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Irma Taavitsainen and **Turo Hiltunen** (eds.). *Late Modern English Medical Texts: Writing medicine in the eighteenth century.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2019. Pp. xix + 432. ISBN 9789027203229.

Reviewed by Isabel Moskowich ⓘ, University of A Coruña

A recent addition to John Benjamins' series on corpus linguistics, this volume follows an earlier one edited by Taavitsainen and Pahta in 2010. Like its predecessor, it contains both descriptive and methodological chapters, as well as some pilot studies using the material compiled in the corpus. Contrary to the structure of *Early Modern English Medical Texts*, the present book is not clearly divided into the same four parts: background, corpus description, corpus categories (in which the six categories in the *Early Modern English Medical Texts* were described), and studies and technical aspects. However, as any reader who has followed the work of the VARIENG team will recognize, these sections underlie the twelve chapters of the present volume. On the same lines, the chapters are closely related to one another, thus illustrating and discussing different facets of the same focus of interest, that is, the *Corpus of Late Modern English Medical Texts*, in terms of its compilation and the various ways in which it can be used. Sociolinguistic and sociopragmatic approaches are evident throughout the volume, permeating all chapters in one way or another.

   Chapter 1, 'Towards new knowledge: The corpus of *Late Modern English Medical Texts*', is by the volume editors, Turo Hiltunen and Irma Taavitsainen. They present the

corpus of *Late Modern English Medical Texts* (LMEMT) as a new corpus of printed medical writing from the eighteenth century. The chapter describes not only the structure but also the principles of compilation followed throughout the whole process. Hiltunen and Taavitsainen discuss representativeness as a challenging aspect of corpus compilation, as well as the difficulty it entails in terms of selecting and working with eighteenth-century medical texts, as both the scope of the discipline broadened and the amount of printed material increased. In light of these two facts, the compilers were faced with the need to create a taxonomy of nine different text categories, this with the aim of representing the reality of medical knowledge and practice in that moment, a reality that also involved material addressed to different types of readership. Some of the methodological difficulties one can perceive in this chapter have been mentioned by other corpus compilers for the same period, as well as by Puente-Castelo & Monaco (2016), among others.

Following the introductory chapter, chapter 2, 'Sociohistorical and cultural context of *Late Modern English Medical Texts*', by Irma Taavitsainen, Peter Murray Jones and Turo Hiltunen, describes the eighteenth century as a period of transition towards more modern practices in medical history. It is the moment when most individual case reports are found (and included in the literature), a time that witnessed the creation of new medical journals and societies (Kronick 1994), as well as seeing, for example, an increase in the use of forceps in midwifery and the subsequent revolution in obstetrics (Wilson 1990) with a demographic outcome.

In the chapter we are shown how these developments are reflected in medical writing, and a sociohistorical background for the corpus is also provided. One of the main differences with other periods in the history of English lies not only in the amount of medicine-related text production; in late modern England more and more people were able to read and learn about medical issues, which implies that knowledge now began to reach social strata of English society that had not previously had access to science. The authors also reveal that, as a consequence of this growing audience and their differing abilities to grasp certain content, a number of different registers now emerged (these in close relation to the text taxonomy proposed by the compilers). The role of the Royal Society and its influence on communicative practices in learned circles are also discussed; for example, the notion of how polite society preferred 'more rhetorical styles' is mentioned, which anticipates Taavitsainen's study in chapter 7. The presence of the scholastic tradition is also dealt with in this sociopragmatic review of eighteenth-century discourse practices. Thus, the chapter approaches texts addressed to different audiences, looking at synchronic variation and seeking to uncover changes that can be observed here. Many of these changes were the result of new methods ushered in by the so called 'scientific revolution' as well as by the pervading presence of mathematics as a universal language of science.

Chapter 3, by Irma Taavitsainen, Gerold Schneider and Peter Murray Jones, presents a 43-page study which uses triangulation, that is, the combination of several techniques, as a means of capturing the real situation underlying eighteenth-century medical texts. They first offer a review of the background to the corpus, and then map British medical literature using typically digital-humanities resources such as computational approaches, history

(the history of medicine in this case) and linguistics. Digital applications are also used for Topic Modelling and Kernel Density Estimation in what is a very thorough study, highlighting as it does the importance of certain texts in the corpus in relation to others, in that they include new ideas and notions, and thus serve to confirm tendencies or 'thought-styles'. Following considerable quantitative analysis, the chapter concludes with a qualitative characterization of late Modern English medical writing, including passages from the texts under study. Here the authors demonstrate that medicine, as a discipline, becomes more and more professionalized over time.

The following chapter, David Gentilcore's 'Regimens and their readers in eighteenth-century England', focuses on a description of the genre of regimens. A typical (and common) medical genre in the period, it concerned the relevance of food and diet in general, and the impact of habits on health. Gentilcore explores the way in which this genre is also affected by the changes undergone by medicine as a discipline, changes that had already begun in the sixteenth century, and which are now having an effect on medical writing in the shape of genre decline. This is precisely what had happened to the genre of regimens over time, although it experienced a revival in the eighteenth century exactly because it tended to incorporate the kinds of changes promoted by the new science. Thus, Gentilcore demonstrates that genres as communicative formats may survive or completely disappear depending on their flexibility to adopt external factors. Regimens recovered some of their former popularity because they included scientific (largely chemical) explanations in their diet and lifestyle recommendations, now that Galenic medicine, without the aid of chemistry and the mechanics of science, had come to be viewed as incomplete. The chapter shows how the ideology behind the development of the discipline changed over time and how the readership to which it was addressed had expanded to include the middle classes, not only the aristocracy, as had been the case in previous centuries. This study, then, soundly demonstrates the validity of the claim that genres are dynamic (Taavitsainen 2016).

Chapter 5, 'Medical case reports in Late Modern English', by Anu Lehto and Irma Taavitsainen, introduces a new element in the book. Instead of reviewing genres or works that to some degree condense what is known about a particular topic (let us bear in mind that most of the samples are treatises), the authors analyze medical case reports as the most-used genre throughout the history of English medical writing from the late Middle Ages to the present, although with different functions and linguistic forms. After defining it as 'a narrative of a single case of disease or injury', they focus on patients, and thus the notion of point of view is especially relevant here. The authors address the use of first-person personal pronouns in their analysis. The method employed combines both quantitative corpus-linguistic and qualitative discursive analysis, with the aim of measuring the degree of conventionalization as the genre develops. Conventions are simply a way to express styles of thought, and the authors of this chapter seek to show that there is a transition to more modern medical approaches in the narratives they analyze. Lehto and Taavitsainen conclude that, although the texts they analyze belong to a single genre, 'there is a great deal of

variation in their linguistic realizations, especially in the expressions of the point of view and in the overall styles of writing' (p. 109).

In chapter 6, 'Household medicine and recipe culture in eighteenth-century Britain', Alun Withey addresses the topic of non-professional medicine. Assuming that medical knowledge was considered to be part of a wider interest in disseminating knowledge, the author presents this dynamic process as a complex one in which context must necessarily be taken into account. This aim of expanding knowledge, not only among specialists but also among a wider readership, Withey claims, is one of the reasons for the enthusiastic collection and collation of medical remedies, which was prompted also by the introduction of new theories and trends (mostly of those relating to physical medicine). In the pre-industrial economy of the eighteenth century there also seems to have been a notable economic interest in remedies, and in this context medical texts were used not only to share medical knowledge and to promote new ideas but also to support and vitalize economic networks. As in other studies, in which he has explored advertisements and patents, for instance, Withey considers here the impact of new inventions on the economy. Looking at remedy collections and printed medical texts he concludes that although great changes occur in the eighteenth century, not least in the way that people approached these remedies as cures but also to improve their overall health, 'medical knowledge still remained firmly rooted in what had gone before' (p. 127); humoral medicine continued to predominate and the home was still the central focus of medicine, especially in non-urban areas.

In chapter 7, Irma Taavitsainen deals in depth with one of the aspects tackled earlier in chapter 2, the practices and habits of polite society. 'Polite society language practices: Letters to the Editor in *The Gentleman's Magazine*' explores the linguistic reflections of values associated with certain social strata in the late eighteenth century, such as politeness, sociability and public good. To this end, Taavitasinen introduces her aims and method and then describes the sociohistorical conditions surrounding the culture of politeness and compliments. The section on the latter is subdivided into different subsections in which she explores 'compliments in the Letters to the Editor', her main focus, and the 'Efficacy statements of recipes in terms of polite speech acts'. She then addresses other aspects of politeness, such as 'Thanking', and 'Requests'. A good many examples drawn from *The Gentleman's Magazine* illustrate these sections, as is also the case with the section dealing with 'Impolite speech acts in politeness veil', which is certainly interesting and might perhaps merit further attention in the future. After a short section on public good, charity and social welfare, illustrated with some quite long excerpts from the same magazine, the chapter concludes that this publication constitutes an important way for readers 'to participate in special issues and bring forth more personal concerns' (p. 144), thus promoting interaction and the spread of certain linguistic and pragmatic strategies at the turn of the century.

The following chapter, by Anu Lehto, is entitled 'Changing portrayals of medicine and patients in eighteenth-century medical writing: Lexical bundles in public health, methods, and case studies'. It focuses on lexical bundles and seeks to reveal whether there are any repeated elements, these perhaps determined by the existence of certain extratextual

concepts that might affect the nature of medical texts. As its title suggests, the chapter considers only some specific genres within the corpus: public health, methods and case studies. Public health texts deal with wellbeing and discuss medical issues from a social, collective perspective. The other two categories, methods and case studies, focus on medicines and patients. After an introduction and some background on lexical bundles, Lehto explores their frequency and distribution in the samples selected, revealing that bundles with fewer elements are more frequently used in the texts analyzed than those with more elements. She goes beyond this to assess the grammatical structures and functions of these bundles and is thus able to classify them into referential bundles (fourteen classes), textual bundles or discourse organizers (seven classes) and stance expressions or interactional bundles (two classes). A detailed analysis of the findings in each of the genres under scrutiny (health, methods and case studies) follows. Here she finds differences among genres (variation), but also over time (diachrony). Lehto finds that, although there are no relevant differences in the distribution of functional categories in her material, the study of bundles reveals that medical writing introduced new practices, as well as new topics, during the eighteenth century.

Taavitsainen reappears as the author of chapter 9, 'Professional and lay medical texts in the eighteenth century: A linguistic stylistic assessment', in which she explores how stylistic features vary according to the expected readership of the texts, professional or lay, and the channels used to distribute these texts. She also investigates whether the guidelines established by the Royal Society in the previous century were still followed. The authors of the texts under scrutiny are mostly educated professionals writing for other members of the same epistemic community, but there is also writing for more general audiences. Taavitsainen claims that monographs were the most important channel for communicating new medical knowledge, and this was certainly the case for other scientific disciplines observed during the compilation of other contemporary corpora (Crespo & Moskowich 2020), but she also points out that the first specialized medical journals, plus the first magazine for polite society (as seen in chapter 7), were founded in the 1730s.

The author divides her mostly qualitative analysis into professional texts and lay texts, using corpus-linguistics methods; she concludes that 'In general, writings targeted at professional readers enhance knowledge-based arguments and aim at increasing the expertise of the readers and communicate the favourable effects of the new cures in argumentative prose' (p. 195). Writing traditions have changed, she notes, and the 'popular' audience of the past now consists of members of the aristocracy. As regards the Royal Society's style recommendations, Taavitsainen claims that 'Reports on experiments continue most conspicuously in the *Edinburgh Journal of Medicine* (example 7), but they are also found in monographs' (p. 196).

'The *symptom* comes of age: Sign semantics from the Late Middle to the Late Modern English', by Jukka Tyrkkö, is the tenth chapter in the volume. He first explores medical (non-Saussurean) signifier terms, that is, lexical elements such as *sign*, *token* and *mark* (p. 199). In the past, such elements included not only observable phenomena or patients' narratives, but also other aspects such as astrological or humoral signs. It is clear that the elements within this lexical field are not the same at present, and for this

reason the chapter aims to provide an overview of the evolution of the use of these medical signifier terms in English. To this end, the author uses the other two corpora compiled by the team, namely, the *Middle English Medical Texts* (MEMT) and the *Early Modern English Medical Texts* (EMEMT), as well as the *Late Modern English Medical Texts*, which of course is the overall focus of the volume. Tyrkkö makes a significant observation in the section on 'retrieval and quantification' in stating that 'Although the present study builds on and revisits earlier studies by the present author, no query data were recycled but instead all the queries and analyses were redone' (p. 208). Section 4 deals with this 'clearly steady part of medical writing' to observe that although it is indeed steady as a field, its elements underwent notable changes in frequency, distribution and meaning (for example, in the case of the terms *symptom/symptoms*, *token/tokens* and *sign*), whereas others remained relatively unchanged (*accident*). Thus, after a detailed quantitative analysis, he concludes that his study of signifier terms has demonstrated that 'even seemingly neutral lexical fields can and will undergo significant and profound changes in the context of scientific writing' (p. 224).

Chapter 11, 'LMEMT category descriptions', is a long, collaborative chapter in which VARIENG members contribute more or less detailed descriptions of the text categories or genres represented in the corpus. The chapter is divided into two sections: section 11.1, by Irma Taavitsainen, is devoted to general treatises and textbooks, and section 11.2 deals with specific treatises. Section 11.2 is in turn divided into subsections, each addressing different aspects of medicine as a discipline and the way in which everything it involved was conveyed in the eighteenth century to conform to different genres. It is organized as follows: Maura Ratia describes 'Diseases', Lehto and Taavitsainen consider 'Methods', and 'Therapeutic substances' are dealt with by Carla Suhr and Irma Taavitsainen. Suhr and Taavitsainen also provide a description of 'Medical recipe collections', whereas Päivi Pahta contributes details about 'Midwifery'. Suhr presents 'Regimens' and Tyrkkö looks at 'Surgical and anatomical texts'. Lehto provides a detailed account of the texts within the realm of 'Public health', followed by a section on 'Scientific periodicals' in which Hiltunen focuses on *Philosophical Transactions* and the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*. The closing section, by Taavitsainen, is devoted to the 'General periodical: *The Gentleman's Magazine.*'

Chapter 12, 'Manual to the LMEMT corpus', by Hiltunen and Tyrkkö, is the final one in the volume. Rather than a manual with indications of how to use the corpus, the chapter is a description of the process by which the corpus was compiled in its two versions, plain text (TXT format) and encoded (XML format). The reader is made aware that the XML version is accompanied by what the compilers call 'paratextual information' thus resembling other available specialized corpora. Section 3 is particularly interesting, in that it presents the philosophical issues that the team faced when reproducing the texts in the corpus, philosophical issues that have sometimes not been resolved easily by other teams working on similar compilations in the past. After the description of the files and what the authors term 'digital editions', following Marttila (2014), readers are provided with a description of the unannotated version of the corpus. The section on 'getting started' is short but very useful for end users of LMEMT. The chapter also

contains an appendix (pp. 355-8) with a table in which the XML elements used for codification are presented along with their definitions according to the TEI P5 standard.

Before the reference section for the whole book and the two indices (name and subject), the volume includes 'Primary data: Catalogue of corpus texts' (pp. 359-6), which contains the bibliographical information relating to each text. This information has been arranged according to the nine categories described in chapter 11 and listed chronologically within each of them. The section of primary data is followed by a list of 'Other primary sources' used by the compilers of the corpus.

Following the general pattern of the Benjamins series, the book accompanies (rather than being accompanied by) the corpus itself, which on this occasion is presented in XML files in accordance with recent trends in corpus compilation, such as those in the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing* collection (Moskowich & Parapar 2008) and the *Corpus of Historical English Law Reports 1535–1999* (CHELAR) (Rodríguez-Puente *et al.* 2016).

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Juho Ruohonen and **Juhani Rudanko**, *Infinitival vs gerundial complementation with* afraid, accustomed, *and* prone: *Multivariate corpus studies*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. Pp. xiii + 161. ISBN 9783030567576.

Reviewed by Uwe Vosberg, University of Kiel

Using multivariate statistical methods, the authors deal with the interplay of an impressive twenty-two presumably universal and chiefly semantic and syntactic constraints influencing the variation of subject-controlled (marked) *to*-infinitives and prepositional gerunds complementing mainly three selected adjectives (primarily in present-day British and North American English). In the field of variable non-finite complementation, one of the two authors, Juhani Rudanko, is a highly productive and long-time expert who has been concentrating for years on a special set of matrix adjectives, including *afraid* and *accustomed*.

Large-scale electronic corpus analyses now revolve around *afraid*, *accustomed* and *prone* with the investigation of *afraid* (partly alongside other *fear*-adjectives) making up nearly two-thirds of the book. The text collections include (i) The *Strathy Corpus of Canadian English*, (ii) a sample of the *British National Corpus* (BNC) to match the *Strathy* corpus in size and genre composition, (iii) the *News On the Web* (NOW) corpus from twenty English-speaking countries and (iv) the British *Hansard* corpus. The authors engage in a great deal of statistical work: in contrast to traditional univariate studies, multivariate regression analyses, holding all other explanatory variables constant, are able to show whether a certain factor has an independent influence on the choice of the variants. This is particularly helpful with a high number of potential determinants.

The seven chapters of the book are organised as follows: all of them are preceded by an abstract, and chapters 2–6 also contain introductory and concluding sections as well as sections with information on the corpus, data or method and, apart from chapter 3, on model selection and model interpretation. Chapter 1 gives a general introduction presenting the notion of a head-based point of departure as the major type of approach (to the study of complementation) taken by all but one of the thematic chapters. It is only chapter 3 that examines the heads selected by a particular pattern or complement type (pattern-based approach). Chapters 2–4 are concerned with the adjective *afraid* as