

# Studies of particular languages

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**ENGLISH** See also abstract 79–37

**79–34** **Smith, Donald L.** Mirror images in Japanese and English. *Language* (Baltimore, Md), **54**, 1 (1978), 78–122.

Mirror images in constituent order are found in a wide range of parallel clause types in Japanese and English. Three explanations are proposed for linear orderings, related to the following hypotheses: (a) all constituents may be classified as either nominal or verbal; (b) relative orderings of constituents derive from language-independent criteria for Verb-to-Complement constraints; and (c) constituents which bear higher degrees of contextually determined and semantic entailment with the verb will be closer to the verb. The evidence presented suggests that all three principles are operative in Japanese and English. Although not all orderings conform to these principles, it is argued that the three principles of ordering will form a necessary part of a theory of syntax which accounts for word order in a non-arbitrary fashion.

**79–35** **Rando, Emily and Napoli, Donna Jo.** Definites in 'there'-sentences. *Language* (Baltimore, Md), **54**, 2 (1978), 300–13.

*There*-sentences in English fall into two types: **EXISTENTIAL** and **LIST**. 'Existential' *there*-sentences typically allow only indefinite NP arguments, while 'list' *there*-sentences accept both definites and indefinites. The reason for this difference is that the argument of an existential *there*-sentence is the NP itself; but the argument of a list *there*-sentence is the list, not the individual members comprising that list. Once this distinction is noted, only one restriction remains on the arguments of all *there*-sentences, namely that they be non-anaphoric in the sense discussed in this article.

**79–36** **Thompson, Sandra A.** Modern English from a typological point of view: some implications of the function of word order. *Linguistische Berichte* (Brunswick, Germany), **54** (1978), 19–35.

The English language can be classified in terms of the role which word order plays; various hitherto unrelated facts about the structure of English can be seen to follow from this basic typological property. Languages can utilise the linear arrangement of predicates and their arguments either mainly pragmatically (to signal which parts of the sentence convey old vs. new information) or

grammatically. PWO (pragmatic word order) languages discussed are Russian, Mandarin Chinese and Spanish – examples show how old information is given before new [discussion of Firbas's concept of 'communicative dynamism']. GWO (grammatical word order) languages cited are English, Swedish, Kwaa and Roglai. The distinction between PWO and GWO does not provide a neat division of all languages. Those which do seem to be clear types, however, exhibit certain properties.

Some of the specific implications for English of being a GWO language are discussed in more detail, in particular the fact that it requires a noun phrase immediately preceding the verb in main clauses and that that noun phrase (if unmarked) is the subject. [References.]

## GERMAN

**79–37 Morey, Margaret.** A contrastive study in frequentative and habitual action in German and English. *Modern Languages* (London), **59**, 2 (1978), 74–81.

A comparison is made between the means German and English have at their disposal to express the concept of frequency and habit. English and German texts are taken as both the source language and the target language and compared with their respective translations. It is found that only in the case of adverbials and conjunctions is there a formal one-to-one correspondence. In most cases overlapping takes place. English has more means at its disposal than German to express frequency. In rare instances English and German differ in that one language expresses frequency whereas the other does not.

**79–38 Voyles, Joseph B.** German as an SOV language. *Linguistische Berichte* (Brunswick), **54** (1978), 1–18.

Some evidence hitherto not considered in the literature is adduced here for considering German an SOV language (i.e. one in which the deep structure consists of a subject in initial position, a verb in final position, and any other constituents, e.g. objects, in between). Two recent theories of language (Ross's penthouse principle and Emonds' more formally based constraints) both predict that German should be an SOV language. The additional syntactic data from German which is adduced points to the conclusion that Emonds' constraints do not work while Ross's penthouse principle, with some possible modifications, is basically correct. Empirical evidence is adduced from the speech of German-speaking children which indicate that German is in fact SOV.

## STUDIES OF PARTICULAR LANGUAGES

### SPANISH

- 79–39 **Fontanella de Weinberg, María Beatriz.** La constitución del paradigma pronominal de voseo. [The constituents of the pronoun paradigm in dialects using 'vos' as second person singular pronoun.] *Thesaurus: Boletín del Instituto Caro y Cuervo* (Bogotá, Colombia), 32, 2 (1977), 227–39.

An explanation is offered for the situation in *voseante* dialects of South America where the second person subject pronoun singular is *vos* (also the complement form), the object form is *te*, possessive adjective *tu*, etc. Sociolinguistic pressure is doubtless responsible for the triumph of *vos* over historical *tú*; paradigm pressures account for the other cases. *Vos* as complement fits the almost general pattern of subject form = complement form. *Te* as object integrates formally with other object forms, as do *tu* and *tuyo* as possessives with the other singular possessives. [Some historical and comparative remarks on the development of the pronoun of address system.]

- 79–40 **Roegiest, E.** Un essai de description taxonomique: le syntagme 'nom+*de*+nom' en espagnol moderne. [A descriptive classification of the phrase 'noun+*de*+noun' in modern Spanish.] *Linguistica Antverpiensia* (Antwerp), 11 (1977), 155–80.

The principles of substitution and transformation are fully exploited as a basis for analysis and classification of the functions of the phrase 'noun+*de*+noun'. However, it proved impossible to draw clear-cut distinctions between the different contextual nuances. Reference is made to previous studies and to parallel work carried out for French, Italian and Rumanian. [The illustrations and examples are taken from modern Spanish authors.]

### RUSSIAN

- 79–41 **Weatherly, Judith B. and Launer, Michael K.** A transformational study of some Russian infinitive impersonal sentences. *International Review of Slavic Linguistics* (Edmonton, Canada), 2, 2/3 (1977), 215–49.

This paper traces the transformational development of infinitive impersonal sentences in Russian, utilising both the standard initial PS rule  $S \rightarrow NP+VP$  and the rule  $S \rightarrow (NP) VP$  recently proposed for some Russian impersonal sentences. The derivations make use of PreSentence conventions, within which is included specification of deictic reference. The range of applicability of each PS is demonstrated, along with a discussion of the advantages of, and constraints upon, their use.

It is concluded that an empty subject node is not possible in the deep structure of Russian sentences: either there is no subject node at all or the subject node must be filled ( $\Delta$  is employed on occasion to this end). Further, it is shown that the PS  $S \rightarrow (NP) VP$  is possible only when the deep structure matrix sentence consists of some impersonal expression; it cannot be applied whenever there is a clear deictic reference to some agent.

## CREOLE LANGUAGES

**79-42** **Bollée, Annegret.** Problèmes et perspectives de la description des créoles. [Problems of, and outlook for the study of creole languages.] *Langue Française* (Paris), 37 (1978), 21-39.

Studies of French-based creoles, from the earliest scientific work in 1869 up to the present time, are examined and found to reflect the prevailing linguistic theories of their day. In addition to their own intrinsic interest, pidgins and creoles possess a special attraction for those linguists concerned with the problems of human language in general, in particular such questions as the origin of languages, the relations between them, and language-contact situations. Creole studies also have their own special problems: the relationship with the standard language, orthography and the place of creole languages in education. Even the very term 'creole' has not been adequately defined. [References.]

## WORLD LANGUAGES

**79-43** **Ornstein, Jacob.** Reflections of a linguist on the unending quest for a world language - negatives, positives and prospects. *ITL* (Louvain), 38 (1977), 3-29.

A review of various schemes to create a world language, notably Esperanto and Interlingua. Esperanto has a philosophical basis and an independent grammatical structure; it has most adherents in smaller countries with languages known to few people, such as Denmark and Bulgaria. It has a wide range of cultural and social programmes; about 145 periodicals are printed in it; it is taught in 40 countries and spoken by about one million people. It has numerous offshoots. Interlingua is an extracted, rather than derived, language, with vocabulary taken from several Romance languages and to some extent German and Russian. It has been mainly used for scientific/technical communication; it is easily understandable and obviates the need for costly translations at international conferences. [Views of American linguists on constructed languages.]

## **STUDIES OF PARTICULAR LANGUAGES**

The real obstacle in the way of an international auxiliary language is political, not linguistic. The main argument against using a natural language such as English, is also political. Would the majority of nations ever voluntarily choose an interlanguage? If so, which language – constructed, natural or simplified? Esperanto, being neutral and having proved its viability, may have a better chance than an ethnic language. [References.]