

Studies of particular languages

ENGLISH

78-259 Kress, G. R. Tense as modality. *UEA Papers in Linguistics* (Norwich), 5 (1977), 40-52.

The traditional association of tense with time reference is reconceptualised in terms of deixis and modality, deriving from the ideational and interpersonal functional components of language respectively. The deictic elements [*have+en*], [*be+ing*], [*to+V*], locate the utterance in the history of the discourse, and these are optional elements because the minimal choices from the ideational component are associated with transitivity. The modal function of tense arises as the result of a functional shift; *-ed* symbolised past time, then past time came to symbolise non-actuality, whilst actuality is symbolised by present tense forms. Actual vs. non-actual is the minimal choice from the interpersonal component, and is thus compulsory.

The ideational meaning of *think* in *I think* and *I thought* refers to a phenomenon in the speaker's mental world, but their use is sensitive to the relationship between speakers rather than to any consideration of when the thinking happened. The past tense morpheme can also be used to indicate negated expectation, or present uncertainty. It is suggested that the categories 'conditional/subjunctive/hypothetical' should be dispensed with, as these are modal too. Some present tense 'actual' forms are also discussed.

FRENCH See abstracts 78-150, -170

GERMAN See abstract 78-135

SPANISH See abstract 78-145

RUSSIAN

78-260 Birkenmaier, Willy. Thema-Rhema Gliederung und russischer verbalaspekt. [Theme-rheme articulation and Russian verb aspect.] *IRAL* (Heidelberg), 15, 3 (1977), 209-20.

Two consecutive sentences in Russian with the same verbal predicate often show an aspectual shift. The verb which is only a repeat of the foregoing action

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appears in the imperfective aspect. On the level of functional sentence perspective the imperfective verb in such a sequence is part of the theme. This thematic role is often underlined by lexical items, whose function it is to signalise the communicative structure of the sentence. The interdependence between theme-rheme articulation is more important than the relationship between aspect and modality.

78–261 Corbett, G. G. Problems in the syntax of Slavonic numerals. *Slavonic and East European Review* (London), 56, 1 (1978), 1–12.

In this paper a structure for phrases involving simple cardinal numerals is proposed along with a set of rules required for deriving the basic constructions. This allows a fruitful approach to the complexities of numeral phrases in different Slavonic languages and highlights some of the remaining problems. These theoretical devices are introduced with reference to Russian, and their effectiveness tested on Serbo-Croat and Polish.

78–262 Crockett, Dina B. The scope of denial in Russian negative sentences. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), 43, 2/3 (1977), 229–45.

Despite the fact that the place of the negative particle in Russian sentences serves to indicate the intended scope of denial, certain ambiguities are inevitable because the terminal boundary of the denied segment cannot be marked, and because the negative particle marks not only the denied segment but also elements that are neither denied nor presupposed. The body of the paper is devoted to ambiguities resulting from the latter distinction and to its substantiation and in the conclusion it is suggested that in order to account for the place of the negative particle in Russian sentences it is necessary to distinguish elements that are neither denied nor presupposed in underlying representations. The analysis throws light on the meaning of negative sentences in other languages as well.

78–263 Rozental', D. Ė. Некоторые наблюдения над развитием русского литературного языка в советскую эпоху. [Observations on the development of the Russian literary language since the Revolution.] *Русский язык в национальной школе* (Moscow), 3 (1977), 8–14.

Five trends can be seen in the development of post-revolutionary Russian. (1) Democratisation: the literary language, dialects and other spoken variants have come together to form a language accessible to all. (2) Stylistic development: the different styles of Russian have influenced each other – much the most influential being the spoken language. Examples of the penetration of spoken

forms are given from phonetics, lexis, morphology and syntax. (3) Analytic tendencies: uninflected forms of names (personal and geographical) are spreading. (4) Economy: where there are alternative forms, the shorter is now usually preferred (patronymics are shortened, abbreviations abound and the shorter forms are favoured in the genitive plural and instrumental singular and in past tenses and gerunds). (5) Uniformity: levelling and simplification is leading to the loss of the partitive genitive form and of the special oblique case forms of possessive adjectives. These five trends are closely interrelated.