

Studies of particular languages

ENGLISH

71–183 Bauer, Gero. The English ‘perfect’ reconsidered. *Journal of Linguistics* (London), 6, 2 (1970), 189–98.

The perfect expresses the action viewed, not as a past event, but as an accomplished fact at the moment of speaking, having taken place within a time-span thought of as unseparated from the moment of speaking. The ‘accomplished fact’ is not necessarily a present fact, but can belong to a future point of time. Essentially the perfect is no more a ‘present perfect’ than the present is a tense denoting present time. Zandvoort’s ‘perfect of experience’ is not a separate function. [In discussing the ‘resultative’ and ‘continuative’ perfects, the author distinguishes between telic or conclusive and atelic or inconclusive verbs.] There are narrow restrictions on the collocation of adverbs with the perfect. The resultative and the continuative type can be reduced to a common denominator. The continuative type is an interplay between the main function of the perfect and certain contextual factors. The progressive form of the perfect expresses the accomplished fact that action has been in progress at or for some time within the time-sphere of the perfect. In the progressive aspect both telic and atelic actions can be turned into continuative perfects by adding certain adverbials. Momentaneous actions in the simple perfect convey the fact that action has occurred. In the progressive, such actions are understood to have occurred repeatedly. There is a delicate interaction between the dual category aspect (factual versus progressive) and the perfect. The English perfect cannot be regarded as a tense or as an aspect; it is a category in its own right. **420 AK**

- 71–184 Carstensen, Broder.** Englische Wortschatzarbeit unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Kollokation. [English lexical studies from the point of view of collocations.] *Neusprachliche Mitteilungen* (Berlin), **23**, 4 (1970), 193–202.

Various definitions of a collocation are given from which the general observation is derived that a lexical principle is involved which is independent of grammatical considerations. The theory of collocations as presented by Halliday, McIntosh, Strevens and Werlich is discussed, followed by a detailed study of the collocations for 'wide' and 'broad'. Numerous dictionaries were consulted from which tables were drawn up showing the nouns with which these words are used, with a detailed commentary. The question of collocations in stylistics is not touched upon as the language of poetry breaks many of the rules established for prose. Theory has so far been in the forefront of investigation of collocations and it is difficult to transfer this to practical work in schools. A large corpus of spoken language is now needed, which can be examined with the help of a computer. Only then can a dictionary of collocations be drawn up. [Bibliography.]

420 ALD

- 71–185 Chen, Matthew.** Vowel length variation as a function of the voicing of the consonant environment. *Phonetica* (Basel), **22**, 3 (1970), 129–59.

[The author describes an investigation into vowel length in French, Russian, and Korean.] As in English, a vowel is invariably longer in these languages before a voiced consonant than before an unvoiced one. The extent to which a consonant affects the length of a preceding vowel varies from language to language. [The author examines the views of various linguists as to the articulatory factor underlying length, and discusses theories of articulatory distance, articulatory energy expenditure, perceptual distance, compensatory total adjustment, laryngeal adjustment and rate of closure transition. He accepts the theory of closure transition as the best explanation so far of vowel length variability. Bibliography.]

420 AJT 430 491.7

71-186 Dušková, Libuše. On the nature of the subject of continuous forms in present-day English. *Philologica Pragensia* (Prague), **13**, 3 (1970), 132-43.

Since the semantics of a verb may be affected by the nature of its subject, the subject is made the starting point of this enquiry into the relation between subject and choice of verb form (simple or continuous) and the extent to which this affects meaning (*You are hurting me v. that hurts*). An enquiry was conducted into material consisting of 5000 finite verb forms. Tables show British and American usage in various registers.

Results show that the animate subject, capable of activity and conscious effort, is an important feature of the meaning of continuous forms. The connection between animate subjects and continuous forms is not, however, straightforward, and has to be sought in the use of individual verbs. [Examples.]

420 ADF AK

71-187 Engler, Leo F. and Roger G. Hilyer. Once again: American and British intonation systems. *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia* (Copenhagen), **13**, 1 (1970), 99-108.

Intonation can easily be a source of misunderstanding between speakers of different languages and even between an Englishman and an American. For this study, a British informant and an American were asked to utter fifty-one sentences of various lengths, sometimes altering the emphasis and sometimes shortening sentences. The two performances were tape-recorded and studied. [Pike's description of American intonation and O'Connor and Arnold's description of English were also studied in making the comparison.] The most important differences were found in the question forms, for many of which British English uses two tunes not found in American English. All intonation differences noticed were consistent and systematic.

420 AJP

71-188 Jacobsson, Bengt. English pronouns and feature analysis. *Moderna Språk* (Saltsjö-Duvnäs), **64**, 4 (1970), 346-59.

Feature analysis does not give a full account of word meaning. If features, or content entities, are abstracted from the meaning of a word and put together again, the sum does not always cover the word's meaning in a given context. Nevertheless some linguists believe that the technique of feature analysis, in spite of the flexibility and vagueness of word meaning, can be extended to describe vocabulary as a whole, and in this article it is applied to the syntax of English relative pronouns.

It is fashionable, especially in transformational grammar, to discuss the distribution of *who* and *which* in terms of the dichotomy human/non-human or animate/inanimate. Most grammars underestimate the frequency and/or range of *who* referring to animal antecedents. *Who* and *which* are partly overlapping, and the speaker's attitude determines the choice of pronoun. The distribution of pronouns does not parallel a clear-cut division into human/non-human or personal/non-personal. The more prominent the idea of personality and individuality, the more probable it is that *who/he/she* will be chosen rather than *which/that/it*, but formal considerations may also be involved.

Translation of these findings into the language of feature analysis does not give deeper insight.

420 AK

FRENCH *See also abstract 71-185*

71-189 Barrera-Vidal, A. Quelques remarques en vue d'une nouvelle présentation du subjonctif en français. [A few remarks on a new presentation of the subjunctive in French.] *Neuere Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main), **19**, 11 (1970), 547-56.

The subjunctive is characterized morphologically by the presence of *que* although *que* also on occasions introduces the indicative. The few forms of the subjunctive used without *que* are fixed forms, usually

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invariable (*vive les vacances*). New words belong only to the two living *-er* and *-ir* conjugations. Verbs of the *-ir* conjugation have quite distinct forms for subjunctive and indicative, and the regularly formed verbs of the *-er* conjugation appear to occur infrequently in the subjunctive form. The written form of the language has two additional subjunctive forms which only differ graphically from the indicative (*il chanta; qu'il chantât*).

At semantic level the subjunctive always gives meaning additional to that conveyed by the indicative. The third person singular form is the only one likely to be used independently and traditional grammars have failed to draw sufficient attention to this. Where the subjunctive appears in a subordinate clause, it is often the only possible form but can sometimes be replaced by the indicative. The choice for the spoken language is usually made automatically according to the area of France from which the speaker comes. Where real choice is exercised considerations of style are involved, but language economy in the present day tends to restrict such stylistic effects and to depend on automatism. The stylistic use of an independent subjunctive to replace a conditional form belongs to the polished written code. Use is sometimes made of subjunctive forms today for comic effect.

440 AK

71-190 Benveniste, E. Mécanismes de transposition. [Transposition mechanisms.] *Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure* (Geneva), 25 (1969), 47-59.

A transformational approach is made to nominal agents ending in *-eur*. Adjectives in *-eur* express moral inclination but never occupation. Certain nouns float between acting as the adjective and as the agent. Agent nouns in *-eur* derive from either a verb or another noun which is the object of some other verb. These two categories reflect either an habitual occupation or a concurrent one. Nouns in the latter class also tend to reflect observable social activities, and are never isolated mental activities.

Nouns ending in *-eur* which are qualified by an adjective are next examined. By comparing transformations of this construction with

those of other nouns qualified by adjectives the deep structure is shown to be different. Such nouns cannot stand alone and when transposed to the verb form demand an adverb and are clearly not agent forms of that verb. The adjective is shown to qualify not a noun but the accomplishment of an act. Thus the nominalization of a verb causes the accompanying adverb to be transformed into an adjectival form. It is shown that the same adverb can be transformed into several adjectives. Some hyphenated forms of adjective and noun are direct translations from English. [Examples are given throughout.]

440 AK ALD

71–191 Pohl, J. 'Ne' et les enfants. *Langage et l'Homme* (Brussels), 14 (1970), 41–3.

Ne is rapidly disappearing from the spoken French language. Small children omit the particle almost entirely; the rest of the population varies according to its socio-cultural level. Foreigners may omit it by analogy with a mother tongue which has only one negative particle. The percentage of omission can also vary from region to region. It is high in Paris and Canada. The greatest contributing factor to omission is the nature of the sentence [examples].

As children develop they will use *ne* more frequently until the percentage reaches a level acceptable to the school and family. During adolescence usage of *ne* will decline following the trend of the century. This tiny word can indicate both a subtle elegance of style and a sign of maturity of language.

440 AHS AK

GERMAN

71–192 Appuhn, Hans-Günter. Das Apollo Mondprogramm in sprachlicher sicht. [The Apollo moon programme seen from the language point of view.] *Neuere Sprachen* (Frankfurt am Main), 19, 5 (1970), 209–22.

Some of the language of space research has passed from technical use to everyday speech. A collection of terms in French, German and American is studied, noting that French usually translates the terms

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into its own words while German sometimes takes over the American term, adapting spelling and morphology slightly to fit. **430 ALD**

71-193 Siliakus H. and K. Morris. Some reflections on the lack of accuracy of word frequency lists. *ITL: Review of the Institute of Applied Linguistics* (Louvain), 9 (1970), 11-18.

The University of Adelaide has produced special word lists in German for students of musicology, literary criticism, geography, history, and theology. The lists were prepared with a computer on the basis of samples totalling 100,000 words for each discipline. Fifteen per cent (500 words per list) were finally selected. This number of words, it was felt, could be assimilated in one academic term. Word lists based on too small a sample are unreliable for the words of lower frequency. By means of a table of statistics the percentage of misclassifications of words in a sample of 100,000 is shown. This reinforces the argument for bigger samples and shorter lists. It is lack of time and money at present which forces the acceptance of large error margins.

430 ALD 994

RUSSIAN *See abstract 71-185*