

**Verb semantics and syntactic structure.** (Linguistics Workshop Series, 4.) Ed. by Taro Kageyama. Tokyo: Kurosio Publishers, 1997. Pp. v, 209.

This work is yet another contribution to the growing literature on syntactic verb analysis based on semantic classification, as pioneered by Robert M. W. Dixon in his *A new approach to English grammar, on semantic principles* (1991. Oxford: Clarendon; though this work is not mentioned once in this book) and further developed by Beth Levin and others. It is a collection of six papers originally presented at two symposia on lexical semantics and morphological effects on semantic structure held in 1993 and 1995 by the English Literary Society of Japan. The papers are generative in orientation, but the material is reasonably accessible to linguists of any persuasion.

The titles, authors and some highlights of the six papers follow: 'On the lexical conceptual structure of psych-verbs' (Yuriko Hatori): 'reversed' syntactic relations of pairs of 'psych verbs' such as fear/frighten, and comparison of resultative verb expressions in English and Japanese; 'Denominal verbs and relative salience in lexical conceptual structure' (Taro Kageyama): semantic salience in denominal verbs, e.g. *to bicycle to school* – no one would say *to school by bicycle*; 'The syntax and semantics of spray/load verbs' (Tadao Maruta): special characteristics of the two locative alternatives of 'put' and 'spray/load' verbs, the latter being derived from an associated medium noun, and which can take a 'with' phrase; 'The middle construction and semantic passivization' (Masaru Nakamura): properties of semantically passive verbs which form the 'middle' construction in English, e.g. *photographs* in *She photographs well*; 'Externalization and event structure' (Naoyuki Ono): incompatibility with unaccusative verbs as a parallelism between *-able* adjectives and resultative adjectives (some faulty examples are cited to support this point), 'Verb prefixation on the level of semantic structure' (Yoko Yumoto): Yumoto suggests that the meaning-changing prefixations *un-* (e.g. *untie*), *over-* (*overshoot*), and *out-* (*outgrow*) take place on the level of the lexical conceptual structure (LCS), not the argument structure.

The book includes a well-written and meaty introduction by the editor, which offers a general overview of verb semantics as well as insightful comments on each of the papers. There is a useful four-page index, something often lacking in conference paper-based volumes.

One weakness, typical of generative works, is the frequent unnaturalness of example sentences and questionable grammaticality judgments. The sentences *The water overran the bank for two days* and *Willa arrived breathless* are asterisked, while *Each other's remarks annoyed John and Mary* is considered acceptable. This is perhaps a danger of using made-up sentences rather than collecting spontaneously produced ones, and of consulting only one or two native informants.

Some authors, in addition to Hatori, added valuable comparative material from Japanese and Dutch, of interest to anyone familiar with these languages, and good as counterweights to the English examples given.

The English in this volume is remarkably good stylistically and relatively free of typos (aside from parts of the Nakamura paper), though it is a bit 'florid' in places. The book is attractively designed and printed clearly on high-quality paper. It contains some

fresh ideas and is a worthwhile reference for anyone studying verbal semantics and morphology. [Karen Steffen Chung, *National Taiwan University*.]