

RECENSIONES

KSENIJA ANASTASIJEVIĆ, *Dvočlani glagol u savremenom engleskom jeziku* (The Two-Word Verb in Contemporary English), Filološki fakultet Univerziteta u Beogradu, Monografije, knjiga XVII, 1968, 187 pp.

The reader of this book — which is a doctoral dissertation presented to the University of Zagreb in 1965 — will obtain a comprehensive view of the problems appertaining to the two-word verb (like break off) in English, starting from its delimitation from the similar “surface structures” to its syntactic relations and word-formation possibilities.

The author's method could be characterized in a simplified manner by saying that Miss Anastasijević takes into account what has so far been said about the problem — incidentally, with a bias towards the statements of Curme, Kennedy, and Wood, as against those of Hill, Taha and even Mitchell — and then tests these statements against the body of modern material of two-word verbs. If the material offers corrections to those statements and opinions, they are pointed out, if not, the views are accepted and usefully substantiated by a quantitative evidence.

In the first chapter Miss Anastasijević proposes and limits the scope of her work which is that of analysing the behaviour of two-word verbs on a body of material consisting of 10,451 examples of verbs accompanied by the most frequently occurring particles: *up, down, in*, and their antonyms: *out, on, and off*. The material has been collected from the

colloquial language of novels and plays published since 1945.

The second chapter is devoted to the history of the two-word verb following Curme, Kennedy and OED. To the existing theories of its genesis the author adds her contribution by examining the origin of the two-word verbs in the modern material. She finds that 61 per cent of the verbs entering into combinations with the particles are of Teutonic and only about 24 per cent of Romance origin, from which she concludes that “the formation of these verbs is an entirely Teutonic process”.

The third chapter tackles what is probably the most absorbing problem of this study, namely the delimitation of the two-word verb from similar combinations, i. e. from the “prepositional verb” (He *came across* the lawn), and the “phrasal-prepositional verb” (I *came across* him yesterday) that shows the semantic features of the two-word verb but not its syntactic characteristics. It is obvious at this point that the material examined, consisting of written language, has dictated the choice of the criteria for the characterization of the two-word verb, and Hill's and similar phonemic criteria have been perhaps too rashly dismissed. Thus, for the purposes of this work, a verb-particle combination qualifies as a two-word verb if it fulfils the following conditions: 1. that it may be substituted by a one-word synonym (break off = end, terminate): 2. that its word order may be re-arranged (They broke off their contacts — They broke their contacts off); 3. that the prono-

minal object — when substituting the nominal one — may be placed only between the verb and the particle (They broke them off); 4. that the combination may not be expanded by an adverb placed between the verb and the particle component (*They broke gradually off their contacts). It would be possible to question the necessity of adding the semantic criterion (1.) to the grammatical ones (2., 3., 4.), or the economy of statement in breaking down the criterion of re-arrangement (2.) into two criteria (2. and 3.), but as it stands the test seems to be a solid and reliable one for the kind of material under investigation.

In the fourth chapter, dealing with the syntax of the transitive and intransitive two-word verb, the quantitative data on the continued and discontinued word order are worth special mention. Thus the well-known syntactical fact that the word order of the verbal and the particle component of the transitive verb depends on the type and length of the object, has been further specified. The author has established that the object consisting of more than three words occurs very rarely (in ten per cent of cases) between the two components, and also that, in general, continuous versus discontinued word order with the transitive two-word verbs stand in the proportion of two to one. As for the intransitive two-word verbs, which occur in about 96 per cent of the cases in the continuous word order, the analysis seeks to establish the type of the discontinued word order (You go right in; Go you down; Up went the flag; In you come), and state the conditions under which this re-arrangement takes place.

The corpus has served well in the fifth chapter to show how transitive verbs may become intransitive when combined with the particles, of which *in* and *on* show a clear "intransitive force". The vice versa process, that is, the change of intransitive verbs

into transitive ones, is considerably less frequent.

The aspect of the verb may be changed when in combination with the particle. In the sixth chapter the author examines how individual particles influence the verbal aspect in the simple and expanded tenses. Certain particles show clearer directions than others in their "aspectual force". The particle *in* suggests the ingressive aspect, the particle *on*, when used with the expanded form of the verb, has a durative force. Most particles, however, do not show a clear preference for a definite aspect.

The omission of the verbal component of the two-word verb is the problem discussed in the seventh chapter. The material suggests that *out* is the most frequently found particle without its verbal part. On the other hand, the verbs which are most frequently omitted are those with the highest frequency of occurrence in English and are never used in their metaphorical sense.

Since two-word verbs are units behaving like normal verbs they are naturally subject to word formation processes, and nouns and adjectives can be formed out of them. However the process is not relatively frequent. The reasons for this infrequency, and the conversion possibilities of two-word verbs are the topics treated in the eighth chapter.

In the conclusion the author emphasizes the influence of social factors in the spreading of the use of these verbs. The combination verb plus particle, which probably belonged to the colloquial language of the uneducated, has, with the democratization of social life, penetrated the written language and that contributed to its wide use nowadays.

The book contains seven tables with the relevant statistical data, and a list of two-word verbs occurring with various numbers of particles.

The above brief outline cannot do full justice to all the topics

that crop up in connection with the syntax of the two-word verbs and which have been treated in detail in this book. We wanted to point out in particular the statistical data since works on the verb syntax are not often supported by such definable materials. The random examples that frequently illustrate such treatments are not as helpful as a look into the quantitative situation of a defined corpus. However one would have liked to see a slightly more critical attitude towards the character of the corpus itself. A scholar is free to choose any style of language as the object of his analysis as long as he is prepared to state clearly the limitations of the results obtained from the chosen style. We have recently learned something about the differences between the spoken and written language, and even about the differences within these two divisions, and this line of thinking has been somewhat neglected in

the present book. Another unusual feature of this treatment is its blend of synchronical and diachronical views on the problems discussed, and that is what probably reminds the reader of this book of the writings of the grammarians of the earlier part of this century who deliberately followed such an approach. The reviewer is not sure that by pointing this out he intends to take a critical view of Miss Anastasijević's approach, but only to pass to the prospective reader another characteristic of this book.

Doctoral dissertations are written and read by (narrow) specialists. This monograph has a great advantage that it can be read with profit also by wider circles of students of English, especially by those with applied linguistics in mind. This is a comprehensive, clear, and honest scholarly effort and deserves a warm welcome.

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