REVIEWS

Valerie Adams, *Complex words in English*. Harlow: Pearson Education/Longman, 2001. Pp. vii + 173. Hardback £25, ISBN 0 582 23964 8.[1]

Reviewed by Ingo Plag, University of Siegen

Apart from the textbook treatments by Adams (1973) and Bauer (1983) this is the first general descriptive overview of English word formation since Marchand's *Categories and types of present-day word-formation*, whose revised second edition appeared in 1969. This fact alone makes *Complex words in English* a most welcome contribution to a field that has seen considerable advancement during the past decades.

Contrary to what the title may suggest, this book is restricted to derivation and compounding, excluding all questions concerning inflection, unless they arise in close connection to word formation. And, contrary to what the first pages may suggest, this is not an introduction to English word formation, but primarily a reference book providing thorough and insightful descriptions of a wide range of derivational and compounding patterns. One of the major strengths of the book is that the analyses are accompanied by numerous authentic examples, taken mostly from the *OED* and the *Guardian*. The use of such electronic sources is an illustration of the important methodological developments that are characteristic of recent research in the field and that are responsible for the current popularity of word formation studies. Adams's analyses are generally lucid and incorporate insights from the recent literature. Overall, the book is a great resource for anyone looking for up-to-date information on particular patterns in English word formation. I have, however, some reservations concerning the overall organization and a number of theoretical points.

The book is divided into twelve chapters: 'Preliminaries', 'Transposition', 'Prefixes', 'Suffixes', 'Particles', 'Noun compounds', 'Adjective compounds', 'Verb compounds', 'Stem formations', 'Phonaesthemes', 'Reanalysis', and 'Overview'. This overall organization appears effective, but loses much of its appeal when the individual chapters are scrutinized. Given the character of the book as a reference volume, potential users need to find the information they are looking for as efficiently as possible, which, however, is sometimes hard to achieve due to some unfortunate organizational decisions. Thus, derivation is subdivided into processes that change the syntactic category of the base word, dealt with in chapter 2 ('Transposition'), and processes that do not change the category of the base, dealt with in chapters 3, 4, and (parts of) 5 ('Prefixes', 'Suffixes', 'Particles'). This not only has the conceptual drawback that we have an incompatible cross-classification (one based on form, one based on function), but also has practical disadvantages for the user. While the distinction in category-changing and category-maintaining affixes may make sense for a considerable number

of affixes, it does not apply so readily to numerous other affixes, namely those that attach to more than one base category including their own. For brief illustration, consider the affixes *-ee*, *-ation*, and *un-*. The suffixes *-ee* and *-ation* derive nouns, but attach to both nouns and verbs, and hence are both category-changing and category-preserving. The prefix *un-* is category-preserving when forming adjectives and nouns, but not (always) when forming verbs. In fact, one could even argue that the category-change imposed by an affix is an epiphenomenon that results from other, more basic (probably semantic) properties of that affix (cf., for example, Ryder (1999) on *-er*). By taking the property of word-class-changing as a central one, Adams is forced to treat certain affixes rather arbitrarily in only one of the chapters or in more than one chapter (e.g. *-ee* and *-ation* are treated in 'Transposition', *un-* in 'Transposition' and in 'Prefixes'). The latter has the considerable disadvantage that the reader does not find the information on one and the same affix in one place. This disadvantage is acknowledged in the final chapter of the book (pp. 144–5), but no reason is given why this particular and unfortunate cross-categorization was chosen. A similar problem of cross-classification occurs inside the chapter on 'Transposition', where section 2.2 is form-based ('Zero'), while the other sections are function-based ('2.3 Verbs', '2.4 Nouns', '2.5 Adjectives', '2.6 Adverbs').

Another organizational problem occurs in chapter 5, which deals with formations which involve particles (as in *download*, *upgrade*, *throw-back*, *blackout*), but which also – as admitted by Adams – includes the discussion of three prefixes (*over-*, *out-*, *under-*). Again, this is not very practical for reference-seeking users. There is, however, a general index and a word-element index which help to locate and retrieve the relevant information, but not every user will find this detour very convenient.

I will now turn to some of the theoretical points that I feel are not satisfactorily treated. As is well known, the boundaries between derivation and compounding, and compounding and syntactic phrases, are often hard to draw and the classification of processes with regard to these distinctions is therefore bound to raise criticism, whatever basis for classification one may choose.

What I find somewhat unsatisfactory about how these problems are solved in the present book is not so much the decisions themselves but the presentation, or rather nonpresentation, of the theoretical arguments on which such decisions can be grounded. The said problems of classification are scattered throughout the book, but whenever difficult theoretical decisions need to be taken, there is no thorough discussion of crucial arguments, which is a pity in view of the descriptive merits of the book.

Consider, for instance, the problem of suffixes attaching to phrases, such as *morning-after-ish* or *milk-and-watery*. This problem is 'solved' by evoking the 'no-phrase constraint' (from Carstairs-McCarthy, 1993: 99f), which, according to Adams, simply states that 'complex words are not formed from phrases' (p. 3). Unfortunately, there is not even one sentence devoted to the question of why such a constraint should be assumed in the first place. Note that I am not saying that the constraint cannot make sense; what I am saying is that I would have liked to see some explicit argumentation concerning the theoretical underpinnings of this important and controversial point. Furthermore, the constraint is not consistently applied throughout

the book. Derivatives such as *black-shirted* and *long-nosed* are accepted as derivatives without any discussion on p. 37, although -*ed* is attached to a phrase (unless one would want to argue that *long nose* and *black shirt* are compounds, which I would find hard to accept).

A similar point can be made with regard to coordinative and reduplicative compounds. Adams excludes coordinative compounds from word formation, because she states that compounds need to be (right-)headed (pp. 3, 82). Thus, coordinative compounds such as *author-illustrator* or *producer-director* are not considered compounds because they allegedly do not have a head (p. 82). This is of course a defendable position, but I would like to see it defended, not just stated. And I would like to see it consistently applied, which it is not. In chapter 10.4, reduplicative compounds such as *easy-peasy* and *helter-skelter* are treated as compounds, although it is explicitly stated that 'their elements cannot be perceived as modifier and head' (p. 128).

Apart from these more basic theoretical problems there are numerous points in the book where readers might disagree with individual analyses or specific arguments presented. This is, however, no reason for complaint, but almost inevitable in a book that tries to cover so much ground on relatively few pages, and which is situated in a field where controversy rather than consensus prevails.

In spite of the problems discussed, my overall assessment of this book is positive. Its primary focus is on description and this is where it succeeds very well. *Complex words in English* is a useful and much needed book.

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Susan Conrad and Douglas Biber (eds.), *Variation in English: multi-dimensional studies*. Studies in Language and Linguistics. Harlow: Pearson Education/Longman, 2001. Pp. viii + 255. Hardback £19.99, ISBN 0 582 30741 4

Reviewed by Geoffrey Sampson, University of Sussex

Beginning in the 1980s, Douglas Biber has pioneered the application of multi-dimensional analysis to the description of stylistic variation in language. In multi-dimensional analysis, one begins by listing a large number (typically, many dozens) of structural features of language which can be counted objectively and which might plausibly be relevant to style differences – if in doubt about the relevance of a particular feature, add it to the list, because the method itself will weed it out if it is actually not relevant. (A few of the features that Biber has used are: incidence of first- and second-person pronouns; *that*-complements to adjectives; 'hedging' words such as *almost*; mean word length.) After producing counts of all these features for a range of written and/or spoken language samples representing the genres whose differences are under investigation, a mathematical technique, 'factor analysis', is used to collapse the large number of surface features down to a small number of underlying factors, identifying groups of features which tend to co-vary in step with one another from genre to genre. The underlying factors will commonly be more humanly meaningful than many of the individual features that realize them. For instance, having a high incidence of prepositions may sound on the face of it like an abstract, stylistically fairly neutral text property, but factor analysis shows that this feature correlates strongly with many other features that, taken together, can be seen as reflecting a focus on information as opposed to personal involvement.

This dimension of Involved v. Informational Production is the first of seven dimensions which Biber and his collaborators have found to characterize genre differences in modern English; others include Narrative v. Non-narrative Discourse, Elaborated v. Situation-dependent Reference, Overt Expression of Argumentation, and Abstract v. Non-abstract Style. Once the dimensions are identified, they perhaps do not sound very surprising, but as Conrad and Biber point out here (p. 8) they do not coincide with the feature groupings that earlier linguists tried to distil using educated intuition. 'For example, neither Longacre's parameters (see Smith 1985) nor Chafe's parameters (see Redeker 1984) are completely accurate in identifying sets of linguistic features that actually co-occur regularly in English texts.' In earlier work, Biber and others have used his technique to establish well-defined long-term trends in the evolution of English style. Popular written registers such as fiction and personal letters have become more like spoken language over the centuries, while the style of specialist writing such as scientific prose has moved in the opposite direction. Furthermore Biber (1995), which included analysis of non-Western languages, suggested that there may be universals of stylistic evolution associated with the introduction of writing and cultural modernization.

The book reviewed contains fourteen chapters, by Biber and by others, which introduce the technique to newcomers, bring earlier findings up to date, and apply the technique to various new areas of language. Six chapters have been adapted from articles already published elsewhere, but most appear here for the first time. Most of the authors analyse different genres in terms of Biber's original set of dimensions, but there is no guarantee that the groupings of features which emerge from factor analysis applied to material from one period will coincide with the groupings valid for another period; Biber's chapter 13 applies the technique independently to eighteenth-century English and finds that not merely the location of genres on the dimensions, but to some extent the dimensions themselves, have evolved. Involved v. Informational is the leading dimension at both periods; but the second most important dimension for eighteenth-century prose is one with no counterpart in the twentieth-century analyses. Biber does not give it a name, but it seems to correspond to the extent to which writing has characteristics of oral dialogue.

The chapters which introduce multidimensional analysis and which continue and refine the applications of it that Biber had already developed previously would certainly make a good introduction and guide for readers coming to the topic for the first time.

Those chapters which apply the technique to aspects of language not discussed in Biber's earlier work (some of which are co-authored by Biber, but many of which are entirely by others) seem on the whole less successful. The topics often seem to be chosen more because it would be nice to find out something new about them, than because multidimensional analysis actually has yielded substantial insights.

In some cases, what interest there is in the findings seems largely independent of multidimensional analysis. That is noticeably true of Jeff Connor-Linton's discussion of the language of 1980s American nuclear arms policy discourse; although Connor-Linton quotes scores on Biber's dimensions, the weight of his analysis rests mainly on questions such as how the words *we* and *they* are applied, which in themselves have nothing to do with Biber's technique. (I wondered, incidentally, about Connor-Linton's background assumptions about the history of nuclear arms policy. Is it true, as he claims, that there was an unprecedented discontinuity in public discourse in this area in the early 1980s? I would have thought a greater discontinuity occurred in the 1960s.)

In other cases, although specific findings have emerged from the multidimensional analysis technique, they seem too predictable to be interesting. Randi Reppen contrasts the speech and writing of 'fifth-grade' (about ten to eleven years old) children with writing for children by adults. He finds that rhetorical strategies in the adult writing are more diverse and subtle. Perhaps it is good to have this objectively established, but surely it would be strange if it were not so? Likewise, Susan Conrad compares the language of textbooks with that of research articles in two contrasting academic disciplines. She finds that, although (relative to the total universe of English genres) all four combinations are close to one another on the Involved/Informational dimension, history textbooks and research articles score much higher than ecology textbooks or articles on the Narrative dimension. No surprise there, then. With respect to the Informational dimension, where research articles score rather higher than textbooks

for both disciplines, Conrad finds that the difference is greater for ecology than history samples. If this finding is robust (and in general these authors are very responsible about subjecting their findings to significance testing), it does seem interesting, because the reason for it is not obvious (to this reviewer, at least). But Conrad ventures no explanation of even a speculative kind.

More problematic than these cases are chapters where the nature of the available data does not seem solid enough to bear the analyses applied to them. Two chapters relate to the evolution of language differences between the sexes. The first, by Jennifer Rey, is based on dialogue from the cult television and film series *Star Trek* from periods ranging between the 1960s and 1990s. Rey uses this material to try to establish the reality of differences between men's and women's use of English, and the fact that these differences have evolved over the period: she finds that by the 1990s there has been a crossover, with the female characters' language, which was originally more Involved and less Informational than the males', becoming *more* Informational by the end of the sampling period. I do not query Rey's figures, but I cannot see what they teach us. Who is to say whether they reflect an unconscious adaptation to real changes in behaviour within the society that produced the programmes, or a striving to make the programmes express 'politically correct' visions of an allegedly ideal future society (or a bit of both)? It is not clear whether Rey herself leans towards one of these interpretations rather than another. One of her key examples relates to an episode where:

> Captain Kirk has been overpowered by Dr Janice Lester . . . and she has forcibly switched bodies with him so that she can fulfil her desire to command a starship . . . Janice Lester, now in Kirk's body, has isolated Kirk from his crew and taken Dr McCoy off 'Dr Lester's' medical case. Kirk (in the female body) has figured out what has happened and now tries to convince Nurse Chappel to let him see Dr McCoy . . .

Does it seem plausible that study of this kind of material could lead to much enlightenment about linguistic behaviour in the real world? The question imposes itself the more forcefully when Rey makes rather naïve remarks about language in less exotic situations. She finds 'quite humorous' the dissonance in terms of Involved/Informational scores between the language of the female Lt Dax, who is trying to repair an RCL Type 1 matrix field and worrying that drinking Klingon coffee will keep her up all night, and the male Dr Bashir who comments 'I can think of better ways of keeping you up, and they're more fun than drinking Klingon coffee.' Some readers might find this exchange too banal to arouse more than a very faint flicker of humour.

In the following chapter, Biber and Jená Burges investigate historical development in male v. female speech using material more naturalistic than *Star Trek*. But their data consist of dialogues by male and female characters in plays written by male and female playwrights; the situations are less bizarre than Captain Kirk trapped in a woman's body, but the problem of distinguishing accurate reflections of natural behaviour from models of writers' possibly false perceptions of behaviour has not gone away.

Then Marie Helt uses the technique to study differences between American and British speech. Her American material is taken from the recent Longman Corpus of Spoken American English; but her British material is taken not from the British National Corpus, which might have offered a reasonable comparison, but from the London–Lund Corpus. Helt perhaps could not help this: she works in the USA, and before 2001 the BNC was not available outside the EU, for legal reasons. But the consequence is that it is very difficult to accept the differences identified by Helt as caused by the national variable: there is a generation of time between the respective samples, and London–Lund is extremely skewed socially. Helt's study focuses largely on telephone conversations, but while the American material represents a period when youngsters were chatting on mobile phones as naturally as walking and eating, some of the British material was recorded at a time closer to my childhood, when telephones were found only in better-off households, and were somewhat daunting instruments in many children's eyes. Using them felt like more of an 'occasion' even for adults.

Helt believes that her analysis confirms what she describes as a 'widely held' belief that British English is more formal and less relaxed than American English. Perhaps everyone thinks that their own national usage is more relaxed than others'. It may come as news to Helt, but Britons tend to see things the other way round. It has long been a popular British cliché that Americans rarely use a one-syllable word if a four-syllable word will do – which may refer primarily to writing, but refers to talking also. Many of us remember the amusement caused by an episode in a 1960s documentary about the Royal Family which showed the then American ambassador ponderously explaining to the Queen that his residence was subject to 'elements of refurbishment', when he meant that he had had to move out of his house while it was being done up. Rightly or wrongly, we saw this as typical American talk. It would certainly be interesting to know whether such popular generalizations are well founded or, perhaps, are the reverse of the truth, but the materials which Helt has studied could never settle the question either way.

The reader may feel that later passages of this review are chattier and less professionally focused than is usual in an academic journal. But in that respect the review mirrors the book. The book is founded on a scientific technique of considerable subtlety, which initially yielded nontrivial and valuable findings; but, on the evidence here, the technique seems recently to have been used as much to lend vague support to nonexpert prejudices as to generate robust, significant new discoveries.

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Anne Lobeck, *Discovering English grammar: an introduction to English sentence structure*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. 370. US$52.95, ISBN 0 19 512984 9.

Laurel J. Brinton, *The structure of Modern English: a linguistic introduction*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2000. Pp. 335. €60, ISBN 90 272 2567 2; US$29.95, ISBN 1 55619 662 8.

Kersti Börjars and Kate Burridge, *Introducing English grammar*. London: Arnold, 2001. Pp. 311. Hardback £45, ISBN 0 340 69172 7; paperback £14.99, ISBN 0 340 69173 5.

<div align="center">Reviewed by Niels Davidsen-Nielsen, Copenhagen Business School</div>

The three books reviewed here are introductions to English grammar aimed at students of English, linguistics, speech therapy, and the teaching of English as a second language. While the books by Lobeck and by Börjars & Burridge are for undergraduate students, that by Brinton is aimed at *advanced* undergraduate students and secondarily at graduate students. Brinton's book also stands out in dealing not only with syntax but also with phonetics, phonology, word formation, and lexical semantics. All three books are of intermediate length (between 300 and 400 pages), contain numerous exercises, and are generative in their orientation.

In what follows I shall first discuss the books one by one and then move on to a couple of issues where the views adopted in the three books are the same, though in my view open to criticism.

Anne Lobeck's *Discovering English Grammar* is for students with little or no background in linguistics and is accordingly easy to read. Not all the way through, though, for once the basic concepts have been explained, there are also challenging sections, for example a discussion of auxiliary verb raising (pp.141f). The title of the book reflects the fact that in the exercises at the end of each chapter there are 'discovery problems' which the reader is meant to solve by critical thinking. These discovery problems are then followed by text-analysis exercises and language-diversity exercises.

The book is divided into three parts and thirteen chapters. Part I on the grammatical system deals with grammar and our knowledge of language (chapter 1), syntactic fundamentals (2), and evidence for phrases (3). Part II is devoted to categories: nouns (chapter 4), verbs (5), the syntax of the verb phrase (6), adjectives and adjective phrases (7), adverbs and adverb phrases (8), and prepositions (9). Part III deals with grammatical functions: the sentence (chapter 10), complements (11), adjuncts in the verb phrase (12), and adjuncts in the noun phrase (13). At the end of the book there is a useful glossary (pp. 333–53), bibliographical references for the topics addressed by the language diversity exercises (pp. 355–9), and an index (pp. 361–70).

On the whole Lobeck steers the reader competently through not only the basics of English grammar but also through a number of more difficult areas. For example, it is not easy to explain precisely how the distinction is drawn between phrase and clause; it is hardly obvious, for example, that *The children prefer eating in the kitchen* contains an object phrase while *The children prefer to eat in the kitchen* contains a clause. The argument put forward in favour of operating with a clause in the second example is that the complementizer *for* can in some varieties of English be inserted (*The children prefer for to eat in the kitchen*), the way it can more generally if a subject is present (*We expect for the Mariners to win*). Although the clausal requirement NP-VP is not satisfied, Lobeck therefore argues 'that there is reason to analyze at least some *to*-infinitives as clauses, with NP-VP structure' (p. 231). She also manages to explain why prepositions constitute neither a lexical nor a grammatical category (p. 190). In chapter 9 on prepositions there is an interesting classification into transitive prepositions (that take a noun phrase object after them, as in *The ship sailed under the bridge*), intransitive prepositions (that take nothing at all, as in *They turned the light out/ They turned out the light*), subordinating prepositions (that are followed by a clause, as in *after she talked to John*), and prepositions in complex prepositional phrases (that take another prepositional phrase after them, as in *Ali pushed Forman up against the ropes*). This analysis clearly differs from more traditional ones in which subordinating prepositions are regarded as conjunctions and where intransitive prepositions (particles) are considered part of a complex verb. However, Lobeck fails to mention how traditionally termed prepositional verbs like *rely on* (=trust) and *wait on* (=serve) are to be analysed. Readers can hardly be expected to assume that e.g. *Jane was waiting on the customers* and *Jane was waiting on the corner* should be analysed in the same way. For example, the former sentence differs from the latter in permitting passivization. A discussion of so-called prepositional verbs, however brief, would therefore have been useful.

In chapter 7 Lobeck formulates a rule according to which adjective phrases are realised as (DEG) A, adding that this does not allow us to generate all possible adjective phrases (p.162). While *very*, *too*, *quite* etc. are clearly degree words, words derived from adjectives like *incredibly*, *terribly*, and *amazingly* 'present us with something of a conundrum, with respect to the distinctions between grammatical and lexical categories' (p. 158). On p. 180, however, it is argued 'that the semantics of *incredibly/terribly/amazingly* changes when they introduce . . . adjectives; they are no

longer interpreted as manner adverbs, but rather . . . as expressing degree or intensity'.
Therefore it seems reasonable enough to interpret them as members of the grammatical
category Degree too. But how about e.g. *openly hostile* and *readily available* where
according to Quirk et al. (1985: 448) the initial words 'tend to retain their general
meaning of manner, means etc, though they also acquire some intensifying effect'?
And in adjective phrases like *politically expedient*, *economically strong*, and *technically
impossible* the introductory viewpoint words cannot possibly be interpreted as members
of the syntactic category Degree. In two discovery problems on p. 168 the reader is
asked to identify what syntactic category the first word represents in *lovely brown* and
sky blue, and the appropriate answer can only be the lexical categories adjective and
noun respectively. But the fact that an adjective phrase can also readily be introduced
by a member of the lexical category adverb is not mentioned. On p. 168 the reader
is asked how we 'have to revise the hypothesis that adjectives are typically modified
by Degree words'. On the basis of the examples given (s)he can answer that A and N
should be added to DEG but not that ADV, which is after all a common premodifier,
must be added as well. In chapter 7 (p. 162) Lobeck writes that she will return to the
phrase structure rules for adjective phrases in later chapters, 'revising it as we discuss
in more detail the internal structure of the adjective phrase'. But what we read there
concerns complements, as in *proud of her son* and *able to leave* (pp. 216, 270f), not
premodifying adverbs.

   Having already voiced some queries and reservations let me now turn to a few more.

   In a section on coordination (pp. 61ff) Lobeck suggests that coordinating
conjunctions be remembered by means of the rather silly acronym *fanboys* (*for, and, nor,
but, or, yet, so*). While any detailed discussion of conjunctions cannot be expected in an
introductory grammar book, it would still be worth pointing out that *and, or*, and *but* are
the only words that can unproblematically be classified as coordinating conjunctions
and that the remaining four rather belong in a grey zone between coordinators and
subordinators. *Yet, so*, and *nor* differ from the three prototypical coordinators in that
they can be preceded by a conjunction (as in *He felt sorry for her and yet at the same
time relieved*). And while *for* does not share this property, it differs from the prototypical
coordinators in that it conjoins only clauses and in that ellipsis is not possible in clauses
introduced by it; while ellipsis is possible in e.g. *Jones has been hired and Brown (has
been) fired*, it is ruled out in *Jones has been hired for Brown has been fired*.

   In chapter 8 (pp. 182ff) Lobeck states that adverb phrases can occur in five syntactic
positions, thereby ignoring or overlooking three possible positions: after the second
auxiliary (e.g. *She may have actively been trying to interfere*), after the third auxiliary
(e.g. *My chances may have been substantially improved by this*) and between the main
verb and an object or obligatory adverbial (e.g. *She tasted hungrily the black tobacco of
a French cigarette*) (see Bache & Davidsen-Nielsen, 1997: 134ff). As these positions
are rather infrequently filled by adverb phrases, it may perhaps be acceptable to ignore
them in an elementary book. But it is too categorical to talk about 'five possible adverb
positions'. Furthermore, it is confusing that the rule on p. 184 claiming to capture the
five positions shows only four.

In chapter 11 (p. 270) adverb complementation is illustrated by two examples, the second of which seems wrong: while *unfortunately for our hero* is all right, the adverb phrase in *(He ran) quickly for a nonathlete* does not in my view contain a complement but an adjunct, for it can readily be moved to sentence-initial position. That moveability is a typical property of adjuncts is mentioned by Lobeck herself on p. 286.

Finally, Lobeck illustrates extraposition of a nonrestrictive relative clause by a somewhat unfortunate example: *The man came in, who I know* (p. 319). In this sentence the relative clause is much more naturally understood to be restrictive, and it is only the comma that points away from that reading. An example with an antecedent proper noun would have been much more instructive, for example, *Then John came in, who everybody knows around here*.

While there are thus quite a few reservations which can be raised against specific parts of Lobeck's book, I find that as a whole it offers an interesting and pedagogical introduction to English grammar, an introduction which is likely to capture the attention of undergraduate students and to help relieve them of the grammar anxiety mentioned in the opening sentence of the Preface.

Brinton's book is eclectically generative. This appears from the following quotation (p. 163): 'The version of generative grammmar presented here is not the most recent one, which has become highly theoretical and quite abstract, but takes those aspects of the various generative models which are most useful for empirical and pedagogical purposes.' Theoretically, the presentation is thus neither within one particular model nor entirely up to date; and in chapter 10 on sentence semantics Brinton adopts a generative semantic approach, drawing on publications by Fillmore from the sixties and seventies. In an introductory book, however, an eclectic approach is in my view entirely justified. Even without bothering about the theoretical state of the art, the book is challenging enough as it is, covering both N-bar and V-bar syntax and containing a large number of nonelementary rules and tree diagrams, particularly in a long, tough chapter on finite and nonfinite clauses.

The book is divided into five units and eleven chapters. Unit 1 is an introduction to the study of English. Unit 2 deals with phonetics (chapter 2) and phonology (3). Unit 3 is devoted to the structure and meaning of English words and covers word formation and the internal structure of words (chapter 4), grammatical categories and word classes (5) and lexical semantics (6). Unit 4 on the structure of English sentences describes phrasal structure and verb complementation (chapter 7), adverbials, auxiliaries, and sentence types (8), and finite and nonfinite clauses (9). In unit 5, finally, the reader is introduced to sentence semantics (chapter 10) and to information structuring and speech acts (11). At the end of the book there is a list of references (pp. 317–21), two appendices on abbreviations and phrase structure rules (pp. 323–5), and a subject index (pp. 327–35). The book is accompanied by a CD-ROM that serves as an interactive workbook.

Brinton's book is clear, solid, and absorbing, and the comments below should be seen against that background. It is also quite demanding, and though interesting throughout it requires a good deal of effort from its readers. In the preface Brinton writes that upon

completion of the book and the accompanying workbook students will have acquired a knowledge of phonology, morphology, syntax, lexical and sentence semantics, and of pragmatics. For conscientious students this prediction is undoubtedly warranted.

Let me now turn to specific queries and reservations.

In chapter 3 Brinton states that a word-medial consonant is ambisyllabic if stress falls on the initial syllable, and she illustrates this phenomenon by means of *ready* and *rigid*. While this is perfectly appropriate, it is confusing then to read that speakers here 'syllabify sometimes with the consonant as coda of the first syllable, sometimes as onset of the second' (p. 66). To me, it is not here a question of speaker variation but of a consonant split between two syllables in all varieties. Furthermore, she forgets to mention that the vowel in the initial syllable must be lax and that there is therefore no ambisyllabic consonant in e.g. *reedy*.

In chapter 4 (pp. 91ff) there is a section on conversion from one part of speech to another, for example, of verb to noun, as in *sneeze*. However, Brinton here operates with a peculiar conversion of noun to adjective, a conversion she illustrates with *blue-collar (worker)*, *plant (supervisor)*, *paper (shredder)*, and *head (bookkeeper)*. In the last three of these words conversion is in my view not involved at all. What we find instead are unconverted nouns which function as premodifiers of other nouns. Nouns cannot be considered converted to adjectives just because they are used before other nouns, but in a theory where syntactic function is given a stepmotherly treatment the risk of erring in this way is not inconsiderable (a question I return to below). As for *blue-collar*, the most reasonable analysis must be to classify it as an adjective from the outset, for it is capable of being compared (as in *They are more blue-collar than you can imagine*), it can be premodified by a degree word (*very blue-collar*) and it occurs in attributive as well as predicative position. On the other hand, *blue-collar* cannot be inflected for number like a noun or be used as a prepositional phrase complement.

On p. 144 there is an error: the situation type 'achievement' (e.g. *kick*, *blink*) is not [+ DURATIVE] but [− DURATIVE]. And on p. 182 it is too categorical to state that an indirect object 'always denotes something which is animate or conceived of as animate'. How about *We gave going to France a good deal of thought*, for example?

Unlike Lobeck, Brinton does not overlook that an adjective phrase can be introduced by an adverb, for on p. 172 she specifies that an adjective can be preceded both by Deg (*very fierce*) and Adv (*fiercely barking*). On the other hand, she fails to mention that an adjective phrase can also be introduced by an adjective or a noun, a fact indirectly mentioned by Lobeck, who provides the examples *lovely brown* and *sky blue*, as mentioned above.

Unlike Lobeck, Brinton mentions prepositional verbs, but on this point her presentation is clearly unsatisfactory. The examples she gives (p. 197) are *He slipped on a banana peel*, *The ashes blew up the chimney*, *The neighbors ate up the street*, and *The cat climbed over the fence*. These are all analysed in the same way, but the verb and the preposition are here unfused (unless *ate up* means 'devoured', in which case what we find is a phrasal verb). On p. 203 an example is given of a genuine prepositional verb: *The negotiating team agreed to the terms*, and it is mentioned that this sentence can

be passivized. Brinton simply fails to distinguish between prepositional verb and verb plus preposition. On the basis of her presentation the reader must therefore conclude that e.g. *Jane was waiting on the customers* and *Jane was waiting on the corner* are to be analysed in the same way.

On p. 109, finally, Brinton states that the 'double genitive is necessarily indefinite', but as examples like *those friends of yours* are not all that rare, she should have written *typically* instead of *necessarily*.

It is clear that a great deal of care has gone into the writing of Brinton's book. Each chapter begins with a concise preview and ends with an equally concise summary. There are many instructive diagrams, for example, those on types of morphemes and morphs on pp. 76f. There are also many interesting specific discussions, for example, the ones on specific, nonspecific, and generic information (p. 292) and on cleft sentences (pp. 294f).

Though *Introducing English grammar* by Börjars and Burridge is generative in its orientation, like the books by Lobeck and Brinton, it differs from them in attaching greater importance to syntactic function. On p. 83 it is pointed out that since one and the same phrasal category may have different functions, and one and the same function can be realised by different phrasal categories, it is 'very important to make a distinction between category and function'. Altogether this book bears the stamp of being influenced not only by American linguistic thinking but also by nongenerative work from Britain and the Commonwealth (e.g. Quirk and his co-authors, Huddleston, Halliday, Holmes, and Trudgill). On the other hand, important studies on functional grammar carried out on the European continent are not reflected at all. For example, the seminal work by Simon Dik is not mentioned anywhere, nor indeed by Lobeck and Brinton.

In their preface Börjars and Burridge point out that out of consideration for those students who find tree diagrams bothersome and off-putting, they have kept trees in the running text to a minimum. For the benefit of less reluctant students, however, they have special sections with tree diagrams at the end of each chapter. While this may perhaps be an expedient decision, my own view is that since tree diagrams – once you get used to them – are of great pedagogical value, there is no need to hide them away in special sections which are likely to be skipped, not only by unambitious students but also by unambitious teachers.

It is a special feature of Börjars and Burridge's book that grammatical points are illustrated by examples from everyday language, particularly from a magazine called *The Big Issue* in its Australian, Northern English, and Scottish versions. These examples may appeal to youthful readers and therefore be justified, but personally I find them rather tiring. A sentence which occurs several times is *The seven days of extensive food-rejection therapy included near-drowning in a soup-filled Jacuzzi and daily beatings with barbecued chicken legs* (pp. 28ff), and on p. 52 we find *Kyle: Thrown into an asylum after taking a talking poo to school*, which the authors comment on in the following way: 'Since we are hell-bent on giving you actually occurring data, you will have to forgive us if occasionally our examples stretch the boundaries of good taste!'

Altogether, the style of writing is very informal, as appears from language like 'Hey presto . . .' (p. 190) and 'Now, you had better sit down for this one' (p. 182).

The book is divided into ten chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to 'the glamour of grammar', chapter 2 deals with the structure of sentences (e.g. constituency tests), and chapter 3 with the words of English (e.g. major and minor categories). Chapter 4 is devoted to functions within the clause (subject, object, etc.), chapter 5 to different sentence types (declaratives, interrogatives, etc.), chapter 6 to the verb phrase (e.g. tense, aspect, auxiliaries), chapter 7 to the noun phrase (e.g. determiners, modifiers and complements), and chapter 8 is on clauses within clauses (declarative, interrogative, relative, finite and nonfinite, etc.). Chapter 9 goes beyond the sentence and discusses information packaging and discourse strategies, and in chapter 10 – on discourse at work – register, speech vs.writing, and occupational varieties are dealt with. At the end of chapters there are exercises and useful sections on points to remember. The book ends with a list of references organized according to various topics (pp. 301–4) and an index (pp. 305–11).

Aimed at students beginning the study of grammar, Börjars and Burridge's lively grammar is easy to read as a whole. Nevertheless, it does not refrain from introducing X-bar syntax (pp. 75–9), from describing Reichenbach's analysis of time and tense (pp. 159–61) or from discussing the analysis of the infinitive marker as an auxiliary verb (pp. 182f). It thus presents its readers with a number of interesting challenges, particularly if they do not skip the sections on trees in chapters 4 through 8.

A major objection, which applies to all three books, will be raised presently. Here only three minor reservations will be mentioned.

In chapter 2 it is stated that inflection does not drastically change the meaning of an item or its category and that derivation 'has a more dramatic effect on the category or meaning of the word' (p. 19). While it is true that inflection differs from derivation in never affecting the category membership of a word, readers may find it difficult to understand that it does not normally affect meaning significantly. Is the difference between e.g. *lives* and *lived* less drastic/dramatic than that between e.g. *possible* and *impossible*? Conversely, the semantic effect of derivation is often rather undramatic, as illustrated by derived words like *booklet* and *panelling*.

In their treatment of complements Börjars and Burridge write that complements have to be unique and that 'we cannot add another one without getting ungrammatical phrases' (p. 74). While it is quite true that there is normally one complement only, the presence of more than one can hardly be ruled out, however, as appears from an example like *responsible to the school for keeping the class in order*. Furthermore, they claim that 'sentences usually become either ungrammatical or at least very awkward when complements are separated from their heads' (p.75). But how unusual are noun phrases like *the discovery in 1929 of penicillin*?

On p. 112, finally, it is stated that the formal realizations of a subject and a direct object are noun phrase and clause while those of a subject complement are noun phrase and adjective phrase. Not until we reach p. 216 do we learn that a subject complement can also readily be realized by a clause.

Börjars and Burridge's category of subclauses is more comprehensive than that of more orthodox generative studies. In their analysis, for example, the object of a sentence like *The children prefer eating in the kitchen* is not a phrase as it is to Lobeck (see above) but a clause. To me a clausal analysis of nonfinite constructions of this type is perfectly reasonable. I can also readily accept Börjars and Burridge's analysis of e.g. *You should never have fed steroids to that fish* as containing an adverbial complement rather than an indirect object (p. 97). Here Lobeck (p. 258) and Brinton (p. 182) operate with an indirect object and dative movement.

I have three specific reservations that apply to more than one of the books reviewed here. I shall deal with the first two of these very briefly.

In their accounts of the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive grammar Lobeck and particularly Börjars and Burridge portray prescriptivism as fundamentally unacceptable. Prescriptive grammar is defined by Lobeck as '[l]inguistic rules arbitrarily designated . . . as the rules of "correct" grammar' (p. 12) and, according to Börjars and Burridge, it is 'language that wipes its feet before it enters a room and that leaves the room before it breaks wind!' (p. 6). But this account of what prescriptive grammar is about is plainly a parody. According to Christophersen (1999: 52ff), the doctrine that grammar is descriptive, not prescriptive, is one of the most frequently misunderstood and misapplied parts of linguistics. A grammarian should obviously describe what (s)he finds objectively, but it is a mistake to elevate this research principle into a method of procedure in applied linguistics, he argues. It is not in all contexts, let me add, that sociolinguistic variation needs to be taken into account, for example in basic foreign language teaching, so normative grammar is not invariably out of place.

In all three books, secondly, I find the account of tense problematic. Lobeck defines tense as the 'time frame in which an event or state occurs' (p. 351), which is not very helpful, and somewhat confusingly writes that tense can be expressed morphologically (e.g. *happened*), syntactically (e.g. *will happen*) or be semantic, as in *I am leaving tomorrow* 'where *am* is morphologically present tense but the sentence is interpreted as future tense' (p. 352). Brinton states that while English has only two inflectionally expressed tense distinctions, there may be three universal tense distinctions – past, present, and future, the last of which is in English expressed by periphrasis, as in *will work* (p. 104). On p. 113 she adds that the English future tense is expressed noninflectionally by a variety of paraphrases, for example, by the present progressive (*We're having guests tonight*). In this book too there seems to be some conceptual confusion. Finally, Börjars and Burridge (p. 146) pass on the conventional view that there are only two tenses in English and then add the following rather condescending remark: 'People who have not studied linguistics, to the extent that they have any view on the future tense of English would probably think of *will* . . . as the marker of future' (p. 148). Evidently they do not know, or choose to ignore, that a number of linguistic arguments have in fact been put forward in support of operating with nonvolitional *will* as a future tense marker (cf. e.g. *It matters, it mattered and it will matter*, and see e.g. Davidsen-Nielsen (1985, 1990: 68)).

My final reservation concerns the analysis of determination. All three books operate with a syntactic category – or word class or part of speech – called *determiner*. Brinton writes that determiners are a set of grammatical words that are somewhat like modifiers but actually function as specifiers (p. 170), and in her glossary Lobeck defines determiner as a 'grammatical category of prenominal elements that express definiteness, number, and sometimes case in English' (p. 337). Lobeck divides syntactic categories into lexical categories that head phrases (e.g. noun, verb) and grammatical categories that typically introduce lexical ones (e.g. determiner, degree). According to all three books determiner is a word class. This word class includes articles, demonstratives, *wh*-words, possessives, and quantifiers (though to Lobeck quantifiers constitute a separate category).

Although this analysis of determiners is in accordance with a long Anglo-American tradition, it is decidedly problematic, for the category determiner differs from the remaining ones – nouns, verbs, etc. – in being established on a purely syntactic basis: determiners occur in a frame like '___leap was a fake' (see Börjars & Burridge, pp. 191f). Furthermore, since determination is a function, like modification and complementation, the word determiner is likely to cause confusion as to whether function or word class is meant. Note that not only modification but also modifier refers to function. Huddleston (1984: 304) tried to solve this problem by distinguishing between determiner (function) and determinative (class), but even the latter term smacks of function.

Thoughtful students will therefore find it hard to understand why there shouldn't also, say, be a syntactic category called modifiers, i.e. why words occurring in a frame like 'The___leap was a fake' do not constitute a word class as well. Why shouldn't one argue that *useful*, say, is a modifier in *useful facts* but an adjective in *These facts are useful*?

Börjars and Burridge attempt to solve this problem by pointing out that premodifiers like *early* and *powerful* have all the characteristics of adjectives: comparison, modification by *very*, characteristic endings. 'Not all of them have all these properties, but each word has enough of the properties to clearly belong to the category of adjective' (p. 195). But how about adjectives like *round*, *male*, *dead*, and *complete*, which have none of these properties? Conversely, many of the words analysed as determiners have evident pronoun properties. The possessive shows gender distinctions, person distinctions, and number distinctions (*his/her/its*, *our/your/their*, *my/your*). They are also *pro*nouns – or pro NPs – in being able to substitute for NPs: *the old man's hat/his hat*. To be sure, this is not possible with other 'determiners', but then it is also impossible in the case of some of the autonomously used pronouns, for example, *I* and *we*. Furthermore, *which*, *what*, and *whose* are formally *wh*-words, and the definite article and the demonstratives are formally characterized by being *th*-words. Huddleston contemplated the possibility of operating with an extended article class instead of a determinative class but gave it up in order not to stretch 'article' beyond its traditional application (1984: 304).

Determiners as a syntactic category goes back to Charles C. Fries (1952), who on the basis of distribution set up nineteen parts of speech (see Brinton, pp. 118f). Four of these – called class 1, 2, 3, and 4 – correspond roughly to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, and the remaining ones (A through O) are various groups of function words. The first of these includes *the* and words that occur in the same position as *the*, i.e. which can replace *the* in a sentence like *The concert was good*. Group A thus includes what are traditionally called articles, possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, indefinite pronouns, and nouns in the genitive (surprisingly, the interrogative pronouns *which*, *what*, and *whose* are not included). Fries notes that these words serve as markers of class 1 words (nouns) and adds: 'Sometimes they are called "determiners"' (1952: 89).

A part of speech called determiners has subsequently been taken over in numerous English grammar books. In America we find it in e.g. Sledd (1959) and in Britain in Quirk et al.'s influential comprehensive grammar (1985). As pointed out, this is very unfortunate, for it is likely to blur the distinction between function and category, and it results in an anomalous, purely distributional class whose members are highly heterogeneous. For this we can hardly blame Fries, for what he set out to do was to establish a number of *positional classes*: 'We are concerned here with . . . parts of speech as functioning units in structure – that is, with syntactic form-classes, not morphological form-classes' (1952: 141). Only subsequently did he comment on the formal characteristics of his parts of speech (pp. 110ff), and only classes 1, 2, 3, and 4 were assumed to have identifying characteristics. And meaning wasn't taken into consideration at all.

In the many books where Fries's determiner class (A) was taken over, and in which word classes were otherwise established not only on the basis of syntactic characteristics but also on the basis of morphological and to some extent semantic characteristics – as stated explicitly by e.g. Lobeck (p. 351) – this led to considerable confusion. It would be much less problematic to say that a determiner (the function) can be realized by articles, pronouns, numerals, and (genitive) NPs. As far as NP realization is concerned, Börjars and Burridge mention that the analysis of this form poses 'the million dollar question', but eventually they concede that while an NP can do the job of a determiner, it is not itself a determiner. This conclusion is hardly surprising and also the one that Lobeck arrives at without any scruples (p. 92). In fact, it is entirely unproblematic to assume that the determiner in e.g. *the old man's hat* is realized by a possessive NP, a point also made by Huddleston, who calls this the 'easiest case to deal with' (1984: 304). For thoughtful students the million dollars referred to should be easy money to get hold of.

As appears from the preceding pages I have quite a number of reservations against each of the books reviewed here and one major one that applies to all three, but that should not be taken to mean that I cannot recommend them. In their different ways each book gives a clear and pedagogical introduction to English grammar while at the same time containing more challenging sections. In all three books, finally, there are numerous useful exercises.

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Laurie Bauer, *Morphological productivity*. Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 95. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. xiii + 245. Hardback £40/ US$59.95, ISBN 0 521 79238 X.

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Morphological productivity is one of the most controversial areas in the study of word formation. Although several competing definitions of productivity and ways of measuring productivity have been proposed through the years (see, for example, Baayen & Lieber (1991), Bolozky (1999), Plag (1999) just to name a few), there is presently no consensus on which approach is correct. In *Morphological productivity* Laurie Bauer evaluates the extensive linguistic and psycholinguistic literature on this topic, referring extensively to familiar data from English as well as from other languages, in order to shed new light on the question of what morphological productivity is and how it can be measured. The author has produced a very readable study dealing with a topic which

also has ramifications for other branches of linguistics (i.e. syntax and phonology). The book consist of seven chapters, which I summarize below.

Bauer begins chapter 1 ('Introduction') with what many linguists would consider to be a relatively straightforward definition of productivity, which then serves as his point of departure for the first part of the book. According to this definition, productivity is simply a property of language which allows us to say things we have never said before. The difficulties with this approach are then illustrated in the first chapter with several brief examples, i.e. plural formation in Modern English and Dutch, English adverbs ending in -*ly*, and two diachronic examples, namely plural formation of French nouns and adjectives ending in -*al*, and the English suffix -*ment*. In the context of these examples, Bauer brings up a number of issues which are dealt with in the subsequent chapters, e.g. whether or not productivity is 'binary' or gradient, and whether or not the use of unproductive processes leads to ungrammaticality.

In chapter 2 ('A historiographical conspectus') a number of important issues are raised which are discussed in greater depth in the ensuing chapters. Bauer begins by providing an overview of the way in which the term 'productivity' has been used by linguists in the past and present and then turns to the question of what it is that can be productive. While some scholars believe that particular affixes can be endowed with this property, others hold that it is particular morphological processes, and yet others believe it to be groups of processes. The chapter continues with sections devoted to degrees of productivity and prerequisites for productivity. The first topic is an area of controversy in the literature, since some authors believe in two, others three, and others in infinite degrees of productivity. By 'prerequisites' for productivity Bauer is referring to factors that are often equated with productivity, i.e. frequency, semantic coherence, and the ability to make new forms. The final sections deal, among other things, with the domain of productivity, the dichotomy between synchrony and diachrony, and the distinction between competence and performance. Citing earlier work by Botha (1968), Bauer shows that there is a conflict between the Chomskian dichotomy of competence vs. performance and productivity, and ultimately concludes that if productivity is a meaningful concept at all then this strict dichotomy needs to be reconsidered.

In chapter 3 ('Fundamental notions') Bauer further refines some of the terms introduced in the first two chapters in order to ultimately arrive at a more precise definition of what productivity is. The chapter begins with a very useful and competently presented discussion of 'existing words', 'new words', 'potential words', and 'probable words'. The distinction between these different kinds of words is crucial for determining what productivity is. As Bauer notes (p. 41), 'a process is productive if it has the potential to lead to new coinages, or to the extent to which it does lead to new coinages'. That productivity cannot be equated with various notions of frequency (e.g. type frequency, token frequency) is also dealt with at length. Bauer also makes it clear that productivity is not synonymous with transparency. For example, the suffixation of -*ment* is a morphological process which is transparent but no longer productive (see also Bauer, 1983), and the suffixation of -*ity* to adjectives in -*able* (to give nouns in -*ability*) is productive, but not transparent (because it does not maintain the stress of

the base to which it is added, e.g. *readable* vs. *readability*). Other topics dealt with in chapter 3 include markedness and naturalness, default rules, and creativity. Separate sections are also devoted to the role of paradigm pressure and analogy. While the issues Bauer raises in the latter two sections are clear, I found it surprising that he offers no working definition of the term 'paradigm'. This is important because what a paradigm is and what it is not differs from author to author. A very useful feature of the book is the section on analogy, in which the author discusses whether morphological innovation is rule-governed or driven by analogy. In that section Bauer presents arguments for and against both positions, the respective rebuttals, as well as Bauer's own evaluation thereof. The chapter concludes with a more precise definition of productivity, which Bauer stresses is still provisional (p. 99): 'The productivity of a morphological process is its potential for repetitive non-creative morphological coining.'

Chapter 4 ('Psycholinguistic evidence about productivity') provides a brief summary and evaluation of some of the psycholinguistic literature dealing with how morphologically complex words are stored and produced. Bauer concludes that complex words are stored in terms of morphemes with the provision that very common morphologically complex words may be stored as wholes and that the term 'morpheme' has to be interpreted in a more restricted way than it is in much of the work in theoretical linguistics. The evidence from production shows that there are various degrees of ease of formation regarding new coinages, suggesting that some word-formation types may be easier to form in some languages than in others. However, Bauer also shows that some of the experiments which are purported to show that speakers find various word-formation processes difficult are not always convincing because of poor experimental design.

In chapter 5 ('Scalar productivity') some of the ways of measuring productivity which have been proposed in the literature are evaluated. After a brief introduction there is a sizeable section dealing with the kinds of constraints that can affect the extent to which any given morphological process can be used in the production of new words. These include constraints on competence, i.e. phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, and semantic constraints, as well as constraints pertaining to performance factors, i.e. pragmatics and aesthetics. An example of a phonological constraint discussed in chapter 5 is the deverbal suffix *-en*, which is restricted to attaching to adjectives that end in an obstruent (e.g. *neaten, tighten* vs. **greenen*). By contrast, a syntactic constraint is required for deverbal affixation processes which are sensitive to the transitivity of the base, e.g. the Dutch suffix *-baar* and its English equivalent *-able*. Bauer notes that the constraints he discusses are not sufficient to rule out all nonoccurring forms, concluding that the overriding constraint is that new words will not be formed unless they will be useful (p. 142). It is demonstrated that even taking into account the large number of possibilities provided by these constraints, productivity cannot be seen as the inverse of the number of constraints holding for particular affixes. In the final section the author discusses some of the more rigorous ways of measuring productivity which have been proposed in the past. For example, Aronoff (1976) suggested that productivity can be measured by considering the ratio of the actual words produced

by a word-formation rule to potential words produced by this rule, whereas Baayen & Lieber (1991) proposed that the ratio involves the number of words formed by the appropriate process occurring in a corpus precisely once to the total token frequency of words created by that morphological process in the corpus (p. 148). Bauer concludes that there are drawbacks with respect to both of these approaches (and to others), in particular the comparability between corpora and languages.

In chapter 6 ('Exemplification') four case studies are presented which are intended to illustrate some of the material discussed in the previous chapters. These four case studies are: the reflexes of Proto-Germanic *-dōm in modern West and North Germanic languages, and three topics specific to English, namely nominalizations of color words, competing nominalization endings (e.g. -ment, -ion), and agentive and nonagentive -er. The first of these case studies is interesting because it shows that the productivity of a given process can vary diachronically. In particular, Bauer shows that the reflexes of Proto-Germanic *-dōm have a number of distinct meanings in modern West and North Germanic daughter languages (in particular Danish, German, Dutch, and English), but that the productivity of the reflexes with these meanings (and the restrictions regarding what the base can be) vary depending on the language. For example, in German the primary meaning of the suffix -tum is a general collective meaning, with bases restricted to nouns that are human (e.g. Bürgertum 'the middle classes', from Bürger 'citizen'), but the same restrictions do not hold for English -dom, e.g. topsy-turveydom in which the base is an adjective. The section dealing with nominalizations of color words in English is important because it illustrates the limits of constraints on bases in derivation. It is shown that there may be constraints which are on the border between the ones discussed in chapter 5 which are either a part of competence or performance. The problem Bauer discusses is why a word like whiteness is completely acceptable while purpleness is questionable (see also Matthews (1974) for discussion). Bauer presents the results of a survey he conducted among students to rate various -ness nominalizations of color words, where he considered factors pertaining to the base, e.g. the number of syllables, the etymology (i.e. Germanic vs. non-Germanic), as well as its familiarity and morphological structure. The author concludes that constraints referring to these factors may interact with each other in such a way as to bring about gradient productivity. The third case study in chapter 6 is concerned with the nominalizations of English verbs and is based on a sample from the Oxford English Dictionary. Some of these suffixes include -age (e.g. blockage), -ance (e.g. observance), -ment (e.g. retirement), and various suffixes ending in -ion (i.e. -ion, -ation, -cation). The topic is significant because it exemplifies a case of competing morphological processes. Bauer uses his corpus to test various approaches to how productivity can best be measured. For example, Bolozky (1999) and Plag (1999) see the best measure of productivity arising through the agreement between various dictionary- and corpus-based methods. Bauer's case study of nominalizations in English suggests that no such agreement can be expected. The final case study in chapter 6 (agentive vs. non-agentive -er) is important because it raises the question of what should be considered the same process, when the productivity of this process is being measured. Bauer concludes that productivity

can vary for different uses of the same morphological process, i.e. the two -*er* suffixes differ in terms of productivity.

In chapter 7 ('Conclusion') Bauer presents a unified view of morphological productivity. He writes (p. 211):

> 'Productivity' deals with the number of new words that can be coined using a particular morphological process, and is ambiguous between the sense 'availability' and the sense 'profitability'. The availability of a morphological process is its potential for repetitive rule-governed morphological coining, either in general or in a particular well-defined environment or domain . . .. The profitability of a morphological process reflects the extent to which its availability is exploited in language use, and may be subject unpredictably to extra-systemic factors.

Bauer concludes the chapter by suggesting that an extension of his definition of productivity to phonology and syntax might offer some insights into how these components of the grammar operate.

In sum, *Morphological productivity* offers an insightful analysis and synthesis of the literature on a topic that is not only of importance to morphology, but also to syntax and phonology. I recommend the book without reservations.

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Joybrato Mukherjee, *Form and function of parasyntactic presentation structures: a corpus-based study of talk units in spoken English.* Amsterdam/Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 2001. Hardback £27, ISBN 90 420 1295 1

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Despite its rather formidable title, this book is actually quite an accessible – and readable – study of the interaction of syntax and intonation in the structuring of spoken English texts and of how this interaction may vary stylistically according to text type. The term 'text' is used here advisedly. Although the corpus that the study is based on does include conversations, these are invariably treated as finished products, not ongoing processes – a point to which I will return shortly. But first, what are parasyntactic presentation structures?

Mukherjee's terminology reveals his indebtedness to two German forerunners: Brigitte Halford (1996) and Jürgen Esser (1998, 1999, 2000). His *talk unit* is somewhat different from Halford's but being a linguistic unit beyond the sentence defined by the interaction of intonation and syntax, it is clearly in the same spirit. Mukherjee's talk units (or rather Esser's, as the approach, including annotation, appears to stem from him: cf. e.g. Esser, 1998) are composed of one or more *parasyntactic presentation structures*, combinations of different kinds of tone unit with different kinds of syntactic structure. In a 'functional reductionist' framework (more about this later), fifteen different types of parasyntactic presentation structures are identified, of which only seven occur with any significant frequency in the 50,000-word corpus to which Mukherjee applies his descriptive apparatus (a selection of texts from the London–Lund corpus (LLC) plus an additional set of monologues partly originating in writing):

- 3 'prosodically open' types of tone unit, i.e. ones with final rising intonation (annotated as ↑) and non-final syntax (↑n), final syntax (↑f) or final syntax followed by introductory coordinator + new syntactic beginning (↑f&); and
- 4 'prosodically closed' types of tone unit, i.e. ones with final falling intonation (annotated as ↓) and non-final syntax (↓n), final syntax (↓f), final syntax followed by coordinator+new syntactic beginning (↓f&) or final syntax followed by new syntactic beginning without introductory coordinator (↓f§).

  A talk unit, annotated with angled brackets <...>, is by definition complete when a presentation structure with (↓f§) occurs.

The following example illustrates how these categories are applied to the analysis of an utterance from the LLC:

(13) LLC 5.3

92 n	[@:]ˆI do "!n\ot bel/ieve#	/<↑n
93 n	in .ˆindis' criminate flagell/ation# -	/↑f
94 n	[@:] withˆin judicial s\entences# -	/↓f&
95 n	but Iˆdo take the v/iew#	/↑n
96 n	that [@:] . theˆthug is invariably a "coward# -	/↓ f §> (Mukherjee, 2001: 57)

Note that syntactic finality vs. nonfinality is judged at the level of clause with respect to the structure so far, i.e. in context – thus, *I do not believe in indiscriminate flagellation* in (13) above is syntactically complete (f) because it forms a clause and *within judicial sentences* is syntactically complete (f) because it recompletes this clause, but *but I do take the view* is annotated as (n) because it is not a syntactically complete clause in the given context. Prosodic openness or closedness is determined by the final pitch movement of a nuclear tone: (↑) includes all rises, fall-rises and fall-plus-rises, (↓) all

falls, rise–falls and rise-plus-falls. (Mukherjee and Esser adhere roughly to the British school of tonetic notation.)

What do parasyntactic presentation structures do? Mukherjee discusses two aspects of their functioning in spoken discourse. First – and for Mukherjee clearly foremost – is their contribution to information structure (the second is speaker interaction: see below). Following Halliday, he views a tone unit as a unit of information; presentation structures are thus ways of packaging information and the different types identified are said to establish an informational hierarchy within the talk unit. Mukherjee's discussion here has some fresh insights to offer. For instance, he argues that the configuration ↑n marks the following information unit (=presentation structure) as relatively more important, and ↓n as relatively less important within the talk unit. Well-planned talk units will thus gradually increase the rhetorical anticipation of more important information by using one or more ↑n configurations, only to end with ↓f§. Second, Mukherjee shows how, through the strategic placement of a tone unit or talk unit boundary, speakers can manipulate the information structure of their talk according to purpose and intent. Certainly the examples he uses to illustrate these claims are convincing. But whether the actual addressees of the talk in question indeed perceived the information structure to be what Mukherjee claims it is, is another matter. That is, one wonders: how can these functional claims be warranted?

Several observations can be made about the analytic apparatus that Mukherjee develops. First, it is reductionistic, i.e. a minimal number of distinctions is postulated as relevant: clausal completeness vs. incompleteness for syntax, final nuclear rise vs. final nuclear fall for intonation. Of course Mukherjee is aware that more dimensions may be involved, but he makes a strong plea for starting with a maximally simple system. This point granted, the question remains: are these the relevant distinctions? Judging from recent conversation-analytic studies of English, doubts are in order. Wells & Macfarlane (1998), for instance, find that it is not so much the pitch direction of a final nuclear accent which is relevant for smooth turn-taking in English conversation but the type of final accentual peak or valley instead. Ford, Fox & Thompson (2002) identify the conversational use of so-called unattached noun phrases, ones such as *good idea* or *poor thing*, that do not fit into a prior syntactic construction but are used as stand-alone increments to (re-)complete a speaker's turn. Unattached NPs (see also Ono & Thompson 1994) would count as having incomplete syntax in Mukherjee's system (they are not lexicalized discourse markers) but are 'complete' turn-constructional units in conversation. The problem is of course that the starting point for Mukherjee's system is not conversation but rather something closer to spoken prose, texts composed of complete sentences and well-formed tone units, which lend themselves well to clausal and nuclear-tone analysis. Taking conversational data and participant orientation as one's starting point, however, produces quite different categories. When Mukherjee 'applies' his system to conversational discourse in the LLC, he shows that it can be done but not that it is necessarily meaningful to do so.

Second, Mukherjee's analytic apparatus is said to be functional. By this he means that minimal pairs can be set up reflecting a meaning distinction if, say, a rising

tone is replaced by a falling tone. But minimal-pair tests work only under exceptionally controlled, decontextualized circumstances. The fact that a rise *can* produce a difference with respect to the meaning dimension of closed vs. open if replaced by a fall doesn't mean that it always does, nor that only rises do this. The high rise of many *yes–no* questions in conversation is a case in point: this surely signals that a talk unit is closed, because the floor regularly switches to the addressee thereafter, yet in Mukherjee's system it is treated as 'prosodically open'. On the other hand, a final fall to mid (often a variant of a final fall–rise) is regularly associated with a continuation of talk in conversation, yet Mukherjee's system treats it on a par with final falls to low as marking prosodic closure. In fact, scholars who have looked empirically at the final vs. continuing distinction as signalled by intonation in conversational discourse have posited rather different category boundaries. DuBois et al. (1992), for instance, claim that final low rises, levels and falls-to-mid are all associated with a continuation of talk in English discourse, whereas falls to low signal that the speaker has come to a point of completion and rises to high signal some kind of 'appeal' to the addressee. In the light of conflicting claims about prosodic openness and closedness, Mukherjee's system would appear to need more careful warranting to say the least.

Third, Mukherjee's descriptive apparatus is both leftwards and rightwards oriented with respect to syntax, that is it relies not only on judgements of the construction so far but also on knowledge of which forms follow. A talk unit is still underway if the presentation structure ↓f& occurs, but it is complete if the structure is ↓f§. Now the presence of f and ↓ can be judged on the spot, but the difference between & and § depends on whether the next unit begins with a (clausal) coordinator (*and*, *but*, *or*) or not. That is, a presentation structure can only be categorized retrospectively, once it is clear how talk will continue! This makes the system particularly inappropriate for the analysis of speech in terms of online production and comprehension. Mukherjee himself seems aware of the problem – at least subliminally – when he points out that all three parasyntactic configurations ↓f, ↓f& and ↓f§ signal possible turn completion (p. 134), but this doesn't prevent him from ultimately claiming that it is *talk units* which create transition relevance points and thus 'allow for turn-taking' (p. 135). The more compelling conclusion, however, seems to be that it is not the talk unit but rather the common denominator ↓f – as opposed to ↓n, ↑f or ↑n – which signals (under the proper circumstances) *potential* speaker completion. The word *potential* is important: the value of ↓f as a completion signal can of course be overridden by any number of extenuating circumstances. Mukherjee's almost constant omission of the attribute 'potential' is another indication that it is the finished product which has come under scrutiny here by an external analyst and not the process of online production and comprehension as realized by the speakers themselves.

This said, it must surely be thought quite extraordinary that Mukherjee – in the framework of the linguistic analysis of spoken prose – comes to many of the same conclusions as other empirically oriented scholars working within the frame of interactional linguistics (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 2001). Selting (1996, 2002) and

Auer (1996) have argued convincingly for German that it is syntax and prosody *together* which serve as resources for the construction of turns at talk and their continuations. The situation in other languages – especially genetically related languages – need not be expected to be any different. Specifically *which* syntactic structures and *which* prosodic configurations signal nonfinality/openness – or floor holding – and *which* finality/closedness – or floor yielding – may however vary from language to language and it is here that careful empirical work still needs doing, even for English.

The final word has yet to be spoken as to where the descriptive starting point for 'spoken English' should be. Should it be a system developed for speech prose and 'applied' to conversation, or rather a system developed from and for conversation and constrained so as to account for spoken prose? The impossibility of appropriating Mukherjee's system for the analysis of conversation as it unfolds in time suggests to me that the latter option is in the long run the only feasible one.

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María Ángeles Gómez-González, *The theme–topic interface: evidence from English.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2001. Pp. 434. Hardback €95/US $87, ISBN 90 272 5086 3

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The term *interface* is familiar in linguistics in a sense that depends on the assumption of distinct systems in grammar, and correspondingly distinct modules, or components, in linguistic descriptions, with constraints on the way these components may interact (see for example the chapters in Newmeyer (1988) on the syntax–semantics interface, by Enç, the syntax–phonology interface, by Pullum and Zwicky, and the phonology–phonetics interface, by Keating). A reader who expects the word *interface* in the title to point to something of this sort will be disappointed. What we do have here is firstly an attempt to sort out the muddle that linguists have made, partly by their confusing use of terminology, in the area of linguistic description that deals with the relationship between syntax and the use of sentences in context,[1] and secondly an attempt to throw light on the usefulness of the concepts of '(extended) multiple Themes', 'marked Themes', and 'special Themes' by the linguistic and statistical analysis of a corpus representing a variety of English texts.

The book deals with the various concepts denoted by the terms 'theme' and 'topic' in a number of theories of grammar. The work of the Prague school and Dik's Functional Grammar are treated at length (28 pages and 32 pages respectively), but the emphasis is on Halliday's 'Theme–Rheme Structure' and proposals intended to improve on Halliday's treatment. Just over half of the book is devoted to an exposition of Gómez-González's view of theme and its subtypes (in something like the Hallidayan sense) and an analysis of the relevant data from the Lancaster/IBM Spoken English Corpus in terms of her own classification of thematic constructions. The book is divided into three parts:

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[1] In spite of the apparent impossibility of reaching any kind of consensus on the nature of topic-comment structure and its place in linguistics, the subject continues to exert its fascination. See, for example, Jäger (2001) and Jacobs (2001).

Part I: 'The theme–topic interface' (pp. 3–58) examines three different uses of 'theme' and 'topic', distinguishing between (i) 'semantic' interpretations, 'glossing theme as "what the message is about"', (ii) 'informational' interpretations, based on the distinction between 'given' and 'new' information, and (iii) 'syntactic' interpretations, which rely on position in syntactic structures.

Part II: 'Previous studies' (pp. 61–170) gives an account of how 'theme' and 'topic' have been treated in three 'functionalist' models of grammar: (i) that of the Prague School, with its various versions of the level of 'Functional Sentence Perspective', (ii) Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, with its 'Theme–Rheme Structure', and (iii) Dik's Functional Grammar, with both 'Theme' and 'Topic' as pragmatic functions, distinguished as extrapredicational (Theme) and intrapredicational (Topic).

Part III: 'A corpus-based analysis of syntactic theme in PresE' (pp. 173–357) applies Gómez-González's proposed revision of Halliday's theory of Theme–Rheme Structure to an examination of the data provided by the Lancaster/IBM Spoken English Corpus.

Gómez-González's position on various aspects of Halliday's analysis and her decisions on changes in terminology are dispersed over chapters 4, 6, and 7. In chapter 4, section 3 (headed 'Troubleshooting'), she deals with the double characterization of Theme as (i) 'the point of departure of an English clause', and (ii) 'what a clause is about', and proposes 'a relational interpretation of thematic "aboutness"' to resolve the conflict. Secondly, Gómez-González accepts Huddleston's criticism of Halliday's constituent structures for 'multiple Themes', as in *Well,| but| then*, *|| Ann,| surely | wouldn't || the best idea ||| be to join the group?* , where everything up to the triple bar is the Theme of the clause, and its constituent structure is indicated by the double and single bars [the notation here is mine], so that the ICs of the Theme are *Well, but then* (textual), *Ann, surely wouldn't* (interpersonal), and *the best idea* (topical). Gómez-González also replaces Halliday's 'substitute Theme' by 'right detachment' and 'reference Theme' by 'left detachment', distinguishes (following Lambrecht) between 'right detachment' (upward bounded) and 'afterthought' (not upward bounded), and rejects (following Downing) Halliday's notion of 'displaced Theme' (Halliday 1985, 1994).

In chapter 6, section 2 ('A survey of thematic options'), Gómez-González sets up two simultaneous systems for major clauses (in the Hallidayan sense of the term) under the heading of THEME. The first is called THEME SELECTION and its terms are 'Theme marked' and 'Theme unmarked'. The second is called THEME SPECIAL and has eight terms. Seven of these are 'special', namely (i) clefting, (ii) pseudo-clefting, (iii) left detachment, (iv) right detachment, (v) *it*-extraposition, (vi) inversion, and (vii) existential *there*, while the eighth (Non-special Theme) is defined by the absence of (i)–(vii). The second system is not unreasonable if all we are trying to account for is a small corpus that contains no sentences that are incompatible with it, and this may indeed hold good for the corpus examined in this book; but if we are talking about the English language at large, we must make provision for the possibility of left detachment or right detachment combining with clefting, or with *it*-extraposition, or with existential *there*, so that Gómez-González's THEME SPECIAL would have to be replaced by something more complex.

In the same section, Gómez-González also announces (i) '*a new approach to unmarked Themes*. . .and *marked Themes*. . .in the light of (a) a reformulation of *special Themes*. . .and (b) a new category. . .*extended multiple Themes*', (ii) the abandonment of 'the SFG notions of metaphorical and displaced Themes', and (iii) the relabelling of Halliday's 'textual Themes' as '*logical* or *logico-conjunctive Themes*'.

In chapter 7 ('Results and discussion'), Gómez-González gives analyses and definitions whose logical place would have been in chapter 6 ('Theory and methods'). *It*-extraposition is taken to be a 'clause complex' in the manner of Halliday (1985, 1994), with the *it*-clause as (unmarked) Theme and the extraposed (dependent) clause as Rheme. Similarly with (*it*-)clefts. Pseudo-clefts, also referred to as *wh*-clefts, are defined more narrowly than Halliday's 'identifying clauses', examples like *The one who painted the shed was John* being excluded. In 'basic pseudo-clefts' the *wh*-clause is initial and functions as Subject and Theme, while in 'reversed pseudo-clefts' it is the 'highlighted element' that is initial and combines the same two functions. Inversions are defined (following Green) as 'those declarative constructions where the subject follows part or all of its verb phrase', thus including 'full inversions' and Subject–Auxiliary inversions. Finally, we have the option of 'extended multiple Theme'. This differs from Halliday's 'multiple Theme' not only in being realized by a string of Themes rather than by a constituent structure of Themes within Themes within Theme, but also in admitting the possibility of a logico-conjunctive (alias textual) or interpersonal Theme, or both, following the topical Theme instead of preceding it. The option of 'extended multiple Theme' is not provided for in the network in chapter 6, and its relationship to the other thematic options is not made explicit, but it is presumably meant to be a term in a third system, simultaneous with THEME SELECTION and THEME SPECIAL.

Section 4 of chapter 6 presents the corpus, and chapter 7 analyzes the occurrences of the different constructions. The corpus is a set of texts recorded between 1982 and 1987 and totalling 49,285 words. The analyses of the constructions deal with (i) formal structures and frequencies, and (ii) discourse functions.

Coming now to an assessment of the quality of the book, we must say that it is unsatisfactory in more ways than one. The most obvious flaw is a relatively trivial one: the author's imperfect command of written English. Here are some examples:

> p. 13: **As advanced**, in this book we shall restrict our analysis...
> p. 15: ...as **expounded** in Figure 1,...
> p. 16: **Emblematic** defenders of this view... [typical?]
> p. 23: **Alternatively**, in (9b) and (9c) the topics are *marked*... [On the other hand]
> p. 35: ...must be interpreted as two different concepts, although they have often been used **indistinctly**...
> p. 52: Syntactic accounts have come in for criticism **in four main flanks.**
> p. 53: the criteria...are heterogeneous and not necessarily **concurrent**.
> p. 54: these...scholars...question its validity...**Emblematically**, Huddleston...explains...

It is a pity that the editors allowed the book to go to press without attending to blemishes of this kind. The misprints, the incompleteness of the list of abbreviations,

and the inadequacy of the subject index similarly point to editorial neglect. All these are minor problems, but there are more serious ones.

Since a consideration of Halliday's analysis of Theme is central to the concern of this book, I shall take a fairly close look at chapter 4 ('Systemic Functional Grammar'). Now in the greater part of this chapter, Systemic Functional Grammar [henceforth SFG] is equated with Halliday. So one might expect the exposition to begin with an explanation of what Halliday means by 'functional' and 'systemic' and how systemic features are realized, and to continue with a clear and coherent account of Halliday's analysis of what he calls 'the textual component' in the organization of the grammar of a language (Gómez-González's 'Theme system complex'), including the differences between the earlier and the later versions. But we are given none of these things. Instead, we are plunged into a mass of largely unnecessary detail from various different sources, accompanied by Gómez-González's own network for the 'Theme system complex' (fig. 5, p. 91), which does not correspond to any network of Halliday's, or indeed to Gómez-González's own classification of 'text forming resources' as set out in (68) on the previous page. Furthermore, Gómez-González's network is so flawed in various ways that readers who are not familiar with systemic grammar (and even some who are) may well fail to make sense of it. The systemic aspect of the analysis, in fact, is not taken very seriously, and the term SFG serves essentially as a label to distinguish Halliday's theory of Theme from Dik's. This would not matter much, if the account of Halliday's analysis were clear and accurate.

Unfortunately, there are inaccuracies and misunderstandings to be found throughout the chapter. Thus on p. 92, referring to Halliday's analysis of the nominal group, Gómez-González explains *Qualifier* as 'whatever follows and is embedded within the Thing'. This is self-contradictory and also, of course, a misrepresentation of Halliday's analysis. On p. 93, she says that 'the boundaries [of tone groups] are determined either by a salient syllable...or by an initially silent syllable'. This should be '...or by a silent beat'; there are no silent syllables in Halliday's account of tone group boundaries.

On p. 103, Gómez-González misrepresents Halliday's analysis of Theme in imperatives, as shown by the following juxtapositions:

> G.: ...the unmarked Theme of imperatives is identified with: (i) *you* (e.g. *you keep quiet*, [Halliday]1994: 47)
> H.: [when 'you' is made explicit as a Theme] 'this is clearly a marked choice'
> G.: [...with] (ii) *do* (e.g. *do take care*, ibid.);
> H.: [*do* plus *take* are Theme in *do take care*]
> G.: [...with] (iii) *don't* or *let's (not)* in negative imperatives (e.g. *don't [you] argue*, ibid.)
> H.: [*don't* plus *leave* are Theme in *don't leave any belongings on the aircraft*]
> [*don't* plus *let's* are Theme in *don't let's quarrel about it*]
> [*let's* is Theme in *let's not quarrel about it*]

Also on p. 103, we find the following:

> Consider Halliday's (ibid. [1967:214]) examples:
> (75) a. //these **houses**// my grandfather sold and *the rest of the property* he left to **me**//
> b. //**John**//saw the play and *Mary* went to the **concert**//

...(75a) is considered unacceptable because the intonational presupposition does not correspond with the semantic and syntactic structure of the sequence; by contrast, the unacceptability of (75b) resides in that the domain of *these houses* extends over the following information unit, but has no function within the second clause.

The references to (75a and b) have of course been inadvertently switched; but this is a minor detail. The question is, what kind of contrast does Gómez-González want us to note between the two sentences? The vagueness of Gómez-González's comment on //**John**//saw the play and *Mary* went to the **concert**// makes it hard to say what she has in mind. But, in fact, the two sentences are given by Halliday (not as a pair) to illustrate exactly the same kind of unacceptability resulting from inappropriate division into tone groups. The only contrast is between marked theme in a. and unmarked theme in b. (The examples are in fact not from the place referred to by Gómez-González, but from pp. 219 and 220.)

On p. 105, where Gómez-González deals with Halliday's treatment of the *it* in 'predications' (i.e. *it*-clefts), she omits Halliday's statement that 'this *it*... can never be thematic'. The omission is not trivial, since the statement is incompatible with Halliday's later (two-version) analysis of predicated Theme (Halliday, 1985, 1994), and we have here an important point on which the earlier version differs from the later one.

On p. 111 we are told that 'Halliday ([1994]: 41) notes that more often in writing than in speech 'β Themes tend to express *grammatical metaphors*, typically of the ideational type by means of *nominalisations*, "whereby any element or group of elements takes on the function of a nominal group in the clause"...' Halliday in fact says nothing of the sort, either in the place referred to or anywhere else. Nor would it make sense, since a 'β Theme', by which Gómez-González means a dependent clause which is initial in a 'clause complex' (and is therefore, in Halliday's analysis, a theme), cannot be a nominalization, for a nominalization cannot be a dependent element in a clause complex. What Halliday does say about the difference between speech and writing in relation to grammatical metaphors (Halliday, 1994: 349–52) is not specifically related to Theme, and is equivalent (not surprisingly) to the common observation that written language tends to be more nominal than spoken language.

The errors noted here in Gómez-González's account of Halliday, whether due to careless reading or careless writing, cannot but undermine one's confidence in the book as a whole.

In section 4.3, which deals with the different views of 'aboutness' in relation to Theme, Gómez-González claims that the conflicts can be resolved by distinguishing between different perspectives, which she calls 'relational', 'referential', and 'interactive', and that the SFG perspective, which she calls the 'relational' one, can answer all the criticisms that have been levelled against it. But much of what she says is unclear, and its relevance to the 'aboutness' controversy is problematic. For example (pp. 119–20):

...from a relational perspective the *valeur*, or paradigmatic value, of thematic choices is established 'relationally', that is, in relation to the *proportionalities*[75] or relationships

in which they participate [in the footnote, *proportionality* is glossed as 'system'] with respect to:

a. the Rheme within the clause;

b. the Given and the New within the Theme system complex;

c. cohesive relationships, within the textual component;

d. grammar as a whole; and

e. discourse in all its dimensions, that is, *register, genre* and *ideology* (comprising various aspects of cultural diversity such as ethnicity, class, gender, generation, etc.).

In keeping with this a clause like *And perhaps he's right* could be claimed to be simultaneously about *and, perhaps* and *he* in that these items stand within the thematic domain for the speaker's choice of, for example, one of the proportionalities... Likewise... sequences [sic] like... *Nothing will satisfy you, You could buy a bar of chocolate like this for 6d before the war* and *There is a fallacy in your argument* could be said to 'be about' and 'have as their point of departure' *nothing*, impersonal *you* or *there*...

This quotation is not unrepresentative of Gómez-González's expository writing. It is often hard to tell what exactly she means.

To sum up, we may say that this book could have been a useful addition to the literature on Theme (or whatever one wants to call it); but unfortunately, in spite of the considerable amount of work that has clearly been invested here, its value seems to be limited.

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