MEDIEVAL ENGLISH STUDIES IN SPAIN (2002-2004): PH.D. THESES AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Title: Northern Varieties of British English: Historical Evolution and Description.

Funding Institution: MCYT BFF 2001-3135.

Time Span: 2001-2005.

Director: Dra. Julia Fernández Cuesta.

Members: Luisa García García, Mª Nieves Rodríguez Ledesma, Inmaculada Senra Silva, Mª José Carrillo Linares, Christopher Langmuir, Edurne Garrido Anes y Teresa Valenciano Sánchez.

Supervisor: Prof. Michael Benskin (University of Oslo, Norway)

Summary: The aim of this project is a preparation of a history of the northern varieties of British English, based on a corpus of texts ranging from the first written records to the present-day. Our intention is to analyse northern texts from different periods and belonging to various text-types in order to examine the persistence of northern features in writing after standardization. A number of features corresponding to the different linguistic levels are being investigated for each period and their continuity at the various stages of development tested. This project fills a genuine gap in research in English historical linguistics, since the development of northern varieties of English has not been adequately described thus far. The sources used for this study are original manuscripts, many of which have been edited in the course of the project.

* * *

Title: Evolución de los patrones textuales de los tratados médicos escritos en lengua inglesa durante los siglos XIV a XVII.

Funding Institution: Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

Time Span: 2004.

Director: Francisco Alonso-Almeida.

Members: Alicia Rodríguez Álvarez, Ivalla Ortega Barrera, Alicia Vega Déniz, Ruth Carroll, Victoria Domínguez Rodríguez, Mercedes Cabrera Abreu, Francisco Vizcaíno Ortega.

Summary: This project is sponsored by the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Its main objective is to study the discourse of medicine in a time-span of four centuries: 1400-1699. For that, we need to compile a short corpus of texts taken primarily from untranscribed manuscripts in libraries of the United Kingdom and the United States. The corpus contained items related to the fields of gynaecology, humours, astrological medicine, therapeutic charms, medical recipes, uroscopy, anatomy, herbalism, veterinary medicine, among others. Our working hypothesis is the idea that changes in the language and the organization of medical treatises go along with changes in the trend of thought. Empirical methods brought about different views of reality and that necessarily implies a new focus on language.

The methodology of work is varied and combine traditional philological approaches (transcription, sources, comparative analysis), and present research techniques that involve special computer software for text compilation and analysis. Theoretic frameworks depend entirely upon the type of results we pursue; hence we move from tradition in the description of the morphological components to recent theories for the accounts of metadiscursive practices.

This initial project stands as a first approach to text compilation. Our research group has been frequently identified with editorial practices, but we have not been able to publish much of the material we ourselves have transcribed. For this reason, we envisaged this project as a good opportunity to analyse and classify texts that later would form part of what we have

labelled as *Las Palmas Corpus of Early English Recipe Texts*.[1] This corpus is currently underway in the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria by some members of the research group *Variación y cambio lingüístico en inglés*: Dr. Francisco Alonso, Dr. Alicia Rodríguez, Ms. Ivalla Ortega and Ms. Victoria Domínguez. The novelty of this corpus lies in the fact that the texts have not been edited previously and so they represent brand new material for various linguistic and cultural analyses. We think that this new compilation will be used as a complement to the forthcoming *Corpus of Early English Medical Texts* (John Benjamins) by Dr. Irma Taavitsainen and Dr. Päivi Pahta.

* * *

PH.D. THESES

Title: La Complementación del adjetivo en inglés antiguo (Complementation of Adjectives in Old English)

Author: Alejandro Alcaraz Sintes.

Supervisor: Dr. Salvador Hernández Valera (Univ. de Jaén)

University: Universidad de Jaén.

Year: 2003.

Summary: This thesis is a corpus-based study of adjectival complementation in Old English. Chapter 1 presents the objectives and describes the methodology employed for the selection of adjectives and for the treatment given to the computerized corpus of examples. It also offers an overall theoretical summary of what is understood by *complementation*. Chapter 2 is a critical descriptive review of specialized literature on the subject of adjectival complementation. It deals with copulas, adjectival participles, complementation by means of an inflected noun (in the genitive or the dative, a clause (finite or non-finite), a prepositional phrase, and

---

[1] I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Päivi Pahta for orientation in the first steps of the corpus compilation. She kindly suggested us that a corpus of early English recipes would be useful to draw significant conclusions for the study of this type of texts from a diachronic perspective, and for the history of medicine in general.

lexical complementation (compounds). So-called *impersonal* constructions in Old English are also studied in this chapter, given their close syntactic and semantic relation to complementation. Chapter 3 starts with an explanation of the treatment given to the computerized data collected about all instances in the Toronto Old English Corpus of the 716 adjectives studied and contains the author's threefold contribution to the subject of study. First, it offers a quantitative and comparative description of the different types of complementing structures. Secondly, a model for a dictionary of adjectival syntactic and semantic complementation in Old English is proposed, with one example per pattern. Finally, the author presents his findings about the correlations holding between the fifteen semantics classes in which the adjectives studied have been grouped and the different complementing structures. The final part of this chapter presents the partial and general conclusions reached, a general summary of the thesis and a list of issues for future research.

* * *

Title: Los "Otros Beowulfs": Reelaboraciones Contemporáneas.

Author: María José Gómez Calderón.

Supervisors: María José Mora, Manuel J. Gómez Lara.

University: Universidad de Sevilla.

Year: 2003.

Summary: This thesis explores the popular revisions of the Old English poem *Beowulf* issued between 1975 and 2000 in English speaking countries. The different *Beowulfs* of media and genres as disparate as the internet, the comic, film, television series, musical, historical romance, science-fiction and cyberpunk novel evidence the persistence of the text on the margins of high culture and the interest of non specialist readers for a text more than one millennium old. From the perspective of cultural studies, this research project analyses the contemporary rewritings of the poem as a case of intracultural appropriation, and explains how the popular *Beowulfs* transform an elite text into consumer goods catering to a wider market.

The present thesis studies how the articulation of the scholarly readings of the poem —what Allen J. Frantzen defined as the archaeology of Old English Studies— not only favored the development of the discipline and its professionalization, but also fostered the extra-academic reception of the medieval text as a national and racial icon within the political agenda of imperialism. At the same time, the poem participated in the creation of the cultural phenomenon of Gothicism and contributed to the construction of the legendary *Germania* as one the favorite niches for fiction. The analysis of earlier forms of appropriations (as adaptations, versions and parodies of *Beowulf* produced through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) provides the chronological frame of discussion for the new approaches of contemporary popular culture, as it also determines how the text is transferred from high to low culture. The later twentieth-century "other *Beowulfs*" thus participate in the reification of the Middle Ages as a commodity for contemporary, globalized audiences whose approach to the original poem and its cultural background is mediated by other forms of popular medievalism as cinema, the theme park, the re-enacting societies, and adventure, (pseudo)historical and pulp fiction. The original *Beowulf* is updated according to the specific parameters of each popular genre, a process which reassesses the archetypes of the hero and the monster by inserting the poem in the discourses of contemporary masculinities and otherness. In this sense, the new *Beowulfs* emerge in the wake of medieval scholarship yet, at the same time, question the secular reverence for the literary canon, the conventions of heroic poetry as a genre, and the significance of Anglo-Saxon literature in the context of the postmodernity.

* * *

Title: Relativization in Early English (with Special Reference to the Distribution of Relativizers and the Position of Relative Clauses)

Author: Cristina Suárez Gómez.

Supervisor: Belén Méndez Naya.

Univeristy. Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.

Year: 2004.

Summary: This PhD is a research about relative constructions in the history of the English language (950-1350), more specifically about the distribution of relativizers in this period of the language and about the position that the relative clause occupies with respect to the clause which contains the antecedent. After an introductory part devoted to the revision of the most outstanding bibliographical references about such constructions, this thesis is, on the one hand, focused on the analysis of the distribution of the relativizers found in a corpus of late Old, early Middle and late Middle English. On the other hand, it is concerned with the analysis of the position occupied by the relative clause in late Old and early Middle English. The corpus used as source of evidence has been extracted from *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts: Diachronic and Dialectal.*

Regarding the first aspect of interest, the main aim of the investigation has been to determine the set of constraints influencing the selection of relativization strategies in different contexts of early English, both of linguistic and extralinguistic nature. With respect to the second issue analyzed in this research, it is generally acknowledged that relative clauses have suffered an evolution in the history of the English language regarding the position they occupy in relation to the main clause. They have been considered to move from extraposed structures adjoined to the main clause to positionally embedded structures within the main clause, going through an intermediate stage in which they are NPtopicalized.

Both parts follow a parallel structure. First, a descriptive part is presented which contains the distribution of the relativization strategies and of the position of the relative clause according to the relevant linguistic and extralinguistic variables. This description is followed by multivariate analyses, which (dis-)confirm the information provided by the descriptive analysis.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

Title: The Significance of the Rune-Names: Evidence from the Anglo-Saxon and Nordic Sources.

Author: Inmaculada Senra Silva.

Supervisor: Julia Fernández Cuesta.

University: Universidad de Sevilla.

Year: 2003.

Summary: This thesis discusses the sources of the rune-names and how they have been transmitted in both the Nordic and Anglo-Saxon traditions. It also gives an answer to the question of what the rune-names mean in the different traditions. The main task has involved a thorough examination of the runic material, which stretches throughout a long span from the first records of rune-names in the 9th c. until the last more or less genuine records in the 18th c. Since the count of English runes is small and they are in addition scantily documented in England, this work is mainly based on Scandinavian material.

As a theoretical bases, chapter I comprises a brief outline of alphabet history. Chapters II and III begin with two rich bodies of material. The first tells on the transmission of the rune-names ant their spelling variants, mainly in manuscripts. The latter handles the evidence supplied by the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian rune poems, which define the rune-names by means of periphrases. Chapter III also includes a new edition of the *Old Norwegian Rune Poem*. Chapter IV tackles the material preserved in 17th and 18th c. manuscripts. This section begins with an analysis of how rune-names are used and what they signify in the Icelandic *rímur* tradition. It continues with the discussion of three late sources, namely, Ole Worm's book *Runer seu Danica literature antiquissima* (1636, 1651), Jón Ólafsson's manuscript *Runologia* (1752) and Olaus Verelius' *Manuductio compendiosa ad runographiam Scandicam antiquam recte intelligendam* (1675). In the final chapter, all the evidence is gathered in order to offer a classification of rune-names according to the information available on their meaning.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

Title: *Lelamour's Herbal* (MS Sloane 5, ff. 13-57): Critical Edition and Philological Study.

Author: David Moreno Olalla.

Supervisor: Antonio Miranda García.

University: Universidad de Málaga.

Year: 2002.

Summary: The main objective that this Ph.D. Thesis aims to complete is the edition of the text contained within folios 13-57 of British Library (London) Sloane 5 (MS *S*), that I have chosen to call *Lelamour's Herbal* after the name of its claimed translator from Latin, a certain John Lelamour, appearing at its *explicit*. Though relatively oft-quoted as an important part of the ME Botanical literature, the text of this treatise remained virtually unknown to the scholarly community, since no edition existed that fulfilled the minimum scientific prerequisites, although a (hardly successful) attempt was made the 1938 MA Thesis (Leeds) by Alianore Whytlaw-Gray. The new edition has been supplemented with a critical apparatus that includes readings from London, Wellcome 5650, ff. 29-39, a treatise that, though belonging to another textual tradition, stems from the same source as *S*. A palaeographical analysis, an ample number of explanatory notes trying to cast light on the several plant-names and sicknesses mentioned in the text as well as on the source(s), both English and Latin, of the work, and a glossary with etymological notes are also provided.

A second task is to ascertain the validity of the *explicit*, since there is evidence that suggests that part of the information offered there clashes with the reality of the text recorded in the actual MS, ranging from the idea that this is a translation into ME of Macer Floridus's *De Viribus (sive de Virtutibus) Herbarum* to the fact that MS *S* could not have been written in the 14th century (1373), as shown by the analysis of the script and the paper, but rather belongs to the second half of the following century (*c*. 1460). The necessary *Quellenforschung* was provided by assembling the textual information scattered within the Explanatory Notes mentioned above. A linguistic analysis was undertaken to help locate the text both chronographically as well as geographically since, although *Lelamour's Herbal* was fitted by the LALME team into Herefordshire following the information given in the *explicit*, they seem to have ignored the evidence that suggests that *S* is a copy translated into an early variety of Chancery English (i.e. an East Midland dialect).

* * *

Title: Imitación, reconfiguración genérica y *translatio* en *Troilus and Criseyde* de Geoffrey Chaucer (Un problema de Teoría de la Literatura Medieval)

Author: Ana Sáez Hidalgo.

Supervisor: José Manuel Barrio Marco.

University: Universidad de Valladolid.

Year: 2003.

Summary: This dissertation attempts to grasp two central points in *Troilus and Criseyde*: its genre and the process of composition and translation.

The first part of the analysis carries out a critical assessment of the diverse generic labels used to categorize Chaucer's poem: tragedy, comedy, lyric, romance, history and epics. These genres have traditionally been identified in *Troilus* by taking into account its formal and thematic features, as well as the diverse sources on which the author draws throughout the text. My analysis of these attempts to classify *Troilus* shows that, on the one hand, most modern generic approaches to *Troilus* are based on our present-day concept of genre, as a literary form subject to neat definition and delineation; however, in the late Middle Ages, the genre was a much more flexible and relative notion: one text could have diverse denominations depending on the elements considered for its classification. On the other hand, the fact that some of these modern generic labellings are based on Chaucer's usage of diverse sources poses the question of the way in which they were used to create the new poem.

The second part of the dissertation is, therefore, devoted to the analysis of *Troilus and Criseyde* from the point of view of the compositional process as the key to understand the generic character that Chaucer intended for the poem. In order to do so, composition is studied according to the medieval notion: an imitation of other texts, which in fact comprises both *inventio* and *translatio*. Therefore, the techniques of translation and composition in *Troilus* are analysed using as a starting point the devices described in rhetorical and poetical treatises, most specifically those in the *artes poetriae*: *amplificatio*, *abbreviatio* and alteration of the model, in this case mainly Boccaccio's *Filostrato* as well as several other sources.

The analysis of this compositional process in *Troilus and Criseyde* shows that, on the one hand, Chaucer resorted to the wide range of principles and devices of the *artes poetriae* rather than following a unique principle of invention or translation; on the other, Chaucer emulated the manner in which Boccaccio made use of and rewrote his sources. Thus, *Troilus* is an imitation of an imitation not only in terms of subject matter, but also in its structure, compositional process and generic character. Both the reworking of Chaucer's sources and the inclusion of new elements follow a pattern derived from the rhetorical and compositional principles already applied by the Italian author.

* * *

Title: Diccionario sintáctico del léxico verbal del inglés antiguo: Verbos de habla.

Author: Marta González Orta.

Supervisor: Francisco J. Cortés Rodríguez.

University: Universidad de La Laguna.

Year: 2003.

Summary: Following the Functional-Lexematic Model, the aim of this thesis is to provide the Old English speech lexical domain with a syntagmatic analysis by means of a typology of *lexical templates*. This model attempts to supply the lexicon with the onomasiological classification of lexemes in terms of a hierarchy of (sub-)domains, which will reflect the organization of our mental lexicon and give evidence of the close relationship between syntax and semantics: firstly, the repetition of similar complementation patterns within each (sub-)domain, due to the fact that the syntactic behaviour of a predicate seems to be motivated by the (sub-)domain in which it is integrated; secondly, the general tendency of the most prototypical lexemes in a (sub-) domain to present a greater number of complementation patterns, whereas with the most specific lexemes the number of syntactic patterns decreases.

The interaction of the semantic and syntagmatic information of Old English speech verbs will give rise to a set of lexical templates, which will

form a semantic network. The term *lexical template* arises with the purpose of enriching the logical structures suggested by Role and Reference Grammar with a semantic decomposition which will permit to capture generalizations within lexical domains, reducing the information to be included in the lexical entries. According to the hierarchical structure of the lexicon, a typology of templates at the lexeme-, subdomain-, and domain-level will be proposed, with the proviso that the templates of the hyponimic subdomains inherit the information from the templates of the hyperonimic subdomains.

* † *