

Language and linguistics

LINGUISTIC THEORY

78–316 Hurford, James R. The significance of linguistic generalisations. *Language* (Baltimore, Md), **53**, 3 (1977), 574–620.

A rigorous objective method is proposed for determining the significance of a generalisation, based on probability theory. The proposal is illustrated by applying it to examples central to theorising in generative grammar. Precisely formulated versions of claims made by Chomsky on the use of certain abbreviatory notations (e.g. parentheses) and by Halle on certain 'natural classes' are investigated and shown to be not significant; i.e. they tell us nothing interesting about the nature of language. Other generalisations – on active/passive selectional restrictions, word-order universals, and noun phrase accessibility – are shown to be highly significant.

SEMANTICS *See also abstracts* 78–321, –336

78–317 Harris, Roy. Semantic performatives and truth. *Journal of Literary Semantics* (The Hague), **6**, 2 (1977), 63–75.

Two questions are discussed: 'Do performative utterances have a truth value?' and 'Is knowledge of the performative uses of expressions a part of linguistic knowledge?' If performatives are statements and have a truth value, it is still unclear whether the falsity of the statement invalidates the performance of the speech act. Self-descriptive present-tense sentences can be either statements (constative utterances) or performatives, where the distinction depends upon whether the simple present or the progressive present tense is used. Counter-examples prove that this distinction will not hold. A better test for the isolation of performatives is the possibility of inserting *hereby*.

An argument exists that speech act assignment can be ruled to be outside linguistic knowledge. The linguistic meaning of a sentence is a product of its component parts, whereas the speech act assignment cannot be derived in this way. But the verbs of English can be divided into 'non-performatives', 'occasional performatives' and 'exclusive performatives' – like *to walk*, *to apologise*, *to be blowed*. The meaning of an occasional performative verb as a performative, and its meaning as a non-performative have no necessary connection. As non-performatives, *You are invited* and *The pleasure of your company is requested*, are not synonymous, but they are equivalent as performatives. The role that 'truth' can play in semantics will be undermined if it is used to explain things that can be better explained in other ways.

78–318 Lepschy, G. Interpretation and semantics. *Cahiers de Lexicologie* (Paris), 29, 2 (1976), 57–65.

Saussure is interpreted to mean that *langue* should be studied as distinct from *parole* and synchrony as distinct from diachrony. The first conclusion is rejected for the study of meaning, where the individuality of *parole* is of interest because its meanings realise the abstract elements belonging to a code. The second conclusion is rejected because, in the present state of the language, countless earlier stages still exist. Dickens' novels can still be read, so their semantic codes must be included in the semantic system of contemporary English.

Semantic studies which employ formalism, like Katz and Fodor, are less insightful than informal accounts of meaning, such as the author's own reconstruction of the (possible) meaning of the last sentence of Saussure's *Cours*. The discussion of meaning should take place not at the level of individual words, but at the higher level of discourse and the lower level of semantic features, where languages could be shown to be more alike than at the surface, lexical level. The study of metaphor ought to be a central concern of semantics; metaphor is concerned with usage and the meaning of sentences, rather than with the meaning of lexical items, which ought to be seen as naturally polysemous, making metaphor possible.

78–319 McCawley, James D. À propos de *Questions de sémantique* de N. Chomsky. [*Chomsky's Studies on semantics in generative grammar.*] *Langages* (Paris), 11, 48 (1977), 50–9.

Chomsky considers that his conclusion on the familiar problem of quantifiers and negation is counter to Standard Theory (ST) when applied to other cases. Although Chomsky's examples justify the abandonment of ST, there is no basis for choice amongst the alternatives. The principal difference between the Chomsky–Jackendoff approach and that of Lakoff lies in whether a rule such as quantifier-lowering is pre-cyclical or in the cycle. The debate between generative semanticists and interpretive semanticists is not whether quantifier re-ordering changes meaning but whether the account is to be semantically or syntactically expressed.

Lakoff's theory of derivational constraints is the only theoretical framework at present allowing precise expression of the interaction of surface and deep rules of semantic interpretation as envisaged by Chomsky, who has under-rated this theory and the extent of the changes between ST and EST (Extended Standard Theory). Chomsky's critique of generative semantics is thus vitiated. The deepest level in a proper generative semantic derivation is not only related to logical form but identical with it. [References.]

LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS *See also abstract*
78–344

78–320 **Cruse, D.A.** The pragmatics of lexical specificity. *Journal of Linguistics* (London), **13**, 2 (1977), 153–64.

When there is a series of alternative formulations for some object, one of the terms in the series will be 'unmarked': it will have 'inherently neutral specificity' (INS). *Dog* has INS in the series *alsation–dog–animal*. Use of INS lexical items produces unmarked utterances. It is not always possible to use such an item and simultaneously communicate normally, so minimum deviation from inherently neutral specificity is permitted when this problem arises; *alsatian* instead of *dog* if *dog* is ambiguous in the context. The utterance so produced is still unmarked, and *alsatian* here has 'contextually neutral specificity' (CNS). Marked levels of specificity can be found where (a) the function of the noun phrase is to identify an individual or class of individuals for the purposes of reference, or (b) to inform the hearer of the category membership of something, or (c) to define the scope of a generalisation. The semantic importance of marked specificity is that underspecification de-emphasises the feature which is omitted, whilst overspecification intensifies the added feature. Underspecification can signal pity, reluctance to give information, ignorance, or the speaker's familiarity with that class of objects.

78–321 **Martins-Baltar, Michel.** La notion de besoin : étude sémantique et applications à la description linguistique. [The concept of need: semantic study and applications to linguistic description.] *Langue Française* (Paris), **36** (1977), 25–39.

Need is defined semantically by goal and means. Goals are physiological or pleasure-seeking. Transitory goals are ethical or pragmatic. Goals are feasible or not, and the conversion to feasibility constitutes in itself a need. Goals which are feasible lie along a scale of ease and difficulty. Difficulty calls for competence, capacity and willingness to act.

An analysis in terms of needs was carried out on a corpus of some 3,000 words [examples]. Besides the explicit content of utterances it is necessary to analyse the implicit content, with allusion and ellipsis [discussion; example of coding of the beginning of a conversation from which the corpus was taken]. Within a framework derived from Austin, there are three ways of achieving action by another (perlocution): violence (non-language); request (illocution); argumentation (discursive) [discussion].

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

78–322 Dascal, Marcelo. Conversational relevance. *Journal of Pragmatics* (The Hague), 1, 4 (1977), 309–28.

Among the maxims that govern conversation and which can be exploited in order to generate 'implicatures', Grice includes the maxim 'Be relevant' (R). The present paper is an attempt to clarify the way in which R operates. Two broad types of relevance are distinguished, a 'pragmatic' and 'semantic' one, as well as a number of subtypes. It is argued that the generation of implicatures via R relies on the rather precise identification exchange. An abductive rather than deductive model for the derivation of implicatures via R is sketched, based upon a presumed hierarchical order of the various types of relevance.

78–323 Fountain, R. L. and Nation, I. S. P. Formal signals of discourse types. *Te Reo* (Auckland), 19 (1976), 3–23.

In some written English texts formal features of grammar, lexis and punctuation provide signals which help to distinguish different discourse types. These differences are ones of speech function. These distinctions are not always signalled formally. Formal clues, however, provide a means by which initial broad distinctions can be made which can then be checked through a study of the meanings of items not formally distinguished. Some ambiguities cannot be resolved. [Two texts are used for illustration.]

78–324 Sornig, Karl. Disagreement and contradiction as communicative acts. *Journal of Pragmatics* (The Hague), 1, 4 (1977), 347–74.

Communicative competence has recently been stipulated as an important teaching objective. The basic unit of acts of communication, as seen by those who advocate a pragmalinguistic, functional approach in language teaching, is no longer the well-formed act that is appropriate to the situation in hand. More precisely, (dialogical) sequences of speech acts must be seen as the proper starting points of language analysis for didactic purposes.

This paper attempts to enumerate the conditions of successful realisation of one kind of speech act sequences, which, though much used in real life situations, is underrepresented in classroom discourse: disagreeing, raising objections, contradicting somebody and so on. Because they can recur upon the proponent's formulation, acts of disagreement – dangerous as they might seem to classroom discipline – seem easier to perform (as to their linguistic encoding) than the much exploited question/answer sequences of traditional classroom discourse.

LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

SOCIOLINGUISTICS See also abstracts 78–331, –342, –366, –368

78–325 Bourhis, Richard Y. and Giles, Howard. Children's voices and ethnic categorisation in Britain. *Monda Lingvo-Problemo* (The Hague), 6, 17 (1977), 85–94.

This study investigates developmental aspects of Black speech accommodation with a sample of 11-year-old, third generation West Indians from Cardiff. It was hypothesised that these children would be more accurately identified as Blacks by local Whites from voice cues alone than in an earlier sample of young adults from the same generation (80 per cent of whom were labelled as Whites) because research suggests that children's attitudes from about the age of 10 continually fluctuate as regards language loyalty, with accommodation developing throughout adolescence. Results shows that 78 per cent of the time, Black children were inaccurately categorised as White (as in the earlier sample). Either they are acquiring White speech patterns earlier than was expected, or perhaps their parents (second generation immigrants) are providing White speech models in the home. [References.]

78–326 Crawford, John R. Utterance rules, turn-taking and attitudes in enquiry openers. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), 15, 4 (1977), 279–98.

Tentative sociolinguistic rules for utterances are offered within the narrow focus of enquiry openings at public and semi-public enquiry desks in face-to-face interaction. The rules are based on tape-recordings made of 38 conversations at the enquiry-desk of the Students' Representative Council in Lancaster Station. Possible applications of these rules are suggested for designers of language teaching syllabuses.

78–327 Crosby, Faye and Nyquist, Linda. The female register: an empirical study of Lakoff's hypotheses. *Language in Society* (London), 6, 3 (1977), 313–22.

Lakoff has argued (1973, 1975) that women's language reflects their inferior status in society: it is immature, hyperformal or hyperpolite, and non-assertive. Men's language, on the other hand, is assertive, adult, and direct. Three studies are here reported to test Lakoff's hypotheses. In all of them, samples of male and female speech were scored for the presence of the female register (Lakoff's 'women's language'). In the first study, speech samples were collected in the laboratory under controlled conditions; the other two studies involved systematic observation in the real world, one at an information centre and one at a police station. The first and third studies supported the hypothesis that women employ the female register to a greater extent than men do. In the third

(police station) study, roles (police personnel, clients) produced highly significant differences, with the female register characterising client speech. The second (information centre) study produced no significant differences, probably because information-seeking is a well established ritual, and rituals have been found to diminish sex differences. Role was found to have a greater effect on speech than status. As society becomes more egalitarian sex differential usage of the female register should diminish. [References.]

78-328 Platt, John T. A model for polyglossia and multilingualism (with special reference to Singapore and Malaysia). *Language in Society* (London), **6**, 3 (1977), 361-78.

Ferguson's concept of diglossia and its later extension and coupling with bilingualism (Fishman *et al.*) is developed further into the concept of polyglossia with multilingualism by discussion of various speech communities where these phenomena are in evidence. A general model is suggested which could cope with cases of polyglossia by a continuum ranging from H(igh) varieties through M(edium) varieties to L(ow) varieties. Devices for status ranking of speech varieties are discussed and established. The general matrix is then applied to two of the special cases discussed previously, namely the English-educated Chinese communities of Singapore and Malaysia.

PSYCHOLINGUISTICS See also abstracts 78-355, -370, -376

78-329 MacKay, Donald G. Derivational rules and the internal lexicon. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior* (New York), **17**, 1 (1978), 61-71.

This study examines two views of lexical storage and word production: a derivational hypothesis whereby complex nouns such as *governance* and *government* are generated by rules for combining stems and affixes separately stored in the internal lexicon, and an independent unit hypothesis whereby *govern* and *government* constitute independent lexical units which are read out directly from lexical store. To test these hypotheses subjects were presented auditorily with verbs (e.g. *decide*) and had to produce a related noun (*decision*) as fast as possible. Reaction times and errors were related to derivational complexity, thereby supporting the derivational rather than the independent unit hypothesis. A model of lexical retrieval processes incorporating derivational processes is proposed.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

78-330 Horgan, Dianne. The development of the full passive. *Journal of Child Language* (London), 5, 1 (1978), 65-80.

Spontaneous full passives and related constructions from 234 children aged 2;0 to 13;11 and elicited passives from 262 college students were analysed. Full passives were classified as REVERSIBLE (*The dog was chased by the girl*), INSTRUMENTAL NON-REVERSIBLE (*The lamp was broken by (or with) the ball*), or AGENTIVE NON-REVERSIBLE (*The lamp was broken by the girl*). The Agentive non-reversible did not appear until after age 9; and until age 11 no child produced both Reversible and Non-reversible passives. All the children used the passive in a semantically restricted way (but not in the same way). The possible developmental course of the full passive was traced for children who initially used only Reversible passives versus those who initially used only Instrumental non-reversible passives.

78-331 Martlew, Margaret and others. Language use, role and context in a five-year-old. *Journal of Child Language* (London), 5, 1 (1978), 81-99.

To explore the relationship of language use and speech adaptation to role and context the spontaneous speech of a boy aged 5;6 was recorded in three different situations: playing alone, playing with a friend of the same age, and playing with his mother. Several analyses were made of the speech transcripts to examine the relationship between context and language use. The nature of play episodes was also investigated. The findings suggest that role play has an important function in the development of a child's ability to communicate effectively, and that a child's awareness of his own role and the expectations he has concerning social interactions lead to modification in language use.

78-332 Peters, Ann M. Language learning strategies: does the whole equal the sum of the parts? *Language* (Baltimore, Md), 53, 3 (1977), 560-73.

Two fundamentally different strategies may be employed by very young children learning their first language. The basic assumptions underlying the study of children's language development, however, have provided means for dealing with only one of these strategies: that which proceeds from the parts to the whole (Analytic). This paper reports on a child who evidently proceeded from the whole to the parts (*Gestalt*) in producing much of his early language. Since further evidence for a *Gestalt* strategy exists in the literature, albeit implicitly, such a strategy is probably quite widespread, and any theory of language or language acquisition needs to be able to account for it. It is also

speculated that there may be neurological bases for the different language-learning strategies.

- 78-333 Schlesinger, I. M.** The role of cognitive development and linguistic input in language acquisition. *Journal of Child Language* (London), 4, 2 (1977), 153-69.

Cognitive determinism (the view that linguistic development is completely determined by cognitive development) should be reformulated so that it claims merely that concepts and relations which underlie language and constitute the meaning of what is expressed by it are formed by cognitive development. Cognitive development (CD) in itself cannot be sufficient for the formation of a concept. In dealing with the problem of interpretation, the child must attain cognitive skills which enable him to interpret his environment. But to solve the problem of categorisation he must utilise language.

The linguistic input (LI) hypothesis, on the other hand, asserts that the child's linguistic development is determined by his experience with language, and that it accounts for the acquisition of concepts underlying language. It is suggested here that concept formation may be triggered off by linguistic input, rather than that the latter is indispensable for it [an example is the distinction between proper and common nouns]. The two hypotheses (CD and LI) can be seen as being compatible. In any case, the interaction between these factors is highly complex. [References.]

- 78-334 Shatz, Marilyn.** Children's comprehension of their mothers' question-directives. *Journal of Child Language* (London), 5, 1 (1978), 39-46.

Much of adult communication is carried on at the subtle level of indirect utterance meaning, where the speaker's intent is not literally expressed in his or her utterance. This work investigates the young child's ability to respond appropriately to the intended, as opposed to the literal, meaning of one class of such utterances, requests for action. The data were the responses of five children between 1;7 and 2;4 to the direct and indirect requests for action their mothers produced during a natural play session. All the children responded with action to requests for it regardless of how subtly the requests were expressed. The apparent ability of two-year-olds to deal with indirect speech acts is surprising in that the understanding of such utterances by adults is presumed to depend on a combination of sophisticated rule systems. Rather than grant the young child such knowledge, the alternative of an action-based response heuristic is proposed.

PHONOLOGY *See also abstract 78–346*

78–335 Rubach, Jerzy. Non-uniqueness in phonology. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), 44, 1 (1978), 49–66.

This paper investigates the consequences of both Kiparsky's Revised Alternation Condition and the theory of underlying archisegmental representations. The principles of standard generative phonology permit non-unique interpretations of the data under discussion. The question is whether non-uniqueness should be suppressed and, if so, how this can be carried out in the framework of the two proposed revisions of the standard theory.

LEXICOLOGY

78–336 Coseriu, E. L'étude fonctionnelle du vocabulaire: précis de lexématique. [The functional study of the lexicon: a description of lexematics.] *Cahiers de Lexicologie* (Paris), 29, 2 (1976), 5–23.

The foundations of the functional study of the lexicon, or lexematics, are presented, together with a sketch of this discipline. Lexematics comes within the framework of semantic research with regard to the three principal types of content (designation, signification, sense); it is contrasted with traditional semantics and generative linguistics, and justified as an autonomous discipline. The theoretical and methodical principles of this approach are formulated and justified. A complete model of lexematics (i.e. the different types of paradigmatic and syntagmatic content structures which can be ascertained in the lexicon) are briefly presented with Romance and German examples. [Brief discussion of the present state of lexematics and its future development; possibilities of application to language teaching, uni- and plurilingual lexicography, and the theory and practice of translation.]

78–337 Lerat, P. Lexicographie et référence. [Lexicography and reference.] *Cahiers de Lexicologie* (Paris), 28, 1 (1976), 43–50.

In the Saussurean conception of the sign, the *signifié* is considered as a datum, as is the *signifiant*. The study of the social use of a language leads us, on the contrary, to consider the *signifié* as a result – rather unstable, both in synchrony and diachrony – of the *référence* (Benvéniste). Meaning can therefore be considered as resulting from the reference either to the designatum (*référent*), to the concept (*valeur*), or to sociocultural uses. Granted this, the role of the dictionary is no longer to list, link or grade the *signifiés*, but to offer a model of communicative competence based on the usual *références* of the *signifiants*.

TRANSLATION *See also abstracts 78–364/5*

78–338 Newmark, Peter. The translation of proper names and institutional and cultural terms. *Incorporated Linguist* (London), 16, 3 (1977), 59–63.

The names of single persons or objects are 'outside' languages: they are in principle untranslatable and not to be translated, unless there already exists an accepted translation. [Established practices for translating the names of historical figures, proper names applied to categories of object (trade-marks, brand-names), geographical names, institutions, and works of art.]

In dealing with cultural terms, obsolete terms should be transcribed unless they have accepted translation equivalents. Criteria for handling modern political, financial, legal, social and cultural terms are offered.

STYLISTICS *See also abstract 78–351*

78–339 Gauthier-Darley, Michel. Linguistique et stylistique – un problème de statut. [Linguistics and stylistics – a status problem.] *Études de Linguistique Appliquée* (Paris), 27 (1977), 99–109.

Stylistics is not the application of linguistics to a text. While linguistics is the science of language forms giving reality to a system, stylistics is the science of language forms constituting a discourse. Traditionally, any aesthetic work was thought to consist of invariant content and a form which the writer tried to improve. Valéry and the Russian formalists, in the first quarter of this century, replaced this dualism by a monism: everything contributed to the work. The linguistic analysis of literary texts is a reformulation of the traditional view. It is important to study the relation between what is intended in the text and its language structure [scheme of relations]. This relation is to be studied at the level of language behaviour (*langage*), of language system (*langue*) and of text.

A central point in the evolution of ideas is the definition of utterance (*énonciation*). Within the Saussurean framework the problem lies in the ambiguity of the *parole* concept. The replacement of *parole* by *discours* has not resolved this, and perhaps the subdivision of *parole* has brought no solution. There have been proposals for formalising the complex of utterance. The meaning of a text is not separate from the determination of the society or culture which saw its birth. In the proper study of the process of utterance the boundary between linguistics and stylistics disappears.

78–340 Кумахова, З. Ю. and Кумахов, М. А. К проблеме классификации функциональных стилей в языках различных типов [Concerning the classification of functional styles in languages of different types.] *Вопросы языкознания* (Moscow), 1 (1978), 3–17.

Attempts to develop a general theory of functional styles remain controversial. While most such attempts have been based on languages with a long written tradition, the authors here consider languages of the West Caucasus, where writing is comparatively recent. There, oral poetic style is of special importance; modern poets have recognised this in their use of folklore traditions.

The difficulties of defining and studying literary style are discussed; the multiplicity of terms used is in part mere duplication but also results from genuine disagreements between investigators. The recent debate on the nature and definition of colloquial language is also considered. It is concluded that the principles for isolating functional styles, their classification, composition and interrelation need not be the same in different languages. Nevertheless, there are grounds for believing that study of languages of the type discussed may lead to interesting generalisations, both synchronic and diachronic, concerning the interrelationship of styles and their relationship to other phenomena.