PRESENTATION BY PROF. CHATMAN

PROF. CHATMAN was at pains to emphasise the conservative nature of his approach and to make clear that a good deal of subclasslfication remained to be done. He added a number of points to those made in the paper: A formal property of copula verbs (V_c) was their number and gender concord with pronouns (cf. p.9). Genuine double-object verbs (V_d) did not admit adverbial replacement of P N_3 (cf. p.13). The verbs whose objects were sentence transforms (cf. p. 4, note 2) fell into two classes according to whether they required or did not require an intervening N_2 before the verb of the transformed sentence. Subtypes of the first class were:-

      (i) V N_2 V: I let her go.
     (ii) V N_2 to V: I want him to go.
    (iii) V N_2 Ving: I see him coming. (Note the ambiguity of,
                      e.g., I want the book standing).
    (iv) V(that) N_2 V: I know that he likes you.

Subtypes of the second class were:-

     (i) V V: He let go.
    (ii) V to V: He wanted to go.
   (iii) V Ving: He likes swimming.

Three means of distinguishing the subtypes V N_2 to V and V to V from the expansion of other verbs with an optional to V were suggested: (1) The insertion of for the purpose of, etc. (Cf. He laughed for the purpose of showing his discontent with *He wanted for the purpose of going); (2) Application of a what-transformation (Cf. To go is what he wanted with *To show his discontent is what he laughed.); (3) Inversion (Cf. To show his discontent, he laughed with *To go, he wanted). V Ving had likewise to be carefully distinguished from V_t + gerund as object of a transitive verb. V Ving usually admitted transformation to V to V (but note the difference between He remembered Ving and He remembered to V).

DISCUSSION

PROF. HARPER wanted to know how the classification had been carried out.

PROF. CHATMAN explained that the test for membership in a given class was commutation within a diagnostic frame checked by transformation.

PROF. JOSSELSON enquired as to the application of such work to MT.

PROF. CHATMAN replied that the finest possible subclassificatlon by formal properties was a prerequisite of the resolution of syntactic ambiguities.

DR. GARVIN welcomed Chatman's work as dealing with a fundamental problem of English grammar and as having found an acceptable use for transformations - namely, in devising reliable operational tests.

PROF. CHATMAN was reluctant to accept sole credit for this use of transformational criteria and referred to the work of Zellig Harris, making the further point that Chomsky's model of syntactic analysis was better termed "generative" and Harris's "transformational".

PROF. OETTINGER pointed out that, in order to apply a given transformation, it was necessary to know the phrase structure analysis of the string to which it was to be applied: this was something well known to Chomsky, but apparently not always realized by the more outspoken of his adherents.

J. LYONS