

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,

such as adverbs and adverbials of stance, modal forms and semantic resonance of verbs are analysed, as indicators of the writer's disciplinary persona.

The volume consists of five chapters. The first one situates the work within contemporary research on academic discourse in applied linguistics and adjacent fields. The importance of investigating evaluation in academic writing is explained and the question of the role of English as a global or world language is introduced. From the following chapters we learn that for the present work, three corpora and a number of sub-corpora have been compiled. In particular, in Chapter 2 a corpus made up of History research articles coming exclusively from university presses based in the United States (HUS Corpus) is used to analyse how historians theorize their knowledge and investigate what strategies they employ when they write in or on their field. In the case of this corpus and its relative sub-corpus made up of article openings (HOPUS), the decision to restrict the investigation to articles published in the United States was taken because the main aim was to identify the extent to which members of the same discipline may condition each other's writing within a national or geo-cultural context. It is in this context that the author investigates first how communities of discourse can affect the way individual academics construct knowledge through their writing and then contrasts how historians theorize the role and importance of language in their discipline, with what they actually do when they write academic articles.

On the other hand, the corpus used in Chapters 3 and 4 (HEC), also made up of articles in Economics and History, is compiled without any national or geo-cultural restrictions. In Chapter 3 the corpus is used to explore the significance of 'story-telling' for historical writing, questioning how time and temporal play is used by historians to constitute historical narrative. The different temporal planes concealed in the historical text are explored and the events rhetorically weaved together by the writer, creating consensus for the story, are carefully charted. In Chapter 4, instead, the research is extended to the field of Economics, so that a comparative and contrastive analysis is carried out on the different writer positions, which characterise these disciplines. Finally, the chapter explores how writers import voices into the text to define and negotiate their disciplinary persona. In the fifth and last chapter, the author uses the HECM corpus, a slightly modified version of the HEC used in Chapters 3 and 4 (three extra journals were added, one in History and two in Economics, so as to have a total of ten journals for each field), to continue the comparative analysis of History and Economics texts, focusing on the use of emphatics. In particular, a selected list of emphatics is studied in order to determine how they vary across disciplines and to identify the different roles they play across sections and moves. The Economics articles seem to prefer inferential forms of reasoning, as opposed to the more contrastive and conciliatory strategies used in History. This difference in particular, has a direct bearing on the variety, the scope and the semantic preference of the adverbs used as emphatics in the two disciplines.

Overall, this engaging volume presents an important study of contemporary academic discourse that will certainly serve as a point of reference for future investigations in the field. Furthermore, because the author does not simply use a ‘corpus driven’ approach, but counterbalances discourse-based and corpus-based analyses to establish a constructive dialogue between the two approaches, the readers interested in the application of these two methodologies will find in this volume a valuable example of good practice.

[Larissa D’Angelo]

HYLAND, Ken / BONDI, Marina (eds.), *Academic Discourse Across Disciplines*, Peter Lang, Bern [Linguistic Insights 42], 2006, p. 320, ISBN 3-03911-183-3, € 50,30 + VAT.

In the last two decades, academic discourse has undergone several significant changes. The original view of the 1980s (cf. Bloor and Bloor 1986) – centred on the hypothesis of a common core for academic English, and aimed at defining its distinctive patterns and features (in terms of register, lexical density, nominalised style, impersonality, formality, precision, etc.) – has been gradually supplanted by comparative studies (Mauranen 1993; Crammond 1998) which have demonstrated how varied and articulated academic discourse is, and not only in terms of content and terminology. In recent times the focus has shifted from the description of a few identifying features of scholarly discourse to the discussion of its many variables, approached not as a cohesive or monolithic unit, but as a result of the interplay between institutional meanings and values, and between practices, strategies and conventions, all of which are expressions of specific academic communities.

The papers by applied linguists and EAP practitioners gathered in this volume reflect such trends and analytical perspectives and discuss cross-disciplinary variation in written and spoken scholarly discourse in terms of rhetorical choices, authorial stance, engagement, and argumentative strategies, drawing on corpora to illustrate concepts and notions, to test hypotheses and to explore methodologies. They are organized in three main sections, assessing the issue of disciplinary differentiation from different angles: first variation in written argumentation and reasoning; secondly aspects of written interactions in academic texts; and thirdly language variation in spoken discourse.

The collection opens with a chapter by Ken Hyland which serves as a useful introduction to the volume, providing an overview of recent research on disciplinary variation. It describes how such key concepts as *discipline* or *discourse community* have evolved over time and discusses the main types of differentiation