson’. Nevertheless, some new collections are rapidly gaining footholds in English departments. Marsden’s Reader is traditional in so far as it follows what Hogg describes (p. viii) as ‘a freestanding account of the grammar and, secondly, a group of texts which the student is expected to read by reference to the relevant material in the grammar’, except that the texts come first and the ‘Reference grammar’ is a relatively slim summary of paradigms (pp. 355–95) tucked away before the Glossary (pp. 396–516) and supplemented by a ‘Guide to terms’ (pp. 517–25). The preliminaries offer sensible and succinct observations on such matters as punctuation, spelling variation, and emendation (admirably kept to a minimum except for the Colloquy), recommend reading aloud as a learning strategy, and end with a guide to ‘The writing and pronunciation of Old English’ (pp. xxix–xxxiv). The range is excellent, a good blending of the often anthologized and the less well known, fifty-six texts in all, some of them very short. Forty numbered sections are presented within six thematic groups, with old favourites dominating sections IV, V, and VI, entitled ‘Example and exhortation’, ‘Telling tales’, and ‘Reflection and lament’ respectively. Marsden’s convenient and thought-provoking rough categorization brings to the front of his Reader two groupings that could prompt teachers of Old English to think out their courses anew. Under ‘Teaching and learning’, Alfred’s letter to
his bishops and passages from the *Colloquy* gloss and the Old English Boethius rub shoulders with medical recipes, samples of information jotted down incidentally in English in Ælfwine’s devotional compilation, and a sizeable chunk from Ælfric’s Grammar. Under ‘Keeping a record’, documents (Ælfgifu’s will and the Fonthill Letter) and excerpts from three lawcodes keep company with history (the founding of England and the story of Cædmon from the Old English Bede) and chronicle (*The Battle of Brunanburh* and annals drawn from 981–1003). And ‘Spreading the word’ illustrates Bible translation and adaptation: selections from Genesis (aptly related to the cover illustration from British Library, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv), Matthew and three prose psalms, followed by Ælfric’s preface to his Genesis translation, Genesis B 338–441, Exodus 447–564, and Judith. The textual footnotes are full and helpful, and they are supported by parsing in the Glossary. Some may find the single-word glossing intrusive, whether in an upper deck of footnotes for prose or in the outer margin for poetry, and the end-word prompts give text blocks a cluttered look, but the gains they afford in building up reading knowledge quickly are undeniable. This is a book that wears its learning lightly, stashing important information on ‘Manuscripts and textual emendations’ (pp. 345–54) neatly before the ‘Reference grammar’ and underplaying the degree of new editorial work undertaken.

An integrated approach to introducing ‘the skills necessary to read Old English quickly and accurately’ is adopted by Hasenfratz & Jambeck, whose *Reading Old English* was written ‘with advanced undergraduates, graduate students, and auto-didacts in mind’ (p. xviii), but it could equally play a part where first-year undergraduates are still fortunate enough to have Old English among their courses. Refreshingly, the authors assume ‘a minimum of prior linguistic knowledge’, and they have put together an imaginative work-book that along the way supplies a clear introduction to the grammar of Present-day English (the first appendix usefully summarizes this basic introduction, pp. 357–95). As students work through the eleven chapters, they are expected to do the exercises, actually to write them into the spaces provided. This is a book that will feed enthusiasm, and it encourages its readers to think beyond the clear summaries. For example, a three-page crash course in Anglo-Saxon palaeography (pp. 4–6), followed up immediately by a reproduction of the front panel of the Franks Casket, will come into play again as facsimile pages are introduced alongside readings. The first chapter may, from Hogg’s point of view, spend too much time on phonology, but it is geared to accustoming students to new letter forms and to the unexpected sounds often needed for *c, g, f*, etc. Throughout the ten chapters in which the basics of Old English grammar are covered, cleverly chosen phrases and sentences of Old English gradually build a secure reading knowledge, leading the readers to translate confidently and idiomatically. Particularly impressive is the authors’ willingness to confront readers with Latin, not just incidentally in the passages from Ælfric’s Grammar that complement grammatical areas under discussion, but at some length too, for example alongside the second and third readings from the Old English *Wonders of the East* in chapters 5 and 6. Other passages given for reading practice select from a wide range of writings in Old English. There’s a riddle, for example, and
other excerpts are taken from the gospels and collections of prognostics and monastic signs. Vercelli Homily 9, illustrated by a Last Judgement drawing from British Library, Stowe 944, f. 3r, supplies the main readings for chapters 8–10. The second appendix (pp. 399–414) gives a brief overview of ‘those sound changes that will help you to understand some of the apparent spelling and inflectional oddities in Old English’ and refers to appropriate further reading. The ‘first reader’ section (pp. 415–552) has four parts: Ælfric’s Latin Colloquy with an edited version of its Old English gloss; the life of St Audrey from Bede’s Historia together with its Alfredian translation, Ælfric’s life and the Audrey entry from the Old English Martyrology; ‘The Wife’s Lament’; and a Glossary. A fold-out summary of essential Old English grammar is interleaved between the last two pages of the Glossary. The authors and press are to be complimented on the variety of fonts used, generous manipulation of space and attractive use of page design.

The earliest English by McCully & Hilles could not present a greater contrast. The remit here is to learn about the language and any short reading passages included are chosen specifically to further that end. If Hogg’s book reflects the sort of overview afforded University of Manchester first-year undergraduates, McCully & Hilles flesh out the history of the language side. Presumably translation and lit-crit work are undertaken separately. Each of the eight units is designed for ‘roughly 4–5 hours’ full-time work, in class and/or out of it’, but the ‘study questions’ at the end of each unit could add considerably to the time involved, as could use of the suggested further reading and of the website addresses. McCully & Hilles want their readers to think as linguists think, and they are prepared to work them hard. The first four units give first an overall introduction (an initial view of the theoretical framework and terminology, some pronunciation pointers, for example asking the reader to check for vibration when voicing the f of heofon, and the story of Cædmon with the Hymn as carrot) and then describe the historical background (phonology, Vortigern’s invitation, language family trees and cognate languages, runes, and lots of good maps), moving on to focus on nouns (settlement, with a strong sociolinguistic thrust and more maps, the noun phrase) and verbs (conversion and Christianization, a map of key religious sites, much on tense, aspect, voice, etc.). An ‘Interlude’ about dictionaries follows (pp. 134–42), explaining how to use the Oxford English dictionary, the Middle English dictionary and the Toronto Dictionary of Old English project’s materials. The second block of units begins with an excellent and formidable account of Old English metre, by the end of which I did not find it surprising to read that the authors have been ‘unable to find websites on this topic that are both comprehensive and reliable’. The final three units serve as a language background for Old English literature. ‘Standards and crosses’ relates to the earlier prose and poetry (the emergence of Wessex, Alfred’s letter to his bishops, two Rood poems, and a considerable splash of ‘breaking’ and linguistic change). ‘Twilight’ deals with late West Saxon (alliterative prose and inflectional loss principally). And ‘Rebuilding English’ thinks beyond Hastings (the creole hypothesis, the remodelling of the pronoun system, the origin of the article, metrical innovation, Orm) and is spiced with excerpts from the Peterborough Chronicle and the later alliterative tradition. My thumbnail indications of content are meant to indicate the detailed and comprehensive
nature of the cover provided in this unassuming and approachable textbook, which should prove invaluable where teaching of the history of the English language is taken seriously.

Together these four books point to the liveliness of Old English teaching at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with much thought being given as to the needs of widely different groups. The books exist comfortably in a context where their readers are as likely to use the web as a traditional library, but the authors have not opted for the dual-media publication route taken by Peter Baker (The electronic introduction to Old English, an on-line analogue of Introduction to Old English, Oxford: Blackwell, 2003; see also The Old English aerobics anthology: introduction to Old English, 2003). Inevitably there are corrections to be made, but for the most part these will be caught through teaching and in reprint. Differing definitions are prompted by differing viewpoints (for Hogg preterite is ‘a morphological form usually expressing past tense’, but for Marsden ‘past tense (also known as preterite)’). Teachers will choose according to the sort of course planned, whether introductory or advanced, whether literary or linguistic. Finally, we shall never know how many sisters St Audrey had (five for Hasenfratz & Jambeck, who include one surprisingly named Erconwald among the larger tally, a mere sister and step-sister for Marsden), but it is sobering to reflect that the surviving records can be used to support both counts.

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This monograph by Gunther Kaltenböck (henceforth GK) must be the most comprehensive corpus-based study on extraposition in English currently available. The core of the book consists of an extensive quantitative and qualitative analysis of the syntactic and functional properties of it-extraposition (and nonextraposition); more than 2,000 tokens are analysed in detail. GK wisely restricts himself to instances of it-extraposition, i.e. of the following type:

(1) It is surprising that John went to Paris. (p. 1)
The study is resolutely corpus-based, and deals with data taken from the British component of the *International Corpus of English* (ICE-GB) based at University College London (a 1 million-word database). See Greenbaum (1996) and Nelson et al. (2002) for a description of the corpus and a discussion of its aims.

What is interesting is that GK, throughout the book, contrasts *it*-extraposition with what he labels ‘non-extraposition’; by this he means those cases where a sentential complement could have been extraposed, but was not. For the example above, for instance, the nonextraposed version would be:

(2) That John went to Paris is surprising.

Such an approach, which is fairly original (but see also Collins, 1994; Miller, 2001), allows us to judge not only the discourse contexts in which the speaker/writer employs extraposition, but also those contexts where extraposition was structurally possible, but not chosen because of functional considerations.

After setting the scene in a short introductory chapter, the author offers, in chapter 2 (‘Previous studies’), a very useful review of the literature. This covers not only a brief summary of treatments of extraposition in descriptive grammars (the term was coined by Jespersen, 1949), and a discussion of the roots of the ‘extraposition’ label in the transformational literature, but also a detailed critical review of recent functional studies on this phenomenon. Such studies include Erdmann (1987; see also Erdmann, 1990), Mair (1990), Collins (1994), Gómez-González (1997), Herrimann (2000), and Miller (2001).

As GK points out, some of these studies do not deal exclusively with *it*-extraposition, or even with extraposition per se, but are part of a broader investigation of a syntactic category (such as complement clauses; Mair, 1990) or a functional category (such as the theme–topic interface; Gómez-González, 2000). The scarcity of such discourse-based studies is perhaps surprising, given that we are dealing with one of the few mechanisms available in contemporary English for deviating from the strict SVO pattern. One reason for this might be the fact that *it*-extraposition has often been analysed exclusively in terms of so-called ‘end-weight’ (Quirk et al., 1985), i.e. the tendency to place syntactically ‘heavy’ sentence elements towards the end of the clause, rather than in terms of information flow in discourse (what Quirk et al., 1985 would call ‘end-focus’). This, of course, makes GK’s study all the more valuable, since it deals in detail with the communicative functions of *it*-extraposition.

GK correctly points out that most of the studies he reviews are much smaller in scale, both with regard to the database employed (e.g. 200,000 words in the case of Collins, 1994) and with regard to the number of (*it*)-extraposition tokens analysed (e.g. a mere 51 in Miller’s 2001 study). GK’s claim that Miller’s investigation is ‘[t]he only corpus study to date investigating the information structure of *it*-extraposition and non-extraposition’ (p. 25), however, is open to dispute, since Collins (1994) clearly also examines the discourse-pragmatic dimension of this construction (GK implicitly admits this when he points out that Collins discusses ‘some interesting communicative aspects’, p. 23). In fact, only two studies appear to be directly comparable to GK’s in terms of approach, viz. Collins’ (1994), which deals exclusively with Australian English, and...
Miller’s (2001), which employs a framework inspired by Prince’s (1981) given–new taxonomy (as does GK’s); Herrimann’s (2000) investigation, while comparable in size to GK’s, is mainly semantic rather than functional in nature.

Interestingly, both databases (GK’s and Herrimann’s) yield a very similar number of tokens (1,701 and 1,633, respectively) of \textit{it}-(subject-)extraposition from a 1 million-word corpus of British English; a similar relative frequency emerges from Collins’ Australian English data. It would appear, then, that a frequency of about 1.5 to 1.8 extrapositions per 1,000 words is the norm (though no figures exist for other varieties of English, and there is obvious stylistic and register variation, as shown by GK).

In chapter 3 (‘Defining the class’), GK offers a structural characterization of extraposition, with a view to identifying extraposition tokens in his database. \textit{It}-extrapositions are defined as ‘bipartite structure[s] consisting of a matrix clause, which is composed of anticipatory \textit{it} and a matrix predicate, and a complement clause, which may be introduced by a complementizer in the case of a finite clause’ (p. 28). Applying this to our example (1) above, we get the following:

(3) It is surprising \[\text{that John went to Paris}\]
\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{[anticipatory \textit{it}] & \text{[matrix predicate]} & \text{[complement clause]} \\
\end{array}
\]

Such a characterization appears fairly uncontroversial. As GK points out, the requirement that complements are clausal means that nonclausal ones such as the italicized NP in (4) are excluded from the analysis; such constructions are considered to be right-dislocations (see Geluykens, 1994, among others).

(4) It is amazing the number of times he went to London. (p. 31)

On the other hand, clause types such as \textit{if}-(and \textit{when}-) clauses are included, as in (3), unlike in some other studies:

(5) It’d be nice if we could avoid an eating or drinking type thing. (p. 30)

This raises a serious issue with regard to the delimitation of extraposition as a syntactic category. In fact, GK argues, further on in the book, that a prototype approach is called for (see the discussion below).

A particularly interesting section of chapter 3, for this reviewer, is 3.1.3, in which GK compares extrapositions to two other noncanonical word-order patterns which also start with anticipatory \textit{it}, viz. right-dislocations (or RDs for short) and \textit{it}-clefts. Both constructions have been studied extensively from a functional perspective (see Geluykens, 1994; Tomlin, 1986 for RDs; Geluykens, 1988 and Collins, 1991 for \textit{it}-clefts, among others), and it seems clear that the three patterns compared here have, at least in most cases, different discourse functions with regard to packaging the flow of information. What is more relevant here, however, is the fact that the structural boundaries between these constructions might be difficult to draw. Such problems do not appear to exist to such an extent for \textit{it}-clefts; compare:

(6) It is on Monday that John went to Paris.
(1) It is surprising that John went to Paris.
In (6), an identification relationship exists between the *that*-clause and the PP ‘on Monday’; such a relationship is absent in (1), repeated here. I totally agree with GK that sentences such as (7) below should not be considered clefts, but rather extrapositions:

(7) It may be that the family will disappear as the basis of civilization. (p. 56)

The demarcation line between extraposition and RD, however, appears more problematic. If one allows for the possibility that it is possible to ‘dislocate’ not just NPs and PPs, but also clausal constituents, it would be hard to argue, purely on structural grounds, against an interpretation of (8)–(10) below as instances of RD:

(8) It is a very nice place to go to, Paris.
(9) It is very nice, going to Paris.
(10) It is very nice, to go to Paris.

Disregarding punctuation, which is irrelevant to our discussion here, both (9) and (10) appear to fit the criteria for both extraposition and RD. In Geluykens (1994), I have argued that such constructions might be regarded as nonprototypical RDs. By the same token, then, one could argue that (8) constitutes a nonprototype extraposition, on purely structural grounds. As GK points out, one might ultimately have to take into account the ‘respective communicative function(s) of right-dislocation and *it*-extraposition’ (p. 55) to determine the border line between the two constructions.

This raises the serious question to what extent it is possible to define such patterns in purely syntactic terms (see Geluykens, 1992 for a similar discussion of left-dislocation, or LD). Additionally, such fuzzy edges suggest that a prototype approach to such constructions (with some class members being more central than others) makes more sense than a strict categorical approach (as I have argued for LD and RD in Geluykens, 1993 and 1994, respectively). Compare, for instance, (4) above (repeated here as (11a)), with (11b) and (11c):

(11a) It is amazing the number of times he went to London.
(11b) It is amazing the fact that he went to London so many times.
(11c) It is amazing that he went to London so many times.

According to GK’s criteria, (11c) would be labelled an extraposition, while (11a) and (11b) would have to be called right-dislocations. While not wanting to claim that (11a) and (11c) are truth-conditionally completely identical (the case appears a bit easier to make for (11c) and (11b), however), it seems intuitively clear that they are indeed very closely related in meaning. Be that as it may, the restriction of extraposition to clausal complements makes sense for the purposes of his investigation. It is important to keep in mind, however, that this decision is a practical convenience (since, inevitably, one has to draw the line somewhere in order to carry out a quantitative corpus-based investigation), rather than a theoretical stance with regard to the categorization of grammatical constructions.

The second main section in chapter 3 (3.2) deals with nonextraposition, as exemplified by (2) above. GK points out that, despite their truth-conditional equivalence
(which few would dispute), extraposed and nonextraposed patterns are not mutually interchangeable in any given context. However, he argues, in order to evaluate the functional dimension of nonextraposition, the extraposed version at least has to be structurally available (p. 59). Personally, I would argue that the converse should also then be the case, i.e. for every extraposition there should be a nonextraposed variant formally possible. If not, the speaker/writer does not really have a functional choice to make, as there are no two structurally equivalent alternatives available to him/her. However, GK also includes extrapositions of the following type in the database:

(12) (a) It appears that John went to London. (p. 34)
     (b) ??That John went to London appears.

Given the doubtful acceptability of (12b), it could be argued that, at least functionally, such pairs are not on the same level as (1)–(2) above. Be that as it may, in the end GK is left with 217 tokens of nonextraposition and 1,808 tokens of *it*-extraposition (1,701 of which are subject extrapositions), or a ratio of about 1:12.

The next two chapters in GK’s monograph form the bulk of the empirical analysis from a formal (chapter 4) and functional (chapter 5) perspective, respectively. Chapter 4, ‘Formal properties of *it*-extraposition and non-extraposition’, offers an exhaustive syntactic description (including some semantic analysis) and classification. First of all, section 4.1 briefly considers object extraposition and its nonextraposed counterpart, exemplified by (13) and (14), respectively:

(13) The Franks found it hard to rule Brittany. (p. 65)
(14) They don’t find being in the same office a stress. (p. 67)

There is remarkably little variation with regard to text type (written vs spoken) in these object extrapositions.

Section 4.2 examines GK’s most frequent class, viz. subject extrapositions (1,701 tokens in the database). Several findings emerge here. First of all, subject extraposition is slightly more frequent in written discourse than in spoken discourse (1.94 versus 1.46 occurrences per 1,000 words). Secondly, *that*-clauses and *to*-infinitives are by far the most frequent type of complement clauses; together they account for almost 84 per cent of the database (1,396 out of 1,662; see table 4.45 on p. 152). Thirdly, in 60.3 per cent of the cases, the matrix predicate is an AdjP (see table 4.46 on p. 152).

With regard to nonextraposition (section 4.3), finally, we find a similar pattern with regard to text type, in that they occur more often in written than in spoken discourse (with much lower absolute frequencies, of course): 0.28 versus 0.12 per 1,000 words (p. 135). Complement clauses in nonextrapositions tend to be gerundial (59 per cent of the data), and the most frequent type of matrix predicate is a VP (39.3 per cent; see table 4.46).

To this reviewer’s mind, the most important contribution to the advancement of our knowledge on extraposition is made by chapter 5, ‘Functional properties’, in which GK embarks on an information flow analysis of extrapositions and nonextrapositions. In other words, he examines to what extent the use of extraposition is influenced
by the respective given–new information statuses of the complement clause and the matrix clause. The taxonomy employed is derived from Prince (1981): GK distinguishes between New (irretrievable) and Given (retrievable) items. New items can be either Brand-New or New-Anchored. Given items can be either Inferrable (indirectly retrievable) or Evoked (directly retrievable). A distinction is also made between Textually and Situationally Evoked items. Crucially, however, the ‘discourse familiarity status’ (after Birner & Ward, 1998) of an item depends on its (non-) occurrence in the linguistic or extralinguistic context (following, e.g., Geluykens, 1991; Halliday, 1994), rather than on the speaker’s assumptions concerning what is present in the hearer’s consciousness (following Chafe, 1987), or what is considered to be shared background knowledge (e.g. Clark & Haviland, 1977). Incidentally, GK mistakenly categorizes Prince’s taxonomy under the heading of ‘Clark-given’ rather than ‘Chafe-given’ (where it belongs), as evidenced by the table on p. 157.

Summing up GK’s general findings on information status (aspects of which have also been published in the meantime as Kaltenböck, 2005), several interesting tendencies emerge. First of all, GK distinguishes two functional types of extraposition (the analysis is restricted here to subject extraposition, incidentally): in Type I, the complement clause contains ‘given’ information, while in Type II, this information is ‘new’. Secondly, Type II (‘new’) is far more frequent than Type I: 71.5 per cent versus 28.5 per cent, respectively. Thirdly, relative frequencies of Type I and II are dependent on discourse type, with Type II (‘new’) much more frequent in written (83.2 per cent of all extrapositions) than in spoken (56.1 per cent) discourse. The situation is reversed in nonextrapositions (section 5.2), where the same two functional types are encountered, but where Type I (‘given’) is much more frequent than Type II (‘new’): 80.2 per cent versus 19.8 per cent. Once again, Type II is far more frequent in written discourse than in spoken discourse, though absolute frequencies are of course much lower (since Type II is much less frequent here overall).

GK does not restrict his functional analysis to an examination of the given–new status of matrix clause and complement clause, but also devotes a lot of attention to the question how this information packaging is exploited in terms of creating coherence in discourse. In other words, he examines the discourse functions of extraposition, not just from a sentence-internal point of view, but also in the wider context of topical structure in discourse. He concludes that Type I and Type II have radically different communicative functions in this respect. In a nutshell, Type I is claimed to have a ‘backward looking’ function, in that it is either a reaction towards a statement made earlier or serves as a type of self-repair. These functions are referred to as ‘reaction mode’ and ‘safety belt’, respectively (labels which I personally find slightly misleading). Type II has a ‘forward looking’, presentative function and typically is employed for introducing new topics. GK concludes that ‘[t]he two types are thus each tied to a specific discourse environment of their own and hence not mutually exchangeable’ (p. 246). Chapter 5 also (re-)examines the status of anticipatory it (see also Kaltenböck, 2003), which is argued to be neither cataphoric (as is the case in, for instance, right-dislocations) nor a semantically empty ‘dummy’
pronoun, but which is claimed to occupy an intermediate position with regard to referentiality.

One important issue with regard to the right-dislocation (RD) versus extraposition distinction needs to be addressed here. As GK points out, Type I extrapositions, which have a ‘new’ matrix clause followed by a ‘given’ complement clause, closely resemble RDs in terms of their information packaging. In fact, elsewhere (Geluykens, 1994), I have argued for an analysis of (prototypical) RDs in terms of repair, where the ‘dislocated’ NP is typically ‘inferrable’ information (i.e. not ‘new’). GK’s safety-belt extrapositions would appear to be very similar in this regard (as he points out on p. 246), while of course being at the same time structurally different (the complement being clausal rather than nominal). One could argue (as GK does) that Type I extrapositions occupy, as it were, an intermediate position between RDs and Type II extrapositions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Matrix Clause</th>
<th>Complement Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type II:</td>
<td>[given]</td>
<td>[new]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type I:</td>
<td>[new]</td>
<td>complement clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD:</td>
<td>[new]</td>
<td>complement phrase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this interpretation, Type II extrapositions represent the prototype (given-before-new order, clausal complement), whereas Type I is structurally similar to Type II, but functionally has more in common with RD. This is an appealing analysis, especially if one allows for the possibility that some (structurally) nonprototypical RDs can have a nonfinite or even finite clause rather than an NP in final position (as I have argued in Geluykens, 1994). The question whether constructions such as (9) above, repeated here with some (constructed) context as (16), involve extraposition or RD then becomes moot:

(16) I went to Paris the other day; it’s very nice, going to Paris.

We can regard this as either a (structurally) nonprototypical RD (in that the final constituent is clausal) or as a (functionally) nonprototypical extraposition (in that the complement clause is clearly ‘given’).

In the remainder of chapter 5, GK once again examines the broader communicative function of nonextraposition as opposed to extraposition, and draws similar conclusions for the two major types of nonextrapositions, in that Type I and Type II serve very different cohesive functions. That being said, the precise discourse functions, of course, differ radically from those of their extraposed counterparts (since it is precisely this different discourse function which makes authors choose the nonextraposed version in the first place). In a brief separate chapter (chapter 6), GK then goes on to examine which syntactic, semantic, and register factors might contribute to the preference for nonextraposition over extraposition. Chapter 7, finally, briefly summarizes the main findings, which GK sums up succinctly in the following way:

Thus, in addition to the obvious syntactic and semantic restrictions that operate on *it*-extraposition and non-extraposition, the two constructional types are also
considerably constrained by functional considerations (i.e. information structure and weight distribution), which tie each type to a specific discourse context and only rarely allow free variation . . . (p. 297)

The discussion ends with GK reiterating the importance of a corpus-based approach. An extensive bibliography and a short subject index are also provided. There is no appendix with data material, but the text itself contains numerous examples from GK’s database, allowing the reader to examine and evaluate the functional analyses provided.

As will hopefully have become clear from the preceding discussion, this reviewer has come away from reading the book with a predominantly favourable impression. One can question a few of the author’s decisions (personally, I would have welcomed a thorough investigation of the interaction between the occurrence of extraposition and its location in the turn-taking system, for instance), and the text might have benefited from some careful pruning, as it is somewhat repetitive in places (presumably a reflection of its PhD origins), but this amounts to niggling over minor details. More importantly, the book provides a large-scale, thorough, and systematic analysis, which crucially examines the contrast between extrapositions and their nonextraposed counterparts. In retrospect, one can only be amazed that such an extensive investigation has never been taken on earlier. As it is, we can only count our blessings that GK has not only undertaken this task, but has also carried it out in such exemplary fashion. There is no doubt in my mind that this will become the standard reference work on extraposition in English for many years to come.

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