

LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

69–281 **Le Page, R. B.** Problems of description in multilingual communities. *Transactions of the Philological Society* (Oxford), (1968), 189–211.

One of the major tasks of sociolinguistics is to show that diversity within a language is not to be classified simply as 'free variation' but is correlated with systematic social differences. An attempt is made to draw up a general frame of reference for analysing the use of one or more varieties of language within a speech community. The concept of interference is examined first, illustrated from French in Canada, Jamaican Creole, Hindi and Urdu. This raises the question of what constitutes 'the language' and the way in which it operates upon the behaviour of speakers of various dialects. For the practical purposes of teaching in creole-speaking (and multilingual and diglossic) communities it might be possible to construct idealized creoles but this would seem to misrepresent linguistic processes to some extent, since evidence suggests that creoles have always been in unstable relationship to one model language or another and one of the practical problems is how to write creole languages. In some societies the 'high' language of education is widely known but in others children are severely handicapped by being taught through what is to them an alien language. Also, regional pride among the younger generation may oppose education in an alien language.

Graphs may be drawn to show whether an individual has one language or more and whether these can be sharply distinguished or form a continuum. Useful information may be obtained about the degree of internal cohesion of the linguistic structures used by a community and about the significance of the direction of modification of those structures when the context is changed. If the structure of the local creole is found to be a still-crystallizing, indigenous, educated

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

dialect, essentially different from English, recognition of this will render a programme of universal education more effective.

PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

69–282 Gay, Thomas. Effect of speaking rate on diphthong formant movements. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* (New York), **44**, 6 (1968), 1570–3.

Duration and formant frequency measurements of the five diphthongs [ɔɪ, aɪ, aʊ, eɪ, oʊ] were made for the slow, moderate, and fast-speaking rates of five male undergraduates speaking the New York City dialect. Results show that onset target position and second-formant rate of change are fixed features of the diphthong formant movement, while offset target positions are variable across changes in duration. Voiced consonants increase the duration of preceding diphthongs. The data provide a basis for an articulatory description of diphthong production.

ACOUSTIC PHONETICS

69–283 Davy, Derek and Randolph Quirk. An acceptability experiment with spoken output. *Journal of Linguistics* (Cambridge), **5**, 1 (1969), 109–20.

Twenty-five students made spoken responses to an 'operation' and 'judgement' test on thirty tape-recorded sentences selected from a list previously used to obtain written responses. With both types of test, there was close agreement with the results obtained through written responses. [The authors discuss at some length, and with the aid of diagrams, the 'hesitation phenomena' observed, the shifts of nucleus, and changes in tonicity.] The oral responses showed precisely the points of greatest difficulty in the test sentences and also showed what type of test was most informative for the researchers.

SYNTAX

69–284 Allerton, D. J. The sentence as a linguistic unit. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), 22, 1 (1969), 27–46.

A descriptive definition of the sentence can only be in terms of the conventionalized written language. The traditional sentence is not perhaps the most suitable unit for generative grammar. A grammar must account for the fact that the native speaker can use the right type of sentence in the right context, and that he knows when to use one sentence and when two. We must account for the native speaker's ability to produce well-formed utterances which themselves are part of a well-formed discourse. The sentence should be defined with reference to the structure of the unit within which it operates.

[The author provisionally defines 'discourse', 'utterance', and 'sentence'.] A sentence must be able to stand in isolation, i.e. form a complete utterance. The same grammatical form may be a sentence in one context and part of a sentence in another. If each utterance is to be exhaustively analysable into sentences, all fully independent elements should be omissible without affecting the utterance-status of any remainder.

Sequences of morphemes may form a sentence in one context and part of a sentence in another. A sentence might be referred to as a 'free sequence' whereas a partial sentence could be called a 'bound sequence'. [Illustration.] The allegiance of bound sequences can usually be established by intonation or punctuation. Free sequences are not structurally independent unless they can occur in isolation without any change in intonation pattern.

Parataxis may be defined as a sequence of two sentences having the intonation pattern of one (and pronounced without pause). Analysing 'co-ordinate sentences' as a string of two or more sentences will mean that conjoining transformations at the sentence level may no longer be necessary in the generative model.

Response utterances are a separate class of independent sentence. They do not form free utterances since they mainly follow questions, almost always occupying the initial position, and could never form a complete discourse. Adverbials and other completives may follow

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

most statements: syntactically there is a single sentence, phonologically a sequence of two.

Parenthetical clauses and tag-questions present problems. Elements referring back or forward to another element beyond the sentence do not prevent it from being structurally independent.

A sentence may be defined as a minimum structurally independent sequence of morphemes in a given arrangement with a given prosodic pattern. [The author distinguishes repetition requests, questions, responses, imperatives, declaratives, statements, and exclamations as subcategories of the sentence.]