

## Reviews

**Miquel Àngel Campos Pardillos.** *Vocabulari comercial anglès/català/castellà.* Alicante: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alicante, 1992, 112 pp.

We are living in the era of global communication and this is so in all fields of life, but is especially true if we refer to the areas of science and knowledge. It is no longer possible to live in our own private “castle” believing that it is an enclosure that exclusively belongs to us and the group of researchers that happen to be interested in the same subject. For the same reason we cannot adopt a closed attitude towards the contributions made by other scholars, thinking that we do not need to pay attention to anyone or anything that is not directly related to the “club” which we are supposed to belong to.

Indeed, the notions of exclusiveness and “watertight compartments” no longer hold for scientific research in general, and they surely do not in the case of linguistic research. It must be remembered that language is the product of a social community, and as such it represents each and every aspect of the life of that human group. When one studies language one will find a certain amount of elements that can be considered strictly intralinguistic, but, at the same time, it can easily be seen that it would be completely impossible to understand many other aspects of language unless we attend to extralinguistic fields. Many different researchers have clearly proved that in studies focusing on language as a whole, but this open approach becomes practically indispensable if we are dealing with specific languages that are more or less restricted to a particular professional or cultural environment.

The above explanations lead us to a field of research that is slowly but steadily gaining ground in recent years: we are referring to Languages for Specific Purposes. In the case of English, we can see that a very important development of this approach has already taken place. Of course, all this represents a very important change in people’s attitudes. The traditional belief according to which the areas of Sciences and Humanities were conceived of as separate worlds lacking any sort of communication clearly proves to be untrue. Lots of publications have shown that the collaboration between researchers from both fields can be extremely fruitful.

The main point when we decide to undertake the task of studying these Languages for Specific Purposes is that we have to adopt a totally new perspective. We cannot stick to the techniques that we have been applying for years when teaching what is usually known as general language, because, above all, the circumstances under which these linguistic corpuses develop are very different from those corresponding to the general language and that distinction is going to give rise to a sharp contrast in terms of characteristic features, communicative objectives and so on.

In this respect, when people start to learn a language, the first thing they have to decide is what their needs are as regards that language. Once we have decided which our

interests are we shall be able to identify the linguistic aspects that are going to be most relevant to us. This is more clearly true in the field of Languages for Specific Purposes. If we talk about the case of English for Specific Purposes, we can say that the students who have to work with this kind of technical or professional languages very well know what is essential for them. Reasons such as lack of time or the status of English in the context of their studies justify the fact that these people should prefer to concentrate their attention on certain aspects of learning to the detriment of others. Of course, this decision is going to be directly related to the most essential needs they will eventually have to face in their professional practice. Nothing can be said in general, but one can see that aspects like translation, techniques of reading and oral comprehension as well as a basic communicative competence will be favoured. Teachers must be equally aware of all these circumstances when they decide to deal with this material and with this group of learners, and they must try to look for any new possibilities that may enable them to make the most of their teaching and may enhance their students' interest and progress. This is precisely what Miquel Àngel Campos Pardillos is trying to do with this dictionary of Commercial English.

*Vocabulari comercial anglés/català/castellà* provides an excellent source of information on the field of Commercial and Business English, which is, by the way, one of the most important varieties of English for Specific Purposes.

This relevance of Commercial English is surely no surprise to anyone as we could say we are in the age of economy. Everybody is familiar with economic terms, and words or expressions like *shares*, the *Stock Exchange* or the *Gross Domestic Product* are known to most of us. In fact, this linguistic material is so well-known that people sometimes have come to the point of using some of these units in an idiomatic way, thus greatly extending their meaning, for example, by giving them metaphorical shades and finally changing the status of this once restricted language that becomes a part of everyday speech.

Miquel Àngel Campos Pardillos has a deep knowledge of the whole world of Economics, Commerce and Business and he has made a very important contribution by compiling an important amount of words and expressions with the aim of helping students go through this forest of terminology. This dictionary is surely going to fulfil this aim, and learners will be really thankful to have this kind of reference material at their disposal.

It must be underlined that Miquel Àngel Campos Pardillos has done more than just gathering a list of words in alphabetical order. First of all, his presentation of the material is very clear and he has likewise taken a lot of care in trying to help students in all senses.

On the other hand, he uses abbreviations that are very useful as they offer a concise but also clear grammatical description of each entry, a kind of information that is of paramount importance if one wants to make sure that students will make the appropriate use of the different words and expressions when they use them actively in the written or in the spoken language.

Furthermore, we must also emphasize the author's effort in trying to make his dictionary as useful as possible. He is working with three languages, namely English, Catalan and Spanish, and he takes good advantage of this, by presenting the material from the perspective of each of these three languages, with English first, then Catalan and finally Spanish heading three separate lists of words and expressions.

This technique is extremely interesting as it offers students the possibility of working with translations and equivalences in all directions, which will enable them to develop their linguistic skills in a considerable way.

Another very relevant aspect about this reference book is that it does not only give a list of terms but also offers some very useful additional sections in which the author completes his contribution. One of them deals with formulas and typical expressions in commercial letters, for which the equivalences with Catalan and Spanish are provided. The other additional section is equally worthy of mention, as it will be very much appreciated by students as well as teachers. Miquel Àngel Campos Pardillos has gathered a series of common mistakes made by students, and explains why they appear and at the same time gives hints that can be helpful to avoid them.

These last two sections further reinforce the conception that is clearly behind this work, the author's didactic aim. As a lecturer in Commercial English at the University of Alicante, the author very well knows the problems and needs of his students, and decidedly faces them making a very important contribution in the form of an instrument to improve their level of English that certainly achieves all its objectives and which, I am sure, students will be thankful for.

Finally, it must also be said that, since the author has used both Spanish and Catalan, this dictionary can go well beyond the academic context and will surely become a useful reference material for the Civil Service both in Spain as a whole and in the context of the autonomous regions in which Catalan is used; besides, it will no doubt be a very useful tool for all kinds of enterprises, specially those which are involved in export-import trade.

Víctor Manuel Pina Medina

**Hayden White. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1973, 448 pp. • Hayden White. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987, 244 pp.**

Although fourteen years have elapsed between the two works reviewed here, the purpose of them both still remains unaltered. Along with Louis O. Mink and Paul Ricoeur, Hayden White is today a most outstanding instance of the contemporary tendency to regard narrative as the fundamental form of historical construction and understanding—that is, the inclination to regard history less as a manner of *representing* reality than as a way of *telling* as well as of *organizing* events. Although this view, which can also be observed in the works of other theorists such as Jean-François Lyotard, in some sense partakes of the postmodern thrust to conceive reality as textually (or discursively) construed, his purpose is more humanistic than deconstructive. In fact, White withdraws himself from many forms of postmodern “pantextualism” insofar as he preserves the differences between reality and fiction, on the one hand, and between fiction and history, on the other. This enables him to study historiography—and its relation to culture—with a more encompassing method than many critics (Derrida, Foucault, or Hillis Miller, for instance),

that is, with more recourse to “reality” and extratextual matters than many contemporary thinkers are willing to concede.

*Metahistory* offers us an extensive and thoroughgoing exploration of the historical imagination in 19th-century Europe, that is, an analysis of the historical method as put forward by different historians, philosophers and social theorists from Hegel to Croce. What makes White’s book differ brilliantly from others of the same kind is the fact that he works through the different ideas of history and, at the same time, successfully studies the ideological validations they enjoyed in their time. This turns *Metahistory* into a study not only of historical consciousness but also an exploration of history as a mode of cognition and emplotment. White’s work begins by establishing “realism” as the guiding principle for the different modes of historical writing in the 19th century—exemplified by Michelet, Ranke, Tocqueville and Burckhardt. The late part of the century is characterized—as set forth in the writings of Marx, Nietzsche and Croce—by the repudiation of realism in historical consciousness. In White’s formulation, it is metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony—“the basic types of linguistic prefiguration”—that articulate the four theories of truth-making in historical understanding found in the late 19th century (Formism, Mechanism, Organicism, and Contextualism). Hence White’s distinction of four “strategies of ideological implication by which historians can suggest to their readers the import of their studies of the past for the comprehension of the present”: Anarchism, Radicalism, Conservatism, and Liberalism (427).

On the other hand, gathering essays written throughout the first half of the 1980s, *The Content of the Form* maintains this same perspective of historical imagination as narrative, enlarging its scope to embrace contemporary forms of historical understanding—Jameson, Foucault and Ricoeur, among others; but in this case, the study of narrativity is not only confined to historical discourse. It is here that White’s inquiry reaches its profoundest implications for cultural history. Here his analyses, while still showing how narrative organization is the way by which historical events are given shape, draw on the more general principle that narrative is not only a foundational element of historiography, but of cultural reality and human life in general. In so doing, White attempts to reach (and actually attains, I think) an anthropological, transcultural element in the configuration not only of history but also of culture itself.

Ricardo Miguel Alfonso

**Víctor Manuel Pina Medina.** *La idiomaticidad en el lenguaje literario: estudio basado en la novela On the Road de Jack Kerouac en sus versiones inglesa, castellana y francesa.* Alicante: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alicante, 1993.

As the author reminds us at the very beginning, “linguistics and literature have ignored each other for many years.” Traditionally, the two main domains of what is loosely called in Spanish “philology” (*filología*) have not worked together as they should, thus forcing any would-be scholar to a painful, unavoidable choice, placing us at a meaningless

crossroads that, either supposedly prevents the person from enjoying the pleasure of literature (should we choose to “do linguistics”), or apparently denied us the chance to understand the way language works as a system, if our choice led us towards literature.

In this situation, which fortunately we are starting to overcome thanks to great “revolutions” such as those produced after the Russian formalists or Jakobson’s poetics, professor Pina’s study helps to envisage a happy coexistence of both linguistic theory and aesthetic pleasure. The present analysis, based on the novel *On the Road*, focuses on one of the features that make Kerouac’s style stand out compared with the then existing literary canon: together with J. D. Salinger’s juvenile heroes in *The Catcher in the Rye*, *On the Road* gives us the chance to listen to the protagonists speaking in their own words, the words of the beat generation, while showing a narrator whose linguistic creativity knows no bounds.

Added to its literary interest, *La idiomática* is based upon three main concerns, which cover almost the whole of what is commonly known as “applied linguistics”: translation, semantics and foreign language learning. Regarding the latter, we have found numerous references to the question of idioms as an idiosyncratic feature, peculiar to each language and resulting from the personal history and conditions of different countries (let us not forget the hilarious contrast between *take French leave* and *filer à l’anglaise*, a real souvenir of the past history of two countries between which there was not much love lost). This leads professor Pina to discuss, not only the possible origins of idioms, but the context in which they are used, which represent a real odyssey for learners of English, who are faced with the double difficulty of hitting upon the correct structure (which hardly ever coincides with the one used in Spanish) and deciding when and before whom they can use their brand “new” words, in such a way that our students often find themselves in absurd or even embarrassing situations, if the choice of context is not the correct one (to overcome this obstacle, a situational view of language is suggested, based on Hymes’s *Foundations in Sociolinguistics*). However, the author of this book quite rightly points out that the register in which idioms are used does not necessarily have to be familiar, as is often believed, and gives examples illustrating cases of idioms in the most formal situations (such as, for instance, the Bible itself, which is the source of a number of these structures).

Such interest in language teaching justifies, in our opinion, the author’s choice of dictionaries, which favours definitions from “learning” dictionaries, for they are the ones most concerned with offering a clear, non-native-speaker-based definition of separate idioms and the idiom itself; although more “theoretical” studies would rather refer us to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, professor Pina does not ignore that learners (and, for that matter, many translators and almost all non-native speakers of English) use such dictionaries as their only way of access to the language.

From the lexicological point of view, the present work offers a detailed preliminary description of the structure of idioms, especially as regards their specific nature. In this respect, we have found a particularly interesting account of idioms as a separate entity, not to be confused with proverbs or phrasal verbs. Such a confusion springs, in our opinion, from the very process of language teaching, and most probably we teachers are partly to blame, for we have tended to group all those structures under the general heading

of “difficult vocabulary which cannot be literally translated.” Moreover, the author’s distinction between the origins of idioms and their context of usage allows us to understand more clearly the phenomena of context change and eventual displacements in meaning.

Thirdly, we must remember the main aim of the book, and the one to which the second part is devoted, i.e. the translation of idioms. The author has chosen to analyse versions of *On the Road* both in Spanish (*En el camino*) and in French (*Sur la route*), and examples are given in all three languages, though, for the sake of clarity and comparison, occasional examples are quoted from German and Russian. By using also the French version, which indeed is worthy of praise in that it encourages the collaboration between English and French Studies, translators’ strategies can be more easily seen, and different choices stand out clearly, above all concerning the dilemma between literal versions (maintaining the original structure) and more “creative” renderings.

An added asset to this book is that it is “user-friendly” in the most literal sense of the word, going from general to particular issues, and featuring a large number of examples and explanations, which make it accessible even for non-linguists. At the same time, it possesses a firmly grounded linguistic basis, with frequent references to literature on translation (especially to García Yebra and Eugene Nida) and to the general structuralist paradigm and mainstream semantic theory.

However, and following our previous comments on aesthetic enjoyment, we cannot conceive this book as a mere linguistic analysis, and therefore it can in no way be considered that *On the Road* is an “excuse” which illustrates a series of theories on idioms; quite on the contrary, *La idiomaticidad* constitutes a real, decided approach to Kerouac’s novel, an instrument which enables us to apprehend and enjoy it better. Such should be the pursuit of linguistics, if we want to put an end to the unjust divorce between linguistics and literature and thus put all the progress we have made over the last decades at the reader’s disposal.

Miguel Ángel Campos Pardillos

**Ch. F. Meyer. *Apposition in Contemporary English*. Studies in English Language. Cambridge. Cambridge UP, 1992, XIV + 152 pp.**

The concept of *apposition* has been, to the best of my knowledge, one of the most poorly treated by the scholars of the linguistic science, perhaps due to the fact that it is a technical term whose scope lies beyond the consciousness that, for instance, native speakers have about other linguistic entities such as transparent categories like nouns or verbs, or about primary functions like subject or predicate. Since it had not been properly analysed in traditional Greek- or Latin-based grammars, the apposition has always been a kind of rag-bag into which linguists filed those pieces of discourse which could hardly be placed under other orthodox labels. Even in studies centred upon this notion, syntactic, semantic and informational considerations mingle and blur together, and as a consequence

constituents such as those highlighted in (1)—Curme (1931)—or (2)—Meyer (this volume)—were analysed as appositions:

- (1) He came home *sick*
- (2) The suggestion *that we should put you down*

The main attempt of *Apposition in Contemporary English*, futile in our opinion, is to delimit the concept of apposition by listing its features, exclusively (I) syntactic, (II) semantic, or (III) pragmatic. The aim is not novel at all, since from the 50s there has been turning up a large number of studies with the same goal in mind. Neither can the originality of this volume under review be found in its conclusions. The proposal of a relational gradient, for which I will account below, far from being convincing, does multiply the number of linguistic dimensions of a concept which will just be operative and useful if we are able to restrict its scope to a limited group of sequences, the more homogeneous, the better.

Meyer's—University of Massachusetts, Boston—novelty is the modernity of his research methodology. The book's most important contribution is the huge amount of statistical information obtained after an in-depth analysis of data taken from three popular computerised corpora of the English language, to wit, *Survey of English Usage Corpus of Written English*, *Brown University Standard Corpus of Present-day American English* and *London-Lund Corpus of Spoken British English*. Those linguistic descriptions which in the first place make use of actual corpora have the immediate advantage of taking into account a wide range of examples, contrarily to the classic generative framework, which have solely analysed a relatively small number of laboratory utterances, according in most cases to the author's subjective criteria—frequently capricious and always extremely limited. In the current "Corpus-Linguistics fever," the *Survey* has consolidated its position as the standard corpus of written English in the U. K., the *Lund* as the one of oral British English, and the *Brown* as the clearest representative of the North-American variety of the English language.

As one could easily perceive from Meyer (1991)—article which curiously has not been included among the *References* of this book—*Apposition in Contemporary English* turns out to be the definite study at least from the author's point of view. Neither imagination nor technical effort has been spared in order to analyse statistically every possible variable and combination of variables which might have any effect in the concept of apposition. We must not be surprised at Meyer's use of thirteen fields and their related variables in the description of every individual example of apposition he identified in the aforementioned corpora. By means of a powerful program such as *SPSS*, this volume displays more than 75 tables and hundreds of examples perfectly classified.

The book's most serious weaknesses spring from precisely the non-statistical part of the study, especially the first and final chapters, in which, as well as in former publications by the same scholar, Meyer tries to characterize the syntactic relationship between the members in an apposition as one exclusive of these constructions, different from traditional coordination, subordination or complementation. Nevertheless, he, in practice, limits himself to giving some characteristics—arbitrary in my opinion—and to

recognizing that a certain group of the examples under analysis are in-between one of the classic types of syntactic relations and that new one of apposition. We will focus on this topic below when we review those chapters in more detail.

*Apposition in Contemporary English* consists of five chapters, two appendices and a works-cited list which, although a bit short, turns out to be a splendid specific bibliography on this topic. On the one hand, Appendix 1 gives an account of every possible value assigned by Meyer to each of the thirteen fields to which we referred above, and which shape the individual registry of each apposition entry found in the corpora. The second appendix puts forward the numerical data of the number of appositions *per corpus* and genre, as well as relative percentages taking into account the number of words which every sample has. On the other hand, the first and final chapters amount to respectively a theoretical introduction and a final-remark section about the concept of apposition, the latter of which, i.e. Chapter 5, is lavishly illustrated with statistical tables. In the ensuing lines I will explore the contents of every section, paying special attention to those of theoretical nature.

The first chapter opens with some criticism of former studies on the apposition, highlighting both their too restrictive or too permissive character and their heterogeneity, and which thus were scarcely scientific. The author pays special heed to Quirk *et al*'s (1985) three well-known criteria applying to *strict full appositions*, to wit, (I) omissibility of either member, (II) functional identity with respect to the clause to which the apposition belongs, and (III) extralinguistic coreferentiality between both units. Meyer ends this introductory chapter by putting forward a table marshalling the characteristics of his peculiar notion of apposition, which

is best viewed as a grammatical relation that stands in opposition to relations such as complementation or modification. The relation of apposition is realized by constructions having specific syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic characteristics that both define the relation of apposition and distinguish it from other grammatical relations. (5)

Those "other grammatical relations" are strictly those of complementation—exocentrism, syntactic interordination or interdependence—subordination—modification or expansion— and coordination. Nevertheless, in that table just mentioned the apposition is not distinguished at all from the traditional relations. Meyer, under the column labelled "Syntactic Characteristics" poses a list of the possible configurations that the members may show, of the functions of the construction as a whole, its binary vs non-binary structure as well as the tendency the members may have to appear either juxtaposed or separated by any material. In Chapter 2 we will find the criteria the author has followed so as to classify a given construction as apposition. However, I do think that threefold division of the linguistic sequences which derive from members in apposition is most valuable. This first chapter ends with some technical information on the three corpora, as well as on the research method and computational tools used.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the syntactic treatment of appositions. In the first part, Meyer explores (I) the different categories of the members, concluding that the nominal apposition is the most productive type in English—55% out of the whole—and (II) the

syntactic composition of each of the members. More simply put, the main concern of this section is to put forward a detailed statistical analysis of the configurational properties of appositions in English, especially the relationship of pre- and postmodification between each member's head and the peripheral material. Besides, here is also introduced the metalinguistic variable of "genre," interacting with the frequencies of every type of appositive phrasal construction.

The apposition of a noun phrase and a clausal or sentential constituent is the third type which is most productive in English—15%—after nominal and non-nominal appositions—the latter, with a frequency of 17%. The second members which usually take part in clausal appositions are *that*-clauses and *to*-clauses, attested in (3) and (4):

- (3) *The fact that the testimony of the Spirit is taken an objective form in a people and words and actions* preserves it from the arbitrariness of subjectivism and individualism ([49] in Meyer 22)
- (4) He spoke of *his desire to promote the abolition of slavery by peaceable means* . . . ([47] in Meyer 21)

By no means do I accept that (3) and (4) show examples of appositions, not even within Meyer's theoretical framework. If appositions are a peculiar kind of syntactic relationship, *ie* different from complementation, coordination or subordination, on what scientific basis can we ground the exocentric nature of the examples above, in which the constituents following *fact* and *desire*, respectively, are absolutely governed and even, let's say, required? In what way can we not allow for the existence of relations of complementation between *fact* and the *that*-clause in view of the first unit's, in broad outline, "subcategorizing" its following argument, or how can we neglect that relationship between *desire* and the *to*-clause if we compare it to predicate versions such as (5)?

- (5) He desired to promote the abolition of slavery by peaceable means

A second part within this chapter is centred on the existence or not of specific markers of the appositive relationship, which, to the best of my knowledge, far from being simply "either optional or obligatory," as the author points out in p. 25, (I) can exist optionally, (II) can be required, or (III)—and here is the difference—are impossible—cf. (4). Let us remember that 97% of the appositions in Meyer's data-base have no markers at all, according to a table in Chapter 5. After Meyer's claim just quoted, we come across numerical tables with every type of marker, and the kind of units "marked" in each occurrence. For example, *of* is said to be a marker in utterances such as (6) below. Again, and turning back to the discussion of the previous paragraph, I cannot identify any apposition or any appositive member introduced by *of* in (6). The syntactic relationship between *the problem* and *of rural tenancy* is not different from that of modification or even complementation.

- (6) It should also be recognized that *the problems of rural tenancy* cannot be solved by administrative decrees alone ([71] in Meyer 29)

After sections dealing with the available categories in an appositive construction, Meyer gives a brilliant analysis of the non-nominal appositions, which, in my opinion, amounts to one of the most useful parts of the volume under review.

In the following part of Chapter 2, the author discusses the syntactic functions of the whole appositive construction with respect to the clause in which it appears. The conclusion is that the function “object” is particularly frequent—55%—if compared to, for instance, that of subject—33%. An explanation for those figures is given in the following chapters, in which Meyer takes into account pragmatic factors, to wit, the constituents’ weight, end-focus, and the like, which strongly influence the organization and placement of apposition in discourse.

Once topics such as the members’ juxtaposition, its number, or the exclusive twofold nature of appositions have already been dealt with, Meyer brings about his claim for a syntactic gradient of the relation “apposition” with respect to the other types upon which we commented above.

If however, apposition is considered an undifferentiated, or *gradable*, relation, we can distinguish those constructions that are most appositional—central appositions—from those that are (in varying degrees) less appositional—peripheral appositions. . . . Appositions can be either coordinative or subordinative. Those that are coordinative will be considered central appositions. Those that are subordinative will be considered peripheral appositions and on gradients between central apposition and coordination, peripheral elements . . . modification, and complementation. (41)

This quotation, in the first place, seems to collide with that in p. 5 of the book, reproduced above in this review. The adjective *gradable*—italics in the quotation are mine—in apposition with *undifferentiated* undoubtedly limits Meyer’s initial intention to oppose the appositive relation to the others usually identified in the literature. Now it seems to be the case that appositions are defined by means of their proximity or remoteness to those traditional syntactic relations, namely, coordination and subordination. Apart from that, neither can I find a justification for the implication that modification and complementation are in the middle of a scale between coordination and subordination, especially in light of Meyer’s examples of apposition which, as I pointed out above, did illustrate central cases of complementation and postmodification. As a conclusion, in those theoretical aspects, Meyer’s framework collapses, since we cannot both countenance the syntactic existence of appositions in English and at the same time agree with the fact that they comprise different syntactic relations. Meyer’s apposition should be regarded exclusively as a semantic relation. Once we take that for granted, those problematic examples classified as appositions which I here criticised are completely mitigated. Meyer is not convincing enough when he tries to add the apposition to the traditional list of syntactic relations, and consequently the goal of *Apposition in Contemporary English* cannot be found in its theoretical implications. Let’s say that appositions have just a semantic nature—and even, if one prefers, a pragmatic one—and then we will greatly benefit from this study. The

characterization of a linguistic structure must not be grounded on its partial fulfilment of any of the three criteria suggested by Meyer, to wit, (I) the omissibility of the first member, (II) of the second one, or (III) their interchangeability.

To those claims some sections are added which confuse rather than shed light on the former proposal of a gradient of syntactic relations, and the similarities that systematically need to be recognized between, for instance, appositions and relative clauses on the one hand, and those examples of *that*- or *to*-clauses and the average verbal complementation on the other.

Chapter 3, centred on meaning matters, opens with a semantic classification of appositions comprising several reflections on former studies. The main concern of the suggested typology is the distinction between those appositions whose members are extralinguistically coreferential and those which refer to different entities in the real world, such as synonymy, attribution or hyponymy. The former are quite productive in the corpora—62%—in spite of the fact that the criteria used by Meyer for their ascription to this group are unreasonably strict. Anyway, non-coreferential appositions are almost marginal, particularly those showing hyponymy. In twenty pages the author analyses each type and subtype, the description of which falls beyond the purview of this review. I will just add that, in my opinion, this is the capital section of the book.

The second part of this chapter deals with the semantic nature of the members, and their reciprocal contribution as far as meaning is concerned. In this way, a second classification—more comprehensive and accurate than Quirk *et al*'s (1985)—is drawn, whose point of departure is the axis plus/minus specificity of the second with respect to the first member.

In the third and final part of Chapter 3, Meyer develops again a gradient, semantic in this occasion, going from the most to the least appositional examples. Strictly speaking, he posits a chain whose borders are, respectively, those cases showing full coreferentiality and the semantic relation part/whole. Cataphoric reference, attribution or hyponymy would be included in the middle of the gradient.

The third of the dimensions put forward in the first pages of this volume, that is, the pragmatic one, is studied in detail in the penultimate fourth chapter. In its introductory paragraphs, Meyer places the apposition within a general theory of linguistic processing, whose main maxim is that new information occupies the last locations in a sentence. Using the author's words, "[t]hematically, apposition is a relation in which the second unit of the apposition either wholly or partially provides new information about the first unit" (92). Consequently it must not puzzle us that in 86% of the examples the second member carries new information. As far as I am concerned, since my intention is to highlight the importance of the semantic and pragmatic dimensions over the syntactic one—null in my approach—the concept of apposition is very similar to the *afterthought*—cf. Li (1976). In other words, the second member will always add new information to the first one, at least in idealistic terms. And I say "idealistic" because although sometimes the hearer or reader may know in advance the second member's informative contribution, the speaker's or writer's appealing to a so-heterodox syntactic structure as the apposition is, can only be assessed if he or she wants to put forward new information to the listener or reader. In fact, to that 86% of second members which contain, according to Meyer, new

information, we could well add the remaining 14%, which includes every second member carrying partial given informative contents. In other words, the concept of apposition that I am suggesting here lets us treat terms such as (7) as constituents carrying new information, even though they have known material, like *visitor*.

- (7) My agreement carries me from one division to another but only in the capacity as a, of a *visitor*, a *visitor from above*, you see ([2] in Meyer 93)

I consider exaggerated Meyer's labelling of members such as those in (8) or (9) as informatively old just because they contain a single—anaphoric—pronoun, and a repeated form of *be* respectively:

- (8) He owns everything that isn't given to the mortgage company. That is to say, he owns the difference between what is bespoke and its actual value  
 (9) His face was altered, [that is to say] was thinner.

As Meyer correctly claims, those final members with given or old information are particularly operative in spoken language, since they function as linguistic mechanisms aiding “in the comprehension and production of spoken texts . . . [creating] parallelism, and . . . [emphasizing] important information in the apposition” (95). In written texts their usefulness decreases because the reader has a powerful tool which oral communication lacks, to wit, *feedback*. As a consequence, the use of appositions in written language is aesthetically marked.

After a small digression with further comments on appositive markers in which its informative role in mediating between the first and the second members is underscored, Chapter 5's most extensive part deals with the frequencies shown by appositions in every sample's genre—fiction, conversation, science, journalism, and so on—as well as the standard semantic types found in those stylistic variants just mentioned.

Chapter 5, which closes the book, summarizes the conclusions drawn from the main sections of the study, and adds new tables and diagrams demonstrating the previous chapter's essential concern, that is, the distribution of the different types of apposition in the corpora. This brief section's only novelty is that “variation in apposition usage is motivated not by differences between American and British English but by the varying functional needs of the different genres of English” (126).

To sum up, the book's typographical and graphic quality contrasts with the serious flaws of the theoretical framework put forward. Nevertheless, even though the final results undoubtedly lose value, neither Meyer's felicitous contribution to the computational study of the apposition in actual corpora of the English language nor his plausible rigour in classifying this linguistic structure *semantically* is diminished at all.

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## Recommended Books

**The Editors mention here some recent valuable books within the field of English studies, or fields closely related to it, that are thought worthy of particular attention:**

The series Translation Studies, published by Routledge and edited by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, has been enriched by two new titles: *Translation as Social Action: Russian and Bulgarian Perspectives*, ed. and trans. Palma Zlateva (London: Routledge, 1993), 132 pp. £ 35 hb. £ 14.99 pb., and *Contemporary Translation Theories*, by Edwin Gentzler (London: Routledge, 1993), 224 pp. £ 35 hb. £ 10.99 pb. The former offers Eastern European views on translation as a field in which cultures converge and influence one another, whereas the latter is an excellent survey of five recent approaches to translation—the American translation workshop, the “science” of translation, translation studies, polysystem theory, and deconstruction. Both books can be warmly recommended to students, specialists in translation, and linguists.

As far as literary texts are concerned, we present here two new titles of the series Letras Universales, published in Spain by Cátedra, which offers scrupulous editions and translations into Spanish of celebrated foreign literary works. These titles are *La señora Dalloway*, ed. María Lozano and trans. Mariano Baselga (Madrid: Cátedra, 1993), 333 pp., and *Middlemarch: un estudio de la vida de provincias*, ed. Pilar Hidalgo and trans. María Engracia Pujals (Madrid: Cátedra, 1993), 954 pp. Both editions carry scholarly introductions by two Spanish professors that place both author and work against their appropriate background, the texts being fully annotated to facilitate the reading. We should also mention the recent translation into Spanish of Virginia Woolf's *Al faro*, trans. José Luis López Muñoz (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1993), 253 pp.

Finally, a comparative study of the Spanish Golden Age Drama and the English Elizabethan Theatre has been published by Tamesis Books Limited (*Vidas paralelas: el teatro español y el teatro isabelino 1580-1680*, ed. Anita K. Stoll [London and Madrid: Tamesis Books Limited, 1993], 141 pp.). It covers issues such as the presence of English characters on the Spanish stage and vice versa, the rebellious masses in Shakespeare and Lope de Vega, the semiotics of the dramatic representation of women in Thomas Kyd and Pedro Calderón de la Barca, the myth of Coriolano-Veturia in Calderón de la Barca and Shakespeare, the wardrobe in Elizabethan drama and in the Spanish *corral de comedias*, etc. The readership aimed at is obviously students of Renaissance drama—both English and Spanish—and scholars or critics working in this field.