

University College London

SURVEY OF ENGLISH USAGE

Annual Report 1964-5

I FINANCE

Our sources of annual income remain unchanged:

DSIR (now transferred to OSTI)	£2000
Department of Education and Science (not claimed in toto)	£2000
Longmans Green (fifth instalment)	£2000
Cambridge University Press (fourth instalment)	£ 250
	<u>£6250</u>

Statement of Expenditure

Salaries, insurance, etc.	£4880
Flexowriter	£1780
Equipment, books, maintenance	£ 350
College administrative charges	£ 145
	<u>£7155</u>

The imbalance was largely caused by the purchase of the Flexowriter, an expense budgeted for in the DSIR grant of £8000 which we are allowed to spread over four years. The financial position this year is thus more comfortable

than would appear at first sight, and this has been made possible by University College having assumed responsibility for Mr Davy's salary. This will not remain wholly the case in future since, as Assistant Director, Mr Davy will receive an honorarium from Survey funds.

The work of the Survey continued to benefit indirectly from the last remaining year of the Ford grant. Research studentships were paid to Mr N. Fairclough and Mr S. Greenbaum; it was possible for us to invite Professor W. Nelson Francis to come for two months from Brown University and hold seminars in the English Department; the grant also financed seminar visits by Professor Morton Bloomfield (Harvard), Professor Barbara Strang (Newcastle), Dr Yngve Olsson (Gothenburg), Professor M. Schlauch (Warsaw), Professor H. Marchand (Tübingen).

## II GENERAL

After three years on the Survey (eighteen months as Assistant Director), Mr Svartvik has resigned to take up a post at the University of Gothenburg. He has made an immense contribution to our work, but, while we deeply

regret his departure, he leaves with our best wishes for his future and we trust that the Survey will continue to benefit through continued contact with him. Mr Derek Da has been appointed to succeed him as Assistant Director, and he assumes these duties in addition to his own special area of research within the Survey as well as his teaching commitments in the Department.

Miss Godfrey and Mr Carvell have our warmest congratulations on their marriage, and we are glad that for the present at least both are continuing as Research Assistants. Mr N. Fairclough and Mr S. Greenbaum, who have been pursuing their own researches based on Survey material, are appointed as Research Assistants from 1 October 1965.

Visitors who spent some time working in the Survey this year have included:

Professor W. Nelson Francis (Providence, R.I.)  
 M. G. Brézard (Besançon)  
 Dr Y. Olsson (Gothenburg)  
 Mr G.E. Selby (Durham)  
 Dr D. Reibel (California)

Briefer visits have been paid by Mr Tupper (National Research Council, Canada), Dr W.R. Lee, Dr J.L. Darlingto (MIT), Miss M. Yu (Hong Kong), Professor J. Söderlind (Uppsala), and others.

With the filing of each additional text and the acquisition of each new book, our accommodation problem

is steadily aggravated. With our two rooms in daily occupation from 9.30 to 5.30 by eight people, cramped conditions and noise from typewriters and recorders make work something of a strain. When one considers that visitors frequently add to the pressure and that classes of students regularly do so, it will be seen that the position is acute. The purchase of the Flexowriter presented a severe problem until the Librarian kindly offered to house it in return for its part-time use for Library purposes.

### III THE YEAR'S WORK

Much thought (particularly by Miss Mulholland) has been given to the categories and proportional selection of texts. Good progress has been made with prosodic transcription of spoken texts covering a wide variety of styles. In addition to supervising this and continuing his work on the comparison of spontaneous English and written English read aloud, Mr Davy has been working on a prosodic transcription which might reduce time on this aspect of our work and which will in any case be required by reason

of the limitations imposed by the Flexowriter keyboard. Mr Davy has also established valuable contact with the Sound Archives department of the BBC with a view to securing samples of those spoken styles which are difficult to obtain by ordinary means. Detailed work on prosodic aspects of the sermon has been begun by an M.A. student, Miss E. Osmer.

Miss Godfrey, along with Miss Mulholland and Miss Evetts, has made similarly good progress with the first-stage filing of texts and has given a good deal of thought to the adaptation of the filing (structure-labelling) system to storage on magnetic tape. It is now considered practicable, retaining a basic slip-file of over 100,000 words for manual trial analyses, to use magnetic tape as the main repository, and Miss Godfrey and Mr Fairclough have prepared a suitable analysis of some material for an experiment in the autumn for which Mr Carvell is writing the computer program. The material being used for this trial is part of the million-word corpus of written American English compiled by W.N. Francis and colleagues at Brown University, a copy of which on magnetic tape was kindly presented to the Survey by Professor Francis. In these computational developments we are glad to have close contact with colleagues in the Communication Research Centre, particularly with the unit led by Dr R. Huddleston which is studying scientific English.

Work which was in effect second-stage analysis of verb-particle sequences was completed as a successful M.A. thesis by Mr Fairclough, and Mr Greenbaum has been carrying out second-stage work on verbless clauses. The most detailed piece of analysis so far carried out in the Survey Mr Svartvik's study of the passive, was fortunately completed before its author left at the end of July; this work benefited greatly from the help of Mr Carvell on aspects connected with numerical taxonomy.

Mr Svartvik also collaborated with the Director in devising an experiment to categorise types of linguistic deviance to measure degrees of linguistic acceptability. The technique was tried out on two groups of informants and the results, written up as a monograph, are now at press.

The sub-project on the application of computational techniques to the analysis of English is the subject of a separate report made to the Office for Scientific and Technical Information. Already in the last annual report we were able to announce Part I of a working paper entitled 'Linguistic Classification and Numerical Taxonomy'. A great deal of further work by Mr Carvell, in collaboration with Mr Svartvik, has resulted in the completion of the paper and the distribution to interested scholars in mimeographed form of the very much larger Part II.

A paper was contributed by the Director to the autumn

meeting of the Linguistics Association, and in addition to giving a public lecture at University College and seminar papers in the French and Psychology departments, he lectured in Bergen, Leeds, Oxford and Bangor. Mr. Svartvik presented a paper at a summer meeting of the London Linguistic Circle and Miss Godfrey broadcast on the Survey for the BBC Overseas Service.

#### IV RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

- D. Crystal and R. Quirk, Systems of Prosodic and Para-Linguistic Features in English, The Hague (Mouton: Janua Linguarum Series) 1964.
- J. Godfrey, 'The Survey of English Usage', English Language Teaching Vol. 19 (1965), pp. 98-103.
- H.T. Carvell and J. Svartvik, Linguistic Classification and Numerical Taxonomy, Part II (mimeographed working paper).
- R. Quirk, 'Descriptive Statement and Serial Relationship' Language Vol. 41 (1965), pp. 205-217.
- R. Quirk, A.P. Duckworth, J.P.L. Rusiecki, J. Svartvik and A.J.T. Colin, 'Studies in the Correspondence of Prosod

to Grammatical Features in English', Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Linguists, The Hague 1964, pp. 679-91.

- R. Quirk and J. Mulholland, 'Complex Prepositions and Related Sequences', English Studies, Supplement to Vol. 45 (1964), pp. 64-73.
- R. Quirk and J. Svartvik, Investigating Linguistic Acceptability (Mouton: at press).
- J. Svartvik, On Voice in the English Verb (Mouton: at press)

RANDOLPH QUIRK

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