Catharine Carfoot

Applying modern phonology to ancient poetry; evidence for the syllable outranking the mora in dactylic hexametre

Many discussions about mora theory begin with a reference to the moraic basis of metre in classical poetry, but rarely go on to explain or explore any aspects of the various metres used in Latin and Ancient Greek poetry. This paper focusses on dactylic hexameter in particular, firstly since it is the metre with which the author is most familiar and secondly because it provides a neat demonstration both of the binary nature of classical poetry and of the prevalence of syllabic constraints over moraic constraints. Each line of poetry consisted of six poetic ‘feet’. The final foot was invariably bisyllabic and consisted of either two long (bimoraic) syllables (a spondee), or a long then a short (monomoraic) syllable (a trochee); all other feet are quadrimoraic, with the penultimate (fifth) foot being invariably a dactyl (one long syllable followed by two short syllables); the remaining four feet in the line could either be spondees or dactyls. A typical line of poetry might then be ‘footed’ as follows:

- - / - - / - - / - - / - - where ‘/’ marks a foot division, ‘-’ marks a long syllable and ‘-’ marks a short syllable.

The analysis here is an Optimality Theory account (Prince and Smolensky 1993 and 2004) wherever possible, and demonstrates that in order to produce the correct form, in particular with respect to the fifth and sixth feet, syllabic contraints take precedence over moraic constraints. Previous discussions of classical poetic metre include Steriade’s (1982) discussion in relation to syllabification, Youmans (1974, 1982, 1983), Fabb (1997) and Golston and Riad’s (2005) discussion of various Ancient Greek poetic metres from an Optimality Theory perspective, where they suggest that the constraints NoCLASH and NoLAPSE are low-ranked, and this accounts for the particular metres that occur in Greek poetry.
Chang-Beom Park

Vowel Harmony in Non-Concatenative Morphology: An Optimality theoretic approach to Korean ideophones

Korean has numerous onomatopoeic and mimetic expressions traditionally called ‘ideophones’. Basically, there are two types of ideophones in Korean: Light and Dark forms, which express a subtle meaning distinction. For example, noran, classified as Light, means ‘bright yellow’, whereas its Dark counterpart nurดน means ‘dark yellow’. Such as ideophones exhibit special properties with regard to vowels, compared with non-ideophonic words. Light and Dark forms divide vowels into two groups: Light vowels {a, o, ε} vs. Dark vowels {i, t, u, e, ə}, which cannot co-occur in each form: *nuran or * nurดน. For this reason, CK ideophones are often regarded as involving vowel harmony from the phonological viewpoint, and at the same time, non-concatenative process from the morphological viewpoint.
L3 Acquisition of German by native Japanese speakers - evidence of L2 Influence

Japanese nouns are non-inflecting and have no articles; English and German nouns generally inflect for number and have articles. Furthermore, German articles vary according to the gender, number and case of the noun. German attributive adjectives also decline according to the gender, number and case of the noun they are modifying, the declension is additionally dependent upon the type of preceding determiner (e.g. definite, indefinite, zero). English does not mark adjectives. Whilst Japanese may mark predicates, such as adjectives and verbs, for tense and negation (amongst other things) and nouns for case, there are no markings on attributive adjectives for gender, number or case. This produces an interesting paradigm for the three languages under investigation.

Feature distribution by language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE</th>
<th>ARTICLE PRESENTS</th>
<th>ARTICLES MARKED FOR</th>
<th>ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVES MARKED FOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Case / Num / Gender</td>
<td>Case / Num / Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>no / partial / no</td>
<td>no / no / no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>yes / yes / yes</td>
<td>yes / yes / yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This study will present results obtained on these properties from two groups of L3 speakers of German with Japanese L1: a group with low proficiency in L2 English and a group with high proficiency L2 English. Subjects undertook written gap-filling tasks and oral elicitation tasks, as well as independent proficiency tests in English and German. A control group of native speakers was included in the design.

Preliminary results show the higher English proficiency group outperforming the lower English proficiency group - in some cases significantly. Recent L3 research has shown that learners acquiring features not present in the L1 but present in the L2 and L3 generally acquire them faster than L2 learners who have no intervening languages (Leung, 2005). However the features observed in the current study are not present in the L1 or L2, thus a tentative proposal is offered that learning any second language is beneficial when acquiring a third language, perhaps making learners more sensitive to certain parameter settings.

References

A Dual-mechanism Account of Stem-formation in Portuguese: Evidence from masked morphological priming

The dual-mechanism model of morphology (e.g., Clahsen, 1999; Pinker, 1999) holds that the comprehension and production of productively inflected forms is mediated by the application of an abstract rule, while irregular forms are stored in the mental lexicon. Say and Clahsen (2002) proposed an extension of the dual-mechanism model of morphology to stem-formation processes in Italian. According to this account, verbal stems (root + theme vowel) belonging to the productive first conjugation can be rule generated, while second and third conjugation stems need to be stored in the mental lexicon.

The present experiment used a masked priming lexical decision task in Portuguese (in which the first conjugation is the largest and usually applies to new verbs in the language) to test this account. Targets were first person singular present tense forms (a root-based form) and were preceded by a masked 50ms prime, which was either the same form (identity condition), the infinitive form of the same verb (morphological condition), or the infinitive form of an unrelated verb (control condition). There were 21 first conjugation targets (e.g., limito) and 21 third conjugation targets (e.g., discuto), and a total of 168 words and 168 pseudowords. Targets were matched across conditions in lemma frequency, word-form frequency, and number of phonemes, letters, syllables, and orthographic neighbours. Primes across conditions were matched in the same variables, except for number of orthographic neighbours. Control primes were matched to morphological primes in these same variables. Participants were assigned to one of three lists, following a latin-square design.

If first conjugation infinitive primes are decomposed into root, theme vowel, and affix (e.g., limit-a-r) by the application of a rule, then prime and target should activate the same representation (the root), yielding a substantial facilitation effect. Third conjugation primes should only be decomposed into stem and affix (e.g., discuti-r), while third conjugation targets (with no theme vowel) should be decomposed into root and affix (e.g., discut-o), activating different representations in memory, and yielding a smaller effect.

The results show a dissociation between first and third conjugation conditions. Facilitation effects in the morphological condition were larger (and closer to the identity condition) for first conjugation targets, supporting a dual-mechanism model of stem-formation, and constituting a challenge for single-mechanism theories, such as most connectionist models of morphology.
Erifili Roubou

Accounting for the inconsistent research findings of word processing effects on students' writing: causes and solutions

When word processing was first introduced in schools almost twenty-five years ago, teachers seemed overenthusiastic about the ways it could contribute to the writing process. Proponents of the word processor attributed to the medium a number of positive effects such as the potential to improve the quality of students' texts, to lead to more and to different kinds of revisions and to improve students’ attitudes (for reviews see Bangert-Drowns, 1993; Cochran-Smith, 1991). However, research on word processing still remains far from unanimous since it has yielded inconsistent or even contradictory findings. This state of affairs though seems to confuse teachers in relation to the effectiveness of the word processor.

It is now accepted that this diversity of findings can be attributed to the complex interplay of a number of variables that have the potential to influence the outcomes of a study. More specifically, such variables include the design of the studies employed by the researchers; the nature of the users; their prior computer and word processing skills; the attitudes and the experience of the teacher; the software and the hardware used; the time devoted to using the word processor and many others.

In this paper I will present and discuss the parameters that should be considered in word processing studies since a careful consideration of these could possibly help the researcher ensure valid and comparable results.

References


Rosalina Domínguez Angel

The identification, code-breaking and retention of idioms by Mexican EFL university students

This presentation is based on ongoing research on the strategies used by EFL learners for the identification, code-breaking and retention of idioms while reading an extended text. The study aims to test the effectiveness of the code-breaking strategies and the effect that the use of these strategies could have had on the retention of the meaning of the target idioms three weeks after the reading took place. The strategy data was gathered through a questionnaire created from the results of a pilot study and also from retrospective protocols elicited after the main task was finished. Language outcomes were collected through an immediate and a delayed test. The scores that the subjects obtained for correct identification, code-breaking and retention were correlated with ten code-breaking strategies (CBS) and with four idiom-type variables: a) familiarity with the component words of the idiom, b) context guessability, c) interlingual similarity and d) transparency. Preliminary results showed that ‘contextual guessability’ played a very important role in idiom identification while the ‘familiarity with the component words of the idiom’ and ‘interlingual similarity’ appeared to determine the success in idiom code-breaking and idiom retention.
Carlota Alcantar Diaz

How to construct a special corpus to extract the most frequent words in a particular field

In order to make a list of frequent words in any particular subject field, a Special Corpus, limited to a specific field or specific text type should be constructed (Bowker and Pearson, 2002). Such a corpus should be a representative collection of texts of the domain area (Atkins, Clear, & Ostler, 1992; Biber 1993; Sinclair 1991), as well as large enough to guarantee the occurrence of words in the area of interest (Coxhead, 2000).

Coxhead (2000) constructed a corpus of 3.5 million running words or tokens of written academic texts and examined the range and frequency of words outside the first 2,000 most frequent words of general English. As a result she obtained a list of 570 word families, examples of these words are: legislation, concept and indicate.

In this presentation I report the construction of a Special corpus, with the purpose of obtaining the most frequent words in texts in the field of tourism. The methodology I followed was similar to the one Coxhead (2000) used to compile his corpus.

The Corpus contains 37,795 tokens (running words) of written texts in the field of tourism, 1,683 families. These texts are those that graduates from the State University of Nayarit of Tourism Faculty are more likely to read at work.

The sub-areas are: Tourism Government offices, hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and Language Institutes. In order to balance the content of the texts, the texts compiled are of different length; short medium and long texts (Coxhead, 2000).

From this corpus, by comparison with the non-tourism written portion of the British National Corpus, using the z test, a list of frequent words in the field of tourism was obtained. Some examples are: dining, in-room, mon-fri, accommodations, vacations, couples only, and beach resort.

References


Yuah Vicky Chon

Writers' identification of lexical problems in the process of L2 writing: a prerequisite for using writing communication strategies

This paper investigates the lexical aspect of the writing process by exploring the types and tokens of lexical problems that L2 writers identify in the drafting stage (e.g. translating; Flower & Hayes, 1981) of writing. The translating stage, for example, has been less researched compared to other stages of writing (i.e. planning, revising) in which lexical problems initiated by L2 writers have been identified only marginally in the writing strategies literature (e.g., Cumming, 1990; Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001), but without clear categorization of them or by disregarding the problem-orientedness of the strategies that are used to solve those lexical problems. Ultimately the study of these lexical problems is important for providing an account of the communication strategies (e.g., Tarone, 1981; Faerch & Kasper, 1983; Poulisse, 1990; Dornyei & Scott, 1997) that are employed in the process of writing since different strategies may be used to solve different problems.

To obtain data on lexical problems, 10 Korean university students were asked to think-aloud while writing twice in English on word processors with access to Internet dictionaries. A repeated measures design was used where students wrote for two audiences and two writing topics. 8 major types of lexical problems were found, some competence and some performance-based, occurring in different patterns for the two audiences and writing topics respectively. Use of the Internet dictionary also had an effect on the types of lexical problems. The results provide pedagogical implications for explaining the L2 writing process.

References


The social significance of the Community of Practice analysis in sociolinguistic research methodology

A major effect of the development of sociolinguistics is that it showed the way language use is biased due to standardization and imposition of norms which are social rather than linguistic processes. It also showed that language is inherently variable and that the reason some linguistic varieties/languages have higher status than others are subjective. The preference of some varieties over the others derives from social factors (Labov 1966, 1972).

An innovative approach in sociolinguistic studies is the Community of Practice (CofP) model. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992,1999) introduced Wenger’s (Lave-Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998) notion of CofP in sociolinguistic research and shifted away the focus from studying fixed social categories, such as social class, ethnicity and age, to the studying of CofPs that constantly re-negotiate their norms through a series of shared practices. Eckert’s research in Belten High (Eckert 2000) offers an explanatory insight to the way linguistic and social variables are co-related. Central role in the co-construction of social and linguistic meanings is the role of style. The stylistic practices involve a process of “bricolage”, as defined by Hebdige (1979).

In this paper, I will present an example of a CofP analysis, based on the linguistic data of my ongoing research in Athens. The data consists of 4 hours of recorded speech of two different groups (a mainstream, “trendy” group, and a non-mainstream one, the “parea”). The usage of standard Greek linguistic elements in the formation of non-standard linguistic types is different between the two groups, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The data show how the creation of linguistic meaning takes place along with the construction of social meaning and demonstrate the importance of style in the construction of group identity.

References


This paper explores how linguistic diversity is treated in two disciplines: sociolinguistics and language planning. Epistemological shortcomings in sociolinguistics are outlined and their effects on language planning examined.

A distinction is necessary between ‘linguistic diversity’ and ‘linguistic heterogeneity’. Heterogeneity entails a discrete series of entities; that is, non-homogeneity. Sociolinguistics demonstrates this by showing statistical differences between identifiably discrete groups of speakers. Diversity, however, is more than this.

Linguistic diversity is the totality of linguistic variation: all the sounds coming from all the speakers (if we limit ourselves to spoken language). This does not lend itself to statistical comparison in discrete groups. Because sociolinguistics fails to distinguish heterogeneity from diversity, it leaves an impression buried deep within its discourse that diversity actually exists in discrete groups.

This is not just methodological nit-picking. When conclusions about linguistic diversity are taken from a descriptive discipline like sociolinguistics into a normative discipline like language planning, certain changes take place. Language planning consistently claims to ‘protect linguistic diversity’, and to achieve this by officially promoting standardised versions of minority languages.

Two problems arise here: standardisation actively works against the internal diversity of the ‘saved’ languages; and new downward pressures are created on even smaller languages. Thus diversity can still decrease. Language planning is the normative enforcement of a set of static outcomes; whereas linguistic diversity is a generative set of dynamic processes.

What is needed is a formal definition of linguistic diversity vis-à-vis heterogeneity, a task that requires a far more reflexive reappraisal of sociolinguistics, and the scope of its analysis. Keywords: linguistic diversity; linguistic heterogeneity; language planning; sociolinguistics; language standardisation.