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Edited on behalf of the Nottingham Linguistic Circle

by

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Typed by Norma Hazzledine

EDITORIAL

Readers of this issue of NLC can hardly fail to notice in its contents an emphasis on language in use; its two longest contributions are on Register and on Language in the Primary School, and the review article (now a regular feature of the journal) is on this occasion also related to pragmatic aspects of language. To a certain extent our contributors have broached topics which are at the moment controversial among teachers, psychologists, and others outside the circle of academic linguists - Deirdre Burton's article, for instance, reflects a current opposition among teachers between those who favour structured, "teacher-guided" programmes of learning and those who advocate the development of "child-centred" patterns of discovery. Should any reader wish to comment on these undoubtedly important issues, we would welcome further contributions.

At the same time, we would hasten to disclaim any suggestion that NLC is in danger of becoming a house magazine for sociolinguists. We have in this issue a short paper on the structure of a phrase-type in French, and in future numbers we certainly hope to publish more articles on central theoretical concerns in linguistics. Another field which we shall continue to explore is that of stylistics. In short, though individual issues will stress particular interests, NLC will remain what it was always intended to be, a forum for the discussion of all aspects of language.

These remarks are prompted by the fact that the journal now appears in a new format, and by the corresponding impression that we have in some way entered a new phrase of growth. We hope that the "refurbished" NLC will please its audience and that our bulletin will continue to fill a useful and honourable place among campus journals of linguistics.

Walter Nash Christopher Butler

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NOTICES AND PROSPECTS

(1) Forthcoming meetings:

Louisville, U.S.A. 6-8 May 1976	Interdisciplinary Conference 'Perspectives on Language', University of Louisville, Louisville, KY; c/o Robert St. Clair, Interdisciplinary Linguistics, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40208, USA.
Stirling, Scotland 21-26 June 1976	Conference on Psychology of Language; c/o R.N. Campbell, Dept. of Psychology, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4LA, Scotland.
Seattle, USA 28 June - 26 July 1976	Second Annual Summer Institute on the Teaching of English for Science and Technology; c/o Louis Trimble, 359 Loew Hall FH-40, University of Washington, Seattle WA 98195, USA
Ottawa, Canada 28 June - 2 July 1976	International Conference on Computational Linguistics, c/o COLING 76, Dept. of Linguistics and Modern Languages, University of Ottawa, Ottawa K1A 6N5, Canada.
Oswego, New York 28 June - 20 August 1976	1976 Linguistic Institute, c/o Dr. C.F. Justus, Director of 1976 Linguistic Institute, Linguistics Program, State University of New York, Oswego, NY 13126, USA.
Middlesex Polytechnic July 1976 (date not fixed)	Workshop Conference on the Teaching of Linguistics in Higher Education, c/o Dr. M. Riddle, School of Humanities, Middlesex Polytechnic, The Burroughs, Hendon, London NW4 4BT.
Salzburg, Austria 26 July - 27 August 1976	Societas Linguistica Europaea Summer School in Linguistics, c/o Prof. Dr. G. Drachmann, Institut für Sprachwissenschaft, Imbergstrasse 2/III, A-5020 Salzburg, Austria.
Oswego, New York 30 July - 1 August 1976	Linguistic Society of America Summer Meeting, State University of New York, Oswego, New York; c/o LSA, 428 E. Preston St., Baltimore, Maryland 21202, USA.
Tokyo, Japan 26-31 August 1976	Third World Congress of Phoneticians, c/o The Organizing Committee, Phonetic Society of Japan, 13 Daita-2, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, P.O. 155, Japan.

Salzburg, Austria 28-30 August 1976	Societas Linguistica Europaea Annual Meeting, c/o Prof. Dr.G.Drachmann (for address see above)
Salzburg, Austria 28-30 August 1976	3 Frühlingstagung für Linguistik "Psycholinguistik" c/o Prof.Dr.G. Drachmann (for address see above)
Vienna, Austria 1-4 September 1976	3rd International Phonology Meeting, c/o Phonologietagung, Institut für Sprachwissenschaft, Lueger-Ring 1, A-1010, Vienna, Austria.
Walsall 9-11 September 1976	Research Seminar on Sociolinguistic Variation, c/o Mr. E.Reid, Language Studies Dept., West Midlands College, Gorway, Walsall, W. Midlands.
Exeter 13-14 September 1976	British Association for Applied Linguistics, Seminar on Translation, c/o Dr. R.R.K. Hartmann, Language Centre, University of Exeter, Exeter EX4 4QH.
Exeter 14-16 September 1976	British Association for Applied Linguistics, Annual Meeting, c/o Dr. R.R.K. Hartmann, (for address see above)
Philadelphia Marriot, USA 28-30 December 1976	Linguistic Society for America Annual Meeting, c/o LSA (for address see above)
Birmingham 29-31 March 1977	Linguistics Association of Great Britain Spring Meeting; c/o Dr. J. Payne, Dept. of Linguistics, University of Birmingham, Birmingham B15 2TT
Honolulu, Hawaii July/August 1977	Linguistic Society of America 1977 Summer Institute, c/o LSA (for address see above)
Vienna, Austria 29 August - 2 Sept. 1977	XII Internationaler Linguisten-Kongress; c/o Linguisten-Kongress, Postfach 35, A-1095, Vienna, Austria.
London 6-8 November 1977	Linguistics Association of Great Britain, Autumn Meeting; c/o Dr. R.A. Hudson, Dept. of Linguistics, University College, Gower Street, London, WC1.

Chicago, USA 28-30 December 1977	Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting, c/o LSA (for address see above)
Lancaster Spring 1978 (date not yet fixed)	Linguistics Association of Great Britain Spring Meeting.

(2) Reports on Conferences

Seminar on collecting, using, and reporting talk for research in education
University of Nottingham 22-24 September 1975

This was an SSRC-funded Seminar, organised by myself and Clem Adelman (East Anglia), for about 40 participants, all actively engaged in research on language in education. A major topic of educational research is the role of language in education: topics of interest include not only the relation of language to social class, but also the role of language in the classroom. The classroom is therefore often taken as a sociolinguistic setting and studied ethnographically. Teachers and pupils talk, and educational researchers record them, and selections from such recordings are then used as data for educational statements about, for example, how teachers teach, and how pupils learn. There has consequently been an increase in the use of methods for collecting linguistic data in educational research, including: participant observation, audio- and video-recording and interviewing. There are clearly major methodological and theoretical problems in collecting and analysing linguistic data as evidence for educational statements, and many studies which present linguistic data as evidence for educational hypotheses or conclusions are inexplicit about the criteria for selecting and analysing such data. These problems were the topic of the seminar, and several fundamental issues were given a good airing.

Papers read were: Michael Stubbs (Nottingham) on "Linguistic analysis in educational research"; Douglas Barnes (Leeds) on the language of children in small group teaching; Mike Whitehead (Dundee) on children's discourse; Mary Willes (West Midlands College) on classroom discourse in infant reception classes; Clem Adelman (East Anglia) on ethnosemantic techniques; Elizabeth Newsom (Nottingham) and Rob Walker and Helen Simon (East Anglia) on problems of interviewing; Peter Woods (Open University) on symbolic interactionist interpretations of children's talk; David Hargreaves (Manchester) on different forms of education theory.

The papers have been revised and brought together in mimeoed form, and a follow-up Seminar, fully funded by the SSRC, is to take place at Reading from 29-31 March 1976, when we hope to thrash out the problems further. This is not an area in which many linguists are at present involved. Most of the work on language in education is being done by researchers primarily trained as sociologists, psychologists or educationalists. It

is, however, an area which provides many interesting problems particularly for the ethnography of communication and for sociolinguistic fieldwork and descriptive theory.

(M. Stubbs)

Autumn Meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain
King's Manor, University of York, 31st October - 2nd November 1975.

As an experiment, the meeting was organised around a central theme, 'The nature of the data of linguistics'. The papers were grouped according to more specific areas within the general topic: the historical linguist's data, contextual data and its alternatives, the mathematical approach to linguistic data, the linguist and his informants, the phonetician's data, and the relationship of the philosophy of science to the data of linguistics. Of particular interest was the fact that several of the contributors to this conference discussed semantic testing procedures of one kind or another. I for one find it encouraging that an increasing number of linguists are getting up out of their armchairs and finding out about meaning by the use of informant testing techniques.

We were particularly fortunate in having as our guest speaker at the meeting Dr. Gillian Sankoff, an eminent sociolinguist from the University of Montreal.

It is hoped that the papers from this conference will be published in York Papers in Linguistics. (C.S. Butler)

BAAL Seminar on 'Reading Courses in Foreign Languages'
University of Nottingham 24-26 March

Within the last decade there has been an increasing demand in higher education for foreign language courses specifically designed to promote reading ability, so that students of history or law are enabled to read texts in French, students of art works in Italian, students of science or music articles in German, etc. Since the problem in this country is a relatively new one, the literature on it is meagre and no dominant orthodoxy has emerged so far. The Seminar gave a welcome opportunity to the 37 participants to exchange ideas and experiences. In a full programme of 17 papers, various approaches to course design were described and a whole host of issues raised, e.g. is reading a global activity or a set of discrete sub-skills? How is material to be graded? How useful is listening while reading? How does one recognise a text as an 'efficient' transmitter of meaning? Should reading courses limit themselves exclusively to reading? What is the relevance of speed reading techniques? Can general statements be made about the relative importance of lexis and grammar?

It would have been surprising if the answers given to these and other questions had been unanimously accepted, but the nature of the questions gives some indication of the liveliness and interest of the Seminar. (W. Grauberg)

REGISTER

Talk given to Nottingham Linguistic Circle on 1 December 1975.

I have recently been visited by a student starting up a research project connected with the use by a well-known author of different styles of speech in his novels. This student was attempting to say something about the use, by the author, of formal or very colloquial language, or of language which obviously recalled the speech style of a certain identifiable group of the population, in a way which should enable him, as critic, to disentangle that which was related to the author's artistic concerns from that which was not. He was looking for some technique, some descriptive or analytical approach, some usable device, which would enable him to say that that bit of language represented the typical usage of a particular group of speakers in a particular circumstance, whereas this bit of language was not thus typical. As he quite rightly pointed out, he wanted a way of identifying the register of slang, or of commerce, or of politics, so that he could comment on the way the author used or did not use that register of language. As he also pointed out, the word 'register', which seems so appropriate, does not now seem to figure so much in the literature as it did some five or ten years ago. And he wanted to know why. Had interest in language variation decreased since 1965? Were linguists not now interested in analysing the language of science, or of politics? Had the study of register come to a dead end?

By contrast, there have appeared in the past two or three years any number of articles and statements hailing a 'new' interest in language variation, and pointing out the contrast with the past, which was apparently only concerned with the norm. Let me quote:

> "Language variation is often thought of in terms of regional dialects. Regional dialectology has a long and well-documented history, especially in Western Europe and England. Recently, however, a new dimension of dialect study, social dialectology, or social linguistics, has arisen which has led researchers to many regular and systematic correlations between social factors and previously unexplained linguistic phenomena. By extending the data to be considered, such variables as social class membership, much linguistic behaviour which was previously thought to be random and unmotivated has been shown to be regular and consistent."
>
> Callary 1972

> "... In the past fifty years or more, linguists have operated with a static paradigm of language; they have described individual languages in terms of an 'ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogenous speech community (Chomsky , 1965 : 3)'. Structural linguists who have dominated the linguistic scene during the last fifty years are not unaware of the inherent variability of the object of their study. But only if they assume that the speech of an individual speaker is homogeneous and that members of a monolingual speech community all speak alike can they describe a language."
>
> Valdman 1972 : 87

and again:

> "During the past few years, linguists working in different branches of the discipline have increasingly shown discontent with the framework of axioms for descriptive work which have been widely accepted for almost half a century. Their frustrations have led to attempts to escape from the procrustean framework of idealized oppositions by devising models that handle variation and continuums in linguistic data...."
>
> Bailey : 1973 : 1

Fifty years or so before 1970 brings us to 1920. 1920 is four years after the publication of Saussure's 'Cours de linguistique générale', and it is probably due to his views as much as anyone's that the 'procrustean framework' should have existed and been so reinforced by Chomsky in the early sixties. But both for Saussure and for Chomsky there existed the need to systematise, to impose rigour and a scientific, generalising and theory-oriented approach on what was becoming an incoherent mass of data.

> "There was a time when the progress of research required that each community should be considered linguistically self-contained and homogeneous... (This assumption) has enabled scholars... to achieve ... some rigour in a research involving man's psychic activity."
>
> Martinet IN Weinreich . 1953 : vii

As is usual with most statements hailing a 'new' discovery in the social sciences or the humanities, it is easy to point out that there is little really novel here. Although some may feel that linguists have been tied down by working with a static paradigm of language, this has not noticeably reduced the amount of work being done in dialect studies, whether these are restricted to 'old-fashioned' geographical and regional dialects concentrating on rural speech or broadened to include 'new-fangled' studies of socio-economic dialects and urban speech. Indeed if anything the past fifty years or so has seen vastly increased work in this area, and big dialect surveys have been set up almost at the same time that Chomsky's Aspects was being published: Tyneside (1968); New York (Labov 1966); Orléans (1967) Variation through time, the study of change in languages, has continued to be in many countries the main introduction to language study at undergraduate level for all except the few. Bilingualism has been a focus of interest and the 'Diglossia' concept was working its way through the literature throughout the sixties. Gumperz' work on varieties in the Indian and South-East Asian context was at its height in the late fifties and sixties; Hymes' Ethnographies of communication came out in a special issue of the American Anthropologist in 1964. In the field of socio-linguistics, Bernstein's elaborated and restricted codes had a field-day in 1962. We can add to all this the work in stylistics and rhetoric which must of necessity inform the study of literature; so if anyone has felt constrained by a "procrustean framework" he has really only had himself to blame.

Or has he? The surprising thing about all this mass of work in language variation is, as Pride has pointed out, that linguists themselves have been so little concerned with it:

> "...most, if not all, of the 'social sciences' are involved: notably psychology, social psychology, sociology, social anthropology and anthropology; involved, too, at all descriptive and theoretical levels, not only directly but very often in passing. What is surprising is the relatively small extent to which linguistics has so far been concerned."
>
> Pride 1971 : 1

Complaints of this sort are not rare; Pride (1971) quotes Sapir's comments about linguists' "failure to look beyond the pretty patterns of their subject matter", and we are all familiar with the debate over data-oriented and theory-oriented approaches. That linguists have been very keen to get away from the messiness of the human condition into the rarified atmosphere of abstractions is fair enough; but the return journey is just as essential. The confrontation of theory with the data is the testing point of the theory, not its internal consistency or its conformity with a macro-theory.

We are faced in fact with a demarcation dispute. What is the proper job of the linguist? Given useful dichotomies like Saussure's langue/parole or Chomsky's competence/performance, is the linguist to concern himself solely with one or the other? Or is it allowable for him to dart back and forth across the boundaries? If he deals with variation in language he will have to do so; he cannot remain in the world of abstractions. So he must swallow his pride and accept the opprobrium of his contamination by the real world; must refuse the label of linguist if this means he can't deal with what is actually said on one occasion by one imperfect speaker; must accept the ad hoc and the random for what they are. What he can do to preserve his academic respectability is to try to see what patterns there are which might fit some of the data, try to see whether he can reconcile linguistics with the other apparently competing disciplines and try to see where real human beings fit into his scheme of things. In doing these three things he may or may not be scientific; but his data and his problems will impose their method on him, rather than the reverse.

What he cannot do is to define the problems away. He cannot say a priori that linguistics is really separate disciplines such as dialectology, historical linguistics or comparative linguistics. He cannot say that linguistics is only concerned with rule systems and not with the application of the rules. He cannot say even that linguistics is only concerned with languages and not with other forms of human communication. He must deal first with the communicating human being as he finds him.

Human beings communicate with other human beings (including sometimes themselves) in specific situations; or rather a human being communicates to one or more hearers. He communicates by using one of a number of devices, of which language, written or spoken, is one. He communicates for a purpose, which may be that of expressing himself without expecting any response from his hearer; or there may be an expectation of response. The common feature throughout all communication situations is that human beings are involved; we do not therefore need to concern ourselves further with the physical nature of the human animal. This leaves us three areas of concern: the situation in which the human finds

himself; the device he uses to convey his message; and the response expectation. For each of these we shall need some sort of model and some way of identifying repetitions of individual acts of communication.

The situation

Human beings are not solely individuals. They exist within societies and are constrained and located within strata, within 'concentric circles... of social control' (Berger 1963:93). Such strata include socio-economic class, educational experience, income, race, skin colour, expectations and attitudes, religion and so forth. Social institutions (i.e. a complex of actions by himself and by others) regulate the behaviour of the individual in such a way that at least part of his behaviour can be predicted. Then the particular actions, movements, utterances of the individual which make up the rôle he will adopt in a defined situation can be outlined. This rôle - "the pattern according to which the individual is to act in the particular situation" (Berger 1963:112) - will vary; any one individual may adopt different rôles in different situations or ever in the same situation. Our picture of the human being in a communicating situation must then tell us about him in his rôle as speaker/utterer and in the other aspects of his relationship towards other participants; and include the 'long-term' features of the situation within which this rôle is played. The picture is further complicated by the fact that communication takes place over time; our model needs to be dynamic in the sense that feedback from situation to speaker is constantly taking place (including feedback from the communication device) and adjusting the situation - which further adjusts the communication device and so on. It is for this reason that some prefer to talk not of speakers but of hearers as being located with communication situations, on the argument that it is the hearer who is constructing the communication situation as he listens, who is also internalising that situation and who will, when he speaks/utters in a similar situation, use the information he has internalised. Of course ideally we should not look at the communication situation from the point of view of either the speaker <u>or</u> the hearer; it is the message, the communication act itself, which can be defined, compared with others, classified, repeated and analysed.

The communication device can be linguistic, para-linguistic or non-linguistic. If we confine ourselves to the linguistic device, then we may expect there to be a range of possibilities similar to the range of possibilities of communication situations. (This would follow on from the fact that we are considering communication situations themselves rather than the ways in which we can analyse the elements that are present in a number of different situations; we start from the point of view that all situations are different and therefore assume that all devices are different.) We may further expect that, as the device itself forms part of the communication situation, if there is any interconnection among different strata and aspects of speaker's rôles, the same sorts of interconnections will exist between aspects of the device and aspects of the situation. This of course is the rationale of varieties: and also of registers, dialects, the language of science and slang;

unless all language usage is idiolectal and at the same time relates to only one time and space, there must be some degree of determination in it, of repetition from situation to situation, allowing the analyst to specify a particular usage as related to the situation. But before exploring this notion further, let us review in rather more detail the components of the communication situation.

The communication situation is a notion which is familiar in social psychology as the primary group. "A group, in the social psychological sense, is a plurality of persons who interact with one another in a given context..." (Sprott 1958:9). Such a definition gives us three lines of attack - the persons, the context and the interaction, and it will be helpful if we expand on these a little.

The persons can be defined in terms of such factors as race, sex, age, socio-economic status, geographical origin - all of which involve some aspects of membership of groups; and also in terms of less easily definable characteristics involving personality factors, temperament, preferences, which are only definable in terms applicable to the individual in contrast to the group - the negative aspect of group membership. Insofar as group membership is concerned, there is comparatively little difficulty in making descriptive statements - Mr A is 50 years old (and not 51), he is male (and not female), he is Puerto Rican (and not Haitian), in the Registrar-General's group 2 (and not 3) and so forth; by a series of such statements using accepted conventions of opposition, Mr A can be defined as a member of a series of groups. The key to the question to raise here is the notion of "accepted conventions of opposition", and it may well be that although an opposition such as 50/51 for age leads to no problem, one such as Puerto Rican/Haitian might well, as might for example West Indian/Nigerian or Irish/Scottish. Such vague labels may well serve their turn, however, according to the purpose for which the analysis is being made. This type of question raises the problem of the nature of the oppositions to be expected along 'dimensions' such as sex, age, socio-economic class and so forth; it would be nice to envisage various scales of 'delicacy' in the allocation of position on these dimensions (or in the allocation of group membership; and the notion of group membership, with the corollary that groups can be of greater or smaller total membership, avoids the worst of the 'dimension' problem).

Personality characteristics raise more difficult problems. Insofar as language use is concerned, these are the sorts of features which enable us to distinguish between a good author and a bad one, between Hank Jansen and D.H.Lawrence, so we can hardly dismiss them or say they will have no linguistic consequences. But analysing personality, even in terms of accepted measuring devices like the personality inventory, is a process nowhere near so 'scientific' as allocating group membership.

The context involves us in looking at the time at which the utterance took place - let us not forget that here we are looking at features which enable us to describe a communication situation. Clearly, since life is sequential, no two communication situations ever recur in the same point in time; if there is no other

difference this dimension must differentiate between situations. And as we know language varies over time; this is what historical linguistics is all about. The relevance of time is undeniable, and the need for a dynamic model of the communication situation follows. But the context of a communication situation involves two other features - subject matter and genre. What is talked about, like race, may be described in very general or in much more particular terms; science may be a subject, or physics, or nuclear reactors, or the safety measure involved in bringing a particular reactor into commission, or the dangers of concrete as against lead shielding, or the characteristics of a particular type of concrete - and so on; here again what we lack is a hierarchy of terms enabling us to know the 'level of detail' at which we are referring to the subject matter. Genre is in a very similar state. We can describe in ad hoc terms the difference between newspaper reporting, editorials and one paragraph new items, but there is no accepted gradation which can compare those differences with those between sermons, prayers and hymns.

The 'interaction' between individuals in a communication situation is probably the aspect of groups which has led to most analysis and discussion in the literature. It involves describing the social relationship of the participants, their occupational relationship and the degree, kind and nature of feedback from speaker to hearer - all these as aspects of the rôles adopted by speaker and hearer. But interaction also involves the intention of the speaker - the button which is pushed by the initiator to start all the other aspects of the communication situation into motion. Until this button is pushed all the other features are virtual and unrealised. Intention then; and finally, in this listing of that which is necessary to the description of the communication situation, must come the choice, by the speaker, firstly of the mode (eg. spoken and not written) in which linguistic communication is to take place, and secondly of the actual items, the words and sentences which make up the text he utters.

Before looking at the choices he can operate I should like to dwell a little on the interaction, in terms of the rôle relationships of speaker and hearer. We have said that the first aspect of this rôle relationship is the 'social', by which I mean the sort of interaction that exists between equals, from superior to inferior, or from inferior to superior. Common membership of the 'in' group, whether this involves caste, social group (class) or other group, normally involves relating as equals; if the speaker is a member of a superior group and the hearer one of an inferior the interaction will be different. 'Power' and 'solidarity' are terms which have been used to express these sorts of relationships, as well as the more common equality, superiority and inferiority, and reflect well the notion of common group membership. The second type of rôle relationship involves membership of groups constituted on the basis of occupation. The interaction here may be as simple as the equality/superiority of the first, but may, on the other hand, be much more complex; thus for example common membership of a particular occupational group may lead to behaviour, including linguistic behaviour, intended to underline the cohesiveness of the group (Parisian butchers' slang, doctors talking to each other) and to establish the

boundaries of the group; this might well be comparable to the idea of equality in social group membership. On the other hand the language of auctioneers in tobacco auctions or cattle sales does not express this sort of solidarity and seems to have no correlation with the superiority/inferiority opposition either. The third type of interaction - degree, kind and nature of feedback - has been noticed by any number of research workers. Feedback, the progressive adjustment of the speaker to the situation as he explores it, as it (particularly the hearer) reacts to him, making of him in turn a hearer, is a further aspect of the dynamic nature of communication situations; it is more than this, however, in that the speaker adjusts himself not merely to actual but also to anticipated feedback. Thus the speaker will communicate in different ways to one person and to many on the expectation that in one case his utterance will be part of a dialogue and in the other it will take the form of a monologue. Likewise the kind of feedback involved will vary: immediate or delayed reaction, or positive (approving) as against negative (disapproving) feedback will have different effects on the speaker's construct of the communication situation. Furthermore, the nature of the feedback will have an effect - linguistic or paralinguistic feedback, all those lovely gestures, postures and eye movements which go to make up proxemics, have their rôle to play and their effect upon the speaker.

I have said that intention is the button which starts the communication situation into motion, which adds the communication to the situation. By intention I mean meaning, the purpose that the speaker is intending to convey. To some extent this is similar to Halliday's functions, which grew, as we know, from an elaboration of the original 'register' concept -

> "The social functions of language clearly determine the pattern of language varieties, in the sense of what have been called 'diatypic' varieties, or 'registers'; the register range, or linguistic repertoire, of a community or of an individual is derived from the range of uses that language is put to in that particular culture or sub-culture."
>
> M.A.K. Halliday 1971:22

For Halliday, the functions available can be described as a series of options relating the behaviour patterns of a language community to the linguistic forms used in communication situations -

> (Semantics constitutes) "... a stratum that is intermediate between the social system and the grammatical system. The former is wholly outside language, the latter is wholly within language; the semantic networks, which describe the range of alternative meanings available to the speaker in given social contexts and settings, form a bridge between the two."
>
> Halliday 1972:96

and again, summarising the process of language production -

"... we can identify ... a finite set of functions ... which are general to all these uses (of language) and through which the meaning potential associated with them is encoded into grammatical structure ... The adult engages in a great variety of uses of language, which in themselves are unsystematized and vague. We attempt to impose some order on them, by identifying social contexts and settings for which we can state the meaning potential in a systematic way ... The macro-functions are the most general categories of meaning potential, common to all uses of language ... (The speaker) will need to make some reference to the categories of his own experience ... He will need to take up some position in the speech situation; at the very least he will specify his own communication role and set up expectations for that of the hearer ... And what he says will be structured as 'text' ... it is through its organization into functional components that the formal system of languages is linked to language use."

Halliday. 1972:99-100

This is a rather wider concept than that of 'intention' as stated above, which is merely the reflection of the speaker's aim or purpose, his selection from the range of options open to him to convey his meaning. It is, however, close to the notion of intention in its close involvement with the range of linguistic options open to the speaker, options which enable the speaker to express his attitude, his emotion or his position. It is also, of course, very close to the notion of "discourse function" as elaborated by Sinclair at Birmingham.

Devices and codes

And this, in turn, brings us back to a consideration of the devices available to the speaker to convey his intention. These, as we have noticed, are not solely linguistic; gesture, eye movement, body movement have their capabilities of expression. But language does represent the most complex and well-developed of human communication devices. A speaker, located in a particular communication situation, which of course includes his intention, the meaning he is about to convey, chooses how to express that intention. If he chooses to use language, he has the choice of tokens, counters of different sorts in which to express himself; he may use an adverb of past time instead of a past tense, he may use a long sentence instead of a short one, he may write a book instead of an article, he may use one word instead of another. In exercising this choice his freedom is not absolute; there will be both restrictions of an absolute nature (need to construct grammatically acceptable sentences) and of a relative or probabilistic nature (need to use 'whereas' rather than 'seeing that' in legal usage). Some of these restrictions will be caused by, or associated with, particular aspects, features, of the communication situation, whereas others may have little or no apparent connection. Part, at least, of the justification for the concept of 'variety' is the extent to which such connections can be shown to have meaning - the extent to which apparently random variation in language may

be shown to be systematic and connected to aspects of the situation.

It's a long way of course from a statement such as that which has been made in the last paragraph to being able to indicate <u>which</u> particular choices in the code, in the device, relate to <u>which</u> aspects of the situation. In the early days of work on 'special languages' and on register it was common to find projects whose purpose was to count up the frequency of occurrence of, say, adjectives in texts which had been classified as representative of some defined variety. This particular frequency of occurrence was then said to be typical of that variety, and occasionally was even compared to the frequency of occurrence of the same forms in another variety - more usually, in something which purported to represent the norm. The more sophisticated examples of this type of project isolated the features of the communication situation which were said to be causally related to the frequency of the linguistic feature under observation - thus Labov's studies of New York showed how phonological items were differentially used by young and old, white and black, upper and middle class speakers. On a practical level, such studies had - and have - immense value. They identify particular linguistic items as those which are subject to variation, they provide us with a mass of data about which words are more frequent than others and which words do not appear in a particular situation; they give us the raw material for constructing courses in the language of science or of the law - particularly useful for foreign language learning; they enable us to see how sentences are constructed differentially in different circumstances. But there are some problems.

The first is that almost everything varies, almost every linguistic item can be shown to be differentially used as between texts representative of different varieties. If you take a fairly simple measure of vocabulary richness, for example the type-token ratio for texts of the same length, and compare the statistics for editorials (next to fiction, about the freest type of writing available in terms of the choice open to the author) and for legal decisions (just about the most restricted 'style'), you can find fairly consistent differences showing that editorials are about twice as rich in vocabulary as the legal decisions. Also, nouns are about twice as frequent, adverbs nearly 7 times as frequent, interrogatives 33 times as frequent, relatives 3 times as frequent in the one variety as in the other - all highly significant differences. And in many other ways also, items vary as between the texts. Ager (1972)refers.

A second problem is disentangling from the complex features of the communication situation the particular one which relates to the variations in the use of language. The frequency of occurrence of a particular word - say 'politique' in French - may be said to correlate closely with the 'subject' dimension as between two editorials, one of them dealing with politics while the other does not; but such an obvious relationship is rare. With what does a significant variation in the frequency of 'sur'

correlate? Or 'jamais'? This type of problem can be illustrated the other way round also: descriptions of the 'language of science' oscillate between lists of highly technical words (mainly nouns for items dealt with by individual sciences) and lists of function words said to be associated with the processes of scientific reasoning ('therefore', 'it follows that', use of the passive etc.); obviously there are at least two features of the situation involved here.

A third problem is related to this. Statistics, as a science, is by now well-developed; it is perfectly able to cope with problems of covariation, of dependent and independent variables, of clusters of items in n-dimensional fields. The problem remains, as Jakobson pointed out, that playing with highly complex statistics on data which is rough-and-ready, to say the least, falsifies the conclusions one can draw. There is no point in weaving complex statistical dances round a basic distinction between a doing word and a being word, but many of our linguistic items are at about that level of sophistication. Or worse, they are defined in terms of an esoteric school of linguistics so that the whole basis of the description depends on the linguistic assumptions of the analyst. In this respect, it is still probably true that the most effective way of describing linguistic variation, if the endpoint of the operation is pedagogic, is by taxonomic, systematic listing of items, dealing first with the words, then the groups, then the clauses, then the sentences, then the paragraphs, then the text as a whole. Generative grammar will deal with the variations in derivational history of the consistent sentences, and 'textlinguistics' with the interrelationships of elements. All are obviously valid, but there will be a different end-product in each case and results will probably not be complete.

Responses

The interconnection between the communication situation and the speech act itself, between the setting and the words, is not just a matter of interest to the linguist and a source of delight to the statistician; every human being exists in this interrelationship; it is the very stuff of life. So every human speaker must possess the key to understand a situation, to recognise what is linguistically right in this situation and inappropriate in that. There must be human capabilities which enable us, as speakers or hearers, to 'derive both extra-linguistic and linguistic information from the signal. These capabilities are: 1) a continuous formulation of hypotheses (concerning the precise nature of semantic, syntactic and phonological aspects of the signal), 2) a mechanism of comparison (with an internalised representation of both the language and its variant forms), 3) a means of establishing resemblance (with speakers who have been previously encountered), 4) a system of mapping (from linguistic variants to extra-linguistic attributes), 5) a method of deriving diagnostic features (i.e. central or defining features of varieties)'

Pellowe et al. 1972:6 (adapted)

Not merely this, but also the reverse process: given the situation, to move from there to the creation of the appropriate signal (modified thereafter, it is true, in the light of the feedback).

I should like finally to explore in relation to French this process of mapping from linguistic variants to extra-linguistic attributes, and to use as my example an administrative decision relating to the marking of cheese. Legal and administrative decisions are recorded in France in the form of laws, decrees and 'arrêtés', the latter being similar in some respects to Ministerial orders in the UK. Arrêtés cover a wide variety of topics, but in almost every other way form a homogeneous set of texts. They are usually published in the 'Journal Officiel' soon after being signed by the appropriate Civil Servant representing the Minister.

The communication situation here then, insofar as the originator is concerned, is a deliberate attempt to nullify 'personal' facts. The race, sex, class, geographical origin, age of the author is denied expression by a conscious training process and by the fact that many Civil Servants will have had a hand in drafting the text. Likewise personality factors will not be allowed to show through, nor will temperament or linguistic preferences. There is a deliberate attempt to render the text as impersonal and unemotional as possible. Likewise, when we examine the context of production of the text, there will be an attempt to render the dimension of time invalid; a deliberate attempt to nullify the difference between 1900 and 1968. Subject however will vary - must vary, for arrêtés cover every conceivable type of activity within the body politic. The dimension of genre we have ourselves as observers nullified; there are distinctions to be observed as between laws, decrees, arrêtés and other forms of administrative instruction but we have confined ourselves to one of these. The interaction between participants in the communication situation - between writer and reader, for arrêtés are not spoken texts - should involve us in looking at the social, occupational and feedback aspects and finally at intention. Arrêtés express the will of the Government to govern; superiority is therefore a necessary posture to be adopted by the originator; there is no expectation on the part of the originator of shared occupational group membership (although many arrêtés may give the impression of being written solely for the benefit of other civil servants). Feedback is likely to be very reduced because of the written nature of the text. The intention of the originator of the arrêté is to express the command, the instruction of the Government.

This brief survey of the communication situation in which an arrêté originates shows that the only way in which an arrêté can be expected to differ from another one is in relation to its subject matter; so any observed differences should be related to that dimension alone. And of course there are differences from one text to another; even if you measure them by crude statistical measures like the bilogarithmic type-token ratio one text can show as much variation from another one as can exist between an arrêté and an editorial (A39 - 0.804 A6 - 0.860/E3 - 0.866 E34 - 0.834). (nb approx same length)(av A 0.856,E0.886).

If the differences between texts can be allocated to correspondence with the subject variable, and if most of the other aspects of the communication situation which different workers have found to be of importance in language variation have been deliberately nullified by the originators of the text, the net result must be that the characteristics of 'administrators'' French which can be identified must be related to the intention of the originators, and to their social and occupational group membership. In the case of the text A28, it is fairly obvious that the tense and mood usage (passives, 'doit être' and 'prendra') is related to the intention (instruction/command) whereas much of the use of participles (present and past) relates to a concept of 'high formality' and presumably therefore to both the social and occupational roles. Likewise the choice of words (in Art ler - 'dispositions', 'article', 'susvisé', 'relatif') relates to the occupational role of the civil servant. These various dimensions cut across each other, of course; formality is not just related to the social (superior/inferior) opposition but also to the occupational (civil servant/public) and intention aspects.

Marquage des fromages bénéficiant de l'appellation d' origine Beaufort. A28

Le ministre de l'agriculture,

Vu la loi modifiée et complétée du 1er aout 1905 sur la répression des fraudes dans la vente des marchandises et des falsifications des denrées alimentaires et des produits agricoles;

Vu la loi du 6 mai 1919 modifiée relative à la protection des appellations d'origine;

Vu la loi du 2 juillet 1935, modifiée et complétée par le décret no 53-979 du 30 septembre 1953 tendant à l'organisation et à l'assainissement du marché du lait;

Vu le décret du 1er avril 1940 rendant obligatoire le marquage des fromages;

Vu le décret no 53-1048 du 26 octobre 1953 portant règlement d'administration publique pour l'application, en ce qui concerne les fromages, de la loi du 1er aout 1905 sur la répression des fraudes et de la loi du 2 juillet 1935 tendant à l'organisation et à l'assainissement du marché du lait;

Vu le décret no 63-859 du 13 aout 1963 complétant le décret no 61-229 du 7 mars 1961 réorganisant le comité national consultatif interprofessionnel du lait et des produits laitiers;

Vu le décret du 4 avril 1968 relatif à l'appellation d'origine Beaufort.

Vu l'arrêté du 21 juin 1956 relatif au marquage obligatoire de certains fromages;

Vu l'avis du comité national consultatif interprofessionnel du lait et des produits laitiers,

Arrêté:

Art. 1er - Les dispositions de l'article 4 de l'arrêté du 21 juin 1956 susvisé relatif au marquage obligatoire de certains fromages sont modifiées et complétées ainsi qu'il suit:

1° Les mots: "et Beaufort" sont supprimés du paragraphe 1° de cet article;

2° Il est ajouté après le paragraphe 2° un nouveau paragraphe 2° bis ainsi concu:

"2° bis Fromages bénéficiant de l'appellation d'origine Beaufort: la marque est constituée par une plaque de caséine teintée en bleu de mêmes forme et dimensions que celles prévues au paragraphe 1° et portant les mêmes inscriptions. Toutefois le nom du département est remplacé par le mot Beaufort inscrit en mêmes caractères. Le mois de fabrication doit être indiqué au voisinage immédiat de la plaque dans les mêmes conditions que celles visées au paragraphe 1°."

Art. 2 - Le directeur général des études et des affaires générales est chargé de l'application du présent arrêté, qui prendra effet trois mois après sa publication au Journal officiel de la République francaise.

Fait à Paris, le 11 avril 1969.

Pour le ministre et par délégation:

Le directeur du cabinet,

ANDRÉ BORD.

Prof. D.E. Ager
Modern Languages Department
University of Aston

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ONE TYPE OF EXPRESSIVE NOUN PHRASE IN FRENCH

In a recent lecture at London University Professor N. Ruwet (Paris) considered various noun arrangements which are expressive enough for speakers of modern French to make use of them as insults. In this short paper I shall not follow Ruwet in comparing what he called 'incorporated constructions' (such as un imbécile de linguiste) and what he termed 'dislocated constructions' (such as un linguiste, l'imbécile) but shall confine the discussion to the first of these. A comparison can only properly procéed if the nature of each of the terms of the comparison has first been established.

In the present case it is necessary to establish:

(a) why a noun phrase of the form Article + Noun + Preposition + Noun should have an expressive function (even though not all such constructions have such semantic force, e.g. une maison de campagne, un chapeau de paille);

(b) why these expressive noun phrases are not grammatical with definite article in a generic sense (given the grammaticality of la maison de campagne to label a class of objects, perhaps as the title of a periodical devoted to the subject of country houses). It is quite possible, however, for the definite article to occur with the expressive constructions, in an anaphoric sense (e.g. l'imbécile de linguiste(que vous voyez/dont vous parliez tout à l'heure)). As a consequence of this block on the generic (whether represented through singular, by abstraction, as in la maison de campagne or l'Homme, or through the plural, as with countable nouns (cf. Bennett 1975 and 1976 on the question of noun categorization and the use of articles), les maisons de campagne or les hommes) the expressive construction is not grammatical with the so-called partitive.

Before returning to consider the source of expressiveness in these constructions it will be necessary to determine the semantic function of those items which may stand at the Article position. They are usually presented together in a list but are in fact semantically very different. A noun phrase such as cet imbécile de linguiste can have only an anaphoric sense (whether the reference is to linguistic context or situational context), while un imbécile de linguiste marks the representative of a class of objects. The distinction is exactly the same if we compare cette maison de campagne (que vous voyez) with une maison de campagne (an object exhibiting features which characterize the particular class of objects).

There is a class of object definable as 'imbécile' or 'salaud' but modification may well render a necessarily limited class of objects so precise that there can be only one member of it. While it is proper to mark a representative of the class it will amount to marking the only member. The categories represented by the words which appear as first noun in the

expressive construction are definable by few but prominent features. The features have to do principally with the speaker's attitude, leaving little basis for choosing between them. It is for this reason that they are so difficult for the foreigner to master, and so easily subject to change.

Of the two possible syntactic analyses of the noun phrase being considered ((i) [[[Article [Noun] [Preposition] [Noun]]] (ii) [Article [Noun [Preposition [Noun]]]]) the present discussion has assumed the second to be the correct one, namely the leftmost noun has been taken as head and the second noun as constituent of a preposition phrase acting as modifier. It would be argued by others, including Ruwet himself, that the roles of the nouns are the reverse of this. It is not clear what formal evidence there is for such an analysis, apart from a concord principle which generally requires an agreement of first noun, say either salaud or saloperie as respectively masculine and feminine, with second noun. If such concord is used as a basis for denying the first noun the status of head word, then the term modifier will have to be extended to such cases of systematic alternation as that between bouche and gueule, pied, patte and serre, mufle, groin and boutoir. When any member of such sets of variants is used as the first noun in an 'incorporated construction' it must be in concord with the second noun (e.g. un pied d'homme but NOT, without irony, une patte d'homme).

The justification for claiming analysis (i) to be the correct one may be semantic rather syntactic, and in acknowledging the conflict between syntax and semantics an explanation may incorporate an account of the grounds for the expressiveness of the construction.

In the face of the regularity of postposition of preposition phrase constituents of noun phrases in French, the only exception being the small and well-defined class of quantifiers (e.g. peu de linguistes, beaucoup de pauvres), it is difficult to see what argument could possibly be powerful enough to require a different structural description when the surface constituency is no different. On the other hand, the semantic facts are quite different. It was argued earlier that in these cases the class of objects has only one member. It is not surprising that a fair degree of synonymy exists between these constructions (un génie de littérateur) and one in which the second noun is used alone (un littérateur). Thus the difference between the sentence with a simple noun phrase and that in which it has been demoted structurally is so small as to be insignificant, and yet the syntactic arrangement imposes an interpretation of the entailed sub-categorization of the lexical items.

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I THINK THEY KNOW THAT

Aspects of English Language work in Primary Classrooms

01. Consider these two passages of classroom talk:

1 Teacher: Right then children, it's language time. (she displays the picture of the dog) What do we call this?
Class together: Dog. Bow-wow. It's a dog. Doggie.
Teacher: Yes, it's a dog isn't it? What is it Tony?
5 Tony: (a very dull boy) no response
Teacher: (without waiting too long) It's a dog. (and continuing) Peter, what else can you tell me about this dog?
Peter: (average boy) It's brown.
10 Teacher: Yes, it's a brown dog isn't it (and continuing) Jane, what else can you tell me about this brown dog?
Jane: (bright girl) It's got a tail and it's big.
Teacher; Yes, it's got a tail and it's big. It's a big brown dog with a tail. (and continuing) Mary, can
15 you tell me what we've learned so far? What have I just said about this dog?
Mary: (dull girl) It's a brown dog (pauses)
Teacher: What else? It's got a ...?
Margaret: (dull girl) tail.
20 Teacher: (quickly) Yes, good Margaret. It's a big brown dog with a tail. What else can we see in this picture? What else has the dog got? (indicating that this is a question addressed to the whole class)
Jean: (bright) It's got four legs.
25 Teacher: Yes it's got four legs (quickly, and intent upon injecting pace into the question and response situation, emphasising 'four legs' by lifting her voice)
Peter: (average) It's got ears.
30 Teacher: Yes, it's got ears, and ... (pointing to Miriam)
Miriam: (dull) It's got a tongue.
Teacher: Yes, it's got a tongue, and its tongue is hanging out isn't it? (and to Tim) What do we call these Tim? (as she asks the question she points first to
35 the dog's eyes and then to her own)
Tim: (dull) Eyes.
Teacher: Yes, we call these his eyes. Good Tim. And this is his ...? (asking Tim again)
Tim: Nose.
40 Teacher: And this is his ...? (asking Tony)
Tony: (dull boy) Mouth.
Teacher: Yes, this is his nose, and that is his mouth. So we've learned a lot about this dog haven't we?

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1	Julia:	Draw a red line (pause) and draw a two.
	Krista:	Where?
	Julia:	On the line - just where the line starts.
	Krista:	What colour?
5	Julia:	Blue.
	Krista:	Mm.
	Julia:	And then - leave a space -
	Krista:	Yeah
	Julia:	and put - three twos - leave a space!
10	Krista:	Blue?
	Julia:	Blue.
		Yes. (accepts Krista's drawing as correct)
		Now - draw a line - a blue line downwards. (pause)
		Downwards, are you doing it downwards?
15	Krista:	Yeah - that way - yeah.
	Julia:	And do three Bs on the left side of the line.
	Krista:	What colour?
	Julia:	Red. (pause) Downwards that is.
	Krista:	Yeah.
20	Julia:	And on the other side - level with the first B, do another B.
	Krista:	Same colour?
	Julia:	Yes.
	Krista:	How many?
25	Julia:	Wait - erm - and then leave a space where the second B was on the left-hand side, and then, where the third B is, do - erm - on the opposite side -
	Krista:	Yes?
30	Julia:	Do one.
	Krista:	Another B?
	Julia:	Yes.
	Krista:	What colour - red?
	Julia:	Red.

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02. In the last few years, there has been a notable upsurge of activity centred around the problems of English language work in the primary classroom - both in terms of theortetical discussion, and in the production of practically-oriented books for teachers to read, and the development of materials to be used by them in the classroom. It is on this latter area that I want to concentrate here, and in particular on recently produced materials which underlie the contrasting extracts of language use in 01 above; where my sympathies lie will become obvious below. The first is quoted from Teach them to Speak: a language development programme in 200 lessons, by Gordon McGregor Shiach, published in 1972. The second is transcribed from a recording of children using part of the "Communication" unit of Concept 7-9, developed by J. Wight, R. Norris and F.J. Worsley on a Schools Council Project at the University of Birmingham, and published in 1971. These two pieces of work represent sharply opposed views in their linguistic and educational attitudes - theoretically, practically and ideologically. These conflicting opinions and assumptions run throughout all the work in the area, and by centring this article upon these two examples, I hope to

make prominent some of these central issues.

There is considerable cause for concern about several, quite fundamental, areas of the language-and-education research being undertaken at present, and the contingent produce of that research. In some of these undertakings, much faith and money is being invested, whilst considerable influence is carried by forceful writing of dubious worth. However well-intentioned all of this work may be, only a small amount of the actual output is academically acceptable, responsible and practically useful. The shortcomings and merits should be analysed and made explicit. The issues involved should continually be brought to the attention of those for whom the materials are intended as working aids. It is tempting to believe that the relevant information about language-use and development must have been assimilated by all educationalists by now. However, even if real-life contact produces no worrying counter-examples, a quick glance at, say, recent issues of the Times Educational Supplement will certainly do so. (See Stubbs, review of Peter Trudgill, Accent, Dialect and the School, in this copy of NLC).

03.1 For those readers not familiar with Shiach's book, I will outline, here, its format and contents. He introduces the work by presenting the rationale of his programme, with references to Luria, Vygotsky & Bernstein among others. Section two lists the materials required for use in the lessons - picture cards, number cards, utensils, narrative posters, puppets, objects, records etc. Section three, after general instructions, outlines two hundred daily lesson plans e.g. (page 46),

"Daily Lesson 14.

Materials
'How to do' cards - mother hanging out clothes; mother cooking; father washing a car; boy/girl washing in the morning.

Tape, nursery rhyme - 'Here we go round the mulberry bush', 'Sing a song of sixpence'.

Description

Display picture of mother cooking a meal. By question-response procedure have the children analyze what is depicted in the picture in detail. Work from the general scene of 'mother cooking a meal' to 'what utensils is she using?' 'What food is she using?' 'Is she frying or boiling food?' Pick out the details in the background, like cooker, cupboards and shelves, curtains, scenes from the kitchen-window. In short, bring the picture to life. Have the children analyze in a similar way each of the other pictures. Remember, begin with the general description and add details and background. Structure the responses of the children and sum up each picture simply, but lucidly.

Nursery rhymes Have the children listen to the rhymes, twice each. Act out each rhyme."

The first extract in 01 above, is given (p.76) as an example of a particularly effective teacher and teaching-style. It is suggested as a model for readers of the book to copy.

03.2. The Concept 7-9 materials are collected in four complementary boxed units; unit one is called "Listening and Understanding", unit two, "Concept Building", unit three, "Communication", and the fourth, designed with West Indian children in mind, is "The Dialect Kit". Each has well-produced graphic materials, pictures, books, charts, posters, materials for games, and tapes where relevant. There is a teachers' manual for each kit.

The unit which underlies the second data extract in 1 us "Communication" which is designed to increase the children's oral skills of firstly, description, and secondly, enquiry, with a stress on co-operative language-use to a particular purpose, in each of the activities thus presented. The particular game which produced this data is as follows: each child has a series of cards showing an arrangement of symbols - mostly alphabetic, numeric and geometric on each. One child with a card has to describe the configuration to the other, who cannot see it. The recipient of the information shows his instructor his first interpretation of the instructions, which are either accepted or rejected. In the latter case, the instructor has to modify his information to help obtain the correct drawing. The two continue using the one card until the right effect is achieved between them.

04.1. The first and most obvious telling-point in Shiach's book is its title - "Teach them to speak". I toyed here with the idea of underlining for emphasis, but realised that I wanted to underline too much! Firstly, the transitivity relationship is important. The notion of children in the object position of the sentence - passive recipients of adult wisdom, therapy and manipulation is an implicit message that runs through the whole book. The teacher is continually exhorted to "get the children to..." "have the children...". In the introductory section of the book, Shiach makes this concept of relative status and power quite explicit. Having fleetingly mentioned the influence of the peer group on a child's language, he says: (page 7)

> "Through this medium of actual communication and interaction with the environment, the child acquires from adults the experience and knowledge of previous generations" (my emphasis).

A consideration of the data extract in01 above, might well make the reader wonder if this knowledge is worth having. Consider, in particular, the concept of "learning" as it is conveyed to the children by the teacher in e.g. "Mary can you tell me what we've learned so far? What have I just said about this dog?" (lines 14/16) and "Yes, this is his nose, and that is his mouth. So we've learned a lot about this dog haven't we?" (lines 42/43). Notice in particular the juxtaposition of the two sentences in the first of these quotes, where the obvious implication is that "learning" is equated with what the teacher has said, regardless of the fact that this is unlikely in this case to be new information to the class, and regardless of paucity of intellectual effort involved. Notice also the causal relationship between the two sentences in the second quote. The children are certainly learning the pattern of the ritual encounter, and

certainly learning the function of a teacher-pupil question as opposed to a genuine inquiry. The maligned Tony of line 6 seems an interesting case with regard to this. It seems most unlikely that he doesn't know the answer to the question as put to him. It is far more likely that he can't believe that anyone should actually want that information - particularly at this point in the discourse, when the whole class has just given precisely that information! Notice, though, that by the end of the passage, Tony has learnt the rules of this game (lines 40/41). A major theme of recent work on language acquisition (neo-Chomskyan) and socialisation is that children are in no way passive receivers of linguistic and sociolinguistic competence, but are active interpreters of the social world.

Returning to the concept of the all-powerful, all-knowing adult, it is important to realise that this point of view predominates in much educationalist writing and research. Tough's work, for example, though an admirable attempt at language consciousness-raising in general, also assumes that the child is a comparatively empty vessel, and that it is the teacher's function to grasp any opportunity to instil linguistic competence, (Tough, 1975, p.2)

> "But for the child to begin to project and take the other's viewpoint, to 'take the role of the other', is major learning to be accomplished by the patient efforts of the tutoring-adult"

Of course, I do not seriously challenge the idea that adults have an important role to play in the teaching programme. What I do object to is the assumption that the child, or children working together without adult interference, have no resources of their own. The conversation between Julia and Krista in 01 above is a fine example of both children doing their best to share a complex piece of visual information through the medium of language. It is precisely by taking 'the role of the other' that they manage so successfully and efficiently. Thus, realising that a vertical line is a new piece of information, in direct conflict with the horizontal line of the previous drawing, Julia makes a repeated effort to ensure that Krista has assimilated this. (lines 13/14). Similarly, Krista is quite adept at switching to the initiating role where it is necessary to obtain information not otherwise forthcoming (e.g. lines 2, 4, 10). She also gives the reassurance of feedback noise, indicating that she is ready for more information, or understands the instructions so far (e.g. lines 6, 8, 19) and is able to prompt tactfully when Julia is getting in a muddle (line 27).

Ashworth, (1973, p.21) makes the point well,

> "They [children] are expert in receiving as well as initiating language and they can receive and understand language over an even wider range of uses. Because they are doubly expert in such complicated matters, they deserve to be treated with respect and admiration."

This notion of unequal competence and status of adult-teacher and child-learner extends through other issues in Shiach's book. Consider also the verbal group of the title - "teach to speak". This reads more like a speech-therapist's manual than a straight teaching guide! Notice that it is not presented as teaching children to speak more appropriately, or more interestingly, or even that well-trodden and prescrptive "better". Again, the notion of the child's unquestionable inadequacy is made quite clear. This surely is an extension of the notably misguided work in the USA on "language deprivation", where on extremely slender, and ill-interpreted evidence it is assumed that children from lower class, or minority-group backgrounds were somehow "without" the language they needed. The fact that much of the data was collected without thought of the crippling atmosphere of a blatant "test" situation, or the effect of a university laboratory on those who had never experienced the environment before was, amazingly, ignored, not to mention the inaccuracy of the conclusions drawn from the already questionable data (see Stubbs in press (a), for a full critique.), Labov's very fine article "The Logic of non-standard English", made a substantial contribution to counteract this well-intentioned, but paternalistic work. Here he shows, with convincing examples, the importance of collecting data in naturalistic setting, of removing the unequal or alien observer. In his actual analysis of the language thus collected, he manages to sort out the really relevant linguistic items from the superficialities, and thus proves the proposition of his title. Later researchers have contributed substantially to the idea that "language deprivation" is largely a myth (see Keddie, 1973).

Where Shiach's sympathies lie in this debate are made very clear in the introduction, where he writes about Middle Class and Working Class language. There is a particularly misleading helter-skelter summary of Basil Bernstein's "findings", which is a gross misrepresentation of Bernstein's theoretical work. I wonder, though, in how many colleges of education does this pattern get repeated - if not by the lecturer, then in the students' notes? For in a style reminiscent of one of Tom Stoppard's most useful comic techniques, we have a rapid itemisation of traits large, small, linguistic, moral, ethical, political, cognitive which are supposed to characterise the speech of people from different classes. For example, consider this set of statements about the working class speech environment, (Shiach, page 14)

> "Subtle distinctions are not made; large areas of human feeling and human expression are not put into words; objects with categories are not described in detail, nor are categories broken down and built up again. The means-end chain is not found so frequently - emphasis is on the present, the concrete, the immediate, with little attention paid to sequence and relationship. Explanations of actions or situations, and relationships between sets of objects are ignored. Thinking tends to be concrete, tangible, and is not elevated to the abstract level.

The sentences used tend to be short with little subordination and infrequent use of common conjunctions. The use of adverbs and adjectives is limited. Qualification, if any, comes from a restricted and unspecific group of expletives like 'nice' and 'big'.

The words 'it' and 'are' are rarely used since there is no need to objectify human experience. There is minimal logical thinking. Statements are given as reasons, and reasons, if given, are not explicit. The child is not really able to understand why and why not.

Sentence tags such as 'isn't it' and 'you know' will be used. These are designed and used to elicit agreement, and if repeated, will have a restricting influence on conversation. Statements will be made to encourage agreement."[1]

These characteristics are given as well-founded, proven and factual. Personally I have difficulty in conceptualising any research programme that could prove the gross generality of these statements, and we are certainly a very long way from the tentative and questionable conclusions that Bernstein and his colleagues draw from either their practical or their theoretical work. Notice the use of the academic passive throughout the passage above - the ambiguous style which confuses declarative with imperative, but which expresses un-questionable authority. Given this, and the status of the writer (chief educational psychologist for Cambridgeshire), what is the uninformed reader to conclude? I find the thought of any teacher going into a classroom with these elitist and erroneous misconceptions very disturbing. Perhaps those linguists who are accustomed to the several and thorough critiques of Bernstein (Jackson, 1974, Trudgill 1975(b) Stubbs, in press (a)) should reconsider the size of the problem where language-and-education is concerned. For this distorted yet authorative picture of Bernstein's somewhat meagre <u>verifiable</u> statements is what appears time and again in the potted texts for intending teachers. Whilst academics may happily work through the chronicalisation of Bernstein's theoretical developments as presented in "Class, Codes and Control", it must remain doubtful that the in-service or student teacher will have the same grasp of that total intellectual situation. This is particularly the case when readers take the familiar shortcuts through what is in fact academic material, in the well-meaning but dangerous hope of finding something of practical use in the day-to-day work of the classroom.

A small but crucial related observation about Shiach's book, is that considerable stress is laid upon the fact that teachers distinguish between 'bright' and 'dull' children - see for example, the bracketed information that follows each child's

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1. See the data in 01 and the teacher's use of <u>exactly</u> these strategies. Yet Shiach commends her as encouraging "a general free response" (Shiach; 17)

name in the data extract in 01 above. He writes, (page 6)

> "The teacher must ... take account of the individual differences among her children and adjust her questioning and expectations to the assessed level of each child in her class."

Ignoring the unquestioned assumption here that a teacher is female, surely such studies as "Pygmalion in the Classroom" have issued a warning light for teachers to guard against such intuitive judgements. Here, the study presented demonstrates convincingly that if students are given rats for experimentation purposes, which they believe to be selectively bred for intelligence, then they will observe intelligent behaviour in them. Similarly, the reverse holds. In the study behind the book, the students were, in fact, given a random selection of animals, not markedly intelligent or unintelligent. This suggests strongly that any subject - rat or child - will only be perceived by an assessor in concordance with that assessor's overall pre-conceptions. Herbert Kohl, in his classic and inspiringly humane book "36 children" makes this point another way, in that he refuses to read the record cards of his new class - refusing to accept the previous teachers' assessments of the children, knowing that his work with them will be the more valuable if he refuses to close his mind to their real potential. From the linguistic, rather than the ideological point of view, Labov, among others, (Labov 1969) has surely shown the importance of a sympathetic environment for the production of interesting, well-formulated talk.

A substantial linguistic criticism of the book must include a consideration of the limited and erroneous concept of the function of discourse as the author presents it. This is suggested in the introductory section, where the social function of speech is demoted to equal status with infant babbling, (page 11):

> "Pre-intellectual speech roots are manifested in the child's babbling, crying and vocalising, which serve more as a release or social function."

In connection with this, consider these instructions for the teacher (page 28)

> "Structured sentences should always be encouraged, even if it is just a one-word response being sought"

In all, there is a weak and unsophisticated concept of what conversations are really like. In the suggestions for the daily class-lesson, amongst other activities there are the familiarly tedious exercises of sentence-completion, unison-repetition, context-questions on stories, production of sentences from a picture-stimulus - these being structurally constrained by beginning "In the picture of the supermarket I see...". Though these are doubtless enjoyable rituals of a sort - the more so in that they can be played with remarkably small expenditure of intellectual effort on the behalf of the participants, and that much desired commodity - teacher approval -

is thus easily come by, their relationship to "real" discourse is hard to see. Notice particularly this specified activity; the teacher is to produce sentences like "Mary drank her milk slowly through a straw". The children are then supposed to repeat this utterance, Shiach continues (page 84):

> "Ask the class to say exactly what you say. Do not accept any alterations or omissions."

This totally ignores the fact that exact repetition of extended utterances is an embarrassment to be avoided at all costs in naturalistic conversation. (see Burton, forthcoming). Whatever these activities are teaching - features of poetic function perhaps, the language of power and status, certainly, they are not teaching the children to speak in anything but a trivial sense. The data given in the opening of O1, is quoted by Shiach with unmitigated approval. Amongst other reasons for this, not all relevant here, he claims that the teacher allows "a general free response". Whilst doubtless the much-charted Initiation-Response-Feedback structure of the traditional classroom (see Sinclair & Coulthard 1974, Mishler 1975) might prove a useful structure for the transmission of certain social and cultural and even informative messages, it could hardly be called an opportunity for a general free response. In this data, in particular, it is evident that for the most part a selected individual must provide a selected discourse move, realised by a selected grammatical item, with a selected ideational content. This could hardly be called an opportunity for a general free response.

I have taken Shiach's book as a particular example of a strain of language-in-education writing. Trudgill (1975, chapter 5) criticises the linguistic howlers perpetrated in comparable books by Herriot, Wilkinson and others.

04.2 In an article, "Language through the Looking Glass", Wight produces a concise epigram that does much to indicate the difference of the Concept 7-9 approach to language work, from many other strategies used in the primary classroom. (page 3)

> "What can you tell a man about his picture that he can't already see, and doesn't already know"

This points out, most succinctly, a glaring fault in many teaching and testing methodologies which do not realise, or acknowledge that inherent falsity of a conversation where a higher-status questioner asks questions to which all involved parties in the discourse know that he knows the answer. I am reminded of the following anecdote of Michael Halliday's (personal communication). A ten-year old girl came home from school, and told her mother that they had had a history test in school that day and that she had answered a question that said "write about Christopher Columbus". She described all the interesting things she had written, but her mother realised that at no point had she mentioned that Columbus is supposed to have discovered America! "But didn't you write that he

discovered America?" she asked. Her daughter replied quite innocently, "Oh no - I think they know that."

It is a common technique in the chalk-and-talk environment for the teacher to engage in a "conversation" which is bizarre by every-day standards, though the pattern is quickly understood and accepted as a methodology by even very young children. Recordings of Middle-Class mothers talking with their pre-school children demonstrate that the Initiation-Response-Feedback routine is quite commonly used in play sessions (see Wootton 1974, Stubbs in press (a)). So ingrained does this practice become, that it is a common and repeated experience for teachers in Further Education, to realise that it is very difficult to persuade adult students that a tutor may ask a question without a pre-supposed answer - either in the sense that it stems from genuine ignorance, or in the sense that the answer required should take the form of an opinion, so that there is no correct or previously accessible answer. Thus, in a sense, the IRF dialogue pattern of the dirst data extract in 01 - a pattern that is immediately recognisable as "classroom talk" - is, in terms of discourse habits, not only negative training, but possibly detrimental.

It is a basic tenet of the Concept 7-9 materials, that the children should be given real jobs to achieve through the medium of spoken language. Thus, using the symbol cards in the "communication unit", there is a real task of communication to be done. There are no artificial restrictions on the type of language used, of the "Answer in complete sentences" variety. The language used is recognised as successful if the job gets done successfully. This functionally-oriented approach differs quite fundamentally from the ritualistic use of language outlined in 04.1 above.

A particularly interesting feature of this game is that the initiating role becomes the right of each pupil in turn - whereas initiation in the traditional classroom dialogue is almost exclusively the right of the teacher. Occasionally children are seen to initiate there - but this is predominently within the discourse confines that the teacher has set up for the particular transaction. Thus, technically, Peter (in line 29) speaks without being asked anything, but the structure and ideational content of his contribution are strictly within the pattern that the teacher has already established. Should a pupil's initiation deviate from the teacher's requirements, he has a range of meta-statements that can curtail alien contributions, e.g. "Hands up please", "Don't speak when I'm speaking" "No calling out" etc. (see Stubbs, in press (b)) No pupil has access to the use of such metastatements in the course of an ordinary lesson. Notice, however, that in 01 (line 25 of the second extract), Julia is able to control the flow of the talk in just this way - not for disciplinary reasons, but in order to facilitate the transmission of information. The use of these materials gives the children extended opportunities for using all available roles and discourse mechanisms as and when the occasion demands. Alan Davies makes the general point, with reference to secondary education, (Davies; 1965, p.38)

"English is there, in use all the time, by different groups in a variety of situations. Let us show children what there is, and, showing them, help them to a wider control and a greater tolerance over other registers, other styles. And let our discussion and our production deal with the real facts of the real language".

As well as demanding variety in the range of linguistic activities a child is exposed to in the classroom, the Concept 7-9 work as a whole requires tact. Firstly, in the sense that language work should be well integrated with other activities - not singled out as a subject with particular problems. In this respect, the opening utterance of data extract one in 01 (and Shiach's explicit approval of it as a strategy) is anathema. Secondly, in the sense that the utmost care must be taken so that a child's own language is not treated as inadequate, either cognitively or socially. Ashworth again, puts this nicely, (page 21)

"He [the teacher] must have a high regard for each child as an individual, precious and unique; and he must extend this regard to what may well be the child's most personal possession - his language...It is necessary that the teacher should accept the child and with him his language. What is at stake is the child's self esteem, the level of his motivation, his ability to move into literacy, his skill in symbolising the world and thus controlling it and himself; in short his resourcefulness in communicating with other human beings and his power to develop intellectually and emotionally."

The Concept 7-9 work keeps a very clear distinction between the written and spoken media. Thus, for example, the dialect kit, intended to help West Indian children with the few syntactic differences from standard English that their speech dialect demonstrates, is aimed directly and explicitly at teaching the conventions needed for effective written English, with no attempt whatsoever at altering the childrens' spoken language. The same applies, of course, for other dialect variants.

The fact that many of the materials are used by children without adult company or interference, means that they are stretched to the limits of their personal resources in order to complete the jobs to their own satisfaction. It is basic to the underlying philosophy of the materials, that a child's resources are extremely sophisticated, and that given an interesting situation, where intellectual and linguistic demands are sufficiently challenging, then the child will employ those resources naturally and efficiently. Thus, confronted with a configuration of symbols not seen before, possibly containing items and relationships for which there is no obvious equivalent, the child is perfectly able to cope with the transmission of the information. Co-operation is a strong point - ideologically and linguistically. Thus, if the instructions of one are not realised by the other in the way intended, the instructor has an informative, graphic record of the difference between

speaker-intention and hearer-interpretation. Thus, the notion of conversation as a two-way process is decidedly re-inforced. Similarly, if, say, the child with the most obviously dominant role - that of instructor - does not provide sufficient information for his hearer, this second child is free to direct the discourse by means of enquiries, as is the case in the following piece of data:

Stephen: T
Adrian: What colour?
Stephen: Blue.
Adrian: Is there anything else?
Stephen: No.
Adrian: Is it the right way up?
Stephen: Yes
Adrian: Is it a capital T?
Stephen: Yes.

Sinclair's notion of "command of a language" is a useful one for educationalists to bear in mind, (Sinclair, 1971, page 221),

> "I regard command of a language as the ability of mature, educated native speakers to exercise full control over their environment by means of their language behaviour... The acquisition of command of a language requires techniques, and techniques are not highly regarded in English teaching today. They smack of old-style methods remembered with contempt because of their failure to achieve their purpose, and their lack of motivation on the part of the teacher or pupil. The social purpose of language as a highly discriminating communicative instrument is currently divorced from the acquisition of techniques."

Given that even very small children may be seen to acquire communicative competence in any discourse situation they actually come up against, it seems that language materials for educational purposes should seek to broaden the range of naturalistic conversational environments for them to experience. The more varied and frequent these opportunities are, the more likely is it that their competence may be matched by sophisticated performance.

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REVIEW OF

Peter Trudgill (1975) Accent, Dialect and the School
Edward Arnold, pp.106, £1.95

William Labov (1969) has argued that it is our responsibility as linguists to remedy some of the ignorance about language which is unfortunately widespread amongst educationalists, and that the most useful service which linguists can perform today is to clear away the illusion of "verbal deprivation" and provide a more adequate notion of the relation between standard and non-standard language. This short, clear book by Trudgill will hopefully help to perform these tasks amongst British teachers and other educationalists. Trudgill's book is highly recommended to teachers, student teachers, educational researchers and other students requiring an introduction to the problems of language in education. For linguists, I would highly recommend the sometimes uncomprehending reviews and discussion which the book has received in the national press! Linguists might then be encouraged to use their professional expertise to demonstrate the fallacies in the verbal deprivation hypothesis and in the forms of primitive language myth which are still widely held, and, in general, to use their professional influence to increase tolerance of linguistic diversity. I suspect that many linguists assume that people as a whole - and teachers in particular - are now relatively familiar with standard linguistic (non-prescriptive) views of language. Unfortunately this is often not so, and in many cases confusion and misunderstanding of basic concepts reign supreme.

Trudgill's book is the latest in the series "Explorations in Language Study" which has followed the work by the Schools Council Programme in Linguistics and Language Teaching, and it is aimed primarily at teachers. It is a sensible and succinct summary of: the causes and types of language variation - regional, social and stylistic; the concepts of standard and nonstandard language; the educational problems caused by linguistic diversity, particularly by the intolerant attitudes often held about non-standard dialects and accents which have low social prestige; and the reading problems which are partly due to nonstandard dialect. The main argument of the book (p.101) is the need to develop people's tolerance to linguistic diversity in accent and dialect. Trudgill takes the view now known as "appreciation of dialect differences". That is, he argues (p.69) that the solution to linguistic problems in schools is to change people's attitudes to linguistic diversity - not change pupils' dialects, but to attempt to educate people to the view that all dialects are equally good from a linguistic point of view, and that "wrong" is a social, not a linguistic, judgement.

From the point of view of the largely linguistic readership of the Nottingham Linguistic Circular, there is not much else to say about the content. Trudgill summarizes, competently

and briefly, views which I assume all linguists hold about the doctrine of correctness, about the linguistic equivalence of standard and nonstandard language varieties, and about the misleading nature of aesthetic judgements of language. The book should, however, prove most useful in spreading these ideas amongst educationalists.

The book is, then, a clear, well-ordered, calm presentation of basic facts about linguistic diversity, which most linguists would take for granted. To linguists there is little in the book which is news. But these comments are not intended critically: I make them because the book has received a barrage of uncomprehending attention from readers, ranging from abusive letters to the author to poorly argued attacks in the press. Clearly Trudgill has touched a raw nerve.

I am not clear about the protocol of discussing one review in another, but the issues seem so important that it is not the moment to worry about the etiquette of reviewing: the rules have already been broken elsewhere. Trudgill's book has been reviewed, for example, by Hegarty (Times Educational Supplement, 30.1.76). From Hegarty's review I have the impression that he and I have not read the same book. Hegerty refers to parts of Trudgill's book as "unhelpful" and as "arrant nonsense", and accuses Trudgill of making "tendentious statements" without proper evidence, and of using "unsupported sociological findings".

Clearly. what is going on here is some kind of symbolic warfare between ideologically opposed academics. Hegarty accuses Trudgill of being a "polemicist", and of dabbling in areas "well beyond the province of a linguist". Yet Hegarty is clearly himself a polemicist, and has not appreciated the nature of Trudgill's argument nor the force of his evidence. Nowhere does Hegarty comment directly on Trudgill's facts and figures: he merely reasserts the position that Trudgill is attacking. In the end, it appears to come down to a disagreement between Trudgill and Hegarty over the concept of "verbal deprivation." Hegarty's view is that we need more evidence to claim that verbal deprivation is a myth. Trudgill does provide, however, considerable evidence that the notion is a myth: he points to the very controversial relation between language and cognition; to the misleading nature of supporting evidence gathered in artificial test situations; to the inadequate analyses of language often used by those in favour of the deprivation hypothesis; and so on. Hegarty, on the other hand, simply reasserts that the concept is valid, but does not provide any evidence in favour. We are no longer in the arena of well-argued critical reviews of scholarly books. Trudgill's book, to repeat, is well-ordered and full of facts and figures about linguistic diversity. Hegarty comments on none of these, but attacks the position which he thinks Trudgill represents.

I should make it clear that not all the articles in the press are misleading. Pye (1976), writing in the Sunday Times (29.2.76) gives a sensible enough account of Trudgill's views and quotes him at length. But the article usefully reminds linguists of the reactions which a non-prescriptive approach to

dialect can provoke: "Challenge to 'proper' English" - "Accused of plotting the death of standard English. He gets sacks of hate mail."

It is true that we could ideally do with more rigorous, observational sociolinguistic work on language in education in Britain. Some Labov-style work on the relation between language and social class stratification, and the relevance of this to educational issues, has been done in Britain and Trudgill cites work by Macaulay in Glasgow, and some of his own findings in Norwich. But there is, as yet, no large body of work comparable to that of Labov, Shuy and others in the USA, and it is not always clear just how far American research with working class Negroes can be extrapolated to the British situation.

Trudgill does however fail to discuss one very important body of sociolinguistic work on the problems of West Indian children in British schools. He refers to unpublished work by Edwards in Reading. But he ignores important work started during a Schools Council Project in Birmingham in 1969. (Wight & Norris, 1970, Wight, 1970, 1975). The project began by studying whether the Jamaican Creole spoken by many West Indian children in the Midlands caused educational problems for them. Many West Indian children are in an extreme dialect situation, since at home they speak a variety of an English-based Creole which is mutually unintelligible with standard British English. The general conclusion of the project was that Creole did not in itself or directly, cause educational problems for the children. Dialect interference did not, for example, cause severe comprehension problems since most pupils rapidly become bidialectal in a version of the Creole and a classroom dialect approaching standard English. The project concluded that the language problems of West Indian children were shared by many British children and much of the work centred on producing communication games for developing children's language skills. (These materials, published as Concept 7-9, are discussed elsewhere in this edition of NLC.)

Unfortunately, such a book as Trudgill's is needed not only to remedy ignorance about language, but actively to combat totally misleading ideas about language which have been given wide circulation in several well-known books aimed at student teachers. For example, Trudgill quotes (p.92-3) Wilkinson's confusion of the concepts of nonstandard dialect and restricted code (concepts which Bernstein himself quite explicitly distinguishes), and he quotes (p.96) a passage from Herriot's book Language and Teaching about working class language which Trudgill's linguistic colleagues have reacted to (as I do) as "misguided" and "ludicrous". In general, he points out that the concept of verbal deprivation is simply taken for granted by several British educationalists and psychologists, at a time when it is being severely questioned by linguists as having no basis in linguistic or anthropological evidence. And he devotes one valuable chapter to clearing up some confusions between the concepts of nonstandard dialect, restricted

code and verbal deprivation. It is unfortunate, but necessary, that one group of social scientists is having to try and clear up some of the confusion caused by another group. Thus Labov (1969) has attacked the "illusion of verbal deprivation", Keddie (1974) has attacked the "myth of cultural deprivation", and Jackson (1974) has attacked the "myth of restricted and elaborated codes." Trudgill's book is a well-argued addition to this important counter-literature.

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