Language description and use

DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES OF PARTICULAR LANGUAGES
ENGLISH

83–388 Bhatia, Tej K. (Syracuse U.) English and the vernaculars of India: contact and change. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **3**, 3 (1982), 235–45.

India is a unique network of giant, coexisting speech communities. Of its 12 dominant languages, Hindi and Bengali rank among the six most widely spoken languages in the world. The first contact with English came about 300 years ago; before then, Sanskrit and Persian served as link languages in India. None of the states is linguistically homogeneous; linguistic diversity is compensated for by a complex network of bilingualism: pan-Indian bilingualism and state bilingualism. The two main sources of the former are English and Hindi. Whereas Hindi speakers prefer to learn the state or local language of the region they move to, Tamil speakers prefer to use Hindi or English.

English is associated with prestige and 'modernisation'; it is employed in scientific, medical, technological, sporting and other registers. The anglicisation of the Indian languages is discussed under the headings of phonology, syntax, code-mixing and the emergence of 'Hinglish' (seen by purists as threatening to Indian languages).

83–389 Dixon, R. M. W. (Australian National U.). The grammar of English phrasal verbs. *Australian Journal of Linguistics* (St Lucia, Queensland), **2** (1982), 1–42.

Phrasal verbs are combinations of a verb with one (or more) preposition(s) which have more or less idiosyncratic meaning. There is a continuum ranging from fully literal combinations like *stand on* [X], through *put* [X] *on* [Y], to semi-literal *wash* [X] *down*, and finally strongly phrasal verbs like *have* [X] *on* and *put up with* [X]. There are six types of phrasal verb which have the following underlying structures (an initial verbal element is understood in all): prep(osition), prep N(oun) P(hrase), NP prep, NP prep NP, prep prep NP and NP prep prep NP. NP prep NP and some NP prep prep NP types do not differ in structure from literal constructions whereas types prep, NP and some NP prep prep NP differ from literal combinations in that they end with a preposition to which a prepositional object cannot be appended.

The syntactic behaviour of phrasal verbs is exactly like that of literal constructions. The same constraints and tendencies apply to the left movement of a preposition over a preceding direct object NP. The limited degree of right movement of a preposition, over its following prepositional object, applies to literal constructions and to a few phrasal verbs. With the exception of a few of the most idiomatic of phrasal verbs in the case of passivisation, phrasal verbs behave exactly like literal verb-preposition combinations with respect to passivisation, co-ordination, gapping, fronting and adverb placement. The difference between phrasal verbs and literal verb-preposition combinations is almost entirely semantic. A classification of prepositions in terms of the

types of phrasal verb they enter into and whether left or right movement is possible is suggested.

83–390 Leitner, Gerhard (Free U., Berlin). The consolidation of 'educated southern English' as a model in the early 20th century. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **20**, 2 (1982), 91–107.

Taking a diachronic sociolinguistic approach, the author outlines the development of language attitudes and the role of the BBC from 1900 to 1940. Educated southern English (ESE) became established as the prestige or standard variety in Great Britain around the turn of the century. The points of departure for this research are the widespread statements that Received Pronunciation (RP) would not be a social accent and that the BBC would be one of the factors which contributed most to the social position of this phonological form. The study shows (1) that the notion of 'educated English' is no longer synonymous with 'educated southern English' or (RP) because features belonging to natural accents, including northern English, were accepted at the time as 'educated'; (2) the flood of descriptions of this type of English around 1900 is in keeping with social and political changes of the time; and (3) discussion among the public at large as well as among specialists are faithfully reflected in the BBC; (4) a series of phonological phenomena were already in existence (e.g. ʊa → ɔ:) whose origin, according to Gimson, was the BBC. Any attempt to provide a non-social definition of RP which relies on alleged influence of the BBC is premature – probably wrong. The social changes since the beginning of the century – greater social and regional mobility, easier access to 'public life' – are the crucial factors.

83–391 Meier, Gerhard E. H. (U. of Saarlandes, FRG). The participle construction of characterisation. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **20**, 2 (1982), 109–30.

The syntactic construction in which participles are preceded by *as* (the participle construction of characterisation or *pcc*, e.g. *I thought of the book as reflecting the author's attitude towards life*) is analysed with reference to 300 examples drawn from a number of twentieth century texts. Although the *pcc* occurs with relative frequency in English it is given only cursory treatment in English grammars. The function of the *pcc*, which can appear as the complement of a subject or object or as an attribute, is outlined. Verbs, adjectives and nouns determined by the *pcc* are classed syntactically and semantically. The various relationships between the different functions of this construction are discussed.

83–392 Strevens, Peter (Bell Educational Trust, Cambridge). What *is* 'Standard English'? *RELC Journal* (Singapore), **12**, 2 (1981), 1–9.

Standard English cannot be defined or described in terms such as 'the best English' or by reference to the usage of any particular group or social class. It is here defined as 'a particular dialect of English, being the only non-localised dialect, of global currency without significant variation, universally accepted as the appropriate educational target in teaching English; which may be spoken with an unrestricted choice of accent'.

'Dialects' and 'accents' are distinguished by the fact that different dialects have differences of grammar and vocabulary, while different accents have differences of pronunciation. Standard English is one dialect among hundreds. Variations typically occur in dialect and accent pairs, geographically distributed with rather little overlap. The only case where the pairing of dialect and accent does not operate is in relation to Standard English, which is the only dialect not associated with any particular locality. It is also the only dialect which can form a pair with virtually every accent. Standard English has global currency, i.e. it is not confined to any single locality. It only varies a little in the usage of British English, American English, etc.: the main differences depend primarily on accent, not dialect (defined by its grammar). Standard English dialect, then, is found in both Britain and America: when spoken, any accent may be used.

Though Standard English dialect is universally accepted as the educational target, no single accent fills an equivalent position. In some areas, a local dialect may be a better choice as the target. It is not 'a class dialect'. Many users switch between it and some other dialect. Nevertheless, the pairing of Standard English dialect and RP (Received Pronunciation) accent has been associated for almost a century with a social and educational élite. But Standard English exists independently of RP accent, though the converse is not true.

The term 'Standard English' is valuable for three reasons: (i) it provides a way of accounting for a range of observable distinctions and attitudes; (ii) it offers a label for the grammatical and lexical components, at least, of the teaching core undertaken by the profession of teaching English, whether as the mother tongue or as a foreign or second language; (iii) it constitutes the unifying element within the enormous diversity of the English language.

83–393   Vachek, Josef. Paralinguistic sounds, written language and language development. *Folia Linguistica Historica* (The Hague), **2**, 2 (1981), 179–90.

Examples from English and Czech are cited in support of the thesis that there is a tendency for languages to (*a*) incorporate paralinguistic sounds into their systemic make-up and (*b*) reshape them into actual elements of linguistic structure. For instance in English, the paralinguistic alveolar click [ʇ], which is usually transliterated as 'tut', is sometimes pronounced as [tʌt], which indicates that it has entered into the systemic structure of English. Such examples would suggest the written language can have an influence on the development of spoken language.

FRENCH

83–394   Seelbach, Dieter. Dislokation im französischen Satz und Text. [Dislocation in French speech and text.] *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **20**, 3 (1982), 193–216.

This article is concerned with a construction common in colloquial French, which is known as 'dislocation'. The sentence (1) *Je connais ce garçon* can evince two types of dislocation, viz. (2) *Je le connais, ce garçon* and (3) *Ce garçon, je le connais*. The determinants of dislocation in spontaneous speech are described and explained, the analysis being carried out at both sentential and textual levels.

GERMAN

83–395 Evers, Arnold. Verb second movement rules. *Wiener Linguistische Gazette* (Vienna), **26** (1981), 15–34.

The occurrence of the verb in second position in German and Dutch main clauses is due to the 'natural' logical form of the clause as opposed to the 'natural' phonological form and 'natural' phrase structure of the clause. The second position rule relating to the verb is comparable to WH-movement. Both rules move elements to the left to express their scope. It is assumed that the finite verb in the main clause is, like the WH-constituent, a scope-bearing element. This explanation does not rule out the possibility that the English VP is natural but it does show that nothing of this sort has as yet been found in German or Dutch grammar. In these languages, there is nothing whatsoever which corresponds to the English VP.

Scope-bearing elements such as the WH-constituents or the finite verb tend to be moved into positions which C-command the proposition to their left. The same could be claimed of grammatically qualified topic elements, e.g. clitics. The positions into which all these elements are shifted are seen as operator positions. The main idea is that rules which move elements to the left and thus disturb the phrase structure do so in order to produce syntactic forms which express the logical functions of the sentence.

JAPANESE

83–396 Hinds, John (Penn State U.). Japanese conversational structures. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **57** (1982), 301–26.

A descriptive overview of a variety of phenomena in Japanese conversational interaction. The major thesis is that conversational interaction exhibits structural properties, even though these structures have been created by two or more entities. At the most basic level, a conversation is organised into 'triplets'. These are either question-answer-acknowledgment sequences or remark-reply-acknowledgment sequences. While the acknowledgment component may be missing, it is frequently present.

The concept of topic progression is introduced, and it is shown that topics progress in an orderly fashion, either 'down' a topic hierarchy, or 'across' to a semantically equivalent topic.

Keeping referents clear in conversational interaction is a major activity. The role of ellipsis in Japanese performs this function effectively, despite the fact that ellipsis provides a minimal amount of overt clues. In essence, Japanese ellipsis parallels English pronominalisation, although there are significant differences in both function and form.

Conversations occur in specific environments, and in the vast majority of cases involve nonverbal accompaniments to the verbal messages. Data are presented which suggest that turn-taking behaviour in Japanese is signalled by a combination of verbal and nonverbal clues.

Japanese conversational interaction can proceed for extended periods with over-

lapped speech. If Japanese are capable of decoding speech at the same time that they encode speech, this suggests that the Japanese interactant operates with a considerably different set of physical restrictions than interactants who speak English.

83–397   Kageyama, Taro (Osaka U.). Word formation in Japanese. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **57** (1982), 215–58.

A range of active word-formation processes in Japanese is reviewed. Predominant are structures in which Edwin Williams' Right-hand Head Rule is exemplified, but left-hand head structures also occur, including prefixation and a large number of Sino-Japanese compounds, the analysis of the latter requiring a special modification of the Head Percolation Rule. The evidence presented supprts and extends Allen's Level Ordering Hypothesis, in that both affixation and compounding take place at all three proposed levels of word-formation. Co-ordinate (dvandva) compounds are also examined, for some of which a word-internal empty node is needed to provide the right input to the semantics. Finally, syntactic word-formation processes are exemplified, which in certain cases can 'feed back' into the lexicon for further lexical word-formation.

83–398   Makino, Seiichi (U. of Illinois). Japanese grammar and functional grammar. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **57** (1982), 125–73.

Several discourse features of Japanese are discussed. Rejecting Kuno's detection of a dual function for the particle *wa* (as theme or contrast marker), Makino subsumes these under the notion of degrees of anaphoricity, in which a thematic NP is 'more anaphoric' than a contrastive NP. The subject particle *ga* can be treated within the same framework: *ga* marks newest information (in Firbas' terms, it indicates those elements with the highest communicative dynamism), *wa* marking those containing old information. In a discussion of deletion in discourse, Makino offers a new condition for the deletion of *wa*, incorporating a revised definition of 'empathy'. His account of gapping relies on the speaker's assumption of the existence of a natural set (as in *He is writing trashy novels and essays*; novels and essays being members of a natural set) and his description of the situation from his own objective viewpoint. Repetition also plays an important part in Japanese, and includes among its functions those of expressing politeness and encoding communicative importance. Finally, Makino proposes replacing the distinction between old and new information with a new distinction between communicative importance and unimportance.

RUSSIAN

83–399   Gurevich, V. V. О взаимодействии видового и лексического значения глагола. [On the interaction of the aspectual and lexical meaning of the verb.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), **4** (1982), 12–16.

On the basis of the widely held belief that aspectual meaning is dependent to some extent on the lexical semantics of the verb, this article discusses the use of aspects in two lexical classes in Russian – simple inchoative verbs (which only involve a single

component of meaning) and complex causative verbs (which involve both an action and a subsequent state). In both of these verb classes the perfective aspect refers to the beginning of a state, but the imperfective is used with inchoatives to refer to actions which are not directly relevant to the present moment, but with causatives to refer to actions which lead to a state. Many other nuances of meaning associated with the aspectual marking of these verbs can be related to this basic difference.

SPANISH

83–400   Foster, David William (Arizona State U.). Internal contradictions of a Spanish subjunctive. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **20**, 2 (1982), 131–7.

The position taken by some previous writers stressing the correlation between abstract meaning and surface form and affirming that the Spanish subjunctive is a closely knit complex of semantic features is rejected. There is no one-to-one correspondence between underlying semantic meaning and use or non-use of the subjunctive and while in a number of cases semantic distinctions do govern the appropriate form of the verb, in others syntactic criteria are paramount. Verbs like *creer*, *dudar* and *parecer* regularly, regardless of higher presuppositions, take one mood in the negative and another in the non-negative. Other examples are cited of internal contradictions in the use of the subjunctive – synonymous utterances which do not agree on verb mood, semantically illogical or contradictory choices of mood arising where morphosyntactic distribution does not match semantic distribution or cuts across it, inconsistent realisation of a putative semantic contrast between indicative and subjunctive – which serve to illustrate the tenuous nature of the link between semantic contrasts and the choice of indicative/subjunctive.

TRANSLATION

83–401   Ibrahim, Amr Helmy (BELC). Enjeux et obstacles de la traduction de l'appartenance du français à l'arabe en passant par l'anglais, l'italien, l'allemand et le néerlandais. [Issues and problems in the translation of terms of national entity from French into Arabic – with reference also to English, Italian, German and Dutch.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **170** (1982), 39–46.

Within the semantic field *nation*, equivalents to the French terms are examined in Arabic and four other languages. The only term common to all links mother, father and land, e.g. in *mère patrie*, *moederland*, *'al watan 'al'oum*. The reference to a territorial basis, whether small or large, is found in *home* (e.g. Home Office or home news), *country*, *pays*, *Heimat*. The tie with 'mother' is particularly strong in Arabic, where *'al'oumma*, meaning community, nation, people, derives from *'al'oum*, mother. The French term *communauté* has interesting counterparts. Italian has three terms, *comunità*, *comunanza* and *comunione*, the Arabic *'oumma* refers only to the largest, institutionalised entity and cannot be used for sub-groups, however large, such as a linguistic community or the European economic community. In French, *communauté*

nationale seems to have assumed the emotional force of *patrie*, still associated with the Vichy regime. Differences in political attitudes among French speakers may determine the choice of *nationalisation* or *étatisation*; German uses *volkseigener Betrieb* and *Verstaatlichung*; the term 'National Home for the Jews' used in the Balfour Declaration has proved dangerously ambiguous. Increasingly there is opposition in European languages (but not in Arabic) between the public, administrative term, *the state*, and the private, affective term, *the community*.

83–402   Schmitt, Christian (U. of Bonn). Translating and interpreting, present and future. *Incorporated Linguist* (London), **21**, 3 (1982), 96–102.

Some paradoxes about translation are that, although it is an ancient craft, associations for translators have not been in existence very long; the teaching of translation has a long history but no theory has united the various approaches; although there is a great demand for qualified practitioners, the profession has little status. The dialogue between translation science and linguistics should be cultivated more intensively. The total import of a text is more than the sum of its semantic parts: concepts must be decoded in the context of the given jargon. No two individuals have identical codes. The translator has to decide which aspect of the discourse he should emphasise and which he should attach less importance to. The problem of the translatability of speech acts remains to be investigated by translation science: a system of correspondences for various language pairs should be elaborated.

The quality of a technical translation rests on specialist knowledge, command of specific terminologies, and familiarity with subject- and language-specific aids (e.g. dictionaries). Here, meanings are not actualised via context. Translation will never be fully automatic, though for many text types translation can be rationalised by means of automated processes, and computer aid (e.g. terminology banks) will be essential to cope with the volume of scientific and technical material. The interpreter or translator acts as a mediator between groups which respect each other's linguistic identity: their work is a contribution to *entente*.

LEXICOLOGY

83–403   Mühlhäusler, Peter (Linacre Coll., Oxford). Etymology and pidgin and creole languages. *Transactions of the Philological Society* (Oxford), (1982), 99–118.

Using examples from Tok Pisin (Pidgin English of Papua New Guinea), the author attempts to demonstrate that despite problems, it is possible to trace the etymologies of lexical items in pidgins and creoles by tracing the socio-historical context in which they develop. At some point of development, a large proportion of pidgin and creole lexical items can be assigned jointly to more than one source language, e.g. Tok Pisin *ais* may derive from German *Eis* or English *ice*, *anka* from *Anker* or *anchor*, and so on. Etymologies can change as a result of discontinuities in transmission and prolonged contact with lexically related languages, e.g. Tok Pisin users borrowed the English word *bee* in about 1885 for it to be replaced by German *binen* between 1910

and 1950, at which time *bee* returned to usage. Borrowing tends to conceal its traces. Cognates can result from either shared history or chance encounter.

DIALECTOLOGY

83–404 Grootaers, Willem A. Dialectology and sociolinguistics: a general survey. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **57** (1982), 327–55.

A survey is presented of research in Japanese dialectology and sociolinguistics since 1960, focussing on methodological advances. Dialect studies in Japan show the influence of both the German and French traditions, leading to research both into structural and lexical variation (the former including tone studies). Methods developed include 'close-mesh surveys' which cover all settlements within an area, however small. The National Institute for Japanese Language Studies has produced a national lexical atlas of Japanese dialects, and other regional atlases cover smaller areas, sometimes using different methods. Sociolinguistic studies have recently shown a shift away from methodology and general surveys, towards more specialised work on social languages, honorifics and standardisation. The National Institute has undertaken large-scale surveys of the sociolinguistics of large cities, and their methods, together with some of their results, are reviewed here.