The Verb Phrase in English: Investigating Recent Language Change with Corpora

Edited by Bas Aarts, Joanne Close, Geoffrey Leech and Sean Wallis

Preface

The origin of this book can be traced back to a symposium held at the University of London on Tuesday 14th July 2009, organized by Bas Aarts and Joanne Close in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Survey of English Usage (SEU) by Randolph Quirk (now Lord Quirk) at University College London. We were fortunate that Randolph himself was able to attend part of the symposium, and to listen to an address entitled ‘Surviving surveying’ by David Crystal, who light-heartedly reminisced on his early days of the Survey in the 1960s where spoken materials which eventually became part of the SEU Corpus, the London Lund Corpus (LLC), the ICE-GB Corpus and the Diachronic Corpus of Present-Day Spoken English (DCPSE) were transcribed.

The majority of papers given at the symposium have been reworked as contributions to this edited collection. As often happens with symposia, not all the major figures active in this research field could attend, but we were subsequently able to invite contributions from other international leaders in the field such as Douglas Biber and Mark Davies. These have enhanced the present volume’s representation of the state of current research in this fast-developing field.

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