

Studies of particular languages

ENGLISH See abstracts 80–88, –90, –94

FRENCH See also abstract 80–108

80–122 Basbøll, Hans. Schwa, jonctures et syllabification dans les représentations phonologiques du français. [Schwa, boundaries and syllabification in phonological representations in French.] *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia* (Copenhagen), **16**, 2 (1978), 147–82.

The main aim is to account for the alternations between schwa and [ɛ] as found in *appel* [apel], *appeler* [aple], *appellera* [apelra], etc. At the heart of the analysis lies a theory of boundaries in which word-internal boundaries are of two types: those that affect phonological rules and those that do not. The structure of French words in terms of these boundaries is investigated with respect to various phonological phenomena (stress, vowel harmony) and also with respect to syntax. It is shown that this approach provides a more satisfactory account of [ə] ~ [ɛ] alternations than has hitherto been available, particularly if the rules mapping underlying /ə/ onto its superficial manifestations are made sensitive to syllabification.

80–123 Darbelnet, Jean. Opacité et transparence du franco-canadien. [The opaqueness and transparency of Canadian French.] *Français dans le Monde* (Paris), **143**(1979), 31–5.

Canadian French presents difficulties for the visiting Frenchman because of the number of unfamiliar words it contains. Many of these are old French terms which have dropped out of use in metropolitan France. Others are words used to describe peculiarly North American phenomena. Further problems are posed by familiar French words used with different meanings. In addition, Canadian French has been more strongly influenced by English, particularly American English, and sometimes uses English words or literal translations of English idioms. Recently, however, there has been an increasing tendency for metropolitan French and Canadian French to move closer together.

80–124 Ducrot, Oswald. L'imparfait en français. [The imperfect in French.] *Linguistische Berichte* (Wiesbaden, FRG), **60** (1979), 1–23.

An analysis of the French imperfect is proposed, to account for certain of its distributional properties and differences between it and the perfect and the preterite. The proposed analysis has two main components. The

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first rests on the topic-comment (theme-rheme, *thème-propos*) distinction: an utterance whose main verb is in the imperfect has as its theme a period of time, an object or an event in the past. The second is based on the notion of characteristic properties or qualities, and, in particular, the possibility of transforming events or processes into properties. For instance, *Il a souvent menti* expresses an event or a series of events, while *Il est un menteur* expresses a related property; that the two are not the same is shown by the possibility of *Il a souvent menti, mais il n'a jamais été un menteur*. It is then claimed that in an utterance whose verb is in the imperfect, the state or event that constitutes the comment is presented as a characteristic property of the theme.

Some uses of the imperfect are discussed in the light of this analysis, including its role in the marking of the contemporaneity or simultaneity of events (*Jean sortit; il pleuvait*) and its relation to the iterativity of events. [Exemplification from literary texts.]

GERMAN See also abstracts 80–104, –111, –147

80–125 Klein, Wolfgang. 'Wo ist hier?' Präliminarien zu einer Untersuchung der lokalen Deixis. [Preliminaries to an investigation of local deixis.] *Linguistische Berichte* (Wiesbaden), **58** (1978), 18–40.

The article demonstrates the existence of a number of problems relating to local deixis and suggests a framework within which these might be tackled. A large number of example sentences are examined in which the relative positions, that is to say the exact meanings, of the adverbs of place *hier* [here], *da* [there], and the more definite *dort* are difficult to establish. It is suggested that deictic references can be distinguished on the basis of which entities (objects, events, etc.) are perceived to be the key elements denoted by a sentence, their hierarchical relationships, and the number of dimensions involved. An approach to understanding the function of local deixis in linguistic utterances is developed using a system based on the concepts of deictic spaces and subspaces, the assumption that '*hier*' is a fundamental category which always denotes a space immediately surrounding an *origo*, and methods of determining co-ordinates and determining deictic positions.

Several areas are outlined in which research is necessary. (1) Suitable techniques for adequately describing deixis must be developed. (2) The nature of deictic space in actual communication must be analysed. (3) The way in which children acquire and learn to manipulate concepts of space must be investigated.

RUSSIAN See also abstracts 80–87, –169

80–126 Green, B. D. Factors in the choice of the case of direct objects after negated transitive verbs in Russian. *Slavonic and East European Review* (Cambridge), 57, 2 (1979), 161–86.

A small corpus (306 sentences of the required form) is used to test the many conditioning factors proposed for the well known problem of which case to choose as direct object of a negated verb in Russian. Only some of these factors are tested to a satisfactory degree of significance, but the advantage of this corpus is seen as being its inclusion of spoken language – something which has not been systematically studied by previous investigators.

The results confirm some of the suggested correlations – e.g. of accusative choice with indirect negation (with a dependent infinitive) and inversion, of genitive with gerunds and participles and intensive negation. But a number of divergences are shown to occur between spoken and written language: the accusative is twice as frequent in spoken as in written language over the whole corpus; the correlation of genitive with imperfect aspect is shown to occur only in written language, while in spoken language there is no significant difference between the use of this form with the different aspects; inversion in spoken texts correlates more strongly with accusative than it does in written texts; and with *verba sentiendi*, spoken texts have a very high accusative frequency, while written texts have a very low one.

80–127 Miller, E. N. Отображение в антонимии неязыковых явлении. [The reflection of non-linguistic phenomena in antonymy.] *Вопросы языкознания* (Moscow), 1 (1979), 40–51.

A discussion of the referential properties of antonyms, based on Russian and German examples. It is argued that some antonyms refer to properties which may only be defined as opposites relative to a certain standard (e.g. *big* and *small*) while others refer to phenomena which are opposite in the real world (e.g. *evaporation* and *condensation*). Within either of these classes of antonyms there is a distinction between phenomena relating to the material world and those relating to social values. Among pairs of antonyms which are only definable relative to social values, there is a further distinction between cases where the objects themselves are socially determined (example given: *том свет* and *этом свет*) and those where the objects themselves are real, but their oppositeness is socially determined (*land* and *sea*, for instance).

Particular attention is paid throughout to antonymous phraseological expressions (e.g. *братъ на буксир* and *вставлятъ палки в колеса*). These show all the same properties as single words in their application to the taxonomy presented.

80–128 **Zolotova, G. A.** К вопросу об объекте синтаксических исследований. [The problem of the aim of syntactic investigations.] *Серия литературы и языка* (Moscow), **38**, 1 (1979), 13–23.

The main danger of linguistic investigations is seen as a failure to distinguish the object of investigation from the theoretical constructs set up to elucidate it. The author particularly reproaches the authors of the recent grammar of the Academy of Sciences for having fallen into this trap, the notion of the ‘structural schema’ of the sentence being singled out for special criticism. One potent source of confusion is claimed to be traditional analysis into subjects and predicates, which are said to be based on morphological criteria while purporting to be syntactic categories.

It is proposed that an alternative analysis of ‘subject’ and ‘predicate’ as categories of thought (the predicate being what is said about the subject) has a number of consequences for syntactic investigations: the notion of ‘single constituent sentences no longer fits into such a framework. In particular, impersonal locative sentences (e.g. *в куте душно*) are analysed as having a property attributed to a subject – the location. Similarly, certain uses of the dative case in Russian, normally analysed as objects simply because of their morphological form, also emerge as subjects (e.g. *брату нездоровится*).