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clauses, however, are far less frequent than today and, unlike at present, also co-occur with transitive verbs in the active voice. The decay of this type of clause and the increase in the use of *there_i* with verbs of 'appearance on the scene' is due to the typological shift of the Old-English verb-second language to verb-medial Modern English. *There_i* insertion in pre-verbal position represents a solution of the conflict between the topicalization principle (topic — comment sequence) and the fixed word order principle (SV sequence). Languages do not universally possess media comparable to the English *there_i*. Dummy subjects are present in languages that either have or have had the verb-second constraint.

The subject-matter of L. E. Breivik's study is carefully organized. The author offers clear definitions, a convincing number of examples, and thorough consideration of the results achieved in the field of the existential clause (sentence) theory by other scholars. He brings into relief a number of problems presented by the existential constructions that have not been solved so far. He examines the constructions from the viewpoint of their communicative function and observes them against the background of the whole system of the language. He tries to find the relationship between the synchronic and the diachronic and succeeds in presenting the language as a dynamic structure. L. E. Breivik's book is an exceedingly important contribution to English grammar as well as to general linguistics.

Jana Chamonikolasová

Della Summers (ed.-in-chief), **Longman Active Study Dictionary of English**. Longman Group Limited, London 1983, 710 pp.

The Longman family of English dictionaries for foreign learners has been increased by a new member: Longman Active Study Dictionary of English, prepared by an editorial team headed by Della Summers.

The LASDE is a monolingual dictionary suitable for use by intermediate students of English. Like the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (LDOCE), it employs the Longman defining vocabulary of 2,000 common words and records both British and American pronunciation. Its special features are exercises intended to increase the learner's vocabulary, and study notes taking up such major language points as conjunctions, countability and uncountability, phrasal verbs and prepositions. A few full-page illustrations with word labels attached to objects and persons depicted present the vocabulary linked with recurring common scenes (e. g., at the airport, in the classroom, in the living room and in the supermarket). Exercises accompany also the introductory explanations of how to use the dictionary. Usage notes concern points of grammar and help to avoid common mistakes in English.

Even a more advanced learner will find the new dictionary useful, especially when looking for further illustrations of the use of a word. He may therefore be disappointed if the examples given by the LASDE happen to be the same as those in the LDOCE (cf., e. g., 'The minister approved the building plans': 'Come off it, tell the truth': 'The little boy cried out with pain when he burnt his fingers'; 'The trapped woman cried out for help'), but appreciate if they differ (cf., e. g., 'He enticed her away from her husband', 'Their beautiful garden is the envy of all the neighbours' and 'You can't equate his poems and/with his plays', adduced by LDOCE, and 'He enticed me away from my work', 'The boy's new toy was the envy of his friends' and 'You can't equate passing examinations with being educated', adduced by LASDE).

The LASDE will undoubtedly establish its place among the learning dictionaries, for it is a welcome book of reference that a learner can use with considerable profit before turning to a more comprehensive dictionary of the LDCOE type.

Jan Firbas