

MOSKOWICH-SPIEGEL FANDIÑO, ISABEL & BEGOÑA CRESPO GARCÍA 2004: *New Trends in English Historical Linguistics: An Atlantic View*. A Coruña (Spain): Universidade da Coruña. 243 pp.

New Trends in English Historical Linguistics: An Atlantic View, edited by Moskowich-Spiegel Fandiño and Crespo García, is a recent compendium of several articles and reflections on the newest findings and trends in English Historical Linguistics. In fact, this book appears as a useful summary of the last innovations on the theoretical (and not so theoretical!) aspects of Historical Linguistics.

The introduction of the book, signed by both editors, becomes a true defence of Linguistics as a science worth of being studied, apart from offering the reader a short but complete review of the pathway followed until reaching the status given to it today. The new trends on the study of Historical Linguistics, hand in hand with the branch of Sociolinguistics since the last decades of the 20th century, are also dealt with in the introduction, which ends by explaining how the set of articles featured in the book has to do both with Linguistics and Philology.

Various well-known scholars and specialists on the field of English Historical Linguistics have contributed to the monograph with good-quality articles. John Anderson, in his article on syntactic change and on the development of subjunctive periphrases in English, regrets the traditional treatment of phonology and syntax and “the relative neglect of syntactic categorisation” (p. 70) until present times. So he has suggested a new type of analysis in terms of notionally-based categories applicable to the changes involving some of the most common modal English verbs. Fran Colman, for her part, offers us a defence of Philology. As this discipline is concerned with internal and external linguistic reconstructions, Colman avoids defining it as a “closed discipline”. She also presents a study of personal names on Anglo-Saxon coins as evidence

for reconstructing the Old English language. The only Spanish contributor to the volume, Luis Iglesias-Rábade, introduces a corpus-based study on Middle English prepositions referring to path. His research, full of graphs and figures, has been based on the texts available in the *Helsinki Corpus of Middle English*, and it provides some noteworthy conclusions on semantic and pragmatic terms.

All the above papers deal with Old and Middle English. The fourth article in *New Trends in English Historical Linguistics: An Atlantic View* discusses the grammaticalization process of the progressive aspect in English during the 18th century. Professor Catherine Smith has used a corpus of personal letters from well-known writers and authors of that time, such as Joseph Addison, Alexander Pope or Jonathan Swift. In the paper “Evidence for Diachronic Semantic Change in the Historical Thesaurus of English: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach”, Louise Sylvester studies the semantic shift of some words along the history of English. She has completed her evidences with considerations on cognitive psychology, which I personally found really adequate for a type of study dealing with semantic change.

The last article in the volume, signed by Yoko Iyeiri, studies the presence of the auxiliary *do* in negations in several literary works of the contemporary period. She recognises that former studies on the development of *do* have only taken into account evidence until 1700. In her article, she proves that there are several conditions underlying the use of negative constructions with or without *do* in the eighteenth century.

In a little more than 200 pages, the book reviewed here offers the reader some of the latest conclusions and reflections on the discipline of English Historical Linguistics. I reckon that it is a book for linguists and scholars who are very much into Historical Linguistics, and specially for those who may be only interested in the kinds of studies described in the different articles. However, the introduction offers wider contributions to the discipline and to Philology in general.

Reviews

In my opinion, the high quality of the different papers included in the volume, as well as the introduction, outstandingly show the increasing interest on exploring older stages of the English language. I personally agree with the idea that it is impossible to understand a language fully without looking at its development diachronically. *New Trends in English Historical Linguistics: An Atlantic View* helps scholars deepen in that view, apart from widening it by completing “our original ‘Atlantic view’ on Historical Linguistics [...] (with more Eastern perspectives” (p. 27).

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