Research in the supporting sciences

Phonetics and phonology

92-328 Diehl, Randy L. (U. of Texas at Austin). The role of phonetics within the study of language. *Phonetica* (Basel, Switzerland), **48**, 2/4 (1991), 120–34.

Phonologists have often held that phonetic 'substance' is more or less unrelated to phonological 'form'. This view rests on assumptions about the phonetic domain that are highly questionable on empirical grounds. Evidence is reviewed suggesting that very few phonetic properties of vowels fail to serve the linguistic function of preserving and enhancing distinctiveness. Accordingly, much of what has been considered to be purely phonetic is also phonological in character: that is to say, the domains of phonetics and phonology overlap significantly. Finally, several well-known criticisms of the programme of phonetic explanation in phonology are discussed and rejected.

Sociolinguistics

92-329 Chini, Marina. Italien et suisse allemand dans des familles bilingues au Tessin: contact pacifique ou conflit latent. [Italian and Swiss German in bilingual families in Ticino: peaceful contact or latent conflict?] *Multilingua* (Amsterdam), **11**, 1 (1992), 75–100.

The aim of this research is to examine certain linguistic and attitudinal aspects of contact between Italian (IT) and Swiss German (SA) in the Lugano area (in the canton of Ticino in Southern Switzerland) with a view to individuating the more or less competitive modalities of this contact. The method of family interviews has been used (qualitative enquiry) integrated with quantitative material in order to discover linguistic contact data (lexical transfers, code-switching) and the representations and stereotypes bilinguals have with respect to their experience of emigration and their language behaviour. It can be shown that the position of national supremacy of SA within Switzerland has fewer repercussions on the life-styles and linguistic habits of bilinguals than one might expect and that several factors work in favour of the Italophone environment and the reduction of the functional rendering of SA, particularly in the second generation, but also in the first Swiss German generation; we are thus witnessing a rather far-reaching linguistic and cultural restructuring process.

92-330 Ju Zhucheng (Nanjing Normal U., China). The 'depreciation' and 'appreciation' of some address terms in China. *Language in Society* (Cambridge), **20**, 3 (1991), 387–90.

The address terms in China are largely based on the two-class distinction (the two classes being the proletariat and the bourgeoisie). The rules governing the use of address terms in China were strictly followed before the Cultural Revolution and are still followed to a certain extent now. The Cultural Revolution has brought about the 'depreciation' of certain address terms, and the new situation that has appeared since China opened its doors has changed some people's mental outlook and has caused some other address terms to 'go up in value.' The author shows that the use of address terms and cultural values are closely interrelated.

92-331 Rampton, M. B. H. (University Coll. of Ripon and York St. John). Interracial Panjabi in a British adolescent peer group. *Language in Society* (Cambridge), **20**, 3 (1991), 391–422.

Several sociologists have noted the emergence of syncretic multiracial youth cultures in Britain and addressed its political significance. Most discussion has focused on Afro-Caribbean influences, but this article considers Asian involvement by analysing the use of Panjabi by black and white adolescents in a mixed peer group. Informant reports suggested that Panjabi crossing was common, though assessments varied according to its contexts of occurrence. Analysis of spontaneous speech reduced these to

two: agonistic interactions, where Panjabi played an auxiliary role in familiar playground practices (primarily among males); and bhangra, in which predominantly white females looked toward a nascent youth culture with Panjabi at its core. Despite major differences, bilingual sponsors and nonconversational structures were crucial in both settings. Opposition to establishment hierarchy might be more a part of the interracial meaning potential of Creole, but Panjabi was important, both in managing the divisions that cross-cut youth community and in extending horizons beyond the confines of local neighbourhood experience.

92–332 Sure, Kembo. (Moi U., Eldoret, Kenya). Learning English in Kenya: problems and causes. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* (Clevedon, Avon), **4,** 2 (1991), 133–8.

The paper reports a survey of secondary school teachers of English in Kenya. Eighty-six teachers answered a questionnaire during seminars in which the role of English in Kenya was one of the topics discussed. They were asked to rate the seriousness of various problems experienced by their students, and to give their most likely causes. Sociocultural and motivational problems relating to the communicative use of English were not considered to be as serious, as obstacles to the use of English, as bad grammar, lack of vocabulary and mistakes in the written language. The paper considers the findings in the light of the current status of English in Kenya, including the strong association of English with the classroom, the methods used to teach it and its role in the life of the students. It concludes that English as a national second language, for internal use in Kenya, may have to be given greater priority in the school programme while English as an international language, which will be relevant only to certain professions and trades, will tend increasingly to be treated as a variety of ESP (English for Special Purposes).

92–333 Wierzbicka, Anna (Australian National U.). Japanese key words and core cultural values. *Language in Society* (Cambridge), **20,** 3 (1991), 333–85.

Every language has its own key words, which reflect the core values of the culture. Consequently, cultures can be revealingly studied, compared, and explained to outsiders through their key words. But to be able to study, compare, and explain cultures in terms of their key words, we need a culture-independent analytical framework. A framework of this kind is provided by the natural semantic metalanguage developed by the author and colleagues over the last two decades. In the present article, the author explores and analyses six Japanese concepts widely regarded as being almost more that any others culture-specific and culturally revealing – *amae, enryo, wa, on, giri,* and *seishin* – and shows how the use of the natural semantic metalanguage (based on universal semantic primitives) helps to make these concepts clear and how it facilitates better insight into Japanese culture and society.

Psycholinguistics

92–334 Ephratt, Michal (U. of Haifa, Israel). Piaget's Nominal Realism from a linguistic point of view. *Language Learning* (Ann Arbor, Mich), **41,** 4 (1991), 555–98.

Nominal Realism connotes the belief that 'every object has received a primordial and absolute name, which is somehow part of its being'. Following experimental results, Piaget and other psychologists claimed that such a phenomenon is observed with children during their 'second childhood period'. This paper challenges these claims about Nominal Realism, and suggests that this is a linguistic phenomenon and should be studied as such.

In terms of linguistics and the philosophy of language, Nominal Realism is a referring instance and excludes any non-referring (i.e. sense) properties. The sense property synonymy was chosen to carry out a field study in which use was made of a modification of the 'semantic differential' in combination with pictorial stimuli to test the grasp of synonymy in children during their second childhood period.

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By introducing linguistic terms, methods and tools, we gain methodological validity and objective results, suitable for comparison. The conclusion is that children of the second childhood period acquire sense-properties – synonymy – hence refuting the psychologists' claims about Nominal Realism.

92–335 Pérez-Pereira, Miguel (U. of Santiago, Spain). The acquisition of gender: what Spanish children tell us. *Journal of Child Language* (Cambridge), **18,** 3 (1991), 571–90.

Data from an experiment on gender acquisition with 160 Spanish children from four to eleven years of age are presented in this paper. In Spanish there are three possible clues (semantic, morphophonological and syntactic), that speakers can use to determine the gender of a noun and the agreement of other variable elements accompanying it. Items where only one of the clues was present, items where there was a combined effect of two of them in agreement (both were feminine or masculine), and items where clues were in conflict (one masculine and the other feminine) were introduced in the experiment. This experimental manipulation made it possible to test the relative strength of the different types of competing clues. In particular, the aim of the present study was to determine the relative importance of intralinguistic and extra-linguistic clues, as evidenced by the ability of Spanish children to recognise the gender of a noun upon hearing it in a particular frame, and consequently, to establish the agreement of other variable elements accompanying it. The results (which are compared with those obtained in other languages) give support to the theoretical view that children pay far more attention to syntactic and morpho-phonological (intralinguistic) information than to semantic (extralinguistic) information.

92–336 Rispoli, Matthew (U. of Kansas). The mosaic acquisition of grammatical relations. *Journal of Child Language* (Cambridge), **18,** 3 (1991), 517–51.

The view that grammatical relations have substantial essence, designated as 'subject' or 'object' has difficulty in accounting for the variety of naturally acquirable grammatical relations. The acquisition of grammatical relations is examined from a theoretical framework, ROLE AND REFERENCE GRAMMAR, in which grammatical relations are decomposed into two separate types of structure: logical (semantic) structure and information (pragmatic) structure. The acquisition of grammatical relations from four languages is compared: (1) the definite accusative suffix and pragmatically motivated word order of Turkish; (2) Kaluli verb agreement, case and focus marking postpositions, and pragmatically motivated word order; (3) Hungarian definite and indefinite verb conjunction; and (4) Italian participal agreement and anaphoric accusative case pronouns. Two conditions on structures are found to cause difficulty: the neutralisation of a semantic or pragmatic distinction by interfering structures (e.g. Kaluli and Italian), and global case marking which forces the child to discover relevant semantic characteristics of both the actor and the undergoer (e.g. Hungarian and Kaluli). Structures that encode semantic or pragmatic distinctions independently are more easily acquired (e.g. Turkish). Piecing together discrete structures in a mosaic fashion, the child can acquire the great variety of grammatical relations that exist in human languages.

Pragmatics

92–337 Angenot, Marc (McGill U. and CIADEST, Montreal). L'analyse du discours: esquisse d'une problématique générale. [Discourse analysis: an outline of general problems.) *Bulletin of the CAAL* (Montreal), **13,** 1 (1991), 9–34.

Discourse analysis is defined as an interdisciplinary research field which has developed considerably over the last 20 years and which today occupies an important place in literary and social science studies. Discourse analysis traditions deal with diverse problems and analytical measures. These traditions share the study and interpretation of what is said and written, as well as various language uses, all considered as a social phenomenon, therefore as an historical phenomenon which, when concretised within language, cannot however be reduced to what the linguist knows about language. Discourse analysis rightfully incorporates not only everyday speech, ordinary documents, newspapers and pol-

itical jargon, but also more 'esoteric', philosophical, literary and scholarly material. The objective of discourse analysis is to understand as a whole the way in which a society knows itself and represents

itself through all its oral and written forms. An interuniversity centre for discourse analysis and social criticism of texts has just opened in Montreal. It intends to pursue research by this method.

92-338 Maschler, Yael (Hebrew U., Jerusalem). The language games bilinguals play: language alternation at language game boundaries. *Language and Communication* (Oxford), **11,** 4 (1991), 263-89.

Working in the tradition of discourse analysis pioneered by Gumperz, this study extends the approach to bilingual conversation. Following other scholars in the field the author calls into question the code metaphor that underlies much modern linguistics. He extends this criticism to work in 'code-switching' in particular and supports this theoretical claim by an empirical analysis of over 20 hours of recorded Hebrew–English bilingual conversation. The study describes the bilingual discourse strategy of language alternation as it is shaped by the many constraints imposed on a particular verbal inter-action by the context in which the interaction takes

place. Wittgenstein's notion of language game is tied to Becker's approach to context as a source of constraints on text. As a highly specified instance of the shaping of bilingual discourse strategies by contextual constraints, this study describes the bilingual discourse strategy of alternating languages at language game boundaries. This strategy of language alternation is argued to be one of the features of bilingual discourse according to which speakers negotiate where one language game ends and the next one begins. The paper closes with a discussion of iconicity of the pattern of language alternation.

92-339 Ranney, Susan (U. of Minnesota). Learning a new script: an exploration of sociolinguistic competence. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **13,** 1 (1992), 25-50.

The current interest in the development of com-municative competence has led attention to the social uses of language in second language teaching and research. While many studies have examined the acquisition of speech acts, there has been less research on the knowledge of how speech acts fit together in extended discourse.

The present study proposes an alternative ap-proach to research on the acquisition of sociocultural competence, focusing on a speech event rather than a speech act, and drawing on the concept of scripts as developed by cognitive psychologists. The speech event examined here is the medical consultation, and the non-native speakers are Hmong learners of

English, a group of refugees from Southeast Asia whose traditional view of illness and medicine is very different from the western model they en-counter in the United States.

This study is exploratory in nature, proposing a combination of methods to investigate norms for a speech event. Script elicitation uncovered cultural knowledge of the choice and sequencing of language functions in the medical consultation. Information from interviews and a discourse completion task for relevant speech acts was combined with the script data to provide a multi-dimensional picture of sociolinguistic knowledge for one speech event.

92-340 Tyler, Andrea and Bro, John (U. of Florida). Discourse structure in non-native English discourse: the effect of ordering and interpretive cues on perceptions of comprehensibility. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (Bloomington, Ind), **14,** 1 (1992), 71-86.

A frequently discussed hypothesis concerning the source of cross-linguistic communication difficulty in written discourse is conflicting organisational patterns. Extending the argument to oral discourse, Young argued that spoken English discourse pro-duced by Chinese speakers evidenced a discourse-

level topic-comment structure that native English speakers find difficult to follow. However, Tyler argued that the perception of incoherence might better be understood as the cumulative result of interacting miscues at the discourse level, that is, miscues in syntactic incorporation, lexical discourse

markers, tense/aspect, and lexical specification. The study reported here aims at testing these competing hypotheses. One hundred and fifteen subjects rated four versions of the Chinese-produced English discourse presented in Young's study for comprehensibility. Results indicated that the effect of discourse miscues on comprehensibility was highly significant $(F = 70, \ p < 0.0001)$. However, there was no significant effect for order of ideas $(F = 0.47, \ p < 0.49)$.

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