

Jan Svartvik: The Evans Statements, a Case for Forensic Linguistics. Göteborg 1968, 46 pp.

T. J. Evans, a 25 year old London van driver charged with the murder of his wife Beryl and of his 14 month old daughter Geraldine, was found guilty of the murder of Geraldine and hanged in 1950. More than three years later, R. J. Christie, who lived in the same house as Evans and confessed to have strangled Beryl, was hanged after having been found guilty of the murder of his own wife. In 1966 the Home Secretary gave a posthumous free pardon to T. J. Evans. Those are the bare facts of a criminal case with a public inquiry for which J. Svartvik prepared a linguistic analysis. His study, which is based on the analysis, presents the case as one for "forensic linguistics". Helped by tables and diagrams, the author examines in an objective way the text of the four Evans statements, especially the part containing the confession of two murders. (At the trial, Evans explained his admissions like this: "I was upset and I do not think I knew what I was saying.") Being aware of the problems involved (the small size of the material and the illiteracy of Evans), J. Svartvik first mentions two types of time indication (the 12.55 a. m. train — the five to one train), points out certain stylistic discrepancies in the four statements and then concentrates on external clause relation, analysing all finite verb clauses according to a system evolved at the Survey of English Usage, University College London: free clauses, clauses with mobile relator (then, also), clauses with immobile relator (and, or, but, so), clauses with elliptic subject linkage, conjunctive clauses, relative clauses. In the internal analysis of the crucial statement, divided for this purpose into three parts, the central part differs from the other two particularly in having a considerably higher frequency of clauses with mobile relator and elliptic subject linkage. One of Christie's statements (where he confesses the murder of Beryl Evans) is analysed in the same way, and its general picture of clause type usage is vastly different from Evans' crucial statement. The study ends with a reference to the parliamentary report on the Evans case, where it is stated that two paragraphs are untrue. These belong to the central part of the crucial statement and are, in respect of the linguistic features considered in the study, markedly different from the rest of the statement. To quote the author's words in the preface, "it is good for the linguist to know that he can be useful".

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Daniel Jones: English Pronouncing Dictionary (13th edition 1967).

The year of Daniel Jones's death in 1967 was also the year of the 13th edition of his universally-known standard Dictionary, first published in 1917. A. C. Gimson, professor of phonetics in the University of London, has revised the book, bringing it up to date and incorporating all previous supplements. He has added 468 new words for the deletion of 17 words out of use, so that the Dictionary now contains nearly 59,000 words in the International Phonetic Association symbols and a glossary of phonetic terms. The editor has left unchanged the Introduction written by Daniel Jones, in which the idea of RP (Received Pronunciation) is explained, but he has amended some of the Explanations in accordance with his own approach. This is only logical in the author of An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English (1962), where the evolution of RP has made him suggest a new interpretation of the quality of some sounds. Apart from the Frontispiece diagram (in which /a/ has been advanced, /ɔ:/ and /ə/ raised, and [o] deleted), the characteristic feature of the 13th edition is the transcription of words like *go*. The diphthong is shown as /əu/, which is the symbol used in Gimson's book, because "[ə] more correctly indicates the present-day starting point of the RP diphthong and underlines its affinity with /ɔ:/". Since the monophthong [o] has been omitted, *November* is given as /nəv'vembə*/ and *going* has the full diphthong /əu/. Less common variants in previous editions of the Dictionary now occupy the first place, e.g. those under *actual* and *issue*, or are listed as equally representative, e.g. *controversy*, and the variant /jə:/ for /juə/ in such words as *curious* is extended to many other entries of the same type because, in the editor's view, it is becoming increasingly common. The variant /a:/ for the word *our* indicates what Professor Gimson in his above-mentioned book considers to be "one of the most striking sound changes affecting Southern British English in the twentieth century" (p. 134). We may therefore expect that the next edition of the Dictionary will give a diphthong or a monophthong as the first pronunciation of such words as *fire* and *power*. In its present form the book seems to be of a transitional character, preparing the way for a dictionary whose phonetic notation will correspond more closely to Professor Gimson's evaluation of RP.

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