

# Reviews



## Reviews

**Horobin, Simon & Jeremy Smith (2002): *An Introduction to Middle English*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, viii + 182 p. Price: paperback: £10.99, hardback: £35.**

Reviewed by M.F. Litzler.  
University of Alcalá de Henares, Spain.

Horobin and Smith divide their book, *An Introduction to Middle English*, into three main sections: an overall introduction to Middle English, a more in-depth look at the linguistic characteristics of the language of the period in question, and a discussion of the relationship between the study of these characteristics and the disciplines of historical linguistics and textual studies. Exercises, annotated suggestions for further reading and notes are provided at the end of the different chapters within the three sections, and an appendix with samples of Middle English texts, notes and glosses can be found at the back of the book along with a discussion of some of the exercises, a bibliography and a selective index.

It is assumed that many readers will have only a basic notion of linguistics and that they have had contact with Middle English through Chaucer's works only. At the same time, some people using the book may be working independently. For these reasons, the authors avoid extensive use of linguistic terminology and limit themselves to using commonly agreed-upon terms. Any new technical vocabulary is highlighted in bold type when it is used for the first time and these words are included in the index at the end of the book. In general, the explanations are very clear and often come with examples, but readers are expected to know the sound charts for the sections on phonology. In addition, people who have a weak background in literary theory will find that the attention paid to linguistic terminology has not been provided in the case of philological terms. Unfortunately, no glossary is provided at the back of the book, so readers must rely on the ample but somewhat distracting cross-references within the text and the index.

An interesting feature of *An Introduction to Middle English* is the range of student levels that it caters to. The authors rightly present their book as one for students in honors courses who have already taken a survey course in the history of the English language, but less-experienced readers will be able to handle much of the material thanks to the approach to linguistic terminology mentioned above and the preliminary sections to each of the chapters on the linguistic description of ME in the second section. Advanced students will appreciate the detailed explanations in the notes to each chapter and the third section, which contains Chapter 7: "Looking forward." This final chapter includes stimulating, albeit specialized, presentations first of language change and second of some of the difficulties involved in editing Middle English texts. Specifically, the first part of the chapter takes the ME determiners and third person pronouns as examples of language change within the shift in tendency from a synthetic language to an analytic one. The second section examines difficulties related to sound and spelling, lexis, and grammar that editors must face when working with manuscripts.

The book takes a new approach to presenting Middle English in that from the start it

gives readers an idea of what Middle English actually looked like. After short examples from *The Lord's Prayer* in the different periods of the history of the English language, there is an excerpt from the prologue to Chaucer's *Miller's Tale* with glossed words and phrases alongside it, followed by parallel sections from the prologue to *The Wife of Bath's Tale* with a discussion of variations between the two versions. This progressive introduction to the language of Middle English differs from other books that start with a social or historical background (Conde Silvestre & Hernandez Campoy, 1998), dialects (Mossé, 1952), and the sound system and spelling (Burrow & Turville-Petre, 1992). Another attempt at presenting the material in a novel way is the author's use of Chaucer's language forms as their point of reference. His usage is characterized throughout the book along with descriptions of the changes that took place from the Old English period. It must be pointed out at this point, however, that any gains from these two adaptations are minor.

The exercises at the end of the chapters tend to have three to five questions for discussion, such as "The analysis of writing-systems is a crucial piece of evidence for the reconstruction of sound-changes in ME. Discuss." (Chapter 4). The "Other questions" sections are more engaging because they contain practical exercises which require students to apply what they have learned, for example, by writing a ME phonemic transcription of a passage or looking up words in the OED or MED to find their history.

The appendix containing Middle English texts has short excerpts taken from commonly studied works such as the *Peterborough Chronicle*, *The Owl and the Nightingale*, *Ancrene Wisse* and *Ormulum*. However, parallel texts are provided for selections from *Piers Plowman* and *Cursor Mundi*, therefore providing students the possibility of analyzing texts from a different, more advanced perspective than other textbooks. The last sample, *The Equatorie of the Planetis*, is also a departure from other books in that it is a scientific text as opposed to a literary one. In this sense, the authors have made a start at bringing their selection in line with current interest in the editing of Middle English scientific and technical texts, described in Keiser (1998, 109). Nevertheless, a greater variety of text types might prove more attractive to this generation of university students.

In conclusion, *An Introduction to Middle English* is clearly an interesting addition to any collection of Middle English books and it is worth serious consideration as a textbook for advanced level courses for students studying towards English degrees. At the same time, it will serve as a worthwhile introduction for postgraduate students pursuing a specialization in this area. However, the drawbacks mentioned above must be born in mind when planning which sources to require in courses.

#### Notes

1. I would like to thank Dr. Francisco Alonso Almeida for encouraging me to write this review and for providing suggestions on how to improve it for publication.

#### Works Cited

Burrow, J. and T. Turville-Petre (1992, 1997): *A Book of Middle English*. Oxford: Blackwell

## Publishers.

- Conde Silvestre, Juan Camilo and Juan Manuel Hernández Campoy (1998): *An Introduction to the History of the English Language II: Middle and Modern English*. Murcia: ICE.
- Keiser, George R. (1998): "Editing Scientific and Practical Writings," in Vincent McCarren and Douglas Moffat, eds., *A Guide to Editing Middle English*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 109-122.
- Mossé, Fernand (1952, 1968): *Handbook of Middle English*. Trans. James A. Walker. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

**Görlach, M (ed.) (2001): A Dictionary of European Anglicisms. Oxford, Oxford University Press. 351 p. \$170.**

Reviewed by Elisabetta Zoni.  
University of Bologna, Italy.

Among the many dictionaries and lexica of neologisms and foreign words, *A Dictionary of European Anglicisms* (DEA) edited by Manfred Görlach holds a significant place, being the first and the only one of its type. The dictionary records English borrowings in 16 European languages, among them Italian, French, Spanish and German.<sup>1</sup> As Rodriguez points out in the introduction to his *Nuevo diccionario de anglicismo*<sup>2</sup>, as yet there are still no fixed, prescriptive criteria for compiling a dictionary of anglicisms in any specific language, or at least it is impossible to identify a set of universally shared and accepted rules. The reverse is true of other types of dictionaries –such as monolingual or bilingual dictionaries of the general language, where the reader usually has very specific expectations. Therefore, Görlach's endeavour of cataloguing anglicisms in 16 languages appears all the more exceptional.

Among the European languages, German is traditionally one of the most receptive towards borrowings from the English language, which now undoubtedly make up the largest part of all new words that have entered the language from the second half of the 20th century onwards, especially in the field of microeconomics and finance (management, information technology, new media), but also in general and colloquial German. The monumental dictionary of anglicisms by Carstensen and Busse (*Anglizismen-Wörterbuch*, 1993) is one of the main sources for English borrowings in German, and one of the reference works from which Görlach himself has drawn for his DEA. However, the most up-to-date lexicographic reference work both on foreign words and on anglicisms is the *Duden Fremdwörterbuch* (2001).

While the anglicisms list of the *Verein Deutsche Sprache*<sup>3</sup> or the *Wörterbuch der überflüssigen Anglizismen*<sup>4</sup> both reflect the radical purism of the authors and the institutions that have produced them, the DEA's selection does not imply a prescriptive or censorious attitude. The choice of the author to compile a dictionary in as many as 16 languages already excludes a "nationalistic" perspective. Its purpose is rather descriptive, in that it aims at reflecting, as objectively and accurately as possible, the globally widespread phenomenon

of borrowings from Anglo-American in European languages, tracing its route through the centuries up to the years 1995-1996.

A first, sketchy recognition of the dictionary entries immediately brings up the problem of up-to-dateness. In general, neologisms and foreign borrowings can be regarded as a reflection, an indicator of the dynamic quality of a language, of the constant change in its enrichment and transformation processes. Within this continuum, it is often difficult to draw a line between mere nonce-formations, unsuccessful borrowings and well-established, definitive borrowings. This is why a dictionary of anglicisms –and, in general, a dictionary of new words, usually becomes “obsolete” just a few months from the final editing. Inevitably, the book version of a lexicographic work, especially a dictionary of foreign words, cannot but be, at best, a snapshot, a blurred picture of the situation at the moment of writing, not as it currently is. In the case of the DEA, the final draft was completed in 1996. Therefore, despite its publication date (2001), the dictionary actually reflects the situation as it was five years before. As a result, the dictionary does not provide a reliable picture of the phenomenon of anglicisms at the beginning of the 21st century, although it can certainly be taken as a starting point for future updates. However, the dating of each entry is quite accurate: for the oldest borrowings the dictionary gives the century when the word was first recorded in written documents –for instance, the word *manager* entered German as early as the first decade of the XX century (“beg20c”), whereas for the most recent borrowings – from the Fifties onward –, the decade, and in some cases even the exact year, is specified –e.g. 1970s for *check* and *cash flow*.

As far as the integration of English borrowings is concerned, the DEA is again very accurate in describing the degree of “acceptance” of the foreign word through an elaborate set of graphic symbols, ranging from the absence of a foreign form –i.e. when the word is known to the German speaker only in the integrated, adapted form (loan-translation or calque), as in *Krach* for *crash*–, to loan word, restricted use, complete acceptance, down to the final stage of integration, when the speaker no longer recognizes the foreign origin of the word, which can only be inferred through an etymologic analysis. Even the descriptive indications pertaining to usage, style, frequency, field of use, and register are rich and accurate, providing the reader with additional information on the socio-cultural status of a word. The DEA therefore meets one of the fundamental requirements for a dictionary of foreign words, in that it contains a great deal of information on the degree of integration and the usage of the anglicisms entered as headwords. The next step now is to find out whether this information is presented to the reader in a clear manner, which is another key rule for a lexicographic reference work.

For a lexical dictionary, clarity and readability are a precondition for usability, as Haensch (1997: 243) underlines in his study of Spanish lexicography. In the case of the DEA, the need to reduce both the size of the dictionary and the number of pages, and therefore to pack, in a limited space, the definitions, the basic grammatical, phonetic and orthographic information, as well as other essential indications such as the degree of integration of each anglicism, its spread pattern and usage, has led the editor to elaborate a complex set of abbreviations and logical-mathematical symbols. Although the symbols are

clearly explained in the introductory pages of the work (see especially pp. XXI-XXV), the reader needs to spend a certain amount of time delving into the study of these symbols and abbreviations before actually being able to use the dictionary.

Another obstacle to the readability of the dictionary are the definitions themselves, which have not been written especially for the DEA, but are borrowed, with slight reformulations, from the Concise Oxford Dictionary of the English language (COD, see introduction p. XXI). This choice presents two main problems: the first problem is again related with the question of readability. For each entry, the COD definition is quoted according to the numbering of the COD itself: therefore, if only one or two of the original meanings of an English word, such as *clearing*, have entered the German language, the first definition given by the DEA could, for instance, bear the number 3, which corresponds to the third meaning listed by the COD for the word *clearing* ('a transaction involving money'). In fact, this mechanical transposition of the numbers of the COD definitions -2d, 3a, etc., not only contributes to further complicate the already tangled symbol map, but it is not motivated by any apparent reason. The second problem with the definitions is that they were drawn, with little or no adaptation, from a monolingual dictionary of the source language. Now, it is well known that, in moving from one language to the other, foreign words often change their meaning, albeit slightly. Therefore, it would be advisable for the editorial staff of a new dictionary of foreign words to completely rewrite the definitions, taking into account the semantic changes that have occurred in the shift from English to German.

One last obstacle to the dictionary's readability is the fact that there is only one search key, i.e. English. The reader can find an anglicism, including loan translations, only by starting from the English word, but not the other way round. He cannot start, for example, from the German *Konzern* to arrive at the original English word *concern* – or, to draw a parallel between German and Italian, to go back from *consulting* to *consulenza*. The absence of cross-references, therefore, does not allow the in-depth study of one major aspect of the integration of foreign words, the adaptation -first phonetic and then graphic, of the borrowed word to the rules of the receiving language, which is still a strong tendency in German.

In the introduction to the DEA, Görlach explains the working method of the lexicographic team he coordinated, as well as the procedures according to which data was gathered to compile the dictionary entries. The team started out by filing journalistic texts, magazines and dictionaries. The files were subsequently submitted to "informers" and linguistic experts selected for each language, who expressed their opinion on the words' frequency and usage. It is interesting to note how Görlach insists on the impossibility, for practical reasons and lack of time, to compile a corpus of electronic texts for each individual language, to use as an information data bank. However, the editor expresses his hope that an advancement in technology will soon allow to produce a second updated edition of the dictionary based on electronic corpora. Although rigorous, the DEA's method is in fact long outdated, as the procedures of quantitative analysis have turned out to be an essential tool for today's lexicographers. The fact that doubts have been raised on the

representativeness of individual corpora used to compile monolingual dictionaries does not mean that the insight of one speaker or a group of speakers into the usage and relative frequency of a word is more reliable than the results obtained with a large electronic reference corpus.

To rely on the introspective method alone or on other, albeit monumental, reference works, such as the *Anglizismen-Wörterbuch* by Carstensen and Busse, can certainly be enough to produce a fairly exhaustive lexicographic work, although it is plain to see that corpus linguistics could do much to expand and perfect it, for example by including a list of the most frequent collocations for each lexeme, or even usage examples drawn from authentic language. The corpus (or corpora) to be used for such purposes do not necessarily have to be created ad hoc, but they may be already existing general or specialist corpora. This corpus-based lexicographic project could also be connected to a larger lexicological research aimed at a day-by-day monitoring of the anglicisms that flow into the various European languages.

The second issue that emerges when reading the DEA has to do once again with the choice of lemmas and the criteria for selecting the anglicisms. The dictionary contains words that can be ascribed to different registers, styles, and degrees of formality, from slang expressions, colloquialisms and “fashionable” words to terms belonging to specialized languages –computer science, economy and finance, science and technology, etc.. This mixture of general, colloquial, and specialized language is a feature common to several dictionaries of new and foreign words –see *Duden Fremdwörterbuch*, 2001 edition, or Carstensen and Busse’s dictionary. The DEA’s format, a single, slender volume, would suggest that it is a dictionary of general language rather than a specialized technical lexicon. This is confirmed by a comparison between the Italian anglicisms recorded in the DEA and the electronic version of the Italian Zingarelli (2000 edition), one of the most popular dictionaries of general Italian. Both dictionaries list about the same number of anglicisms (2000). However, as far as specialized language is concerned, Görlach’s introduction (see p. xix) does not seem to provide an adequate explanation of the selection criteria for technical terms: he only talks about “words not known to the general public” (slang, or terms belonging to the field of economics and computer science) which have purposefully been left out.

Finally, it is interesting to find out how Görlach’s dictionary deals with the issue of direct loans, or loan words, from English - i.e the case where not only the meaning, but also the form is transmitted from one language to another – as part of the derivational and compositional processes of the German language. First of all it should be remembered that in German, as well as in the majority of European languages, lexical borrowings, first and foremost from English, currently represent a major source of lexical enrichment, also through the mediation of the receiving language -by combining the foreign root with native elements. In this respect, morphologic normalization can be a dilemma when there are several orthographic variants of the same word. Another important factor to consider is the German orthographic reform of 1996. The reform includes new writing rules for foreign words, which aim at further “germanizing” the already existing loan words. Therefore, the

main orthographic discrepancies that can be observed between the *Duden Fremdwörterbuch* (2001, written according to the new writing rules) and the DEA are due to the univertation introduced by the orthographic reform in the case of compound terms like *cash flow* or *merchant bank* (now written in one word: *Cashflow*, *Merchantbank*), whose standard writing is still given by Görlach's dictionary as identical to the English word.

To sum up, the DEA can certainly be taken as a model, a reference point, both in positive and negative terms, for future reference works conceived with similar aims and with similar scope and importance. Despite some major scientific and methodological drawbacks, it is impossible to overlook a work of such importance, not only for lexicographic theory and practice, but also for lexicology, in particular the study of neologisms and anglicisms, two increasingly relevant research fields.

#### Notes

1. **Germanic languages:** Icelandic, Norwegian, Dutch, German. **Slavonic languages:** Russian, Polish, Bulgarian, Croatian. **Romance languages:** French, Spanish, Italian and Romanian. **Other languages:** Finnish, Hungarian, Albanian, Greek.
2. 1997, Madrid, Gredos.
3. Web site: <http://www.vds-ev.de>
4. Edited by R. Pogarell and M. Schröder. Last updated edition: 2004, IFB Verlag.

#### Works Cited

- Carstensen, B. & U. Busse (1993): *Anglizismen-Wörterbuch : der Einfluss des Englischen auf den deutschen Wortschatz nach 1945*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Duden. Das Fremdwörterbuch* (2001): 7. Auflage. Mannheim, Leipzig, Wien, Zürich: Dudenverlag.
- Görlach, M (ed.) (2001): *A Dictionary of European Anglicisms* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Haensch, G. (1997): *Los diccionarios del Español en el umbral del siglo XXI*. Universidad de Salamanca: Salamanca Ediciones
- Lo Zingarelli 2000 in CD-ROM: vocabolario della lingua italiana*. Bologna, Zanichelli, 1999.
- Pogarell, R. & M. Schröder (2004). *Wörterbuch der überflüssigen Anglizismen*. Paderborn, IFB.
- Rodriguez G. F. & A. Lillo Buades (1997): *Nuevo diccionario de anglicismos*. Madrid: Gredos.
- Tulloch, S. (1991): *The Oxford Dictionary of New Words. A Popular Guide to Words in the News*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**García Velasco, Daniel: Funcionalismo y Lingüística: La gramática funcional de S.C. Dik. Oviedo: Servicio de Publicaciones, 295 p.**

Reviewed by María Martínez Lirola.  
University of Alicante, Spain.

*Funcionalismo y Lingüística: la Gramática Funcional de S.C.Dik* is the only introduction

to Dik's Functional Grammar written in Spanish. The author has also translated the quotations from English into Spanish so that the book is easier to read for those who do not have a good command of English.

In the prologue, the author clearly states that his purpose is to offer an up-to-date presentation of this functional model that is becoming more and more important in today's functional research.

This book is divided into seven chapters. At the end of the book we find a glossary of technical terms related to Functional Grammar (hereafter FG) that can be very useful for scholars and for university students. The book has a very clear structure and organization, which can be seen in the topics covered in each chapter, in the clear conclusions that the author provides, and in a fixed section at the end of each chapter devoted to basic bibliography used in the chapter, which is commented by the author.

In chapter one the author presents the two main tendencies in linguistics: functional and formal approaches. He specifies the main differences between both approaches to avoid simplistic characterizations. In order to pay attention to both approaches in detail, he divides this first chapter into three sections: 1) "Functionalism and Formalism in Grammatical Theory" covers three very important issues: "Form(al) and Function(al)", "The Concept of Autonomy" and "Formal and Functional Explanation". 2) The second section presents a short characterization of contemporary functional approaches to situate Dik's model in contemporary functionalism. The author refers to the functional-cognitive perspective represented by Langacker, Fillmore, Kay, Taylor, Lakoff and Johnson and to the functional-cognitive perspective represented by Dik's Functional Grammar and Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar. 3) In the third section, the author offers some conclusions.

In chapter two, the author offers a critical evaluation of Functional Grammar within the framework presented in chapter one. The author shows to what extent FG can be considered a true functional theory after having paid attention to the methodological manifestations and the practices by researchers belonging to this theory.

In the second part of this chapter, the author offers an introduction to the structure and organization of Functional Grammar, which is developed in the next chapters. García Velasco analyses in detail the position of the three parameters adopted by Functional Grammar already presented in chapter one, i.e., form and function in FG, the autonomy of grammar and formal and functional explanation. After that, in the third section of the chapter, the Standards of Adequacy (pragmatic, psychological and typological) are considered to prove that this linguistic model fits several methodological criteria. Parts four and five of the chapter are devoted to some technical restrictions and to the organization of Functional Grammar.

In the next chapters (three to seven), the author analyses the general architecture of the model from a critical perspective. Chapter three is devoted to the organization of the lexical component in FG and the classification of the state of affairs.

In chapter four, the author focuses on the construction of the clause and the characterization of the morphosyntactic categories of Time, Mood and Aspect. In the next chapter, he offers a characterization of the syntactic and pragmatic functions proposed in

FG since they are relevant in the general architecture of the theory.

In chapter six, the author deals with the Expression Rules, the Form-determining Expression Rules and the syntactical order, prosody and the dynamic model of the expressive component. It is here that we find the different mechanisms that help us see the main formal differences between languages.

Chapter seven has the same title as the last chapter of Dik's work (1997): *Towards a Functional Grammar of Discourse* and, as the title suggests, what García Velasco presents here, are the main discursive studies made within the Functional Grammar approach.

This excellent book constitutes an invaluable introduction to Dik's Functional Grammar, and will be very useful for scholars and for university students interested in getting a general overview of one of the main current functional theories in linguistics. The bibliography is also complete and up to date.

#### Works cited

Dik, Simon C. (1997): *The Theory of Functional Grammar. Part 2. Complex and Derived Constructions*. [Kees Hengeveld (ed.)]. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.