correspondence, reporting plays a fundamental role in creating a sense of immediacy, vividness and intimacy. A. Sairio examines the use of progressives in the letters of Elizabeth Montagu in the 1730s; regarded as a feature of conversation and colloquialism employed as a means to create an illusion of immediacy, progressives are seen to be used in letters written to friends, though never in letters written to family members. I. Tieken-Boon van Ostade demonstrates how abbreviations are regarded as an index of politeness in 18th-century letters, but are accepted in private use only, thus revealing whether the letter was a draft, a copy, or the version of the letter that was actually sent. The chapter by E. Seoane highlights the stylistic changes affecting scientific prose when the code choice is between British and American English. Finally, C. Claridge ('"With the most superlative felicitee": Functions of the Superlative in 19th Century English') shows how the use of superlatives is dictated by stylistic and textual constraints, such as the trends towards subjectification - in which words and constructions develop meanings reflecting the attitude of the speaker - and towards semantic bleaching, owing to which the force of the superlative itself may need to be boosted.

Overall, this volume gives evidence of the considerable progress made in various fields of English historical linguistics – a subject that has broadened its empirical basis and strengthened its methodological procedures, thus achieving new results in many significant areas.

[Stefania Maria Maci]

HORNERO, Ana María / LUZON, María José / MURILLO Silvia (eds.), *Corpus Linguistics. Applications for the Study of English*, Peter Lang, Bern 2006, pp. 526, ISBN 3-03910-675-9, € 76,00.

The present volume is a collection of papers presented at the *XII Susanne Hübner Seminar*, held at the University of Zaragoza in November 2003. By gathering the contributions of several university researchers from Spain and other European countries, the US and Asia, the volume gives a clear and exhaustive presentation of the great variety of topics which characterise the state of the art in Corpus Linguistics research. The book is divided into seven sections (Diachronic Studies; Pragmatic Analysis; Cognitive Linguistics; Applications in Translation; Applications in English for Specific Purposes; Corpus Design; Oral Corpora), which cover a wide range of approaches and applications of Corpus Linguistics.

The opening paper of the first section, by T. Nevalainen ('Corpora, historical sociolinguistics and the transmission of linguistic change') deals with the transmission problem, a key issue in language change. To illustrate the claim that not all changes necessarily progress in the same direction across generations and

that the findings based on one variety should not be generalized to all other varieties of a given language, she uses the data provided by the Helsinki Corpus, the Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots and the Corpus of Early English Correspondence. The second paper by L. S. Stvan ('Diachronic change in the uses of the discourse markers *why* and *say* in American English') focuses on the distribution of the discourse markers *why* and *say* in written vs. spoken form and on their date of appearance. Finally, the paper by A. Hornero ('Marry, hang thee, brock!: linguistic tools for impoliteness in Shakespeare's works') analyses the different possibilities of breaking the linguistic norms of courtesy in Elizabethan England, by using a corpus consisting of three romantic comedies and three tragedies.

The second section opens with the contribution of K. Abe ('"How may I help you?" – Advice by radio in Japan and the US'), who compares patterns of advice-giving discourse in the USA and Japan, basing her study on a corpus made up of recordings of radio programs. Instead, A. Pinna's contribution ('Discourse prosody of some intensifiers in G.W. Bush's Presidential speeches') investigates the intensifiers *absolutely, deeply* and *highly*, demonstrating how these units play an important role in the organization of discourse and in the manipulation of the audience. C. Santamaría ('Preference structure in agreeing and disagreeing responses') analyses four conversations from the SBCSAE / CREA corpus to show certain differences concerning agreeing and disagreeing turns in American English and Spanish. The section concludes with the chapters by J. Marín (Epistemic stance and commitment in the discourse fact and opinion in English and Spanish: a comparable corpus study'), S. Molina ('The expression of deonticity in English and Spanish in news and editorials'), L. Hidalgo ('The expression of writer stance by modal adjectives and adverbs in a comparable corpus of English and Spanish newspaper discourse') and E. Martinez ('The verbal expression of belief and hearsay in English and Spanish: evidence from newspaper discourse'), which are part of a common research project on evidentiality and writer stance in English and Spanish, thus sharing a corpus consisting of press editorials and news reports.

The third section, on Cognitive Linguistics, includes chapters by O. Díez ('Metaphor, metonymy and colour terms: a cognitive analysis') and C. Inchaurralde ('A corpus-based approach to the study of counterfactual English conditionals'), both based on the British National Corpus. O. Díez in particular, analyses the collocation patterns that exist between colour adjectives and body parts, whereas C. Inchaurralde studies the formal characteristics of English conditionals.

The fourth section collects several papers, which focus on translation problems. The section opens with J. Marco ('A corpus-based approach to the translation of evaluative adjectives as modality markers'), who uses the Bank of English corpus to signal the translation problems caused by evaluative adjectives and proposes the use of monolingual or bilingual corpora to overcome such problems. B. Mott uses a collection of translation tests made by Spanish students and teachers to search

possible equivalents in Spanish of the English middle passive. M.P. Navarro's work ('Enrichment and loosening: an on-going process in the practice of translation, a study based on some translations') is based on a corpus of several complete translations into Spanish of *Gulliver's Travels* and demonstrates how translators shape, in more or less implicit ways, the information that reaches them and shows to what extent they are faithful to the author's intentions. N. Ramón's paper ('Using comparable corpora for English-Spanish contrasts: implications and applications in translation') argues that comparable corpora are an excellent tool for English-Spanish contrastive studies, thanks to the authenticity of the language samples. P. Rodríguez ('The application of electronic corpora to translation teaching within a task-based approach') concludes the section arguing that translation teaching should embrace a corpus-based approach to make the learning process more systematic and comprehensive.

In the fifth section, R. Lorés ('The referential function of metadiscourse: *thing(s)* and *idea(s)* in academic lectures') explores the referential function of the nouns *thing* and *idea* in academic speech, whereas M.J. Luzón ('Key lexical items in computing product reviews') uses computational analysis tools to show that the meaning and collocational behaviour of words in a genre depend highly on the purpose of the latter. S. Olivé ('A corpus-based study of hedging in Spanish medical discourse: analysing genre patterns in Spanish language biomedical research articles') carries out an intergeneric and contrastive study (English/Spanish) and proposes a taxonomy of hedging in Spanish biomedical discourse. S. Murillo ('The role of reformulation markers in academic discourse'), C. Pérez-Llantada ('Assessing corpus-driven materials for the teaching of interactive features of speech') and I. Vázquez ('A corpus-based approach to the study of the distribution and function of nominalization in academic discourse') all use parts of the MICASE corpus to highlight the peculiarities of the genre of academic lectures, analysing the functional variability of some high frequency discourse particles and offering pedagogical suggestions for genre-based ESP/EAP curricula; they also investigate the patterns of variation in the use of nominalization in lectures and dissertation defences, and its importance in the construction and expression of scientific meaning. Verdaguer and Laso conclude the section analysing the occurrence and meaning of delexicalised verbs in a corpus of scientific English.

In the sixth section, devoted to corpus construction, E. Asprey, L. Burbano and K. Wallace ('The Survey of Regional English and its methodology: conception, refinement and implementation') present SuRE, a database of spoken British English used to study regional variation in the British Isles. C. Valero ('Ad hoc corpus in Public Service Interpreting. Issues of design and applicability') presents a corpus of conversations between health-care workers and foreign-born users in Spain and in the United States.

In the seventh and last section of the book, dedicated to spoken-language corpora, P. García and N. Drescher ('A corpus-based analysis of pragmatic

meaning') present two studies where pragmatic meaning is analysed with corpus-based techniques. Pérez-Guerra analyses written-to-be-read and written-to-be-spoken textual productions from the British National Corpus to research the linguistic features, which determine the degree of (positive or negative) orality. Finally, in 'Non-native intonation: What information does it transmit?' D. Ramírez suggests the use of comparative computerized spoken corpora to provide an accurate description of learners' use of spoken English and the avoidance, overuse and underuse of certain intonation patterns by non-native subjects.

Thanks to the great variety of topics and approaches (quantitative as well as qualitative) presented in this volume, readers will have a clear and exhaustive idea of the present state of the art in Corpus Linguistics. The breadth and depth of the researches presented in this volume constitute therefore an important and valuable point of reference for future studies in the field.

[Larissa D'Angelo]

SILVER, Marc S., *Language Across Disciplines. Towards a Critical Reading of Contemporary Academic Discourse*, Brown Walker Press, Boca Raton, Florida 2006, pp. 176, ISBN 1-59942-402-9, € 14,00.

Academic discourse is undoubtedly the principal means through which knowledge is established nowadays, whether through a university lecture, a research article or a conference. At the same time, English has become today's globalized language, used to communicate and spread such knowledge. It is within this framework that Silver attempts to shift the attention from 'what' is written or said within the academic discourse, to the often ignored (but not less important) question of 'how' what is written or said is expressed or received. More specifically, he sets out to explore ways in which writers from two academic disciplines – History and Economics – present themselves and their knowledge claims to their readers.

To carry out this investigation, a wide range of lexico-grammatical, pragmatic and logico-argumentative elements from research articles are considered. Basing his methodology mainly on two approaches – discourse analysis and corpus linguistics – the author seeks not only to understand how common lexico-grammatical and pragmatic elements of the texts work to persuade the readers of the knowledge claims the writers bring forth, but also how scholars construct their disciplinary identities. Although numerous textual elements are investigated, the focus is set on those features of language which convey evaluation and stance, as well as forms of reporting, temporal framing and argumentative roles. Also other textual elements,