

Language description and use

DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES OF PARTICULAR LANGUAGES ENGLISH

85–296 Beier, Rudolf. Fachexterne Kommunikation im Englischen. Umriss eines forschungsbedürftigen verwendungsbereichs der Sprache. [Science communication in English: an outline of a neglected variety of language use.] *LILI: Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* (Göttingen, FRG), **51/2** (1983), 91–109.

Science communication is defined as the use of language to bridge the gap between the specialised fields of science, technology, and business and audiences of laymen. This article discusses some factors of the extra-linguistic situation which cause considerable variation within science communication and differentiate it from other uses of language. This is followed by a brief examination of the most prominent linguistic characteristics of science texts, which require further research and may be grouped under five headings: the functions of headlines and introductory 'hooks' (to catch the audience's interest), reference to different groups of people (readers, other members of the general public, subject specialists), the tendency towards informality, the expression of attitudes and evaluations, and the explanation of specific concepts. Examples are taken from both general and popular-scientific magazines and journals and from newspapers.

85–297 Fries, Peter H. (Central Michigan U.) On the status of theme in English: arguments from discourse. *Forum Linguisticum* (Lake Bluff, Ill), **6**, 1 (1981) [publ. 1984], 1–38.

The theme of a clause or sentence is the point of departure of that clause or sentence as message. In English the theme is realised as the initial constituent of the clause or sentence. The information that is contained within the themes of the various sentences of a passage correlates with the method of development of the passage and, if the passage is outlinable, the outline structure of the passage. The meaning of theme and its realisation in English explains the general correlation of given information with the initial position in the sentence.

85–298 Fudge, Erik (U. of Hull). Stress in English compounds. *York Papers in Linguistics* (York), **10** (1983), 57–76.

The placement of main-stress in English compounds of the sort *'black-bird* (initial-stress, i.e. stress on the first element) and *apple-'pie* (final-stress) is shown to depend on interacting criteria: principally the word-categories involved and the logical relation between the two elements, together with a number of other factors for particular items. A transformational account is rejected because both initial- and final-stress sequences may be derived from the same kinds of underlying sentence by

means of the same types of transformation. Nominal compounds tend to be initially stressed, adverbial ones to be finally stressed, but there are many exceptions. Adjectival and verbal compounds in general do not show such marked tendencies. Semantic relations can be called upon for some cases, but again with exceptions. It is proposed that particular lexical items should be marked in the lexicon as having idiosyncratic properties in compounding (e.g. *street* as opposed to *road*, *cake* as opposed to *biscuit*, *juice* as opposed to *squash*, etc.). The principle of contrastive stress, especially where the first element is bound, requires initial rather than final stress (*metalanguage*, contrasting with *language*, as opposed to *meta`physics*). End-stressed compounds used attributively typically shift the stress to the initial element. Apart from these factors, certain compounds may still have to be marked as exceptional. [Rules are given for final-stressed items (with exceptions), leaving all others as initial-stressed.]

85–299 Mühlmann, Horst. Germanismen im britischen und amerikanischen Englisch. Eine Ergänzung zur Behandlung interlingualer Einflüsse im Fremdsprachenunterricht. [Germanisms in British and American English.] *Die neueren Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main, FRG), **83**, 4 (1984), 366–85.

The strong Anglo-American influence on the German language, particularly after 1945, reflects the politico-economic and socio-cultural importance of the English language as *lingua franca* and the language of world trade. At the same time the adoption of Germanisms into British English (BE) and American English (AE) is undergoing a marked decrease, although the general public are still being confronted with German words and phrases in the mass media. This paper offers a historical survey of the German influence on BE and AE and is designed to convey more detailed knowledge about the interlingual relationship between our countries to German pupils. The word-material is presented according to the main areas of usage and analysed from various points of view, e.g. frequency, value, functional distribution, word formation, semantic changes, types of language, degree of assimilation, comparison of BE and AE.

85–300 Pawley, Andrew and Syder, Frances Hodgetts (U. of Auckland). Natural selection in syntax: notes on adaptive variation and change in vernacular and literary grammar. *Journal of Pragmatics* (Amsterdam), **7**, 5 (1983), 551–79.

Syntactic and morphological usages in conversational and formal written English show a number of differences, both in what is accepted and what is preferred or most frequent. The central argument is that some of these variations can be explained in terms of the Darwinian concept of natural selection, in which the forms better suited to particular conditions survive or are favoured in those conditions. A subsidiary hypothesis is that English vernacular (conversational) grammar represents an older and more natural tradition, and that certain levels and constraints generally considered to be characteristic of English grammar, e.g. the sentence level, and elements of relative clause formation, are innovations belonging to a literacy-based form of English.

ESPERANTO

85–301 Large, J. A. (Coll. of Librarianship, Wales). 'Of one language, and of one speech': artificial languages and international communication. *Multilingua* (Amsterdam), 3, 1 (1984), 11–17.

Many cultures have seen linguistic unity as an essential element in the achievement of utopia. Selection could be made from an ethnic (natural) language to act as a universal language or at least fulfil the role of an international auxiliary language – English, German, Latin and Greek have been suggested. Some have argued for modifying an ethnic language to remove irregularities (e.g. Basic English; Ogden, 1934). A third approach is to opt for an artificial or constructed language, the simplicity or logical unity of which should appeal to common sense. In the 1980s, artificial languages are still being created, e.g. Glosa (Ashby and Clark, 1982) [some historical schemes are noted].

The first artificial language to stir the popular imagination was Volapük (World Language), created by the German, Schleyer, in 1880. Clubs, journals and textbooks flourished. Volapük drew its vocabulary from the roots of various European languages, particularly English. In a short time the movement disintegrated because of dissension among its adherents. By this time Dr Zamenhof's scheme, Esperanto, had been published; this is now the best known and most widely spoken artificial language. Its success has not discouraged competition, however; a number of variants on Esperanto itself, such as Ido and Mondlingvo, and more recent languages such as Glosa and Eurologo. Glosa has a 'central vocabulary' of just 1,000 words (with an extended vocabulary of more than 100,000 words) consisting of Greek and Latin roots and no inflection. Eurologo is based on English and Spanish (on the assumption that they are the two most-used languages in the world), and its grammar is contained in three pages of print (Jones, 1972).

Esperanto, the most popular artificial language, probably has between half a million and eight million speakers worldwide. Interlingua is another artificial language which has had some impact. Its mentor, Alexander Gode, sees it not as a new language, but as a method enabling someone to expand the interlingual portion of his native language into a fully fledged language for international communication. A word is eligible for inclusion if it occurs in more or less the same form with corresponding meanings in the vocabulary of at least three of the four source units: Italian, Spanish/Portuguese, French and English. German and Russian are also consulted where necessary. The grammar is Romance in form, but has no gender, only one definite article and uninflected verbs. It was primarily intended for scientific communication, particularly for abstracts, a role in which it has had some success.

Artificial languages have failed to win mass support, despite their advantages. The real obstacles to success are political and psychological, rather than linguistic. Several governments would need to introduce, say, Esperanto into their schools at one time, but there is no sign of any real willingness to do this on an international scale.

FRENCH

85–302 Bègue, Dominique. Enonciation, temporalisation et actes de langage indirects. [Utterance, time-reference and indirect speech acts.] *L/INX* (Paris), **10** (1984), 119–34.

A syntactic explanation is proposed for the ready perception of ‘indirect’ interpretations of certain contextless utterances (e.g. *Tu as du feu?* = *Donne-moi du feu*). No single marker may account for this: the determination (definite, indefinite specific, indefinite non-specific) of the object noun phrase (*Peux-tu ouvrir la porte ~ une porte ~ une porte du salon?*) and sometimes of the subject noun phrase (*La session ~ une session est levée!*) may be relevant, as may the time-reference of the verbal form (*Peux-tu (souvent) ouvrir la porte?*), the status of the object being the determining factor in the presence of a present verbal form and a definite object expression. Future and conditional forms point to the present moment but distance themselves into the future or past respectively; they are interpreted as ‘polite’ (*Pourras-tu ~ pourrais-tu ouvrir la ~ une porte?*). Imperfect and perfect forms exclude an indirect interpretation. Furthermore, the presence of a second person pronoun as subject in interrogative expressions anchors the utterance to the here and now. All the factors discussed relate to the establishment and limitation of the moment of utterance and to reference to events and entities within rather than outside the current ‘discourse island’.

85–303 Casagrande, J. (U. of Florida). La syllabe dans l’optique de la loi de position ou procès et sentence de douteuses notions. [The syllable according to the ‘law of position’ or suspect notions tried and sentenced.] *General Linguistics* (Pennsylvania), **23**, 4 (1983), 246–64.

The ‘law of position’ according to which French mid vowels (in particular /E/) are pronounced closed ([ɛ]) in open syllable and open ([e]) in closed syllable is a gross simplification of several distinct principles. Degree of aperture is only partly relevant to syllabic division; more important is the maintenance of the preferred syllabic structure CV, seen in the deletion of word-final consonants before consonant or pause (unless protected by schwa), in reduplications in children’s speech and in affectionate diminutives, abbreviations and onomatopoeias and in epenthetic schwa (inserted post-consonantly). The alternation [ɛ] ~ [e] also depends on vowel harmony: [eme] for *aimer*, *aimé* as against [em-] in *aimait*, *aime*, etc. Forms such as *respect* [respe] have a single morphological shape that includes the [ɛ] segment, while in alternating forms (*schellera* [seləra] v. *scheller* [sele]) the presence of a schwa (realised or not) conditions the [ɛ] pronunciation. The influence of schwa also depends on an immediately following morphological boundary and the absence of such a boundary between /E/ and its following consonant(s) (*mêles-vite* [ɛ], *élèveur* [e], *j’ai le vertige*) [e].

85-304 Eriksson, O. (U. of Gothenburg). Notes sur l'emploi de 'faire' comme 'verbum vicarium'. [Notes on the use of 'faire' as a dummy verb.] *Français Moderne* (Paris), **52**, 1/2 (1984), 48-60.

Copious examples taken from literature illustrate a description of *faire* in expressions of comparison such as *Jamais je n'avais regardé, détaillé un être humain comme je le faisais celui-ci* 'Never had I looked at, scrutinised, a human being as I did this one' (direct complement). Use of *faire* is far more frequent with an indirect complement: *Je le prends enfin sur mes genoux et je l'examine comme on ferait d'un petit animal* 'I took him on to my knee and examined him as one would do with a small animal'. The force of generalisation/simplification is likely to lead to the indirect construction becoming the only one. Examples with *pour*, *avec* and *à* are also given.

85-305 Muller, Claude (U. of Rennes II). Les comparatives du français et la négation. [French comparatives and negation.] *Linguisticae Investigationes* (Amsterdam), **7**, 2 (1983), 271-316.

Comparative complements in French are analysed into two general categories: reduced complements, e.g. *Luc est aussi avare que riche* 'Luc is as avaricious as (he is) rich', and nominal complements (not the result of reduction) [copious examples]. A generative account is proposed according to which all the specific characteristics of French comparatives can be handled by more general syntactic rules such as relativisation, indexing of the relative term as the antecedent of the comparative, use of *ne* without *pas*. Hence, it is argued, no *ad hoc* rule is required.

GERMAN

85-306 Rafalovich, Hilmar (U. of Pierre and Marie Curie, Paris). Négativité ou créativité des langues de spécialité allemandes? [Negativity or creativity in German for Special Purposes?] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **51** (1983), 45-59.

While any specialised language is open to criticism from a literary point of view, since it will be functional, restricted, neologistic, repetitive, economic, elliptical, allusive and hence opaque to anyone who is not a specialist, such jargons can also be creative and contribute to the language at large.

This thesis is illustrated from scientific German. In the pursuit of abstraction and depersonalisation, the use of noun phrases rather than human subjects and verbs is preferred, as are passive over active constructions. Figures, curves, diagrams, tables and the prominent use of logical connectors emphasise the structure of thought as opposed to its content. The restriction of terms lessens the risk of ambiguity but leads to stereotyped phrases and an impoverished range of expression. Nevertheless, scientific terminology is extremely rich; the total technical lexicon is estimated at a million terms as opposed to half a million words in everyday language, which is constantly enriched by morphosyntactic influences from the specialist jargon. Copious examples from modern everyday German are given.

HINDI

85–307 Bhatia, Tej K. (Syracuse U., New York). Variation in Hindi: problems and prospects. *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* (Urbana-Champaign, Ill), **13**, 2 (1983), 1–19.

A wide range of linguistic and non-linguistic factors obscured the clear, systematic and unbiased description of linguistic variation in Hindi. Among such factors, notable ones are: the charismatic impact of Sir George A. Grierson's monumental work, *Linguistic Survey of India*, on variability studies in Indian languages; the bias of the succeeding investigators against rural dialects; the influence of Gandhian philosophy and of the reformative secular government policies. The aim of this paper is threefold: (1) to demonstrate that a more highly intricate and dynamic state of linguistic variability exists in the Hindi-speaking region than has been pointed out in the existing literature on this topic; (2) to point out that the unsatisfactory view of linguistic variation in general and Hindi variation in particular has narrowed down the domain of Hindi grammar; (3) to characterise the scope and the nature of a pan-dialectal grammar of Hindi. In an attempt to achieve the last goal, ten speakers of Hindi were selected, representing different areas, castes and religions of the Hindi-speaking region. The study was carried out following the methodology outlined in Labov (1972, 1978).

JAPANESE

85–308 Hinds, John (Penn. State U.). Intrusion in Japanese conversation. *Papers in Linguistics* (Champaign, Ill), **16**, 1/2 (1983), 1–33.

Verbal intrusion of personal space occurs when a conversational participant asks a question or makes a comment which is inappropriate or aggressive. Evidence from taped interviews is presented to show that verbal and physical intrusions of personal space are similar violations of propriety or politeness. There are two reactions to intrusion: (1) aggression, resulting in a shift to non-polite forms; and (2) defence, where there is a tendency to become more polite, to create a verbal or non-verbal barrier. The effect intrusion has on the intruder is to lead him to terminate the conversation.

85–309 Hoffer, Bates L. (Trinity U.) and others. Japanese use of English loans. *Papers in Linguistics* (Champaign, Ill), **16**, 1/2 (1983), 35–56.

English loan words in Japanese undergo a phonological restructuring. For instance, Japanese syllable structure (c) (j) V means that some single syllables in English become multiple in Japanese, e.g. /su-to-ra-i-ku/ for *strike*. Phonemic substitutions include /ja/ for /æ/ (*gyappu* for *gap*), /z/ for /ð/ and /s/ for /θ/.

Different types of borrowing patterns are outlined: (1) the dropping of all syllables after the first two or three; (2) first letter abbreviations (e.g. PR); (3) Y used as a letter combined with words like /shatsu/ – *Yshatsu* for /waishatsu/; (4) the creation of new

English items, e.g. /sukin-shippu/, literally 'skin-ship' by analogy to friendship, a relationship close enough for touching behaviour; (5) the combination of loans and Japanese vocabulary, e.g. /han dzapa/ from /han/ (*half*) and *Japanese*; (6) more sophisticated examples of (5) where loans and the vernacular are homophonous; (7) abbreviation by taking the first syllable of a two-syllable word or the first two of a multisyllable word, e.g. /paso kon/ from /paasonaru konpjuutaa/ personal computer.

85-310 McGloin, Naomi Hanaoka (U. of Wisconsin). Some politeness strategies in Japanese. *Papers in Linguistics* (Champaign, Ill), **16**, 1/2 (1983), 127-45.

One function of *no desu*, *desyoo* and *ne* in Japanese is to enable a speaker to present information which is held exclusively in his/her territory of information *as if* it also belongs to the hearer's territory of information at a particular moment of speech. This makes the territorial boundary between speaker and hearer less distinct and is therefore a way of creating rapport. In some contexts or sentence types, however, *no desu* gives the impression of hedging while in other contexts it can be quite rude.

RUSSIAN

85-311 Bethin, Christine Y. Teaching Russian language competence: locational and directional concepts. *Russian Language Journal* (Michigan), **37**, 126/7 (1983), 17-24.

The use of the prepositional and accusative cases after *в* and *на* to distinguish between position and motion is usually explained in course books in terms of preposition analysis, case analysis or verb analysis. It is argued that the ideas of Location, Goal and Ablative (removal) provide a better basis for teaching about locational and directional concepts, since they also accommodate the prepositions *у*, *к* and *от*. In particular, confusion arising from the association of verbs of motion with locational expressions can be avoided, with students considering underlying relationships rather than surface case forms or verb types.

85-312 Lapyeva, O. A. (Pushkin Inst., Moscow). Устная научная речь: изучение и обучение. [Spoken scientific language: its study and teaching.] *Русский язык за рубежом* (Moscow), **6** (1983), 53-60.

Collective research into contemporary Russian spoken scientific language has been reported by various authors; the main findings are summarised. They cover aspects of syntax, phraseology and lexis and derive their material from comparisons between scientific and normal spoken or literary languages as well as from comparisons within scientific language between written and spoken forms, both monologue and dialogue. The significance of findings under various headings (such as compound and complex sentences, predicative constructions, word formation, dialogue on specialist topics) is related to teaching strategies and priorities. Attention is also drawn to the range of published texts and transcriptions generated by the research team.

TRANSLATION

85–313 Tobin, Yishai (Ben-Gurion U. of the Negev, Israel). Translation theory as an interface of linguistic and stylistic analysis and its implementation in the teaching of literary translation. *Bulletin CILA* (Neuchâtel), **39** (1984), 7–22.

At the Ben Gurion University of the Negev an advanced undergraduate course in translation is given that requires students both to translate and to perform stylistic analysis. As a literary text is unique and embedded in its socio-cultural and linguistic setting, it is essentially untranslatable, so students are taught to re-create the text in the language of the translation. To do this the text is first analysed linguistically, then stylistically; only when the specific language features that create the message of the text have been identified does the work of re-creation (translation) begin. The approach is exemplified by detailed reference to Zivia Lubetkin's memoir of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, in which the use of the historic present tense and proximal deictics are systematically contrasted with the past and distal deictics to achieve emotional effect. The semantic and emotional hierarchy thus created has to be reflected in any translation.

LEXICOGRAPHY

85–314 Calzolari, Nicoletta (U. of Pisa). I dizionari-macchina: problemi e prospettive. [Machine-readable dictionaries: problems and perspectives.] *Multilingua* (Amsterdam), **3**, 2 (1984), 65–9.

The machine-readable dictionary is seen variously as: a useful resource for facilitating access to the information in natural language contained in texts; a lexical database for generating a printed dictionary; an instrument for studying the various morphological, lexical, syntactical and semantic relationships between lexical items, and therefore the internal structure of a vocabulary; a resource for the printing of a dictionary by photocomposition; an input for the automatic analysis of language; a means of analysing the connections between the lexical and syntactical patterns used in definitions and the semantic or pragmatic relationships they express; a tool in automatic translation; a place in which to express, in the form of rules of redundancy, a number of universally valid generalisations in the various languages; a lexical database constructed with various points or methods of access to meet users' requirements; a system of conceptual representation; an educational aid; or simply a means of studying the meaning of words. The author gives a personal assessment of the results of the Workshop on Machine-Readable Dictionaries held at the Stanford Research Institute, California, in April 1983.

LEXICOLOGY

85-315 Danlos, Laurence (CNRS, Paris). Présentation d'un modèle de génération automatique. [A model for automatic text generation.] *Revue Québécoise de Linguistique* (Quebec), **13**, 1 (1983/4), 203-28.

A system is described which generates text in one of several languages. There are two modules: a strategic composer which makes decisions about the order of events, the order of their reporting and the necessary lexis, and a syntactic model which makes schemas into surface output. The system was tested by a realisation in which journalistic-style texts report events in either French or English. The conceptual basis of the system and examples of the realisation are given.

85-316 Derouault, Anne-Marie and others (I.B.M.-France Scientific Centre). Automatic transcription of French stenotypy. *Linguisticae Investigationes* (Amsterdam), **7**, 2 (1983), 209-19.

An automatic transcription system is described which is intended to replace the current Grandjean stenotypy method, which is rather slow to transcribe into written text. The system is based on a 150,000-item dictionary, including morphological variants of the same lexeme, tagged with information about word-class and frequency of occurrence (based on an automatic analysis of a large corpus). Using a Markov model, the probability of occurrence of a particular word-form is calculated on the basis of the parts of speech of the two preceding words. [Methods of calculation.] Word boundaries are determined by searching for all possible words beginning with a particular starting syllable, moving to the right and searching for further words beginning at the possible word endings that have been detected. Only 'high' probability collocations are retained. This process is repeated until the end of the text. The system has been tested on a 2,000-word text taken from a TV news bulletin; the error rate was 9.7 percent. [Example.]

85-317 Frey, Werner and Reyle, Uwe (U. of Stuttgart). Lexical Functional Grammar und Diskursrepräsentationstheorie als Grundlagen eines sprachverarbeitenden Systems. [Lexical functional grammar and discourse representation theory as bases for a language processing system.] *Linguistische Berichte* (Wiesbaden, FRG), **88** (1983), 79-100.

A report on work in the Stuttgart Institute of Linguistics' project on 'Algorithms for the analysis of tense in French texts and their implementation in order to build up a data bank'. The long-term objective of the project is the machine construction of a data bank by means of the processing of natural language texts. A number of program packages have been developed to implement well-founded theories from linguistics and logic.

Two of the program packages are discussed and the rationale of their underlying theories is explained. Lexical Functional Grammar (LFG) (Kaplan/Bresnan) is held to possess a number of advantages over grammars which are context-free; for example,

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it can be translated into a PROLOG-program. The first part of the paper demonstrates how LFG builds up the functional structure of an input sentence. The authors present a PROLOG-implementation of LFG which does away with the need for three separate components. F-structures are constructed during the parsing phase itself. Also they demonstrate that conditions for the instantiation of long-distance variables can likewise be dealt with during the parsing phase. The second program package deals with semantic representation. It is based on Kamp's D(iscourse) R(epresentation) T(heory). This provides a treatment of indefinite reference, universally quantified NPs, *if-then* constructions and anaphoric pronouns. The authors argue against a modular treatment of syntax and semantics and suggest that a PROLOG-program allows syntactic and semantic analyses to be carried out in parallel.

85–318 Hahn, U. and Reimer, U. (U. of Konstanz). Wortexperten-Parsing: Text-Parsing mit einer verteilten lexikalischen Grammatik im Rahmen des automatischen Textkondensierungssystems TOPIC. [Word expert parsing: text parsing with a distributed lexical grammar within the framework of the TOPIC system of automatic text condensation.] *Linguistische Berichte* (Wiesbaden, FRG), **88** (1983), 56–78.

The article deals with the knowledge-based text analysis system TOPIC, which has as its objective the automatic summarising of German-language specialised texts. Its parsing mechanisms, based as they are on the model of word experts, are described. The word-expert parser of TOPIC is aimed specifically at a consideration of the features of lexical cohesion and of global coherence of specialist texts. Its objective is also the strategic demands of a variably precise analysis of complete texts. In the description of text parsing given in the technical part of the paper, a distinction is made between a view which sees word experts as the basic organisational units of a distributed text grammar and a procedural view of the word-expert system as a text parser.