

Amne Zeitschriften Fred. with best wishes
rev. by → Bob le Page.

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intuition, which can nevertheless receive corroboration from more rigorous procedures. Dupriez is at pains to point out that the sum of particulars to be found in a text cannot make up the whole: just as we can recognize 'un je ne sais quoi d'individuel' in a human personality, underlying the outward aspects of his behaviour, so there is a global quality to style – 'structure du comportement d'un écrivain'.

The 'structuralism' in Dupriez's method is of the European, not the American type, and only indirectly related to linguistics. Obviously, on the level of terminology, *stylème* (= a constituent of style) is formed on the model of *phonème* etc. (225); and the structure formed by stylèmes is a *stylémie* (so that *stylémique* can replace *stylistique* as the designation of the field of study – 249). Dupriez also introduces from linguistics Martinet's notions about 'niveaux d'articulation' (238): stylistics, he asserts, is concerned with the first articulations of both *langue* and *parole* – 'deep' structures perceived by the outsider only through the more superficial layers (239).

Where Dupriez claims to have drawn most on linguistic method is in his use of 'commutation'. At one step in his examination of a text he segments it into appropriate sections and seeks substitute expressions for each segment. Necessarily some of his substitutes represent 'permitted' alternatives within the language (e.g. synonyms *se souvenir/se rappeler*, or syntactic equivalents *ce brin/un brin*). But the 'bric-à-brac' found in the inventories of stylistic alternatives given by the 'new rhetoricians' is not really what Dupriez is after. He seeks an alternative rendering of the author's deeper thoughts, not merely for his expression: thus for Camus' *et la même corde*, we cannot use *et la même ficelle*, but rather *et mourir comme toi* (233); or for Apollinaire's *L'automne est morte souviens t'en* we may find *Souviens-toi des amours d'antan* (273). Sometimes Dupriez goes further and eliminates a feature of his text, substituting a new element: thus the repetition of *brin de bruyère* in Apollinaire's *L'Adieu* gives way to *Je referme ma tabatière* (275).

Having pinpointed the *stylèmes*, Dupriez seeks to interpret them by explaining why the author chose one expression, or, more important, one succession of expressions, rather than another. Finally he draws his hypotheses together and tries to define 'le geste de l'auteur, qui est la la stylémie'.

What all this amounts to is an extremely high-falutin' *explication de texte*, perhaps excessively long-winded (41 pages of analysis for a five-line poem) but nonetheless interesting. One may wonder whether all the paraphernalia of the book, with its *tours d'horizon* and discussion of its precursors, could not have been omitted, leaving us with a slim pamphlet outlining and exemplifying the originality of Dupriez's method (a previous article, Dupriez 1964, had already done this to some extent). Perhaps the book is meant to serve a pedagogical purpose (it is to be noted that Dupriez had already written treatises on orthography for his Canadian fellow-countrymen). It is true that the author bore in mind *lecteurs pressés* (6) in planning the lay-out of his book (though I can hardly think a hurried reading would yield any profit whatsoever). If it is addressed to students, however, I cannot predict success; although the rigours of Dupriez's method can, and do, elucidate facets of language and style, the average student will probably find them over-elaborate and tiresome.

Nevertheless, stripped of ballast, this book does make a contribution to literary studies, but not, alas, to the linguistic study of literature.

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ARNE ZETTERSTEN, *The English of Tristan da Cunha*. Lund Studies in English 37. C. W. K. Gleerup, Lund 1969. 179 pp.

'Since the linguistic data on which the present investigation is based are of a particular kind, being part of an archaic, isolated type of language, the description focuses (*sic*) on features which differ from those of modern Standard English. In the phonology, particular emphasis has been laid on allophones used by Tristan da Cunha people in contrast with speakers of modern Received Pro-

nunciation. The examples given under *Morphology and syntax* are also features characteristic of the island speech as opposed to modern Standard English. . . It can be generally said that the main purpose of the description is to present the most notable features in which the Tristan da Cunha dialect differs from modern Standard English. It is thus a contrastive description of an isolated variety or dialect of English.'

Arne Zettersten has run head-on into problems of description which are very much more complex than his rather superficial discussion indicates; and although his actual mode of resolution of these problems is not unreasonable, the justification he gives has something of the air of a *faute de mieux* rationalization. Any description of a language which is not wholly structuralist – that is, stated with reference only to the structures found within a synchronic sample – is in some sense evolutionary or historical or comparative. For such treatments one needs a datum-line (or datum-lines). In the case of a language with so long a history, and so complex a history, of dialectal variation as English, the selection of a datum-line is bound to be to some extent arbitrary and a matter of convenience. 'Genetic' models for historical and comparative linguistics would lead one to select a 'parent' variety for reference – and indeed this is the goal Zettersten works towards later in his book, as we shall see – but such models are more misleading than they are useful. For many years in historical English philology the convention obtained that 'dialect' forms in phonology were related back to an idealized 'Middle English', which usually meant those reconstructions of the South-East Midland dialect which were somewhat precariously strung like spiders' webs between the evidence of Middle English literary texts and that of modern regional speech and place-names, etc. Zettersten makes some use of that convention. But the study of contact-varieties of English all over the world is leading today to a realization of the multiplicity of 'sources', each of which needs to be invoked to explain why, for example, lower-class Johannesburg English is different from educated Texan usage. In many such situations the concept of a normative 'model language' is useful. Sometimes it proves impossible to describe the model, but that semi-mythical norm of good breeding, RP, has been a model (or, Daniel Jones has been a model) for the teaching of English pronunciation in many parts of the world, and

RP

the literary standards we refer to as Standard English have similarly provided a model for grammatical and semantic usage. Unfortunately, Zettersten's discussion of and justification for his choice of these modes of usage for reference is perfunctory, to say the least; his statements about 'the English-speaking world' are simplistic and sometimes misleading, and he uses the term 'Standard English' to refer to RP, which is unfortunate.

He claims that Tristan da Cunha English is not a contact variety but an archaic variety. In his early chapters he discounts the influence of a fairly high proportion of women from St. Helena and of the fact that Glass's wife was a Cape Coloured woman. Tristan, he says, 'has always been a men's community, and it is very likely that the language used by the leading men left its mark on the speech-habits there from the start' (p. 21). On the other hand, he discounts also the fact that Corporal Glass, the leader of the little community left behind after the garrison withdrew in 1817, was a native of Kelso in Scotland. 'Thus most of the features characterizing the phonology of Tristan da Cunha speech have parallels in London or South English dialects' (pp. 87–8). 'Of the early settlers who remained longest on Tristan the majority were from the South or from London.' The argument seems to me dubious and circular.

In the first place, the material transcribed and forming the basis of this judgement consists in the main of interviews with RP speakers after the islanders were evacuated to England in 1961. Prior to that, RP had on the whole been the model in school and church. Thus the islanders almost certainly shifted their usage in the direction of that of their interviewers. This Zettersten acknowledges.

Secondly, if we take – arbitrarily, but there is no alternative to an arbitrary interpretation – 'early settlers' to mean those who settled in the 10 years 1817–1827, and 'who stayed longest' to mean 'who stayed more than ten years', the total numbers involved are precisely *ten* persons. Of these, four (women) came from St. Helena, one (woman) from Cape Town, one (man) from Kelso, one from Deptford (London), one from Hull (Yorkshire), one from Hastings (Sussex). The provenance of the remaining man is unknown. By far the greatest degree of continuity and homogeneity was provided in the 19th century by the four coloured women who married the settlers Glass, Swain, Cotton and Green – the first

coming from Cape Town (where Glass himself had spent ten years) and the remaining three, all surnamed Williams, from St. Helena. However much of a 'men's community' it was, the children were likely to be influenced by their mothers. The 1966 census, printed on pp. 159-162, lists 51 members of the Glass family, 60 of the Green family and 48 of the Swain family out of a total of 290. The Cottons were still fairly numerous in the 1875 census. Thus it is more reasonable to look closely at the provenance of these families than elsewhere:

Name	Provenance	Years in Tristan	Until
Corpl. Glass	Kelso/Cape Town	37	1853
Mrs. Glass	Cape Town	42	1858
Alex. Cotton	Yorkshire	53	1874
Mrs. Cotton	St. Helena	65	1892
Thomas Swain	Sussex	36	1862
Mrs. Swain	St. Helena	over 48	after 1875
Peter Groen ~ Green	Holland	66	1902
Mrs. Green	St. Helena	63	1900

The speech of uneducated garrison soldiers as learnt by their African or Coloured women-folk at the Cape and in St. Helena, and subsequently by their children, in the first quarter of the 19th century, seems likely to have formed an important part of the mould for Tristan speech; the model language-itself evolving - another important part. In Appendix B Zettersten, apparently contradicting his earlier statements, himself gives much greater weight to St. Helena.

Thirdly, although Zettersten cites as one of his sources an interview between Catharine (elsewhere printed Katharine) Patch and one of the islanders, Sophie Green, in 1963, I am told by Professor Trevor Hill, who has worked on this same material, that it exhibits considerably greater variation in the phonology and greater complexity in the syllable structures than is reflected in Zettersten's transcriptions and phonemicization.

It is difficult to have too much confidence, therefore, in the

account given here of the historical phonology. Having attempted the same task for Jamaican Creole myself, and having committed many of the same sins, I am reluctant to criticise Zettersten too harshly. However, his summing-up (p. 137) that the Tristan dialect is 'entirely British in character, formed in a British or general European culture', is at variance with his own earlier observations on the influence of South African and St. Helena usage, and misrepresents generally the situation regarding transplanted English. I make this criticism within the framework of reference of the dogma that all linguistic change is due to contact and/or environmental adaptation. It is not enough today to refer in a footnote to Uriel Weinreich in this connection; his book, valuable and stimulating though it was when published, has long been overtaken by subsequent work on creoles and pidgins. Nor can one take very seriously Zettersten's short section (pp. 137-8) on 'Universals in island languages'. The universals he points to are on the one hand the comparative lack of change in the language of a community that is very isolated, and on the other the adaptations which typically take place when a language is transplanted to a new environment - and it makes no difference whether the isolated transplanted community is on an island or a continent, except of course that islands have headlands and bays and these have tended to get the same kinds of names from English settlers in various parts of the world. Otherwise, I could match most of his 'island universals' from Guyana and British Honduras.

His book is interesting and contains much valuable material; it is, like all volumes in the series, beautifully produced. It is a pity that he used different samples for the grammatical analysis on the one hand and the lexical analysis on the other. A great deal of the discussion is rather superficial, relying heavily on reference to the more detailed studies of others. There is an extensive bibliography in which, on cursory inspection, I found two mistakes - my own name becoming two separate people and Labov becoming Labow - and some inconsistencies. In short, although this book provides a lot of useful information, the general standard falls short of what we have come to expect both from the author and from the series.

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