

Language description and use

DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES OF PARTICULAR LANGUAGES ENGLISH

82–240 Emonds, Joseph. Inversion généralisée NP- α : marque distinctive de l'anglais. [Generalised NP- α inversion: a distinctive characteristic of English.] *Langages* (Paris), **60** (1980), 13–45

A number of syntactic constructions are peculiar to English: subject-auxiliary inversion (*Are the boys painters?*), indirect-object movement (*write Mary a letter*), particle movement (*lift out the books*), raising to object position (*consider John to have lost*), etc. Traditionally, it has been supposed that each of these is accounted for by a separate transformational rule. It is proposed in this article that they are all due to the same rule, which inverts a NP with some following category α . [Detailed analysis of the above constructions, giving rise to a discussion of lexical and grammatical formatives and a proposed distinction between 'primary' and 'secondary' vocabulary. Analysis of other constructions (*John forced Bill to leave*; *John made Bill angry*), showing why they do not fall under the scope of generalised NP- α inversion.] This approach, when combined with trace theory, sheds new light on the source of constructions with non-finite verbs (*They planned on the room being bigger*, *Their helping Mary surprises me*) and on the processes of raising to object position.

82–241 Stump, Gregory T. (Ohio State U.). The interpretation of frequency adjectives. *Linguistics and Philosophy* (Dordrecht), **4** (1981), 221–57.

The paper examines, and establishes a connection between, two different uses of English frequency adjectives, such as *occasional*, *frequent*, *sporadic*, *periodic*, *hourly*, *monthly*. These adjectives specify either fixed periods (hour, month) or periods of variable length, depending on the length of the relevant time interval, which may be seconds or millennia. The two usages are termed 'adverbial' and 'generic'; examples of 'adverbial' usage are *An occasional sailor strolled by* and *Mary paid her a frequent visit*, both of which can be paraphrased by a sentence-modifying adverb, e.g. *Occasionally, a sailor strolled by*. The generic usage, however, does not permit such a paraphrase: consider *An occasional cup of coffee helps keep John awake* and *John enjoys a frequent vacation in Palm Springs*. This usage corresponds more nearly to postnominal phrases such as *now and then*; thus, *A cup of coffee now and then helps keep John awake*.

The problem is to determine what features of interpretation these two usages have in common. A solution is offered within a framework of intensional semantics; in a technical discussion, the element of meaning in common turns out to be exactly that function from propositions to truth-values denoted by the corresponding frequency adverbs. The analysis is seen as pointing forward to deep problems about the psychological and anthropological significance of frequency.

FRENCH

82–242 Laffay, Albert (Inspecteur Général honoraire.) Quelques remarques concernant la négation NE. [On the negative 'ne'.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **162** (1981), 29–32.

In Old French the negative was expressed by *ne* alone. Later *ne* became linked with other words like *pas* and *point* and the combined form was used to express the negative. *Ne* alone survives in sentences which though formally negative are not negative in meaning or intention. *Ne... pas* is objective and denies categorically; *ne* is subjective and conceals an underlying affirmation. *Ne* qualifies the negation; used to deny a fact, it yet devalues the denial, setting it in a context which deprives it of importance. [Examples.]

GERMAN

82–243 Gostjuk, T. N. (Černovcy). Коммуникативное членение сложноподчиненного предложения. [The communicative structure of the complex sentence.] *Иностранные языки в школе* (Moscow), **4** (1981), 11–17.

An analysis of functional sentence perspective in complex sentences in contemporary German literature, focusing on the question of the number of communicative units in complex sentences. A typology is presented, with three basic classes, each of which has subclasses. The complex sentence may have a single theme–rheme structure, either corresponding to the sentence boundaries or not; or each clause may have its own theme–rheme structure, this being especially frequent in adjectival and adverbial subordinate clauses; thirdly, there may be a single theme, but several rhematic parts, yielding sentences with a very dense presentation of new information.

ITALIAN

82–244 Bertinetto, Pier Marco. The phonetic status of juncture in Italian. *Zeitschrift für Phonetik, Sprachwissenschaft und Kommunikationsforschung* (Berlin), **34**, 2 (1981), 211–16.

This piece of research aims at clarifying the phonetic status of the so-called junctural phenomena in Italian, with a typological definition of phonological systems in mind. Following some previous reports, mainly by Lehiste, a perceptual test has been devised for the ability of native speakers to discriminate between such pairs as *finire legato* ~ *fini relegato*. Statistical analysis of listeners' responses shows that juncture plays a very weak role in Italian, and that it is rather used as a potential device for contrastive disambiguation of utterances, when semantic and syntactic information fails to provide sufficient cues for interpretation.

JAPANESE

82-245 Hinds, John (U. of Minnesota). Japanese conversation, discourse structure and ellipsis. *Discourse Processes* (New Jersey), **3**, 3 (1980), 263–86.

Ellipsis is a common occurrence in Japanese conversation despite the fact that there are no overt clues to the identity of ellipted elements. Both the ellipsis of noun phrases and main verbals is examined. It is shown that an analysis which utilises a version of frame theory can account for when ellipsis has occurred; recognition of paragraph structures defines the identity of ellipted elements. All sentences require a main verbal; if one is not present, an appropriate verbal is selected from those available in immediate consciousness. All verbals have specific noun phrases which must be identified; if any of these are not present they are also selected from available candidates in immediate consciousness. In addition to structural information about paragraphs, the accretion of information throughout a conversation and the notion of 'scripts' is necessary to identify the referents of ellipted noun phrases.

RUSSIAN

82-246 Shmeleva, T. V. (Moscow). Социальный аспект смысла предложения. [The social aspect of sentence meaning.] *Русский язык за рубежом* (Moscow), **2** (1981), 62–6.

All sentences are said to have both subjective and objective content, the subjective content being divisible into deixis, speaker's evaluation of the message, and the speaker's attitude towards the hearer. This latter aspect is said to be neglected, for Russian has no specific morphological means of expressing it, unlike a language such as Korean.

It is claimed that attitude towards the hearer comes out most strongly in choices of phrase for referring to people. The most obvious example is the use of polite or intimate second person pronouns, but the choice of personal name by which the hearer is addressed, and the choice of means of referring to the speaker, are also important. A number of other factors are also defined as significant in this respect – e.g. the choice of form of imperative sentences and other performative utterances, the choice of lexical items (in particular the use of diminutives) and the use of familiar language or slang.

SPANISH

82-247 Gómez Molina, C. Los verbos conjugados pronominalmente y su frecuencia. [Pronominally conjugated verbs and their frequency.] *Linguística Antverpiensia* (Antwerp), **14** (1980), 173–9.

A semi-automatic search of 212 articles by Miguel de Unamuno (all those written between 1931 and 1963) yielded 4092 examples of pronominally conjugated verbs, representing 372 different verbs in all. When this list was compared with the list in order of frequency of all the verbs in the same corpus (*ser* and *haber* excluded) it became evident that no special class of pronominally conjugated verbs exists: the frequency of this form reflects the frequency of the verb itself. Any verb, even rare terms and neologisms, can be treated in this way. [Tables; graph.]

TRANSLATION

82-248 Arthern, Peter J. (English Translation Division, EEC). Computer-assisted translation – a translator's viewpoint. *Lebende Sprachen* (Heidelberg), **26**, 2 (1981), 55–9.

The introduction of publicly accessible data-transmission networks such as 'Euronet' and systems like 'Teletext' and 'Viewdata' (which use the domestic television set as a visual display unit) may mean that any translator will be able to dial for information from a term bank in the near future. Information can be made available on paper, via a visual display unit, or on micro-fiche [the advantages and disadvantages of each system are discussed]. It is more difficult to absorb information from an illuminated screen than from the printed page, hence the information must be designed for the purpose. A standard two-stage format for the presentation of terminology on screens is suggested. A new form of machine-aided translation for large 'controlled-translation' situations such as in the EEC is proposed, consisting of a central memory-store which stores all texts produced by the organisation together with translations into as many languages as are required. These texts could then be used as a source of 'raw' terminology.

82-249 Liu Yong-quan (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences). Machine translation in China – a report. *ALLC Journal* (Cambridge), **1**, 2 (1981), 61–6.

Machine translation (MT) research in China began in 1957. Over the years MT algorithms have been developed for translation into Chinese from English, Russian, German and French. Chinese MT techniques concentrate on syntactic analysis, including the determination of the hierarchical structure of the sentence and the determination of the axis in the sentence; the full use of fixed phrases; full stress on the key significance of function words in MT; and the emphasis on formal analysis without neglecting the function of meaning.

82-250 Newmark, Peter (Polytechnic of Central London). The translation of metaphor. *Incorporated Linguist* (London), **20**, 2 (1981), 49–54.

The main purpose of metaphor is to describe an entity, event or quality more comprehensively and concisely than is possible in literal language. Moreover, a one-word metaphor, once accepted as a technical term, may be added to the technical terminology of a semantic field and thus contribute to greater accuracy in language use. The majority of metaphors are either anthropomorphic (personification) or reific (mental to physical) – both processes reinforcing the emotive effect. Metaphor is of five types: dead, cliché, stock, recent and original [discussion].

Preferred procedures for translating metaphor are (1) reproducing the same image in the TL; (2) replacing it with a standard TL image which does not clash with the TL culture, (3) translation by simile, retaining the image, (4) translation by simile plus sense (or metaphor plus sense), (5) conversion of metaphor to sense, (6) deletion, (7) same metaphor combined with sense. [Discussion of recent metaphors and how original metaphors are translated into the modern TL for the first time.] The

translator must assess the status of the metaphor before he translates. Linguists should treat metaphor more seriously, as it is at the centre of all problems of translation theory, semantics and linguistics.

82-251 Roberts, Roda P. (U. Laval). Context in translation. *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal, Quebec), 1, 2 (1979), 117-32.

Context as defined by linguists, in the sense of linguistic units in the immediate proximity of a particular unit, plays an important role in translation, in that it helps the translator to solve some grammatical and lexical problems [examples]. To solve other problems, however, the translator often needs to go beyond the sentence level to the situation itself, the concrete or abstract reality described by the text. The process of analysis differs depending whether the framework is textual or not.

The role of context in translation is discussed at the stage of analysis, when the aim is to grasp the meaning of the entire text, which may seem meaningless, and at the stage of transfer, when the translator moves from one language to another, transferring the semantic content of the text into the target language. At a further, restructuring stage, immediate context helps to pinpoint any discrepancies of style.

LEXICOLOGY

82-252 Dugast, D. Lexicométrie: qu'est-ce qu'un vocabulaire théorique? [Lexicometry: what is a theoretical vocabulary?] *Cahiers de Lexicologie* (Paris), 36, 1 (1980), 3-23.

The relation between the total vocabulary of a text and the number of words in the text is described by the 'Uber' equation. One term in this equation is a constant U which provides a measure of the lexical richness of the text relative to its length. This article considers the application of the Uber equation and the constant U to the analysis of lexical richness in literary texts: (1) the interpretation of statistical data for individual texts against the broader background of a writer's total literary output and the treatment of parts of a work in relation to the work as a whole; (2) the way a picture of the whole may be constructed from the analysis of its parts. The methodology of lexicometric analysis is briefly discussed. [Illustrative analyses of Racine's tragedies, of *Fort comme la mort* and of *Ruy-Blas*.]