Language and linguistics

SEMANTICS

71-278 Seiler, Hansjakob. Semantic information in grammar: the problem of syntactic relations. *Semiotica* (The Hague), **2**, 4 (1970), 321-34.

Recent linguistic studies have revealed a great deal about categories and about properties or features. The description of syntactic relations is far less advanced. All three of these basic notions require equal attention. In a sentence of a natural language there is more semantic information and more structure than could be derived from a mere juxtaposition of categories, and this information and structure is attributed to relations. [The point is illustrated by a study of syntactic relations involving adverbs and prepositional phrases, the examples being from German.] The meanings of such relations involve notions of locale (place–direction) and time (point or frequency–duration). These relations may be marginal in a sentence but their meaning can be more easily grasped than that of a predicate-of-a sentence as represented in transformational grammar. Positing relational features will increase the descriptive adequacy of a grammar. Under the rules of generative grammar some important insights and generalizations are being missed which were familiar in traditional grammars.

(430) ADF ALD

LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

71-279 Antal, László. Some remarks on a controversial issue. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **26** (1971), 171-80.

Finiteness is a condition of the existence of a sentence. The boundary of its length exists in the field of social phenomena. Chomsky and the generativists neglect the social nature of language and are able there-

fore to maintain a theory of the infinite possible length of a sentence. This means that the mathematical theory of infinity has been transferred to the phenomenon of language without justification. Chomsky's ideas of competence and performance refer to individualistic phenomena. The author sees language as an objective norm, consequently above the individual. It is a conventional, social, not a logical or mathematical system. The reflexion of such a system in the mind of a speaking individual is his competence. The speaker's performance is directly based upon his competence. But performance has to be compared with language as an objective norm and judged on that evidence. Individual competence, performance and the objective language affect one another in a complex way which is worth further investigation, as it may contain a clue to linguistic change. **ADN**

71–280   Spathaky, Ronald. The international scientific vocabulary and the new national languages. *Linguistics* (The Hague), 61 (1970), 92–4.

The proliferation of scientific and technical terms in the language of urbanized people reveals the effect of science and technology upon our lives. *Webster's Third Dictionary* has put the letters ISV (international scientific vocabulary) in front of such words since 1961.

It would be better for the developing countries to receive new terms from their Greco-Latin form rather than through the medium of whichever language dominates the international scene. Linguistic standardization should progress under the leadership of Technical Committee 37 of the international standardizing authority of the IUPA. It is to be hoped that a morphological, semantic and syntactic study will be made of existing national variants of ISV, that rules for matters like verbal combining forms will be made and that 'false friends' across languages will be considered. [Fr. *tension*, Eng. *tension*, It. *tensione*.]   **ADN ALD ANG**

71–281 Spence, N. C. W. Some notes on the morpheme. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), 26 (1971), 113–31.

True uniformity in usage of linguistic terminology would depend on agreement on the aims, methods and principles of linguistics. At present different schools and even different scholars use terms with varying meaning. As in translation, one has to be aware of *faux amis*. This paper attempts to clarify the different uses of the term 'morpheme' and its relation to terms such as morph, allomorph and moneme.

ADN

STATISTICAL LINGUISTICS

71–282 Urechia, Alex. Graphèmes, familles de langues et calculateurs électroniques. [Graphemes, language groups and computers.] *Linguistics* (The Hague), 61 (1970), 95–102.

Linguistic statistics have grown in importance in recent research. The value of segmentation has also been proved and no further apology is necessary for it. Graphemes have the same role at alphabetic level that phonemes have at a phonological level. The graphemes have been analysed for Latin and three other Romance languages: French, Italian and Romanian. The analysis was carried out to prove the hypothesis that languages belonging to the same group use a more or less constant volume of graphemes specific to each group. This should be true regardless of the separate orthographic systems and grammatical structures of each language. Such a hypothesis once proved would be valuable for its application to computers. [The author's work methods are outlined and resultant statistical tables given for the four languages, together with explanatory notes which, it is felt, prove the value of such research for computer work and justify its further exploration.]

(440 450) ADP

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

71-283   Hebb, D. O., W. E. Lambert and G. R. Tucker. Language, thought and experience. *Modern Language Journal* (St Louis, Missouri), **55**, 4 (1971), 212–22.

The dominant view in psycholinguistics is that learning is not involved in the acquisition of grammatical competence but that the essential principles of grammar are transmitted by heredity. The author propounds the more moderate view that learning cooperates with heredity in the child's mastery of language. Latent learning, without reinforcement, is one of the facts of human behaviour, a normal consequence of perception. Within this framework the special position of language learning is considered. Early cognitive learning results in 'competence' – some form of mastery of words that a baby possesses before he begins to talk. The first naming and imitation follow. A child then has to acquire an understanding of plural forms, of active and passive, of negation, of 'nounness' and gender. A French five-year-old appears to know instinctively the gender of nouns he has not encountered before. The acquisition of bilingualism in infancy highlights the way in which extremely abstract higher-order properties of language can be built up from primary-order part-perceptions. The bilingual person's knowledge of languages as systems exemplifies itself in his capacity to keep the systems functionally segregated. [The authors believe that their model of language learning offers a productive alternative to the polarized positions at present taken by nativists and empiricists in psycholinguistics.]   AGR

PHONETICS

71-284   Renard, Raymond. Sur le recours à la tension en phonétique corrective. [On the tension factor in phonetic correction.] *Revue de Phonétique Appliquée* (Mons), 17 (1971), 71–86.

Advocates of the verbo-tonal system of phonetic correction mention 'tension' as one of the chief factors in their work. This term has not,

however, been clearly defined. Generally 'tension' implies the accu-
mulation or combination of several factors: the operation of opposing
muscles, pressure of the tongue on the palate, pressure of air against
various speech organs, etc. After a brief examination of the theory of
'tension' as described by a number of phoneticians its application to
the practical work of correction is considered. Each sound can be
characterized by a particular tension. This fact is used in teaching the
deaf to speak. Personality traits can also play a role. The lazy and
careless will have difficulty in learning to pronounce a French '*r*'.
Once the existence and influence of neuro-muscular habits have been
recognized, the teacher can learn to modify these habits, linking the
effect of vowel tension to intonation and rhythm, and consonant
tension to the surrounding sounds. [Illustrations and suggestions for
correction.]
AJ ATD

GRAMMAR

71-285 Lakoff, Robin. Tense and its relation to participants.
Language (Baltimore), **46**, 4 (1970), 838–49.

Tense has been traditionally viewed as expressing the time at which
an act occurred relative to the time of utterance. There are also
secondary factors: the time of occurrence of other higher verbs may
produce changes in the superficial tense of a lower verb by sequence-
of-tenses rules. None of the explanations of tense are, however, satis-
factory since they do not account for many ways in which tenses are
used in English and other languages. An adequate theory must be
able to incorporate concepts such as the interrelationship of the actual
time of occurrence of events with the involvement of the speaker,
hearer or participants and the perception by the speaker of the
temporal gap between event and speech. The choice of tenses differs
from language to language, but the distinctions of form and meaning
are part of our linguistic knowledge and must be incorporated into
any theory of linguistics that aims at being more than merely
descriptive.
AK

LEXICAL STUDIES

71-286   de Kock, Josse. L'automatisation dans les études de lexicographie et de lexicologie romanes. [Automatization in romance lexicography and lexicology.] *Linguistica Antver-piensia* (Antwerp), 4 (1970), 73–93.

The use of mechanical recording and computers in linguistic research was begun in Besançon for lexicological and lexicographical studies. Later these methods were used in Utrecht, Gallarate and Nancy. [Details are given of the establishment and development of work at the various centres.] Besides these laboratories, there are other centres of research in applied lexicology. At Saint-Cloud there is a *Centre de Recherche de Lexicologie Politique*; CREDIF (Centre de Recherches pour la Diffusion du Français) is interested in the drawing up of scientific and technical vocabularies; CRAL (Centre de Recherche et d'Applications Linguistiques) is linked with the *Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes* in a mechanical investigation of texts for domestic studies. There are also private investigations on a less ambitious scale. There is no radical difference between work which has hitherto been done manually and work done on a machine, except that it can be done more rapidly and on a larger scale, though sometimes detail is lost which the machine is unable to deal with. The printing out of results demands much careful checking and even the use of computers does not entirely dispense with this. [The author is willing to pass on any information which he has on this kind of work to interested enquirers.]

ALD ALG

STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

71-287   Sandig, Barbara. Probleme einer linguistischen Stilistik. [Problems of linguistic stylistics.] *Linguistik und Didaktik* (Munich), 1, 3 (1970), 177–194.

The basis of discussion is the definition of functional style as the framework from which individual devices of the language are selected and combined for a particular purpose in certain fields of social

behaviour. Analyses of weather reports and cooking instructions show how certain conventions in lexis and syntax are accepted, expected and therefore unnoticed. The recurrence of these conventions makes up functional style. How can it be linguistically analysed? Some linguists have used the concepts of norm and system and analysed on these two levels. Others have used a statistically based level of linguistic description. Three levels, combining both methods, are suggested and the work of poetic stylistics is outlined. Competence in handling language must be considered purely linguistically. Any theory of language competence must include functional style, pragma-linguistics and sociolinguistics. Questions of characteristics of style and aims of communication need investigation. Only then can criteria for classification of styles be established. **AVB**