Studies of particular languages

ENGLISH *See also abstract* 79–324

79-350 Osgood, Charles E. From 'Yang' and 'Yin' to 'and' or 'but' in cross-cultural perspective. *Cahiers de l'Institut de Linguistique de Louvain* (Louvain), **5**, 1/2 (1978), 81–97.

A cross-cultural experiment in progress is outlined, setting out to predict choice between insertion of *and* or of *but* in the sentence-frame X is ADJ_1–ADJ_2. Prediction is based on a set of general postulates concerning the dynamics of cognition, as it relates to the production and reception of communicative behaviour. For example, the given sentence-frame consists of two simple cognitions, each consisting of a two-member relation. The members are assigned sets of positively or negatively valued semantic features (cognitive-based). The product of these values determines the absolute value of the respective members of the cognition, and of the cognition itself. Using the values obtained through a rigorous sampling method [details], it is possible to predict to a statistically significant accuracy whether *and* or *but* will be inserted, given that *and* generally relates cognitions with the same polar value, while *but* generally relates cognitions that are incongruent on this criterion. Such preferences cannot be predicted by current generative methods.

Evaluation of features can be compared to the bipolar forces *Yin* and *Yang* of Taoist metaphysics. It is concluded that the essences of *Yin* and *Yang* can be expressed as positive and negative evaluation, where positive is associated linguisically with the unmarked case, and a behavioural, evolutionary account of the basis of such evaluation is given.

79-351 Schachter, Paul. English propredicates. *Linguistic Analysis* (New York), **4**, 3 (1978), 187–224.

The syntax and semantics of English elliptical predicates are examined. These are predicates containing one or more auxiliary verbs, but no main verb or verb complements, e.g. 'John couldn't have been lying under oath, but Bill *could* (*have* (*been*))'. Two proposed analyses of such constructions, one by means of a VP-Deletion transformation, and the other positing an underlying empty VP node, are shown to be descriptively inadequate. A third analysis is offered, in which the underlying structure of such sentences is essentially the same as their surface structure, and the elliptical predicates are analysed as propredicates, that is, one of the class of proforms, which plays a consistent role in both the syntactic and semantic rules of English. The proposed alternative does not

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require transformational devices such as deletion under identity, since such predicates are generated directly. It is, furthermore, shown to be inconsistent with the transformational rules of '*do*-Support', 'Passive', 'Tag-question Formation', and 'Raising'. Such results cast doubt as to whether there remain any well motivated transformations at all.

79–352   Smyth, Ronald H. and others. The effect of context on dative position. *Lingua* (Amsterdam), **47**, 1 (1979), 27–42.

The putative freedom of dative position in English sentences is questioned. In terms of the distribution of given and new information in discourse, it is hypothesised that in certain ('motivating') contexts, dative position is highly constrained, while in other ('non-motivating') contexts, it is not. An experiment is reported which tests such a hypothesis by means of a recognition memory task for sentences in different types of contexts. It was found that subjects are indeed sensitive to changes in dative position in motivating contexts but not in non-motivating contexts. The results provide experimental support for the given-new strategy of information distribution. Furthermore it is argued that such a strategy can be extended to numerous other syntactic phenomena, and it is concluded that a sentence-bound grammatical description is inadequate to represent such facts, while an alternative formal system sensitive to discourse phenomena can handle the facts in a natural and revealing way.

FRENCH

79–353   Culioli, Antoine. Valeurs modales et opérations énonciatives. [Modality and propositional operations.] *Français Moderne* (Paris), **46**, 4 (1978), 300–17.

Certain instances of *bien* and *fort bien* are considered with a view to defining formally the semantic operations that correspond to their use. [Examples of the sort: *Il a bien expédié une lettre, Vous prendrez bien un petit quelque chose!, Il pourrait (fort) bien pleuvoir ce soir.*] These operations are seen to involve the generation of (a set of) related propositions [e.g. *Tu lis bien des romans policiers, toi!* leads to *pourquoi n'aurais-je pas le droit d'en écrire?, pourquoi ne lirais-je pas des illustrés, des romans d'amour?, pourquoi ne jouerais-je pas aux cartes?*, etc.], and formal means for expressing these operations are proposed. Uses of (*fort*) *bien* with future and conditional tenses are also considered, with regard to the type of grammatical subject (*je, tu, il*), and to the identification or non-identification of the speaker (*locuteur*) with the origin of the assertion (*énonciateur*) [e.g. *Marie épousera Paul* (*locuteur* and *énonciateur* coincide) vs. *Marie épouserait Paul* (*locuteur* and *énonciateur* different)].

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GERMAN

79-354 **Repp, Michael.** Modal- und Modalitätsverben in Texten der gesprochenen Standardsprache des heutigen Deutsch. [Modal verbs and verbs expressing modality in texts of contemporary standard spoken German.] *Deutsche Sprache* (Munich), **3** (1978), 203–20.

A model for the semantic description of German modal auxiliaries is presented and applied to texts of present-day spoken German. This analysis is statistically evaluated and its consequences for the so-called Freiburg Hypothesis are examined.

79-355 **Schmidt, Günter Dietrich.** Neues im Wortschatz der deutschen Sprache. Sowietische Arbeiten zu Wortschatzveränderungen in der deutschen Gegenwartssprache seit 1945. [New developments in the vocabulary of German. Soviet works on changes in the vocabulary of German since 1945.] *Deutsche Sprache* (Munich), **4** (1978), 325–45.

The article is a survey of works by Soviet writers, almost all of them in Russian, on changes in the vocabulary of German since 1945. Differing conceptions of key technical terms, such as 'neologism' and 'meaning change', are documented, and it is suggested that these have too often been employed uncritically, without adequate analysis or definition. Various systems proposed by Soviet researchers for classifying neologisms are examined, and it is noted that all the works considered draw their raw material and examples mainly from written sources, particularly newspapers and journals. They concentrate typically on changes in vocabulary brought about by political changes within East and West Germany.

Special attention is devoted in the article to writers who have studied the influence of foreign languages, in particular of Russian upon German in the GDR and of English and American in the FGR. Various methods of classifying borrowings are described, and it is noted that, bearing in mind the interest of Soviet writers in the effects of political events and cultural influences, surprisingly few have investigated the problem of divergence between the vocabulary of the language in East and West Germany. [Bibliography of Soviet works on changes in the vocabulary of German since 1945.]

RUSSIAN

79-356   **Belošapkova, V. A.** Минимальные структурные схемы
русского предложения. [The minimal structural schemata of
the Russian sentence.] *Иностранные языки в школе* (Moscow),
5 (1978), 55-9.

Two conceptions of structural schemata for sentences are illustrated, one
relating purely to the categories which occur in basic sentence types, the other
specifying only those sentence types which are semantically complete. These
two approaches are complementary, the first being more abstract, and this
approach is chosen to illustrate the basic sentence types of Russian.

All minimal structural schemata are said to involve predicativity, expressed
by a finite verb, a non-finite verb or a copular expression. Where the form of
this predicative expression is not determined by the sentence type, there must
also be some other element determining the person/number/gender concord of
the predicate. Seventeen minimal structural schemata are presented as being
sufficient for Russian.

79-357   **Comrie, Bernard.** Morphological classification of cases in the
Slavonic languages. *Slavonic and East European Review* (London),
56, 2 (1978), 177-91.

Jakobson's classification of cases in Russian is semantic (though with some
morphological correlates) and purely synchronic; an alternative is proposed
which is primarily morphological, and takes account of diachronic changes in
form and function of cases. Where change in form or function leads to a
discrepancy between formal and functional classification, there is pressure for
the forms to change to realign themselves with the functional classification
[examples].

This hypothesis is tested in detail against the genitive and locative, which
are linked formally and functionally in the oldest Slavonic languages. The shift
of the genitive from a semantic case to a syntactic case breaks the functional
link with the locative, which is in turn tied more closely to the other semantic
cases, dative and instrumental. Morphologically, a corresponding change is
found in the increasing dissimilarity in form between genitive and locative and
increasing similarity in form between locative and dative-instrumental. The
syntactisation of the genitive also leads to new relations contracted by the
genitive with the other syntactic cases, nominative and accusative.

ARABIC   *See abstract* 79-323