

THE NOTTINGHAM LINGUISTIC CIRCULAR

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Edited on behalf of the Nottingham Linguistic Circle

by

R.R.K. Hartmann, Language Centre, University of Nottingham

and

W. Nash, School of English Studies, University of Nottingham

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J.C. Williamson	Eaton Hall, College of Education, Retford, Nottinghamshire
B.J. Calder	Postgraduate Research Student, University of Nottingham

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* based on meetings of the Nottingham Linguistic Circle

EDITORIAL

A year has passed since the first issue of NLC, and though it affords us some satisfaction to be able to write 'Vol. II' on the title-page, our small success does not entitle us to the editorial nonchalance we would like to affect. Dare we reiterate that contributions are welcome, and that the interest and vitality of a small bulletin like ours depends on the willingness of its readership to take a hand?

Much of the present issue is devoted to programme notes for the year's events in our Circle and in the greater calendar of Linguistics. With regard to our summaries and papers, it will appear that, as usual, various interests are represented. This diffusion of subject matter may possibly deprive our readers of some focus upon which to concentrate their own observations. We should therefore be pleased to hear of any interest that might be given special representation, and we take this opportunity of noting that in impending issues of NLC the subject of stylistics is likely to take a prominent place.

Recently (or so it seems) we bade good-bye to Ron Keightley. Now we are to lose his fellow-Hispanist and successor on our advisory panel, Barry Ife, whose paper on transformational-generative grammar and the literary process we printed in our last issue. Mr. Ife is leaving to take up a lecturership at Birkbeck College, London. We congratulate him on his appointment, and wish him well. At the same time, we welcome Christopher Pountain, who celebrates his arrival among us with some powerful observations on a certain dilemma.

We look forward to the coming session and to the continuing success of NLC.

R. Hartmann

W. Nash

Dear Reader,

Membership of the Nottingham Linguistic Circle entitles you to a free copy of NLC as well as other announcements. £ 1.00 (in cash or by cheque made out to 'Nottingham Linguistic Circle') should be sent to the new Treasurer, Mr. C.S. Butler, University of Nottingham Language Centre, NG7 2RD.

Subscription to the NLC without membership in the Circle is 50 p per annum, including postage, for two issues. Send the money with your name and address to the Treasurer, Mr. C.S. Butler, University of Nottingham Language Centre, NG7 2RD.

NOTICES AND PROSPECTS(1) Nottingham Linguistic Circle activities 1972-73:

The first meeting this session on 20 October elected a new Committee and heard Mr. W. Nash lecture On Linguimericks and Limeringuistics. In his talk Mr. Nash, using the limerick as a 'micro-model', discussed some stylistic concepts in relationship to the structure of rhymed verse in English.

On Wednesday, November 15th at 7.30 p.m. in the Audio/Visual Room of the University Language Centre, Dr. G.L.M. Berry-Rogghe (Senior Research Associate, Atlas Computer Laboratory, S.R.C. Chilton, Berks) will give a talk entitled Some Contributions of Computational Linguistics to the Study of Language.

Other plans for the session include the following:

Mr. P.A.D. MacCarthy, Head of the Department of Phonetics, University of Leeds, will give a talk on Phonetic Training for Modern Language Students. This meeting will take place on January 26th 1973 at 7.30 p.m. in the Audio/Visual Room of the University Language Centre.

Mr. C.S. Butler (of the University of Nottingham) will give a talk on A Contrastive Study of Modality in English, French, German and Italian. This meeting will probably take place on March 5th at 7.30 p.m.

Dr. Colin Stork (of the University of Sheffield) will give a talk on Linguistics and Speech Therapy. This meeting will take place in May.

It is also hoped to arrange for meetings on the subjects of Working Class Language and Educational Failure and the Teaching of English to Overseas Students.

Further details of these meetings will be sent to paid-up members of the Circle.

(2) Forthcoming meetings elsewhere:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <u>17-19 Nov. 1972</u>
<u>Sheffield</u> | Autumn Meeting, Linguistics Association of Great Britain, c/o Dr. F.C. Stork, University of Sheffield, S10 2TN |
| <u>27-29 Dec. 1972</u>
<u>Atlanta, Ga.</u> | Annual Meeting, Linguistic Society of America, c/o LSA Room 800, 1717 Massachusetts Ave, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036 U.S.A. |
| <u>2-4 Jan. 1973</u>
<u>Lancaster</u> | Conference on Language Teaching in Higher Education, c/o D.J. Hounsell, University of Lancaster, Bailrigg, Lancs. |
| <u>2-5 Jan. 1973</u>
<u>Guildford</u> | Annual Joint Conference of MLA, ATG, ATI, ATR, ATSP and AVLA, c/o Conference Officers MLA, 2 Manchester Square, London W1M 5RF |
| <u>3-6 Jan. 1973</u>
<u>London</u> | Meeting, International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, c/o Dr. W.R. Lee, 16 Alexandra Gardens, Hounslow, Middlesex TW3 4HU |
| <u>5-7 Jan. 1973</u>
<u>Manchester</u> | Second Conference on Post-A-Level Spanish Language Teaching, c/o Dr. P. Russell-Gebbett, University of Manchester M13 9PL |

28-30 Mar. 1973 <u>Hull</u>	Spring Meeting, Linguistics Association of Great Britain, c/o P.N. Werth, University of Hull HU6 7RX
30 Mar.-1 Apr. 1973 <u>Lancaster</u>	BAAL Seminar on Communicative Teaching of English, c/o C.N. Caudlin, University of Lancaster, Bailrigg, Lancs.
3-5 Apr. 1973 <u>Bangor</u>	Biennial Colloquium of British Academic Phoneticians, c/o R.A.W. Bladon, University College of North Wales, Bangor
9-12 Apr. 1973 <u>Cambridge</u>	Colloquium on Formal Semantics of Natural Languages, c/o Dr. E.L. Keenan, University of Cambridge CB3 9DA
25-28 Apr. 1973 <u>New York</u>	Eighth Congress, International Association for the Study of Italian Language and Literature, c/o AISLLI Congress, 701 Main Bldg., New York University, NYC 10003 U.S.A.
22-22 Jul. 1973 <u>Minneapolis</u>	International Conference on Computers In the Humanities, c/o Prof. J. Leavitt, 114 Main Engineering Bldg., University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 55455 U.S.A.
beginning Sep. 1973 <u>Edinburgh</u>	First International Conference on Historical Linguistics, c/o C. Jones, University of Edinburgh EH8 9JX

(3) Reports on conferences:

The BAAL Seminar on German Applied Linguistics was held at the University of Nottingham from 24-26 March 1972 with the aim of providing a survey of how the models and techniques of linguistics may be applied to the description of German. The 9 speakers (3 from Germany) dealt with the history of German linguistics, some syntactic problems from the point of view of dependency and TG grammar, lexicography, contrastive phonology and error analysis as well as their relevance to first and second language learning, testing and scientific registers. (R. Hartmann)

The Symposium on the Use of Computers in Literary Research met in Edinburgh from 27-30 March 1972 under the same auspices as that 2 years earlier at Cambridge (proceedings published by C.U.P. 1971 as The Computer in Literary and Linguistic Research, ed. R.A. Wisbey). About 35 papers were presented on technical procedures and substantial literary and linguistic questions. Among the most noteworthy from the linguistic point of view were those on collocations in English (Mrs. G. Berry-Rogghe), on French prose and poetry (P. Fortier & J. McConnell, P. Laurette) and on a computer-aided analytical dictionary/grammar of Russian (V. Sibayev). (Stuart G. Hall)

The Spring Meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain was held at the University of York from 4-6 April 1972. The plenary session papers, covering a range of topics in the areas of sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, syntax and phonetics, were particularly noteworthy for the interest shown, even by the transformational grammarians, in organisation at a higher level than the sentence. T. Moore spoke of inter-sentence constraints within a transformational-generative framework, and L.A. Jackson presented his ideas on a transformational theory of context, while U. Fries treated from a discourse analysis viewpoint the relationship between questions and answers in English. The sectional meetings were concerned with language teaching, semantics, sociolinguistics and developmental and clinical linguistics. (Christopher S. Butler)

The Third International Congress of Applied Linguistics, held in Copenhagen from 21-26 August 1972, was attended by approx. 700 people. Among the speakers at plenary sessions the President of AILA, S.P. Corder, indicated as one of the

main developments since 1968 the fruitful but still rather vague concept of 'communicative competence' and E. Roulet similarly held that existing, sentence-based, grammars were inadequate for language teaching. The importance of sociolinguistics was affirmed by C. Ferguson, and a claim for a science of translation was made by A. Neubert. Over 250 papers were given. (W. Grauberg)

The Eleventh International Congress of Linguists took place at Bologna between 28 August and 2 September 1972. It is difficult to give an adequate account of the proceedings which involved 1200 participants, 5 plenary sessions and over 5 dozen section and group meetings on subjects ranging from phonology to semantics, from ancient Greek to transformational-generative grammar, and from the hierarchical structure of syntactic units to political decisions on a standard language in the Philippines. But certain trends emerged: a critical self-assessment of what linguists are doing and why, an integration or at least convergence of contemporary theories, a renewed interest in the problem of meaning, and a widening of approaches to admit techniques of other disciplines. (R. Hartmann)

The Annual General Meeting of the British Association for Applied Linguistics was held at the West Midlands College of Education/Walsall from 15-17 September 1972. Eleven papers were read; of these about half dealt with language teaching in the context of research into instruction and the factors operating on its success (P. Strevens, S.P. Corder and W. Currie). The other half showed the relevance of inter-disciplinary studies involving linguistics and psychology, sociology, educational technology and medicine for our understanding of the acquisition, development and use of language as well as any rehabilitation of disorders. (R. Hartmann)

(4) Recently published:

- V. BECKER MAKKAJ Ed. Phonological Theory. Evolution and Current Practice. Holt-Rinehart-Winston, New York - London
- CILT Ed. Teaching Modern Languages Across the Ability Range. Papers from a conference. CILT, London WC1R 4TN
- CILT/ETIC Ed. A Language Teaching Bibliography. 2nd ed. Cambridge U.P.
- W. DRESSLER Textlinguistik. Niemeyer, Tübingen
- J.A. FISHMAN Ed. Advances in the Sociology of Language. Vol. 1: Basic Concepts, Theories and Problems. Mouton, The Hague
- V. FRIED Ed. The Prague School of Linguistics and Language Teaching. Oxford U.P.
- R.R.K. HARTMANN - F.C. STORK Dictionary of Language and Linguistics. Applied Science Publishers, London
- E. HAUGEN The Ecology of Language. Essays ed. by A.S. Dil. Stanford U.P. - Oxford U.P.
- R.W. LANGACKER Fundamentals of Linguistic Analysis. Harcourt/Brace/Javanovich, New York
- P.A.D. MACCARTHY Talking of Speaking. Selected Papers on Applied Phonetics. Oxford U.P.
- B. MALMBERG Ed. Readings in Modern Linguistics. Mouton, The Hague
- R. QUIRK et al. A Grammar of Contemporary English. Longman, London
- W.P. ROBINSON Language and Social Behaviour. Penguin Books
- M.L. SAMUELS Linguistic Evolution, with Special Reference to English. Cambridge U.P.
- J.McH. SINCLAIR A Course In Spoken English: Grammar. Oxford U.P.
- D.A. WILKINS Linguistics in Language Teaching. Arnold, London
- J. WINDSOR LEWIS A Concise Pronouncing Dictionary of British and American English. Oxford U.P.

(5) Periodicals and Newsletters received (by Dr. Hartmann):

Englisch. Eine Zeitschrift für den Englischlehrer. Cornelsen/Velhagen & Clasing, Berlin No. 4/1972

Fremdsprachenunterricht. Volk und Wissen, Berlin No. 9/1972

The Informant. Department of Linguistics, Western Michigan University at Kalamazoo, No. 2/1972

Mitteilungsblatt für Dolmetscher und Übersetzer. B.D.Ü., Germersheim No. 7/1972

Sprachmittler. Informationshefte des Sprachendienstes der Bundeswehr. Hürth/Mannheim No. 3/1972

UMRCCLL Newsletter, Manchester No. 5/1972

Wiener Linguistische Gazette. Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Wien, No. 1/1972

Language and Lore. The Journal of the Survey of Language and Folklore, University of Sheffield, No. 6/1972

ON A DISCUSSION WITHOUT DECISIONS

In NLC, Vol. 1, Nr. 2, pp.10-12, we reported on Miss R.M. Kempson's address to the Linguistic Circle on the subject "What is Semantics?", and printed that part of her paper dealing with conditions for a semantic theory. At a subsequent meeting of the Circle, this paper provided a point of departure for a forum discussion on semantics. The discussion, which was attended by linguists philosophers and psychologists, was introduced by David Evans, speaking for the linguists, and Robert Kirk, speaking for the philosophers. The tape recording of these exchanges unfortunately has not preserved much more than the opening statements of Mr. Evans and Dr. Kirk, so that it is difficult for one not present at the meeting to establish whether the discussion actually produced firm decisions as to the similarities and differences of linguistic and philosophical approaches to meaning. To at least one listener it would appear that certain vital contrasts have been touched upon but left unexplored. We reproduce here a summary with quotations of the 2 principal offerings of the evening. (A library copy of the tape, No. 2114, is available in the University Language Centre.)

Mr. Evans opened the proceedings with the observation that meaning is "the point of common ground between linguistics and philosophy." Remarking that "linguists talk fairly freely in terms such as 'meaning implies choice' (Lyons) and 'meaning is function in context' (Firth)", he went on to say that "most linguists are used to thinking of meaning at various levels of language." "Within the context of these terms the notion is 'operational', so to speak, but probably not very rigorously outlined."

As examples of linguistic approaches to meaning, Mr. Evans cited that of Ruth Kempson - as exemplified in her paper - and, by contrast, the neo-Firthian 'behavioural' model of M.A.K. Halliday. In the first of these approaches meaning is "a statement of the conditions in the world for which this utterance is true." Mr. Evans developed this with reference to Miss Kempson's componential analysis of the utterance the man killed the boy. In assessing the value of this approach, he criticized the "dominance of the ideational component", and also objected to "the extrapolation of syntactic functions as referential." Referring specifically to the utterance the man killed the boy, he observed that this is "fairly directly referential", as

opposed to other utterances marked by non-referential but nonetheless informative features (e.g. utterances marked by a modal choice, 'performative' utterances, utterances with an 'affective' content).

Mr. Evans then proceeded to describe the 'complementary approach' exemplified by the writings of M.A.K. Halliday. Referring to Malinowski and Firth, Mr. Evans formulated the position that "language is behaviour potential"; or, more strictly, that language provides options, and thereby "encodes behaviour potential within meaning potential." "There is a distinction between behaviour potential, meaning potential, and language potential, such that the formal choices that language offers realize meaning choices, which in turn (when) put into operation realize ways of behaving." As a weakness of this theory, Mr. Evans pointed to the lack of definition of basic concepts. What, for instance, is "meaning potential"? Are there language-independent concepts - i.e. concepts existing prior to language? Furthermore, the theory is weighted towards the speaker-expression side of meaning, as opposed to the referential side.

These 2 approaches, Mr. Evans concluded, are consistent in themselves, resemble each other in that they try to give a lexical-external character to meaning, and yet are to be regarded as complementary rather than parallel.

Dr. Kirk began by observing that philosophers are interested in language (a) for what it is, and (b) for its power to deceive - a power which has engaged the attentions of philosophers from Parmenides to Wittgenstein. The interests of linguists and philosophers overlap, their aims being formulated in the questions "What is it for anything to have a meaning at all?" "What is it for a particular sentence to have the meaning or meanings it does have?" "What is it for a particular phrase or word to have the meaning or meanings it does have?" However, given this common ground, there is still room for considerable differences of opinion. "There is general agreement (...) that meanings are somehow or other a matter of conventions and/or rules, but not agreement as to what conventions and/or rules are."

Dr. Kirk characterized Miss Kempson's approach, the 'truth approach', as "fairly venerable", citing Carnap. Asking the question whether there exists a "characteristic philosophical approach" to meaning, he explained that philosophers are not concerned with rule-specifying for particular languages, but are interested in ways in which 'truth-conditions' are characterized. It is here that the linguist fails to satisfy the philosopher. "When I look at some of the things that some linguists say with a view to characterizing the functions of linguistic expressions in context and so forth, I feel that there's a great deal of clarification required, if the account is going to be satisfactory and more than just a rough sketch (...). The sort of thing that would puzzle us is when Halliday, for example (...) says things like (...) 'serves for the expression of content, that is of the speaker's experience of the real world, including the inner world of his own consciousness. We may call this the Ideational function, though it may be understood as easily in behavioural as in conceptual terms'. Now I find in that small sentence such a wealth of obscurity and dubious assumptions that one would really want to go into this and try to sort it out." "The sort of thing that leads to philosophical difficulty is when one starts trying to get clear about conventions - the notion of a convention is not clear."

As an example of an attempt by a philosopher to deal with "the notion of a convention", Dr. Kirk cited David K. Lewis's Convention, A Philosophical Study. Proceeding from conventions to 'rules', Dr. Kirk remarked that "the

notion of a rule is not as clear as it might be"; there are analogues - for example, chess - which, however, are also "disanalogues". What happens in language is obscure. "The sort of worry that can be raised by philosophers about rules is raised for example in Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations (...). You say, 'this is the rule' (...) and then the question arises, how on earth are you going to tell whether in any given case you're following the rule correctly? It seems that the idea of a rule necessarily involves the idea of being able to follow it correctly and being able (...) on occasion to make mistakes about it (...) and there are obscurities in the notion when you start brooding about it (...)." Dr. Kirk cited the possibility of divergences from the rule on a large scale; where would the 'rule' stand, if, for example, half the population were to start calling the grass red. Dr. Kirk remarked that Wittgenstein meets this kind of objection by appealing to the notion of a 'form of life': "as a matter of natural history" human beings agree to certain things, and this basic agreement makes rule-following possible.

(W. Nash)

LINGUISTIC STYLISTICS BY CANDLE-LIGHT

(On 23 February 1972, at the height of the electricity reductions because of the coal miners' strike, about 2 dozen associates of the Nottingham Linguistic Circle assembled to experience an unusual poetry writing and discussion session, staged by Professor Sinclair of Birmingham University.

We first looked at a poem by Robert Graves (see below). Professor Sinclair asked us to 'complete' the 'truncated' section C (lines 31-32), which helped to establish the recurrent structure A (lines 1-5 and 33-37) B (6-11, 17-22, 26-30) and C (12-16, 23-25). We then argued about what it is in syntax and lexis that makes this poem appear 'regressive' and 'cumulative', or possibly even 'terminal'. Then we were asked to retire individually and/or in groups - at that point the lights faded - and to produce a 'piece' which incorporated any or all of the stylistic features we had discovered in the Graves poem. Six of these writings are reproduced here, together with Professor Sinclair's comments. May we take the opportunity of thanking both John Sinclair for a fascinating evening and our 'instant poets' for allowing their works to be treated in such a manner. R.H.)

Warning to Children

Children, if you dare to think
 Of the greatness, rareness, muchness,
 Fewness of this precious only
 Endless world in which you say
 You live, you think of things like this:
 Blocks of slate enclosing dappled
 Red and green, enclosing tawny
 Yellow nets, enclosing white
 And black acres of dominoes,
 Where a neat brown paper parcel
 Tempts you to untie the string.

In the parcel a small island,
 On the island a large tree,
 On the tree a husky fruit.
 Strip the husk and pare the rind off:
 In the kernel you will see
 Blocks of slate enclosed by dappled
 Red and green, enclosed by tawny
 Yellow nets, enclosed by white
 And black acres of dominoes
 Where the same brown paper parcel -
 Children, leave the string alone!
 For who dares undo the parcel
 Finds himself at once inside it,
 On the island, in the fruit,
 Blocks of slate about his head,
 Finds himself enclosed by dappled
 Green and red, enclosed by yellow
 Tawny nets, enclosed by black
 And white acres of dominoes,
 With the same brown paper parcel
 Still unopened on his knee.
 And, if he then should dare to think
 Of the fowness, muchness, rareness,
 Greatness of this endless only
 Precious world in which he says
 He lives - he then unties the string.

Robert Graves

Commentary

A writing or re-writing job can be carried out at various levels within the same general specification. People agree that the Graves poem gives an impression of 'going round and round' and also of regression (like having a mirror both in front of you and behind you). These are both simulations of open-ended cyclical patterns that seem to arouse the imagination, especially in children. (A simple one is given at the bottom of this paper, in the form of a Moebius strip. Cut the dotted line, twist the strip once and line up the 2 A's facing each other. Stick together and read.)

Here are the patterns of repeated vocabulary, in a rough stanzaic layout. Repetitions with reversed sequences are in capitals.

V me a story. He would sit me down on his knee and light his pipe and gaze A

out of the window. Then he would say "when I was a boy, my father used to tell

2 greatness
rareness
muchness
fewness

precious
only
endless
world
say
live

5 blocks of slate
(enclosing)
dappled
red
green
tawny
yellow
nets
white
black
acres of dominoes
brown
paper
parcel
string

12 parcel
Island
Island
tree
tree
husky
fruit
husk
rind
16 kernel

17 blocks of slate
(enclosed by)
dappled
red
green
tawny
yellow
nets
white
black
acres of dominoes
brown
paper
parcel
string

23 parcel
Island
fruit

26 blocks of slate
(him enclosed by)
dappled
GREEN
RED
YELLOW
TAWNY
nets
BLACK
WHITE
acres of dominoes
brown
paper
parcel

37 string

34 FEWNESS
MUCHNESS
RARENESS
GREATNESS

ENDLESS
ONLY
PRECIOUS
world
say
live

The break in pattern occurs between line 31 (parcel) and 37 (string) where an A section is intruded. It would be possible to write a new line 31 with the word string in it, and then go through another Section C routine, then a B without the string line, then fit in a renumbered 32 7 with adjustments. The vocabulary, rhythm and context of the poem are provided; the problem is to choose which variations are appropriate for a new section. Superficially, almost anything would do, because the poem has a strong ritual effect. But in looking more closely at the possibilities, one is forced to find meanings for the variations that already appear.

The inverted sequence of Section A at the end is heralded by small-scale inversion in B 25-30, where the adjectives change over though the sequence of nouns remains the same. The other inversion, of active voice (6) to passive (17) suggests a neat mirror image. The main subject of lines 1-22 is you = children, and from 23 onwards it is he = who dares undo the parcel. A new section might put together he as subject and enclosing as active verb, e.g.

find himself enclosing dappled
 green and red enclosing yellow
 tawny nets enclosing

Item i does just this. The repetition parcel-island is not possible because the sequence of Section C is reversed, but the symmetry of Section B is exactly as predicted by the text.

Item i attempts more than this, however, and in the reversed Section C introduces a development in the still-life objects. The kernel is ripe, the fruit is cut, etc., but in lines l. 5-6, the syntax and vocabulary are changed from any model in the poem. Brown paper does not reverse in that structure (unlike tawny yellow), so brown neat is chosen even though neat is not a repeating word and paper is.

It is an unreal question where lie the limits of fidelity to the original text. But the novelty of l. 5-6 also breaks the general 'enclosing' theme. Time is not reversed, the rind does not return to the kernel, and the transition from l. 6 to l. 7 is unexplained.

(1)

He who dares untie the string
 There will find a ripened kernel,
 Pared of rind and stripped of husk,
 Husky fruit cut from a tree,
 Small the tree upon an island
 Large inside the brown neat parcel.
 In the kernel he will find
 Blocks of slate inside his head,
 With himself enclosing dappled
 Green and red, enclosing yellow
 Tawny nets, enclosing black
 And white acres of dominoes.

The other poems handed in do not attempt a fit inside the Graves text, but explore the same sort of patterning in a much more direct abstract fashion.

Most take reversal as their dominant pattern, developing mainly Section A of Graves. Item II has reflection as its theme as well as its structure. It works by a reversed sequence of 8 words (light, trees, re-echo, gloom, spiraling, water, glass, faceted), and, with a tiny variation, fine and darkness. A central section, ll 4-6, links the two, and this reversal of vocabulary forces a changed syntax in the final third of the poem, re-aligning the words. It manages to reverse the 'enclosing' pattern through the words inside, outside, within which characterize Sections B and C of the Graves poem. So item II compresses the main patterns of the original, except for the fixed sequence repetition.

(II)

Eyes light, dark inside, through the trees re-echo,
Down in the gloom, spiraling within water,
Outside glass faceted fine to see
Through my darkness, light. Ought there
Your character, individual, repose?
Outside shaded ordinary life, sunshine
Inside faceted glass shows
Your reflection as darkness fine -
Lost within water, spiraling in the gloom
Through trees that re-echo in its light.

Item III attempts to combine a progressive 'story' with line-by-line repetition, and also encapsulates much of the Graves patterning. Growing more, deeper, self-confidence repeat in fixed sequence; growing/what/children and feel/see reverse. Children provides the outermost cycle, and one can readily imagine this poem on interlinked Moebius strips.

Graves does not attempt such intricate structures, and so avoids some almost inevitable artificiality. The vocabulary, being reversed, is controlled. The metre, being repeated, is also controlled. So the syntax has to be squeezed to fit. Item I we have noted hits problems in l. 5-6; then II cleverly avoids it in the parallel passages but has to keep the central portion brief, and packs the syntax there. Item III leaves itself so little room for choice in line III. 7 that yes has to be repeated to provide some sort of shape to a staccatto line.

(III)

Children, what is growing up?
To see more, to feel deeper
 gaining self-confidence.
Growing up, what is that?
Feeling more, seeing deeper
 self-confidence, yes and no.
Growing, yes, to what? Children.

Item IV is one complex sentence that exploits a thematic possibility of the recursive/regressive structure - the fumbling for words to describe something on the limits of perception. The last line is again weak because there is no object for see, but I don't think that adding it would deform the pattern. It uses mainly conditional clauses, which can occur either before or after the main clause, and the regression of the 'report' structure - you thought you saw him find you noticing him (...). Although the poem asserts twice (IV. 3, 8) that your perceptions were mistaken, the hedging of conditionals after these lines suggests second thoughts, and leaves the issue still in doubt. The unrepeated central section (IV. 5-6) neatly fits by using a because clause, very similar to a conditional, and a report structure with remember.

(IV)

If you thought you saw
 What you thought was there,
 But was not there,
 Although it could have been,
 Because it was too dark to see clearly;
 You should remember
 That although it could have been,
 It was not there,
 Although you thought it was there
 If you thought you saw.

Item V attempts a tighter structure still. Apart from some freak phrases of limited utility like "Able was I ere I saw Elba", the reversal of short lines to make any sense at all, far less a developing poem, must be one of the most tricky tasks a writer can do. The additional reversal of V. 7a and 7b forces that characteristic packed syntax, and the relation of V. 3b with 2b, although grammatical, is not obvious, and makes interpretation difficult. This is one for the Moebius strip. (See below)

The last poem, item IV, moves away from the repetitive/regressive structure towards the metaphysical paradox, reaching an intermediate stage we may call the obsessional. A basic one-many dichotomy is laced with puns.

I - one (numeral) - one (pronoun) - one (whole); many-men; box (noun) - box (noun)

On a small scale it reproduces the effect of bewilderment that one derives from Graves' changing sequences of repetition, but it misses the ritualistic 'round we go again' flavour of the original.

(V)

1		If you want	1
2a		To know To know	2b
3a	Why I haven't	Why I haven't	3b
4a	Been to see	Been to see	4b
5a	My mother	My mother's	5b
6a	Recently	Recently	6b
7a	I can tell you	I can tell you	7b
8		Now-Now	8

(VI)

What am I? - A many sided box.
 I - What? I am not.
 Many - boxes, though many sided.
 But one box am I. One many-sided
 Let no one box me up!
 So I am one sided - but one I must be.

In reading these seven poems, and discussing similar texts in various groups, I have formed the impression that a person encountering relatively small-scale patterns of alternation or reversal within broadly repetitive patterns, finds it difficult to describe what he hears or sees, and, without study, cannot paraphrase precisely. Maybe bell-ringers are immune from this disability. The rest of us find the effect disquieting, making us receptive to feelings of bewilderment, of things going on outside our field of perception, which we reconcile by concentrating on their ritual aspects. Things non finite, never-ending patterns, are not of course representable - a Moebius Strip is a finite physical object -, but they can be hinted at, simulated, suggested by a variety of rhetorical devices. This seems to me to be the basis of the atmosphere of the Graves poem, continued in item I, hinted at in item IV but not otherwise apparent.

A mirror-image structure is different. It tends to form a symmetrical, obviously complete and coherent artefact, with conscious craftsmanship well to the fore. Its ending is highly predictable, and satisfying when reached, if the poem is well-constructed. It tends to make a game of item IV, and to lighten the others.

One cannot be conclusive on the slender evidence put forward here.* It seems to me to be a valuable exercise, for 2 main reasons,

- (a) The specification of the task requires analysis of the original text, according to the detail of the specification. This is the sort of analysis, too, that brings out aspects of its meaning and structure which are not obvious at first sight.
- (b) Writing within externally-imposed limitations is at worst a healthy exercise, and at best an education in itself. In all uses of language, each utterance is interpreted largely against the background of previous utterances in the discourse thus providing a type of external constraint. The ingenuity, flexibility and resource needed to do well in these writing exercises seems little different from what is needed in any other effective use of English.

I should like to thank the Nottingham Linguistic Circle for allowing me to experiment with them, and especially the 6 who were willing to submit their work for comment in this paper.

John Sinclair,
University of Birmingham

* I have argued a case in a paper called "The Integration of Language and Literature in the English Curriculum", Educational Review vol. 23, no. 3, June 1971.

THE ENGLISH WRITING SYSTEM COMPLEX

In the preface to Pygmalion, Shaw says of the English Language 'no man can teach himself what it should sound like from reading it.' This is of course quite true, or perhaps not quite true - let us say fairly true. But, with all due respect to Shaw, it is I suggest beside the point.

It is not the object of a writing system to tell people how to pronounce a language. The object of a writing system, as I understand it, is to represent, through the medium of black marks on white paper, linguistic texts which may equally and alternatively be represented, or expounded, or if you prefer, realised, by disturbances of the air, i.e. by speech, and which very often are so expounded. There are, or have been, quite a number of writing systems which bear no relationship at all to the sounds used in speaking the languages concerned. The Chinese character system is one such. Many other writing systems, and this is the majority nowadays, are related to the sounds used, it is true, but the systems even in these cases are based on the sound pattern of the language rather than designed to tell you how to pronounce it. For one thing the speakers of a language know by and large how to pronounce in any case, or can find out, without recourse to a writing system (in many communities they still have to). The fact that the English system is admittedly rather complex in terms of its relationship to the spoken language, does not therefore seem to me the failing that some people would have us believe. Note too that this complexity has not proved so great that we have in fact stopped using the system.

The English system then is a phonologically based one. It would seem likely that such systems are the most efficient to work with, but the phonological level of language is itself a highly abstract one and the units of phonology are very far from corresponding one to one with the sounds used in speaking a language. The relationship between marks made on paper and sounds produced on the air is in the nature of things therefore an indirect one - the marks and sounds are related via phonology, not directly, and it is wrong, for me, to talk of letters as being sounded or sounds as being written. There is only a (two way) correspondence between sounds and letters.

In addition to recognising these facts about our writing system we must I think also accept that, like language itself, it is not a single system but a system of systems. (And potentially no more difficult to acquire for that reason than language itself, with all its undoubted complexities.) For historical reasons we have French and Classical spelling conventions in addition to our own (in some cases we have reintroduced them I believe). So we have 'get' but 'gem', 'city' but 'sit' and so on. I am proposing therefore that we should regard these symbols (g,g ; c,s) as belonging to different systems. Note in passing that we have to talk of symbols here, though I used letters above. There are 26 letters in our alphabet, but such combinations as ch (more than one of these), ph, sh constitute symbols of the writing system. So do the single letters when regarded in their relationship to sounds.

One or two points about these systems. If we take system 1 (the 'English' system) we find such spellings as wan, swan, all, call, wall. It is clear from these examples that we cannot take symbols in isolation - they are discrete units. The correspondence of a in such words, as compared with its correspondence in hat, tap, cat, can be understood only by taking into account a following ll or preceding w. Further counter examples to wan, swan on the other hand, such as wag, swag, whack, are all found on investigation to end in what for lack of space I will call 'velar symbols'.

Further, 'lexical' items, with one or two possible exceptions, (ox is one) are never spelt with less than three letters. This is the reason for the ie in tie, lie, pie as compared with try, fry, shy (but cf. trying, lying), also the reason for the doubling at the end of ebb, egg, add, odd; b, d, g and some other symbols are not normally doubled following single vowel letters - cf. bad, pod, log etc. Also the reason for the e in eye, awe, owe, ewe (cf. whey, raw, sow etc.).

If we now turn to 'grammatical' items we find two letters in be, me, we, he, by, my etc; up, at, in, on (cf. ebb, add, inn); and more strikingly, this, yes, such, much, which with single final symbols (cf. miss, tress, witch, hutch - these symbols are regularly doubled in this way in lexical items).

In system 2 (the 'foreign' one) I would place such symbols as the vowels in command, grant, Caesar, cyst, field, fruit, juice, and the consonants in cyst, scene, gem, guard, chorus, psyche etc. I was asked after my talk, quite fairly, how I had made the decision to assign symbols to 1 or 2. I admitted that it was a rather intuitive and practical business. I would like to point out here however that if we accept my system 2 symbols we find many words that contain several of them. Such are psychology, philosophy, city (2 symbols), Caesar and so on. I mention this as a factor in support of my analysis. It is not surprising of course that words of classical or other foreign origin should contain more than one of these originally foreign symbolisations. (See my The English Writing System, Longman (forthcoming) for the full list of these symbols.)

Dividing the overall system in this way and considering the environments in which symbols occur, and the grammatical status of items, it seems to me that we can do much to explain how our writing system works and find regularities of pattern in it where it seems none (or few) were suspected.

Kenneth A. Albrow,
University College of North Wales,
Bangor

PERSONAL VIEW

(In the first issue of NLC (Vol. 1, Nr.1, pp.21-27) we printed an article by Walter Nash, entitled "The Continuing Dilemma of Linguistics". This short piece was an attempt to establish, as a regular feature of our bulletin, a section which we hoped might become a forum for lively debate. The article was therefore written in pleasantly polemic spirit, in the hope of provoking comment on its deliberately drastic presentation of linguistics as a science beset by the necessity of choosing between the tasks of describing performances or defining a competence.

Our hope has been almost embarrassingly fulfilled, and this has proved itself to be, indeed, a dilemma with differences. The first differentiation was proposed by John Shotter, in a paper published in NLC, Vol.1, Nr.2, pp. 15-19. Mr. Shotter related the 'dilemma' to two ways of viewing man's interaction with his environment, the one 'mechanistic', or isolating, the other 'organismic', or integrating. Mr. Shotter's paper was still in our hands when we received further contributions from Edward Fichtner, of Queens College, City University of New York, and from Christopher Pountain, now with the Department of Spanish at the University of Nottingham.

Professor Fichtner's paper has not a little in common with Mr. Shotter's. He proposes for linguistics a 'biological model' - cf. Mr. Shotter's 'organismic system' - in which a 'functional' linguistics and a 'formal' linguistics stand in "complementary and mutually supportive relationship", thereby resolving the dilemma. Mr. Pountain is less content to accept the problem as propounded. Answering our potshot with a broadside, he concludes that "there is no dilemma for modern linguistics (...) just because there are dichotomies which are definable."

There are times, evidently, when an editor gets more than he bargained for, and is happy to get it. Perhaps enough has now been said on our 'dilemma' and its differences; but perhaps, also, the vigour of this debate will encourage others to propound a 'personal view'? There is surely much in linguistics that lies open to constructive question.)

FORMAL VERSUS FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS

The epistemological model which has been used - implicitly or explicitly - in most discussions of language function from Plato to Descartes to the present day is one which we will call the 'mechanical model' (for a modern version, cf. Farre, 1968). In Western philosophy, this takes the form of the camera obscura, which is really only a mechanized version of Plato's cave. In this device, a scene or picture is refracted through a pinhole or lens and projected onto a screen at the back of the box. On the basis of its function, a distinction is drawn between the 'subject', which is the instrument which does the viewing, and the 'object', which is the scene being viewed. Transferred to the realm of language, the camera box itself becomes the listener, the act of viewing is analogous to the reception of the utterance, and the scene projected onto the screen is the utterance itself. Given this model, a linguist may examine the production of an utterance by one individual (articulatory phonetics) or its reception by another (acoustical phonetics). By a comparison of many such utterances, he can come to certain conclusions about the relevant features of the sound system (phonemics), or about the morphological and syntactical features of the language in question.

What is of importance here, however, is that the mechanical model leads the linguist to consider the phenomenon of language primarily from the standpoint of cognition. Nowhere in connection with this model is there any reason to ask what the model is doing there in the first place, or what possible function language, or indeed, communication and cognition of any kind, might possibly have in the life of the organism. Plato's cave and the Cartesian camera obscura are both analogues for one aspect of the totality of human intellectual function, i.e., cognition, and the assumption which is often made is that this is the only, or at least the most important function there is.

There are a number of questions which, within this frame of reference, are meaningless or irrelevant. As language seems to be a characteristic of man exclusively, why did it arise in the species at all? What is the relationship, if any, between language and other elements of a given culture? How does the speech situation affect the utterance, in terms of the lexical items and grammatical structures used? Where several alternative words or structures are available to a speaker, why does he use one and not one of the others? To what degree is the structure of language contingent on the neurophysiological and other anatomical structures of the human organism? The whole range of questions dealing with the function of language is effectively excluded because of the emphasis on cognition inherent in the mechanical model. Under the circumstances, it is easy to see why the theoretical linguist, one who is interested in the structure of

language, and the applied linguist, whose concern is with the expressive and communicative use of language, feel that they have very little in common.

If we attack the problem at its source - the inadequate epistemological model - we may be able to escape this dilemma. Let us examine the implications for an organization of the science of linguistics of a 'biological model', which could replace the 'mechanical model' described above. This biological model takes at its point of departure the thesis that we are dealing, not with a box camera, but with a much more elaborate structure, one which is equipped with a variety of neurophysiological and anatomical features characteristic of the higher mammals. Human beings share with these a number of structural characteristics which are relevant to an epistemology of language constructed on this basis. Our perceptual universe, for example, is organized stereometrically: we have two eyes and two ears, and it is by means of these organs that we locate objects in space. It is not surprising that much of our higher conceptualization is based on metaphors involving spatial relations (for examples in German, cf. Henzen, 1959). All mammals have certain rudimentary intellectual functions, such as the ability to retain and recall data (memory) and to extrapolate future lines of action from those data (problem-solving).

To these functions, which are shared to a varying degree by all mammals, we add certain additional ones which are specifically human. We have evolved certain special structures which are connected with the process of symbolization. We can associate certain vocalizations with certain entities. We can manipulate these signs in a network of complex relations. We can use these signs to communicate data to others of the species. Despite these abilities, it must be emphasized that the general mammalian functions and the specific human traits exist side by side. We can see traces of this in the growing child, in whom thought and speech develop independently, up to a point where these two lines of development meet; at that point, thought becomes verbal, and vocalizations take on a linguistic character (Vygotsky, 1965, p.44).

The biological model has a number of important implications for linguistics. The faculty of speech is seen to be a specific evolutionary development within the higher mammals; it is therefore legitimate to inquire as to the factors which contributed to its appearance. (The zoologist Desmond Morris, 1969, has some interesting ideas on this point.) Since linguistic activity is only one of the intellectual functions of man, linguistic activity may be affected by other internal functions of the organism. (The influence of the unconscious on the use of language is an almost completely unexplored field, yet early in his career the psychologist C.G. Jung, 1906-1910, made an important study of word associations; in this area, the art historians are far ahead of us.) Furthermore, while some forms of thought seem to be possible without the aid of language, our higher intellectual operations are to a preponderant extent carried on by means of symbols; hence our conception of the world is not simple or mechanical, but is to some degree contingent on the structure of the language we speak. (B.L. Whorf opened the door to this area some years ago, 1950/1956, but as yet there has been little expansion on his efforts.) All of these extra-linguistic factors impinge inescapably on language at some point. For this reason, we can say that language has both a functional and a formal aspect: it may be described as a formal system of symbols and their relations, which functions, first of all, as an instrument of analysis and interpretation of sense data, mediating between the individual and his social and physical environment, and, in addition, serves as a communicative code for the transmission of data from one individual to another. (The word formal is used here in the sense of 'explicit' and 'not notional'; for a discussion of the meaning of the term, cf. Lyons 1968, pp.135-137.)

In light of this definition, we can divide the field of language study into two large areas: functional linguistics, and formal linguistics. In the former are included the fields of genetic linguistics, which deals with the origin of language, as well as with problems connected with child language; the field of psychological linguistics, which deals with the psychological aspects of language function, including the psychoanalytic aspect mentioned above; sociological linguistics, which treats of the linguistic aspects of man's relationship to his social environment (the traditional field of dialect studies might be included here); and anthropological linguistics, which examines the reflexes of human and cultural relationships in language. (The anthropologist Lévi-Strauss has recently, 1967, called attention to the fact that anthropological structures no longer in existence frequently leave their mark in the vocabulary of a language; if nothing else, this raises the traditional linguistic subdiscipline of etymology from the limbo of an antiquarian pastime to a new significance.) The fields of formal linguistics include those more familiar to the student of language, i.e., phonetics (which, on the other hand, has certain points of contact with biology and physics), phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics (which touches, through logic, on philosophy). In short, the subdisciplines of functional linguistics treat of language as an operant in human affairs, while formal linguistics investigates the properties of the linguistic code as such. However, both formal and functional linguistics stand in a complementary and mutually supportive relationship, because each serves to illuminate what can now be seen as different aspects of the same phenomenon.

In light of the foregoing, we can perhaps hazard some answers to the questions posed by Mr. Nash. Can we study linguistic behaviour independently of the study of language as such? Yes, if we keep in mind that language itself is one of the most potent operative factors in human behaviour. A discussion of kinship systems, for example, without reference to the terms which exist for these relationships in the language of the social group under consideration would be futile. Can we analyze language independently of the behaviour of its speakers? Yes, provided we remember that language exists in order to mediate between the organism and his environment. For example, a discussion of delictic categories in language would be pointless if one failed to take into account the stereometric character of the world as we perceive it, and the implications this has for the orientation of the individual in his physical and social environment. To approach the study of language from either of these points of view to the total exclusion of the other is to place oneself again on the horns of Mallinowski's dilemma.

The reader of these lines, particularly if he has been educated in the tradition of the humanities (as the author has been), is likely to have gained the impression by this time that vast tracts of academic terrain have been ceded wholesale to the social sciences with barely a murmur. This view is mistaken on two counts. First of all, these areas never were the fief of the linguist; for the most part, they have lain in the terra incognita of scholarship. Second, and more important, is the fact that the stimulus of this kind of contact with the various social sciences can enlarge the scope and range of the study of language (as the suggestions above were intended to show), and can give the discipline a new sense of purpose and direction. A study of language which retreats into pure formalism will surely end its days, in Mr. Nash's words, as a poor pensioner in the house of philosophy. A closer interrelationship with the social sciences will not compel linguistics to become a handmaiden to those disciplines. Quite the contrary - its own efforts will be enriched by the ideas which come from them. And what is perhaps even more valuable, this kind of contact can make the social sciences

more aware of the importance of literate culture in social contexts, thereby bringing those fields closer to the discipline of humane letters - in the literal and best sense of that hallowed term.

Edward Fichtner,
Queens College,
City University of New York

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DILEMMAS AND DICHOTOMIES

Walter Nash was quite right to state openly in NLC No.1 that "pure and applied linguistics (...) represent opposing camps"; it is perhaps regrettable that he did not declare equally openly his apparent distrust of the 'pure' linguist and give a few concrete examples to substantiate his implied indictment of the "kind of linguist who will rest satisfied with nothing less than an elegant, specific and comprehensive general theory (...)". I doubt if the 'pure' linguists in their turn would observe the 'good form' with which Mr. Nash is so refreshingly concerned! Let us admit straight away that among present-day linguists there is a growing dissatisfaction with the abstract formalism of the Chomskyan variety. We have every right therefore to ask whether 'pure' linguistics in the sense attributed to this term by Mr. Nash is a worthwhile and desirable study, and to be concerned about the status and aims of our discipline.

I must first of all confess myself perplexed by the Malinowski review Walter Nash discusses. It seems to me that if we were to do as he recommends and drop the language/speech dichotomy, we would automatically solve his dilemma, since we would have no means of stating it. But let us concentrate on an utterance/situation dichotomy for the moment, if that is what he might have preferred. A linguistic investigation might then with such terms of reference attempt to characterise the relationship between utterance and situation, so that we might make a series of statements to the effect that an utterance U 'applies' in a situation S. Let us symbolise this relationship $U \leftrightarrow S$. This could be a taxonomy of the type:

$$U_1 \leftrightarrow S_1$$

$$U_2 \leftrightarrow S_2$$

....

$$U_n \leftrightarrow S_n$$

where, for such an example as Bloomfield (1933) described, S_1 might equal HUNGER and U_1 "I am hungry". But if we are to discover any principles behind the $U \leftrightarrow S$ relationship, we would surely want to know if it made sense to speak of any general classes of U's being in relation with any general classes of S's, or if there were any cases of several U's being in relation with a single S, or vice versa, so that if nothing else, our $U \leftrightarrow S$ relationship could be stated as concisely as possible. And if we do not want to have to include every U and S which have ever existed or will exist in our list we would have to have some concept of identity by which we could recognise a 'hunger situation' or a 'statement of hunger utterance', for example. Therefore we would immediately have to do with sets and members and tokens and types. This means of achieving anything beyond what Chomsky has called (and the idea is not necessarily peculiar to linguistics or to Chomsky) observational adequacy is an elementary and universal process in reporting phenomena. If we wish to give an account of even numbers for example, we do not list them all, but give some sort of principled description, such as all those numbers divisible by 2. According to this basic view of things, the relation between U and S would involve:

- (1) A principled account of the types of U
- (2) A principled account of the types of S
- (3) A statement of relations between types of U and S

Now if the 'applied' linguists want to jump straight away to (3), it is not surprising that to remain sane they have to be 'cheerfully impure', since (3) would seem to be logically posterior to (1) and (2); we may compare a remark by Firth (1935): "But even when phonetician, grammarian and lexicographer have finished, there remains the bigger integration, making use of all this work, in semantic study". (We should note, however, that Firth wants to reserve the term 'semantics' for situational study alone. Although this view is conceptually important in its ramifications, just what one calls 'semantics' is essentially a terminological quibble, and all one can conclude is that Firth's concept of semantics is different from that of many other linguists. John Lyons (1963), for example, seems to consider situational context as a part only of the total context necessary for describing meaning - see particularly note 1 on p.85 where he compares his views with those of Firth and Malinowski.) But there is no reason why there should not be interim accounts of (3), and this 'impurity' is of course valid in its own way; but it does not preclude the expectation that armed with the results of (1) and (2) a more systematic account of (3) will be made possible. Equally it would be shortsighted of analysts to remain content with abstruse formulations of

U or S in isolation, since in the complete view of language as given by Malinowski they would not be ends in themselves but only preparations for (3). Indeed, Malinowski's dilemma falls away when language as an isolated system is seen as a constituent part of or logical prelude to language as a social phenomenon inseparable from its social context.

But I am not sure it is fair to compare Malinowski's dilemma with the dilemma Mr. Nash sees as affecting the contemporary scene. Malinowski was justified in expressing discontent with the sort of formal linguistics prevalent in his day - namely a structuralist school of the Bloch and Trager (1942) type committed to the study of formal relations, generally without reference even to semantic considerations. Chomsky in fact was to be the inheritor of this programme and could say in Chomsky (1957), "I think that we are forced to conclude that grammar is autonomous and independent of meaning"; but he has since modified his viewpoint, as Chomsky (1971) shows. However, the langue/parole dichotomy against which Malinowski inveighed, although comparable in some general respects to the competence/performance dichotomy of modern formal linguistics, is by no means identical with it. De Saussure uses the term 'langue' with a view to accounting for the systematic nature of language:

"Si nous pouvions embrasser la somme des images verbales emmagasinées chez tous les individus, nous toucherions le lien social qui constitue la langue. C'est un trésor déposé par la pratique de la parole dans les sujets appartenant à une même communauté, un système grammatical existant virtuellement dans chaque cerveau, ou plus exactement dans les cerveaux d'un ensemble d'individus; car la langue n'est complète dans aucun, elle n'existe parfaitement que dans la masse." (De Saussure (1916) p.30)

Thus it is a kind of highest common factor between individual systems which explains the relative stability of language even in the face of change which makes it viable as a means of communication. 'Competence', on the other hand, is defined as the internalised ability of the individual native speaker to know what is acceptable in his language and what is not - hence it is possible to speak of individual competences, or competences pertaining to particular styles; but one cannot have individual 'languages'. There are important substantive discrepancies between competence and langue too - Chomsky (1968) points out (p.17) that de Saussure neglected the study of syntax and in fact assigned it as a phenomenon to parole.

Let us assume then that Mr. Nash's dilemma boils down to the study of competence versus the study of performance. He parallels this dichotomy with a methodological one, implying that the study of performance is an empirical procedure whereas the investigation of competence is speculative. I would like to take the latter point first. The object of investigation for the Chomskyan linguist is primarily construed as a property of the human mind in the sense that 'grammar' is understood to mean 'grammar of competence'. Thus the investigation will of its very nature rest on what can be inferred about this property from the statements of native speakers. In the same way as a detective must reconstruct a crime that no one saw from a fragmented collection of evidence and thereby arrive at a hypothesis as to the identity of the felon, so the linguist must form his hypothesis about the structure of language from evidence given by the native speaker. Now this evidence is subject to huge anomalies in the very nature of things - an informant may be mistaken, or be influenced by his own ideas of what language 'ought to be'; but this does not mean that in the best of all possible worlds the linguist cannot base his case on actual experience. In this way I would say that competence-orientated linguistics is indeed empirical (and certainly Chomsky (1964) (1965) and (1968) never considers it to be anything else). As regards the

method of describing a language by hypothesis - the 'speculation' side of things, no doubt - we may ask what other way there is of describing a property of the mind. There has been a lot of confusion on this issue, mainly because 'mentalism' was almost a dirty word in pre-Chomskyan formal linguistics; and acceptance of mentalism has been a bitter pill for many to swallow - see Katz (1964) for a fuller statement of the problem. It is interesting to recall that long before Chomsky, Sapir (1951) sensed the importance of the native speaker's intuition in his work on American Indian languages. And one may even ask how independent the minimal pair test - that veteran structuralist principle - really is of the native speaker's judgment. Mentalism in the Chomskyan sense is therefore nothing stunningly new. The linguist's grammar, however, is best characterised as an empirical hypothesis: that is, subject to the normal rules of the game where theories are open to confirmation and refutation by example and counterexample.

Let us now return to the claim that the study of performance is par excellence empirical. We have already seen that when we investigate competence our data may be rather difficult to get at, but at least we know what we are looking for. I am unclear how 'real' language is to be used to provide data as it stands; Hockett's idea (Hockett (1958) p.142 ff.) of 'edited speech' immediately springs to mind as the sort of process that should take place before everyday speech is susceptible of analysis. It would be a commonplace to point out all the 'impurities' in natural language - the ungrammaticalities, the hesitations, repetition and ellipsis. I think anyone who tries to take such manifestation of language in isolation as his data is attempting too much and taking too much for granted. However, we should note that it is not true that 'pure' linguists disregard performance data. Their inferences about competence cannot be based initially on anything else. But performance is not the central interest of such linguists, because they do not see how anything interesting can be said about it without the assumption of a level of competence - see Chomsky (1965) Ch.1 §2, particularly p.15. So a performance theory would provide an editing (or seen the other way round a generating) procedure which is principled and which would make the study of performance itself principled and non-chaotic since it becomes a function of competence. Let us take a simple example, which is not so clearcut as most that Chomsky offers. Consider the sentences:

- (a) The committee propose to elect a chairman
- (b) The committee proposes to elect a chairman

They may both be taken as performance data. As to their acceptability, logically either (a) is acceptable or (b) is acceptable, or both are acceptable or neither is acceptable. To decide the question we could adopt a general convention and say that since both occur then both are acceptable - but this would mean that anything anyone says is right and we can admit to full acceptability such sentences as:

- (c) Yes but I don't think that we
- (d) I well we were going
- (e) Cinquering kongs their titles take

and other attested and attestable utterances. The absurdity of such a solution should need no more comment - it would doom performance to being little more than a mass of unprincipled and often contradictory phenomena. To reach our decision about (a) and (b) we could adopt other performance-based procedures - for example, we could ascertain which of the two sentences occurred more frequently, and define acceptability on a statistical index. But anyone who has done any work in syntactic statistics will know the near impossibility of establishing sufficiently low margins of error to make any significant statement at all. Why not adopt the simplest expedient, which is

to get hold of a native speaker, and to assess his view of things? When we do this for the sentences in question we find that there are three broad classes of speakers:

- (i) Those finding (a) acceptable
- (ii) Those finding (b) acceptable
- (iii) Those finding either acceptable, but generally considering them to have slightly different meanings

But once we make this kind of enquiry, we must accept that we have to do with competence. Now there are two empirical issues in this simple example: (1) whether the forms actually exist, (2) whether they are both acceptable and part of English. Reference to performance can solve the first issue, but only reference to competence can solve the second. We conclude then that if the study of performance is to be empirical (as everyone cited in Mr. Nash's article including himself seems to assume it to be) it can only make a trivial inventory of observed utterances - as soon as it tries to become a principled description it must refer to competence and hence depend on the arbitration of the native speaker's intuition.

The competence/performance dichotomy seems to be reducible, then, to the mentalist/antimentalist dichotomy. Chomsky concluded that this, as a controversy, was "idle", since it was "not an arguable matter", the antimentalist or behaviourist position simply being "an expression of lack of interest in theory and explanation". (And oddly enough, it is with regard to the antimentalist linguists that he speaks of 'methodological purity' in the spirit of strong verificationism which was a legacy of logical positivism.) By the same token, I do not see why modern linguistics is in a dilemma. Mr. Nash seems to lean towards this view too in the abstract but raises some serious practical objections. He makes two charges: (1) theoretical linguists select only model facts, (2) their 'theory' is of a somehow higher order than 'practice'. Dealing with the second point first, I have already pointed out that utterance is only a part of the phenomenon of language; the theory of competence, as an account of utterances, thus enjoys the same status, and I would therefore join in criticising any linguist who saw theory as the be-all-and-end-all of linguistic enquiry. But I do not think that most 'theoretical' linguists do hold this view - in fact the very distinction between competence and performance helps to make it clear that competence is only a part of the story. To quote Chomsky (1965) p.4:

"To study actual linguistic performance, we must consider the interaction of a variety of factors, of which the underlying competence of the speaker-hearer is only one."

It is true of course that the publications of this breed of linguists come more and more to resemble algebraical brain-teasers and that they have borrowed much from set theory and mathematical logic; but if these procedures facilitate the description of grammatical structure then I feel they are justified. Algebra is not a 'higher order of activity', it is a convenient shorthand, and it behoves the linguist to get used to dealing with it for that way he will save a lot of paper. To conclude on this point, I cannot readily call to mind any instance where a theoretical linguist belittles the activities of those not engaged on research on theory on the grounds that their work is trivial beside his own. Turning now to the first charge above, it strikes me as somewhat curious, since the nature of the theory of competence is such that any hypothesis is open to refutation by the production of a fact that is a counter-example to the hypothesis. Therefore if theoretical linguistics is selecting only model facts it is up to the critics to select some non-model ones and knock down the theories thereby established.

However, I do sympathise with those who are wearied by modern transformationalist literature. I think it is regrettable that concern with overall models should be such that almost every American linguist feels it incumbent upon him to attempt a major revision of an existing model on the basis of a handful of examples, though this is no doubt due to the extreme positions taken up by the model-builders in the first place. I think too that some assumptions of majority dialects for some proposals (here I think particularly of Lakoff (1971) where there are many claims which run counter to my own intuitions as a native speaker of English) are too hasty and not sufficiently substantiated. However, these private reservations do not compromise the overall theory, nor are they in themselves an objection to work being done on analytical models.

I conclude paradoxically that there is no dilemma for modern linguistics of the type Mr. Nash suggested just because there are dichotomies which are definable. There are preferences, of course, and individual dilemmas for the investigator as a person, but this happens in any field. As far as the scope of linguistics goes I would be content to take it as involving anything to do with language. Terminology seems to be rather irrelevant in this matter, and if a subject such as linguistics overlaps the convenient administrative boundaries of our higher education institutions (to say nothing of the Dewey catalogue) then the moral is that these boundaries should be redrafted as being demonstrably artificial as they stand. In conclusion, I turn to Firth (1935):

" (...) I am convinced that the greatest need of linguistic scholarship at the present time is a new outlook over a much wider field of life in company with others looking through adjacent windows converging on the same scene."

"Plus ça change (...)" But now, in the whirligig of time, it is 'pure' linguistics that must more and more elbow its way to a vantage-point, it seems.

Christopher Pountain,
Department of Spanish,
University of Nottingham

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