Corpus Linguistics. *Applications for the Study of English*

Ana María Hornero, María José Luzón & Silvia Murillo (eds.).
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Over the past 15 years, corpus linguistics (CL) has emerged as an important area of applied linguistics research and it has been used for various purposes in applied linguistics. A good number of authors have devoted their research to the development of applied discourse analysis, lexicography, and language teaching (Biber et al., 1998), or to the study of historical linguistics and language varieties (Meyer, 1992). The new publication edited by Hornero and her colleagues offers a multi-faceted combination of sub-areas within the ample field of CL and its applications.

Roberta Smith (2005), on judging a show by its title, wrote the following words: "the title is a flare fired from an ocean liner that has yet to crest the horizon; it lights up the night sky regardless of whether the vessel is sinking or there's a party onboard." From the point of view of genre studies, we would rather say that a title should be more like a lighthouse leading sailors safely to port. In *Corpus Linguistics. Applications for the Study of English* there is no such ambiguity, as described by Smith; it actually leads the reader into the right direction. Its title is expressive enough to invite the reader into its pages and notice that the book responds to the expectations created, thus fulfilling one of the main functions of a book review, as postulated by Motta-Roth (1998: 35), of inserting the book in the field. Furthermore, the blurb provided on the back cover of the book complements this information by saying that this collection of essays "covers a wide range of approaches and methodologies and reflects current linguistic research".

The popularity acquired by the Hübner Seminar, at the University of Zaragoza, whose communications and papers presented at the 12th edition (November 2003) constitute the contents of this volume, speaks for itself. It is enough to have a look at the number and category of scholars from European, American and Asian universities. In addition and from the onset, it should be clearly said that the three editors have done an impressive editorial work for this 526-page volume.

The book is organized in seven different and clearly distinguishable parts covering a wide range of areas, such as diachronic studies, pragmatic analyses, cognitive linguistics, translation and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), as well as several papers on corpus design and research. In the opening pages of the volume

("Foreword," pp. 11-20), the editors provide a detailed description of the contents of the book, distributed by specific areas, from which we can obtain a clear and detailed picture of what the book is about. However, the first conclusion one draws from reading the book is that there is a lot more to it than just CL; through different types of corpora, the authors analyze areas related to our daily teaching/learning activities.

In the opening paper, T. Nevalainen ("Corpora, historical sociolinguistics and the transmission of linguistic change," pp. 23-37) contends that language varieties progress differently across generations as well as across varieties of a given language. A. M. Hornero ("*Marry, nag thee, brock!*: Linguistic tools for impoliteness in Shakespeare's works," pp.39-59) shows how corpus is also perfectly applicable to literary studies in her analysis of Shakespeare's works. Similarly, M. P. Navarro ("*Enrichment* and *Loosening*: An on-going process in the practice of translation. A study based on some translations of *Gulliver's Travels*," pp. 269-286) studies the process of translation of Jonathan Swift's work.

The majority of papers, however, deal with language as such. In the first group we should place those dedicated to English varieties. For instance, L. S. Stvan ("Diachronic change in the uses of the discourse markers *why* and *say* in American English," pp. 61-76) takes a diachronic look at how two discourse markers change in American English throughout the 20th century. E. Asprey at al. ("The survey of regional English and its methodology: Conception, refinement and implementation," pp. 431-449), in turn, analyze regional English through which they document British English dialects in a joint effort of the Universities of Leeds and Sheffield. Similarly, M. D. Ramírez ("Non-native intonation: What information does it transmit," pp. 507-526) takes a close look at intonation problems by non-native speakers of English by comparing cross-linguistically learner and native English to show, following a Hallidayan premise, that changes in intonation also represent semantic changes.

Corpus-based techniques and orality are undertaken by P. García and N. Drescher ("Corpus-based analysis of pragmatic meaning," pp. 465-481) in two studies. They arrive at the conclusion that corpus-based research is an effective device to analyze pragmatic meaning through the integration of conversation analysis and discourse analysis. I agree with the authors that the methods described are of interest to corpus linguists, discourse analysts, and pragmaticians. Finally, J. Pérez-Guerra ("How oral is this text? Revisiting orality through multidimensional techniques," pp. 483-506), based on Biber's multidimensional model and materials from the British National Corpus, explores written-to-be-read, written-to-be-spoken and spoken textual productions to provide linguistic features through which the degree of orality shown by the samples may be determined.

Political speeches have often been the object of study by linguists (Stembrouck, 1992; Blas Arroyo, 2000), and the paper by A. Pinna ("Discourse prosody of some intensifiers in G. W. Bush's presidential speeches," pp. 93-111) is another of these examples. The author looks at the use of adverbs of degree in political speeches to analyze discourse prosody and the role of these intensifiers in identifying specific units of meaning. Also based on spoken language, C. Santamaría-García' study ("Preference structure in agreeing and disagreeing responses," pp. 113-123) compares 600 turns of conversation in English and Spanish. The author uses Cartwright's (1998) software package for the analysis of this conversational material to show that responses in both language have a similar structure. K. Abe ("*How may I help you?* – Advice by radio in Japan and the U.S.," pp. 79-92) also takes a cross-cultural pragmatic look at advice-giving discourse in Japanese and American radio broadcasts.

In another group of papers, a good number of them touch different aspects of contrastive studies in reference to newspaper discourse in Spanish and English. For instance, L. Hidalgo ("The expression of writer stance by modal adjectives and adverbs in comparable corpus of English and Spanish newspaper discourse," pp. 125-140) looks contrastively at the use of adjectives and adverbs, while E. Martínez ("The verbal expression of belief and hearsay in English and Spanish: Evidence from newspaper discourse," pp. 159-175) studies how verbal expressions of belief and hearsay are employed in newspaper columns. J. I. Marín ("Epistemic stance and commitment in the discourse of fact and opinion in English and Spanish: A comparable corpus study," pp. 141-157) also explores similarities and differences in reference to the information published, and similarly S. Molina ("The expression of deonticity in English and Spanish in news and editorials," pp. 177-194) analyzes how modality is expressed from a contrastive stance in news and editorials and what their quantitative and qualitative differences are in the use of these contrastive devices.

In a paper addressed to translators, J. Marco ("A corpus-based approach to the translation of evaluative adjectives as modality markers," pp. 241-254) discusses translation problems with evaluative adjectives as modality markers using the Bank of English corpus. B. Mott ("Translation equivalents of English middle passives in Spanish," pp. 255-268) analyzes problems particularly related to the dichotomy transitivity/intransitivity when translating from English to Spanish. Through this analysis, he aims at pointing out "ways in which the concept expressed via middles or mediopassives is conveyed in Spanish" (p. 258). Translation is also the subject of two more studies: the first one, by N. Ramón ("Using comparable corpora for English-Spanish contrasts: Implications and applications in translation," pp. 287-299) provides implications and advice on using comparable corpora in contrastive studies, while the second, by P. Rodríguez ("The application of electronic corpora to translation

teaching within a task-based approach", pp. 301-312) gives insights into the use of a corpus-based methodology in the task-based approach to teaching in order to make "the learning process more systematic and comprehensive." In this wide category of contrastive and translation studies we should also include the problematic issues related to corpus design and the so-called public service interpretation as analyzed by C. Valero ("An ad hoc corpus in public service interpreting. Issues of design and applicability," pp. 451-462).

Cognitive linguistics also has some space in this volume. O. I. Díez ("Metaphor, metonymy and colour terms: A cognitive analysis," pp. 197-214) studies collocational patterns between colors and body parts through which metonymic or metaphoric meanings are activated. C. Inchaurralde ("A corpus-based approach to the study of counterfactual English conditionals," pp. 215-238) uses British National Corpus samples to study formal characteristics of conditionals. A sub-corpus of 500 random sentences with *if*-conditionals is analyzed and it is concluded that tense combinations are varied and also that, in a tentative classification of counterfactual conditionals, their evaluation of impossibility ranges from more subjectivity to more objectivity.

Finally, a group of papers under the general subtitle of "Applications in English for Specific Purposes" may raise the debate of re-defining what exactly falls under the ESP umbrella. We would have to include there the analysis of news and editorials, as seen in papers mentioned above, or the modality discussion in journalistic discourse. Perhaps "genre studies" would have been a better choice, since the papers included discuss academic lectures (R. Lorés, "The referential function of metadiscourse: *Thing[s]* and *Idea[s]* in academic lectures," pp. 315-333, and S. Murillo, "The role of reformulation markers in academic lectures," pp. 353-364), reports (M. J. Luzón, "Key lexical items in computing product reviews," pp. 335-351), research articles in Spanish (Oliver del Olmo, "A corpus-based study of hedging in Spanish medical discourse: Analysing genre patterns in Spanish language biomedical research articles," pp. 365-384), lectures and student presentations (C. Pérez-Llantada, "Genre-based pragmatic variability of interactive features in academic speech," pp. 385-397), or nominalization in different genres (I. Vázquez, "A corpus-based approach to the distribution of nominalization in academic discourse," pp. 399-416).

By way of a general evaluation it must be said that this is a perfect example of a state-of-the-art volume in which the communion between applied discourse analysis and CL is fully brought up. As the editors point out, the papers presented "give an idea of the great variety of topics which characterize the present state of the art in the research on Corpus Linguistics" (p. 11). I find no better compliment than this which is to be understood as an enthusiastic recommendation of this volume. I am sure

readers will find in it sufficient food for thought to open up new areas of research in the field of CL.

Revised by **Jordi Piqué-Angordans**, Universitat de València (Spain).

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