

## Descriptive studies of particular languages

### French

**91–125 Coveney, Aidan** (U. of Newcastle-upon-Tyne). The omission of 'ne' in spoken French. *Francophonie* (Rugby), **1** (1990), 38–43.

The aim of this paper is to show the precise extent to which *ne* is omitted in spoken French, as well as social and linguistic factors affecting its omission. A review of seven quantitative surveys reveals a striking difference between metropolitan France and Montreal, where *ne* has practically disappeared. Factors affecting the omission of *ne* seem to be age, social class and different levels of formality, with age being the most significant – younger speakers have

a high rate of omission. The use of *ne* can vary considerably on the formal–informal scale of individual speakers, increasing with greater degrees of formality.

A brief look at syntactic environments shows a much higher retention rate when the subject is a noun phrase than when it is *qui* or conjunctive pronouns.

**91–126 Lepetit, D. and Martin, P.** Étude différentielle intonative français/anglais. [Differential study of French/English intonation.] *IRAL* (Heidelberg, FRG), **28**, 2 (1990), 135–52.

The authors understand by a differential investigation the description of differences and similarities existing between intonation systems of two languages, the goal of such an investigation being to make the teaching of target-language intonation systems more effective. The investigation described in this article has English as source language and French as target language. The conceptual framework is provided by Martin's intonation theory.

Within this framework certain minimal syntactic structures are each assigned a series of intonational contours, the selection of which is determined partly by the accented syllables of the structure in question, partly by the hierarchical ordering of the syntactic units. The utility of the procedures described here is confirmed by an analysis of intonational errors made by English-speaking learners of French.

### Russian

**91–127 Endryus, E.** Семантический анализ русских глагольных приставок и предлогов 'о' и 'об'. [The semantic analysis of Russian verbal prefixes and prepositions 'o' and 'ob'.] *Русский язык за рубежом* (Moscow), **1** (1990), 67–71.

A semantic analysis is made of the verbal prefixes *o-* and *ob-* and of the prepositions *o* and *ob*. The prefixes *o-* and *ob-* form synonymous types of verb, although when minimum pairs of verbs are studied, a more complicated relationship is evident. Rules relating to the phonetic aspects of these prefixes are considered. For example, that the combination *o + (a)* and *o + (o)* is only found in loan words such as *oazis*.

Ten pairs of verbs are studied. Initially, *ob-* appears to be more concrete than *o-* and more linked with the external traits of an object, whilst *o-* changes the internal essence of an object. It is, however, too simplistic to suggest that *o-* and *ob-*

can be correlated with 'internal/external' state. *O-* and *ob-* are also found as prefixes of nouns. These nouns are formed from verbal roots, which have the same minimum pairs.

The phonetic aspect of the prepositions *o* and *ob* are considered. In the prepositional case, *o* is used with words beginning with a consonant, *ob* with words beginning with a vowel. Generally, the use of *o* and *ob* plus the accusative case is found as frequently as *o* and *ob* plus the prepositional case, but the combination with nouns in the accusative case more frequently results in *ob* plus consonant, than *o* plus vowel.



## Translation

**91–128 Dollerup, Cay and others.** Reader, text, translation, and interpretative potentials. *Multilingua* (Amsterdam), **9**, 3 (1990), 271–84.

The article posits that ‘literature’ exists only in and after the reading of a specific literary text, and that criticism is a set of hypotheses about the potentials of specific texts. Provided these two premises are accepted, it is argued that criticism of the source-text and of the target-language text cannot be the same in different language communities, no matter what pains conscientious translators take to produce a target-language text ‘identical’ to the source-language text.

Explicitly disregarding obvious mistranslations and cuts, the article discusses differences between

source-language ‘originals’ and target-language ‘versions’ that are introduced at the level of the editor, of the author, and of the translator. Referring to translations of folkloristic texts, and citing evidence from cross-cultural reader response studies, it is argued that texts in translation offer different potentialities than those which they offer in the original: accordingly, criticism based on translation primarily constitutes part of the critical endeavour only in the target language and not in the source-language.

## Lexicology

**91–129 Yastrebova, O. I.** Отбор и методическая типология лексики, обозначающей советские реалии. [The selection and methodical typology of vocabulary concerned with Soviet life.] *Русский язык за рубежом* (Moscow), **2** (1990), 78–84.

Recent occurrences in Soviet political and economic life have resulted in considerable changes in Russian vocabulary. Additional connotations have appeared and new words have been created. Problems have therefore arisen in the selection and systematic typology of such vocabulary, which is concerned with social, political and economic aspects of Soviet life.

Three stages determine the selection of vocabulary for teaching purposes: texts are chosen; vocabulary is selected; and a glossary compiled by considering aspects such as frequency of words and the students’ past linguistic experience. A classification of 12 subject areas (such as that of vocabulary linked with

the development of the Soviet state) is outlined. Three main principles of selection of the vocabulary are considered: statistical (the frequency of occurrence of words), systematic (concerning the subject), and linguistic. Using these principles, a dictionary was compiled. The selected vocabulary was characterised by varying structural features (such as different types of abbreviations). Lastly, three groups were devised on the basis of the students’ ease of understanding the vocabulary. The easiest group consisted of words often already known to the students, such as *perestroika*; the most difficult group comprised words which the students needed assistance in understanding.