

Language description and use

DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES OF PARTICULAR LANGUAGES ENGLISH

84–657 Fronek, Josef. 'Thing' as a function word. *Linguistics* (The Hague), **20**, 9/10 (1982), 633–54.

The purpose of this article is to point out some interesting uses of the English word *thing* with a view to demonstrating that there is no sharp distinction between autosemantic and synsemantic lexical units and between the synthetic-morphological and analytic-lexical markers of syntactic relations in the English language. *Thing* is shown to be an extremely flexible function word. It is capable of a considerable degree of desemantisation and in consequence can appear as a pro-form; unlike most other pro-forms it behaves like an autosemantic word in that it can be freely pluralised and serve as an empty head for all manner of modification, e.g. by articles, adjectival attributes, prepositional phrases, infinitival and participial constructions, and relative clauses. The other distinct use of the grammatical *thing* is shown to be that which can be referred to as a 'detached' inflectional or derivational morpheme. English examples are contrasted with their counterparts in other languages (Czech, Russian, German) in order to highlight the above-mentioned functions of *thing* and its place in English grammar.

84–658 Vande Kopple, William J (Calvin Coll.). Hendrik and Jipke Den Hollander and American English: 'De Dutch Most Furgit Us'. *Papers in Linguistics* (Champaign, Ill), **15**, 2 (1982), 139–63.

This essay attempts to discover why the Dutch who migrated to the United States between 1847 and approximately 1914 affected American English only minimally. In some respects this is surprising. However, there are at least four reasons why the Dutch contribution to American English was limited to perhaps a few words. First, their contact with the Americans was generally not confident, intimate, and pervasive. Second, the Dutch were riddled by various kinds of divisions. Third, the Dutch language was not maintained in all arenas. Finally, the tendency of some of the Dutch to mix Dutch and English brought scorn upon Dutch.

84–659 Seltén, Bo. English in the Swedish Press: an analysis of types. *Germanistische Linguistik* (Marburg, FRG), **5/6** (1982), 105–12.

English in the Swedish Press is a project which aims to record and analyse all types of English influence on Swedish that occur in newspapers and periodicals. English loan-words are occasionally imported without any change: changes affecting phonemic structure of the word are those where a phoneme is used in Swedish that does not occur in British or American English, and those where the wrong English phoneme is used [examples]. Those involving a change in meaning are rare.

Other ways of borrowing include using native linguistic material to translate foreign words (translation loans, e.g. *grapefrukt*), or express new, foreign meanings (semantic loans, e.g. *huvudvärk* 'problem'). It is often difficult to find conclusive proof of foreign influence with these direct loans.

Longer units, or loan phrases, are also borrowed, e.g. *best man*, *blue baby*, phrasal translation loans, e.g. *det kalla kriget* 'the cold-war', partial translation loans, e.g. *starta upp*, *backa upp*. English names and titles are frequently given to Swedish people, animals and shops. Film titles are frequently left untranslated.

84–660 Smith, Carlota S. (U. of Texas, Austin). A theory of aspectual choice. *Language* (Baltimore, Md), **59**, 3 (1983), 479–501.

Sentential aspect presents a situation (event, state, etc.) from a particular point of view: it represents the speaker's choice of perspective on the situation. In this article, a speaker-based approach to aspect is proposed which crucially invokes abstraction, namely the idealisation of different types of situations. A speaker relates an actual situation to an idealised type by using the linguistic forms associated with that type.

Speakers may choose an unusual way of presenting a situation, as with a progressive stative such as *I'm really loving this walk*. Here a state is presented as an event. Analysis of stative sentences in English shows that they have a unique aspectual interpretation, and allows for the interpretation of progressive statives.

Two components of sentential aspect are recognised. SITUATION ASPECT involves type of situation, e.g. event or state; VIEWPOINT ASPECT involves type of perspective, e.g. simple or progressive. Separating these two components leads to a unified account of simple aspect in English.

84–661 Zwicky, Arnold M. (Ohio State U.) and **Pullum, Geoffrey K.** (U. of California, Santa Cruz). Cliticisation vs. inflection: English 'n't'. *Language* (Baltimore, Md), **59**, 3 (1983), 502–13.

Two types of bound morphemes – clitics and inflectional affixes – are found attached to (free) words in many languages. At least six lines of evidence separate the clear cases on each side: the degree of selection between the dependent morpheme and the word to which it is attached; arbitrary lexical gaps; phonological idiosyncrasies; semantic idiosyncrasies; syntactic operations affecting the combinations; and restrictions on the combinability of clitics with inflectional affixes. These criteria all indicate that English contracted auxiliaries (*She's gone*) are clitics, but that the English contracted negative (*She hasn't gone*) is an inflectional affix – a rather surprising conclusion that turns out to have satisfying consequences.

FRENCH

84–662 Chalaron, Marie-Laure (U. of Grenoble III). Modifications apportées par l'exclamation à l'intonation d'un type d'énoncé interrogatif. [Modifications to the intonation of one type of interrogative utterance brought about by exclamatory function.] *Bulletin de l'Institut de Phonétique de Grenoble* (Grenoble), **12** (1983), 67–93.

Utterances of up to three syllables and of the form (*preposition*) + *interrogative particle* e.g. *où, pour qui, jusqu'à quand*) spoken as the second term in a two-part dialogue (e.g. *Je pars au Guatemala. – Où?(!)*) were studied instrumentally. Despite individual variations, utterances perceived as 'exclamative' rather than 'neutral' were distinguished, for comparable forms of words, by (1) wider frequency range, (2) greater divergence between the two final intensity peaks, (3) higher final frequency, (4) lower initial frequency, (5) greater final intensity and (6) greater plosion in final-syllable stops; these features, in order of frequency of occurrence, were common to all three speakers studied. Individual speakers also made use of utterance duration and reduction of the intensity level in ante-penultimate syllables in a regular way. Both functional types tended to show rising frequency and an increase in intensity in the final syllable, but the two features were not necessarily correlated.

84–663 Loffler-Laurian, Anne-Marie. (CNRS, Paris.) 'Faire' et ses quasi-synonymes dans les discours scientifiques. ['Faire' and its quasi-synonyms in scientific discourse.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), **51** (1983), 93–103.

A distinction is drawn between uses of *faire* as a lexical verb, e.g. *la compression se fait à l'aide de ce liquide* 'compression is effected with the help of this liquid'; and as an auxiliary either to mark aspect, e.g. *Si nous faisons passer un courant...* 'If we cause a current to pass...', or in a complex lexeme, e.g. *Les résultats feront l'objet d'une publication ultérieure* 'The results will appear in a later publication'. Partial equivalents (e.g. *réaliser, effectuer*) are described [examples].

Faire in all its uses is important in creating an impression of author-distance and hence of scientific objectivity. The description provided should be of use to teachers of scientific writing, both to native speakers, and to foreign learners of French. [Full examples, and a list of the scientific articles used as the data-base.]

GERMAN

84–664 Bannert, Robert. Modellskizze für die deutsche Intonation. [Outline of a model for German intonation.] *LILI: Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* (Göttingen, FRG), **49** (1983), 9–34.

This outline of a model for German intonation is based on an acoustic description of the pitch contours of a large number of utterances, read by three speakers in appropriate contexts, and containing several variables. The model consists of three

parts: (1) The phonological component which transforms the prosodic (tonal) features into the tonal points or levels HIGH or LOW. (2) The intonation algorithm which transfers the abstract tonal transcription HIGH and LOW into a concrete time-fundamental frequency-field, generating the pitch contour in five steps. (3) The modification component where the generated pitch contours are modified according to the temporal, tonal, and spectral demands and constraints. The input of the model is a linguistically defined structure; its output is the temporal and tonal structure of an utterance. Considering one aspect of the relationship between syntax and intonation, the tonal signalling of syntactic phrase boundaries is shown.

84–665 Carstensen, Broder. English elements in the German language: their treatment and compilation in a dictionary of anglicisms, I. *Germanistische Linguistik* (Marburg, FRG), 5/6 (1982), 13–34.

Since 1945 English has become a determining influence on the German language, and the author has been commissioned to compile a dictionary of anglicisms aimed at linguists interested in the language-in-contact phenomenon. The article describes the planned layout and content of the dictionary, which will be based on over 70,000 examples of anglicisms attested in writing and collected at Paderborn since 1962. The dictionary will follow alphabetic-semasiological order and record spelling, pronunciation, gender, inflection, process of borrowing including six categories of loans, meanings, differences between usage in donor language and host language, and features of register, morphology and regional variation relevant to the correct use of the words in modern German.

The research has shown that anglicisms can have any of three genders and sometimes more than one, but that most have one only used consistently by speakers who understand the original word. They take a variety of plural endings, but speakers who know English tend to use the-*s* plural. [Ten-page bibliography.]

84–666 Gibbon, Dafydd and Selting, Margret. Intonation und die Strukturierung eines Diskurses. [Intonation and discourse development.] *LILI: Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* (Göttingen, FRG), 49 (1983), 53–73.

The intonation of a stretch of German dialogue, taken from a listener participation programme about housing problems, is investigated in respect of its function in discourse development. A selection of formal properties of intonation is described; these include pitch accents, understood as pulse-like variations in pitch, and the properties of sequences of such accents. In particular the iterative character of accentuation and the cumulation of accent patterns with similar properties is shown to configure both turn-taking processes and the semantic development of the dialogue. These relations are interpreted as having strategic value for the role of the moderator.

84–667 Pheby, John. Intonationsbeschreibung des Deutschen mit Hilfe von „Informationseinheit“ und „Informationsverteilung“. [Describing German intonation in terms of ‘information unit’ and ‘information distribution’.] *LILI: Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* (Göttingen, FRG), **49** (1983), 35–52.

Information distribution is part of the prosodic information structuring of syntactic units. It is realised by the coextensiveness of syntactically specifiable segments with the phonological unit ‘tone group’, which yields ‘information units’. In German, information units are classified as ‘primary’ (potentially sentence-final) and ‘secondary’ (non-sentence-final). The possible sequences of primary and secondary information units differ between languages (for example between German and English), depending on regularities of syntactic sequence. Information distribution may thus provide a parameter for language typology. Because of the close correlation between information distribution (and other functions of intonation) and syntactic structure there are many regularities and relations in syntax which cannot be explained without reference to information distribution. One of the possible applications of a linguistically well-founded account of information distribution is its use in an approach to the interpretation and thus the oral rendering of literary texts.

84–668 von Polenz, Peter. Die Sprachkrise der Jahrhundertwende und das bürgerliche Bildungsdeutsch. [The crisis of language at the turn of the century and middle-class educated German.] *Sprache und Literatur* (Munich) formerly *Linguistik und Didaktik*, **17**, 2 (1983), 3–13.

The author provides an historical account of the roots of the so-called ‘crisis of language’ which German literary historians usually see as dating from Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s Lord Chandos letter (1902). The movement to transcend everyday language which is associated with numerous poets and writers has certain of its roots in the social and economic upheavals of the latter part of the nineteenth century. The process of industrialisation in the German Empire and the creation of a demand for mass literature paralleled the ‘literary’ crisis. The period from 1873 to 1896 saw the rise of escapist literature for the reading masses associated with Hedwig Courths-Mahler, Karl May and others. Hence the crisis of language has to be viewed against the background of the popularisation of middle-class educational values. A further factor in the crisis was the role played by newspapers and journalists. They were said to have contributed to the disrepute into which language fell.

Von Polenz devotes a large portion of his essay to demonstrating the influence of Fritz Mauthner’s work (*Kritik der Sprache*, 1901/2) on poets, philosophers like Wittgenstein and others concerned with the abuses of the German language they saw taking place around them. An attempt is made to show how the language crisis in Wilhelmine Germany can be taken as a culmination of developments in the history of the German language which date back to the time of Luther.

SPANISH

84–669 Silva-Corvalán, Carmen (U. of Southern California). Tense and aspect in oral Spanish narrative context and meaning. *Language* (Baltimore, Md), **59**, 4 (1983), 760–80.

This quantitative and qualitative study of the distribution of tense and aspect in oral Spanish narrative shows that the meaning of certain verb forms is in part delimited by the narrative structural context in which they occur. The historical present/preterit alternation, an issue that has attracted recent controversy (Wolfson, 1979; Schiffrin, 1981) is examined, and the results show that the Spanish historical present functions as an internal evaluation mechanism.

TRANSLATION

84–670 Wilss, W. (Saarlandes U., Saarbrücken). Translation strategy, translation method and translation technique: towards a clarification of three translational concepts. *Revue de Phonétique Appliquée* (Paris), **66/8** (1983), 143–52.

The terms ‘translation strategies’, ‘translation methods’ and ‘translation techniques’ are often used imprecisely. Strategy, method and technique are empirical concepts but they are none the less relevant to translation studies (TS) provided that the latter are not regarded as being synonymous with translation theory, but rather as an agglomeration of various sub-areas: (1) general TS, (2) language-pair-related descriptive TS, and (3) language-pair-bound applied TS or translation pedagogy.

Translation strategy is rather a diffuse concept which refers to the general transfer perspective/concept for a particular text. Many factors may influence a translator’s specific transfer strategy, and he has considerable leeway in his work. There is no yardstick for the strategic processing of the source language text by the translator. The need for text processing is greater in the case of ‘interpretative’ (literary) texts than with ‘repetitive’ (LSP) texts. The decision for a particular strategy may be determined by the complexity of a transfer situation.

Translation methodology has to be capable of describing the intentional achievement of the translation. It can be assumed to be located in the (second) transfer phase of a three-phase model, but the first phase of such a model, source-language analysis, is also important. It is probably best to restrict methodological research to individual texts for the time being. Source language text decoding must focus on the translationally sensitive points of a text. The translator’s transfer competence is crucial, and is composed of many elements; two important procedures are back-transformation (intuition-based paraphrases of the source-language text), and multiple-stage translation, which follows it and leads by means of successive approximations to the goal – an adequate translation.

‘Translation technique’ is not an identical concept to ‘translation method’; its essential feature is the self-monitoring reproducibility of specific textual segments beyond the lexical level. Practising such techniques, the experienced translator simply

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applies his store of organised practical experience. In texts with a high number of standardised elements, such as institutionalised or LSP texts, the translator can fall back on habitualised translation procedures.

The long-term aim of translation pedagogy (which subsumes the three concepts discussed here) should be to build up language-pair-related transfer grammars, taking as a starting point the investigation of parallel texts.

84–671 Wilss, Wolfram (Saarlandes U.). *Syntaktische Probleme der Maschinenübersetzung*. [Syntactic problems of machine translation.] *Multi-lingua* (Amsterdam), 2, 3 (1983), 139–48.

The paper begins by attempting to distinguish the process of human translation from that of machine translation (MT) procedures. The computer possesses no capacity comparable to that of the human translator to construct cognitive strategies which permit a coherent relationship between the understanding of the text and the interlingual transfer of what has been understood. In contrast to the computer, the human translator has available to him not only cumulatively acquired stores of knowledge and operating sequences, but also integrated knowledge networks. This means that research on MT has to proceed with more limited criteria of complexity than the human translator, who is also able to comprehend larger textual and contextual relationships, and thus has greater scope for manoeuvre in his translation methods.

It is therefore worth examining whether ways can be found of reducing the degree of complexity of texts for machine translation by reducing complex sentence forms to syntactically simple structures. ‘Reverse paraphrases’ of this kind reflect the central role of syntax in translation. The aim must consequently be a pragmatic man–machine interaction; in other words, the division of tasks between man and computer must be seen as largely completed once the computer goes into operation. Whether this approach is realistic will depend largely on whether authors of technical and other specialised texts can be made to accept certain syntactic conventions in their writing. This leads to a conception of machine translation which simultaneously combines lessons and insights gained from research into text intelligibility, studies of specialised language and data processing, seen as disciplines logically precedent to machine translation, and which initiates a learning process leading to forms of linguistic behaviour adapted to the functional capacities of the computer.

LEXICOGRAPHY

84–672 Burger, Harald. *Phraseologie in den Wörterbüchern des heutigen Deutsch*. [Phraseology in dictionaries of contemporary German.] *Germanistische Linguistik* (Marburg, FRG), 1/4 (1982), 13–66.

A critical survey of the lexicographic treatment of phraseological units – idioms, proverbs, etc. – in contemporary German. The basis for the discussion is the analysis of two major dictionaries of contemporary German – *Duden. Das grosse Wörterbuch*

der deutschen Sprache (in six volumes, Mannheim, 1976–81) and *Wörterbuch der deutschen Gegenwartssprache* (six volumes, Berlin, 1964–77).

All dictionaries of German are characterised by the lack of an adequate definition of fixed word combinations; this is held to be a reflection of the chaos which has reigned within Western linguistic research in the area of phraseology. Various aspects are pinpointed for the shortcomings shown. The following are discussed: the question of what citation form for idioms is found in the dictionaries and the headwords under which idioms etc. are recorded. Considerable inadequacies are found in the ways in which fixed expressions are covered in individual entries, in the headwords under which they are entered and in the manner in which their semantics and pragmatics are dealt with. Recommendations for the subsequent uniform treatment of phraseological items are proposed.

84–673 Candel, Danielle (Inst. National de la Langue Française). *Réflexions sur l'utilisation de textes scientifiques dans un dictionnaire de langue*. [Reflections on the use of scientific texts in a general dictionary.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), 51 (1983), 21–33.

The principles followed in choosing definitions and illustrative examples for several dictionaries including the *Trésor de la langue française (TLF)* are discussed with particular reference to the term *mécanique* (n.) 'mechanics'. Diverse publics have to be satisfied (including scientists) and generalisations drawn from diverse source texts. The lexicographer, normally without specialised scientific training, has to convey many linguistic facts and select representative texts as examples. The *TLF* attests only what is found in texts, includes only specialist terms generally accepted beyond their original field and gives only those senses with frequent associations. None the less, *mécanique*, particularly rich in lexical associations, develops several senses derived from a multiplicity of contexts. Mostly associated with names of scientific rather than technological disciplines, it is given definitions relating only to scientific contexts (*contra* the *Dictionnaire Larousse du XIXe siècle*). The texts examined date from 1789 to 1969, with some more recent texts added to supplement them. The *TLF* uses many short unattributed phrases and some longer, attributed quotations, in total greater than any other dictionary examined. It is a valuable original tool of decoding and encoding.

84–674 Heath, David (University of Erlangen-Nürnberg). The treatment of grammar and syntax in monolingual English dictionaries for advanced learners. *Linguistik und Didaktik* (Munich, FRG), 49/50 (1982), 95–107.

Three modern dictionaries of English widely used by foreign learners are compared, viz. *The advanced learner's dictionary* (ALD), *The Longman dictionary of contemporary English* (LDOCE) and *Chambers universal learner's dictionary* (CULD). Verbs, nouns and adjectives entered under the letters J, K and L are compared for the amount of grammatical information supplied with them, in the form either of a code or example sentences. While CULD provides both a simple code and copious examples for verbs against the other two, all three fall short in provision of structural guidance for the

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use of nouns and are generally unsatisfactory in the case of adjectives. A foreign learner would not be able to originate sentences using these words and be sure they were acceptable English.

It is recommended that example sentences should be considered as important for syntactic information as codes, and such codes should be simple enough to use without constant reference to the key. Furthermore, they should be used systematically and the information given in a consistent order. Codes and examples should be seen to complement each other and should illustrate the microstructure as well as the macrostructure.

84–675 Mel'cūk, Igor and others (U. of Montreal). *Trois principes de description sémantique d'une unité lexicale dans un dictionnaire explicatif et combinatoire*. [Three principles for the semantic description of a lexical unit in an explanatory-combinatory dictionary.] *Canadian Journal of Linguistics* (Toronto), **28**, 2 (1983), 105–21.

Three of the basic principles, formally characterised and strictly applied, to be followed in formulating the semantic description of any lexical unit in an explanatory-combinatory dictionary are presented. The first is adequacy: the definition of an individual lexeme should identify it uniquely in all its uses and be substitutable for it in all its contexts [illustrative entries for RESPECT/MEPRIS; RESPECTER/MEPRISER]. The second is that of the 'semantic bridge': each lexeme belonging to a vocabulary item (Fr. *vocable*) should share with at least one other lexeme of the same item a non-trivial semantic component called a semantic bridge; within a vocabulary item a single base lexeme will be linked to every other lexeme of the set, [TÊTE and CŒUR, as examples]. The third is uniformity: any two vocabulary items belonging to the same semantic field should be defined according to the same schema; as far as possible the lexemes of each should be presented in parallel order, with analogous semantic distances presented analogously [example of TÊTE and CŒUR]. These principles apply equally to idiomatic expressions and vocabulary items containing idiomatic expressions [example of À LA TÊTE].

84–676 Schaefer, Burkhard. Häufigkeiten und Häufigkeitsangaben in neu-hochdeutschen Wörterbüchern. Zur Rolle von Frequenzuntersuchungen in der Lexikographie. [Frequencies and frequency indication in Modern German dictionaries. On the rôle of the investigation of frequency in lexicography.] *Germanistische Linguistik* (Marburg, FRG), **1/4** (1982), 239–74.

Two present-day German dictionaries form the subject-matter of an investigation of the use of frequency and currency indications such as 'rare', 'usual', 'obsolete', in the definition of entries. The dictionaries show a marked lack of overlap in their use of such terms, which are often ill defined or not defined at all. Frequency considerations are important for the selection of items for inclusion in the dictionary, for the order of presentation of alternative meanings, usages, syntactic forms, etc., and, significantly, as part of the pragmatic information linked with lexical items, concerning their mode of use. The value of such information, along with the inadequacies revealed, leads to

a call for a more thorough investigation of such matters, using machine-readable texts and the methods of quantitative linguistics.

84–677 Warnesson, I. and Marcotorchino, F. (IBM–France). Pertinence synonymique: recherche algorithmique par agrégation de similarités. [The synonymical link: algorithmic research by equivalence relations.] *Cahiers de Lexicologie* (Paris), **42** (1983), 28–62.

The aim of this article is to suggest a new way of creating a dictionary of synonyms according to linguistic and mathematical requirements. The authors explain, from an existing dictionary of synonyms how they (1) define the meaning of the synonymical relation they want to reveal in a new dictionary; (2) transform the existing dictionary into a sequence of matrices of synonymy; (3) check, with an adapted algorithm (similarity aggregation techniques), if the links appearing in the existing dictionary correspond to their synonymy definition, and (4) try to improve the synonymical relation, in order to propose more accurate data to a lexicographer, facilitating the management of a new dictionary.

The synonymical link is defined as a symmetric and transitive relation. Classical cluster analysis methods cannot be used because of the relational structure of the data, so the authors use a special technique: they look for an equivalence relation which best fits the original data, in order to obtain a classification of synonyms according to a semic separate valuation.

LEXICOLOGY

84–678 Tambovtsev, Yuri A. (Novosibirsk U.). Linguo-statistical studies of Siberian languages in the UDSSR. *Linguistische Berichte* (Wiesbaden, FRG), **87** (1983), 27–8.

The statistical studies of Siberian languages began in 1973, with phonostatistics: for practical purposes (especially for publishing) it was necessary to know the frequency of occurrence of different phonemes of Siberian native languages. The investigations were held at the Computing Centre of the Novosibirsk State University.

The first language computed was Mansi (Vogul). Texts were transcribed by native speakers, then the material was fed into a computer; the same procedure was applied to other languages: various Finno-Ugric languages, also languages of the Turkish, Paleo-Asiatic and Tungus–Manchurian families. The researchers are currently collecting material on Mongol, Buryat, Tibetan, Nivkh and some other languages of Asia.

84–679 Witkowski, Stanley R. and Brown, Cecil H. (Northern Illinois, U.). Marking-reversals and cultural importance. *Language* (Baltimore, Md), **59**, 3 (1983), 569–82.

Unmarked terms in the lexicon, compared to marked ones, are typically more frequent in use, less complex in form, and acquired earlier by children learning a language. Terms which are unmarked in single languages are often unmarked in all languages;

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however, marking is not always invariable across languages, or through time within individual languages. The present work focuses on variation in cultural importance as a factor which influences marking. As the importance of a referent changes within a speech community, the marking value of its label alters, often resulting in lexical change. Introductions of previously unknown referents in culture contact situations – e.g. domestic plants and animals – frequently have led to shifts in cultural importance. Such examples illustrate how cultural factors, by influencing the assignment of marking, often play an important role in lexical change.