Abstracts

The term apposition has a long history but lacks a general, clear-cut definition. The present volume sets out to investigate apposition in detail and to try to find out why the term has been used to refer to 'such a variegated group of structures' (p 13).

   After providing a short background to the history of the study of apposition, the author deals with close, or restrictive, apposition, arguing that 'there is no such thing as close apposition' (p 55).

   The author then moves on to discuss loose apposition, starting with a study of the pause and the role it plays. It is concluded that intonation boundaries, such as marked by pauses, are characteristic features of apposition. In the subsequent, rather extensive, section, a number of different interpretations of the concept of loose apposition are presented and commented on, illustrating the diversity of views on the topic.

   It is then maintained that in order to retain the concept of apposition, its theoretical foundation has to be altered. The author arrives at a re-definition of the concept of apposition where the term refers to 'a structure in which two constituents perform exactly the same function without making up a superordinate constituent' (p 180). Many of the structures traditionally referred to by the term 'apposition' are here seen as instances of the relationship of dependency.

The present volume aims at giving under-graduate students a broad

introduction to corpus linguistics. It focusses on descriptions of some of the possibilities open to scholars using corpora in research on languages and linguistics. In the seven chapters included in the volume the authors deal with different aspects of corpus linguistics, for example, the development of corpus linguistics, what a corpus is and what is in it, how to work with quantitative data, corpora as sources of empirical data, and corpora and computational linguistics. The reader is introduced to areas such as text encoding and annotation, different types of corpora, quantitative and qualitative corpus analysis, and the use of corpora in language studies. Each chapter contains a section with study questions/ exercises (with suggested answers) and a guide to further reading. A case study is provided to 'demonstrate how corpora may be used to investigate a hypothesis' (p 147).

Throughout the book, frequent references are made to existing corpus-based studies. Special emphasis is put on showing how corpora can be, and indeed are, used in empirical linguistics and language studies. Ample illustrations are provided from such fields as grammar, sociolinguistics, stylistics, dialectology, speech research, semantics, cultural studies and social psychology.

Dieter Mindt, *An Empirical Grammar of the English Verb; Modal Verbs.* Berlin: Cornelsen Verlag, 1995. 192 pp. ISBN 3-464-00649-2. Abstracted by **Ylva Berglund**, Uppsala University.

The present volume is a learner and teacher-oriented grammar of the English modal verbs. This inductive work draws its data from a corpus of more than 80 million words of, primarily, British English fictional texts. It is not based on previous grammars, but the grammatical categories used are those which emerged from the analysis of the data. These are based on the needs of the foreign language learner.

The book is organised into three parts. The first part, 'Foundations', deals with the English verb phrase and the syntax and function of the elements in it. The bulk of the book is devoted to a comprehensive description of the forms, meanings, and contexts of the different modals. Each verb is dealt with separately and at three levels of specification (essentials, prototypes, details). The last part of the book reverses the

traditional grammatical procedure by describing the modal verbs starting from their semantic and syntactic context. The reader is shown which modal verbs can be used to express a certain type of meaning and is then provided with a description of the characteristic occurrences of the modal verbs with regard to their syntax. It is shown, for example, that *necessity* is mainly expressed by *must* and, to a lesser extent, *need, have got to* and *can*, while *consent* in 99 per cent of the cases is expressed by the modal *shall*. That more than three out of four modals occur with an intentional subject and that occurrence in main clauses is least frequent with *should* are examples of the kind of syntactic information provided in this section.

All examples in the book are authentic, drawn from the texts studied. Frequency data are supplied for individual grammatical categories in order to help the learner/teacher distinguish central phenomena from marginal ones.

Jenny Thomas and **Mick Short** (eds), *Using Corpora for Language Research*. London: Longman Group Limited, 1996. 301 pp. ISBN 0 582 24877-9 CSD, 0 582 24878-7 PPR. Abstracted by **Ylva Berglund**, Uppsala University.

The papers in the present volume are offered as a tribute to Geoffrey Leech on the occasion of his 60th birthday. The central theme of the collection is corpus linguistics, a field in which Leech has been, and still is, a pioneer and source of inspiration for many scholars. The diversity and broad scope of the papers included mirror Leech's wide interest in and contribution to different kinds of language study. The volume is intended to be a guide showing non-specialists in corpus work how corpora can be used for language research.

The first part of the book exemplifies how corpora can be used as a source of empirical data in descriptive linguistics. Illustrations are provided in four papers on the development of corpus linguistics, the study of central embedding, lexicography, and the organization of linguistic data. The papers in the second part all present different case studies where corpora have been used. The topics dealt with are the syntax and semantics of GET, complement clauses in English, computer content

analysis, and stylistic analysis of speech and thought presentation. The third part of the collection demonstrates how machine-readable corpora can be used in speech and language technology. This section, which is more technical in nature, deals with probabilistic LR parsing, speech and handwriting recognition, tagging of unrestricted text, and template analysis. In the last part of the book, four papers present wider applications of corpus-based research in more applied areas of language research; machine translation, language teaching, language testing, and lexicography.