

Leçons de linguistique, Vol. 9. 1946-47, Série C: Grammaire particulière du français et grammaire générale (II), by Gustave Guillaume, Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval; Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1989, 291 pages, \$30.00 CDN, ISBN 2-7637-7172-6 (Québec), ISBN 2-85939-358-7 (Lille).

1. This is the ninth volume of Guillaume's posthumous lecture notes, which were left in manuscript form to his Canadian disciple Roch Valin when Guillaume died in 1960. The notes are from 1938-1960, the twenty two years that Guillaume taught at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes in Paris; about 25% of the manuscripts are now in print.

This volume consists of 217 pages of text (23 lectures), 27 pages of résumés that allow the reader to survey the content, and 45 pages of painstaking index that allow the reader to trace the development of almost any idea in the text. This has been the format of the most recent volumes and has now obviously been adopted as a standard. Given that Guillaume covers a vast range of ideas, often repeats himself, and sometimes further develops his earlier ideas, this kind of presentation is extremely valuable to the researcher. Referring to some of Guillaume's fundamental ideas might otherwise result in searching for the proverbial needle in a haystack.

The text itself breaks down into three main areas of interest. The first of these begins with the presentation of the distinction between langue, the underlying permanent system, and discours (Saussure's parole), the everyday use of the system. This leads into an examination of the nature of systems, illustrated by the French verbal system, with a brief discussion of tense, mood, aspect, and a new analysis of the imperfect subjunctive. (8 lectures). The references to système and  systématique are a recurring theme: these words occupy a full page of the index.

A second section deals with the structure of the noun, the categories of gender and case, and the relationship of the adjective to the noun. There is a long discussion, with some very interesting examples (un plein panier = a basketful; un panier plein = a full basket) of the differing values of preposed and postposed adjectives. (11 lectures).

A final section treats infinitives, prepositions, symmetry of grammatical structure in languages, but deals mostly with the

category of pronoun, which includes not only pronoms supplétifs which stand in place of nouns, but also pronoms complétifs such as the articles, which need to be accompanied by a noun. (4 lectures)

2. These Leçons de linguistique are remarkable documents. It is difficult to imagine any other university teacher whose lecture notes would be worth publishing in their entirety nearly fifty years later, along with 72 pages of apparatus criticus. But Guillaume was clearly a scholar at least fifty years ahead of his time. The last decade, for example, has seen the development of a vast interest in what has been called cognitive linguistics, and the work exemplified by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Langacker (1985), Lakoff (1987), and Johnson (1987) is clearly trying to promote a view of a language (une langue) as a system of cognitive representation, precisely the view put forward by Guillaume in this volume, forty-four years ago.

In these lectures, in fact, there is a clearer sense of system than in any contemporary work. Saussure was probably the first to realize that a phoneme is itself not a sound, but a position in a mental system that triggers the speech apparatus to produce a variety of sounds (allophones) which are only recognizable as 'the same' to a hearer who has a phonological (i.e. mental) system with the same values. It was probably Saussure's experience in historical reconstruction that led him to see that changes in systems have systematic results (e.g. the regularity of sound change) and that each position draws its value from its place in the system and the contrasts thereby generated.

It is this set of insights that leads Guillaume to describe his technique as la linguistique de position, which he describes as follows (p. 39):

'Elle consiste en effet, invariablement, à rapporter des formes de langue à la position qu'elles occupent chacune en système, et de laquelle elles tiennent leur valeur première, essentielle et une; à partir de laquelle deviennent possibles, et pour mieux dire peut-être, permises, une multitude de conséquences, d'effets de sens, pouvant aller jusqu'à l'apparente contradiction.'

The value of the French present tense, for example, stems entirely from its position in the French tense system. Since the English tense system is different, it is to be expected that systematic differences will show up in discourse: to translate a French present tense with depuis regularly requires an English

present perfect. Such systematic contrasts in usage, in function, in discours, are a reflection of the fundamental systemic differences in langue, in the underlying mental systems.

In his twenty-two years at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Guillaume built up a faithful audience of regular listeners, who attended year after year, and he quite often refers to them and to their participation and discussions. It is undoubtedly the presence of this audience that encouraged him to present his latest thinking on many of his themes so that even for those thoroughly versed in Guillaume's work each of the volumes of the Leçons is new and interesting reading. I finally understood, for example, on reading page 45, why Guillaume represents the forms of the quasi-nominal mood (parler, parlant, parlé) with vertical arrows, and there is an interesting comparison with the equivalent forms of the English verb on the previous page.

There is inevitably some repetition, however. Some of this is simply familiar territory that is useful because it provides a frame of reference for that which is less familiar. Elsewhere the informed reader may chose to brush over certain sections that are already dealt with elsewhere. The section on the morphology of the imperfect subjunctive (pp. 31-2), for example, is dealt with in earlier volumes, and of no interest to me mostly because I cannot identify with the kind of abstract phonology that Guillaume utilizes in his presentation.

The discussions are so wide ranging, however, that there is always something to catch the attention of anyone interested in the grammar of French. The volumes in this series are invaluable to the linguist because Guillaume takes his time presenting his point of view, and one gradually catches the breadth and coherence of his theoretical stance. They are also of great interest to anyone teaching French, since many of Guillaume's presentations and explanations can be directly transferred to the second language classroom, especially at the university level, where the presentation and discussion can be in the language of the original. The reaction of so many of my own students to Guillaume's presentation of tense and aspect has been 'This makes it so clear and so simple. Why wasn't it taught to us like this in the first case?' Good question. How do we go about answering it?

## REFERENCES

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John Hewson  
Memorial University