The British Association for Applied Linguistics

No. 23  NEWSLETTER  Spring 1985

From time to time the Newsletter has contained reports about the BAAL/LAGS Committee for Linguistics in Education, better known as CLIE. Many BAAL members will also be familiar with the CLIE Working Papers, which Dick Hudson has edited and produced since their inception in 1983. For this special issue of the Newsletter, we are fortunate to be able to reproduce the first five Working Papers, with an editorial introduction by Dick. They bear witness to the important role that Dick has performed in seeking ways in which linguistics can respond to the educational needs of our day.

CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLIE WORKING PAPERS:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. (1983) &quot;Linguistic equality&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (1984) &quot;The uselessness of 'formal grammar'?”</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (1984) &quot;The higher-level differences between speech and writing&quot;</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (1984) &quot;Language and sexism&quot;</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A note on Copyright

CLIE Working Papers may be cited, reproduced or translated, provided that the source is acknowledged.

Future papers will be obtainable from Dick Hudson, Dept. of Phonetics and Linguistics, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT. Please send one first-class stamp for each paper, to cover printing costs, plus a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Requests from overseas will be serviced gratis.
introduction to the series

by lawhinson

lithographic quality

2
model of the world as an active participant in it, through our actions and experiences. This reality is constructed and experienced by each individual based on their perceptions and experiences. The psychological processes involved in creating this model include perception, interpretation, and memory. Perception involves the initial sensory input, while interpretation involves the cognitive processes that give meaning to the sensory input. Memory plays a crucial role in the formation of this model, as it allows us to store and retrieve past experiences to inform our current perceptions and actions.

4. The application of this model can be observed in various domains such as psychology, philosophy, and education. In psychology, the model helps explain phenomena like perceptual illusions, cognitive biases, and individual differences in problem-solving. In philosophy, the concept of the model of the world is central to discussions about reality, knowledge, and truth. In education, understanding the model of the world is essential for developing critical thinking and reasoning skills, as it helps students understand how their perceptions and beliefs are shaped by their experiences and how these perceptions can be challenged and refined.
language (in the sense of grammar and vocabulary). Consequently, its remedy may lie in instruction or training in the best strategies for exploiting existing knowledge, rather than in adding supposedly unknown vocabulary and grammar to this existing stock of knowledge.

b. No community or individual uses precisely the same variety from one year to the next: some of these changes arise out of the need for linguistic resources which are not available before the change. These needs in turn are due to the communicative demands which are regularly placed on the speaker (or speakers), so at least some of the changes in an individual’s linguistic repertoire take place because of his or her communicative needs. As these needs change, so must the linguistic repertoire, otherwise “communicative gaps” will arise. This is clearly true of individuals as they become mature members of their society, but it also seems to be true of the varieties used by mature members. They are not cut out of step with the communicative needs of their users. This is obviously what happens when there are technical and social changes which produce objects and ideas for which a community has no vocabulary, but other types of change may also point up “communicative gaps” which need to be filled.

A particular case was discussed in some detail (DECHWAR), namely where a variety which has hitherto been used only in face-to-face interaction starts to be used in less interactive situations (e.g. over the radio). This leads to changes in the communicative demands, such as the need to identify referents without the help of a shared immediate context, and without the help of immediate feed-back from the addressee. One linguistic consequence of this change may be the development of a “relative clause” construction with clear markers of the relative clause, whereas such constructions were less necessary in the earlier, more interactive, situations where the variety was used. Such varieties seem to have developed recently in Tok Pisin (Neo-Melanesian Pidgin, an English-based pidgin spoken in New Guinea) and in American Sign Language (used by the deaf). Old English needed to develop a way of keeping up with the communicative needs of their users. However, the discussion revealed some disagreement about the details of these cases: the claim that Old English had no inherited relative clauses is controversial (HIEBEL); and, even if relative clauses marked by -ing were not inherited, we should have to be certain that the earlier language did not use intonation to signal relative clauses; if this were the case, then the need for “relative clauses” was already satisfied (WELLS); a certain community in Panama uses a language (Buglere, a member of the Chibchan family) in which no relative clause markers are used even in the relatively non-interactive genre of narrative (LEVINSOHN); however, the semantic status of the marker-less construction is shown by the tense, and the lack of markers to show specifically that the clauses are relative does not seem to matter. (We lack information about the language use in other cases using this construction, so it could be that overtly marked relative constructions exist there - RUSSELL.)

In spite of this uncertainty about the particular examples, there seemed to be general agreement that linguistic changes can be motivated by the existence of communicative gaps, and that these changes may affect grammar as well as vocabulary.

Three general points arose out of the discussion, which need to be emphasised:
- When these adaptive changes take place, it is because the speakers adapt their language, and not because the language adapts itself; the difference may sound academic, but it is also important to see language as a “living” organism with its own “abilities” to do things such as adapting; such views of language were long since discredited by linguists.
- Communicative gaps are specific, not general, even if there are a large number of cases which is relatively poor in one area of meaning, or in one genre of communication, may be relatively rich in another (HONEY).
- Different communities may solve the same communicative problem in different linguistic ways; for example, (LEVINSOHN), linguistic varieties used in oral narrative by pre-literate societies differ widely in their use or avoidance of syntactically-signalised subordination, with Buglere (mentioned above) at one extreme, and Ica (another Chibchan language spoken in Colombia) at the other extreme. There is no question of one type being linguistically better than the other.

c. The question of “cognitive equality” came up for discussion only in relation to the difference between spoken and written language; more specifically, we considered whether there are consistent cognitive differences between literate and illiterate societies (LEITII). Unfortunately linguists have contributed very little either to this debate, or to the more general probing of the relations between language and writing, so too many of us have claimed to be representing the spoken language while actually taking our data from written language. However, others have taken an interest in the question of cognitive effects, and the “orality/literacy” hypothesis is now popular, according to which written language has non-cognitive benefits. A recent article in the second book (by OAL) promotes this hypothesis, and we examined some of the conclusions and evidence presented there (LEITII). Under scrutiny the arguments turned out to be unimpressive (e.g. the effects of literacy were confused with those of schooling), and the discussion produced no supporting voices for the hypothesis (though it has to be admitted that linguists often do seem to accept it as plausible). To some extent this may have been because participants recognised that we linguists need to be careful in pronouncing on questions of cognition (LOCAL), but it was also because we are not convinced enough about the very different roles of writing systems, of literate people, and of literacy in (say) China, Japan and Korea, compared with Western Europe, to be sceptical about general conclusions based on a small range of Western societies (LE PAGE).

C. Bones of contention

Three general issues seem to remain as points of dispute, to judge by the discussion in our meeting, though in each case there appeared to be a fairly clear majority view, which I shall indicate.

a. Is it true, as linguists have tended to claim, that every variety is perfectly adapted to the communicative needs of its users? We saw in the discussion of (a) in the previous section that such claims are best rephrased in terms of total repertoires rather than individual languages; a multilingual community may have all the linguistic resources it needs even though no one language is adequate to all the linguistic needs of the community. So is it true that every communicative repertoire is perfectly adapted to the needs of its users? There was some support for this view (HARLOW), but rather more support for the view that not so much the absolute fact that the gap is too large (as above) showed that at least some repertoires, for some of the time, are not adequate for the needs of their users (DECHWAR, CULLEN). A question which we did not discuss is whether a communicative gap necessarily leads to a compensatory change in the linguistic repertoire; a prime facie case exists for the view that a gap may be actually created by a change (e.g. the loss of sibling in English), and that gaps may be tolerated permanently. However, it is important to bear in mind in thinking about these questions that communicative gaps are created, that they create, the debate over the debate gives rise to the view that some varieties (or repertoires) are better overall than others.

b. Is adaptation of a language ever prevented by linguistic factors (to the exclusion of social and other factors)? It was suggested that some Australian aborigine languages with only 7,000 words had unable to adapt to new circumstances by English experience” (HARLOW). The view was the one already mentioned above, that it is wrong to think of language as adapting; it is people who adapt, so if they are unable (or unwilling) to adapt their linguistic repertoire, this is probably for social reasons (e.g. the dominance of English-speaking society in Australia). The wide-spread belief
among linguists in "potential equality" which was mentioned above is relevant here, because it is a belief in the potential of every variety for adaptation; although it is an odd notion of "equality", it is highly relevant in this more restricted context. Moreover, it is massively grounded in the historical study of languages, where linguists have failed to find any specifically structural constraints on adaptation.

c. Could the social status of a variety be predicted on the basis of a linguist's description of its structure alone? And more specifically, would it be possible to tell which of two related varieties was the standard one on this basis alone? We considered this question at some length (J. NURYO), in connection with the way in which standardisation leads to a reduction in the number of alternative forms for expressing the same content: "The aim of standardisation is to ensure reliability and efficiency in using the linguistic resources in communication. It is exactly analogous to standardisation of coinage, or weights and measures, as language (like money) is a medium of exchange. Linguistic uniformity can be seen, therefore, as desirable in the interests of efficiency and reliability..." Variant realisations are suppressed and uniformity is encouraged. (J. NURYO) The available evidence from communities such as Montreal and Belfast seems to suggest that the least standardised varieties allow more variation than more standardised ones, which would suggest a general typological difference between standardised and non-standardised varieties. If this is the case, then it would of course be possible to predict at least part of the social status of a variety on the basis of a linguistic description. The view was expressed (based on Romance data), that a full description of the syntax of a variety could give some indication of its social status, particularly if the description included information about which syntactic structures were frequently used (HARRIS), but it was objected that the basis of these predictions about social status was not purely internal to the structures of the varieties concerned. Moreover, the Belfast data may be typical of non-standard varieties, but rather of a newly formed dialect mixture (TRUGILL). Moreover, the relative statuses of Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Indonesia are reversed between Malaysia and Indonesia - one dominates in Malaysia, the other in Indonesia - so social status must be arbitrary in relation to linguistic structure (LE PAGE). By the end of the discussion, participants seemed to be generally in favour of the traditional view that structural differences between standard and non-standard varieties were probably arbitrary, and that the social status of a variety could not be predicted from a description of its grammar alone.

D. Conclusions

In relation to our original questions, we seem to have arrived at the following conclusions:

a. The hypothesis of linguistic equality can be taken in relation to varieties of language (language/dialect/register/idiolect) or linguistic repertoires (of an individual or of a community); in relation to structural, communicative or cognitive equality; and in relation to actual or potential equality. The most "liberal" interpretation would be that all linguistic repertoires are potentially equal from a communicative point of view: given the right social circumstances, all speakers (and communities) have an equal ability to develop a linguistic repertoire to suit their communicative needs. This version of the hypothesis is probably true.

b. But it is certainly not true that all varieties are equally good as resources for satisfying every communicative need, or that all varieties contain the same range of structural patterns. However, the differences between varieties are specific to each variety will have areas of strength as well as of weakness. Moreover, the crucial question is to what extent these differences provide problems for people, and in this connection the notion of a linguistic repertoire is much more relevant than that of a variety.

Summary

This paper reports a debate on "linguistic equality" which took place at the autumn meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain in 1983. The purpose of the debate was to review the state of opinion among professional linguists in the light of developments since the doctrine of linguistic equality was first formulated, near the beginning of the century. We agreed that we could not accept a simple version of the doctrine, according to which all languages and all speakers were said to be linguistically (though not socially) equal. Instead, we found it essential to distinguish different kinds of equality (structural/communicative/cognitive, actual/potential), and to ask the question not in relation to languages, but rather in relation to linguistic repertoires of individuals and communities. Having made these distinctions, we concluded that in one sense the doctrine was probably right - no language has a structure, or lack of structure, which prevents its speakers from adapting it to meet any new communicative demands. But in another sense, it is certainly wrong, if it is taken to mean that all speakers are already equally well equipped with linguistic means for coping with all communicative demands.

List of speakers

Connie Cullen, U. of Hull
Steve Harlow, U. of York
Dick Leith, Birmingham Poly.
John Martin, U. of York
Steve Levinsohn, S.I.L.
Joan Russell, U. of York
Bill Wells, U. of York

"Margaret Deuchar, U. of Sussex
Steve Harlow, U. of York
Prof. John Martin, U. of Salford
Prof. Bob Le Page, U. of York
John Martin, U. of York
Lesley Milroy, U. of Newcastle
Prof. David Reibel, U. of Tübingen
Prof. Peter Trudgill, U. of Reading
* = presenter of prepared paper

Acknowledgments

I should like to thank all those who spoke in the discussion (listed above), and the rest who attended but didn't speak. But above all I should like to thank those who sent me comments on an earlier version of this report: Margaret Deuchar, John Martin, Bob Le Page, Dick Leith, Stephen Levinsohn, Joan Russell, and Bill Wells. Now that I have revised the report to take account of their comments, I think it probably reflects their views fairly accurately, and I hope it is also true to the views of the people who spoke but didn't send me any complaints.
The uselessness of ‘formal grammar’

John Walmsey

‘Formal grammar’, meaning the teaching of the terms of a linguistic metalanguage, is obviously one area which is of central concern to linguists. Until the last few years, the teaching of English grammar in schools had suffered a decline extending over more than fifty years. Although the teaching of some grammatical terms is doubtless done in the context of the foreign-language lesson, any English teacher who tries to introduce or re-introduce this aspect of linguistics into his or her work should not be surprised to meet with opposition – overt or covert. Though many reasons have been advanced for keeping formal grammar out of schools, the one we look at below is the most pervasive – it is the argument of which most has been made in the literature, and the one we think interested teachers are most likely to confront with.

The argument

It is natural that in approaching what amounts nowadays to a new discipline, teachers should be interested in its usefulness. AsBrookes says, "...the limits of the usefulness of such (i.e. linguistic - JW) insights in relation to other considerations in teaching need to be very carefully considered" (Brookes and Hudson 1982: 65). In fact, the strongest attacks mounted against the teaching of formal grammar in the past have been based on its failure to produce improvements in pupils’ linguistic ability. The point has been put most succinctly in a book which was said at the time (by its editor) to represent "the best current thought and practice in Britain" (Thompson 1969: 1). It treats, "...most children cannot learn grammar and ... even to those who can it is of little value" (Thompson 1969: 7). Coming when it did, this two-pronged criticism echoed scores of similar remarks which had gone before. For example: "Intelligent pupils can repeat definitions of parts of speech, recognise them in sentences, and fill up gaps with the correct words, but the fact that so many pupils can do this and yet write ungrammatically shows that there is no real connexion at this stage between correct writing and that superficial knowledge of grammar which they have been taught" (Evans 1953: 8), or this: "And now a word about grammar. It will be a dogmatic one. The formal teaching of grammar makes negligible difference to the child's ability to write well. I admit ignorance of what the pundits have to say on this issue; forty years in the classroom convinces me that fresh, spirited and correct expression is not achieved by lessons devoted to the minutiae of formal grammar" (Mason 1964: 33).

One might suppose that grammar could be admissible for those who have a difficulty with it. But this is not the case. "I admit that some pupils take readily to instruction in grammar, but I have never found that proficiency therein necessarily ensures corresponding efficiency in other and more important aspects of their work in English" (Mason 1964: 34) – the implication being that unless it does, there can be no place for it in teaching; and, "The study of English grammar remains an essentially investigatory activity; it is the proper province of linguists and it is not the province of schoolchildren, for the reason that they have on hand a task in which it can give them almost no assistance – the task of learning to write" (Walsh 1965: 181). In other words, for these authors the overriding aim of English teaching is to teach children to write, to express themselves freshly, spiritedly and correctly, and, they say, knowledge about language can make no significant contribution towards achieving this aim. Under the circumstances, that anyone should show any interest at all in teaching grammar would appear perverse: "...one can only conclude that a great number of both examiners and teachers are ignorant of, or indifferent to, the scholarship which has demonstrated its inherent democratic and practical value, which has shown it to have no, or only minimal, influence in developing the skills of reading and writing" (Wilson 1969: 155).

It is not only practical experience which has shown grammar teaching to have only minimal influence in developing linguistic skills. Research into this area has, according to Wilkinson, been "massive" (Wilkinson 1969: 35). From the wealth of studies available we shall deal with just three. These studies, however, have not been selected at random: they are interconnected, and they have been chosen because their results have been wielded with considerable effect by opponents of the systematic teaching of formal grammar. They are associated with the names Harris, Cowley and Macauley.

Aims of the research

Harris’s aim was to test the effectiveness of English grammar-teaching in improving mastery and control in children’s writing. He was working on the assumption that the teaching of grammatical terminology is directed to these ends: "Many teachers would concede that they do use much of this terminology. Most would have no doubt and feel that the emphasis is on linking the terms to the practical business of composition. This would seem to be a crucial justification for retaining formal grammar in English instruction" (Harris 1962: 21). In his review of earlier work, Harris found that "... Cowley, as Macauley previously, suggests that for all except the bright children no level of attainment likely to be valuable can be reached in formal grammar" (Harris 1962: 56). His criticism of Macauley’s work - and the starting-point for his own approach - was that Macauley "does not show why it (i.e. grammar - JW) should be taught ... at all, and he does not show even if learnt it has no effect on correctness" (Harris 1962: 58).

Methods

Harris’s method was to compare two sets of five forms each in a variety of schools over two academic years. The control group had a basic course in English, with no grammar. The experimental group followed the same basic course, with a further lesson a week in English grammar. While the experimental group was being given its lesson in English grammar, the control group spent the same amount of time practising writing.

Results

After two years, Harris discovered that the control group produced better written work than the experimental group. ‘Better’ was defined in terms of other things: a higher number of words per common error; greater variety of sentence pattern; and a larger number of complex sentence patterns used correctly. Harris concluded that "...the grammar lesson in these five schools was unreliable as a means of securing a greater mastery of control in children’s writing than could
be secured with the entire neglect of grammar in English lessons, and its replacement by some form of direct practice in writing" (Harris 1962: 202).

The earlier research by Cawley had arrived at similar conclusions, though by a different route. He had tried to replicate the Scottish experiment, for English schools. Both Cawley and Macauley were trying to assess the effectiveness of the teaching of formal grammar in its own terms, i.e. they were not trying to assess its effectiveness in a different area (the teaching of writing skills). Both asked their subjects to identify five parts of speech (N., V., Adj., Adv., Pron.) in a set of sentences. Macauley found that even after six years of grammar teaching only four out of 397 pupils could manage 50% correct answers on all five parts of speech. Having set his "pass" criterion at 50%, Macauley goes on, "at the end of a three-year secondary course we have still not managed to get the median boy over this hurdle. This seems to indicate that even at the end of a three years' senior secondary course, recognition of the simplest parts of speech by their function is still too difficult" (Macauley 1947: 159). Cawley extended Macauley's research to include such questions as - is there an order of difficulty in recognizing the five parts of speech? - are there any noteworthy correlations between grammar scores and intelligence? - are there any significant correlations between grammar scores and marks in school exams? Cawley's results did not conflict in any way with Macauley's, and the main point of his research was confirmed, namely, that even after six years of grammar teaching the pupils learned very little. There is little evidence that grammar should be taught in senior secondary classes since (a) comparatively few pupils have the necessary intelligence to benefit from the teaching; (b) the ability to write well is not dependent upon a good knowledge of grammar" (Cawley 1958: 176).

So far, it looks like an open-and-shut case. Before we leave this research, however, one or two points must be made about aims, methods and design.

In trying to test the effectiveness of grammar-teaching in transmitting grammatical concepts, both Macauley and Cawley can at least be said to have approached their problem rationally. Harris, however, was trying to do something rather different - he wanted to see whether the transmission of grammatical concepts had any effect on the quality of pupils' writing. Under the name 'transfer-of-training', the assumption that the results of practice in one form of activity are transferred to other activities has been familiar in educational psychology since the last century. "Belief in such transfer was at one time universal. ... Researches carried out in the early years of this century, however, have shown that the view is almost entirely mistaken. Transfer occurs in a sense but not in the sense in which the old educationists had supposed... It can be quite safely laid down as a principle that the best way to become proficient in any activity is to practice that activity, and not some other" (Knight and Knight 1966: 170-71).

The first point to note, then, is that far from being surprised to find that direct connection between grammar and composition, the results were only to be expected. A large number of empirical studies had in fact appeared by 1929 (Wilkinson 1971: 32) which demonstrated just this point.

Furthermore, by the time Harris was writing, there is evidence that this view had been widespread among teachers for some decades. In the Preface to the 1924 edition of his English Grammar, Ritchie wrote: "The claim of English Grammar to a place in the school curriculum has sometimes been defended on the ground that it enables or assists the learner to speak and write correctly. This argument is easily refuted by facts: it is tolerably obvious that the correct use of language is mainly a matter of environment, and is very little, if at all, dependent on a knowledge of grammar." Harris's assumption that most teachers hope that they succeed in linking grammatical terms to the practical business of composition would therefore appear to need putting in perspective.

The second point concerns methods. Although it might seem obvious that the best way to improve writing is to practise writing, there is nevertheless a real dilemma here for linguists. For although they might not wish to postulate a direct positive influence of grammar teaching on the quality of a pupil's writing, it would seem unintelligible to suggest that the less cognitive understanding of language a pupil has, the better his or her writing is going to be. The problem is, it depends exactly how much grammar we mean: a little, or none at all? And if none, how much, and exactly what? Harris's evaluation criteria for the research included, as we saw, the variety of sentence patterns used, the number of complex sentence patterns used correctly, and number of words per common error. How far was the grammar teaching over the two years of the experiment geared to the evaluation criteria? In his thesis, Harris lists a number of grammatical (i.e. metalinguistic) terms: "if these forms or equivalent ones are used in teaching English, then for the purposes of this enquiry formal grammar is taught" (Harris 1958: 176). It is doubtful whether the words have been the same if, instead, the experimental group had been given specific tuition on such things as variety of sentence patterns, complex sentences etc. The mere use of grammatical terms would scarcely seem sufficient in itself for a rational test of the effectiveness of grammar teaching. It is perhaps for this reason that some writers have shown themselves unperturbed by the results of Harris's kind of research: "It has actually been 'proved' by means of experiment and statistics that good lessons in grammar are largely a waste of time. This conclusion has been reached so often in the last four decades that one is inclined to wonder whether in the field of educational research the scientific path follows the laws of fashion rather than of logic" (Black 1956: 7). And Carroll wrote in the same vein: "... I am reasonably sure that unless the student gets a feeling for sentence patterning ... his own sentence patterns will show many obvious defects. Research on the effectiveness of teaching English grammar in improving English composition has been mainly negative, but until this research has been repeated with improved methods of teaching English grammar, I will remain unconvinced that grammar is useless in this respect" (Carroll 1958: 324).

What exactly was taught, and the methods of teaching, appear to be the crucial issues. Harris signally failed to pay much heed to this, sugggesting that in the course of his research. In view of the above, his results could equally well be felt to argue for more, rather than less, grammar teaching. For if the effects of teaching some grammatical metalanguage more or less effectively, over a long period of time, were negligible, the one conclusion would seem to be that pupils' writing might be improved by teaching those aspects of grammar which are later to serve
as evaluation measures for the research, more intensively, at greater length and on a sounder foundation.

Discussion

In order to assess this research properly it will help if we ask ourselves what conclusions we would draw, were we to be faced with the results obtained. For - let us face it - the results make pretty dismal reading. They document the almost complete failure of four to six years' instruction in grammar at both primary and secondary level to teach even the most basic items (five parts of speech) with any degree of success.

The first thing one would surely do would be to cast around for possible candidates for more detailed enquiry: were the methods used in teaching the grammatical terms adequate? - were the materials sound? - were the teachers competent and effective? - was the subject matter suited to the age and ability of the pupils? Strangely, none of these seems to have obtained Macauley, Casley or Harris for long. They all agree that there is a kind of inherent difficulty in grammar which puts beyond the reach of all but the ablest and most mature learners. Since they do not tell us which methods of teaching the teachers used, we cannot find fault with them. Nor may we fault the teachers' own knowledge. Those who mention the teachers at all assure us that - wherever else the fault may lie - it does not lie with them: "As far as could be judged, all the teachers were as competent as practised in the present grammar of the language" (Harris 1962: 115). And Macauley: "From our investigation, we can say that there is no necessity to malice the primary teacher who has been struggling for the previous fourteen years with the subject. The factor in the situation which has altered is not the personality or efficiency or method of the teacher but the age or maturity of the scholar" (Macauley 1947: 159). We have, of course, no means of checking the effectiveness of the teachers who participate in the present experiment. Since this would be a good factor for research of this kind, however, it is odd that no more attention was paid to it. Odder still is the fact that remarks elsewhere in Harris's thesis actually lend support to the suspicion that the results of the research may indeed be due in some measure to the teachers involved. Harris mentions a discussion with a group of "sixteen teachers of English, all of more than two years' experience. On December 1st. the sentence 'Thinking it would be late, the man ran to the house where his friend lived... only four of the sixteen teachers managed to provide a correct answer..." (Harris 1962: 57). In view of this, Harris's earlier assurance that as far as he could judge, all the teachers concerned were competent in the grammar of the language seems somewhat disingenuous. There is no reason, in making this point, to fear that we are unjustly maligning the teachers. They were doubtless working more or less in the way they themselves had been taught. The blame, if any, should be laid at the door of those responsible for educating them.

We may sum up this research, then, by saying that although the results show that the random teaching of the terms of some grammatical metalanguage is less effective in improving pupils' written expression than practice in writing, in order to be properly effective it would have had to compare general practice in writing with specific teaching of the grammatical points in terms of which the writing was going to be evaluated.

We have conducted the debate so far within the framework of the assumptions that improving linguistic skills is the overall aim in the teaching of English, and that all other aims must be seen as subservient to this. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that this view is widely held, with its corollary that unless the study of linguistics (in the form of grammar) can be justified on these grounds it cannot be justified at all.

It is perhaps surprising, then, that many teachers still make use of a metalanguage of some kind. Further, pupils are almost certainly to come up against the terms of a metalanguage in their foreign-language lessons, even if not in their English lessons. More surprising still is the fact that some of the most vehement opponents of grammar teaching list in detail the terms of a metalanguage which seems to be indispensable, even to them. It is most surprising of all, however, to find them writing school books of the grammar they so despise - e.g. D'Malley and Thompson, 1955. These programmes specify not only what should be taught, but - implicitly or explicitly - how. Holbrook, for example, insists that the parts of speech, sentential functions (subject, object), and secondary grammatical categories (number, tense) should be "defined by example rather than by ... their function" (Holbrook 1961: 233). It is a question worthy of serious consideration how far the propagators of these total systems (such as Mason, Holbrook, D'Malley, Thompson etc.), do not themselves bear considerable responsibility for the ineffectiveness of grammar teaching which they so lament.

We shall now consider the question of whether the improvement of linguistic skills really is the only criterion against which grammar teaching can properly be measured. We saw that a number of writers claimed that improving pupils' linguistic ability is not what linguistics is trying to do - that linguistics is not that kind of science (Blimires, Ritchie, Walsh). If we can rid ourselves of the notion that linguistics can only be measured against a purely materialistic yardstick, then we can begin to see it in a somewhat different light. We can surely agree that we live, grow up and work in a particular environment, or a series of environments, and that one of the functions of education is to explain his or her environment to the individual learner. No-one would dispute either that a number of traditional disciplines are very much concerned with the nature of this environment from different points of view - Geography, History; parts of Biology, Chemistry, Maths. How, in the same way as we inhabit a physical, social etc. environment, we grow up in and inhabit a linguistic environment. Why should our pupils not study their linguistic environment just as they study Biology, History, Geography etc.? Seen from this point of view, it seems a direct connexion between social and practical skill looks a lot less convincing as a criterion for accepting or rejecting the teaching of any particular discipline. We do not measure the success of geography lessons primarily in terms of whether a pupil could find his or her way round the town or not. If we did, what place would we find for History? Geography is concerned with a different scale of values. And would we accept Mason's criticism if it were applied to Biology - "... forty years in the classroom convince me that so disquisitions on lessons designed to explain and understand, what place would we find for Biology ..."? We must divest ourselves of the view that some subjects should be required to provide detailed justification for
a place in the curriculum whereas others are there by a kind of divine right. "... literature needs no justification. Its significance for personal values, for the width and depth of an individual's mind, and for his growth as a thoughtful member of society is self-evident" (The Examining of English Language 1964: 20).

If linguistics, including the study of grammar, is, as Walsh says, "an essentially investigatory activity" (loc. cit.) providing a means of approach to what is after all one of the most impressive, pervasive and important aspects of any human being's environment, ought not the boot rather to be on the other foot? Instead of allowing linguistics to be tied to written performance as the only admissible criterion, ought we not to demand that any child should have the right to study his or her own native language in all its aspects? Why should such a study need more special justification than any other subject? The argument that it can not be shown to improve their practical written performance smack of a depressing philistinism totally irreconcilable with a humane or liberal approach to the curriculum.

Peculiarly odd in this materialistic approach to the curriculum is its propagation by some who profess to support the humane values of literature. Holbrook, for instance, speaks of a "failure of confidence" in English: "It can be felt from the university to the primary school. ... It lies behind the retreat to utilitarianism." (Holbrook 1979: 9). If English teaching in this respect is indeed retreating to utilitarianism, why should it surprise us? Utilitarianism is the only criterion which has been held up to the teaching of grammar as a yardstick against which it should be measured.

Conclusions

In our necessarily cursory look at the evidence on which the claim that grammar teaching is useless is based, we have found, I think, consensus of a kind in three areas - 1) The random teaching of grammatical terms seems to effect no direct improvement in pupils' expressive ability in writing. As Carroll pointed out, what was being taught under the label of 'grammar' in these experiments would have to be more carefully controlled, if the results were to be entirely convincing. 2) Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that a grasp of the terms of a linguistic metalinguage is an essential tool for communicating about language even in schools. Even those who claim to be against the teaching of grammar accept this, and some go so far as making suggestions as to which terms should be taught, and how. The question here is: in view of the uncertainty about grammar, and the poor results which have been achieved, would it not be better to put this teaching on a sound footing rather than teach the bare minimum, and that skimpily "by example"? 3) The conclusions reached by Macaulay and Cauley point to a rather different, and more interesting conclusion than the one we have been discussing - that grammar is inherently too difficult for any but the brightest and most mature pupils. This argument deserves more space than can be devoted to it here, and will be taken up again elsewhere.

In the latter part of our paper we argued that even if the opponents of grammar-teaching do believe that some kind of metalanguage is useful, a narrow, materialistic approach is not one which linguists ought to subscribe to. Language is a significant, important and interesting aspect of our environment in its own right, and there is just as much justification for studying it as there is for studying its physical, social or historical aspects. Anyone who argues that language is in itself not a legitimate study for children ought to be required to say why. These arguments should then also be applied with equal stringency to other subjects of the curriculum. And for anyone interested in discovering exactly what the best way is, of improving oral and writing skills, the field is still very much virgin territory: "If a small part of the research effort that has been put into demonstrating the uselessness of grammar ... had been distributed over a wider field, more might be known about how skill in the use of English can best be developed" (Thouless 1969: 211).

References


Evans, A.A. (1953) Grammar, Language and Style I and II. The Use of English V, pp. 3-9 and 76-81.


linguists have consistently pointed out that speech has a much better claim to priority than writing has, if one of them is to be taken as 'basic' and the other as 'derivative', since speech came before writing in the history of the human race, and speech comes before writing in the history of each individual. Nothing said in the discussion calls this position into question, and indeed it was reaffirmed by Milroy, Lowe, Stubbs, Gradol and T. Bloed. However, the relations between speech and writing are somewhat more complex than linguists have tended to imply in their claim that written language is always derived from speech:

a. Some constructions used in writing have no spoken counterpart (STUBBS), and likewise for some more general uses of writing such as timetables (M. BLOED); and more generally, the differences between speech and writing are much greater than most people realise until they study detailed transcripts of spontaneous speech (OWEN);

b. The social prestige of writing is often higher than that of speech; for example, written formulations often have legal status whereas corresponding spoken formulations may not be binding (STUBBS);

c. Many educated speakers spend more time reading and writing than speaking and listening (Lowe);

d. Some linguistic patterns (vocabulary or constructions) are learned from written rather than from spoken language (Milroy); and the speech of many literate speakers is heavily influenced by written language (Lowe);

e. Children may learn to speak from parents whose speech is influenced by the written language, as in (c) above (STUBBS);

f. Linguistic loans often enter a language first through written language (Milroy), and more generally innovations may start in writing and spread from there to speech;

g. Given the right historical circumstances, a language which is restricted to writing may develop into a spoken language (e.g., Modern Hebrew) (STUBBS).

In assessing the extent of differences between speech and writing, we should pay attention to differences between societies, since these differences are much greater in some societies than others (Le Page).

Question 2. Which other social, psychological and functional parameters interact with the channel difference in influencing the structure of the linguistic expressions used?

One of the difficulties in studying the differences between speech and writing (the 'channel' difference) is that it is hard to find comparable texts that differ only in this respect (STUBBS), though some research, notably that by Ochs, has managed to solve this problem (DECHAR). Most spoken and written texts differ on other parameters than the channel difference, and these other parameters influence the choice of linguistic expressions used (i.e., the vocabulary, and so on). The parameters concerned include the following, supplied by Lowe, STUBBS, and Milroy:

a. Formality;

b. Standardness of language;

c. Interactional purpose (transactional or phatic);

d. Specificity of addressee;

e. Length of time available;

f. Amount of interaction between producer and receiver;

g. Degree of speaker involvement;

h. Degree to which context of beliefs etc. is defined in advance;

i. Visibility of receiver;

j. Relation between time of production and time of reception;

k. Degree to which the communication is public or private;

l. Amount of pre-planning or spontaneity.

These parameters, and others, are independent of one another and of the channel difference. For example, writing is often associated with transactional purpose (Milroy), but there are types of written text that are mainly phatic, e.g., Christmas cards (Cordiner). Indeed, when one preliterate society (the Nambiquara, in the Amazon basin) first learned to write their language, they wrote letters to each other which for the first five years contained nothing but phatic messages (Lowe). More generally, speech tends to express interpersonal relations more than writing (MONAGUAN), but under the influence of writing some societies accept what might be called 'spoken prose' (HOLL). In view of such complicated interactions between different parameters, we must consider specific genres of speech or writing, rather than 'speech' or 'writing' as such (TUTTLE), in order to avoid the danger of oversimplifying the issues (FACKETT).

Question 3. Are there typical configurations of these other parameters in combination with speech and with writing?

In view of the complexity introduced by other parameters which interact with the channel difference, we need to know how acute the problem is. In particular, could we rescue the simple contrast between 'speech' and 'writing' by assuming that writing is typically formal, standard, and so on for all the other parameters, and that speech typically has the opposite set of values? Our education system tends to encourage such a view, since it tends to value only one kind of writing (GRADOL), and there is some evidence from psycholinguists to support it: namely, children's development of writing skills seems to recapitulate their development of speech, and some aphasic patients show writing skills before speech (CHAN). The general view seemed to be that such a simple view badly misrepresents the actual relations between speech and writing. Many speakers supported the view that some combinations of values on the different parameters were more typical than others (LOWE); for example, we can assume that the most typical speech is the kind which is spoken by people who read least, and which is least formal (Milroy) - what Labov calls the 'vernacular' (STUBBS). Nevertheless, we should not expect to find a simple two-way split between 'typical writing' and 'typical speech', but rather a complex continuum between speech which is hardest to match with writing (e.g., speech closely integrated with non-verbal behaviour) and writing which is hardest to match with speech (e.g., graphs and tables (PERERA) and certain kinds of notation; though many notations, such as mathematical ones, can in fact be verbalised by the initiated (PIAN) (STUBBS). Furthermore, the possibility of certain configurations changes with technology, and recent technological changes have led to the possibility of new configurations, such as the radio phone-in and the letter-cassette (BARTON). Some speakers suggested that the various parameters were so independent of one another that it might be best to consider them individually in studying their effects on language, rather than to look for typical configurations (LOWE, REIBEH). But the general conclusion remained undisputed, namely that the contrast between speech and writing intersects in complex ways with the other parameters; so it is unlikely that we should have
very much to say about the difference between speech and writing as such without taking account of the effects of the other parameters.

**Question 4. What structural differences do the social, psychological and functional differences between speech and writing NECESSARILY lead to?**

Assuming that the structures found in various genres of speech are different from those found in genres of writing, the present question asks to what extent these differences can be explained as the result of functional pressures (MILROY). In considering a variety of examples from English, speakers appeared to agree that functional explanations for the differences were reasonable (though hard to prove). For instance, we can say that a speaker works under pressure of time (e.g. to hold the audience and to avoid losing the floor), whereas a writer is more under pressure of space; so speaking favours constructions which give speed and fluency, where writing favours those which allow a message to be conveyed concisely (LOWE). Of course, we realised that these generalisations applied only to certain genres of speech and of writing; but the explanations would be no less valid for this, provided they serve to relate the structures found in those genres to the pressures under which their producers operated.) The need for speed and continuity in speech encourages the use of fillers and clichés, repetitions and other kinds of redundancy, and constructions like left and right dislocation which make planning easier (LOWE, MILROY). In contrast, the need for compactness in writing favours nominalisations, passive, complex nominal subjects and hypotaxis (LOWE, MILROY). Premodified constructions tend to be shorter than postmodified paraphrases (compare TUC leader with leader in the TUC), and consequently they tend to be favoured by newspapers, in comparison with radio (CORDINER). Another hypothesis is that speakers can produce variety through intonation, so it is less important for them than for writers to vary the vocabulary and syntax (MILROY). If explanations such as these are valid, then they would lead us to expect the differences between speech and writing to be quantitative rather than absolute, and consequently we need to apply quantitative research methods, in the comparison of texts (STUBBS). A good deal of work of this kind has already been done, but a lot more is needed before we can be clear about the validity of the above generalisations.

Another way of approaching this question is to consider languages other than English, to see whether the structural differences between speech and writing are the same as in English. If we find that the structural differences vary from language to language, we should probably assume that they are arbitrary, but if we find similar differences across a wide range of languages, the differences may be inherent to the difference between speech and writing (in the genres concerned). We had no systematic collection of comparative data to draw on here, but we had some observations on a particularly interesting range of situations, where a language has only recently started to be used regularly in written form. Those cases all seemed to show a tendency to develop differences similar to those found in English between speech and writing. Basque has recently started to be used for writing, and the written form has rapidly diverged from the spoken form, though this could perhaps be explained as due to the influence of Spanish and writing (THURSDAY). Even Hamblique (Amazon basins) was first written in the written form on a highly edited version of the spoken, omitting things as ideophones (e.g. pow!) and "sentence fragments", and this development was spontaneous (LOWE). Written Tok Pisin (New Guinea pidgin English) has developed a number of constructions not found in ordinary speech, such as relative clauses, but this may be due to a different parameter: whether or not the receiver can interact with the producer (DEUCHAR). This is a particularly important parameter as far as deictic elements are concerned, and it is in relation to deixis that some of the main differences between speech and writing are found (SPARKS). The importance of the interacting listener in speech is illustrated by the difficulty that many of us find in leaving a message by phone on a recording machine, and by the finding that hesitations in speech are often linked to the gestures of the listener (MONAGHAN).

The need for research in this area, and the difficulty of carrying it out, was illustrated by a brief discussion of differences between spoken and written versions of the news. Is the spoken version more redundant and repetitious (MILROY), or are they much the same (MONAGHAN)? And whatever the answer to that question, how do we generalise it beyond this particular genre?

One point found general agreement: that there was no evidence for a quantitative difference between speech and writing in the amount of structure, contrary to various claims that there is less structure in speech; and this is especially so if structure at the level of discourse organisation is taken into account (FANCETT).

**Question 5. Are there on the other hand any structural differences between speech and writing which are purely conventional?**

This is the converse of the previous question. If we assume that some of the structural differences between spoken and written genres are inevitable, as was suggested by the answers to question 4, is this so of all the differences? We found some examples of differences which appeared to be purely conventional:

a. the restriction of the French passé simple tense form to writing (STUBBS);

b. the distinctive treatment of names in writing (by capitalisation) but not in speech (notice that languages may differ arbitrarily in this respect, as English capitalises the names of the days of the week, but French does not) (STUBBS);

c. the marking of sentence boundaries and paragraph boundaries in some, but not all, writing systems, in contrast with the debatable status of sentences and paragraphs in speech (see questions 6b and 9b below) (STUBBS);

d. the avoidance of prepositional phrases as subjects in written genres of English but not in spoken ones (in contrast with sentences like By his side sat a tall girl, which are structurally similar but are more typical of writing than of speech (MILROY)).

However, some of the structural differences that were mentioned had already been discussed as examples of differences which might be explicable in functional terms (e.g. avoidance of "sentence fragments" and preference for hypotaxis in writing); so it seems that we don't have a great deal to say that is coherent on the distinction between conventional and necessary differences between speech and writing. Our problem is partly in deciding what is due to the channel difference as opposed to other parameters (ALLPORT); partly in knowing what is culture-specific and what general (WOOD); partly in distinguishing yesterday's functional explanation from
today's pure convention (e.g. commercial radio stations now favour premodification, just like newspapers (CORDIER)); and partly in isolating the functional demands of particular genres - for example, one of the purposes of a written genre may be precisely to distance the written text as much as possible from speech, in order to emphasise its permanence, authority, impersonality, etc. (HUDSON); and conversely, fillers may be needed in speech in order to avoid a didactic tone, associated with writing (PERERA).

Question 6. Are any structural differences associated directly and solely with the channel difference?

There was general agreement that writing contains no simple counterpart to intonation, though some conventions in our writing system match some parts of the intonation structure (e.g. underlining for marking tonic placement (CHANNEL)). Spoken language can exploit features which are simply not available in writing, e.g. pitch, speed and rhythm (STUBBS), and many structures which depend heavily on such features do not occur in writing (LOWE). Similarly, non-verbal gestures are an important part of spoken language, and are necessarily absent from most written genres (NOLL). Conversely, speech has no counterpart to some punctuation conventions. However, all the examples of this kind of mismatch which we discussed turned out to be unclear:

a. Quotation marks - there is no exact counterpart in speech, but changes between unquoted and quoted material can be marked by change in pitch (JUPP; LEWIS) and tempo (CORDIER), as slow changes from dictated material to instructions on a dictating machine (JUNT).

b. Sentence boundaries - there was disagreement as to whether or not there is a counterpart of the sentence (as opposed to the clause) in spontaneous unprepared speech; one researcher claimed that 'sentence' is not a relevant category for such speech (COATES), while another maintained that sentence-like units are quite easy to identify in it (FANCETT). This disagreement may turn out to be just a matter of terminology, but it clearly needs to be investigated.

c. Paragraph boundaries - again there was disagreement about whether there is anything like a 'spoken paragraph' (MONAGHAN) or not (LOWE, ALLERTON).

In addition to the above differences there are differences involving syntax and vocabulary (e.g. the ban on the indefinite, specific use of this in writing, and the avoidance in speech of constructions like *a supposes to be* (MILROY), and the avoidance of indefinite they in writing (LOWE)). However, these all seem to be examples of more or less conventional characteristics of particular genres of speech and writing, rather than features linked directly to speech and writing as such.

Question 7. Is speech less explicit than writing?

It is often claimed that writing is context-free and speech is context-bound, so that writing must be more explicit than speech, because it can rely on context to a smaller extent. There is some truth in this because of the way in which speech is tied to a particular time, place and set, so that these elements can be studied directly by deictic expressions (MILROY) - but such deictic reference is quite explicit. Indeed, the presence of intonation makes some parts of a spoken message more explicit than it would have been if written (CAMERON). In any case, marked deictic differences between speech and writing only appear when abstract expository writing is contrasted with speech (STUBBS, quoting Nystrand 1983).

The difference between speech and writing is not so much that one relies on a context but the other doesn't, but rather that writing relies on the context of reception (i.e. when and where it is read), whereas for speech the context of reception and production are (normally) the same (STUBBS). The extent to which context is exploited in some written genres is shown clearly by assembly instructions for self-assembly kits (LOWE). In general, then, we rejected the simple claim that writing is less context-dependent, and correspondingly more explicit, than speech.

Question 8. Is the notion 'grammaticality' different when applied to speech and to writing?

It has sometimes been suggested that the distinction between 'grammatical' and 'ungrammatical', and the rules which make the distinction, are a by-product of literacy. However, this cannot be so, because even preliterate societies, such as the Ambiguara, distinguish between 'correct' and 'incorrect' expressions in their language (LOWE). On the assumption that 'grammaticality' does not refer to the prescriptions of school grammar, but is taken in the Chomskyan sense where it refers to the expressions allowed by any grammar, then it must apply in the same way to speech and to writing (CHAN). On the other hand, it is clear that non-literate forms it easier to apply the notion 'grammaticality' to writing than to speech, partly because standardisation reduces the variety in a written language (STUBBS), partly because speech is harder to observe objectively (STUBBS), and partly because grammars familiar to non-literate tend to apply to written language (MILROY).

Because of this, we found it hard to discuss this question without turning it into a matter of pure terminological definition.

Question 9. Are our views of the nature of language biased by our literate culture?

This question is about the views of linguists, whose view of language is clearly likely to be influenced by the view prevalent in their society. We found a number of respects in which the dominant influence of writing has structured linguists' perceptions of language, in spite of our allegiance to the principle of giving priority to speech:

a. We underestimate the amount of diversity in language because standardised writing is relatively uniform (STUBBS).

b. The view that 'a language is a set of sentences' rests heavily on the unit 'sentence', which may well be less relevant to speech than to writing (MILROY); this question arose in question 6, but the disagreement continued here too, with reference to Amerindian languages, for which the sentence is relevant (RUJBEL), and with influence on adults learning to read in Britain and the States, who do not automatically put full stops in the conventionally correct places, but have to learn to do so (BARTON).

c. Written language is a set of permanent marks, or 'things', whereas speech is a set of events; our experience of writing tends to encourage us to see both kinds of language as consisting of 'things' rather than events or relations (FANCETT). Interestingly, congenitally deaf people, who are often illiterate, often find it hard to believe that sign language could be written down, because sign language is so obviously a series of events (NOLL).

d. Writing forces us to separate the linguistic from the non-linguistic,
tions, but some seem to be just coconstructed.

Inferences. Inferences can be coconstructed in intentional
understanding. Some of the differences in spoken and written
language can be very different from those of the least mutual-
understanding.

The structural and interactional aspects of the least mutual-
understanding can be very different from those of the least mutual-
understanding.

Inferences. Inferences can be coconstructed in intentional
understanding. Some of the differences in spoken and written
language can be very different from those of the least mutual-
understanding.
GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING SCHOOL INSTRUCTION ABOUT LANGUAGE

INTRODUCTION

This document is a discussion paper commissioned by CLIE - the Committee for Linguistics in Education, a joint committee of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain and the British Association for Applied Linguistics. CLIE tries to make the findings of linguistics and applied linguistics more readily available to the world of education, in the belief that many of these findings are relevant and valuable. The present paper is about the linguistic education of our school children, in the broadest sense of 'linguistic' - what children ought to know about language by the end of their school careers. The paper does not argue for the inclusion of 'linguistics' as an examinable curriculum subject. That may or may not be a good idea, but it is a separate issue.

We try to show how inadequate the knowledge of language is which most school-leavers have, and how unnecessary this ignorance is. Academic linguistics has a considerable amount of core or less uncontroversial knowledge which would be easy for children to learn, and which would also be valuable for them. We leave open the questions of how this should be taught and by whom. We hope that the paper might provide general principles by which more specific proposals for syllabi and examinations could be evaluated.

I. THE NEED FOR A COHERENT LANGUAGE POLICY

1.1 The level of understanding of language among school-leavers is much lower than it should be. Even those who achieve high grades at A level are typically

List of speakers

David Allerton, Basle Univ.
David Barton, Lancaster Univ.
Meriel Bloom, Aston Univ.
Thomas Bloom, Aston Univ.
Deborah Cameron, Roehampton Inst.
Ronald Chan, Loughborough Univ.
J. M. Channell, Nottingham Univ.
Jennifer Coates, Edge Hill College
David Cordner, Birmingham Poly.
Margaret Deuchar, Sussex Univ.
Robin Favett, Wales Poly.
David Gradwell, Open Univ.
Catherine Johns-Lewis, Aston Univ.
Robert Le Page, York Univ.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for the contributions of all the above to the discussion, and also for the support of those who attended the discussion but did not speak. I have tried hard to represent fairly the views that were expressed, and I have sent a copy of the preliminary version of this report to all those listed above, with a request for comments and corrections. I received such comments from nine of them (Barton, Coates, Cordner, Deuchar, Favett, Johns-Lewis, L. Milroy, Reibel and Stubbings), and have revised the report to take account of them. I have also had comments on the preliminary version from two linguists who did not participate in the meeting but expressed interest in the topic: Katherine Perera (Manchester University) and George Dillon (Maryland University). Their comments too are reflected in the final report. I feel this report represents a collective effort by a large number of distinguished scholars, and I sincerely hope that it will be useful to those both inside and outside the field of academic linguistics who are interested in the things we discussed. I thank all those mentioned above for their help in producing it.
Enough...
third section lists some ideas of knowledge which satisfy all these criteria, and the fourth section describes three criteria which are necessary for knowledge. The next section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be selected, and the last section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be defined. The next section describes three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be selected, and the last section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be defined. The next section describes three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be selected, and the last section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be defined. The next section describes three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be selected, and the last section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be defined. The next section describes three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be selected, and the last section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be defined. The next section describes three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be selected, and the last section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be defined. The next section describes three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be selected, and the last section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be defined. The next section describes three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be selected, and the last section defines three criteria by suggesting that the idea of knowledge can be defined.
these criteria.

2. SOME GENERAL CRITERIA FOR SELECTING ITEMS OF KNOWLEDGE

2.1 We assume that each item of knowledge should satisfy all of the following conditions: it should be teachable, it should be valuable, and it should be reliable. We elaborate on these principles below.

2.2 An item is teachable if it can be taught, given the obvious limitations due to pupils, teachers and resources. This criterion rules out a good deal of what goes into a university course on linguistics, on the grounds that it would be too abstract for pupils and that it is unlikely that suitable teaching materials will become available soon. As already noted, however, the success of various courses currently being taught at school level shows that a lot of potential items are not ruled out by the criterion of teachability. This is true not only of matters which are somewhat on the periphery of academic linguistics (e.g. the history of writing), but also of more central topics to do with the nature of linguistic structure (e.g. word-classes, alias parts of speech).

2.3 An item is valuable if it is important to the quality of life. In 1.5 we listed a number of problems which are due to inadequate knowledge of language, and an item can be taken as valuable if it helps to solve any of these problems, from the most "practical" (e.g. improving language-learning) to the most "academic" (improving the pupil's understanding of his or her environment). This criterion rules out any item which has no consequences for the pupil. One example of such an item would be an analysis of some exotic language without a discussion of the similarities and differences between that language and some language already known to the pupil, and without any generalisation to "language" as a whole. Another example would be an abstract outline of some theory of language structure without a good deal of discussion of its implications for the structure of particular sentences. Presumably virtually any item could be made valuable by an imaginative and knowledgeable teacher, but some items have more obvious consequences than others.

2.4 An item is reliable if it is compatible with the findings of academic linguistics (bearing in mind the broad definition which we gave to this term in 1.3). It is true that there is always a danger of putting too much faith in the experts, because they may be earing collectively up the garden path and folk linguistics could turn out to be right after all. However, this problem is faced in every area of life, and it is much more likely that the professionals are right. A more serious problem is that professional opinion is divided on a variety of issues in linguistics, so we feel it is safest to exclude such issues from our list of items. Even so we are left with a good number of areas of agreement among linguists, which include those documented in Richard Hudson, "Some issues on which linguists can agree", Journal of Linguistics 17, 1981. The items listed in the next section satisfy this criterion as well as the other two.

3. MINIMUM KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LANGUAGE

3.1 The following paragraphs define five general types of knowledge about language, without picking out a list of particular instances of each type as specially worthy of teaching. For example our first type is defined as "some analytical categories", but we do not say which particular categories should be known. We have a number of reasons for leaving this choice open:

a. The number of possible categories is vast, even when we apply our three criteria, so we cannot expect a "complete" knowledge.

b. Any category is as good as any other when we consider one of the main purposes of learning categories, which is to illustrate the rule-governed nature of language and to understand how categories are defined by the rules which
c. Once a small number of categories are known, other categories can be added on more easily than if none were known, as the basic principles will have been learned; but again it probably matters very little which categories are learned first.

d. The needs of different pupils in later life will be different (for example, they may apply the categories in learning foreign languages or in improving their ability to communicate in their first language), and different needs will point to different sets of categories.

e. Teachers, schools and examining bodies will wish to make their own choice of categories in the light of their particular circumstances, and we would not wish to restrict their choice in any way.

3.2 Even if each pupil knew only one thing under each of these headings, this would constitute a great improvement on the present situation, but we hope that many pupils would learn a great deal more than this.

3.3 Some analytical categories. These should not be restricted to the level of grammar, but should also include categories relevant to pronunciation and to meaning. Within grammar some obvious examples would be the parts of speech; categories used in the analysis of person, number and tense among inflections; morphological categories like "suffix" and "coiupound"; and categories for defining relations among words or word-groups (e.g. "modifier" and "subject"). For pronunciation the basic categories are probably "consonant", "vowel" and "syllable", but intonation could also be studied with the aid of simple categories like "rise" and "pause", and sounds could be further classified for e.g. length, stress and voicing. Semantic categories include the traditional ones like "synonym" and "coordinate", but linguistics offers a wide range of others which could be taught, such as "restrictive", "deictic" and "presupposed".

3.4 Pupils would benefit from learning analytical categories in the following ways:

a. Some of these categories have been part of the terminology of linguistics for thousands of years, and are now well established in books such as dictionaries and grammar books; such books will be inaccessible to school leavers if they do not understand the terminology. Moreover, many foreign-language teachers make use of such terms, so it is important for pupils to understand them properly.

b. Analytical categories make it possible to study the grammar of a pupil's own language, as recommended in 4 below.

c. They are also useful tools in any discussion of texts, such as would take place in a course on communication.

3.5 We recommend that the emphasis should be on understanding the categories themselves rather than on the terms used for naming them. However, where terms are well established in non-technical publications (such as grammars and dictionaries for the layman), such terms should be taught in preference to spuriously "simple" terms like "doing word".

3.6 Some rules. (By rules we mean here general statements about particular varieties of language, including rules about what is possible in particular non-standard varieties of English.) Analytical categories should be introduced in relation to rules which refer to them, and which in so doing define them. Thus rules will be needed in relation to all the levels of language mentioned above (pronunciation and meaning as well as grammar), but they could also be developed in relation to spelling, and in relation to language use (e.g. the rules for choosing between surnames and first names when addressing people, or the rules for choosing between standard and non-standard English). We recommend that some rules should be developed with reference to the
pupils' own ordinary language, though we recognize the possible value of explicit rules in the teaching of both written standard English and foreign languages.

3.7 Linguistic rules are important for various reasons.

a. If the pupils work out the rules for themselves, they learn important fundamental principles of science (relating to the formulation and testing of hypotheses, the need for sensitive treatment of data, and so on).

b. By learning the connection between categories and rules they will learn the difference between scientific explanations and taxonomy, and will develop a less dogmatic and sterile attitude to grammatical terminology than is commonly found among educated people at present.

c. When pupils explore their own ordinary speech and work out rules which govern it, they will find out for themselves that it is rule-governed, and interesting. This discovery will be valuable as an exercise in self-knowledge, but also as an antidote to the prevailing view in folk linguistics that only standard written English and foreign languages are governed by rules. This view leads to particularly low self-respect among non-standard speakers, which is socially divisive and dehumanising.

3.8 Some major structural peculiarities of English. This type of item would be an application of the knowledge of rules recommended in 3.6. It would require a comparison between English and at least one other language which would pinpoint differences between them, but once such differences have been identified other languages could be brought into the comparison, and pupils would thereby learn some of the ways in which languages may be expected to differ. Examples of suitable areas for comparison would be word-order, the relative importance of inflections, the types of syllable structure permitted, whether particular semantic contrasts are optional or obligatory, and writing-systems.

3.9 Such an introduction to linguistic typology would bring various benefits:

a. It would be useful preparation for learning a foreign language, whether at school or in later life.

b. It would reduce ethnocentricity among monolingual English speakers.

c. It would raise the social status of pupils who could speak other languages, including members of ethnic minorities, since they could be used as "experts" on their languages; and the explicit consideration of these languages would raise the social status of the languages themselves.

3.10 Some facts about languages of the world. Pupils should know roughly how many languages there are (far more than the figure most people guess at), and roughly how they are distributed throughout the world — e.g. that there is no language called "African", and that a very high proportion of the world's population is multi-lingual.

3.11 The benefits of this kind of knowledge include the following:

a. More knowledge about the linguistic background of ethnic minorities can only improve the attitudes of the majority community, and the self-respect of the minorities.

b. This kind of knowledge could provide a link between different school subjects, notably between the language-based subjects and geography and history.

c. It could be helpful to pupils who are likely to travel abroad for work or pleasure in later life.

3.12 Some structural differences between standard and non-standard English, and between written and spoken English. This type of knowledge would be another
extension of the knowledge of rules recommended in 3.6.

3.13 The advantages of this type of knowledge include the following:

a. It should improve the linguistic self-respect of English-speaking pupils by setting their own ordinary language on the same level as standard written English.

b. In so doing it is likely to make them more willing to learn written standard English, because it will no longer be seen as a threat to their own language (as it too often is at present).

c. It should also improve their understanding of the rules of the written standard, since the latter would have to be made explicit.

d. In comparing written standard English with their own speech, they will discover not only differences but also similarities, which again should help them in learning the former.

3.14 We should like to emphasise in conclusion that we are not recommending a "back to basics" return to the grammar teaching practised in the past. The main characteristics of our recommendations which we should like to stress in this connection are:

a. We recommend a descriptive approach, not a prescriptive one.

b. We recommend a much more wide-ranging syllabus, including pronunciation and semantics as well as grammar, applied to different varieties of language, and with attention paid to use as well as structure.

c. We recommend teaching which reflects developments in academic linguistics.

d. We recommend teaching which is matched to pupils' needs and interests.

LANGUAGE AND SEXISM

Jennifer Coates

Language and sexism is a vast subject and this paper cannot begin to do it justice. A session on language and sexism was held at the meeting of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain in September 1984 because of growing interest in the subject and because we wanted to encourage this interest and to increase our knowledge of it. We felt it was important to bring linguists together to discuss research findings and their implications in the area of language and sexism; this paper constitutes a report of that discussion.

Over fifty linguists attended the meeting, but, although some general discussion took place, the session was dominated by the responses of a panel of experts to an agenda of questions. Each question was discussed primarily by just one member of the panel, which consisted of: Deborah CAMERON (questions 1, 3, 7, 8, 11), Jenny CHESHIRE (questions 4, 5, 10) Jennifer COATES (questions 6, 7) and Joan SWANN (questions 2, 9). (Other speakers’ names are given in the text after their contributions.) Deborah Cameron has written a book on feminism and linguistic theory and publishes in both fields. Jenny Cheshire is well known for her work on the speech of adolescents in Reading; this work involved her in an analysis of sex differences in syntax and morphology. Jennifer Coates has taught a course on language and sex since 1977 and has just completed a book on the subject. Joan Swann works for the School of Education at the Open University where one of her interests is sexism in language; she is writing a book on the subject in collaboration with her colleague David Graddol. The panel was chosen to provide a range of expertise, to help us to tackle the various aspects of the topic.

The selected bibliography at the end of the paper shows the wide range of work being carried out in this area. This report, unlike previous ones, will make
Language and Sex.

The study of language and sex is a complex and multifaceted field. Contemporary sociolinguistics have brought to light a number of sociolinguistic factors that contribute to the construction of gender-based language use. These factors include, but are not limited to, societal norms, cultural expectations, and personal identities. The interaction of these factors can lead to variations in language use that are often tied to gender roles and expectations.

Sociolinguistic research has shown that language use is not only a means of communication but also a powerful tool for shaping and reinforcing social identities. Gender differences in language use can be observed in a variety of contexts, from everyday conversation to formal settings such as the workplace or the classroom.

Language is not just a means of expression; it is also a means of power. The way in which language is used can reflect and reinforce social hierarchies, including gender hierarchies. For example, the use of certain language styles or register can be associated with particular gender roles, with men often expected to speak in a more assertive voice while women are expected to speak in a more deferential manner.

Moreover, language use can be affected by larger social and cultural forces. For instance, the media plays a significant role in shaping language use, as it often reflects and reinforces existing gender roles and stereotypes.

In conclusion, the study of language and sex is a vital area of research that has the potential to shed light on the complex interplay between language and social identity. By examining how language is used, we can gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which gender is constructed and maintained in social contexts.

Q. What do we mean by sexism in language?

Sexism in language refers to the way in which language reflects and reinforces gender stereotypes and biases. It can manifest in various forms, such as the use of gendered language, the assignment of gender roles through language use, and the perpetuation of gender-related stereotypes.

Gendered language, for example, can involve the use of specific terms or pronouns to refer to one gender but not the other. This can lead to the exclusion of certain voices and perspectives from the discourse. Additionally, gendered language can reinforce existing gender hierarchies by assigning certain characteristics or behaviors to specific genders.

Q. In what ways are languages sexist?

Languages can be sexist in a number of ways. For instance, they may use gendered language to refer to certain roles or occupations, or they may assign different values or meanings to different genders. Furthermore, languages may reinforce gender stereotypes through the use of specific terms or constructions.

Gender stereotyping can also be found in the way in which languages are taught and learned. For example, certain gendered language patterns may be more widely taught or accepted, while others may be seen as less appropriate or less valued. This can lead to unequal access to language education and opportunities for communication.

In conclusion, the study of sexism in language is crucial for understanding the ways in which language can reinforce and perpetuate gender inequalities. By examining the mechanisms through which sexism is expressed in language, we can work towards creating more inclusive and equitable communication environments.
Generic Masculine Forms. Chiefly he, and man on its own or in compounds. (Note claims that such usage has been reinforced by male authorities such as grammarians.) Research shows that "generic" forms aren't interpreted as generic – see Question 3(c).

ii. FORMAL MARKING. The feminine form tends to be derived from the masculine by the addition of a suffix (-ess, -ette, etc.). Note also the use of woman/lady preceding nouns, e.g. lady doctor, woman cellist.

iii. LEXICAL GAPS. There are gaps in the lexical system such as no feminine equivalent of masculinize, effeminate, virile; no masculine equivalent of nymphomaniac. There are also gaps in the sense of a lack of words to refer to women's experiences – recently the rise of the women's movement has led to the coining of new words and meanings: sexism, male chauvinism, sexual harrassment, sisterhood.

The last category overlaps with (c) below; not only is there an absence of words to refer to women's experiences, but also lexical gaps show what is regarded as normal or appropriate for women and men in our society.

(c) Stereotyping of women and men: trivialization or denigration of women. Stereotypes exist for both sexes. They may have some social basis but become exaggerated. They are reinforced by institutions such as the education system and by the media. The important point is that, while both sexes are stereotyped, women's role and experiences are more often than not seen as having less value. Linguistic counterparts to this include:

i. Lack of parallelism between female- and male-referring terms. Terms like mother and father come to be distinguished by more than just the feature +FEMALE or +MALE. In other words, very few pairs of words are distinguished by sex alone.

ii. Female-referring terms tend to have lower status (and often acquire sexual connotations). Compare master/sistress; lord/lady; manager/manageress.

iii. Semantic pejoration/derogation of women. Words referring to women systematically acquire negative (often sexual) meanings through history. E.g. hussy, wench, dame, mistress, etc.

WORK ON OTHER LANGUAGES.

There has been work showing a sexist bias in languages as diverse as German (Pusch 1980), Japanese (Lee 1976) and a Lebanese dialect of Arabic (Jabbar 1980), amongst others. But while this work supports the general arguments based on English, it really only scratches the surface. It was pointed out that, even in languages without sex-based gender, such as Finnish and Hungarian, male terms can still be semantically and morphologically unmarked compared with female (CROCKER).

QUESTION 3. IS LINGUISTIC REFORM FEASIBLE OR DESIRABLE?

In terms of feasibility, it is certainly the case that speakers and writers can make serious efforts to change their usage (for practical suggestions, see Miller and Swift 1980). So-called generic he seems to be a prime candidate for reform. They appeared to be the favoured solution, though alternate use of he and she was suggested (ROSC). It was pointed out that this would lead to confusion where he and she were coreferential (HUDSON).

On what grounds is reform desirable?

(a) Avoiding offence to women. Sexist example sentences and pronouns, for instance, incense many female students and professional linguists, and also serve to keep women in their place.

(b) Symbolic identification with women's aspirations to equality. Refusal to use sexist conventions makes a
point: "every act reproduces or subverts a social institution" (Pateeman).

(c) Making sure women are included. Psycholinguistic findings indicate that there is confusion about 'generic' masculines, with both women and men interpreting he and man as referring to males only (see for example Schneider & Hacker 1973; Moulton et al. 1978).

But sexism in language goes deeper than the formal surface marking of certain items, as the following extract illustrates:

The lack of vitality is exacerbated by the absence of able-bodied young adults. They have all gone off to look for work, leaving behind the old, the disabled, the women and the children. (Sunday Times)

Adult here is used as if it were masculine. Reform of our morphology will not make any impact on this kind of example (which is in fact very common). It is the social group 'women' that is marked, not the lexical item.

Similarly, reforeist items like -person can be subverted by our all-pervasive ideology of female markedness: 'person' is frequently regarded as equivalent to feminine:

True justice to a steamed pudding can only be done by a true trencherman; I use the term advisedly, for I have never met a female trencherperson whose curves could expand to accommodate a second helping. (Sunday Times)

These examples call into question the idea that we can somehow invent a neutral language, and that language exists to reflect the world accurately (so that sexist pronouns are a historical aberration and reform is functionally justified, as argued by Miller and Swift 1980). If we change our usage, it is an ideological decision about representation, desirable on political and social grounds.

QUESTION 4. WHAT ARE THE FINDINGS OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC RESEARCH IN RELATION TO SEX DIFFERENCES IN PHONOLOGY, MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX?

The findings are diverse:

(a) In societies where women and men lead fairly separate lives, with clear role delimitations, there are clear linguistic differences in their speech. For example:

Chukchi (spoken in Eastern Siberia). Phonological differences - women use /ʃ/ where men use /ʃ/ or /ʃ/ so 'people' is /ʃaʃʃin/ for women, and /ʃaʃʃiʃin/ for men.

Koaati (Amerindian language from Louisiana). Morphological differences, for example in the verb forms used by women and men.

Other languages have different forms whose use depends not only on the sex of the speaker, but also on the sex of the addressee.

(b) In societies like ours, where differences in the lives of women and men are more subtle, differences in their language are more subtle too, and are only revealed by quantitative analyses of variation. These analyses are of two main kinds: there are those that have grouped speakers into different socioeconomic classes, and those that use criteria other than socioeconomic class for grouping speakers.

1. SURVEYS BASED ON SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS. A consistent finding that has emerged from all studies of this type is that women use a higher proportion of standard forms than men, for all social classes. This appears to be so both for phonological variables and for morphosyntactic and syntactic variables, though there are fewer analyses of the latter. A number of 'explanations' for these findings have been suggested: for example, that women are socially insecure; that
and some showed no sex differentiation at all.

Some studies have reported graded forms of sex differentiation, but these studies are not always consistent. In some studies, boys were more active than girls, whereas in others, girls were more active than boys. This variability suggests that sex differentiation is influenced by both genetic and environmental factors. In general, boys tend to engage in more aggressive behaviors than girls, whereas girls tend to engage in more nurturing behaviors than boys. However, these differences are not always consistent across studies.

Despite these differences, it is important to recognize that sex differentiation is a complex process influenced by a variety of factors. Future research should continue to explore the underlying mechanisms responsible for sex differentiation and the factors that influence these processes.
Loyalty to the local community. 

Choose different linguistic features to show their patterns. This suggests that male and female speakers may use different linguistic features in different contexts. This may be because of sociolinguistic and social differences in the way language is used to express power and identity. It is possible that during adolescence, speakers choose to

Both boys and girls develop a strong sense of belonging to their community and use language to express this. 

This supports the idea that the use of language is a social construct, and that it is shaped by cultural and social factors. 

Communication differences are often observed between different age groups, and are influenced by factors such as education, social class, and cultural background.

Although the findings of sociolinguistic studies do

51

コミュニケーション

QUESTION 6: IN WHAT WAY DOES MALAY/MALE/FEMALE COMMUNICATE

Example: speakers (gender)

Lauren's mother, who grew up in a rural community, uses different linguistic features to communicate with her male and female siblings.

The results of this study support the idea that language is a social construct, and that it is shaped by cultural and social factors. It is possible that during adolescence, speakers choose to use different linguistic features to express their identity and social position.

The results of this study support the idea that language is a social construct, and that it is shaped by cultural and social factors. It is possible that during adolescence, speakers choose to use different linguistic features to express their identity and social position.
yeah, function in conversation to indicate the listener's active attention. Both Zinman and West and Leet-Pellegrini found that women use more than men, and at appropriate moments (men sometimes use delayed minimal responses to signal lack of support for the speaker's topic). This finding is supported by many other researchers, e.g. Stródbeck and Mann (1956), Fishman (1980).

(c) VERBOSITY. It is a folklinguistic belief that women talk more than men. Research findings consistently contradict this - men have been shown to talk more than women in settings as diverse as staff meetings, television panel discussions, experimental pairs and husband-and-wife pairs in spontaneous conversation. Swacker (1975) got male and female subjects to describe three pictures - men took on average 13 minutes per picture, compared with women who took 3.17 minutes. (This actually underestimates the amount of time taken by men, since some of the male subjects were still talking when the tape ran out!)

(d) USE OF QUESTIONS. Fishman (1980) taped the daily conversations of three couples. During the 12.5 hours of conversation she transcribed, a total of 370 questions was asked, of which women asked 263. Brouwer et al. (1979) taped people buying a ticket at Central Station in Amsterdam; their results support Fishman's: women asked more questions than men, especially when addressing a male ticket seller.

(e) COMMANDS/DIRECTIVES. Goodwin (1980) observed the group play of girls and boys in a Philadelphia street, and found that boys used different sorts of directives from girls (she defined a directive as a speech act which tries to get someone to do something). The boys used explicit commands: Gimme the pliers, Get off my steps, whereas the girls used Let's: Let's use these first, Let's ask her. Girls also used the modals can and could as a way of suggesting action: We could go around looking for more bottles. Hey maybe tomorrow we can come up here and see if they got some more. Goodwin demonstrates that

in same-sex interaction boys and girls use quite different linguistic means to express directives. But she points out that girls can use more forceful directives (for example in cross-sex arguments). She argues that differential usage is derived from different social organisation - the boys belong to a hierarchically organised group, with leaders using commands to demonstrate control; the girls belong to a non-hierarchical group, with all girls participating equally in decision-making.

Engle (1980) studied the language used by parents playing with their children, and concluded that parents are providing different models for their children, depending on their sex. Fathers tended to give directions to children: Take it off, Why don't you make a chimney?; mothers were more likely to consult the children's wishes: Do you want to look at any of the other toys over here? What else shall we put on the truck?

(f) SWERING AND TABOO LANGUAGE. It is a folklinguistic belief that men swear more than women. There is very little hard evidence on the subject; most linguistic work seems content to reflect folklinguistic beliefs. Jespersen (1922) claims that women have an "instinctive shrinking from coarse and gross expressions and a preference for refined and (in certain spheres) veiled or indirect expressions." Lakoff (1975) claims that men use stronger expletives than women. Labov (1971) argues that in middle-class groups, women generally show much less familiarity with and much less tolerance for non-standard grammar and taboo. None of these linguists present any evidence to support their claims. The evidence there is inconclusive. Cheshire (1982) selects swearing as one of the measures to be included in her Vernacular Culture Index since "this was a major symbol of vernacular identity for both boys and girls". However, we have no comparative data. Goza's (1981) study of conversation showed that men in all-male groups swear more than women in all-female groups and more than men or women in mixed groups. Women certainly have a reason for avoiding taboo language as much of it (i) puts women down, and (ii)
Clearer insights are affected by socio-cultural factors which people have experienced. Research has shown that language and culture play significant roles in shaping beliefs and attitudes. Studies have indicated that women in Western cultures tend to have more positive beliefs about their abilities in various domains, including math and science, compared to women in other cultures. However, the extent to which these beliefs are influenced by cultural factors varies across different societies.

One study has explored the role of language in affecting women's beliefs about their abilities. The research suggests that women's performance in math and science is not only determined by their cultural background but also by the language they use. For example, women who speak languages with gender-neutral pronouns tend to have higher self-esteem and better academic performance in math and science than women who speak languages with gender-specific pronouns. This finding challenges the traditional belief that women are naturally less capable in these areas and supports the notion that cultural and linguistic factors play a significant role in shaping gender-related beliefs.

In conclusion, while women's beliefs about their abilities in math and science are influenced by a variety of factors, including cultural and linguistic factors, it is important to recognize the role of these factors in shaping gender-related beliefs. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that considers both cultural and linguistic perspectives.
kind: "women are conservative" and "women are status-conscious", for example. These generalisations are widely believed, though rigorous evidence for them is never produced. Research is needed not so much into the accuracy of such assertions, as into whether this type of psychological explanation is appropriate as an explanation of variation at the level of the group.

QUESTION 8. HAS LINGUISTICS ANYTHING CONSTRUCTIVE TO SAY ABOUT SEXISM?

No - on the contrary, linguists have quite often chosen to obfuscate the issue and discourage reform called for by feminists. An example is the popular labelling of English feminine and masculine pronouns as "marked" and "unmarked" respectively (which implies that the asymmetry is a matter of grammar rather than sexual politics). Unless one is making universalist claims about hierarchy in gender systems, the claim of markedness reduces to one about frequency or neutrality of meaning, and the question then arises why the masculine is used more frequently: by what criteria is it semantically more neutral? The history of English seems to show the "neutrality" of the masculine was reinforced by prescriptive practices, which were themselves related to beliefs about the nature and relative importance of the sexes (Bodine 1975). While linguists need to counter inaccurate claims by writers such as Spender (1980) that prescriptivists actually introduced "generic" he (CROCKER), it was agreed that ideologically-based processes in language change are little understood; they should not be dismissed out of hand. It was suggested that linguists, psycholinguists and pragmatics might help in exploring how the hearer chooses to interpret he, as neutral or as male (HUDSON).

QUESTION 9. WHAT ARE THE EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF SEXISM IN LANGUAGE?

(a) IN TERMS OF THE FORMAL CURRICULUM. It was suggested that pupils/students should be taught about the areas covered in the LAGB session as part of a more general

"language awareness" programme. Language awareness is quite widely taught nowadays (or at least it is part of the rhetoric that it is taught). Teachers should be encouraged not to accept language as a neutral medium but to examine the possibility of bias, the way language reinforces social norms, etc. Discussing some aspects of sexism may have a more direct pay-off: for example, teaching about differences in women's and men's interaction styles and exploring classroom interaction may actually change the way pupils behave. Though sexism will not be eradicated by changes in linguistic usage alone, the teacher can help to create the awareness that leads to a change of attitude by discussing linguistic sexism and by giving guidance on language use (CROCKER).

(b) IN TERMS OF SCHOOL POLICY, CLASSROOM ORGANISATION, ETC. It was suggested that schools and other institutions should have a formal policy for the avoidance of sexism in all public language (speech as well as writing), in much the same way as publishing houses (e.g. McGraw Hill 1974), professional organisations (e.g. National Union of Journalists 1982, American Psychological Association 1977) and some other educational institutions (e.g. the School of Education at the Open University).

The sexist term chairman was taken as an example. "Sex-neutral" alternatives (chairperson) tend to be recommended for stylistic reasons, but, although this avoids a "generic masculine" term, a "sex-neutral" term may eventually be assumed to refer to a man if it isn't formally marked for femaleness (by the male-as-norm rule). "Sex-explicit" alternatives (chairman/chairwoman) are stylistically awkward but women's presence is always made explicit. The very stylistic hiccuph may serve a useful function in making people aware of this. However, if female-referring terms tend to acquire negative meanings there would be a constant need to find new (temporarily neutral) alternatives. It was suggested that resistance to the term chairperson may be explained by the notion of agency being involved in the suffix -man, but absent from a semantic representation of -person (BEUCHAR).
Teachers should be aware of the research findings on female and male differences in interaction, and should try to investigate what happens in their lessons. A teaching aim might be something like "everyone should have the chance to speak; everyone should be required to listen". Some people have advocated single-sex classes or groupings as a way of promoting this; although this may help some girls, on its own it won't guarantee equal opportunities for everyone. However teachers organise their classrooms, they need, first, to monitor what goes on in their lessons, and second to adopt certain strategies to correct any imbalance they observe. Some obvious examples are: introducing both "male" and "female" topics, consciously calling on girls as well as boys to speak, looking at girls when addressing the class, getting girls to chair groups and to read out reports of group work. The point is, however, not to provide a definitive list of strategies but to convince teachers that such strategies are necessary - inequalities won't just correct themselves.

QUESTION 10. WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF SEX DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE FOR OUR IDEAS ON THE MECHANISMS OF LINGUISTIC CHANGE?

(a) The findings from studies based on socioeconomic class that women use more of the prestige standard forms than men has been taken as suggesting that women are more likely to lead changes that are in the direction of the prestige norms. There have been a large number of studies that appear to confirm this, from Gauch (1905) to more recent studies in New York (Labov 1966) and Norwich (Trudgill 1974). It is often assumed that it is middle-aged, middle-class women who lead changes of this kind. Conversely, it seems that working-class men may lead changes that are in the direction of non-standard vernacular norms (see Labov 1963, Trudgill 1972).

(b) Studies based on social networks have suggested that where social networks are dense and multiplex, and the patterns of social interaction are stable, language change is unlikely to occur. Furthermore, where a particular linguistic feature functions as a symbol of loyalty to the local community for one sex but not for the other, then the sex which uses it as a symbol of loyalty will tend to be the most conservative: if there is a change, it will be led by the sex for which it has no such function. When changes are introduced into a community, it is speakers with weak network ties who are likely to be the innovators (Milroy and Milroy 1984).

It is misleading however to make generalisations about language change that are based on the sex of speakers alone. Sex differentiation interacts with other social factors, such as age, social network, education, social values and personality.

QUESTION 11. WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF LANGUAGE AND SEXISM FINDINGS FOR LINGUISTIC THEORY IN GENERAL?

It was suggested that linguistic theory should observe the following caveats:

(a) Beware of inadvertently incorporating folklinguistic beliefs and stereotypes into methods and explanations.

(b) Beware of gross demographic variables in variationist research; interactions may be important.

(c) Not forget the ideological aspects of languages or underestimate the significance of ideology in regulating usage and as a factor in linguistic change.

(d) Consider the possible links between language and conceptualisation, and the social/educational consequences of such links.

(e) Set a good example in using language that both avoids offence and also avoids conceptual confusion.
Conclusion

The relationship between language and sex in England, as elaborated in Trudgill (1984), has been extensively discussed in sociolinguistics. The claim that there is a correlation between gender and language use has been supported by various studies. However, the extent of this correlation varies across different sociolinguistic contexts.

Recent research suggests that the relationship between language and gender is more complex than previously thought. While certain linguistic features may be associated with specific gender identities, these associations are not universal and can vary significantly within and across different sociolinguistic communities.

It is important to approach the study of language and gender with a critical and nuanced perspective. The focus on binary gender roles and the binary opposition of male and female language use can be limiting and reinforcing stereotypes. Therefore, future research should aim to explore the diverse and multifaceted nature of gender and language, acknowledging the fluidity and variability of gender expressions.

In conclusion, the relationship between language and gender is a dynamic and multidimensional phenomenon that requires continued investigation and a critical approach to understanding its complexities.
Labov W. (1963) "The social activation of a sound change", Word 19, 273-309
Lakoff R. (1975) Language and Women's Place, Harper & Row
Lee M.Y. (1976) "The married woman's status and role as reflected in Japanese: and exploratory sociolinguistic study", Signs 2.4, 991-9
Milroy L. (1980) Language and Social Networks, Blackwell
Moulton J. et al (1978) "Sex bias in language use: neutral pronouns that aren't" American Psychologist 33(11), 1032-6
Mufwene S. (1983) "Investigating what the words 'father' and 'mother' mean", Language and Communication 3.3, 245-69
O'Barr W. & Atkins B. (1980) "Women's language" or "powerless language"? in McConnell-Ginet et al (eds)
Schneider J.W. & Hacker S.L. (1973) "Sex role imagery and the use of the generic "man" introductory texts: a case in the sociology of sociology", The American Sociologist 8(1), 12-8
Schulz M. (1975) "The semantic derogation of women" in Thorne & Henley (eds)
Stones R. (1983) "Pour out the cocoa Janet": Sexism in children's books Longman for the Schools Council
Strudbeck F. & Mann R. (1956) "Sex role differentiation in jury deliberations", Sociology 19, 3-11
Trudgill P. (1972) "Sex, covert prestige and linguistic change in the urban British English of Norwich", Language in Society 1, 179-95
Trudgill P. (1974) The Social Differentiation of...
non-existing usage.

In the growing field of sex difference in language, research has led to some interesting findings. One of the most notable is the role of sex differences in language development. In particular, research has shown that girls tend to develop language earlier than boys. This is particularly true in the area of reading and writing. As a result, there is a growing body of research that suggests that sex differences in language development are significant and should be taken into account in educational settings.

SUMMARY

This paper reports what was said in a discussion on
Interested in language, both inside and outside the field of linguistics who are
interested in the area, and will enlighten and inform those
and sexists, we hope this report will stand as a more
until very recently, linguists have neglected language
writing (CLIE working paper 3) reflects the fact that,
production of this report than the one on speech and
that fact that fewer linguists have been involved in the
and have revised the report to take account of them. The
listed above with a request for comments and corrections.
listed above, I sent a preliminary copy of this report to those
report, I understand clearly, to record the main points that arose. I
space available, to record the main points that arose, I
space attached from the report - I have done my best in the
apologises to anyone who feels their comments have been
discussed, I would also like to thank everyone who came
discussed (which are shown by names in brackets after
discussed) to the above for their contributions to the
I am grateful to the above for their contributions to the

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS