

Descriptive studies of particular languages

English

88–519 George, K. E. M. (London Sch. of Economics). The use of English words in the 20th-century French novel. *Modern Languages* (London), **68**, 4 (1987), 235–40.

English is used in the French novel when an Anglophone character is involved, or when the action takes place in an English-speaking country. As is the case with loan-words generally, borrowing occurs through physical presence during warfare (in this instance the Liberation) and travel, and via intermediate channels such as the cinema, television and the press. To a certain extent the novel has merely reflected the sociological phenomenon of increasing American influence in the post-war period, in keeping with the French language itself, beginning with 'le gadget, comme on dit au sous-sol des grands magasins' (Aragon, *Blanche ou l'oubli*, 1967). As an extension of this, acquaintance with English is readily associated with sophistication and pretentiousness. For the novelist, the use of English words thus becomes a convenient device in the technique of characterisation.

Many writers have seized on the opportunity to incorporate English forms into their linguistic stock in trade, and have exploited this alternative in a

variety of ways. One of these involves giving Anglicisms a new orthographic identity, normally based on pronunciation (e.g. *ticheurt*, *stèque*, *niolouque*, *presse-bouque*, *touiste* in Boudard). Another consists of creating a new derivative within French, based on an English root (e.g. the verbs *snober*, *flache-baquer*, *sandouicher*). Yet another is the insertion into an otherwise French sentence of an isolated English word, for example an adverb or conjunction such as *yes*, *never*, *but*, an essentially different practice from the use of Anglicisms such as *planning*, *dry*, *break* already assimilated into French usage. Or else using, as Thérôme does, a foreign element in combination with a French word (*poule-hen*) or with a word from another language (*love mio*). All of the above represent the more or less conscious desire on the part of the writer to break free from traditionalism and to seek new forms of expression. The use of English words, their Gallicisation, and the creation of pseudo-Anglicisms constitute one such possibility.

88–520 Umeda, Iwao (Kyoto Sangyo U., Japan). Psychological predicates in English. *IRAL* (Heidelberg, FRG), **25**, 2 (1987), 91–101.

The past participles of certain 'psychological' verbs like *annoy*, *embarrass*, *frighten* and *surprise* can equally well be used as adjectives as with a verbal function (as part of a passive construction). Postal (1971) maintains that adverbs of degree like *very* are not able to function in a passive construction. This article

discusses results of questionnaires and analysis of corpora (Brown, LOB, London–Lund) which show that *very* does indeed occur in passive constructions (*I was very disappointed at the news; I was very irritated by her late arrival*).

French

88–521 Steinmeyer, G. (U. of Bamberg, FRG). Le 'futur antérieur' comme temps du passé: remarques sur un emploi particulier fréquent du 'futur antérieur' en français. [The 'future anterior' as a past tense: some remarks on a frequent special use of the 'future anterior' in French]. *IRAL* (Heidelberg), **25**, 2 (1987), 119–29.

Standard grammars mention two major functions of the *futur antérieur*: a retrospective one in which an event is seen as completed in the future (often in a sentence summarising a list and often accompanied by markers of emphasis and/or an adverbial of time) and a modal one (expressing uncertainty

about the completion of a process in the future and often accompanied by an expression of epistemic judgement). A further function, used with increasing frequency by the French press, is as an equivalent of the *passé composé* (present perfect). This is due to the ambiguity of the present perfect form (i.e. between

past reference and aspectual relevance to the present). The *futur antérieur* is always perfective in aspect. French verbal tenses are polyvalent, dependent for interpretation on contextual elements. They do,

however, have primary senses. In the case of the *futur antérieur* this is 'the completion of a process anterior to another process situated from the speaker's point of view in the future'.

Slavonic languages

88–522 Corbett, Greville G. (U. of Surrey). Gender in Slavonic from the standpoint of a general typology of gender systems. *Slavonic and East European Review* (Cambridge), **66**, 1 (1988), 1–20.

This paper outlines a general typology of gender systems and locates the Slavonic systems within it. There are two reasons for adopting this approach: first, it gives a new perspective on the Slavonic data; and second, it highlights those features of gender in Slavonic which are of most interest to researchers working in general linguistics. Slavonic is indeed a rich source: its gender systems are complex and varied and a good deal of work has been done both on descriptions of individual languages and on typologies of Slavonic as a whole, as the publications referred to make clear. Moreover Slavonic scholars, notably Zaliznjak and Gladkij, have worked on the definition of gender, which lays a foundation for

typological work. In the first section Zaliznjak's approach is extended; the problem cases which require extensions of the basic definitions are of course the most significant and interesting. Having established a method for determining the gender pattern in a given language, the author examines in section II the assignment systems which allot nouns to the different genders. When assignment rules conflict, there may be nouns which do not fall completely into a single gender and have complex agreement patterns; the constraints on these agreement patterns are examined in section III. Finally, the rules which determine agreement in gender with conjoined noun phrases are considered.