

Descriptive studies of particular languages

French

93-518 Bossé-Andrieu, Jacqueline (U. of Ottawa). L'emploi de l'article défini entre la préposition 'de' et le nom d'une province ou d'un Etat: une question d'usage. [The use of the definite article between the preposition 'de' and the name of a province or state: a question of usage.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **14**, 2 (1992), 27-41.

Commonly-used grammars say very little about the possible omission of the definite article after the preposition *de* placed in front of the name of a country which is either feminine or masculine in gender but starts with a vowel. As some grammarians and linguists have indicated, the use or the omission of the article is determined, to some extent, by the way the country is perceived and by

the relationship conveyed by *de*. However, the author's own study reveals that, in cases where the definite article could be omitted, Canadian francophones use it more often than European francophones. They somehow tend to simplify the use of the article by putting it in front of the names of all countries and provinces. Reasons for this are suggested.

93-519 Daoust, Denise (U. of Quebec in Montreal). Le rôle du poste comme facteur de changement des habitudes terminologiques dans une entreprise privée montréalaise. [The role of occupation as a factor in changing terminological habits in a private business firm in Montreal.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **14**, 2 (1992), 71-93.

Quebec has been applying a language planning programme since 1977 (Charter of the French Language) which stipulates that private business firms must develop and use French terminology in all types of communication. The author has been carrying out a research programme within this political framework since 1983 that aims to identify the extra-linguistic factors affecting: (1) language choice (French or English) for terminology in the workplace, and (2) terminological and sociolinguistic change. To gather the data, she devised a 20-minute self-administered written questionnaire. She then

compared some of the 1983 results with comparable data from the 99 workers of the 1990 corpus. A general comparative analysis revealed that English was used more often for the ten terms in 1990 than it was in 1983, while most of the opinions and attitudes tested are more favourable to French in 1990 than they were in 1983. Before concluding that the francisation campaign was a failure, she examined language choice for the ten terms in oral communication, as well as some of the attitudes and opinions tested, as correlated to occupation.

Translation

93-520 Dancette, Jeanne (U. of Montreal). Des processus de traduction concomitants: compréhension et recherche d'équivalents: application d'un modèle. [Concomitant processes of translation: comprehension and the search for equivalents: application of a model.] *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **14**, 1 (1992), 59-73.

This article is an attempt to test, through experimental analysis, some proposals made by theorists such as that translation occurs through deverbalsation, that it consists of semasiological and onomasiological processes, and that it is the result of crossed investigation. The article deals specifically with verification of the double helix model, which

the author devised as an attempt to formalise the concomitant mechanism of the comprehension and search for translation equivalents. After presenting the model, the author describes an experiment conducted with six professional translators. Their verbalisations emphasise (a) three alternating operations: linguistic decoding, conceptual creation and

linguistic production; (b) the favoured status of analogical processes and of metalinguistic judgments in the search both for comprehension and equivalents.

Writing

93-521 Bruthiaux, Paul (U. of Southern California). Knowing when to stop: investigating the nature of punctuation. *Language and Communication* (Oxford), **13**, 1 (1993), 27-43.

There is a need for a model of punctuation that would account for all its uses, capturing the degree to which punctuation maps onto prosodic contours as well as the rules by which it encodes syntactic relations.

The development of punctuation is charted from its earliest sources. It was not until the seventeenth century that punctuation moved away from a solely oratorical orientation towards a syntactic system. Awareness of such structural properties is linked to social factors such as the nineteenth-century shift away from purely devotional literature towards analytical materials and the growth of a class of

intellectuals who appealed not to tradition but to scholarship and logic. This development may also have reflected a growing interest in notions of language as a universal phenomenon.

It is suggested that the acquisition of the skill of punctuating may shift from prosodic to syntactic considerations, but further research is needed on the nature of spoken and written language if a model is to account for its role in marking both prosodic contours and intratextual relations. If speech and writing are seen to share enough characteristics, research might focus on the connection between punctuation and prosody.

93-522 Olson, David R. (OISE, Toronto). How writing represents speech. *Language and Communication* (Oxford), **13**, 1 (1993), 1-17.

The history of writing systems is briefly explored, from the tally marks of the ninth millennium B.C. to recent times. Olson rejects the traditional view that writing has come ever closer to the direct representation of speech or ideas, and argues that awareness of linguistic structure (including separate sounds) is a product of a writing system, not a precondition for its development. Evidence is adduced from pre-literate children, who believe that each word in the written phrase 'three little sheep' represents a different sheep, and from Greek history, where the rise of justice, courage, etc., as philosophical concepts (rather than emblematic

features of an individual) coincided with the onset of literacy. However, writing can also blind us to features of language which it does not record (e.g. tone of voice).

Non-alphabetic writing systems such as that of Chinese are no longer thought of as inferior, and the spread of syllabic and then alphabetic systems was probably simply a by-product of transferring a writing system from one language to another for which it was ill-suited. One such transfer, and the source of all alphabetic systems, was from Semitic to Greek around 750 B.C.

Lexicography

93-523 Owen, Charles (U. of Birmingham). Corpus-based grammar and the Heineken effect: lexico-grammatical description for language learners. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **14**, 2 (1993), 167-87.

The storage of vast amounts of text on computer, together with sophisticated concordancing software, has begun to have a significant impact on language description and on language pedagogy. The theoretical impetus for this development comes from Firthian linguistics and is in marked contrast to the more psycholinguistic approaches to language description which have been dominant for the last

thirty years. In particular, lexical patterning is seen as the key to grammatical description. This article assesses the current status of corpus-based lexicogrammar with particular reference to the one substantial descriptive grammar of English to have made use of the new computational techniques, the *Collins COBUILD English Grammar* (1990).