

Studies of particular languages

ENGLISH See also abstracts 76–4, –18

76–20 Bodine, Ann. Androcentrism in prescriptive grammar: singular 'they', sex-indefinite 'he', and 'he or she'. *Language in Society* (London), 4, 2 (1975), 129–46.

Before the beginning of the prescriptive grammar movement in English, singular *they* was both accepted and widespread. It is argued that the prescriptive grammarians' attack on singular *they* was socially motivated, and the specific reasons for their attack are discussed. By analogy with socially motivated changes in second person pronouns in a variety of European languages, it is suggested that third person pronoun usage will be affected by the current feminist opposition to sex-indefinite *he* – particularly since the well-established alternative, singular *they*, has remained widespread in spoken English throughout the two and a half centuries of its 'official' proscription. Finally, the implications of changes in third person singular, sex-indefinite pronouns for several issues of general interest within linguistics are explored (language change, sex roles and language, language attitudes, language planning, prescriptive grammar, pronouns).

76–21 Grannis, Oliver C. Some semantic aspects of relative clauses in English. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), 13, 2 (1975), 111–18.

It has been suggested that non-restrictive relative clauses are simple variations of independent sentences – they can be expressed as independent propositions, conjoinable to other independent propositions containing referentially identical nouns. It has further been argued by Thompson (1970), that sentences with restrictive relative clauses are derivable from conjoined underlying sentences. This approach avoids the difficulties involved in representing relative clauses in an embedded structure, has greater generality, but denies that an argument is ever defined by a restrictive relative clause. However, negativising sentences held by Thompson to underly surface structures of both the restrictive and non-restrictive type, shows immediately that a conjunction analysis is unsatisfactory.

Thompson excludes certain classes of generic sentences, for instance *men who smoke pipes look distinguished*, from this analysis, arguing that they are derived from an underlying *if-then* sentence. However, this exclusion ignores those facts which most support the thesis that non-restrictive relative clauses are related to conjunctions, while the restrictive type are not. Although it seems that

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non-restrictive relative clauses have much in common with conjoined sentences, it would be a mistake to use a conjunction analysis to drill restrictive relative clauses in a classroom situation.

GERMAN

76-22 **Götze, Lutz.** Zum Problem der Ergänzungssätze in spontan gesprochener Sprache. [The problem of complement sentences in spontaneous spoken language.] *Zielsprache Deutsch* (Munich), 1 (1975), 16-22.

Complement sentences are usually handled as subordinate clauses [examples]. Conditional sentences also belong here. It is argued that more attention should be paid to the sentence patterns of colloquial speech where in co-ordinate *wenn*-clauses the verb of the second clause appears in non-final position, *Wenn er kommt und sagt mir. . .* Sentences like these are deviations from the written norm and as such are not acceptable, but they should be learnt passively since they do occur in spoken language. Co-ordination of statements, *Der Mann ist imstande und erzählt das allen Leuten*, is more typical of spoken language than the sentence *Der Mann ist imstande, das allen Leuten zu erzählen*, with an infinitive complementiser. Spoken language shows the tendency to spread information over two clauses joined with *und*, but co-ordination cannot always be applied. [Examples]. Some subordinate clauses can occur on their own [examples] but their meaning is clear from the context, hence the need for a pragmatic component to deal with the sentences of spoken language.

SPANISH

76-23 **Bolinger, D.** One subjunctive or two? *Hispania* (Appleton, Wis), 57, 3 (1974), 462-71.

The view that the Spanish subjunctive should be regarded as dual in nature (optative or dubitative) is criticised. Collocation of the two 'subjunctives' fails to produce expected oddities of effect such as zeugma. The two characteristics mentioned are semantic properties of matrix sentences [cf. 76-25]. Some expressions are neither optative nor dubitative yet still require the subjunctive (*es interesante que. . .*); some are ambiguous with respect to the 'distinction' (*es inconcebible que. . .*).

The theory under attack states that optative and dubitative behave differently with respect to the negative: negative before dubitative offers the choice of indicative or subjunctive. But the problem and the solution are dictated by the choice of explanation, which uses *no* as an automatic trigger of a subjunctive

rather than analysing the effect of *no* on the meaning of the matrix sentence. Thus not all negative dubitative have the option indicative/subjunctive; their meaning is the critical factor in the option, thus *no desconfiar* does not permit the indicative.

A parallel in English involves main (matrix) verb dislocation and the insertion of 'performatives' into adjective clauses (which are impossible just where Spanish requires a subjunctive) and clause-preposing (which parallels Spanish cases that require a subjunctive). The subjunctive is unitarily attitudinal in character; the indicative is intellectual, according to the traditional insights of Spanish linguistics. [Extensive notes.]

76-24 González-Mena de Lococo, Verónica A. A look at Spanish irregular verbs. *Hispania* (Appleton, Wis), **58**, 1 (1975), 111-14.

Harris's generative phonological work on Spanish regular verbs is here extended to cover subregularities among 'irregular' verbs. A simplified model is used as a pedagogical and auto-instructional method. Verbs are grouped according to their behaviour with respect to such subregular rules as stressing of stem-final [i] (*envío*), [j] -addition (*estoy*), [(i)g] -insertion (*vengo*, (*caigo*)), [k] -insertion (*partenezco*, [i] -deletion/semi-vocalisation (-*uimos/-uyen*), abnormal retention/deletion of theme vowels (*veo* (present indic.)/*ven* (imper.), *cabré* (future)). The past perfect is subregular in that it often has the phonological structure -C[u] C[e] in the first person singular and analogously in the third. Explicit teaching of such rules will depend on the age of the learners, but they aid retention by virtue of making the student make deductions for himself.

76-25 Terrell, T. and Hooper, J. A semantically based analysis of mood in Spanish. *Hispania* (Appleton, Wis), **57**, 3 (1974), 484-94.

One traditional view of the Spanish subjunctive is that its occurrence is syntactically determined; critics of this theory feel that it misses a relation between the occurrence of the subjunctive and the semantic structure of the entire sentence. A second traditional theory, which is extended here, holds that choice of mood corresponds to such propositional values of matrix sentences as assertion, presupposition and the like. These values are used to classify sentential complements in such a way that their modality follows naturally from this aspect of their meaning. Subjunctive in negated assertions follows from the meaning 'doubt' implicit in the notion of 'negated assertion'. Ordinary assertion contains the indicative, as does reported assertion (*le dije que . . .*). Non-assertion (including pre-supposition) contains the subjunctive. In accordance with this, Spanish imperatives are standardly subjunctive, as are overt expressions of doubt. Subjective comment on presupposed complements (which are by

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definition not asserted) requires subjunctive (*me alegro de que...*). But 'mental acts' in relation to a presupposed complement, which are non-attitudinal, require indicative (*tomar en consideración que...*). There is an imbalance in the system of mood such that some speakers use indicative for all presupposed complements.

Syntactic evidence for this classificatory separation of complement types comes from: the restriction of tenses in embedded imperatives (doubt complements are unrestricted); presupposed complements are constant under negation (asserted and doubted complements swap reciprocally under negation); comments vs. mental acts are distinguished in that the latter are anomalous in first person negative (**yo no me doy cuenta de...*). Matrices that are ambiguous between two of the above categories are disambiguated by the mood of the complement or by one of the other discriminations (tense-range restrictions; compatibility of first person and negative). [Drills are suggested which are innovative rather than simply blank-filling.]

RUSSIAN See abstract 76-5

PORTUGUESE

76-26 Hutchins, J. A. Use and frequency of occurrence of verb forms in spoken Brazilian Portuguese. *Hispania* (Appleton, Wis), **58**, 1 (1975), 59-67.

Despite the importance of the verb in Portuguese textbook drills, there exists no verb-form frequency list for written or spoken Portuguese. Suitably 'natural' dialogue in the prestigious Rio de Janeiro dialect of Portuguese was analysed, as spoken mainly by upper-middle-class speakers. Alphabetical and frequency tables were drawn up. Of the tense forms, present indicative proved the most frequent overall (40 per cent) (infinitive 19 per cent), and the total for this tense in the most frequent verbs (*estar, ir, ser*) ranged around 70 per cent. A number of verbs were more common in the preterite than in any other finite tense (*chegar, dizer...*). Imperfects were largely restricted to seven verbs, including *querer* which uses this tense as a conditional substitute. *Gostar* preponderated in the conditional. Present perfect was very rare, and its formation with *ter* exceeded that with *haver* by three to one, in contrast with literary usage. Subjunctives were rare; the 'colloquial command' (third person singular indicative) predominated over the 'normal command' with *você*, etc., largely by virtue of the frequency of *olha!* as a call for attention. On the side, *tenho que* (not *de*) was found to be near-universal. Hypercorrections were noted (*esteje*). Singular forms of the verb outnumber plurals by ten to one. *Você/vocês* proved to be the commonest form of second person address. [Frequency list. Alphabetical list with note of the most frequent representative form of each verb. Notes.]