

Sociolinguistics

89-517 Genesee, F. and Bourhis, R. Y. (McGill U., Canada). Evaluative reactions to language choice strategies: the role of sociocultural factors. *Language and Communication* (Oxford), **8**, 3/4 (1988), 229–50.

The sociolinguistic approach explains language switching in terms of language rules and norms whereas the social psychological approach emphasises speakers' motives, cognitions and group loyalties. Four factors appear to determine listeners' reactions to language choices: (1) situational language norms, (2) speech accommodation, (3) ingroup favouritism, and (4) sociocultural factors. A segmented dialogue technique involving a salesman and a customer in a toy store was used to elucidate the role of language norms and social psychological

factors by English and French speakers, firstly in Montreal and, two years later, in Quebec City.

Results show that neither speech accommodation nor situational language norms alone can fully account for the dynamics of language use in cross-cultural encounters. The sociocultural position of language groups can significantly affect the relative importance of situational norms and speech accommodation in evaluative reactions to language switching.

89-518 Laflamme, Simon and Berger, Jacques. Compétence linguistique et environnement social. [Linguistic competence and the social environment.] *Canadian Modern Language Review* (Toronto), **44**, 4 (1988), 619–38.

The originality of this research resides in the fact that the conditions affecting the writing competence of post-secondary students have been studied simultaneously in both Anglophone and francophone linguistic groups. It shows that the English-speaking and the French-speaking students make the same errors and that the situation of the French-speaking students, in spite of their position as a dominated group, or of the milieu in which they live, is no

worse than that of their English counterparts. The variables which, according to the traditional viewpoint, should influence competence cannot explain the rather poor performance of students in both languages. Language competence is therefore a phenomenon which affects society as a whole; it is not directly linked to a majority versus minority situation, nor with the languages' degree of difficulty.

89-519 Macaulay, Ronald K. S. (Pitzer Coll., Claremont, CA). What happened to sociolinguistics? *English World-Wide* (Heidelberg, FRG), **9**, 2 (1988), 153–69.

There has been surprisingly little detailed sociolinguistic description in the last twenty years; the work that exists is perhaps over-influenced by Labov's concern with linguistic change, so there has been little attention to the many features of language which remain remarkably stable. The time-consuming nature of the work and the need for collaborative effort are stressed.

The author analysed a 120,000-word corpus of interviews in Ayr, Scotland. Lower-class speech was found to differ from middle-class on many levels:

phonological (e.g. more glottal stops and velar fricatives); morphological (e.g. zero marker in relative clauses); syntactic (e.g. lower proportion of subordinate clauses, more *get*-passives); lexical (e.g. fewer adverbs in *-ly*); highlighting devices (e.g. more NP-fronting, less adverbial-fronting); discourse markers (e.g. *ken*, *mind you* instead of *I mean*, *you see*). Whereas some features, such as the clitic *-nae*, were very robust class indicators, on others there was a great deal of overlap and individual variation was more salient than class variation.

89-520 Nerlich, Brigitte (Wolfson Coll., Oxford). The evolution of the concept of 'linguistic evolution' in the 19th and 20th century. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **77**, 2 (1989), 101–12.

All 19th-century linguists were interested in some sense or other in the history and change of language(s). Influenced by the success of biological sciences, the terms 'transformation', 'evolution' or

'growth' were widely used and misused. After 1859, when Darwin published his book on the Origin of Species, linguists became even more fascinated by the biological metaphor. But although

the term 'evolution' changed its meaning in biological sciences, being now connected with the terms 'variation' and 'selection', most of the linguists continued to use it in a pre-Darwinian way. Linguists did not participate in the Darwinian revolution. What was missing, and is still missing, is

a sound application of the theory of variation, selection and adaptation in theories of language evolution and change. This article indicates some routes a Darwinian revolution could take in the linguistics of the 20th century.

Psycholinguistics

89-521 Cameron, Catherine Ann and others (U. of New Brunswick). Medium effects on children's story rewriting and story retelling. *First Language* (Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks), **8**, 1 (1988), 3-18.

As part of a longitudinal study of the development of literacy skills, seven-year-old children wrote and told stories previously read to them. This partial replication of Geva & Olson (1983) examined the characteristics of story rewriting by hand and by computer, as well as oral story retelling, and their relationships with reading comprehension. The productions of these second graders were comparable to Geva & Olson's six-year-olds' story

retelling in use of language forms, reflecting knowledge of story schemata, and an awareness of the formal characteristics of narrative conventions. The children in this within-subjects design demonstrated few significant psycholinguistic differences between production media, in spite of their voiced preference for word-processing activities. Relationships were revealed between reading comprehension and story rewriting and retelling.

89-522 Gopnik, Alison (U. of California at Berkeley). Three types of early word: the emergence of social words, names and cognitive-relational words in the one-word stage and their relation to cognitive development. *First Language* (Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks), **8**, 1 (1988), 48-69.

The early words that 27 children produced between the ages of 12 and 20 months were analysed. Social words, such as *that* used to point out objects or *no* used to refuse suggestions, were consistently among the first words to appear. A small number of names also appeared in the very early period. Cognitive-relational words, such as *gone* used to indicate disappearance or *no* used to indicate failure consistently appeared after some social words had been

acquired. The cognitive development of 18 of these children was also recorded. Social words and names, though not cognitive-relational words, appeared before children solved 'early stage 6' cognitive problems. These results suggest that children move from using language communicatively to using it to sort out their cognitive problems early in the one-word stage and that this shift is related to 'stage 6' cognitive developments.

89-523 Hochberg, Judith G. (Northwestern U.). Learning Spanish stress: developmental and theoretical perspectives. *Language* (Baltimore, Md), **64** (1988), 683-706.

This paper uses spontaneous and imitated speech data from 50 Mexican-American preschool children to demonstrate that children learning Spanish as a first language learn rules for assigning stress, as opposed to simply memorising stress on a word-by-word basis. From a developmental perspective, this finding is taken as an indication that children's propensity to hypothesise linguistic rules is so strong

as to take effect even when rules are not needed to produce correct forms and are obscured by large numbers of exceptional forms. From a theoretical perspective, the acquisition data are used to support the metrical theory of stress and to suggest that future theories take into account degrees of irregularity among different irregular stress types.

89-524 Jordan, Nancy C. (U. of Chicago). Language processing and reading ability in children: a study based on speech-shadowing techniques. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research* (New York), **17**, 5 (1988), 357-77.

Language-processing facility in good and poor readers was examined using two speech-shadowing experiments. A total of 54 children from the second, fifth, and eighth grades were tested (9 good and 9 poor readers at each grade level). The first experiment manipulated rate of presentation to study speed of processing auditory-linguistic information. Good readers were superior to poor readers in their ability to maintain shadowing accuracy at increased rates of presentation, although the performance patterns of the two groups varied according to grade level. In the second experiment, good and

poor readers shadowed sentences exhibiting different degrees of grammatical acceptability. Unstructured word strings, without syntactic coherence, penalised good readers more than poor readers, relative to their performance on syntactically appropriate constructions. Poor readers did not differ from good readers in their sensitivity to semantic cues. The results support the hypothesis that reading skill is a manifestation underlying linguistic abilities, and point to the importance of employing rate-based linguistic measures in the study of reading and language development.

89-525 Kelly, Michael H. (U. of Pennsylvania). Rhythmic alternation and lexical stress differences in English. *Cognition* (Lausanne), **30**, 2 (1988), 107-37.

An account is given for the evolution of strong-weak (trochaic) stress on disyllabic English nouns and weak-strong (iambic) stress on disyllabic English verbs. This explanation draws on two claims: (1) language users adjust the stress patterns on words so that alternations between strong and weak beats are created (the principle of rhythmic alternation) and (2) nouns and verbs tend to appear in different rhythmic contexts, such that verbs are more likely than nouns to be biased towards iambic stress. Analyses of spoken and written samples of English revealed that disyllabic verbs were more likely than disyllabic nouns to receive an inflection that adds a syllable onto the word. Because such syllables are weakly stressed, rhythmic alternation would be

created if the disyllabic word received stress on the second syllable (e.g., *suggesting*) rather than the first (*promising*). Two experiments showed that stress assignments on pseudowords such as *cortand* are in fact varied depending on the syllabic nature of inflections added to the words. In addition, the text analyses and experiments can account for specific subpatterns within the noun-verb stress asymmetry as well as the general asymmetry itself. Implications of these findings for theories of word stress are discussed, as well as the more general point that patterns of language change can be understood in terms of language processing at the level of the individual speaker or listener.

89-526 Kemper, Susan and others (U. of Kansas). Life-span changes to adults' language: effects of memory and genre. *Applied Psycholinguistics* (Cambridge), **10**, 1 (1989), 49-66.

Three different language samples were collected from a group of young adults, 18 to 28 years of age, and a group of elderly adults, 60 to 92 years of age: an oral questionnaire eliciting information about the adults' background, education, and current health and activities; an oral statement describing the person they most admired; and a written statement recounting the most significant event in their lives. In addition, the WAIS vocabulary and digit-span tests were administered to the adults. Age-related changes in the length, clause structure, and fluency of the adults' oral answers and oral and written statements were investigated. There was an overall decrement in the complexity of adults' oral and written statements attributable to an age-related loss of left-branching clauses which occurred in all three

language samples. Correlations between the length, clause, and fluency measures from the language samples and the education, health, and WAIS vocabulary and digit-span tests revealed that better-educated adults scored higher on the WAIS vocabulary test, produced longer utterances, and used more right-branching clauses, and that adults with greater memory capacity, as measured by the WAIS Digits Backward test, produced more complex utterances and used more right- and left-branching clauses. Judges found the statements from the elderly adults to be more interesting and clearer than those from the young adults. This finding suggests that there is a trade-off between producing complex syntactic structures and producing clear and interesting prose.



89–527 Peterson, Carole (Memorial U. of Newfoundland) and **McCabe, Allyssa** (Tufts U.). The connective 'and' as discourse glue. *First Language* (Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks), **8**, 1 (1988), 19–28.

Children's use of the connective *and* during narration was studied. Semantic analyses of the relationships between connected sentences showed that *and* is heavily used for a range of meanings, including those for which more specific connectives (such as causal or temporal ones) would be more appropriate. Few differences were found between juxtaposed narrative sentences that had no connective and those that were joined by *and*. It was concluded that

semantic relationship is not an adequate explanation for why *and* is used. Rather, pragmatic functions seem to be important: *and* is more commonly used when the child is producing thematically related speech (i.e., within versus between narratives) and is associated with longer conversational turns. *And* seems to function as a generalised signal of cohesion between sentences and an indication that the narrator's conversational turn is not over.

89–528 Wagner, Daniel A. and others (U. of Pennsylvania). Does learning to read in a second language always put the child at a disadvantage? Some counterevidence from Morocco. *Applied Psycholinguistics* (Cambridge), **10**, 1 (1989), 31–48.

Researchers have gathered a variety of evidence to support the theory that learning to read in one's mother tongue or first language enhances a child's achievement relative to that of children obliged to learn to read in a second language. Evidence collected primarily in Europe and America has been applied by international organisations to support early mother-tongue education programmes in many Third World countries. The data reported in this article suggest that a general application of this conclusion is not justified. The present article reports on a longitudinal study of literacy acquisition among 166 grade 1 children from a rural town in Morocco. Children in the sample came from two distinct linguistic communities (Moroccan Arabic and Berber), but lived in the same village, attended the same schools, and received literacy instruction in Arabic and subsequently French. The study also considered a number of background variables that might influence learning to read, such as Quranic preschooling experience, parental literacy, gender,

and SES. Analyses showed that while there were significant differences in Arabic (first literacy) reading achievement between Berber- and Arabic-speaking groups in the first year of the study, such differences virtually disappeared by year 5. Quranic preschooling, also conducted in Arabic, was found to be mediating influence on achievement in grade 1. Learning to read in French (second literacy) was unrelated to Berber or Arabic linguistic background, but highly related to reading achievement in Arabic, thus providing support for Cummins's (1979) 'interdependence' hypothesis. Overall, the findings support the proposition that children in certain social and linguistic contexts need not be taught in their mother tongue in order to achieve literacy norms of the majority language group. These findings are discussed in terms of the context of language use and language prestige in the Moroccan setting, and in terms of their potential generalisability to other linguistic and cultural contexts.

Pragmatics

89–529 Brown, Gillian (Cambridge U.). Making sense: the interaction of linguistic expression and contextual information. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **10**, 1 (1989), 97–108.

This paper briefly characterises the view of 'context' which appears to be most prevalent in applied linguistics and in language teaching. It notes that 'what is being talked about', the conceptual content, is rarely considered in any serious way. It outlines the findings of various research projects directed by the author on some of the parameters which contribute to greater or lesser conceptual difficulty, hence to greater or lesser difficulty in talking about them, or in understanding what is said about them. The bulk of the paper describes some research which explores the role of intentionality (and

causality) in narrative as a facilitator of understanding what is going on and of talking about it. These relationships are complex and hence require expression in complex language. It is noted that these findings have implications for the design of task-based materials for use with foreign and second language learners as well as mother-tongue learners. Readers are reminded that context alone may not illuminate language use unless language is first deliberately used to guide listeners to identifying those features of context which will be relevant to the interpretation of language.

89-530 Chun, Dorothy M. (U. of Texas). The neglected role of intonation in communicative competence and proficiency. *Modern Language Journal* (Madison, Wis), **72**, 3 (1988), 295-303.

Applied linguists have overlooked the role of intonation in signalling discourse strategies. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines [summary] synthesise well the concepts of communicative competence and proficiency but fail to mention interactive strategies and the place of intonation. Recent research, however, has shown how intonation plays

a principal part in controlling interactive structures: as in turn-taking, production and comprehension of speech acts, identification of given and new information and in signalling the relative power status of interlocutors. Here, Brazil's concept of 'key' (pitch range) is particularly relevant.

89-531 Lüger, Heinz-Helmut. Stereotypie und Konversationsstil: zu einigen Funktionen satzwertiger Phraseologismen im literarischen Dialog. [Stereotypes and conversational style: some functions of sentence-length phrases in literary dialogue.] *Deutsche Sprache* (Berlin, FRG), **1** (1989), 2-25.

Verbal stereotypes, here understood as preformed expressions of sentence length, can perform a large number of functions in communication. A differentiation of the basic types of stereotype is followed by a detailed functional analysis based on stretches of dialogue from one of Fontane's novels. The results

show that stereotypes are used especially (a) to support the aim of a superordinate speech act, (b) to express value judgments with additional indication of attitude, and (c) to make a contribution to image projection.

89-532 Myers, Greg (U. of Bradford). The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles. *Applied Linguistics* (Oxford), **10**, 1 (1989), 1-35.

Recent studies of the pragmatics of politeness have drawn on conversational data. It is argued that their model can be extended to some genres of written texts. There have been two obstacles to such an extension: the lack of a definite addressee for published texts, and the difficulty of defining relevant cultural variables. Taking a corpus of articles by molecular geneticists, a simple model of a two-part audience is assumed; focus is on two kinds of impositions: claims and denials of claims. With this framework, one can see politeness strategies in regularities of scientific style – such as the use of pronouns and of passives – that are usually explained in terms of conventions. The

analysis also accounts for some otherwise unexplained stylistic features, such as the use of adverbs in establishing solidarity, and the use of personal attribution in hedging. With these positive and negative politeness strategies in mind, we can understand better the social significance of the occasional instances in which the writer makes an imposition without redress, or makes the imposition indirectly or chooses not to make it at all. Comparisons with popularisations, a genre in which the writer has a different kind of relation to the reader, and thus uses different kinds of politeness devices, show that these devices arise in response to the interaction embodied in the text.

89-533 Polanyi, Livia (Rice U., Houston, Tx). A formal model of the structure of discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics* (Amsterdam), **12**, 5/6 (1988), 601-38.

This paper addresses the issue of discourse structure and describes in detail a theory of discourse structure, the Linguistic Discourse Model. This work takes as its goal development of a set of formally defined robust notions and mechanisms which will eventually be able to assign every clause in a discourse a proper semantic representation. The LDM framework takes as its initial assumption that discourse structure can be represented as resulting from the recursive sequencing and embedding of discourse units of various types. The Model consists of a set of

discourse rules which specify the constituents of possible discourse units, a set of recursive rules of discourse formation which specify how units may relate to one another, and a set of semantic interpretation rules which assign a semantic and pragmatic interpretation to each clause and to the discourse as a whole. In this paper the LDM framework is sketched. Special attention is paid to describing the discourse constituent unit or dcu – the elementary unit of discourse construction in this Model – to describing recursive discourse formation

in terms of dcu structures and to describing the left to right, clause by clause construction of a Discourse Parse Tree which captures structural and semantic relations among a discourse's constituent units.

The paper concludes with an analysis of a misunderstanding sequence from a Service Encounter in terms of the LDM framework.

89-534 Vicher, Anne (U. of Paris V) and **Sankoff, David** (U. of Montreal). The emergent syntax of pre-sentential turn openings. *Journal of Pragmatics* (Amsterdam), **13** (1989), 81-97.

Spoken French contains a rich variety of pre-sentential discourse particles playing structural, interactional and pragmatic roles. In 65% of some 3,700 utterances in classroom discussions and ordinary conversations, of both native and non-native French speakers, we find intonationally unitary turn-openings containing up to five of these particles. Distributional analysis reveals strong ordering constraints among the particles, with eight paradigmatic 'slots' available. The first two positions structure the transition from hearer's to speaker's roles (*hmhm...*, *ah bon...*). Usually, the following two positions allow a bi-morphemic reaction (*mais oui...*, *ben non...*) to the interactional and illocutionary validity of the preceding turn,

while the fifth and sixth slots contain analogous reactions to its informative content. The remaining slots contain tag-like elements which play a largely prosodic role. Quantitative analysis of particle co-occurrence is based on the null hypothesis that occurrences in different slots are statistically independent. A comparison of observed versus predicted frequencies detects particle combinations used more, or less, than could be accounted for by the frequencies of their individual components, suggesting emergent collocations, and functionally incompatible components, respectively. Finally, we give a brief analysis of the semantic-pragmatic functions of some particle combinations.