Language description and use

Descriptive studies of particular languages

English

95-379 Bruthiaux, Paul (City Poly, Hong Kong). The rise and fall of the semicolon: English punctuation theory and English teaching practice. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **16**, 1 (1995), 1–14.

Descriptions of English punctuation in modern instruction manuals offer elaborate descriptions of the properties of each mark in the system, but rarely note their relative frequency. As a result, analysts tend to overstate the role of intermediate marks. In response, this study reviews the 400-year evolution of semicolon use in one genre of English. It presents evidence that after flourishing in the 17th and 18th centuries, the semicolon may have become a marginal component of the English punctuation system. In order for this evolution to be reflected in teaching practice, both writers and instructors need to rely not on conventionalised theories but on descriptions of punctuation practice in naturally-occurring texts,.

95-380 Duffley, Patrick J. (U. Laval, Quebec, Canada). 'Need' and 'dare': the black sheep of the modal family. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **94**, 4 (1994), 213–43.

The first aim of this article is to explore as exhaustively as possible the full range of modal usage found with the verbs *need* and *dare* in English, something which has never been done before. The second aim is to explain why these two verbs can exhibit modal-like behaviour. The reason is to be found in the fact that in certain uses they express a type of meaning which is analogous to that of the core modals, sharing with the latter the impression of 'non-assertiveness'. This provides a valuable insight into the essence of the meaning of the modal auxiliaries in English and demonstrates convincingly that the morpho-syntactic behaviour not only of *need* and *dare* but also of the modals themselves is conditioned by meaning and not by syntactic rule.

German

95-381 Pasch, Renate. Benötigen Grammatiken und Wörterbücher des Deutschen eine Wortklasse 'Konjunktionen'? [Do grammatical descriptions and dictionaries of German need the word class 'conjunctions'?] *Deutsch Sprache* (Berlin, Germany), **22**, 2 (1994), 97–116.

The traditional grammatical description of German accepted the usefulness of the concept of a word class 'conjunction'. However, in some more recent grammars of German the term is no longer used or not used in the traditional sense. At the same time, the subclassification associated with the concept is also missing. Yet these grammars either do not enter into a critical discussion of the traditional acceptance of this word class or their arguments are not convincing. The author shows why future grammars and dictionaries of German should do without a word class 'conjunction' in the traditional sense and should instead use at least two classes, '*Konjunktoren*' and '*Subjunktoren*', the characteristics of which are described. The relevant elements of German are then attributed to each of the new classes.

95-382 Pittner, Karin. 'So' und 'Wie' in Redekommentaren. ['So' and 'wie' in speech-commenting clauses.] *Deutsche Sprache* (Berlin, Germany), **21**, 4 (1993), 306–25.

This article investigates syntactic and semantic-pragmatic characteristics of speech-commenting clauses introduced by the particles *so* and *wie* (e.g. *wie* *er sagte, so meinte sie*). Various differences between *so*-clauses and *wie*-clauses result from V-E-position in *wie*-clauses and V-2-position in *so*-clauses.

Both clause types can occur parenthetically within the major constituents, contrary to common assumptions about the positions of parentheticals. This is possible because of their metacommunicative function. It is argued that *wie*-clauses are speech act modifying adverbial clauses. The *so*-clauses, which exhibit the form of independent clauses, have no function in the surrounding clause. Semantic and pragmatic differences between the clause types are pointed out which hint at a basic difference: *so*-clauses identify the present utterance with the reported utterance, whereas *wie*-clauses relate the present utterance to another one without identifying the two.

Lexicography

95–383   Ammon, Ulrich. Über ein fehlendes Wörterbuch 'Wie sagt Man in Deutschland?' Und den Übersehenen wörterbuchtyp 'nationale Varianten einer Sprache'. [The missing dictionary: how is German spoken in Germany? The case for a dictionary providing an overview of the national variants of a language.] *Deutsche Sprache* (Berlin, Germany), **22**, 1 (1994), 51–65.

While there have been special dictionaries on Austrian and Swiss German for centuries, there is still no corresponding dictionary on German German. This is partly a result of German division during which German was hardly regarded as a single entity, and partly due to the 'inner-German world view' which is still dominant and according to which German German is equated with the German language as a whole and is therefore not seen as needing any special description in a dictionary. A generalisation of these considerations leads to a type of dictionary which has not yet been developed for any linguistic community: a dictionary of all the national variants of a language, which would correspond to a genuinely pluricentric view. In the case of the German language which would mean listing the Austrian, Swiss and German features on an equal footing and as completely as possible. A justification for this type of dictionary is given here along with a discussion of methodological problems and possible uses to which it could be put.

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