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(1) Emphatic inverted commas

A couple of weeks after reading Barbara Carton's "Why does 'everybody?'" in *ET61* (Jan 00) I wandered into a second-hand shop here in the north of Sweden and came across two short British story magazines from 1930 (of all things!).

What was interesting was that the adverts nearly all contained masses of inverted commas – the name of the product being advertised, publications and leaflets – and just the sort of words Barbara Carton was unhappy about. In particular, the Jelks and Allenburys adverts. [Here, the Jelkes ad for high-grade secondhand furniture says that the price of such furniture 'is far less than you have to pay for "new" factory-made furniture'; in the Allenburys ad for baby food, the baby says: 'I feel "bigger" and "stronger" after each feed of "Allenburys."' – Editor.]

(2) Swedish and 'Interanto'

This second letter is in connection with your interesting article on 'Interanto' (in *ET61*: Jan 00). I thought you might appreciate some comments on some of the Swedish terms discussed.

1. Why do you think *Klipp Punkten* is a 'cheeky label' for a hairdressing salon? Are you associating it with the 'clip' of clip joint? *Klippa* is the normal Swedish word for 'cut'.

2. *Ateljé* and *mode* are not new borrowings for the Uppsala signs you saw, but are in fact the normal Swedish words for 'studio' and 'fashion'. They are loanwords that entered the language some time ago, and are therefore perhaps more like *biljett* (ticket) and *fön-*

ster (window) – and even 'beef', 'pork', 'mutton', etc., etc.) in English!

3. *Glasögon* is the normal Swedish word for 'glasses'. 'Glass eyes', if that's what you're thinking of, would be *emaljögon*.

4. *Handverk* and *handarbete* are not both 'handicraft'. The first is more like 'craftsmanship' – carpenters, plumbers, etc., are *handverkare*. *Handarbete* includes things like knitting, embroidery, crochet.

5. *Upsala* is the old spelling of Uppsala.

6. *All*, *radio* and *allradio* are all Swedish.

7. *Flash* is a chain of clothes shops.

8. *Joy* ditto.

9. You describe *frisör* as 'Swedified'. Again, *frisör* is (i.e., has become) the Swedish word.

10. *TV*, *video* and *videokamera* likewise.

11. *Gospelhörnan* – note the two dots.

12. *Mjuk* is not 'milk', it's 'soft'. *Glass* is 'icecream', not soft ice-cream.

What you seem to be doing here, I think, is mixing up the different generations of loanwords. Older ones like *frisör* and *ateljé* have become well-integrated parts of the Swedish language. Others retain their original spelling but are given Swedish pronunciation – *mode*, for example, is bisyllabic.

More recent loans may continue to look and sound English, French or whatever, or may acquire Swedish pronunciation and/or spelling – only time will tell – but they will undoubtedly become part of the Swedish language despite the Swedish Academy's best and loudest protests. It seems to be the pronunciation that changes first, in the mouths of the people. ('Interview', for example, is becoming [-ju:v].) Then the Academy tries to change the spelling. Interestingly, the Academy recently gave up on 'juice', pronounced with [j], and which

they wanted us to spell *jus*. In their latest official list of Swedish words they have capitulated, and allow *juice*. They've similarly given in over *bebis*, baby. The language contains the most amazing loans that I simply had no idea were from English – *koks* ('coke'), *keks* ('biscuit', from 'cake'), even *slips* ('tie' – apparently via 'a slip of material'). Note how Swedish loves to put 's' on the end of singular loans from English.

Tom McArthur replies: I am very pleased indeed to have the clarifications on specific Swedish usage, and also agree that the length of time an 'alien' (translinguistic) word has been in a language signals its degree of nativization – a point I struggled to make in the *Interanto* article. It is exceedingly difficult (especially when looking at languages such as Swedish that one does not know at all) to get an idea of the length of time over which domestication may take place, but this of course does not vitiate the argument about the acquisition of translinguistic words and the macaronic quality of the titles and other constructions in which they appear in any language.

Determiners

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I would like to make a few comments on the article *Determiners: a class apart* by Roger Berry published in *ET53* (Jan 98). I am quite aware that it is too late to comment on an article which appeared two years ago but here in Ukraine it is very difficult to obtain your journal and only visiting the neighbouring countries can we read it.

The author has strong doubts

about the possibility of treating determiners as a class, citing troubles for linguists, describers, learners and teachers. The concern for linguists is considered to be the membership problem since determiners are indistinguishable from pronouns. But it is true only at the traditional parts-of-speech level, though the difference is quite evident at the syntagmatic and perception levels. At the syntagmatic level, determiners including determiner pronouns combine with nouns while non-determiner pronouns don't. Determiners are not alone with their membership problems in Modern English. Virtually any part of speech has them. Quite a number of nouns can be used as verbs (*a horse – to horse*) but we distinguish the two forms as different parts of speech. Another relatively new group of words which includes pronouns and adverbs is the deictics.

The new word classes like determiners and deictics seem to reflect the tendency of modern linguistics to look for new functions of traditional parts of speech, relying mainly on their use in speech. And in this respect the use of determiners seems to be connected with the order of speech processing, i.e., perceiving a piece of language, we recognize its formal features first and only afterwards comprehend its meaning. Therefore the formal criterion of determiner classification appears to be prior to the semantic one. So, formally the function of determiners is to distinguish a noun from other word classes and, consequently, noun referents from referents of other word classes. The semantic criterion comes second because we understand a word after recognising its form. Besides, it is quite natural that meanings of predeterminers (*all, both, half; such, many, exclamative what, rather, quite, and postdeterminers* cannot be

put down to those of the central determiners – the definite and the indefinite articles, because language does not need so many units to express the same meaning. The more distant the determiner from the position of the article the more different the meaning it conveys. Semantically, determiners express various aspects of a noun referent though formally they do the same job – mark nouns or substantivised forms as well as their referents.

The advantages of treating determiners as one formal class are obvious from the pedagogical point of view, especially for the learners of English whose native tongue has no articles, for example, Ukrainians. The constant emphasis on the fact that English countable nouns cannot be used without determiners, especially at the initial stage of instruction, results in the proper understanding of articles and other central determiners before learners come over to abstract nouns which are mainly determinerless. But it is a sufficient period to make them realise the necessity of central determiners. The idea of determiners helps to explain why articles, possessive and demonstrative pronouns, and nouns in the possessive case do not co-occur in a noun phrase. On the basis of the formal criterion, plural endings can also be treated as determiners because they mark a countable noun in the absence of the indefinite article or substantivise other parts of speech (e.g. 'radicals', in *Student radicals gathered outside the prison*).

Similarly, the titles *Mr, Mrs* and the like can be regarded as determiners in English since they distinguish names of persons from other word classes (cf *green – Mr. Green*), especially in speech where there is no capital letter to do the job.

Taking into account the formal

criterion, we can expand the idea of determination to other word classes. Due to the fixed syntactical structure of English, the distribution of words and their co-occurrence can be treated as determining for particular word classes – nouns, verbs, attributes, etc. The interaction of the syntactic position and such markers as *-s, -ed, -ing* is determining for units of different word classes (cf. *The worker speaks* and *The workers speak*). Similarly, the item *to* can also be treated as the determiner of the infinitive in certain syntactic positions and as prepositional in others (cf. *He went to school – I will teach you to school your feelings*). It seems that there are two determiners to main word classes in modern English – their syntactic position in a sentence and a special function word or morpheme. It's the interaction of these two features that distinguishes main classes of words and their referents at the formal level. For speech perception it is important that these two criteria are structural, formally guiding the activation of word meaning and its understanding at the cognitive level.

In conclusion, determiners must be regarded as a class of function units derived from the physiological and psychological capacity of human beings to perceive formal features first and semantic features afterwards which allows us to distinguish various word classes and their referents formally. On the other hand, it seems fruitless to look for semantic homogeneity among determiners of different classes. Moreover, we can expect a rise in word classifications based on the human peculiarities of perceiving and understanding speech which are sure to contradict the original division into parts of speech, and in the final run may result in the emergence of a new comprehensive word membership classification.