

University College London

SURVEY OF ENGLISH USAGE

Annual Report 1966-67

I. FINANCE

Our sources of income were as follows:

Longmans Green (seventh instalment)	£2000
OSTI (transferred from DSIR)	£2389
Department of Education and Science	£2732
	<u>£7121</u>

As in the past, we record our expenditure under three heads:

Salaries, insurance, etc.	£6140
Research expenses (esp. books, equipment, maintenance, experimental subjects)	£ 518
College administrative charges	£ 100
	<u>£6758</u>

With the receipt of the last instalment of their £14,000 grant, we take this opportunity of recording afresh our deep gratitude to the directors of Longmans Green, who in 1960 took the generous and public-spirited step of enabling us to establish the Survey as a continuing record and analysis of English usage in all its rich variety. It has long been our hope, however, that the public service aspect of our work would become recognised by having our expenses met from public funds, and we have been pleased over the

years to have this recognition to some extent in the grants made by DSIR (subsequently OSTI) and DES. During the present session, our ambition has become fully realised, following a recommendation in our favour by the Committee on Research and Development in Modern Languages. In June 1967, the Department of Education and Science announced a grant of £15,705 to continue the Survey until 1970. For the next three years, therefore, the Survey will for the first time be sustained entirely from public funds, and while the support is not on as large a scale or for as long a period as we had hoped, we are profoundly grateful for it and for the recognition it implies.

II. GENERAL

With the termination of the OSTI grant and no provision in the new DES grant for the continuance of the 'mechanised analysis' sub-project, we are in the sad position of bidding farewell to Mr H.T. Carvell, who leaves the Survey with our best wishes as well as our thanks for the co-operative spirit in which he has worked as a member of our team. His departure not only from University College but from London, however, doubles our loss since it means the departure also of our most experienced 'first-stage' analyst, Mrs Judith A. Carvell, whose enthusiasm, loyalty, and specialised knowledge will be grievously missed. A further blow, whose seriousness is difficult to overestimate, is the resignation of Miss

Joan Mulholland (Mrs Huddleston) who has moved to Reading on her husband's appointment to a post in the Linguistics Department there. These losses, sad enough on the personal level, leave us once more with the dismal problem of reduced progress through further cycles of recruitment and training.

On the brighter side, it is a pleasure to note that in October we were joined by a new part-time colleague, Mrs Caroline Bott, who came to us from Cambridge where she had taken the Diploma in Numerical Analysis and Automatic Computing. Another point to report with pleasure is the success of our former colleague, David Crystal (now at the University of Reading) in proceeding to the London Ph.D. degree with a thesis based on Survey materials.

Mr R.D.Eagleson of the Australian Language Research Centre at Sydney spent some time on the Survey studying our procedure, and other visitors during the year who were interested in our techniques in relation to partially analogous projects being undertaken elsewhere were Professor G.Nickel (Germany), Dr A. Zettersten, Dr C.C.Elert, and Miss M.Olsson (all of Sweden). We were pleased to welcome on short visits also Professor R. Filipovic and Dr N.Dimitrijevic (Jugoslavia), Dr V.Fried (Czechoslovakia), Dr K.Yamakawa (Japan), Dr B.Khlebnikova (USSR), Professor V.Dearing, Professor M.Steinmann, and Professor D.W.Maurer (USA), as well as such British scholars as Professor W.Haas, Dr W.R.Lee, and Mr R.A.Close.

III. THE YEAR'S WORK

Those engaged on the Survey this year in addition to RQ and DD have been Valerie Adams (VA), Caroline Bott (CB), H.T.Carvell (HC), Judith A. Carvell (JAC), S.Greenbaum (SG), and Joan Mulholland (JM).

Prosodic transcriptions (DD, VA) have been produced at a steady rate and several seminars have been held, attended by Dr Crystal, on problems arising. An important fresh source of material has been law court proceedings, and an excellent selection of tape recordings was made available through Mr R.Thesiger and the Lord Chancellor's Office. Three M.A. students (Mrs Whitcut, Mr Riddle, and Mr Winterson) have been trained in transcription by DD and VA, and their dissertations will constitute a welcome addition to our corpus of transcribed speech.

It is this type of material that has constituted the chief addition to the basic slip collection (JM), the work in this area now being done regularly by the 'Duplimat' process in place of the former use of stencils. First-stage analysis has been continued by VA, JM, and JAC.

SG has pressed ahead with second-stage work on adverbial expressions, and a doctoral thesis in this field is almost complete. DD is likewise well advanced with a thesis, and in his case this pursues second stage analysis of prosodic phenomena. Other second stage work has been done on the non-finite verb clause and on the complex finite verb group (VA, RQ), fields in which further seminars have been held.

ILA experiments were conducted by SG, RQ, and DD in University College, Bedford College and Westfield College, with special reference to the acceptability of various adjunct constructions. All the data from these experiments were punched on IBM cards, and CB has made excellent progress in devising programs for analysing the results. Other ILA work has been done in collaboration with the psychopharmacology research project in University College (Dr H. Steinberg), and a specially designed battery of tests has now been used with several groups of subjects to investigate the effect of psychoactive drugs and certain combinations of such drugs on the implementation of linguistic rules. It is hoped that on the one hand ILA may provide psychopharmacologists with a sensitive and significant index of drug action, and that on the other hand drug effects may provide some information on the nature and operation of linguistic rules.

On the very eve of the OSTI grant's expiry, HC achieved successful runs with the computer grammar of nominal group structures. This work will now be continued by a colleague in the Computer Centre of University College, Mrs Carol Easthope, in consultation with HC who has generously put his work at her disposal. Mrs Easthope intends to make a modest advance next year in the course of her work for the University of London Diploma in Computer Science, and hopes to make more significant progress with analysing Survey data subsequently in the preparation of a higher degree.

In the course of the year, RQ lectured on the work of the Survey in Oxford, at Imperial College, to the Royal Society of Literature (the Giff Edmonds Memorial Lecture), and delivered the Threlford Memorial Lecture to the Institute of Linguists, of which he was elected Honorary Fellow. He also joined in a broadcast discussion with Professor A.C.Gimson on sociolinguistic aspects of current English usage. DD lectured on Survey material at the Sidney Webb College, London, and at the Dacorum College of Further Education, Hemel Hempstead; in addition, he and Dr Crystal have almost completed their book on varieties of English. SG gave seminars to graduate students in the Departments of English and Linguistics at University College, and, like DD, VA, and JM, served as a tutor on the University of London Summer School of English, where the opportunity was taken once more to test the relevance of Survey observations to the teaching of English as a foreign language. CB attended a Symposium in the Mechanical Solution of Linguistic Problems at the Lanchester College of Technology, Coventry; she also enrolled on the IBM Department of Education course in Assembler Language and is to be congratulated on her Grade 'A' result.

IV. PUBLICATIONS

- Quirk, R., 'Acceptability in Language', Proceedings of the University of Newcastle Philosophical Society vol.1 (1966), pp. 79-92.
- 'Our Knowledge of English', The Incorporated Linguist vol. 6 (1967), pp.1-6.
- 'On English Usage', Journal of the Royal Society of Arts vol.114 (1966), pp.837-51.
- 'Types of Deviance in English Sentences', in A Common Purpose, ed. J.R.Squire (Champaign, Illinois: National Council for the Teaching of English, 1966), pp.46-60.

RANDOLPH QUIRK
DEREK DAVY

September 1967