

University College London

SURVEY OF ENGLISH USAGE

Annual Report 1977-8

I GENERAL

The College celebrated this year its 150th Anniversary and at a major exhibition of the College's work, past and present, the Survey was given a prominent place and attracted a good deal of attention, both from visitors and in the press. The year also saw the publication of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English in which we take some modest pride, not merely because the editors were able to make good use of our files but because several of them are past or present members of the Survey team.

The present staff suffered a major change with the resignation of Miss C. Sweetman to take up a senior administrative post with PHAB. We have been fortunate in recruiting Miss J. Cheney in her place, and fortunate also in having the part-time help for this year only of Mr K. Halliwell.

Dr Gunnel Tottie held a short-term Longman Fellowship at the Survey from April until the end of July. She pursued her highly significant work on English negation and in addition made a valuable contribution to the Survey work by lending a hand at first-stage analysis.

Through the generosity of Longman, we were able to bring Professors Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik to a nine-day intensive seminar at UCL, making a detailed study of numerous grammatical problems and laying the foundation for further close collaboration over the next few years.

The following scholars spent periods in the Survey working upon research problems:

- Prof W-D Bald (Aachen) - response intonation
- Miss B Bird (Oslo) - nominal compounds
- Miss A Bjørge (Tromsø) - reference and concord
- Dr L Breivik (Tromsø) - existential sentences
- Mrs J Coates (Liverpool) - modals
- Miss L Haegeman (Ghent) - the future
- Mr D Hart (Reading) - temporal conjunctions
- Mrs K Hart (Edinburgh) - adjective comparison
- Mrs M Ingham (Poznan) - present tense
- Mrs C Macdonald (Newcastle) - auxiliaries
- Mr S Monster (Groningen) - the progressive
- Prof F Palmer (Reading) - modals
- Prof R Redfern (Clarion State College) - pronouns
- Prof G Stein (Siegen) - passive
- Mrs A-B Stenström (Lund) - questions and answers
- Dr J Taglicht (Jerusalem) - nonfinite clauses

Mr A Vermeire (Hasselt) - intensifiers
Mr A Wharton (Reading) - comment clause intonation

Among further visitors that we were pleased to welcome:

Prof P Christophersen (Qatar)
Mr A Coleridge (London)
Dr C Faerch (Copenhagen)
Prof J Fisiak (Poznan)
Mr D Hicks (London: ESU)
Dr H G Hönig (Mainz)
Mr R Jones-Parry (Singapore)
Dr A Juul (Copenhagen)
Dr V Kohonen (Åbo)
Mrs V Mavrides (Thessaloniki)
Dr F Mish (Merriam-Webster)
Dr A Mittwoch (Jerusalem)
Prof D Nagashima (Osaka)
Miss D Osisanya (Nigeria)
Mr F Planchon (Mons)
Prof K Schröder (Augsburg)
Prof M Spevack (Münster)
Prof M Steinmann (Minnesota)
Dr G Tetzlaff (Heidweg)
Prof E Thumboo (Singapore)

II THE YEAR'S WORK

Some further spoken texts were transcribed (RQ, Joy Bowes, René Quinault) to supplement particular categories, and good progress was made in adding further manuscript texts to the corpus, thanks to the skilful and scholarly work of Leta Almeda. Sylvia Chalker, Audrey Morris, and Oonagh Sayce pressed ahead efficiently with first-stage analysis. René Quinault gave expert help in many directions, not least in ensuring the smooth transmission of Catherine Sweetman's coordinating role to Jan Cheney, who also continued CS's work on 'zero that' as time permitted.

The associated Survey of Spoken English conducted in Lund by Jan Svartvik has made excellent progress. The primary goal of making machine readable the spoken corpus of the Survey has been achieved, with only some mopping-up tasks still outstanding. The material will be made available on magnetic computer tape (at cost) through the International Computer Archive of Modern English whose coordinating secretary is Dr Stig Johansson, University of Oslo. Plans are in hand to make the transcriptions of spontaneous speech available additionally in printed form.

Thanks to continued support from the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation, the Lund project can now proceed to Phase II. The first step in the analyses of the material will be grammatical tagging (parsing and the assigning of function labels) by a semi-automatic, interactive system.

During the year, Jan Svartvik read papers at conferences in Stockholm, Poznan and Montreal. As Secretary-Treasurer of IATEFL, René Quinault helped to organise the Association's conference at Goldsmiths' College in April. Sylvia Chalker has worked on advanced study programmes and correspondence exercises for Linguaphone. Oonagh Sayce read a paper on macaronic poetry at Bedford College. RQ was elected to the Council of the British Academy, made several broadcasts, and read conference papers in Denmark, Sweden, Hawaii, and Japan.

III PUBLICATIONS

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- Close, R A 'Modern Linguistics Applied to Problems in English Grammar', Views on Language and Language Teaching 4 (1978)
- Gnutzmann, C 'Sprachliche Variation und Grammatische Handbücher des Englischen', Papiere zur Linguistik 15 (1977)
- Textkonstitution und Textsortendifferenzierung, Hannover (mimeo) 1978
- Greenbaum, S (ed) Acceptability in Language, The Hague 1978
- 'Judgments of Syntactic Acceptability and Frequency', Studia Linguistica 31 (1977)
- Kussmaul, P 'Auffordern im Englischen', Kongressberichte der 8. Jahrestagung der GAL (Hochschulverlag, Mainz 1977)
- 'In fact, actually, anyway...: Indikatoren von Sprechakten im informellen gesprochenen Englisch', Die Neueren Sprachen 77 (1978)
- Quirk, R 'Grammatical and Pragmatic Aspects of Countability', Die Neueren Sprachen 77 (1978)
- 'Aspects of English as an International Language' Sproglaererene 9 (1978)
- 'Language and Tabu', New Society 44 (1978)
- & Svartvik, J 'A Corpus of Modern English', in Text-Corpora: Materialien für eine empirische Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft, ed. H. Bergenholtz & B. Schaefer (at press)
- Svartvik, J & Sager, O Engelsk Universitetsgrammatik, Stockholm 1978
- & Wright, D 'The Use of ought in Teenage English', in Greenbaum 1978
- Tottie, G 'Idioms with have', in Alarik Rynell Festschrift, ed. M Rydén & L A Björk, Stockholm 1978
- 'Variation, Acceptability, and the Advanced Foreign Learner', in Greenbaum 1978