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СЪДЪРЖАНИЕ

David Ingram. Two notes on Gheorghov.	7
Сашо Рангелов. Две бележки върху Георгов.	15
Ивайло Велев. Третата аксиома на Нютон за движението.	24
Райна Холанди. Устойчиво сравнение и метафора.	30
Рада Кърлова, Боряна Вуковска. Метафората в езика – позната и непозната.	34
Никола Димитров. Описателност и процесуалност.	50
Наташа Аврамовска. Урбаниот лабиринт.	60
Николай Папучиев. Граждански и църковен брак в България.	68
Венцислав Божинов. Българските студенти в чужбина.	77
Енчо Мутафов. Смъртта на човека след смъртта на Бога.	85
Елена Тачева. Училищното наказание или за властите в/на институцията.	105
Елена Гетова. Какво сравнява възрожденският пътепис.	112
Елена Азманова. Темата за смъртта във „военните“ разкази на Йордан Йовков.	123
Мая Горчева. Забулената тайна на разказа “През чумавото”.	130
Евелина Иванова. От четене на глас към четене на ум или пътуването от споделеното към самотното четене в легендата.	136
Роман Хаджикосев. Елин Пелин на луната.	142
Бойка Илиева-Пензова. Трагичната история на баронеса Ченчи в интерпретациите на Шели, Стендал, Гуераци.	152
Мария Христова. На лов за . . . Артемида.	161
Магдалена Костова-Панайотова. Геометрия на метареалността.	169
Стилиян Стоянов. Геният и неговият наставник.	176
Магдалена Петрова. Интертекстуалност на рецепцията.	181
Gergana Apostolova. Towards a systematic study of intercultural Rhetoric.	194
Драгомир Лалчев, Мария Томова. Етимологични ракурси в топонимията на средновековната епархия Крупник.	208
Лъчезар Перчеклийски. Словообразователната категория имена за действия и за резултати от действия.	226
Радослав Цонев. Някои синтактични особености на говора на гр. Банско.	252
Елена Чаушева. За някои балканизми в морфологичната система на българския и новогръцкия език.	261
Ε. Παναρετου. Η γλῶσσα τῶν νομῶν.	271

Г. Λαϊνε, Σ. Φιλίποβα-Μερτζιμέκη. Η ΓΛΩΣΣΙΚΗ ΕΘΙΜΟΤΥΠΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗΣ ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΣ: ΣΥΓΚΡΙΤΙΚΗ ΜΕΛΕΤΗ ΤΩΝ ΣΛΑΒΙΚΩΝ ΓΛΩΣΣΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΓΛΩΣΣΑΣ.	281
Ellie Boyadzhieva. Principles and Rules in the Structure of the Verb Phrase in English.	289
Иванка Сакарева-Стоянова. Промените в българския език през вековете.	296
Mariya Anastasova. Literal translation and style.	304
Antoaneta Mihailova. Die Frau – ein Gewebe aus Hoffnung, Protest und Identitätssuche.	309
Светлана Стойчева, Юлияна Стоянова. Сянката на Андерсен	314
Чен Ин. Приказките на Ханс Кр. Андерсен в Китай.	325
Надежда Михайлова. Ханс Кристиан Андерсен.	329
Вера Ганчева. Камбаният звън на Андерсен.	343
Таня Стоянова. Детската поезия като възпитателна книжовност. . . .	354
Маргарита Терзиева. Педагогически идеи в зообелетристичните творби на Лев Толстой.	367
Йордан Костурков. Преображения на автори и книги.	372

TWO NOTES ON GHEORGHOV (1911)

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Paper prepared for the Symposium with International Participation in Memory of Professor Ivan Gheorghov "Modelling of Child Language", sponsored by Blagoevgrad University, held in Teshovo Village, Bulgaria,

1. Introduction

While a student at Stanford University in the 1960's, I became fascinated with the extremely rich literature in the field of child language that had apparently been overlooked by many modern researchers. Perhaps one of the most extreme examples of this was the lack of awareness about the brilliant research of Professor Ivan Gheorghov of the University of Sofia, Bulgaria. In particular, I was fascinated by his excellently transcribed and cautious observations on the linguistic development of his two sons (Gheorghov, 1905).

In preparing my presentation for this conference in his honor, I went back to one of my favorite papers in the field, Gheorghov (1911). The year 1911 was a significant one in the study of child development for it was when its first international conference in history took place. This was the Premier Congres International de Pedagogie, which met at the in Brussels, Belgium. Professor Gheorghov was a prominent participant at this meeting. His earlier letter led to its eventual organization, and, at the meeting, he offered on behalf of the University of Sofia to host the second international meeting to be held in 1915. (The Congress selected Barcelona as the next site, although that meeting never took place due to the outbreak of World War I).

Gheorghov had just recently published his excellent diary study of his two sons (Gheorghov, 1905). At the Congress, he gave the only paper on language acquisition (Gheorghov, 1911). In that paper, he decided to divide the discussion into several topics. One part addressed the question of why children's early kin terms are 'mama' and 'papa'. In this section, he argued for a position that is remarkably similar to that so commonly assigned to Jakobson (1962). In another part, he noted that there were cross-linguistic differences in how children use phonological substitutions. The data he presented indicated that Slavic children replace the phoneme /r/ with [l], while children acquiring other languages (based on the limited data at the time) do not. It is these two topics which constitute the focus of my paper today.

Before doing that, however, I would like to comment on Professor Gheorghov's comments at the very beginning of his paper. He stated in his very first sentence (p. 201): "In our new century, which has judiciously been named the century of the

infant, we have begun to give much more attention to all which concerns the child than ever before". He went on to say: "From this need was born, several years ago, the idea to meet periodically in international conferences..." Little did I realize, when I read those words twenty years ago, that I would be so honored as to be able to prepare this article for an international symposium in his honor 79 years later.

2. On 'mama' and 'papa'

In the United States, the study of children's language acquisition is not generally focussed on its past (but see Ingram, 1989). For many Americans, the field began in the early 1960's with the study of three children, Adam, Eve, and Sarah, by Roger Brown. Around the same time, however, there were also important developments in California, for example, the early longitudinal studies by Susan Ervin and Wick Miller at Berkeley, and the subsequent work on phonological acquisition at Stanford University by Charles Ferguson and his students (the Child Phonology Project). The Child Phonology Project was preceded by at two noteworthy events. In 1962, Ruth Weir, a professor at Stanford, published an outstanding study in on her son Anthony. In 1959, the famous Russian linguist Roman Jakobson spent the year at Stanford University, at least part of which was spent at the Center for Advanced Behavioral Studies. There he met George Murdock who had recently published a study on kinship terminology (Murdock, 1957). Murdock had identified 1,072 terms that were used across languages for 'mother' and 'father' (Murdock, 1959). These data formed the basis for a paper subsequently published by Jakobson, i.e. "Why 'mama' and 'papa'?" (Jakobson, 1962). Jakobson argued that the similarities across these terms suggested that these word forms result from the infant's early vocalizations and needs. 'Mama' is a general request for help, while 'papa' is a more referential term.

Jakobson noted that other researchers had commented on the possible origins of 'mama' and 'papa', e.g. Gregoire (1937) and Leopold (1939). None of these publications, however, referred to Gheorghov's significant paper in 1911 that made this very point. In Table 1, I provide the data found in Gheorghov's paper for the term 'mama'. These are impressive data, given the time of the study. Gheorghov did not publish the comparable forms for 'father', but he had collected those as well. His account for these sounds very similar to the one given by Jakobson nearly forty years later. Gheorghov stated (p. 205: translation mine): "... it is presently clear, after having considered children's language, that all these terms are related to the vocal expressions of infants and their ways of expressing their mental states".

Table 1. Data on parental kin terms cited in Gheorghov (1911) 1, 2

1. Indo-European words from the PIE form *matar 'mother'

Albanian: 'motre' (sister, probably older sister); Anglo-saxon 'modor';

Armenian: 'mair'; Breton 'modreb' (aunt); Old Bulgarian 'mati'; French 'mere'; Old

German: 'muoter'; Greek 'meter'; Old Irish 'mathir', 'moder'; Latin 'mater';

Latvian: 'mate'; *Lithuanian* 'motyna', 'mote' (woman, wife); *Old Prussian* 'pomatre' (mother-in-law);

Welsh: 'modryb' (Matrone); *Zend* 'matar';

2. Indo-European Baby Talk forms for 'mother', not related to PIE *matar

Albanian 'meme'; *Armenian* 'mam' (grandmother); *Bulgarian* 'moma' (girl); *Old German* 'muoma' (aunt?); *Greek* 'mamme', 'mamma', 'ma'; *Modern Greek* 'manna'; *Old Irish* 'mam'; *Latin* 'mamma'; *Lithuanian* 'mama', 'moma', 'meme', 'mammyte'; *Sanskrit*

'ma';

'mama-s' (uncle); *Welsh* 'mam'.

3. Forms in non-Indo-European languages

a. Europe and Asia:

Arabic 'um'; *Omani Arabic* 'mamab'; *Basque* 'ama'; *Bengali* 'ma'; *Burmese* 'ami';

Chinese 'mu'; *"Dhimal"* 'ama'; *Garo* 'ama'; *Hebrew* 'am'; *Lepcha* 'amo'; *"Matchou"*

'eme';

"Packya" 'ama'; *Sherpa* 'ama'; *Siamese* 'ma'; *Sinhalese* 'amma'; *Tamang* ("Murmi") 'amma'; *Tibetan* 'ama'; *Tonkinese* 'mu';

b. Africa:

Baga 'ma'; *Basaa* 'am'; *Dewoin* 'ma'; *Gadyaga* 'ma'; *Hottentot* 'mama'; *Kimballi* 'omo';

"Kiriman" 'mma'; *Kongo* 'mama'; *Koro* 'ma'; *"Kosah"* 'mao'; *Kupa* 'mo'; *Landoma* 'mama'; *Mana*

'ma'; *"Mose"* 'ma'; *"Mozambique"* 'mama'; *"Musu"* 'meya'; *Saloom* 'yuma'; *Sesotho* 'ma'; *"Sittlapi"*

'ma'; *Wada* 'omma'; *Xhosa* ("Caffre") 'uhma'; *Yasgua* 'ama';

c. America:

Bare 'memi'; *Huastec* 'mim'; *Tucano* 'maou'; *"Uainamben"* 'ami'.

d. Australia (and vicinity):

"Errob" (Northern Australia) 'ama'; *"Ile Murray"* 'hammah'; *Javanese* 'ma'; *Malay* 'ama';

"Murrumbidgee" 'mamma';

1 Unless indicated otherwise, the meanings of these terms is 'mother'.

2 Gheorghov's paper is in French, and he uses several names for languages which are not in current usage. He does not provide sources, so it is not always possible to establish an English term. When this is the case, I give the French term he uses and place it within quotes.

3. The Nature of Children's Phonological Substitutions

After his discussion of the maternal kinship terminology, Gheorghov turned to a discussion of children's early substitutions for /r/. Table 2 gives the data he presented on this point for four Slavic languages. He provided examples from Bulgarian, Polish, Russian and Czech which show the early substitution of [l] for /r/. (He also observed that it first appears medially, then finally, and then initially.) This insightful observation is also supported by subsequent diary research, e.g. (Ohnesorg 1948).

Table 2. Selected data presented in Gheorghov (1911) on substitutions for /r/ in Slavic languages

Bulgarian

Gheorghov: 1st son: vcera [vcela] 'yesterday'; 2nd son: piron [pilon] 'cloud'; zachar [zachal] 'sugar'; cerechi [celechi] 'cherries'; drechi [dlechi] 'clothes'.

Russian

Sikorsky: govorit' [galavit'] 'speak'; sacharu [chachalju] 'sugar'; gorjacaja [goljacaja] 'hot'.

Polish

Oltuszewski: Marysia [malisia] 'Marie'; kura [kula] 'chicken'; stara [stala] 'old'; dobra [dobla] 'good'.

Rzetkowska (daughter): firanka [filanka] 'curtain'; baranka [balanka] 'lamb'; raczka [lacka] 'hand'.

Rzetkowska (son): raczka [lacka] 'hand'; chory [choli] 'sick'; krowa [klowa] 'cow'.

Czech (material sent to Gheorghov)

child 1: Karel [kalel] 'Charles'; brambory [bamboly] 'apple'; cukr [kucul] 'sugar'.

child 2: Karel [talel] 'Charles'; papir [papel] 'paper'; paprika [pepelu] 'pepper'; dobry [blody] 'good'.

Gheorghov then observed that this pattern did not appear to be common in the speech of children acquiring other languages. The languages he considered were German, Italian, French, and English. The most extensive data were from English, where some examples of replacing /r/ with [l] were found, but they were not extensive. He also commented that the Italian data were especially interesting since it has a similar /r/ to that found in the Slavic languages (p.208). Such data suggest that children's substitutions may be influenced by the phonological system being acquired, and thus are not just the result of articulatory limitations.

As with Gheorghov's observations on kinship terms, this significant observation went unnoticed for many years after it was made. Indeed, a prevalent trend in phonological acquisition research has been to emphasize articulatory factors over linguistic ones (e.g. Locke, 1983). This trend was no doubt aided by the influence of Stampe's theory of natural phonology (Stampe, 1969) in which children's substitutions were accounted for by a universal set of phonological simplifications. It has taken several years for researchers to return to this very significant possibility that children's substitutions will be sensitive to the language being acquired.

The first step in my research on this topic was the identification of differences in the phonetic inventories of children acquiring different languages. The first observation of mine in this regard was made in Ingram (1980) where I gave a preliminary report on the acquisition of French and English. I noted that the pattern of denasalization, i.e. changing nasal consonants into oral consonants, was more common in the French data than the English data. Some examples are in (1):

(1) English: 'room' [wub]; 'salmon' [sabud]

French: 'mange' [ba]; 'menton' [ba:to:]

This pattern is quite rare in English, with the English examples taken from Velten (1943). It is common, however, in the French data which I have seen (e.g. Roussey, 1899-1900). I suggested that this difference might lie in the differences in the occurrence of nasality in the phonological systems of these two languages.

My next observation in this regard was my study of the phonological acquisition of an Italian and English bilingual girl (Ingram, 1981/82). My goal was to see if the child's phonologies for words from the two languages would be similar or not. They should be, if articulatory constraints are the primary determinant of the child's first

words. I found, however, that her phonologies for the two vocabularies were quite different. Her English words were highly monosyllabic, while her Italian words were highly multisyllabic. I concluded that she was acquiring separate phonologies for the two languages, and that the properties of her words were highly influenced by the shape of the target language's phonological system.

The next and most dramatic set of contradictory data came when I initiated a project with Cliff Pye to do phonological analyses on his five Quiche children, Quiche being a language spoken in Guatemala. Using the methodological techniques developed in Ingram (1981), we examined their acquisition of initial consonants, imposing a frequency criterion on when we would say that a child had acquired a sound. Based on their frequency, consonants were determined to be marginal, used, or frequent. The general results of this study were reported in Pye, Ingram and List (1987). We found that, despite individual differences, the children would tend to acquire certain sounds over others. For example, the two most frequent early sounds in Quiche were [t] and [l]. We compared the Quiche inventory with the one determined for English in Ingram (1981). These two are summarized in (2).

(2)	English	Quiche
	m n	m n
	b d g	p t tf k ?
	p t k	x
	f s h	
	w	w l l

There are some similarities in order of acquisition for sounds which occur in both languages. For example, both inventories show early use of the nasals [m] and [n], the stops [p], [t], and [k], and the glide [w]. Differences occurred, however, with several other sounds. The early use of [l] in Quiche was not matched in English, nor the early use of affricate [tʃ]. Also, the early use of some form of [s] was not matched in Quiche where the first fricative appeared to be [x]. We concluded that linguistic reasons, rather than some form of articulatory constraint, were at the root of the differences.

I have examined this issue further in one subsequent study. In Ingram (1988), I selected a sound which is known from numerous studies to be quite late in English, this being the voiced labiodental fricative [v]. I examined diaries from different languages that I had previously analyzed and in which I recalled seeing the early use of some form of [v]. (3) shows the early phonetic inventories that I found for the Estonian and Bulgarian. The labiodental fricative [v] was one of the first fricatives acquired. (Note also the early use of [l]).

(3) Phonetic inventories of word initial consonants of two case studies

Estonian: m* n* p* t* k* v l*

Bulgarian: m* n d g p* t k* v t l

Such results have led me to believe that each language will have its own basic inventory which characterizes the child's first phonemes. Due in part to their advanced perceptual capacities, I believe that children are better prepared than we have given them credit for to acquire a range of speech sounds. As discussed in Pye, Ingram and List, we suggest that order of acquisition is not solely determined by biological factors, but also by linguistic ones. The linguistic factor is something along the lines of what has been referred to in the past as 'functional load'. The more words a child acquires that have a particular sound in the adult model, the more likely it is that the sound will be produced. The fricative [v] is a late sound in English because children acquire relative few words with it. It is because of this problem, for example, that English articulation tests have had to rely on words like 'valentine' and 'vacuum cleaner' to test for it. Such is apparently not the case in the languages mentioned above, where the language learner is presented with a number of lexical items with /v/.

I now turn to Gheorghov's observation on the acquisition of /r/ in Slavic versus other languages. Gheorghov's initial observations were heavily restricted by the limited nature of the data available at the time. While the situation is still far from adequate, there is enough crosslinguistic data available to return to this interesting proposal.

Table 3. Selected data on the acquisition of /r/ and /l/

French
Roussey (1989-90): /ariv/ [alil] 'arrive'; /pari/ [pali] 'Paris'; /ri/ [li] 'laugh'; /rje/ [le] 'nothing'.
Greek
Drachman (1973): /piruni/ [tuluni] 'fork'; /paraOiro/ [talatilo] 'window'; /kokorikos/ [kokolikos] 'cockerel'; /forema/ [lolama] 'dress'.
Estonian
Vihman (1971): /l/ acquired early; initial /r/ deleted; medial /r/ replaced with [l].
Hungarian
Kerek (1975): /piro / [pilan] 'red'; /frizura/ [fizula] 'hairdo'; /kre:ta/ [le:ta] 'chalk'; /krumpli/ [lumpi] 'potato'; BUT /rep lnek/ [jep nek] 'they fly'.
Italian
Ingram (1981/2): /far/ [fal] 'fare' 'do'; /fora/ [fola] 'fiori' 'out'; /muro/ [mulo] 'wall'; BUT same child produced English 'rabbit' as [waebi].
Norwegian
Vanvik (1971): /l/ acquired early; /r/ rare in early words.
Quiche
Pye, Ingram & List (1973: 182): /l/ acquired early; /r/ replaced with [l]. (no examples given)

In Table 3, I present a summary of the patterns found for the acquisition of /r/ in a subset of crosslinguistic data which I have available in my files. They show that Gheorghov was only partially correct. They show quite strikingly that /l/ is often acquired quite early, and that it serves as a potential substitute for /r/. There appear to be two common patterns. In one, /l/ is acquired early, and /r/ is generally avoided. In the

other, /l/ appears early, and is used as a substitute for /r/. The early acquisition of /l/ supports Gheorghov's observation that it is early in Slavic, and can be used for /r/. The data also show that this is quite different from English, where /l/ is acquired later, and where both /l/ and /r/ are commonly replaced by glides, e.g. [w] or [j].

The data do not, however, restrict this pattern to Slavic. Indeed, based on this limited survey, the Slavic pattern appears to be the one most commonly found across languages. Other Indo-European languages such as Italian, French, Norwegian, and Greek, and nonIndo-European languages such as Quiche, Greek, Hungarian, and Estonian, show the early appearance of /l/. Most also show the substitution of /l/ for /r/.

Two factors can account for this common pattern. One is the more prominent use of /l/ in the vocabulary of these languages, which at least has been shown for Quiche in Pye, Ingram & List (1987). The other is the articulatory differences between the /r/s found across languages.

The English /r/ is very much like a glide, and quite rounded in syllable initial position. This is unlike most other languages where the /r/ is formed by tongue contact either in the form of a flap or trill. This articulatory difference clearly is playing a role in this noticeable crosslinguistic difference in substitution patterns.

This is of course a preliminary which raises as many questions as it answers. The first thing we need is more descriptive data on the acquisition of these sounds in a range of languages, including more data on the languages mentioned in Tables 2 and 3. Next, we need to explore in more detail how the linguistic systems affect these directly. For example, is a language with the phonemes /w/, /r/, and /l/ more likely to show /r/ to [w] replacements than those which do not have a /w/? Such gaps in our understanding of such a basic question indicate that we have not come as far in this century in our understanding of phonological acquisition as we may like to believe.

4. Conclusion

As discussed in Ingram (1989), World War I had a tremendous disruptive effect on the study of child development in general, and child language in particular. The drop off of diary studies in the immediate years after the war, combined with the onset of behaviorism, led researchers to lose touch with the rich literature which existed. The lack of awareness of modern researchers of Gheorghov's (1911) article is a striking example of this consequence.

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ДВЕ БЕЛЕЖКИ ВЪРХУ ГЕОРГОВ (1911)

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Доклад, подготвен за Симпозиума с международно участие в памет на професор Иван Георгов "Моделиране на детския език", спонсориран от ЮЗУ „Неофит Рилски“, Благоевград, проведен в с. Тешево, България, юни-юли 1989.

Предслов

Когато през 1989 година с колегите от катедрата по български език подготвихме Първия симпозиум с международно участие в памет на проф., д-р Иван Георгов под надслов "Моделиране на детския език", ние разпрацахме поканите на чуждестранните гости с лека самоирония в смисъла на "как пък ли няма да дойдат!?". Не можехме да повярваме, че някой друг би се заразил от ентузиазма на Благоевградската езиковедска група. Неочаквано и за нас самите името на проф. Георгов явно подейства като магнетично-хипнотичен лъч, чрез който по склоновете на южен Пирин се изсипа сонм езиковеди – едни от най-големите авторитети в детското езикознание. Ще спомена някои от тях. Проф. Елз Оксаар, с чиято книга "Увод в педолингвистиката" започват обучението си студенти от цял свят; проф. Питър Гордън от Университета в Питсбърг (сега проф. в Колумбийския университет в Ню Йорк); проф. Татяна Слама-Касаку от Румъния, тогава председател на Световната асоциация по приложна лингвистика; световноизвестният професор от Сорбоната в Париж Рене Том изпрати своя докторант Доминик Дюкар. Получихме и доклада на професор Дейвид Инграм, който тръгна за България, но той не успя да стигне до нас, защото беше изгубил дирите на с. Тешево. Гоце Делчевско, по пътя от Солун за южните склонове на Пирин.

Забележително беше какво съзвездие от авторитетни детски лингвисти се изсипа тогава край нас, привлечено от името на именития по света и малко познат у нас учен проф. Иван Георгов.

Проф. Инграм в момента работи в Държавния университет в Аризона, в Департамента за науки, свързани с речта и слуха. Той е директор на департамента от 1998 насам. Преди това е работил в университета на Британска Колумбия, където е бил ръководител на департамента по езикознание от 1982 до 1998 година. Интересете му са в областта на фонологичното, граматичното и семантичното усвояване при нормални деца и деца с увреждания с цел анализ, оценяване и корекции. Носител е на награда на Университета на Британска Колумбия, Канада. Автор е на повече от 250 научни публикации и книги.

За наше съжаление в годините от времето на симпозиума насам оригиналните материали се загубиха по време на преместванията ни в нови помещения. Сега правим първи опит да изкараме на бял свят ценните приноси на нашите участници, като материалът на проф. Инграм е първият от тях.

Превод и предслов Сашо Рангелов