

Studies of particular languages

ENGLISH *See also abstracts 74-4, -22*

- 74-8** **Bowley, C. C.** Some explanations of causatives in English. *Te Reo* (Auckland), **15** (1972), 1-30.

Alongside the transitive/intransitive distinction for verbs there is a third category, the 'ergative' (e.g. *open*). While verbs such as *eat* may occur transitively or intransitively they would not be categorised as ergative, but rather as 'pseudo-transitive' (appearing to be transitive because of deletion). Verbs such as *wash* have been classified in various ways. The grounds for distinguishing such verbs from true ergatives such as *open* are discussed. Whereas *John opened the door* implies that *the door opened*, *someone washes this shirt well* does not imply *this shirt washes well*.

[Previous approaches to ergatives are discussed, in particular the work of Fillmore, Anderson and Halliday.] The lexicalist hypothesis is outlined as the most satisfying means of accounting for ergatives. It is proposed, as an alternative to Chomsky's proposals, that 'causative' be a semantic feature from which syntactic consequences will follow. [Bibliography.]

- 74-9** **Butler, Christopher.** A contrastive study of modality in English, French, German and Italian. *Nottingham Linguistic Circular* (Nottingham), **2**, 2 (1973) 26-39.

Although the modal verbs of English have received a lot of attention [references], there has been little attempt to relate their use and meaning to what is known of their syntax. Halliday (*Foundations of Language*, 6 (1970), 322-61) has distinguished between two functions of modal verbs in English: modulation and modality. The present paper is concerned with Halliday's division of the range of probability with which the speaker views future or past events. It is thus con-

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cerned with the modality function. Of Halliday's four categories – 'possible', 'probable', 'virtually certain' and 'certain' – the author proposes to change the last two to 'very probable' and 'extremely probable', respectively. Further, the categories may themselves be modified [examples]. There are various ways for realising the categories in English [examples], and it is possible that there should be intermediate degrees in the Halliday set because of the combinations of these realisation types which can occur. Modality may also interact with tense.

The modality options of German are considered [examples] but no conclusions can be drawn about the comparative values of the probability scale in German and English. Native speakers of English were asked to translate modal sentences in German [main results and table]. The modality options of French and Italian are very similar to each other. French and Italian speakers were asked to translate modal sentences into their own language [discussion and examples]. The equivalences between scales of probability in all four languages are seen most clearly in adjectival and adverbial realisations. English and German use a wider range of modals than French and Italian. [References for four languages.]

74-10 Lyons, John. Deixis as the source of reference. *Work in Progress* (Edinburgh), 6 (1973), 92-115.

The definite article and personal pronouns in English and other languages are weak demonstratives. Their anaphoric use is secondary to their deictic use. It is important to distinguish between sentences and utterances, particularly in the study of child language. The rules which are required to account for children's utterances are, if not universal, at least more general than many of the rules required for the analysis of adult speech.

A grammar is proposed to account for the derivation of phrases such as 'this man', 'that man' and 'the man' from underlying structures containing neither demonstrative adjective nor definite article. Deixis may become specialised and sub-categorised in a given language, and this development away from pointing may be represented

through transformational rules. The derivation of such phrases as 'that man' by adjectivalising transformation (attaching 'man' to a head word 'that') is less attractive than by regarding 'man' as being in apposition to 'that'. For English it is essential to incorporate 'he' and 'she' in the deictic system. The nature of existential sentences, and the relationship of deictics and the indefinite article is considered. [References.]

74-11 Hakutani, Yoshinobu and Hargis, Charles H. The syntax of modal constructions in English. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **30**, 4 (1972), 301-32.

The customary lexical rule of generative grammar 'M → will, can, may, shall, must' will not account for such sentences as *I have to go, you used to be able to go*. The location of the modal in the framework of generative grammars is discussed. According to the authors, in English modals are generated by the base rules. The modals of English are defined [examples]. They are compared and contrasted with 'aspectuals' (such as *begin, continue*). When various candidates for inclusion in the modal category have been excluded on the ground that they are generated as items other than auxiliaries, the modal category is found to have been enlarged by items whose exclusion leads to the inadequacy of rules for the syntax in which M occurs. Modals that can be combined internally are distinguished and described as 'quasi-modals' [examples and discussion]. A new rule is proposed for rewriting Aux as a string including optional M and any number of optional Q (quasi-modals) at up to three places. The relationship of modal and tense is considered, as well as the transformations which it can undergo [examples]. [References.]

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FRENCH *See also abstracts 74-9, -70*

74-12 Gilbert, Pierre. Remarques sur la diffusion des mots scientifiques et techniques dans le lexique commun. [Notes on the spread of scientific and technical words in the common lexis.] *Langue Française* (Paris), **17** (1973), 31-43.

There is confusion about the notions lexis and vocabulary. The confusion seems to stem from uncertainty about the distinction between language and speech. The distinction between scientific and technical vocabularies has been clearly stated but the fields to which they refer interlace and change. The *Vocabulaire général d'orientation scientifique* and a number of technical dictionaries [sources given] provide material for serious lexicological study.

There have been definitions of common lexis. [Examples and discussion.] An individual's lexis is not stable. [Examples.] An apparent simplification of the observer's task is to select, for comparison with the technical dictionaries, 'general' dictionaries. [Discussion of studies of the contents of such dictionaries, and of the limitations.] A comparison should be made of the contents of these general dictionaries, and at different dates. In this way it would be possible to determine the scientific or technical fields contributing the largest amount to the common lexis, and the speed of assimilation. [Examples and commentary on sources, occasions and manner of transfer into common lexis.]

74-13 Ledesert, D. M. and R. P. L. Harrap's new 'Standard French and English Dictionary'. *Incorporated Linguist* (London), **12**, 2 (1973), 29-31.

The editors describe the need for the new version of the Dictionary, particularly for fresh translation of certain terms, and in view of the volume of new material which had appeared since the earlier supplements. A wide range of technological and scientific terms has been included [examples from various fields]. Everyday language is not neglected (e.g. *lave-vaisselle*/washing-up machine, *mini-jupe*/mini-skirt). Colloquial words are usefully graded according to politeness of

usage [picturesque examples]. *Franglais* presented problems and only those words firmly established were included (*le parking* as well as *le smoking*). [Modifications to the original Dictionary are described – mainly removal of obsolete words, new translations in keeping with current usage, and additional meanings; sources of new material are also indicated.]

- 74-14 Pinchon, Jacqueline.** Des mots coordonnants. [On coordinating words.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **96** (1973), 49–50, and **98** (1973), 44–5.

The number of coordinators in French varies according as individual grammarians decide on criteria for including words in the category [discussion]. Bonnard suggests that a conjunction cannot be used predicatively; such words as *ainsi* and *après* may have double roles as adverbs (predicative use) and as conjunctions. *Donc* can then be classed as a coordinator. The *Grand Larousse* is inconsistent in describing both *bref* and *au contraire* as adverbs only in their alphabetical entries while including them in the list appended to the article *Conjonctions*. More tentative even than the classification is the account of the functioning of coordinators.

Car and *parce que* show a similar contrast in use [examples].

GERMAN See also abstract 74-9

- 74-15 Endres, Rolf C.** Die Gliederung der deutschen Verben nach Bedeutungsgrossgruppen. [The arrangement of German verbs by major semantic categories.] *Linguistic und Didaktik* (Munich), **4**, 2 (1973), 128–45.

There have been criticisms of customary verb categorisation, but none has provided a concrete basis for an alternative. The classification of verbs as transitive and intransitive is discussed and criticised. The criticism is founded in particular on the inadequacy of the division for representing the range of verb/object relationships. The distinction between personal and impersonal verbs is also inadequate in

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any but the most superficial, formalistic sense. To distinguish reflexive verbs in the customary way is to overlook the equal self-centredness of those such as *nachdenken*, *laufen*.

A scheme is proposed, along lines deriving from the work of Brinkmann (*Wirkendes Werk*, I (1950/1), 65–79), for imputing to verbs semantic components. Tests for these components are proposed and discussed [examples]. From combinations of these components a matrix is formed, against which various verbs are discussed. The semantic characteristics are discussed for each major semantic group [examples].

ITALIAN *See also abstract 74–9*

74–16 Rando, Gaetano. A quantitative analysis of the use of anglicisms in written standard Italian during the 1960's. *Italica* (New York), 50, 1 (1973), 73–82.

Concern has been growing recently in Italy over the number of foreign loan-words entering the vocabulary, particularly from English. Samples were therefore taken from fiction, non-fiction, magazines and newspapers, and the statistics analysed. [Tables.] In fiction, anglicisms were mainly used to give appropriate local colour (*bar*, *neon*, *tram*), but amounted to at most 0.5 per cent of the total vocabulary. The number of anglicisms was greatest in magazines and newspapers, particularly in 'items of English interest' (0.52 per cent), news and sports (0.38 per cent), entertainments and advertisements, and lowest in 'letters to the editor'. [Derivatives, calques and loan-translations are also considered.] Even counting derivatives and calques, the highest percentage of anglicisms was 0.92 per cent, so it seems that the use of anglicisms is contained within restricted limits.

SPANISH

- 74-17 Bobes Naves, Maria del Carmen.** La coordinación en la frase nominal castellana. *Revista Española de Lingüística* (Madrid), 2, 2 (1972), 285-311.

The syntactical process of coordination, corresponding to addition in arithmetic, is inefficient and often ambiguous, as a given superficial structure may contain coordinated elements of diverse semantic content. The author studies the problems presented by coordination in the noun phrase by analysing the conditions of its use and examining its possible varieties: the coordination of simple elements, of two or more elements with noun expansion, and of diverse elements [examples]. An essential deficiency of coordination is seen in its failure to clarify adequately syntactical relationships and semantic content, particularly in respect of referential and connotative values; the process can therefore, in transformational terms, be viewed as structurally inadequate.

- 74-18 Haverkate, W. H.** The performative analysis of the Spanish imperative. *Cahiers de Lexicologie* (Paris), 21, 2 (1972), 67-74.

Traditional grammarians have taken the view that the imperative mood in Spanish has only two authentic forms (e.g. ¡entra! ¡entrad!). In this article, on the other hand, these forms of the imperative are considered to be irregular surface forms. Arguments are presented for deriving imperative sentences in Spanish from a performative deep structure in which an embedded clause forms a direct object. The application of transformational rules produces the characteristic 'subjunctive' form of the imperative.

RUSSIAN

- 74-19 Dudnikov, A. V.** Синтактические омонимы. [Syntactic homonyms.] *Русская речь* (Moscow), 2 (1973), 88-93.

Homonyms are usually taken to be words of similar sound with different meanings. Something like homonyms can be observed in the realm of syntax – in the formation of constructions having the same number of lexical units in the same succession and taking the same form but with a different syntactical relationship between some of them. [The idea is illustrated fully with examples from Russian literature before the various types of syntactic homonyms are discussed.] The four categories are fully documented together with the conditions appropriate to their creation. Since intonation plays a vital part in the way their meaning is understood, an understanding of the nature of syntactic homonyms has practical as well as theoretical significance.

- 74-20 Friederick, Wolf.** Zum Akzentgang der russischen Substantive. [On the position of the accent in the Russian noun.] *Russisch* (Munich), 1 (1973), 14-16; 2 (1973), 26-8.

One of the difficult problems in the declension of the Russian noun is the mobility of the stress. A list of eleven stress patterns is presented with examples. These are accounted for in a self-explanatory system originated by Fouquet, which involves the use of code letters and numbers. Two letters are used to signal stress on the word-stem, or stress on the ending; reference to singular declension precedes reference to the plural. Isolated cases which take a different stress are denoted by numbers, and instances of stress shift within the main stem are shown by diacritical marks.

ARABIC

74-21 Fellman, Jack. Sociolinguistic problems in the Middle Eastern Arab world: an overview. *Anthropological Linguistics* (Bloomington, Ind), **15**, 1 (1973), 24-32.

The crucial linguistic problem in the Arab world today is diglossia, further complicated by three other major splits – geographical, socio-economic and religious. The peasant is most closely concerned because his ignorance of the standard language, Classical Arabic, cuts him off from the news media and reduces his opportunities for improving his lot. [A brief survey of the history, geography and socio-economics of the Middle East shows how lack of political unity, traditional divisions between urbanite, villager and nomad, together with a fostering of numerous minority religions, have all tended to encourage the development of different ways of living and speaking.]

The various dialects differ from each other and differ in various ways from Classical Arabic, the language of the educated. The standard should be provided by Classical Arabic because dialect forms are simplifications of it, but its structure and use are complex [details]. It is held in awe as the language of God, and the poetic and religious texts by which it is taught are remote from the peasant's comprehension.

Radio is seen as a possible aid in bringing the peasant into modern society: local programmes can be given in dialect or the colloquial form of Classical Arabic, and broadcasters can make Classical Arabic more comprehensible by using pauses [problems of phonology, stress and script]. Some authors are publishing two versions of their books, or mixing passages of Classical Arabic with dialect where appropriate. It is hoped that in fifty years' time the gap will have been bridged [References.]

SWAHILI

- 74-22 **Mkilifi, M. H. Abdulaziz.** Triglossia and Swahili-English bilingualism in Tanzania. *Language in Society* (Cambridge), **1**, 2 (1972), 197-213.

To test hypotheses about the factors affecting language maintenance and code-switching it is essential to study as many situational variants as possible. Three factors seem to affect language maintenance, code-switching and language mixing among bilingual speakers of Swahili and English in Tanzania: the sociocultural settings for acquisition and use of the languages; the communicative function of each; and the adequacy of each language to a situation of modernisation. Among fifteen respondents four main phases of language acquisition and use were discovered. [The subgrouping within these categories is described and discussed.] The general language situation in Tanzania is characterised as one of triglossia, an intersection between two developing diglossic situations (one involving Swahili and a vernacular; the other Swahili and English). The constituent situations are described and discussed. The language situations are considered in the light of the 'restricted', 'elaborated' code dichotomy.

It is difficult to predict what language bilinguals will choose in any face-to-face situation [examples]. A possible explanation has to do with the order in which the three languages were learnt. It is also possible to suggest the existence of a hierarchy of social distance, with vernacular representing one extreme, English the other. Questions are raised about the future of Swahili and English in the Tanzanian language situation, and answers are suggested. [References.]

MANUAL LANGUAGE

- 74–23 Tweney, Ryan D. and Holman, Harry W.** Back translation: a method for the analysis of manual languages. *Sign Language Studies* (The Hague), **2** (1973), 51–72.

A brief outline of previous attempts to describe the grammatical properties of American Sign Language is given. The authors adapted back translation to the study of ASL to test ASL's adequacy as a channel of communication. [An experiment performed by deaf adults is described in detail with tables of results.] The results showed that the deaf subjects were surprisingly accurate in translating English written sentences into ASL and back into English. Some limitations of ASL, and some differences and similarities between English and ASL, are revealed. [List of references. A criticism of the article and the authors' reply is given in the same issue.]