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URSULA LENKER & HANS SAUER (MÜNCHEN)

English Historical Linguistics in the German-Speaking Countries: Continuations and New Departures

Ye knowe ek that in forme of speche is change
Withinne a thousand yeer, and wordes tho
That hadden pris, now wonder nyce and straunge
Us thinketh hem, and yet thei spake hem so,
[...]

(Geoffrey Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book II, 22-25)

Geoffrey Chaucer's famous passage from the second book of *Troilus and Criseyde* nicely attests to the long-standing tradition of the critical awareness and conscious interest of humans in language change, which eventually led to the central axiom of today's historical linguistics – "All languages are in a continual process of change". Today, the central issues of historical linguistics as an academic discipline are questions such as "How and why do language changes begin?", "How and why do they spread?" and "How can they ultimately be explained?". Historical linguistics thus focuses on internal linguistic mechanisms such as analogy, grammaticalization and linguistic variation, but also looks at external factors such as language contact and sociohistorical conditions or at engineered changes, such as the avoidance of sexist or racist language. The English language in particular has always proved to be a good testbed for these questions: it is attested in a wealth and variety of texts much earlier than most genetically related languages (from around 700) and offers interesting insights into long-term developments of language change. Furthermore, English has changed much more than, for example, German and thus does not only allow, through an analysis of language-contact, a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural history of Britain and all English-speaking countries, but also interesting insights into the mechanisms of internal as well as contact-induced language change.

In the present account of English historical linguistics in the German-speaking countries, we would like to illustrate how the field of English historical linguistics has seen manifold continuations, but also new departures in recent years. We fully agree with Kortmann,¹ who sees "a continuing revival of historical linguistics" as one of the trends which are likely to become stronger over the next years in English linguistics and the discipline of linguistics as a whole.

Historical linguistics, which had – together with its forerunner and complementary discipline "philology" – been the leading paradigm of linguistics in the 19th century, lost its pre-eminence with the rapid development of the field of synchronic descriptive study of English from the beginning of the 20th century onwards. Today, however, it is widely agreed that synchronic and diachronic linguistics are inextricably linked: studying language change involves the examination of distinct language stages and systems which can be profitably analysed using models and theories developed in synchronic studies. Conversely, these models can be usefully tested against historical data, and it is hard to consider them complete if they do not allow for the incorporation of change. That historical linguistics has indeed once again become a field of vigorous research is manifest in the number of publications as well as in the well-attended conferences (especially by younger academics), such as the biennial "International Conference on Historical Linguistics" (ICHL) and "International Conference on English Historical Linguistics" (ICEHL).²

1 See Kortmann, in this volume, 31.

2 Not only do German historical linguists regularly present papers at these conferences; two departments of English linguistics at German and Austrian universities have even had the honour of hosting such conferences: the 13th ICHL was held at Düsseldorf in 1999 (host: Dieter Stein) and the 13th ICEHL was hosted by Nikolaus Ritt, Herbert Schendl and Dieter Kastovsky in Vienna in 2004. Hans Sauer organized the conference of the "International Society of Anglo-Saxonists" (ISAS) in 2005 at Munich. The annual "Studientag Englisches Mittelalter" (SEM; initiated by Hildegard Tristram) provides a discussion forum for postgraduates and doctoral students (see section 8 below). Also, recent sections of the *Anglistentag* dealing with historical topics indicate a renewed interest in the field: "Approaches to Linguistic

It should be noted that the terms "(English) historical linguistics" (i.e. the main focus of the present paper) and "history of the (English) language" overlap to a certain extent but are not identical.³ Surveys of the history of English are often primarily arranged according to the main periods of English (Old, Middle, Early Modern English, etc.) and outline their phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactic characteristics. They frequently also examine the historical backgrounds of the respective periods, thus bridging the ground to cultural and literary studies. Historical linguistics, on the other hand, focuses on phenomena of language change, trying to explain its causes and mechanisms. Moreover, historical linguistics is not necessarily confined to one language, but often looks at language change from a comparative point of view.

The present paper summarizes the principal continuations (1.) and developments in the field of historical linguistics and the contributions by German-speaking academics, in particular on central topics such as causes and mechanisms of language change (2.1 & 2.2), the consequences of new methodological approaches such as corpus linguistics and data-driven research (3.) and their effect on the preparation of editions (4.) and, finally, the emergence of new research fields and disciplines. In the many fields in which historical linguistics has seen new beginnings in the last decade, German, Austrian and Swiss scholars have actually taken a leading role: in opening up younger periods of the history of English – the English of the 18th and 19th centuries – as study grounds for research in historical linguistics (5.) and in develop-

Change" (convenor: Edgar Schneider; Dresden 1996), "Historical Pragmatics" (convenor: Andreas Jucker; Giessen 1997), "England in the Middle Ages: Language, Literature and Culture" (convenors: Hans Sauer, Ursula Schaefer; Aachen 2004) and "Modern English in the Making" (convenors: Marianne Hundt, Ursula Lenker; Bamberg 2005). In 2004, a conference in Bamberg was specifically devoted to the state and future of historical linguistics and medieval studies in Germany (see Knappe 2005).

3 A third field which is distinct but also overlaps to a certain degree is the field of "history of linguistics and English language scholarship"; for a recent survey (covering the time up to ca. 1900), see Gneuss (1996).

ing new fields of research, such as historical pragmatics and historical text linguistics (6.1-6.3).⁴

1. Traditional Core Areas of Research

While the United States have arguably been the "centre of gravitation and innovation of linguistics for at least the last 50 years",⁵ innovative centres for the study of historical (English) linguistics have been established in particular all over Europe, and especially in countries where English is not the official first language.⁶ It is certainly no coincidence that universities outside Great Britain and North America have been crucial in shaping the discipline in the last decade, since historical linguistics is always comparative. Accordingly, scholars whose mother tongue is not English find the aspect of comparing older features of English with the history or current state of their own (often genetically related) language especially intriguing. One of the greatest assets of German-speaking scholars working in the field of English historical linguistics is that they are native speakers of a language which, in its structure, is still very similar to Old English. Although many aspects of language change and its mechanisms can also be studied in short-term intervals from the Early Modern English period onwards, it would thus certainly be detrimental to the subject as a whole if Ger-

4 For a survey of recent developments in historical corpus linguistics, historical text linguistics and historical pragmatics, see Kohnen (2005).

5 See Kortmann, in this volume, 25.

6 Such centres are, for instance, Helsinki (Finland), Amsterdam, Leiden and Nijmegen (Netherlands), Poznan (Poland) and Santiago de Compostela (Spain). There are, of course, many prominent and leading scholars in the United States and Canada, such as Laurel Brinton, Paul Kiparsky, Donka Minkova, Robert Stockwell or Elizabeth Traugott. Lively centres of historical linguistics in Great Britain are, for example, the universities of Cambridge (Laura Wright), Edinburgh (Charles Jones, April McMahon), Glasgow (Christian Kay, Jeremy Smith), London (Jane Roberts), Manchester (David Denison, Richard Hogg) or Newcastle (Joan Beal).

man universities in particular did not continue to teach and do research in Old English up to the professorial level. It would also be a great loss for German-speaking students, who are undeniably very interested in the comparative aspect of long-term developments in English and German.

The genetic (and typological) similarities of German and Old English have at all times proved fruitful in research in the more traditional fields of historical linguistics: German-speaking scholars have published widely on historical phonology (e.g. Lutz 1991; Dietz 1998), on historical morphology and syntax (e.g. Lutz 1998; Claridge 2000; Rosenbach 2002; Kohnen 2004), on Old and Middle English word-formation (e.g. Kastovsky 1992; H. Sauer 1992), as well as on historical semantics (e.g. A. Fischer 1994; 2002) and etymology (e.g. Bammesberger;⁷ Feulner 2000; Vennemann 2003).⁸

A long neglected area which is attracting new interest is the study of glosses and glossaries. Glosses are not only interesting from a purely linguistic point of view, but also offer interesting insights into the intellectual world of those who produced and studied them, since they, for example, show how Anglo-Saxon monks and scholars adapted the Graeco-Roman-Christian world into their own milieu (see, e.g., Gretsche 2000; Kornexl 2001; H. Sauer 1999).

7 Alfred Bammesberger publishes widely on individual etymologies (in *Anglia*, *Notes & Queries*, *Die Sprache*, etc.) in preparation for his new edition of Holthausen's *Altenglisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*; for an internet publication on the field, see the online journal *Onomasiology online* (*Onon*), edited by Joachim Grzega and Alfred Bammesberger (<http://ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVglSW/OnOn.htm>).

8 That German universities produce young scholars who are internationally competitive in this area is proved by the fact that three German academics are on the staff of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, preparing the third edition (Andreas Gröger, Inge B. Milfull, Kathrin Thier).

2. Causes of Language Change

Traditionally, but especially more recently, most researchers have not only been concerned with chronicling the specific linguistic forms of different stages, but also with an understanding of why changes have happened, i.e. historical linguistics proper. Generally, these causes are seen to be either language-immanent (2.1) or contact-induced (2.2).

2.1 Internal Factors

With respect to the more theoretical questions of the language-immanent mechanisms of change, Rudi Keller's theory of the "invisible hand in language change" has been most influential also for studies in English historical linguistics (Keller 1994 [1990]). In the field of phonological change, Angelika Lutz has offered a theory based on phonotactics (Lutz 1991), while Nikolaus Ritt pursues what he calls a Darwinian approach (Ritt 2004).

The key term of the last decade, however, has been "grammaticalization", which in its traditional sense refers to the numerous instances of language change whereby lexical elements lose their lexical status and come to be used as function words (see Diewald 1997 and, for example, Krug 2000 for an analysis of emerging modals such as *going to*, *have got to* and *want to* and their contracted forms *gonna*, *gotta*, *wanna*). The concept of grammaticalization has been expanded from diachronic to synchronic, typological, and cognitive investigations of linguistic material, finding its more concrete conceptualization in studies which are now the standard works in the field: Lehmann (1995 [1982]) and Heine/Claudi/Hünemeyer (1991) for the morpho-syntactic approach, and Hopper/Traugott (1993) for the semantic-pragmatic approach.

Traugott's semantic-pragmatic approach in particular, with its focus on pragmatic strengthening and increased subjectification, has been extremely popular in the study of the history of the English language (Barth-Weingarten/Couper-Kuhlen 2002; Brinton 1996; Lenker 2000b; 2003). This does not come as a surprise, since English with its heavy loss of inflexional endings is by no means a good test case for the morpho-syntactic approach to grammaticalization focusing on the ori-

gin of morphological affixes. In order to avoid confusion, Traugott now sees recurrent developments like the "adverbial cline" ("clause internal adverbial > sentence adverbial > discourse particle") no longer as instances of grammaticalization, but as "regularities in semantic change" (Traugott/Dasher 2002). Research now investigates structural similarities between lexicalization and grammaticalization, a topic already discussed on the example *methinks* in Wischer (2000). Ilse Wischer also instigated the first International Symposium "New Reflections on Grammaticalization" (NRG 1) at Potsdam University in 1999, whose goal was to bring together contributions from various languages and different orientations in the field of "grammaticalization".⁹

2.2 External Factors

In its structural and social complexity and its relationship to other forms of communication, human language can only be fully understood when we know how it responds not only to internal, but also to external stimuli: linguistic and social factors are interrelated in language change. In the field of contact-induced changes, research today mainly concentrates on the superstrate and substrate influences which have led to the peculiarities of Modern English and which distinguish it from other genetically related languages, such as German or Dutch (see, e.g., the findings of the Eurotype project at Berlin). In-depth analyses study the mixed character of the Modern English lexicon and in particular the deep influences of language contact on word-formation (e.g. Lutz 2002a; 2002b).

The most widely discussed question at the moment is the influence of a Celtic substrate on Old and also Middle English, which would account for many of the typological peculiarities of Present Day English. This influence is now being viewed under various aspects, in

⁹ The success of this forum is attested by the fact that conferences on "New Reflections on Grammaticalization" – with heavy input by German academics – are now held every three years: NRG 2 was hosted by the University of Amsterdam in 2002, and Santiago de Compostela hosted NRG 3 in 2005.

archaeology, genetics, place-name studies, and, as far as German scholars are concerned, linguistics (see, e.g., Lutz 2002b; Schrijver 2002; Vennemann 2002; Tristram 2004), a field of research which also fostered the analysis of the Celtic Englishes (see Hickey 2002 and in particular the conferences in Potsdam on Celtic Englishes; see Tristram 1997-2003). Most of these authors argue – though with differences in detail – for a strong influence of a Celtic substrate, which is discernible in verb morphology (dual present paradigm of the verb 'to be' in Old English), syntax (progressive aspect, external possessors) and also vocabulary. Theo Vennemann goes even further and sees a strong Vasconic and Semitic influence on the languages of Europe, and thus also on English (see, e.g., Vennemann 2003).

3. Corpus-Linguistics and Data-Driven Research

Since at least the 1990s corpus linguistics has become generally accepted as an elementary method of studying not only synchronic but also historical phenomena.¹⁰ With respect to historical phenomena, this development is closely linked with the University of Helsinki and the so-called *Helsinki Corpus (HC)*, the first all-purpose historical language corpus.¹¹ It comprises ca. 1.5 million words in about 400 selected English texts from the 8th to the 18th century, and every effort has been made to create a balanced corpus – carefully compiled according to criteria of author (rank, age, sex), medium (all in written code, but attesting language of proximity and distance), genre (text type), register (formal vs. informal) – rather than a randomly chosen archive or collection. The *HC* thus allows not only for corpus-based studies of long-term developments in English, but also for data-driven analyses of linguistic variation and genre styles. In comparison with corpora of Modern English, the historical texts collected in the *HC* can

10 See Kortmann, in this volume, 29-31, and Kohnen (2005, 273-280).

11 For a list of corpora of English, see the homepage of the "International Computer Archive of Modern and Medieval English" (ICAME, <http://nora.hd.uib.no/icame.html>) and its links.

obviously not provide a full coverage of all text types for all periods of English. With its wide distribution, there is unfortunately a growing danger that scholars "of the second generation", who have not grown up with the discussion on the shortfalls of this corpus, are no longer aware of these limitations and, in particular, the origin, cultural setting and make-up of the text(s) concerned. This is especially serious if, for example, syntactic structures are investigated without the researchers being aware that they are dealing with a text heavily dependent on its Latin, or French, original.

In spite of the paucity of extant material in general and of specific text types and registers (informal texts, "spoken" medium, etc.) from Early English, the *Helsinki Corpus* has proved to be an invaluable tool for the analysis of highly frequent morphological and syntactic features in Early English and their long-term developments. For other issues, the corpus often emerges as being too small, so that a rather rigorous theoretical background is needed to give explanatory value to the series of attestations, which are often only presented as numbers and percentages. One such attempt is the analysis of morphological productivity and word-formation across speech and writing with reference to type- and token-frequency in large-sized corpora: As the size of the corpus increases, unproductive morphological categories are characterised by a preponderance of high-frequency types, by low numbers of low-frequency types, and by very few, if any, hapax legomena (see Dalton-Puffer 1996; Plag/Dalton-Puffer/Baayen 1999).

Research with corpora in the past decade has also made evident that many more (and specialised) corpora are needed for in-depth studies of less frequent phenomena, especially from the late Middle English period onwards. While the extant Old and Middle English material can be completely searched by means of the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus (DOEC)* and the *Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse*, the growing amount and diversity of extant texts from the late Middle English period onwards requires carefully balanced corpora comprising diverse media, registers and genres, such as letters, sermons, political treatises, medical English, etc., which then allow more in-depth studies into the changing defining properties of certain text types or even genres. Thomas Kohnen, for example, is currently working on a project which tries to establish "connective profiles", consid-

ering aspects of orality and literacy (Kohnen [forthcoming]). The field of orality and literacy, which has been one of the most fruitful issues in the last decades (Schaefer 1992; Ehler 1999; Reichl 2002, etc.), will certainly further profit from these analyses based on selected texts.

With diverse perspectives, many more corpora are currently being prepared in various universities worldwide. The German-speaking countries have contributed to the *ARCHER* corpus (Freiburg, Heidelberg) and, as independent historical corpora, submitted the *Innsbruck Corpus of Middle English Prose* (a full corpus of 6 million words and a sampler of 4 million words by Manfred Markus, Innsbruck), the *Zurich English Newspaper Corpus* (*ZEN*; compiled under the direction of Udo Fries) and the *Lampeter Corpus of Early Modern English Tracts* (compiled at Chemnitz by Josef Schmied, Eva Hertel, Claudia Claridge and Rainer Siemund). The *Lampeter Corpus* covers the period between 1640 and 1740, i.e. roughly the period between the outbreak of the Civil War and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, and thus fills another gap in the market of historical corpora, providing a balanced corpus with complete texts for text-linguistic and stylistic analyses.

4. The Continuing Importance of Editions

It is generally agreed that this new type of research using balanced corpora is immensely valuable for the analysis of highly frequent phenomena and for studies in a variationist approach to language change. For many of these new compilations, however, new text editions are necessary, because these corpora try to cover genres (e.g. medical texts, cookery recipes, etc.) which had traditionally not been considered "essential" texts.

It is thus good to know that the history of English rooted in a philological tradition oriented on and towards interdisciplinary studies still stands strong in many German universities. Editions of Old and Middle English texts by German scholars are considered to be of a high professional standard, and are not only used as reference texts for all

studies on these sources, but also for the *Dictionary of Old English*, the *Middle English Dictionary* and the *Oxford English Dictionary*.¹²

Quite a number of new critical editions of Old and Middle English texts, with introduction and commentary, are currently being prepared as doctoral dissertations at the universities of, e.g., Göttingen, Greifswald, Jena and Munich.¹³ These editions, which will eventually find their way into the various language corpora, are directed at an interdisciplinary audience. They will certainly remain indispensable for research in historical linguistics, because they provide a correct and readable text basis for a wider audience and comment on linguistic details such as the dependency on Latin exemplars or specific dialectal or register characteristics, thus allowing for an understanding of the value, but also deficits of our extant sources. Since they also consider aspects of the interdependence between writing and illuminations and the roots of the texts in their intellectual climate, these editions, in contrast to corpora, highlight the alterity and uniqueness of these texts and open up new perspectives for interdisciplinary research.

5. The Exploration of New Periods at the Interface between Language Synchrony and Diachrony

Corpora like the *Freiburg-LOB* (*FLOB*) and *Freiburg-Brown* (*FROWN*), initiated by Christian Mair (Freiburg) are situated at the interface of synchronic and diachronic linguistics and thus allow insights into the mechanisms of ongoing language change in Present Day English. They attest to the fact that the strict distinction between language synchrony and diachrony, as promoted during most of the latter half of the 20th century, has fortunately at last also been over-

12 For a list of Old and Middle English editions produced in Munich under the direction of Helmut Gneuss, see Kornexl/Lenker (2003, xxxi-xxxiii).

13 Many of these indispensable new textual editions are published in the series *Middle English Texts* (*MET*) by Winter at Heidelberg (founders: Manfred Görlach and Oliver Pickering; among the present editors: Hans Sauer).

come in English linguistics in German-speaking countries (Mair/Hundt 1997).

One of the most thriving fields in this respect is the interest in the younger periods of English, the English of the 18th, 19th and early 20th century (until the First or Second World War). The language of these centuries was traditionally – together with today's English – labelled "Modern English", so that the specific characteristics of the language of these periods were not a subject of general scrutiny. One of the pioneers in this area of research worldwide, who recognized the language of these periods as independent fields of study, is Manfred Görlach: He has not only published the standard international introductory textbooks on the respective periods, but has also inspected specific linguistic features and mechanisms of language change in these periods (see, e.g., Görlach 1998; 1999; 2001).

What sets the Modern English period apart from earlier periods is the sheer quantity and variety exhibited by English texts in these centuries, the variety of text types and genres documented – some of them recorded for the first time (e.g. journalism and advertising) – and also its wealth of meta-linguistic sources, such as dictionaries, grammars, and style guides. The Modern English period sees the shaping of the language by prescriptive grammarians (see Gneuss 1996), a growing importance of the Standard Language, but also the splitting up of English into different kinds of "Englishes" world-wide, and the first attempts at sociolinguistic studies on slang, etc.¹⁴ While some important work has been done on the metalinguistic texts of these periods (Gwosdek 2000 on early grammars, Hüllen 1999 and 2004 on dictionaries, Polifke 1999 on Mulcaster, Knappe 2004 on the study of idioms and phrases), many aspects of these periods provide an as yet largely undiscovered area for linguistic research.

14 At the Anglistentag in Bamberg 2005, the speakers in the linguistic section "Modern English in the Making" (convenors: Marianne Hundt and Ursula Lenker) considered most of these aspects: They discussed diverse syntactic developments in the period (Nesselhauf, Mair, Claridge), but also took a look at metalinguistic sources, such as stylebooks and *thesauri* (Busse/Schröder, Knappe), and analysed various new text types, such as parliamentary debates (Bauer).

6. New Disciplines

Recognizing these (predominantly non-literary) texts, which often do not document standard language, but genres and language which had been marginalized, as important documents for linguistic research has also yielded entirely new disciplines in historical linguistics, obviously inspired by comparable tendencies in the field of synchronic linguistics. Conversely, disciplines like historical sociolinguistics (or: sociohistorical linguistics), historical pragmatics and historical text-linguistics, which have become very popular in the last decade, open up new perspectives for the theoretical paradigms of the respective disciplines, in that they provide language data, which, for example, deepen the understanding of the significance of certain dialectal or sociolectal features or of the changing conditions for communicative contexts.

6.1 Historical Sociolinguistics

Historical sociolinguistics is obviously much hindered by the limitations of our (often randomly preserved) extant sources, which mainly attest written language of male authors of upper ranks. Thus the social context of authors must be reconstructed on the basis of historical research, or, if the authors are anonymous, as they most often are during the Old and Middle English period, by an analysis of the origin of a manuscript, its script and its textual tradition. Given these conditions, most of the work done before the end of the 20th century was concerned with regional variation, such as specific dialect features (for a recent publication on Old English, see Kalbhen 2002). One outstanding field of research in this respect has always been the evolution of particular linguistic features of Scots and its status (see, e.g., Dons/Moessner 1999; Görlach 2002b).

New perspectives on the conditions and make-up of standard languages were gained by analyses of their emergence in Early Modern English (Stein/Tieken-Boon van Ostade 1994) and also in late Old

English.¹⁵ In spite of the limitations of the extant data, there have also been attempts to apply theories like the concept of social networks and their impact on language change with regard to earlier stages of English, thus to the "Winchester Circle" around 1000 (Lenker 2000a) or to the Paston Letters from 1421-1503 (Bergs 2005).

6.2 Historical Pragmatics

One of the most fruitful innovations instigated by German-speaking researchers is certainly the field of historical pragmatics.¹⁶ Andreas Jucker, now one of the editors of the new journal *Historical Pragmatics*, edited the papers collected in a volume which indisputably marks the beginning of this new discipline (*Historical Pragmatics. Pragmatic Developments in the History of English*, 1995). The approach now labelled pragmaphilology, which asks about the producers of texts, their audiences and their social and historical context and aims at describing and understanding conventions of language use in earlier periods, can look back on a long tradition of editions and other studies which – sometimes rather systematically – have looked beyond a certain text to its author and its audience.

Diachronic pragmatics, on the other hand, is a relatively new field of linguistic inquiry and may have two starting points, namely a particular linguistic form (see, for example, Lenker 2000b and 2003 on truth-intensifying adverbs) or a particular function, such as the expression of politeness. Very productive subjects for both approaches are, for example, form-to-function mapping in the personal pronouns of the second person (*thou* vs. *you*) from Old English to Modern English, or, more generally, the changing conditions and forms of address terms (see, e.g., Busse 2002). Other research may be characterized as historical discourse analysis of particular speech acts, investigating, for example, speech acts such as apologies or insults (Jucker/Taavitsainen 2000).

15 For a project testing the assertions in Gneuss (1972), see Gretschi (2003); for an approach incorporating a more general perspective on standardization, see Kornexl (2000).

16 See also Kohnen (2005, 287-291).

6.3 Historical Textlinguistics

The interest in the younger periods of English sketched above (5.), and the quantity and variety of registers and genres exhibited by English texts in these centuries led to intensive research on more general issues connected to the emergence of various new text types (Diller/Görlach 2001; Görlach 2004), but also to more detailed studies on the evolution of specific genres, such as advertising (Gieszinger 2001) or journalism (Jucker 2005).¹⁷ These studies are now greatly facilitated by computer-searchable archives, such as the *Times Digital Archive* or the corpus of *American Historical Newspapers*, comprising the *Los Angeles Times* (1881-1966), *The New York Times* (1851-2001), *The Wall Street Journal* (1889-1987) and *The Washington Post* (1877-1988). Generally, research in this field tries to establish inventories of text types and genres at various times, but also changing conditions in the relation between writer and addressee as well as issues of diverse communicative functions. These new fields are extremely interesting because they are – again – situated at an interface: not only the interface of synchronic and diachronic linguistics, but also, since they shed light on changing conditions of production and changing communicative needs and their reflexes, at the interface between historical linguistics and literary and cultural studies.

7. Textbooks and Teaching

While the preceding sections have been mainly concerned with research, the more practical needs for teaching the history of English and, with a different focus, historical linguistics should not be forgotten. Concerning the history of English, there has fortunately been a constant flow of introductory textbooks in recent years. In addition to introductions to Old (Obst/Schleburg 2004) and Middle English (W. Sauer 1998; Obst/Schleburg 1999), there are surveys of the history of English (Görlach 2002a [1974]; R. Fischer 2003; Moessner 2003 and

17 For a critical assessment of progress and problems in the field of historical text linguistics, see Kohnen (2005, 280-287).

Jucker 2000, who also covers the new disciplines such as historical sociolinguistics, pragmatics, etc.). Most of these also deal with issues of historical linguistics, such as mechanisms of language change; an introduction to historical linguistics proper is Schendl (2001).

For the reasons sketched in the first two sections of this article, the training of students of English should, in our opinion, certainly comprise at least an introduction to the history of English or one of its earlier periods such as Old or Middle English as well as to the main mechanisms of language change. Many of the specific features of Present Day English, such as the discrepancy between pronunciation and spelling, irregularities in the verbal and nominal morphology, the size and mixed character of the English vocabulary, can only be fully understood when seen from a historical point of view. Fortunately, many universities (though apparently not all) still require at least some basic historical knowledge of the language from their students, and also allow their advanced students to specialize in historical linguistics and to write their M.A. or similar theses (*Zulassungsarbeiten*) in this area as well as to focus on it in their written or oral final exams. The new B.A. and M.A. study programmes, to which most German universities are now switching, also offer an opportunity to integrate the historical aspects of the English language, often in an interdisciplinary context. The Old and Middle English periods in particular prove to be a very good ground for interdisciplinary studies, and open up promising perspectives for new interdisciplinary M.A. programmes, such as "Historical Linguistics" or "Medieval Studies" (grounded on a B.A. in, for instance, "English").

8. The Future of the Discipline

To give doctoral students from the German-speaking countries and young academics doing their *Habilitation* an opportunity to exchange their ideas, to present their research projects and test them before an expert audience, the annual *SEM* conference ("Studenttag Englisch Mittelalter") was initiated by Hildegard Tristram in Potsdam in 1999 and is now hosted by various universities in Germany and neighbouring countries (2004 Jena, 2005 Bochum, 2006 Munich, 2007

Zurich). At some universities, there are now also doctoral programmes which support dissertations on historical linguistics – for example the centre for "Europäische Mittelalter- und Renaissanceforschung" at the Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg or the *LIPP* (*Linguistisches Promotionsprogramm*) at the University of Munich.

What chances these young academics ultimately have of getting a professorial position or even a chair is difficult to predict. Professorial positions exclusively or mainly devoted to English Historical Linguistics are rare and exist only at some of those universities that have two or more professorships in English linguistics; but even there they are usually combined with medieval English literature and/or culture (e.g. at Aachen, Erlangen, Göttingen, Jena, Mannheim, Munich, Potsdam and Zurich). At many universities, however, there is just one chair of English language and linguistics and its holder also has to cover the historical aspect. This, of course, conversely means that scholars specializing in the history of English also have to be competent in modern linguistics if they want to have a chance of getting one of those chairs. Taking into account the many subjects in today's research which are situated at the interface between synchrony and diachrony, the increasingly similar means of investigation (corpus linguistics and data-driven research) and focus (sociolinguistics, pragmatics, textlinguistics in addition to the core areas such as phonology, morphology and syntax), the strict distinction between academics working in one field or the other might possibly be overcome, and – as is already common in Romance linguistics, for example – young scholars having worked on historical subjects might be seen as equal competitors to those having written on present day topics. Research in English linguistics in the last decade has shown that synchrony and diachrony are indeed inexorably intertwined, and that both approaches furnish us with particular types of information, which may then be combined to give a fuller account of language in general, and the English language in particular.¹⁸

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