aims. They turn to the United States which has the books, has the men, and has the money too, to Russia which has a gospel and creed and also to England—I hesitate to summarize what we have got nowadays—but we may have a little of something the others haven't got, so that all of us may help.

The interpenetration and interaction of linguistic forces and the forces of nationalism are to be observed all over the world and one of the obligations of a general linguist is not only to be aware of this, but to offer what help and guidance he can.

Notes

1. Language isolates are described by naming them in accordance with a framework of categories and nomenclature. This is in effect by distribution in groups and classes, in structures and systems. The structures and systems are also grouped and distributed. Distribution of this kind is a distribution in the abstract categories of linguistics which can indeed be said to have places and order, but not in any spatio-temporal sense. Distribution of entities in sequential or successive segments, of time or of space for that matter, like telling beads on a string, is an entirely different matter. There is considerable confusion and inconsistency in the use of the word *distribution* in contemporary linguistics. Distribution of *what*? *where*? and *how*?
2. In the concluding paragraph of a recent article in *Language* 33.1, 35 (1957), he writes—'The theoretical implication of these studies is that the analysis of languages requires a treatment of structural phonological units larger than the phoneme, with contrastive types on each level of the hierarchy. A phonological theory is inadequate to portray the structure and functions of these units, with their various contrastive features, if it attempts to squeeze such data into one non-hierarchical linear sequence of chopped up disparate segmental phonemes and quasi-segmental juncture phonemes.'
3. As Professor W. S. Allen has reminded us, de Saussure long ago warned us not to 'faire de la linguistique la caricature d'une autre discipline'. (Frei, *Word* 10.2–3, 145).

Ten

Ethnographic analysis and language with reference to Malinowski's views†

In the field of linguistics, it has been said with some truth that the English have excelled in phonetics and in lexicography. They have always been interested in the spelling of their language, which has the longest literary tradition in Western Europe. The English were the first to make use of their native language in law, chronicle and translation. The first grammar of Latin in a Western European language was written by the Anglo-Saxon Aelfric in the tenth century. I have elsewhere (1946) given some account of the English interest in spelling and pronunciation, culminating in an appreciation of our greatest philologist, Henry Sweet.

It is, therefore, a matter of some satisfaction to an Englishman, writing an appreciation of the linguistic work of Bronislaw Malinowski, to be able to quote him as follows (1923, 495n.): 'I quote from H. Sweet (*Introduction to the history of language*), because this author is one of the cleverest thinkers on language'. Malinowski notices Sweet's statement that language and logic 'often diverge from one another' and that they are constantly at loggerheads. In Section 4 of the same Supplement, he mentions his concern with the

> definition of single words and with the lexicographical task of bringing home to a European reader the vocabulary of a strange tongue. And the main result of our analysis was that it is impossible to translate words of a primitive language or of one widely different from our own, without giving a detailed account of the culture of

† *Man and culture: an evaluation of the work of Bronislaw Malinowski* ed. R. W. Firth, London, 1957, 93–118.

> its users and thus providing the common measure necessary for a translation (1923, 470).

Malinowski faces the crucial problem of definition throughout his work. It should be remembered that all definitions of the 'meanings' of a word are arbitrary and that authoritative citations collected by the lexicographer or ethnographer are usually keyed to these selected uses of the word under description. Throughout Malinowski's ethnographic work, from his account of the natives of Mailu (1915)[1] to his *Coral gardens* (1935), it can be said that he makes every effort to give the native words the fullest cultural context of ethnographic description in English. There is one notable exception which he learnt to abandon in later years. In his account of the Mailu classificatory terms of kinship (1915, 532–4), he gives English terms first, even when the Mailu equivalents are often repeated for different entries.

In the nature of our history, British scholars have been faced with the necessity of offering some account of the exotic languages they have had to live with all over the world. Most of these accounts are, by modern standards, amateurish and inadequate, but the pioneer work was there. Malinowski's contribution in English to the advancement of the study of such languages from the point of view of a professional anthropologist is a brilliant enhancement of the English tradition and we can be proud to include him as one of the makers of linguistics as we now understand it in this country.

Having dealt first with the definition of single words in his Supplement on 'The problem of meaning in primitive languages', we next find him looking at language in an ethnographic perspective, using the concept of context of situation in order to give an outline of a semantic theory useful in the work on primitive linguistics and throwing some light on human language in general. He goes on to describe language, in its primitive function, as a *mode of action*, rather than as a *counter-sign of thought*.

All this is truly in the tradition of British empiricism and of the philosophic radicals and utilitarians, whose influence was far-reaching and is obvious in the works of the Vienna Circle. It finds echoes in Wittgenstein, who would probably have endorsed Malinowski's views on meaning. 'The meaning of words lies in their use' (Wittgenstein, 1953, 80). 'One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to look at its use, and learn from that' (Wittgenstein, 1953, 109). He likens the practice of various types of language in speech behaviour to games with rules. 'A language is a set of games with rules or customs' (Wittgenstein, 1953, 47, 81). The publication of Malinowski's essay on the problem of meaning as the first Supplement to a work largely inspired by C. K. Ogden is itself significant in this connection. Malinowski himself refers to his own *ethnographic empiricism* (1923, 481).

Among the linguists mentioned in the Supplement, the leading German comparatists are missing but W. von Humboldt, Sweet and Jespersen are there, and notably Wegener (1885), to whom Malinowski owed his early notions of the Situation. Wegener was one of the first to propound what he called the *Situationstheorie*.

Malinowski explicitly informs us that he was not acquainted with the technicalities of Indo-European comparative linguistics. 'Of Brugmann-Delbrück's treatise, I tried to understand only the main outlines and the general theoretical parts' (1920, 37, n. 1).

Of his outstanding ability as a practical linguist, we have abounding evidence. To begin with, it is perhaps enough to notice his mastery of English as a vehicle for his original thought. He tells us of what he calls his facility, in his introduction to his work on the Mailu:

> I am afraid I must explicitly boast of my facility for acquiring a conversational command of foreign languages, since I understand that the time in which I learned to speak the Motu would have been normally too short a period for acquiring a foreign, and especially a native, tongue. I wish also to state that the ability to speak Motu and to follow a conversation was of no small advantage in my work. Over and over again, I was led on to the track of some extremely important item in native sociology or folklore by listening to the conversation of my boy *Igua* with his Mailu friends, who used to come from the village to see him. (1915, 501).

In associating him with Anglo-American rather than Continental traditions of linguistic scholarship, the further point might be made that he explicitly dissociated himself quite early from Durkheim's philosophical basis of sociology (1913; 1916, 423, n. 1). He would have nothing to do with a collective soul and presumably had no interest in the French conception of *langue* as a function of the *collectivité*. It is well known that leading French scholars, notably Meillet, held Durkheimian views in their sociological approach to language. This was reflected in their contributions to *L'année sociologique* (Meillet, 1926). I know from personal association with Malinowski that those parts of de Saussure's general linguistic theory which led in that direction, he

found not only unattractive but of little practical value in the study of meaning, which was his principal interest. In order to make way for his own approach, he declared that the postulate of a collectivity was barren and absolutely useless for an ethnographical observer. He wished to see his 'social ideas' embodied in institutions or traditional texts formulated on the basis of work with competent informants (1916, 424).[2]

As a social anthropologist and ethnographer, he was primarily interested in the analytical and functional study of culture, and throughout his work he made the fullest use of language possible to him in stating and commenting on his facts. The linguist, however, must keep the language text in the focus of attention and his main work is the linguistic analysis of the language data collected in his *corpus inscriptionum*.

The London group of linguists associated with my own work have accepted the notion of the institutionalized word in the broadest sense and have always kept to the text as the point of departure. Throughout his ethnographic work, Malinowski had stressed the importance of the institution[3] viewed from the native point of view and interpreted by the scholar, and he makes copious use of native expressions almost as loan words in his descriptive writing. The importance of applying his idea of the institution to language and the liberal recording of textual material is fully recognized in present-day linguistics in England. The procedure is explicitly stated in his *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*:

> The best ethnographical writers—here again the Cambridge school with Haddon, Rivers and Seligman rank first among English Ethnographers—have always tried to quote *verbatim* statements of crucial importance. They also adduce terms of native classification; sociological, psychological and industrial *termini technici*, and have rendered the verbal contour of native thought as precisely as possible. One step further in this line can be made by the Ethnographer, who acquires a knowledge of the native language and can use it as an instrument of inquiry. In working in the Kiriwinian language, I found still some difficulty in writing down the statement directly in translation which at first I used to do in the act of taking notes. The translation often robbed the text of all its significant characteristics—rubbed off all its points—so that gradually I was led to note down certain important phrases just as they were spoken, in the native tongue. As my knowledge of the language progressed, I put down more and more in Kiriwinian, till at last I found myself writing exclusively in that language, rapidly taking notes, word for word, of each statement. No sooner had I arrived at this point, than I recognized that I was thus acquiring at the same time an abundant linguistic material, and a series of ethnographic documents which ought to be reproduced as I had fixed them besides being utilized in the writing up of my account.
>
> (1922, 23–4)

In a footnote, Malinowski recognizes the encouragement given him by Dr A. H. Gardiner, now Sir Alan Gardiner, in collecting and interpreting his *corpus inscriptionum Kiriwiniensium*. It is a considerable satisfaction to me to remember Malinowski's association with Sir Alan Gardiner at that time, to be followed by my own association with both these distinguished scholars, since it provides a further illustration of Malinowski in his English setting and his part in the development of linguistics in this country. This is further borne out by his reference to

> Sir Richard Temple's most interesting attempts at a semantic theory adapted to the study of primitive languages. His outlines of a Universal Grammar and their application, although very condensed and carried out only in very broad outlines, seem to me of extreme importance: the problems are set forth in an excellent manner, and the solutions offered are undoubtedly correct in all essentials.
>
> (1920, 74, n. 1—with reference to Temple, 1899*a*)

The placing of Malinowski in the English tradition links him with the work of distinguished amateurs, so characteristic of scientific leadership in England in the nineteenth century.

He tells us that during his first stay in Kiriwina, from 1915 to 1916, he had no linguistic preparation, but on his return to Melbourne he undertook a good deal of linguistic reading which enabled him to write on linguistics (1920, 73–4). He appears to have studied Sir Richard Temple's 'A theory of universal grammar' carefully and especially Temple's detailed examination of Portman's *Notes on the languages of the South Andaman group of tribes*. Temple reproduces Portman's texts of the Andaman fire legend with inter-linear word-for-word equivalents, followed by a rendering in running English with somewhat crude syntactical notes. Temple described this procedure as the analysis of the language in which the story is couched and, in a good deal of Malinowski's own linguistic work, little more than this is attempted. His reading of Temple reminded him of the difficulties of grammatical description in dealing with exotic languages. As he says, 'there is no

universally acknowledged set of definitions and no consistent body of views about the various linguistic categories, everyone is compelled to use his own discretion and to coin his own terminology' (1920, 74).

Sir Richard Temple devotes some time to the consideration of a new set of grammatical categories coupled with an original nomenclature in contrast with traditional terminology. This he summarized in 'The skeleton of a theory of universal grammar' (1899*b*). Sir George Grierson of the Linguistic Survey of India must have taken some interest in this matter since I have in my possession a letter addressed to him by Sir Richard Temple in November 1907, in which he says:

> The question of terminology in my 'Theory' resolves itself thus:—is it a smaller strain on the brain to put *new* definitions on to old words or have new words? I thought the latter was the best, but if the former is the best, it is all one to me. Of course, to a man immersed in a set terminology, a new one is a trouble—but for the learner at large, it may be best to discard what is old and give him something new for new notions. At any rate you avoid confusion in teaching by so doing.

Malinowski expressly approves of the main essentials of Temple's approach. I certainly agree with some of the general principles myself. For example, Temple says:

> Of course, grammarians will know that all this is syntax, and I will now explain why I consider that it is far more important to study function than form as essential to the correct apprehension of words, and how to my mind accidence arises properly out of syntax and not the other way round, as we have all been taught.
>
> It is obvious that any given word may fulfil one or more or all the functions of words, and that therefore words may be collected into as many classes as there are functions, any individual word being transferable from one class to another and belonging to as many classes as there are functions which it can fulfil. The functions a word fulfils in any particular sentence can be indicated by its position therein without or with variation of form, and, because of this, the form which a word can be made to assume is capable of indicating the class to which it belongs for the nonce. It is further obvious that words transferable from class to class belong primarily to a certain class and secondarily to the others, that a transfer involves the fulfilment of a new function, and that a word in its transferred condition becomes a new word. (1899*a*, 4–5)

Again, Temple is on the right track when he says:

> I found myself, in building up the theory, compelled, in order to work out the argument logically, to commence where the accepted Grammars ended, viz. at the sentence, defining the sentence as the expression of a complete meaning, and making *that* the unit of language. (1899*a*, 2)

It is not surprising, in the light of the development of linguistics since, that Malinowski found Temple's approach attractive. He did not, however, pay much attention to functional grammar or move in the grammatical directions suggested by Temple. He remained reasonably traditional, but grammatically unsystematic.

In developing a school of social anthropology in London, Malinowski gave all his emphasis to the need for linguistics, especially in connection with the establishment of sound ethnographic texts. It may safely be said that he was among a very few scholars who actively promoted descriptive linguistics both by the example of his own work and by what may be called propaganda. He realized the need for the development of linguistic theory different from the one prevailing, the main orientation[4] of which was the study of historical change and evolution. He even regarded his important article on Kiriwina as

> an example of a general proposition, namely, that there is an urgent need for an Ethno-linguistic theory,[5] a theory for the guidance of linguistic research to be done among natives and in connection with ethnographic study. It was stressed above, in the introductory paragraph, that as there can be no sound theory which is not based on an extensive study of facts, so there can be no successful observation of facts without the guidance of a sound theory. A theory which, moreover, aims not at hypothetical constructions—'origins', 'historical developments', 'cultural transferences' and similar speculations—but a theory concerned with the intrinsic relation of facts. A theory which in linguistics would show us what is essential in language and what therefore must remain the same throughout the whole range of linguistic varieties; how linguistic forms are influenced by physiological, mental, social and other cultural elements; what is the real nature of Meaning and Form, and how they correspond; a theory which, in fine, would give us a set of well-founded plastic definitions of grammatical concepts. (1920, 69)

The field-worker relies entirely upon inspiration from theory.
(1922, 9)

Jespersen's book *Language*, published in 1922, opens with the sentence—'The distinctive feature of the science of language as conceived nowadays is its historical character'.[6] In 1931, Malinowski found it necessary to say that 'many linguists realize the importance of studying the language of living rather than dead specimens, and everyone would probably admit that the study of native languages is of paramount importance'. He brings in, as he says, 'even Delbrück' in support of the view that 'a finer analysis of given linguistic phenomena could be achieved on living languages only' (1920, 71).

Sweet, in his Presidential Address to the Philological Society of Great Britain in 1887, pointed out the special English interest in the observation of the phenomena of living languages:[7]

> Our tendency is not so much toward the antiquarian philology and text-criticism in which German scholars have done so much, as towards the observation *of the phenomena of living languages* . . . the real strength and originality of English work lies . . . in phonology and dialectology. Our aim ought clearly to be, while assimilating the methods and results of German work, to concentrate our energies mainly on what may be called 'living philology'. The vastness of our Empire, which brings us in contact with innumerable languages, alone forces us incessantly to grapple with the difficulties of spoken, often also unwritten, languages. We ought to be able to send out yearly hundreds of thoroughly and specially trained young men.

As I have pointed out earlier, Malinowski in a sense joined this especially English trend and was unaware of the developments in the United States, as he says himself (1920, 72, n. 1).[8]

While emphasizing by example and precept the importance of general linguistics in theory and practice, Malinowski clearly appreciated the value and importance of comparative and historical studies and goes out of his way to notice them. Furthermore, he points out that:

> So-called functionalism is not, and cannot be, opposed to the historical approach but is indeed its necessary complement. The functional method, if I understand it rightly, is interested primarily in the processes of culture as an explanation of its products. It introduces thus the time element, at first on a smaller scale, but none the less in the real historical sense. I myself have advocated the biographical approach in the study of kinship. In my work on language, I have attempted to show that the study of meaning should start with observations on infant speech and the growth of linguistic expression within the context of culture. In the study of law, I have tried to point out that the consideration of transactions in the long run, as the extensive and enduring balancing of interests, is the only way to understand primitive jurisprudence. The context of time as well as the context of culture essential to the functional approach are, on the one hand, historical concepts, and, on the other, they lead to the formulation of general laws of process so necessary to any reconstructive work. Here again, therefore, I do not see that functionalism and historical reconstructions stand in antithesis. I agree with Professor Kroeber that 'basically a functional approach is rather close to the historical approach'. (1939, 43)

This view accords with my own approach which emphasizes the mutually complementary nature of historical and descriptive studies in linguistics though I am inclined to the opinion that the development of descriptive linguistics on a large scale is an essential preliminary for the reformulation of problems in comparative and historical work. This could only be the case if, as I have frequently emphasized, linguistics recognizes that its principal objective is the study of meaning in its own terms (Firth, 1950, 8–14; 1951*a*, 82–4; 1951*b*, 118).

Malinowski's functionalism extended to language, as is clear from his Supplement to *Meaning of meaning*: 'The lack of a clear and precise view of Linguistic function[9] and of the nature of Meaning has been, I believe, the cause of the relative sterility of much otherwise excellent linguistic theorizing' (1923, 471).

By no stretch of imagination could he be described as a 'structuralist', nor would I, myself, accept the appellation, if it be narrowly interpreted to require adherence to basic phonemic 'structures' or with 'alterations' in 'sub-structures' and 'super-structures', the main reason being that 'the structure of all this linguistic material is inextricably mixed up with, and dependent upon, the course of the activity in which the utterances are embedded' (1923, 473). He gets nearer the structural approach—which I distinguish from 'a structuralist approach'—in Section VI of the Supplement (1923, 495) in which he faces the problem of the structure of language:

> Every human tongue has a definite structure of its own. . . . This

> body of structural rules with their exceptions and irregularities, the various classes into which the elements of the language can be ranged, is what we call 'the grammatical structure' of a language.

It is not easy to assess his contribution to linguistic analysis as understood today because his language material is closely wedded to his ethnographic work. Yet there are, throughout his work, indications that he appreciated the bearing of function and structure in linguistics. In approaching his study of the classificatory particles in Kiriwina, he indicated his awareness of

> the general features of linguistic structure, rules of syntax, parts of speech and word formation. Everybody agrees that in an ethnographic work these should be recorded, that all essential linguistic facts should be collected. But all collection of facts requires the guidance of definite theoretical principles. (1920, 34)

Again, in his concluding paragraphs, he reiterates what seems almost like a wish unfulfilled—the need for a theory:

> We need a Theory, devised for the purpose of observation of linguistic fact. This theory would give a recast of grammatical definitions, based on an analysis of meaning. It would analyse the nature of syntax, parts of speech, and formation of words, and besides giving adequate and plastic definitions would open up vistas of problems and thus guide research. (1920, 78)

And here, I cannot refrain from repeating a favourite quotation from Goethe: 'Das Höchste wäre zu begreifen, das alles Faktische schon Theorie ist.'

It is clear that Malinowski contributed very little towards such a theory for the statement of linguistic facts in terms of phonetics, phonology, the various branches of grammar or stylistics. This we shall appreciate by a close study of his linguistic work following the indications here given. His main interest, as he indicates in his Supplement, was in the problem of meaning, and such theory as he developed arose from his study of primitive societies. The key concept of the semantic theory he found most useful for his work on native languages was the notion of *context of situation*. He read widely in linguistics,[10] always looking for the kind of theory which could find a place and prove useful in his ethnographical work. He was always eager to discuss theoretical questions with linguists of his acquaintance, as I well know from personal experience. It is no accident that both he and Sir Alan Gardiner acknowledge their indebtedness to Dr Philipp Wegener. In dedicating his book *The theory of speech and language* to Wegener, Gardiner (1932) calls him 'a pioneer of linguistic theory'.

Malinowski and Gardiner[11] both make great use of the situation theory, and I, too, have developed its application in descriptive linguistics, though in a more abstract and general form as one of several levels in linguistic analysis, all of which should be congruent.[12] In Wegener's original work (1885), the concept of the situation is related to his distinctions between the logical and grammatical subject and predicate, and there is much which has to be abandoned. Nevertheless, a good deal survives which has, with modifications, been incorporated into subsequent work by later theorists.

Wegener's theory requires three types of situation: (a) die Situation der Anschauung; (b) die Situation der Erinnerung; (c) die Situation des Bewusstseins (1885, 21–7).[13] He recognizes both speakers and hearers, objects and events as possible end-points in sets of relations set up to state the meaning of language. In other words, if language is studied in context of situation, mutual comprehension and co-operation is not by language only. Even using logico-grammatical terms, he would maintain that the predicate or the subject of a situational communication might be in the relevant objects and events of the situation. The situation is the basis, the environment for all the facts or data and we see the effective process of speaking and listening therein displayed. The presence of the persons and relevant objects, he regarded as providing essential environmental relations which may be thought of within the three sub-situations above mentioned. First, the objective situation as presented and observed; second, the immediately associated memorial elements or the factor of retentiveness; and, thirdly, the situation of the whole state of mind (with special reference to the consciousness of self or of personal identity in all participants) in which the content of the specific language finds its meaning completed.

In some respects, this analysis has links with my own point of view though I do not require his trinity of situations, nor do I wish to introduce a reference to retentiveness nor to consciousness of self or of personal identity. A serious confusion of the analysis of the context of situation with the other levels of analysis such as the grammatical level has been one of the main weaknesses of early attempts to relate statements of meaning to other social and psychological factors. Nevertheless I place a high value on Wegener's realization that the context of situa-

tion provided a valid configuration of elements comprising persons, objects, non-verbal events as well as language between which significant relations obtained, thus constituting a set of functions as a whole.

This reshaping of the most interesting features of Wegener's theory, if related to other levels of linguistic analysis in terms of interior relations, would accord with the practice of a number of present-day linguists in this country. It should be borne in mind, however, that Malinowski and others who have used the situation approach did not grasp the full theoretical implications of Wegener's hints, though he has been frequently quoted.[14]

A general theory such as this must include similar approaches in other branches of linguistic analysis. Naturally, the sentence and syntactical analysis finds a central place. Even the origins of all speech, considered biographically in the nurture of the young and in the history of the race, are to be found in sentences: 'Alle Sprachelemente sind ursprünglich Sätze' (Wegener, 1885, 181). It is not surprising that Wegener pays special attention to imperatives, interrogatives, demonstratives and pronouns. No wonder Malinowski found all this attractive in his search for concepts likely to assist him in developing a technique for the elucidation of ethnographic texts. He had found similar notions in the work of Sir Richard Temple.

Ranging himself with the primitive man's pragmatic outlook and regarding language as a mode of action rather than as a counter-sign of thought (1923, 459, 479), Malinowski selected for notice only such features of his languages as were essentially bound up with his contexts of situation in trading, fishing (1923, 474), gardening and similar pursuits. There, he noticed direct indications of these activities, references to the surroundings, words of command, words correlated with action (1923, 473), the expressions of feeling and passion bound up with behaviour, many of them stereotyped in form, such as spells, chants and narratives.

It is language material of this kind which he presents throughout his ethnographic work with little or no development of formal description as understood by linguists. The linguistic treatment of ethnographic texts, from *Argonauts of the Western Pacfic* (1922) to *Coral gardens and their magic* (1935), is fundamentally the same though in *Coral gardens* we are given a 'full treatment' of the 'language of agriculture'.[15]

In substantiation of the above criticism of his linguistic technique, it is sufficient to notice his chapter on 'Words in magic' in the *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922, 428–63).[16] In the course of this chapter,

he makes repeated use of the expression 'linguistic anlaysis' (428, 433, 442, 459) with reference to his ethnographic texts, but it must be pointed out that the expression as used by linguists refers to highly abstract analyses of a given language—usually a restricted language—at the phonological level, at various grammatical levels and in the summary entries of dictionaries. Malinowski fully realized his short-comings in linguistic analysis, as we now understand it, and said so explicitly: 'The analysis to which I now proceed can be given only in an approximate manner, for, in a full one, a long disquisition on grammar would have to be given first' (1922, 433). He never managed to realize what may have been his secret ambition—a technique of analysis satisfying the demands of linguistic science.

The main features of his textual method can be summarized as follows: having placed the text functionally, from the sociological point of view, let us say, as a particular kind of spell tabulated in his systematic magic, linguistic statements of 'meaning' are to be made—first, by an interlinear word-for-word translation, sometimes described as a 'literal' or 'verbal' translation, 'each expression and formative affix being rendered by its English equivalent', secondly, a free translation in what might be described as 'running English', thirdly, by the collation of the interlinear and free translations, leading, fourthly, to the detailed commentary, or 'the contextual specification of meaning'.

The commentary relates the free translation to the verbal translation and deals with the 'equivalents' and adds phonetic and grammatical notes.

First, then, he no doubt intended really to suggest *an* English equivalent for ethnographic purposes. When I was associated with Malinowski in his Linguistics Seminar in the early 1930s, he often referred to this word-for-word translation method, and even employed the expression 'fixed term equivalent'[17] for the English counters that he placed against the elements of native texts. He states as his fundamental principle that for each native word we adopt one English 'fixed meaning'. Unfortunately, in this connection, he reverts to notions characteristic of early work by such etymologists as Skeat, and makes an attempt to establish what he calls the 'primary meaning'[18] of a word, numbering derived meanings in the text. But he found that it was not 'always feasible or convenient to use primary meanings as the fixed equivalent'.

In my opinion, the concept of primary and derived meanings must be abandoned, and even in Malinowski's work it served no useful purpose. I well remember discussing with him the primary meaning of

the word 'ass' in familiar, colloquial English. To bring in the animal, we had to place the word in another 'language'. Such difficulties are met by applying the concept of meaning by collocation, which I have dealt with elsewhere (Firth, 1951*b*; see also Mitchell, 1952 and 1953). The word 'ass' in colloquial English is usually collocated with expressions of personal reference and address and the plural is not very common.

Moreover, 'fixed term equivalents' or counters are of doubtful value in the structure as I define it, that is to say, taken together in sentences and longer pieces.[19] The notion of a fixed term equivalent, arbitrarily chosen to cover systems of words, is another matter. Systems of units or terms, set up by the linguist, provide sets of interior relations by means of which their values are mutually determined. In order to have validity, such systems must be exhaustive and closed, so far as the particular state of the language, suitably restricted, is under description.

Malinowski's lists are rich in information and testify to the excellence of his field-work. But, as he says himself, not all of his lists are exhaustive and the reader is left to judge for himself (1935, II, 5). There is one example, however, of what a linguist would accept as a system to be found in his treatment of the six[20] Trobriand words for 'garden'. That they can be regarded as a lexical system on the evidence supplied is clear from his own statement that they 'are defined by placing them within a series of terms with mutually exclusive uses' (1935, II, 16).

We now turn from the verbal translation to what Malinowski calls a 'free translation' (1922, 457):

> Comparing the free translation with the literal one, it is easy to see that certain additions have been made, sentences have been subordinated and co-ordinated by various English conjunctions which are either completely absent from the native text, or else represented by such very vague particles as *boge* (already) and *m'tage* (indeed). (1922, 458)

Occasionally, the comparison of the interlinear version with the free translation is held to be sufficient. Indeed, a great deal of the method of statement depends upon this double-entry procedure in giving what is nowadays technically described as the 'translation meaning'.[21]

Throughout his work, he uses the double translation method of stating 'meaning'. He was in the habit of accumulating large numbers of texts and he even uses the method in dealing with native definitions provided by informants.[22]

The third and fourth features of his textual method, namely, the collation of the interlinear and free translations, must be considered together, since what is called 'the contextual specification of meaning' (1935, II, 37) is with reference to the text (and not the situation) and to the two translations requiring a full miscellaneous commentary.

In doing this, a great many words 'have to be reinterpreted when we pass from the interlineal word-for-word rendering to the free translation'. He claims that this transition is not arbitrary and that his commentaries on the texts illustrate definite principles. In the *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922, 457) he makes the astonishing claim that 'the verbal translation renders word for word the individual meaning of every particle and root, according to a definite grammatical and lexicographical scheme which has been adopted for this text in common with a few hundred more'.[23] In spite of the above statement, he confesses that he had not made any distinction in the verbal translation between the inclusive and exclusive first person, dual and plural. It is difficult to imagine the definite grammatical and lexicographical scheme, presumably expressed in the translation, and not easy to agree that the opening sentences of the formula given (1922, 440) 'are so clear that the translation word for word explains itself without any closer commentary'. Malinowski's notion of 'translation' extends to his whole method of

> *defining a term by ethnographic analysis*, that is, by placing it within its context of culture, by putting it within the set of kindred and cognate expressions, by contrasting it with its opposites, by grammatical analysis and above all by a number of well-chosen examples —such translation is feasible and is the only correct way of defining the linguistic and cultural character of a word. (1935, II, 17)

He did, however, deal explicitly with 'the translation of untranslatable words' (1935, II, 11).

'The contextual specification of meaning' includes phonetic, grammatical and lexical observations, many of which are of doubtful value and would not be technically recognized as useful in descriptive linguistics today. To say that the real difficulty of the Trobriand language is 'not in the complexity of the grammatical apparatus but rather in its extreme simplicity' may be an amusing paradox, but it fails to satisfy the sophisticated reader, and we get very little further when we are told that:

> Its structure is on the whole what might be described as telegraphic; the relation of the words, as well as the relation of the sentences,

> has mainly to be derived from the context. In many cases the subject remains unmentioned, is represented merely by a verbal pronoun and has to be gathered from the situation. (1935, II, 36)

Grammar is concerned with the interrelation of categories, not of the words as such, and cannot be derived from any context other than that of grammatical analysis. In referring to the subject of the situation, Malinowski goes back again to Wegener.[24]

Most linguists would regard his grammatical treatment of texts (1935, II, 30–7) as unsatisfactory. To begin with, most of the grammar is notional, of the traditional pattern. We find for instance that 'this sound *b* changes the character of the verb'. He connects it with what he calls the 'future tense' but 'very roughly' and adds that it 'conveys the idea of potentiality, past, present or future; or at times it is simply emphatic'. The confusion of all levels of analysis is well exemplified in his summary sentence: 'As a fixed meaning distinguishing verbs thus modified by the potential *b* I have chosen the English auxiliary verb "might"' (1935, II, 31). Levels are again confused and vagueness reigns supreme in the following:

> This sound imparts a tinge of definiteness; at times it places the action into a regular past, accomplished state; at times it only gives emphasis. On the whole it is best to regard it as an implement of definiteness and accomplishment. The letter *l* I have rendered by the fixed meaning 'did', *luku-gis*, 'thou didst see'. (1935, II, 32)

Traditional grammatical categories are obviously accepted as universals as is shown by his remarks (a) that the distinction between the transitive and intransitive verbs is not easy to make, and (b) that the passive does not exist. He is much better on the classificatory particles, to which he gave special attention in an article previously quoted, and in his introductory note to Part V[25] of *Coral gardens* he specifically refers those grammatically interested to this article (1935, II, 78). He did not develop any precise forms of lexical entry, but attempted more or less systematic glossaries (1935, II, 115, 150–5).[26]

He appears to be acutely conscious of his shortcomings in phonetics as a basis for what he calls his transliterations of the texts—they are certainly not phonetic transcriptions—and confesses that his phonetic distinctions probably do not go as far as they ought to, and he very often finds in his notes two or three transliterations of what he calls 'the same word'. He dismisses the difficulty by saying that perhaps phonetics carried too far is unprofitable. However, he appreciated the need to connect sound of the language in some way with what he regarded as meaning but had no technique of analysis at his command nor language of statement. He had to be content with such observations as 'alliterative symmetry so dear to Kiriwinian magic'; 'a heavy thumping rhythm indicated by sharp and circumflex accents'; 'the manner of reciting these parts is more perfunctory, with fewer melodic modulations and phonetic peculiarities'; 'this phonetically very expressive word is used with very great sound effect'; 'this sentence, giving the vowels a full Italian value, such as they receive in the Melanesian pronunciation, does certainly have an impressive ring' (1922, 441, 444, 447, 450).

The abundance of the linguistic materials would justify revision in the field by a linguist since, as Malinowski says, 'belief in the efficiency of a formula, results in various peculiarities of the language in which it is couched, both as regards meaning and sound' (1922, 451). It would be of considerable linguistic interest to know more of the 'effects of rhythm, alliteration and rhyme, often heightened and accentuated by actual vocal accent' (1922, 452; 1929, 304).

The use of synoptic tables in presenting at a glance the consecutive progress of work and magic as inseparables, is a useful example of the ethnographic method of analysis and justifies the expression 'systematic magic' with its formulae, rites and spells (1922, 414 ff.).

As I have already pointed out (p. 148, n. 15), Malinowski was fully aware that as his work became better known, it was easier for him to expand his linguistic documentation to great lengths. But he was also apparently conscious of the possible danger of his ethnographic apparatus becoming too obvious and wished to get beyond the field-worker's notebook (1935, II, 45).

A critical appreciation of his contribution to linguistics may be summarized under the following four heads:

1. General theory, especially his use of the concepts of context of situation and of types of speech function (1935, II, 53; 1923, 475–7).
2. The statement of the meaning of a word by definition with reference to culture context.
3. The statement of meaning by translation.
4. The relations of (i) language and culture; and (ii) linguistics and anthropology.

1. As we have seen, the situational approach in linguistic theory can

be regarded as beginning with Wegener's work (1885), which has the merit of general theoretical abstraction with no trace of 'realism'. My own development of the situational approach has been of this kind.

In the work of Gardiner[27] and Malinowski there are distinct traces of the realist approach, which is in strange contradiction, in Malinowski's case, to his repeated insistence on the need for theory. He seems to imagine that there is such a thing as the 'existence' of the brute 'fact', independent of and prior to any statement of fact. 'To us', he says, 'the real linguistic fact is the full utterance within its context of situation.' There is belief in the 'concrete situation', the 'situation of action' in which the utterance is 'directly embedded' and he even used the phrase 'environmental reality' (Malinowski, 1935, II, 57). The word 'utterance' seems to have had an almost hypnotic suggestion of 'reality' which often misleads him into the dangerous confusion of a theoretical construct with items of experience. The factors or elements of a situation, including the text, are abstractions from experience and are not in any sense embedded in it, except perhaps in an applied scientific sense, in renewal of connection with it. In one place, however, he seems to have realized that if a sound film could be taken of a Trobriand gardening activity, so that the 'visual part of it would be self-explanatory', 'the accompanying sounds would remain completely incomprehensible' and would have to be explained by a long and laborious linguistic analysis (1935, II, 10, 26).

It was perhaps in order to avoid giving 'a disproportionate amount of space and attention' (1935, II, 10) to language that he adopted the not altogether satisfactory methods we have just reviewed.

In my own work, I first turned to the context of situation in 1930[28] and, more recently, have held to the view that the context of situation and the notion of types of speech function are best used as schematic constructs to be applied to language events and that they are merely a group of related categories at a different level from grammatical categories but of the same abstract nature. The linguist sets up interior relations[29] of three main kinds:

(a) the interior relations of elements of structure, words and other bits and pieces of the text;
(b) the interior relations of systems set up to give values to elements of structure and the bits and pieces;
(c) the interior relations of contexts of situation.

The interior relations of the context of situation may be summarized as follows (see Firth, 1950, 7):

1. The relevant features of participants: persons, personalities.
   (a) The verbal action of the participants.
   (b) The non-verbal action of the participants.
2. The relevant objects.
3. The effect of the verbal action.

The situational approach, I believe, requires also the classification of types of speech function, in which Malinowski pioneered the way in his Supplement[30] and in *Coral gardens and their magic.*[31]

A great deal of the linguistic work we have noticed deals with studies of the magical word in the sociological sense; but language can be regarded as magic in the most general sense. Malinowski's treatment suggests many possibilities of research for all students of words in action. It was perhaps this magic which led him to regard speech in infancy and childhood as sources of magical meaning for all of us (1935, II, 62). The creative functions of language which he always emphasized are indeed miraculous.

These aspects of his general theory, which were first sketched in the Supplement, are more clearly stated in *Coral gardens*[32] and are his weightiest contributions in the sociological approach to the statement of meaning.

He pointed out the 'richest field of modern verbal magic'—advertisements—and his amusing parallel of Trobriand beauty magic and the advertisements of Helena Rubinstein and Elizabeth Arden he commends to any young anthropologist interested in modern as well as primitive savagery. He concludes this interlude in a light vein with the remark: 'In my opinion, the study of modern linguistic uses side by side with those of the magic of simple peoples would bring high rewards.'[33]

2. His attitude to words as such is curiously unsatisfactory when we remember his concern with institutions[34] and customs. There is no doubt that, in literate societies such as our own, words and other elements of language are institutionalized, and statements about them in dictionaries and even in common talk are treated with a respect felt to be due to some sort of authority. He says, for instance, that words do not exist in isolation and adds that they 'have no independent existence in the actual reality of speech' (1935, II, 23). The descriptive linguist does not work in the universe of discourse concerned with 'reality' or what is 'real', and is not concerned with the ontological question

of whether his isolates can be said to 'have an existence' or 'to exist'. It is clear that one cannot deal with any form of language and its use without assuming institutions and customs. It has long been a commonplace of linguistics, as Malinowski himself says (1935, II, 22), that the sentence and not the word is its main concern, but it is not the lowest unit of language, nor is it a 'self-contained or self-sufficient unit'. Let us again emphasize that 'facts' do not 'exist', they are *stated*, and it may indeed be a better guide to the handling of facts to regard them as 'myths' in which we believe, and which we have to live with.

I should agree that 'the figment of a dictionary is as dangerous theoretically as it is useful practically' and, further, that the form in which most dictionaries are cast, whether unilingual or bilingual, is approaching obsolescence, partly on account of the arbitrariness of the definitions and preoccupation with the historical value of the citations. In his method of definition (see above, pp. 138–9), Malinowski makes some approach, though rather vaguely it is true, to the tendencies in modern linguistics to use contextual definitions and make statements of meaning at a series of levels. He does, however, pay great attention to systems of words having mutually exclusive uses in a given field of application—for example, the six words for 'garden' in Kiriwina. He fully appreciates what we might describe in technical linguistic terms as 'distinctive meaning' (see below, p. 165, n. 36). Throughout his work he is at great pains to describe in English sociologically important distinctions in use (see 1929*a*, 58, 388, 422).

Perhaps the most interesting full-length commentary on the use of a common word is to be found in his *Freedom and civilization*, which is an analysis of the 'multiple meanings' of 'freedom in its universe of semantic chaos'. The whole work he himself describes as the semantics of freedom, and his treatment I find not only more sophisticated but more stimulating than similar general semantic studies which have appeared in the United States. Two remarks in this work are of central importance: first, 'all mental states which are postulated as occurrences within the private consciousness of man are thus outside the realm of science' (1947, 84); and secondly, 'we have completely to throw overboard any meek acquiescence in dictionary meanings, in the dictates of epigram, metaphor and linguistic vagary. We have often stressed that in science we must run counter to linguistic usage. This is even more important in social science than in the study of matter or organism' (1947, 80).

There are signs that in this work his general theory had so developed as to make consideration of primary meaning and fixed equivalents obsolete. While recognizing, as a social fact, that most people do take up attitudes towards words, he sounds the very necessary warning that the 'physicist does not inquire through universal suffrage or a Gallup Poll what the meanings of his concepts are' (1947, 81).[35] We know how obsessive is the desire to define the 'core of meaning' (1947, 68) of such a word as 'freedom'. His final decision is a 'complete rejection of this core of meaning'. At the same time, as we have already pointed out, he recognizes the influence of such beliefs on human behaviour. In science, however, as he rightly warns us, we are to beware of the tendency to reify and hypostatize such general words as representing valid general concepts (1947, 77). Such words are often conceived anthropomorphically. In the language of description in linguistics, we refer chiefly to structures, systems and relations. Our task is observation, analysis, synthesis and renewal of connection. Words such as 'freedom' and 'law' he regards—in accordance with sound tradition in linguistics—as polysemic and the words themselves as summaries of homonyms and homophones.

3. Whatever shortcomings we may find in Malinowski's analysis of texts, we must concede his realization of the central importance of the statement of meaning by what may be termed 'systematic translation'. He presents in his synoptic tables the consecutive progress of work and linguistic magic as inseparables (see above, p. 153). His statements by double translation with commentary bring into the focus of attention the whole question of what may be called 'translation meaning'[36] in linguistics.

Comparative linguists have perhaps not fully realized the technical implications of the translation meanings by means of which they identify words, let us say, by employing in English such translation equivalents as 'horse', 'sheep', 'father', etc. Translation meanings as identification names require careful consideration in all descriptive work. Translation meanings consisting of pieces of phrases in analytical languages, set against words in other types of languages, are all too often carelessly conceived and often quite haphazard in application. But translation meanings, however systematic, do not in themselves constitute linguistic analysis.

It is perhaps useful in this connection, to apply the two words 'use' and 'mention' to our procedures. A distinction must always be maintained, even in unilingual descriptions, between the word, piece or

sentence in *use* and a reference to these by using the same words as autonyms in *mention*. What Malinowski calls an equivalent, especially in such cases as the six Kiriwinian names for 'garden' (see above, p. 150), should be specifically noted as such, so that the translation meaning does not masquerade as analysis, but serves its identification function in linguistic description. It is in no sense to be regarded as a sociological equivalent.

This leads me to the triple distinction of (a) language under description, (b) the language of description and (c) the language of translation. The language of translation subdivides into word-translation meanings, and translation meanings offered as a means of identifying longer pieces or as names for other native categories supplied by informants. What Malinowski calls free translation, though it may be regarded as contributing to the general statement of meaning, might be referred to simply as 'translation' to distinguish it from the more formal apparatus which we have referred to as systematic translation meanings. The rest of the language of description, being both technical and general, may incorporate translation meanings and translations as part of the description, alongside the necessary technical nomenclature and phraseology of the statement of the analysis proper.

4. The subject of this essay, 'Ethnographic analysis and language', which arises from the consideration of Malinowski's work between 1915 and his death in the United States of America in 1942, has been very much on the agenda of anthropologists and linguists among others in recent years. In 1951, a Commission was set up by the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies of Unesco, of which I am a member, to promote a number of linguistic investigations to serve as the basis for an examination of the relationships between language and the other aspects of culture, undertaken by linguists, cultural anthropologists and philosophers (Firth, 1951*a*). May I repeat Malinowski's warning in this connection:

> But there is nothing more dangerous than to imagine that language is a process running parallel and exactly corresponding to mental process, and that the function of language is to reflect or to duplicate the mental reality of man in a secondary flow of verbal equivalents.
> (1935, II, 7)

In 1953, the results of a Conference of anthropologists and linguists were published as a Supplement to the *International journal of American linguistics*. This has been previously referred to. Although the Conference did not actually face the problems stated by Lévi-Strauss (1953), his clear summary of the position should be noted. He distinguished the relations between (1) *a* language and *a* culture; (2) language and culture; (3) linguistics as a scientific discipline and anthropology. He also remarked on something I have often experienced myself, namely, the dangers which beset scholars of different disciplines when they meet to discuss what they consider to be common problems, often employing similar language. In recent conferences on communication theory, scientists and humanists have imagined that, when they employ the same words, they mean the same things. A far more healthy state of affairs was indicated by my namesake, Raymond Firth, when he remarked, in a humorous vein at a meeting in which we both took part, that the audience should not allow themselves to be confused by the identity of the patronymic but should remember that though we were colleagues working in similar fields, neither of us really knew, in any technical sense, what the other fellow was talking about. Lévi-Strauss expressed it as his belief that one of the main teachings of the Conference was that whenever they tried to express linguistic problems and culture problems in the same language, the situation became tremendously complicated and they would always have to keep this in mind (1953, 3).

If it be admitted that linguistics is a social science of some sort, it is certainly true that it is ahead of the others in theoretical formulation and technique of statement. The coming together of anthropologists and linguists in recent conferences may have the highly desirable effect of, first, convincing anthropologists that they need to look not only to their theories but also to their technical language of statement, including systematic nomenclature, and secondly, to demonstrate to the linguists that they are concerned with the statement of meaning in linguistic terms and that 'linguistics limited to the signal factor' was a 'necessary but fragmentary stage' (1953, 59). As Lotz remarks, linguists should not feel so pessimistic about statements of meaning in linguistics.

In a paper at the same Conference, Roman Jakobson, summing up his impressions of the Conference, declared, 'One of the most symptomatic features of this Conference was that we lengthily and passionately discussed the questions of meaning', and concluded, 'Thus, meaning remains a No Man's land. This game of Give-away must end. For years and decades we have fought for the annexation of speech-sounds to linguistics, and thereby established phonemics. Now we face a second

front—the task of incorporating linguistic meaning into the science of language' (1953, 19, 21).

It is my personal opinion that linguistics is suffering from a surfeit of phonemics and that our energies must turn to the second front. As we have seen in our review of the work of Malinowski, approaches to the problem in Great Britain go back over three-quarters of a century. In my own work, associated with my colleagues in London, I have indicated a strictly formal study of meaning at all levels, in linguistic terms, without poaching either on the sciences of the mind or of society.

It is of considerable interest, therefore, to notice the published results of still another Conference in the United States on the interrelations of language and other aspects of culture. Even Hockett, who places semantics outside linguistics as he understands it, finds it possible to say that ethnography without linguistics is blind: linguistics without ethnography is sterile (1954, 225). From my own point of view, I should move a drastic amendment to the last phrase and say that linguistics without 'meaning' is sterile. I do, however, find myself in agreement with Hockett that 'it had better be the linguists who work on this systematic end of semantics' (1954, 250).

I should like to suggest once more that linguistics at all levels of analysis is concerned with meaningful human behaviour in society and that the structures and systems and other sets of abstractions set up enable congruent statements of meaning to be made in exclusively linguistic terms.

Let us now turn to Malinowski in this connection. His approach, as one might expect, was practical and concerned itself with teaching. 'A close co-operation between linguistic teaching and anthropological training seems to me of the greatest importance' (1929*b*, 29). Even earlier, he had pleaded 'for a more intensive interest in linguistics on the part of the student of man, and at the same time for a study of language more thoroughly correlated with investigations on other aspects of human culture' (1927, 157). He encouraged the linguist in setting up his grammatical categories to look to other levels of linguistic analysis which would take note of the situation, including the personalities, institutions and customs:

> A grammar of a primitive language cannot be fully stated without reference to further analysis.
>
> The various pronouns of possession[37] in Melanesia, some modifications of verb and noun, are deeply correlated with the practice to which the language is put within its various cultural contacts, and to separate the study of language from the study of culture means merely a waste of time and an amateurishness in most aspects of the work. (1929*b*, 29)

I think it is a fair criticism to say that Malinowski's technical linguistic contribution consists of sporadic comments, immersed and perhaps lost in what is properly called his ethnographic analysis. As he says himself, 'I was able to incorporate a great deal of my linguistic information into the analysis of magical texts and into the ethnographic descriptions, so that not very much is left to purely linguistic commentary and etymological speculation' (1935, II, 170). There is a need to separate the two techniques of ethnographic and linguistic analysis and, at the same time, to correlate the results so that the trend towards a statement of meaning in linguistics shall be made clear at all levels. Linguistic analysis I reserve for statements about language data in terms of phonetics, phonology, grammar, stylistics, lexicography and textual analysis in a background of statements of collocation and of contexts of situation as I understand these terms.[38]

In conclusion it may surely be taken as a tribute to Malinowski that we have found it possible to discuss the wide subject of ethnographic analysis and language, still very much before us as the recent conferences show, largely in terms of his published work.

His outstanding contribution to linguistics was his approach in terms of his general theory of speech functions in contexts of situation, to the problem of meaning in exotic languages and even in our own.

Notes

1. It is of some interest to note that a copy of this work was presented by the author to the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies on Malinowski's return to England and is one of many indications of his appreciation of the work of his British colleagues in exotic languages.
2. Malinowski's procedures and techniques with *informants* are fully described, and of high importance both in ethnographic and linguistic analysis. See especially: (1935) II, 5, 23–6, 84, 95, 100–1, 119–21, 127, 129, 135, 156–7, 158, 175, and (1922), 396, 398, 400, 409, 429, 433, 453–5, 483, 490–1.
3. cf. Wittgenstein (1953), 108, para. 337. 'An intention is embedded in its situation, in human customs and institutions. If the technique of the game of chess did not exist, I could not *intend* to play a game of chess. In so far as I do intend the construction of a sentence in advance, that is made possible by the fact that I can speak the language in question.' See also above, p. 138 and n. 1.

4. See Malinowski, 1920*b*, 55. The establishment of texts in living languages by the descriptive linguist may prepare the way for studies of such subjects as the degree of obsoleteness of words and grammatical forms. 'It is extremely astonishing that, although this is the only way of gaining an insight into the historical changes of a native language, and although historic change and evolution have been the main orientation of linguistics, yet, to my knowledge, very little attention has been paid to the degree of obsoleteness of words and grammatical forms.'
5. Eventually in Vol II of *Coral gardens and their magic* (1935), Malinowski stated what he there describes as an ethnographic theory of language.
6. cf. Firth, 1951*a*.
7. cf. Firth, 1951*a*, 218. 'In the session 1950–1 the School of Oriental and African Studies was able "*to send out*" seven "*thoroughly and specially trained young men*" whose whole task was "*the observation of the phenomena of living languages*" and both they and at least a score of others are "*concentrating their energies mainly on what may be called 'living philology'*". In America there is a similar history to report since the foundation of the American Philosophical Society [1838], the American Oriental Society [1842], and the Smithsonian Institution [1846]. Today there is the Linguistic Society of America which supports the annual Linguistic Institute; also the Linguistic Circle of New York, the *International journal of American linguistics*, and the Summer Institute of Linguistics for the training of missionaries for linguistic work in the mission fields of the world (see *"Atlantic linguistics").'
8. 'There has been much, and as it seems excellent, work recently done on the American native languages, but with that I am completely unacquainted.' Present-day American linguists return the compliment by remaining unacquainted with Malinowski's contribution to the subjects of their concern.
9. In the same Supplement, Malinowski uses the expressions 'speech function', p. 476, 'linguistic uses', p. 474 (cf. Wittgenstein, 'Meaning is use'—see above, p. 138).
10. Malinowski, 1935, II, xi. 'Since I regard it as of the greatest importance always to stress the fact that only theoretical training enables us to see a sociological fact and to record and interpret it correctly, I should like to say that in no other branch of Anthropology has my reading been as extensive as in Linguistics.'
11. See Gardiner, 1932. For *Situation*, see pp. 49, 51, 194. Gardiner's book was published in 1932, nine years after Malinowski's Supplement in which the phrase 'context of situation' is first used. For his reference to Wegener's *Situationstheorie*, see pp. 60, 124, 127, and refer to the Index, where there are sixteen entries. Gardiner points out that his own terminology is different from Wegener's—so is his whole theory.
12. See Firth, 1935, 23, 33; 1950, 181–2; 1951*a* 225; 1951*b*, 192–6.
13. This philosophical use of the word *consciousness* in English really begins with Locke's *Essay concerning human understanding*. His French amanuensis and translator, M. Coste, found great difficulty in rendering Locke's thought in this connection. Wegener's use of *Erinnerung* and *Bewusstsein* is also traceable to Locke. Under the entry *Personality* in Dr Johnson's Dictionary, the following quotation from Locke is cited: 'This personality extends itself beyond present existence to what is past, only by consciousness, where it imputes to itself past actions just upon the same ground that it does the present.' See Firth, 1950.

14. Let Wegener speak for himself in the following extract from his work, pp. 21–3. 'Die Situation ist der Boden, die Umgebung, auf der eine Thatsache, eine Ding u. s. f. in die Erscheinung tritt, doch auch das zeitlich Vorausliegende, aus dem heraus eine Thätigkeit entsprungen ist, nemlich die Thätigkeit, welche wir als Prädicat aussagen, und ebenso gehört zur Situation die Angabe der Person, an welche die Mitteilung gerichtet ist. Die Situation wird bei der sprachlichen Mitteilung nicht blos durch Worte bestimmt, viel gewöhnlicher und ausgedehnter durch die umgebenden Verhältnisse selbst, durch die unmittelbar vorhergegangenen Thatsachen und die Gegenwart der Person, mit der wir sprechen. Die durch die umgebenden Verhältnisse und die Gegenwort der angeredeten Person gegebene Situation kommt uns durch die Anschauung zum Bewusstsein, wir nennen sie daher die Situation der Anschauung.

'Stehe ich mit Jemandem vor einem Baume, so genügt vollständig das Wort *Linde*, um zu sagen: *dieser Baum ist eine Linde*. Der vor uns stehende Baum bildet, auch unbenannt, das Subject des Satzes. Oder sage ich bei dieser Situation: *das ist eine Linde*, so erhält doch das Pronomen erst durch die gegenwärtige Anschauung seinen Inhalt.—Stelle ich Jemanden in einer Gesellschaft vor, so wäre es gradezu unpassend zu sagen: *dies ist Herr Müller*, ich weise nur mit der Hand auf ihn hin, um ihn von den übrigen anwesenden Personen zu unterscheiden und sage: *Herr Müller*. Die lebendige Anschauung, präcisiert durch den Gestus, ist die Situation und das Subject. Es ist klar, dass ein gegenwärtiges Anschauungsbild nicht so einfach ist, dass alle Teile desselben das Subject sein könnten, noch auch das gesammte Anschauungsbild. Neben jener Linde im Parke steht veilleicht auch eine Eiche, und vieles Andere ist sichtbar, die angeredete Person ja auch. Der Gestus und die Richtung der Augen geben Anhaltepunkte für die Ausscheidung eines Teiles aus dieser complicierten Masse, doch auch ohne diese Illustration bleibt ein derartiges Prädicat beziehbar. Ja, der Gestus selbst ist ja eine Thätigkeit, die Hand, der Arm, ein Finger wird dabei gezeigt, warum bezieht der Hörende das Prädicat nicht anf diese Teile der Anschauung? Es muss ein Schluss von dem Hörenden aus der Natur des Prädicats sowohl wie aus dem Inhalte der Anschauung gewonnen werden, um die Beziehung richtig zu machen. Ich deute hier diese Frage nur an über welche die zweite Abhandlung einigen Aufschluss geben soll.

'Setzt Jemand ein Glas Wein vom Munde und sagt: *vortrefflich!*, so zweifle ich keinen Augenblick, dass en den eben genossenen Wein so nennt; selbst wenn ich nur das leere Glas sehe, so ergänze ich den Ausruf zu dem Satze: *der Wein ist vortrefflich*. Also die Situation wird auch bestimmt durch vollendete Handlungen, die noch im Vordergrunde unseres Bewusstseins stehen. Und das zu denkende Subject ist nicht blos die gesammte Handlung, wie hier das Weintrinken, sondern ein Moment dieser Handlung, der Wein,—also auch hier liegt ein Schluss des Verstehenden vor, von dem später die Rede sein wird. Diese Situation wird passend genannt werden Situation der Erinnerung. . . . Hört der Jäger von *Löffeln*, so ist er wenigstens ebenso geneigt an die Ohren des Hasen zu denken, als an die Suppenlöffel bei Tisch, selbst wenn er einen solchen bei Tisch in der Hand hält. So hat der Militär seine besonderen Gruppen der grössten Associationsfähigkeit, andere der Jurist, andere der Seemann, andere der Philologe, andere der Geistliche u. s. f. Daher die hübsche Anecdote, welche Steinthal erzählt, dass ein Menschenkenner sich anheischig macht, aus den Antworten, welche verschiedene ihm unbekannte Personen auf eine Rätselfrage geben, ihren Stand zu bestimmen. Diese verschiedenen Interessenkreise

haben daher ihre eigenen Ausdrucksweisen, die bekannten termini technici, welche ihren Inhalt aus der Situation des Bewusstseins, d. h. aus den fest gewordenen Interessen ergänzen, so *die Löffel, der Lauf* des Hasen, *der Schweiss* des Wildes, die vielen juristischen Termini und die grosse Menge der Handwerkerausdrücke; *testudo* bei den Römern kann die Schildkröte, das militärische Schilddach, die Leier sein.'

15. Malinowski, 1935, I, xi. 'For the first time I am able here fully to document my ethnographic contribution from the linguistic point of view. This is not due to the absence from my field notes of the same, or of a reasonably comparable quantity of texts, commentaries, sayings and terminologies to validate the statements which I have made in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* or in *The sexual life of savages,* in my booklet on *Myth* or in *Crime and custom.* The reason is, that earlier in my career there would have been no chance of publishing as full a linguistic documentation as has become possible now, when the interest in the Trobrianders and in more detailed ethnographic accounts has on the whole increased. I trust that the theoretical parts of this book, the Introductions to the Linguistic supplement and to the Magical formulae (Parts IV and VI), will add to this interest and to the understanding that such full documentation is necessary, and that they will justify the methods here adopted.'
16. 'These three texts will be quite sufficient to give an idea of the method of dealing with linguistic evidence, and of the documentary value of immediately recorded native opinions.'
17. This notion he adheres to in *Coral gardens and their magic,* in which he formulates rules of interlinear translation. 'The fundamental principle here is that for each native word we adopt one English *fixed meaning*' (II, 28). My comment here is that such 'fixed meanings' are of value in stating systems but difficult to apply in interlinear translation. Such systems of differentiated words might be technically referred to as *distinctive meanings* in the relative sense of mutual exclusiveness.
18. cf. Malinowski, 1947, 86. 'Social science is still burdened with the superstition that words contain their meanings.'
19. My own theory of analysis requires that the terms 'structure' and 'system' be kept distinct in technical use. Structures are abstractions from utterances or parts of utterances recorded textually. Thus CVCVC and Noun-Verb-Noun might each constitute a structure specifically defined in a particular language, at the phonological and grammatical levels respectively. A *structure* is said to comprise *elements* or categories in mutual syntagmatic relation. At any given level of analysis closed systems of categories, units or terms are set up to give mutually determined values to the elements of structure. The terms of a *system*, or of a *sub-system* within it, *commute*, thus enabling account to be taken of the elements, constituents and features which are given order and place in structures. See my **'Synopsis of linguistic theory', also Robins, 1953, 109.
20. 1935, II, 15. 'For they really have no word corresponding to our general term "garden". Instead they have a series of words: *bagula, buyagu, tapopu, kaymata, kaymugwa, baleko,* each of which describes a certain type or kind, aspect or phase of "garden". But to "translate" any of these native terms by equating it to an English word would not merely be wrong, but impossible; or rather it would be impossible to find an English word exactly corresponding to any one of the native ones. Furthermore, to label the native term by even a combination of English words is at least misleading.'

21. 1935, II, 38. 'In any case, comparing the interlineal version with the free translation, the text becomes quite clear.'
22. 1922, 460–1. The 'two versions will give an inkling of how I was able to obtain from my native informants the definition of unknown and sometimes very involved expressions and how, in the act of doing it, I was given additional enlightenment on obscure details of belief and custom'. Further, on p. 463, he comments 'these three texts will be quite sufficient to give an idea of the method of dealing with linguistic evidence, and of the documentary value of immediately recorded native opinions'.
23. Leading American ethnographic linguists are still using this somewhat primitive method of so-called 'equivalents', confusing at least three levels of analysis, and mixing up translation with grammatical and collocational statements. 'A point by point morphemic transformation of kweteletiiwena = *advise-animate-reciprocal-inanimate thing-plural* = *laws*; hence, saawanwa kweteletiiwena = *Shawnee Laws.*' See Voegelin, Yegerlehner and Robinett, 1954, 32. Even Harris makes use of translation meanings, though not systematically. See Harris, 1951, 165–7, 182–4, 211, 213, 216–7, 223–4, 285–9, 339–44.
24. See above, p. 139, and pp. 147–8.
25. *Corpus inscriptionum agriculturae Quiriviniensis;* or 'The language of gardens'.
26. The following example is typical of the entries: '*kwanada:* yam growing in *odila*; eaten in *molu*'.
27. Gardiner, 1932, 49–52, 127 and especially 193 for the expression 'the present situation of the utterance'.
28. See Firth, 1930; 1950; 1937, Chapter X; 1951*a*, 83–4, 87.
29. See above, p. 150 and note 19.
30. 1923, see especially 476–7.
31. 1935, II, Part IV and Part VI, Division V.
32. 1935, see especially II, Part IV, Division I, 52–62, and Part VI, Division V, 236–7. Cf. 1929*a*, 296–7, 299.
33. 1935, II, 238. See also Harold Lasswell and Associates, 1949, in which quantitative methods are attempted in the study of key symbols, slogans and the *credenda* and *miranda* of politics.
34. See 1916, 428. 'If you examine the "broad masses" of a community, the women and children included, you will find that, whenever they grasp your questions, their answers will not vary.' See also 1935, II, 172. 'These three texts are a good example of how time after time one receives the same answer from different informants belonging to different communities. Perhaps unfortunately, I did not usually take down statements which I found merely duplicated information already noted.'
35. See also Voegelin, E., in which notice is taken of certain words of power as traditional language symbols evolved in the social process.
36. This has also been dealt with, though less satisfactorily, by American linguistics. See the Supplement to *IJAL* 19 (1953), *Results of the conference of anthropologists and linguists,* 58–9. Malinowski has covered in detail the three kinds of meaning for linguistics suggested by Professor A. A. Hill: (1) differential meaning (distinctive meaning); (2) translation meaning; (3) structural meaning. Such multiple, yet congruent, statements of meaning at different levels are characteristic of the approach of the London group of linguists. See also the examination of inferences from linguistic to non-linguistic data by Greenberg (1954, 13–4).
37. In the Bauan dialect of Fijian, for example, the following expressions may

serve as illustrations: (1) na nona *waqa*, 'his canoe'; (2) na mena *tī*, 'his tea'; (3) na *yava*-na, 'his foot'; (4) na mena *yaqona*, 'his kava'; (5) na kena *uvi*, 'his yam'. The noun bases are italicized.

38. See my **'Synopsis of linguistic theory'.

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