DISCUSSION ON PAPER 27

The discussion centered mainly about two points:
DR. GARVIN raised the first, as to whether predictive analysis, as applied to Japanese, viz. from right to left, was in fact, predictive. Might it not more properly be termed retro-dictive?

MR. KUNO considered it to be predictive, and added that scanning the sentence in this way afforded more hints about the method of syntactic analysis in which more general predictions of entire constructions are made rather than prediction of specific elements. Furthermore, in Japanese, there are more words at the end of the sentence which give more information about the sentence than those words which initiate it. In other words the Japanese sentence seems to have a regressive rather than a progressive structure but, beyond this, Mr. Kuno did not consider that there was any significant difference between scanning from right to left as distinct from left to right. In view of the regressive nature of the Japanese sentence he felt that the question was closely related to the depth hypotheses of Miller and Yngve but that Miller's hypothesis was more likely to apply than Yngve's.

This introduced the second point:
PROF. YNGVE pointed out that the depth hypothesis, as he stated it, referred to sentence production and not to sentence recognition. It might be, however, that the temporary memory necessary for production of a sentence was different from the temporary memory necessary for its recognition. Prof. Yngve emphasised that the depth hypothesis was still an hypothesis and that it was not yet certain that it applied even to English though there was a considerable amount of evidence to suggest that it did.

PROF. LAMB questioned the use of the words prediction and retro-diction and stated that the term needed is presupposition, which has been current in linguistic circles for some years. There is a tendency for presupposition to work in the same direction for the majority of constructions, i.e. some languages have a tendency for the presupposing member to be on the left and others for the presupposing member to be on the right. It is also the case that in all languages not all the constructions work in this way. Russian, for instance, is a language in which most constructions presuppose left to right, but this is not the case, for example, when a noun is followed by a genitive and in this case predictive analysis gets into difficulties. Prof. Lamb felt that, for a programme to be effective, it must be able to deal with pre-suppositions which work in both directions.

MR. KUNO recalled that the main prediction approach referred to the way of syntactic analysis and, in any case, he failed to see why the prediction of a genitive noun after a noun master was inefficient.

S. *WHELAN,*