

## STUDIES IN IRREVERSIBLE BINOMIALS

### I. PRELIMINARIES

In the typical newspaper headline *Cold and snow grip the nation* it is proper to set off the segment *cold and snow* as a binomial, if one agrees so to label the sequence of two words pertaining to the same form-class, placed on an identical level of syntactic hierarchy, and ordinarily connected by some kind of lexical link. There is nothing unchangeable or formulaic about this particular binomial: speakers are at liberty to invert the succession of its members (*snow and cold* . . .) and may with impunity replace either *snow* or *cold* by some semantically related word (say, *wind* or *ice*). However, in a binomial such as *odds and ends* the situation is different: the succession of its constituents has hardened to such an extent that an inversion of the two kernels—\* *ends and odds* — would be barely understandable to listeners caught by surprise. *Odds and ends*, then, represents the special case of an irreversible binomial<sup>1</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup>) There would be little point in surveying here microscopically the terminological imbroglio. Most deplorable is not the fact that different labels have been used by linguists and folklorists for the same neatly delimited phenomenon, but that the delimitation itself has been rarely effected. Thus, one finds in *Lean's Collectanea: Collections by V. S. Lean* [1820-99], II (Bristol, 1903), 899-940, a fine annotated list of such groups as *bale and bless*, *bacon and beer*, *bag and baggage*, classed with *bear away the bell*, *bear the badge* (*the blame, the brunt*), etc. under "Alliteratives": the author, inattentive to the principle of concomitancy, focused his interest on one side of a complex situation to the extent of losing sight of the other. Logan P. Smith's less erudite book *Words and idioms: studies in the English language* (Boston and New York, 1925), p. 184, takes cognizance both of words meaningless by themselves but combining into phrases familiar to everybody (*spick and span*, *tit for tat*, *jot or tittle*) and of archaic and poetic words normally avoided except when paired off (*use and wont*, *kith and kin*); not only is he at a loss for a suitable common denominator, but he blurs the picture by mixing the second group with differently patterned "idioms". More articulate paroemiologists and lexicographers operate with some such tab as "parallelism" of words and word groups (F. Seiler, *Deutsche Sprichwörterkunde* [Munich, 1922], pp. 209-211, presenting an elaborate morphological picture of phrase-initial and phrase-final repetition, simple and dual contrast, and phrase-initial repetition reinforced by phrase-final contrast) or "binary phrases"; J. Casares, *Introducción a la lexicografía moderna* (Madrid, 1950),

In dealing with binomials it is helpful to agree on a set of abbreviatory symbols. Let A stand for the first and B for the second member (with C, D, etc. reserved for any additional members <sup>1</sup> in such multinomials as may come up for parenthetical mention) and *l* for the link which, we recall, is not under all circumstances equally essential and which, as will be demonstrated, need not occupy in the flow of speech the precise mid-point between A and B; <sup>2</sup>) also, let F represent the entire formula.

The present paper has been conceived as strictly exploratory. Its purpose is to examine, with the aid of a severely limited material, the wisdom of saddling binomials, once defined, with the performance of important operations in linguistic analysis. No statement here must be construed as excluding or limiting further possibilities, apt to take shape in unforeseen contexts. The primary aim throughout has been to build, with a modicum of data, a strong case for more generous use of a category not yet fully established rather than describe exhaustively its range of applications <sup>3</sup>).

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§ 37, even expressly mentions "combinaciones binarias de carácter estable", but applies this ticket mainly to quasi-compounds such as *arco iris* and *piedra imán*. "Paired words" as a term of English philology evokes "the marriage of classical and native elements" for the sake of rhythmical and rhetorical effects, a stylistic device which W. Nash recently illustrated with *Othello* (*E. St.*, XXXIX [1958], 62-67). In his scattered notes, yet to be discussed, W. Th. Elwert favors the categories "Synonymendoppelung", "Synonymenbinom", "Koppelung", reconcilable with V. Bertolucci Pizzorusso's "iterazione sinonimica" traced to medieval Latin prose (*Studi mediolatini e volgari*, V [1957], 7-29): this implies again a partial view of a problem best examined when envisaged in its totality, a view certainly not incorrect, but neither very rewarding. It is hoped that the term binomial, used here in a distinctly narrower sense than by B. L. Whorf (who applied it to sequences like *pane of glass, cup of coffee*), has acquired through this deliberate semantic shrinkage a sharpness of contour that will enable the explorer to extract from it, to use a phrase cherished by Sapir, a heuristic service.

<sup>2</sup>) In a trinomial one visualizes either a single link between B and C, as in G. *Weib, Wein und Gesang, (für) Gott, König und Vaterland* (not quite so readily one inserted solely between A and B, at least not in Standard Average European) or a pair of links (*l*<sub>1</sub>, *l*<sub>2</sub>), normally identical, each placed between two contiguous members, or else the absence of any link (G. *Kinder, Kirche, Küche*). The various potentialities of complex linkage increase in direct ratio to the growing number of members.

<sup>3</sup>) I am indebted to several fellow-scholars for their provocative comments

## II. BINOMIALS AND "IDIOMS"

In dealing with binomials, in general, and with the minority group resisting inversion, in particular, one does well to steer clear of any reference to the ill-defined category of "idioms" or phraseological formulas. These have been variously spoken of as sequences yielding imperfectly to routine grammatical analysis, as passages strikingly rebellious to literal translation (this phrasing manifests simultaneous concern with more than one language), as semi-autonomous pieces of congealed syntax (a view implying the supremacy of the historical perspective), as word-groups whose aggregate meaning cannot be fully predicted even from thorough knowledge of each ingredient (a semantic approach), and, in stylistic or esthetic terms, as clichés, i.e., as combinations once suffused with fresh metaphoric vigor, but gradually worn thin by dint of use. Strictly speaking, none of these diverse or overlapping characterizations fits all irreversible binomials, as defined here at the outset in austere formal terms. Thus, on the semantic level *F* may quite adequately represent the exact sum of its constituents, as in *husband and wife*, *knife and fork*, *hammer and tongs*. Syntactically, a binomial, in contrast to a typical "idiom", need not be contained within a clearly demarcated phrase: in this respect *back and forth*, R. *verx i vriz* 'up and down' clash with *hard-and-fast* (rule), G. *an und für* (sich). Stylistically, the record of few binomials duplicates the meteoric rise and precipitate downfall of once successful metaphors.

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made after a partial reading of this paper, at the meeting of the Linguistic Society of America in New York on last December 30; moreover to Professor Archer Taylor, for spontaneously channelling to me a vast amount of pertinent English material, gathered at Bloomington, Ind. in July 1958 from informants and correspondents, especially Mr. Richard L. Castner of Portland, Maine, or culled from extensive readings, in particular G. L. Apperson, *English proverbs and proverbial phrases* (London, etc., 1929) and *The Oxford dictionary of English proverbs*, 2d ed. (Oxford, 1948), also from the file of *Notes and Queries*; to Professor Percival B. Fay, for miscellaneous bits of precious advice; to Professor D. W. Maurer, for information on the aberrant use of binomials in thieves' argots; to my wife, María Rosa Lida de Malkiel, for a profusion of Spanish and a sampling of Greek illustrations; to Miss Barbara M. Yates and Miss Elizabeth H. Wierzbicka, for helpful documentation from (Western) American English and Polish usage, respectively.

### III. DELIMITATION OF "IRREVERSIBLE" AND "FORMULAIC"

"Formulaic" is not necessarily connotative of "irreversible", nor is the opposite always true. The two qualifiers must first be examined separately, each on its own merit.

Our possibly least vulnerable conjecture on progressive irreversibility, at least with respect to typical situations in Standard Average European, may run thus: Among the countless free binomials floating in the air – (*she was*) *happy and gay*; (*the*) *cold and obvious* (*fact is that . . .*) – not a few display a mild preference for a certain succession – and a concurrent avoidance of the inverse sequence – conceivably by margins as narrow and normally imperceptible as 50 to 55 percent. Among such loosely attached binomials a fraction of preferred sequences may, with the passage of time, become increasingly current, at the expense of their opposites (as should be statistically demonstrable under ideally favorable conditions), until one particular arrangement of the two words once freely matched stiffens, tending to become obligatory. One must reckon, then, with a continuum of subtly graded possibilities of matching. On this scale definitive coalescence (entailing irreversibility) represents one extreme; unimpaired freedom of variation, the other. At the concluding stage of lexicalization there remains only an exiguous residue of unmistakably "frozen" sequences that are nevertheless reversible, e.g. *on and off* beside *off and on*, *then and there* alongside *there and then* <sup>4)</sup>. Even so, on close inspection such dwindling phraseological doublets almost predictably reveal hidden differences of frequency, social acceptability, or semantic nuance. Thus, *G. Freud' und Leid*, in harmony with a powerful bias

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<sup>4)</sup> At this juncture the unavoidable question arises: How does one go about determining the formulaic "flavor" of a lexical group, if the sequential evidence for once is inconclusive, *A + B* (say) being approximately as common as *B + A*? I should think that in such an impasse (comparatively rare in the languages examined), the semantic argument, as an adjunct to the statistical criterion, would be apposite, whichever operational technique one cares to adopt. Those favoring substitution, for instance, may contend that – aside from the dimension of formality – *on and off* is in the closest vicinity of *intermittently*, while *on the spot* borders on *there and then*: this argument, if accepted on principle, indirectly presupposes considerably blurred contours of *on*, *off*, *then*, and *there*.

yet to be presented, seems considerably more widespread than *Leid und Freud*<sup>5)</sup>.

However, even very marked prevalence of, say,  $A + B$  over  $B + A$ , in purely relational terms, does not of itself suffice to insure the intrinsically formulaic character of  $F$ , unless its claim to this privileged status is independently vindicated by absolute frequency of incidence. For two discrete reasons *cat and mouse* amounts to a virtually unalterable binomial formula: first, because *mouse and cat*, outside a distinctly atypical context, would sound offensively "unidiomatic" – for reasons yet to be explicated – and, second and no less important, because *cat and mouse*, as a result of their peculiar real-life companionship and the speakers' conditioned reaction to it, are not infrequently paired off, as are *boy and girl*, *brother and sister*, *sun and moon*, etc. *Girl-and-dog (murder case)* also yields an exciting headline or a suitable title and, under ordinary circumstances, sounds or reads distinctly smoother than *dog and girl*, entitling one to speak of latent irreversibility. What prevents it from becoming a ready-made formula is this, that our society fails to pair off habitually *girls* and *dogs*, making the absolute incidence of this binomial so low as to bar it from the status of a "formula". Any newspaper page supplies a list of such binomials, engaging to ear and eye, but failing of the promise of ultimate crystallization:

*black and sooty, brash and loquacious, bright and rosy, choice and chance, cold and aloof, cuts and bruises, force and violence, gay and laughing, glory and grandeur, grim and weary, (a) long and beautiful (friendship), moody and despondent, (an) open and inviting (door), (a) strong and bitter (political factor).*

Between the two extremes of this new scale: on the one hand, the

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<sup>5)</sup> It is theoretically conceivable that in some language an obligatory sequence may emerge as a pervasive grammatical pattern assigning to the longer member a place before or behind its shorter partner or converting the difference in stress into the controlling factor, with the result that the binomial becomes as rigid as the sequence *mon vieux* ... or *ce grand* ... in French. In such a language irreversibility would not depend on the occasional compression of a frequent, but fluid group into a hardened lexical formula. There is some point, then, in considering "irreversible" and formulaic as two distinct conditions on the theoretical plane, despite their frequent interlocking and even merger in practice.

studiedly bizarre, preferably unique word pairs so matched as to satisfy even a modernistic poet in his search for the unprecedented and, on the other, the familiar, soothingly trite combinations, one discovers again a rich gamut of gradual transitions. The point at which one begins to speak of "frequent" combinations is, of course, selected with complete arbitrariness. Significantly, even in non-formulaic binomials, to the extent to which they are tendentially irreversible, one dimly recognizes certain schemes in the recurrent preferences of ordering, e.g. in English, the excess, in sheer length, of B over A (contrast, measured by any yardstick, *grandeur* with *glory*, *despondent* with *moody*, etc.; and, in terms of syllabic wealth, *rosy* with *bright*, *sooty* with *black*, *weary* with *grim*, *bitter* with *strong*). These hazy proclivities suggest patterns which one expects to find more neatly delineated in corresponding full-grown formulas. Such patterns, in turn, need not (and in Romance and Germanic, as a rule, do not) coincide with those controlling similar word-sequences deprived of the characteristic link (*thin brown hands*, *hoarse young voice*, *great big burly kids*)<sup>6</sup>.

This impressionistic pilot study dispenses with any binding statistical computation of frequency, freely mingling and lumping formulas and near-formulas. A more rigorous monographic inquiry moored to verifiable statistical data would have to start from the premise that all in all two distinct continua are involved: the (relative) irreversibility of binomials is determined on one scale and their currency on another, so that an irreversible binomial, to qualify for the rank of a "formula", must at once fulfill two conditions, of which one – the second – has of necessity been arbitrarily laid down.

#### IV. REVERSIBLE BINOMIALS

The countless reversible binomials offer problems of their own which, in most instances, are best attacked from a position other than that of linguistics. Thus, assuming there exist, in real life or in fiction, two

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<sup>6</sup> Irrespective of the intonational contrast (marked by a comma) between (a) *big black wolf*, *good old Joe* and (b) *long*, *low start*. On these sequences there exists an impressive corpus of researches; cf. A. A. Hill, *Introduction to linguistic structure; from sound to sentence in English* (New York [1958]), pp. 175–190, with a reference to an unpublished dissertation by C. W. Barrett, and N. Garver, "The grammar of prenominal modifiers in English" (paper orally presented at the 1958 meeting of the LSA).

playmates, Ván'a and Mít'a, the reasons for any mention of them, in conversation, report, oral story, or fine literature as R. *Ván'a i Mít'a* rather than *Mít'a i Ván'a* may be effectively explored in sociological, psychological, or esthetic terms (margin of age, order of appearance, closeness to narrator, importance of rôle, etc.). If there emerges a schema of definite preference, linguistic conditions are likely to have acted, at best, as a lubricant. In contrast, irreversible binomials, especially those used with high frequency ("formulas"), are primarily analyzable from the linguistic platform, though real-life conditions and the distorting social prism through which individuals view these conditions cannot be entirely excluded from consideration.

#### V. DEGREE OF REVERSIBILITY

Rigidity of word order must be understood as allowing of several degrees. A foreign speaker of French saying \**mer la* for *la mer* is unlikely to convey any assimilable message. If, through some lapse of memory or through inexperience, he inverts the prescribed sequence of members (while respecting their immediate environments) in *au fur et à mesure (que)* 'in proportion (as)', he stands a fair chance of being understood and even corrected by a few patient listeners<sup>7</sup>). Similarly, side by side with completely unelastic G. *ab und zu*, F. *d'ores et déjà* 'from now onwards', one stumbles upon binomials whose inadvertent dislocation would scarcely make them unintelligible to the sensitive interlocutor (e.g. L. *hīc et nunc*, *by leaps and bounds*) and comes across others that in fact seem marginally reversible even in the flawless speech of natives. This is true not only of groups firmly soldered ("lexicalized") such as the twin formulas *on and off* alongside *off and on*, but also of instances in which a mild disruption of the customary order may serve a special end, by producing a spontaneously comic effect in unrehearsed speech or a calculated departure from the boresome norm in pretentious literary style. In a language, for instance, enforcing in ordinary context the schema 'by day and by night', a dramatic reversal of A and B may infuse into F a strongly suggestive

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<sup>7</sup>) *Au fur et à mesure* need not invariably precede *que* and function as a conjunction; for a semicolloquial example of its absolute (adverbial) use see *BSLP*, LIII: 2 (1958), 26.

(one suspects, exhilarating) quality <sup>8)</sup>. *Male and female* is entirely too trivial to arouse much attention; in *female and male* the unexpected inversion generates just enough explosive power to make the reader or listener pause for a precious moment. Then again dialectal or idiolectal peculiarities may be at issue, gently pitting speakers addicted to the sequence *ball and bat* against others favoring *bat and ball*. A similar state of practically free variation obtains between *socks and shoes* and *shoes and socks* (while *shoes and stockings*, under the sway of a rhythmic pattern, is unalterable), also between *groove and tongue* and *tongue and groove*. American reporters covering the latest uprising in Cuba were linguistically split, insofar as some observed, at a very fluid stage of developments, *black-and-red*, and others, *red-and-black* (*bands*). A cleavage in real-life conditions may also spark differentiation, as when *gas and oil*, normally requested by motorists at service stations, is in semantic contradistinction to *oil and gas*, as used in the professional jargon of the oil industry <sup>9)</sup>.

## VI. MULTINOMIALS

In many languages one encounters also traces of multinomials (particularly trinomials) congealed into obligatory sequences, e.g. *Tom, Dick, and Harry*, Sp. *fulano, mengano y zutano* (or *perengano*) or, in the language of mathematics, *X, Y, and Z*. An overtone of mathematical progression is further discernible in the musicologist's *pairs, triads*, (or *duets, trios*) and *quartets*. Asymmetric patterns of elaborately courteous forms of address underlie Br.-E. *Ladies, Lords, and Gentlemen* and F. *Mesdames, Mesdemoiselles et Messieurs*, beside stylized, but slightly more "natural", hence less rigidly formal, binomials: *Ladies and Gentlemen, Mesdames et Messieurs*, mandatory in most European societies (Sp. *Señoras y Señores*, G. *meine Damen und Herren*, alongside the Nazi vulgarians' *deutsche Männer und Frauen*). The letters of the alphabet, whether Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, represent the classic case of a latent multinomial; ordinarily the recital of

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<sup>8)</sup> One instance of jocose inversion may be the title of Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice or Men*, pointless unless it calls up memories of the mocking alternative (*are you, is he*) *a man or a mouse*? (The title has also been inspired by a line from Robert Burns's poem "To a Mouse".)

<sup>9)</sup> A point of semantics is here actually at issue: when preceding *oil*, *gas* refers to the fuel ('gasoline'); when following *oil*, it stands for 'natural gas'.

the first two (R. < Ch.-Sl. *ázbuka*, G. < Gr. *Alphabet*) or three (coll. E. *ABC*) suffices to evoke the name of the whole <sup>10</sup>). The linkage of trinomials tends to assume a high degree of intricacy: in *Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish*, one may interchange, but hardly ever disrupts, the order of A and B, while C, for obvious non-linguistic reasons, clamors for a fixed place apart; conversely, the sequence of *Christians, Jews, and Muslims* may be rearranged with greater freedom, in accord with the chosen perspective. In references to all three media of entertainment *movie(s)* either precedes or follows *radio* and *television*, but is not normally wedged in between them, again on account of the longer semantic distance of A from either B or C than of B from C. While the members of the Trinity appear in an immutable order, facetious or malicious variations upon it exhibit a higher degree of looseness: the historian reproaching Spanish colonizers with the triple pursuit of *Glory, Gold, and Gospel* (note capitalization) might have arrayed in different fashion the incisive terms of his indictment. Rhythmic and semantic progression harmonize in G. (*für*) *Gott, König und Vaterland*.

Changing conditions of life, normally in the direction of increasing complexity, may transform a binomial into a trinomial, as when the military's long-standing dualistic formula *on land and on sea* has yielded ground, within the lifespan of one generation, to less homogeneously structured *on land, on sea, and in the air*: here linguistic streamlining seems to lag behind technological progress. Such expansions are frequently tampered with for the sake of a jocular effect, as when irreverent *soul, spirit, and spark plugs* flanks time-hallowed *soul and spirit*. The effect is heightened if the additional ingredient is nonchalantly injected before, rather than after, the consolidated binomial, as in *to (hiss,) kiss, and make up*, recently launched by a Californian humorist.

## VII. ORCHESTRATION BY RHYME AND ALLITERATION

A binomial may without difficulty assert itself under its own power. Yet in numerous languages F acquires added strength and appeal if the matching is supported by an extra measure of suggestive outward

<sup>10</sup>) Only binomials are admissible in simultaneous references to the first and last letter, to suggest totality (*alpha and omega, from A to izzard*, etc.). On some linguistic implications of the alphabet see "Diachronic hypercharacterization in Romance", *ArL*, IX (1957), 109, n. 1.

resemblance between A and B, a token of partial identity which produces a powerful welding effect on the whole. One such companion feature straddling many language frontiers is rhyme, e.g.

*heckle and jeckle, by hook or (by) crook, (a) rough-and-tough (speech), to toil and moil, town and gown*, G. (*mit*) *Ach und Krach*, (*mit*) *Rat und Tat*, F. (*n'avoir*) *ni feu ni lieu* 'to have neither hearth nor home', Sp. *corriente y moliente* 'regular, all right' (lit. 'running and grinding'), *a roso y vell-oso* (beside *-udo*) 'completely, without exception', *de tomo y lomo* 'bulky and heavy, of consequence' (lit. 'of some volume and [square-shaped] animal's back'), *sin ton ni son* 'without rhyme or reason' (lit. '... tone nor sound'), R. *ni dat' ni vz'at'* 'just so, exactly' (lit. 'neither give nor take away'), *šutki i pribautki* 'jokes and playful sayings', *štvorot na vývorot* [šý-] 'topsy-turvy' (lit. 'collar inside out'), Pol. *tędy i owędy* 'this way and that'<sup>11</sup>).

Examples of rich rhyme include *plundering and blundering*, G. (*auf*) *Schritt und Tritt*, Sp. (*tomar*) *las duras y las maduras* '(to face) both benefits and drawbacks' (lit. 'to take the hard ones and the ripe ones' [fem.]), and R. *žit'jó-byt'jó* [žy-] 'day-to-day life' (lit. 'living-existing'). One encounters further stray instances of assonance (*hit or miss, rise and shine*, Sp. *de zoca en colodra* or *de zocos en colodros* 'from bad to worse', R. *plot' i krov'* 'flesh and blood') and of presumably significant coincidence between concluding segments smaller than required for a rhyme, e.g. single consonants and consonant clusters: *East and West* (as against G. *West und Ost*), *North and South, from first to last* (*first and last*), *good or bad*. Imperfect rhymes involving one accented and one unaccented vowel underlie *male and female* (the latter, deflected from OF *femele* through lexical polarization) and, initially at least, *man and woman*; cf. Pol. *ni w pięć ni w dziewięć* 'without rhyme or reason' (lit. 'neither in five nor in nine', a linguistically potent, if arithmetically quaint, assortment).

<sup>11</sup>) Much pertinent information was amassed and scrupulously winnowed by J. Morawski, "Les formules rimées de la langue espagnole", *RFE*, XIV, (1927), 113-133. It is not devoid of interest that Sp. *sin ... ni* 'without ... or' should represent an approximation to rhyme and Ptg. *sem ... nem* a perfect rhyme (reminiscent of *sim ... não* 'yes ... no'). To be sure, scholars may in both instances attempt to account separately for the baffling phonological convergence of L. *sine* and *nec*. The degree of abnormality will dwindle once we analyze the characteristic mutual rapprochement of each pair as a partial result of semantic solidarity plus syntactic vicinity.

Reiteration of the initial vowel, except possibly in extra-short *on* and *off*, turns out to be a weak magnet. One may even entertain doubts as to whether in Sp. *afuera y adentro, allí y allá* (beside Ptg. *cá e lá*, sporting the rival adjunct of a rhyme) it is not advisable to operate with the repetition of a (fading) morpheme. Conversely, echoing of initial consonants (alliteration) is widespread and effective. In the Germanic languages it serves as, far and away, the dominant soldering device:

(a) *bed and board, (a type) big and black, birds and bees, bit and blow, bred and born, bruised and battered, (the ailment's) cause and cure, chalk and cheese, (without) chick or child, (to receive) cove ('chamber, closet') and key, cup and can, deaf and dumb, (to make) ducks and drakes, dust and dirt, fair or foul, fire and flood, fish or fowl, to forgive or forget, friend or foe, hale and hearty, to harp and harrow, to have and to hold, health and happiness, to help and/or hurt, to hem and haw, hide (n)or hair, horse and hounds, hot and heavy, house and home, Jack and Jill, judge and jury, kith and kin, life and limb, (by) line and level, to live and learn, loud and long, to make or mar, man and maid, a man or a mouse, to meddle or make, (with) might and main, now or never, part and parcel, penny-wise and pound-foolish, from pillar to post, to pitch and pay, poor and pert (-and proud, -but pious), popcorn and peanuts, pots and pans, (to go to) rack and ruin, to rant and rave, rhyme or reason, right(ly) or wrong(ly), rock and roll, rough and ready, safe and sane (- and sound), neither scrip ('satchel') nor screed ('shred'), (with) shot and shell, at sixes and sevens, start-and-stop (sign), from stem to stern, (to fight with) sticks and stones, stress and strain, sweet and sour [in notable preference to bitter, more relevant, but less effective], tattered and torn, from top to toe, to toss and turn, to turn and twist, warm and winning, wild and woolly, wind and weather, to woo and win, zip and zest;*

(b) G. (in) *Bausch und Bogen, (durch) dick und dünn, gang und gäbe, im grossen und ganzen, hin und her, (mit) Kind und Kegel, (in die) Kreuz' und Quere, kurz und kernig, Land und Leute, (nach) Lust und Laune, (mit) Mann und Maus, mehr oder minder, (bei) Nacht und Nebel, (von) Ruf und Rang, Wind und Wetter, (ohne sein) Wissen und Wollen.*

Rich alliteration underlies *tried and true* and G. (das) *Drum und Dran, klipp und klar*.

Other language families have recourse to reinforcement through alliteration more sparingly: F. *bel et bien, ni peu ni prou, sain et sauf, tôt ou tard*, Sp. (echar a) *cara y cruz* 'to flip up a coin' (lit. 'heads or tails'), *en cruz y en cuadro*, lit. 'crosswise and square', *más o menos* 'approximately' (lit. 'more or less'), (no temer) *rey ni roque* 'to be afraid of nobody' (lit. 'neither king nor rook'), *de rompe y rasga* (= coll. Am.-

Sp. *a rompe y raja*) 'determined', lit. [to the point of] 'breaking and ripping', R. *styd i sram* 'shame' [on you], with a play on near-synonyms, *tut i tam* (= Pol. *tu i tam*) 'here and there'.

Occasionally the segment shared includes, aside from the initial consonant or consonant cluster, also the following vowel: *cash and carry*, (*through*) *thick and thin*, Sp. *sano y salvo*, G. *ganz und gar*, but the languages examined hardly capitalize on this further possibility. One can, of course, speak only of gross identity between the short *a* of *ganz* and the long one of *gar*.

The third force available for amalgamating A and B is the repetition of a morpheme, whether grammatical (affix) or lexical (root morpheme). Its agency can be best observed in isolation with an unstressed final morpheme: *obverse and reverse* (*sides*), *sooner or later* = R. *ráno ili póz(d)no*, *upwards and downwards*, and, on the phrasal level, *on again, off again*.

These three forces form an intricate network of alliances. Alliteration and echoing of the word-final segment may work hand in hand, as in *tit for tat*, *to meddle and muddle*, and in R. (*razbit'*) *v pux i (v) prax* '(to beat) to shreds' (lit. 'to fluff and to dust'). This concomitancy is doubly efficacious if that segment is coterminous with a morpheme: *bigger and better*, (*to go*) *farther and faster*, G. (*auf*) *Biegen und Brechen*. The repetition of a final morpheme easily coincides with rhyme: *hither and thither*, *highways and byways*, F. *jambe de ça, jambe de là* 'straddling'; note that the morpheme reiterated need not contain the rhyming vowel. The echoing of such word- and phrase-initial morphemes as begin with a consonant is implicitly alliterative (*day in and day out*, *betwixt and between*, F. *mi-oral, mi-écrit, comme ci, comme ça*).

In non-poetic discourse, rhyme and alliteration (to which, for completeness' sake, one may add rarely isolable morphological parallelism) function as occasional, less than essential ingredients endowing with an extra touch of cohesiveness certain particularly suggestive word sequences. They act as spices, giving, if adroitly sprinkled or shaken, an appetizing quality to the staple food of communication. Binomials represent a feature similar in its effects, but one more thoroughly grammaticized in its structure. Small wonder that, given their optional and peripheral status within the total economy, rhyme and alliteration, on the phonological level, and parallelism, on the morpho-

logical level, all three tend to support one another and separately or jointly serve to underpin binomials.

It would be tempting, at first glance, to discuss under this rubric of orchestration also such highly colloquial formations based on an interplay of initial consonants and stressed vowels as (a) *boogie-woogie* (*piano*), *namby-pamby* (*parents*), *willy-nilly*, *quakey-shakey* (*marriage*), *razzle-dazzle* (*news*), *roly-poly* (*character*) and (b) *shilly-shally*, *tip-top* (*form*), *a tisket a tasket* (a bouncy nursery rhyme), with interesting counterparts in other languages (F. *bric-à-brac* 'curios', a word exported on almost as wide a scale as the objects so collectively labeled, beside *de bric et de broc*, both preceded by *en bloc et en blic* [15th–16th centuries], *à bric et à brac* 'à tort et à travers' [1632]). As will be made plain, the resemblance is specious: this new group of words is characterized by fanciful elaboration on a single theme, not by a deft amalgam of two preëxistent formations.

### VIII. MUTUAL RELATION OF THE TWO MEMBERS

One may set off several types of meaningful relationship between A and B (disregarding, at least provisionally, any influence that the link, in its own right, may exert as a part of the ensemble). Some of these relationships are purely formal, as when A and B are the same word, or B represents a morphological variation upon A, arrived at through inflection, derivation, or composition. Other, more numerous relationships are of a semantic order: thus, A and B may be near-synonyms or mutually complementary, or else B may be the opposite, a part, or a consequence of A.

#### (A) *Patterns of formal relation*

(1) A and B may be the same word. There is something primitive, archaic, cyclopic about this arrangement; cf. the chain in Cl.-Hebrew 'ayin le 'ayin, šen le šen, imitated in all European languages (G. *Auge um Auge*, *Zahn um Zahn*; Sp. *ojo por ojo*, *diente por diente*; R. *óko za óko*, *zub za zub*, etc.). This scheme has maintained its undiminished vitality in modern languages:

*class against class, dozens upon dozens, face to face (with), (to go) hand in hand, hand-to-hand fighting, (as) man to man, on and on, one-to-one correspondence, point-to-point equivalence, season by season, shoulder to shoulder, side by side, so-and-so, step by step, (at) such-and-such (an address), from time*

to time, wall-to-wall (carpets), years and years; F. *côte à côte, tête-à-tête*; Sp. *hombro (contr)a hombro, paso a paso, (hablar) a tú por tú* 'to speak rudely', - *de tú por tú* 'to be on familiar terms'.

Not included in this category is straight repetition to the extent to which it has come to represent an indefinitely extendible morphological device, as in *four by four (inches), more and more* (cf. *higher and higher*, etc.), and It. *pian, piano*, a kind of subdued superlative absolute<sup>12</sup>).

(2) Not infrequently B embodies some variation upon A. In richly inflected languages a declensional or conjugational paradigm may have been at work: L. *diem ex diē* 'day after day', *pār prō parī* 'tit for tat', R. *málo po málu* 'little by little', *šag za šágom* 'step by step'. Comparable effects are produced by the intervention of an affix (primitive vs. derivative, or two derivatives in opposition) or by a play on composition: *bag and baggage, bear and forbear*, G. (*nach bestem*) *Wissen und Gewissen* 'to the best of (one's) knowledge'.

### (B) Patterns of semantic relation

(1) A and B are near-synonyms and the use of F adds color and emphasis to the bare statement:

*beck and call, checks and balances, death and destruction, each and every, fair and square, fears and anxieties, first and foremost, graft and corruption, hard-and-fast (rules), heart and soul, (with) intent and deliberation, (defiance of) law and order, (by) leaps and bounds, nip and tuck, null and void, soft and easy, ways and means (- and traditions); G. an und für (sich), schliesslich und endlich; F. us et coutumes; R. (xodit') vokrug i okolo* 'to walk around, avoid a straight approach'.

In certain styles, both conversational and literary, the pairing off

<sup>12</sup> On It. *pian piano, sola soletta*, and vars. see K. Jaberg, "Elation und Komparation", *Festschrift Édouard Tièche* (Berne, 1947), pp. 41-60. The situation in Spanish is complicated: *de cuando en cuando* and *de tanto en tanto* 'from time to time', *de trecho en trecho* 'at intervals', also *de casa en casa, de flor en flor, de rama en rama* are lexicalized units, but the pattern lends itself to unlimited extension in modern literary style (*de chimenea en chimenea, de tejado en tejado*, etc.). It is clearly marked by the special tag *de ... en* (for  $A = B$ ), contrasting with standard *de ... a* (for  $A \neq B$ , e.g. *de Viena a Madrid*; exception: *de vez en cuando*, patently a blend of *de cuando en cuando* with *una* or *alguna vez*, esp. *una y otra vez, una que otra vez*).

or massive accumulation of synonyms may become a pervasive feature: cf. OProv. *planh e sospir* 'deep sigh', lit. 'complaint and sigh', and its Old French counterparts<sup>13</sup>). Where Shakespeare has recourse to this artifice "the familiar Saxon word acts as a kind of gloss to the rarer classical word"; also "the second word may extend or modify the meaning of the first, or it may repeat the notion already contained in the first, and thus have a purely decorative function" (Nash).

(2) A and B are mutually complementary, forming a single team referring to a characteristic composite dish, to a pair of tools seldom used in isolation, to a notion bipartite, but lacking any definitive cleavage:

*assault and robbery* (– and battery), *bar-and-restaurant* (business), *book-and-art store*, *brush and palette*, *cheek by jowl*, *cuts and bruises*, (on one's) *elbows* (hands–) *and knees*, *fame and riches*, *fang and claw*, *food and drink*, *from floor to roof*, *full and equal*, *gold and silver*, *ham and eggs*, *hammer and sickle* (– and tongs), (to stand) *head and shoulders* (above), *hat and coat*, *Letters and Science(s)*, *lock and key*, *meat and potatoes*, (sound) *mind and body*, *Mom and Dad*, *men and materials* (– and matériel), *pistol and ammunition*, *place* (space –) *and time*, *potatoes and gravy*, *salaries and wages*, *soul and spirit*, (one's) *stick and hat*, *words and pictures*; G. *Blut und Boden*, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, *Hände und Füße*, *Hören und Sehen*, *Reih' und Glied*, *Wollen und Können*; F. *mes yeux et mes oreilles*; Sp. *pan y agua* (– y vino), (con) *pelos y señales* 'with minutest details', *punto y coma* 'semicolon', *a sangre y fuego*, (echar) *sapos y culebras* 'to utter angry abuses', (contra) *viento y marea*; Pol. *deszcz ze śniegiem* 'sleet' (lit. 'rain with snow'), *głodno i chłodno* 'hardships' (lit. 'hunger and cold'), *jeść i pić* 'eating and drinking', *ogniem i mieczem* 'with fire and sword' (cf. L. *ferrō ignīque*).

<sup>13</sup>) Taking his cue from S. Pellegrini, "Iterazioni sinonimiche nella *Canzone di Rolando*", *Studi mediolatini e volgari*, I (1953), 155–165, W. Th. Elwert presented his ideas in "La dittologia sinonimica nella poesia romanza delle origini e nella scuola poetica siciliana", *Bollettino del Centro di studi ... siciliani*, II (1954), 152–177, followed by the two consecutive postscripts "Zur Synonymendoppelung vom Typ *planh e sospir*, *chan e plor*", *ASNS*, CXIII (1956–57), 40–42, and „Zur Synonymendoppelung als Interpretationshilfe", *ibid.*, CXCV (1958), 24–26. He recognizes traces of such pairs as *plangō* and *plōrō* in early Church Latin (in the Itala more than in the Vulgate), but regards Old Provençal lyric as the principal channel through which the device of carefully matching synonyms penetrated into many western literatures and credits the primacy of *planh e plor* over *chan e plor* and *planh e sospir* to the concomitant agency of alliteration.

(3) B is the opposite of A. The contrast may be expressed either (a) syntactically or (b), on a much wider scale, lexically: <sup>14</sup>)

(a) *to be or not to be, the eat-or-be-eaten battle;*

(b) *assets and liabilities, big (great-) and small, dead or alive, fast-and-loose, freedom or death, give-or-take, (to fall) heads or tails, love and hate, laughing and sobbing, married or widowed (- or divorced), near and remote, open and shut, to sink or swim, to stand or fall, talent and technique, (one's) triumph or defeat, true or false (the truth or falsehood of . . .), up and down, war and peace, win or lose; G. Dichtung und Wahrheit, hin und her, Wollen und Können; L. ultrō citrōque and ultrā citrāque 'on this side and on that, to and fro'; F. par monts et par vaux, à pile ou face, c'est à prendre ou à laisser; Sp. ni carne ni pescado 'neither fish nor fowl' (lit. 'neither flesh nor fish'), ¿pares o nones? 'odd or even?' (lit. 'even ones or odd ones'), (como) perros y gatos 'on hostile terms' (lit. 'like dogs and cats'), por sí o por no 'in any case', <sup>15</sup>) vaivén 'swing, seesaw, coming and going'; R. dn'om i nóč'ju (= Pol. Iniem i nocq) 'by day and by night', stároje i nóvoje 'old and new (happenings)', ni voobščé, ni v částnosti 'neither in general, nor in particular'; Pol. lądy i morza 'land and sea' (pl.), mniej lub więcej 'more or less' (lit. 'less or more'), orzel i reszka 'heads and tails' (lit. 'eagle and tails'), prośbą i groźbą 'with pleas and threats' (sing.), śmiech i łzy 'laughter and tears', od stóp do głów 'from head to foot' (lit. 'from feet to heads'), tam i zpowrotem 'back and forth' (lit. 'there and back'), wojna i pokój 'war and peace'.*

(4) At rare intervals, B is a subdivision of A or viceversa; where numbers are involved, one may state the relations in fractions or multiples. In scientific discourse *genus and species* serves as an example; sequences of wider currency include, on the one hand, *dollars and cents*; on the other, *months and years, (every) nickel and dime*. The precedence granted to *dollars* over *cents* and to *months* over *years* may reflect our habit of marking prices (bills, etc.) and dates <sup>16</sup>). Folk-speech

<sup>14</sup>) If the opposition is brought out derivationally (as in: *the advantage or disadvantage of . . .*), the pattern A2 rather than B3 is involved.

<sup>15</sup>) Cf. *un sí o un no* 'yes or no', *no decir un sí ni un no* 'to be evasive or secretive', *sin faltar un sí ni un no* 'accurately, punctually, circumstantially, exhaustively', *entre ellos no hay (ellos no tienen) un sí ni un no* 'they are in complete agreement', *sí por sí, no por no* 'truthfully, candidly'. The colloquial adverbial phrase *un si es no es (turbado)* 'somewhat (confused)' patently forms part of this cluster; the disguise of *sí* 'yes' as *si* 'if' is a misspelling presumably rationalized as a consequence of the monosyllable's pretonic position.

<sup>16</sup>) In English and cognate languages the mathematically smaller element of a numerical binomial obligatorily precedes the larger: *five-and-ten-cent-store*,

tolerates illogical coördination, in either direction, of a whole and of a part entering into that whole, as in Sp. *aves y gallinas* 'poultry', lit. 'birds and hens', as against *rosas y flores*.

(5) Quite exceptionally, B functions as the consequence, inevitable or possible, of A. This is especially true of binomials involving verbs or verbals (deverbal abstracts, participles): L. *dīvide et imperā*, imitated by some modern languages ('divide and rule'); *to shoot and kill* (as against *to shoot to kill*), *spit and polish*; *the rise and fall* (– *decay, decline*); possibly also *married or widowed* (cf. B 3); and, on a high level of abstract thinking, *if and when* 'if at all, and, in the affirmative case, when . . .' (the less logical *when and if* has also left traces).

Given the fluidity of any semantic classification, one expects cases of overlapping. According to one's stand, *checks and balances*, *goods and services*, *wages and salaries* may all involve opposition or complementariness; *heart and soul* may rate as near-synonyms, mutual complements, or, unlikely as this eventuality appears at first glance, irreconcilable opposites ("poles"), cf. the semantic equivalent F. *corps et âme*.

## IX. THE LINK

The connective between the two members is typically a preposition or a conjunction: *side by side*, *black and white*, R. *s mēs̃ta v karjēr* 'abruptly, immediately' (lit. 'from [the horse's] stand or post into the race'), *styd i sram*, Gr. *Hēllēnēs kai bárbaroi*. There exists a loose connection between the sevenfold relation of A to B, the form-class favored, and the choice of the link. If A equals B, the form-classes preferred in a typical I.-E. language are substantives and adjectives and the link (prevailing by a narrower margin) is a preposition: *bit by bit*, *little by little*, *season by season*, *time after time* beside, it would seem, less common *again and again*, *by and by*, (to run) *neck and neck* (*with*). If B is the near-synonym, complement, or antonym of A, the predominant type of link is a conjunction tying together primarily substantives and adjectives, e.g. (a) *part and parcel* beside less typical *cease-and-desist* (*order*), G. *Sturm und Drang*, *Wind und Wetter*, Sp.

*thirty or forty customers*, *the third or fourth*, *twice or thrice as many*, *to double or triple*. German has stretched this principle to the extent of applying it even to compound numerals: *fünfundzwanzig*, cf. *four-and-twenty* in archaic English nursery rhymes.

*liso y llano* 'simple, easy' (lit. 'smooth and even'), *sano y salvo* 'safe and sound'; (b) *cloak and dagger, coat and vest, fire and smoke, needle and thread, pen and pencil, text and tune, tooth and nail*, Sp. *carne y huesos* 'flesh and bones', R. *grom i mólnija* 'thunder and lightning'; (c) *ebb and flow*, G. *Alt und Jung*. Prepositions are here less common: G. *schwarz auf weiss*.

Can one categorize the prepositions and conjunctions according to the services they render in cementing binomials? The situation in each language family (indeed, in every language at each stage of its growth) invites separate examination, at least provisionally. In English and its congeners the size and the meaning of *l* seem to be important factors, though atypicality lacks prohibitive force.

As regards size, the monosyllabic link numbering up to three phonemes leads by a wide margin of range and particularly of incidence: *and* (folksy 'n'), *by, on, or, to* beside rare *after* and *against* (also *but*); cf. G. *auf, und*, quite infrequently disyllabic *oder*; R. *da, i, na, po, v, za*, rarely *ili*, very rarely *skvoz'* (*smex skvoz' sl'ózy*, lit. 'laughter through tears', is not indigenous).

With respect to the meaning of conjunctions, three sets of relationship: (a) conjunction proper, (b) alternative, and (c) disjunction, are all adequately represented, roughly in this order of frequency:

(a) *rats and mice, this and that, town and gown*, G. *Hände und Füße*, Sp. *invierno y verano, pan y queso*, R. *den' i noč'* 'day and night', Hebr. *ba-y-ôm ušal-aylā* 'by day and by night', *le 'ôlām wā'æd* 'for all eternity' (lit. 'for future and duration');

(b) *all or nothing, heads or tails, sooner or later*, <sup>17)</sup> Fr. *près ou loin, tôt ou tard*, Sp. *más o menos, tarde o temprano, o todo o nada*;

(c) *neither chick nor child, neither kith nor kin, neither fish nor fowl*, F. (*ne savoir*) *ni A ni B*, Sp. *ni rey ni roque*, and, in their closest vicinity, Sp. *sin ton ni son* beside *without rhyme or reason*, G. (*ohne sein*) *Wissen und Wollen*.

<sup>17)</sup> In modern English *and* and *or* act like close rivals. In some instances, the use of one or the other opportunely leads to semantic differentiation, cf. *give and take*, symbolic of a bidirectional process (with a moral overtone of parity or equity) as against *give or take (two hours)* suggestive of an equal margin of error on either side of a point chosen along a scale. Colloquially *and*, probably as a result of its distinctly greater currency, tends to trespass on the domain of *or*: one hears and even reads (*a question of*) *life and death*; cf. *life-and-death (struggle)* = Sp. (*lucha a*) *vida o muerte*. Logicians or jurists rather than untutored speakers have recently launched the artificial compromise formula *and/or*.

The semantic classification of prepositions is more intricate. Certain spatial relations which tend to appear in symmetric distribution are quite sparingly represented: 'above', 'beneath', 'before' and 'behind', 'this side of' and 'beyond'. (*To fall*) *head over heels* is a fairly isolated sequence. Conversely, one may copiously exemplify relations indicative of iteration, reciprocity, opposition, or compensation where  $A = B$  (*time after time, friend against friend, bit by bit, side by side, dollar for dollar, one to one*; Sp. *año tras año*). Equally abundant are relations suggestive of direction or delimitation, often expressed – by virtue of a familiar metaphor – through spatial imagery even where temporal distances are involved; A and B are then preponderantly non-identical and even lend themselves to polarization: *from cellar to garret, from dawn to dusk, from first to last, (a) floor-to-ceiling (window), from head to toe*; It. *d'alto in basso*, Sp. *de pies a cabeza* (= F. *de pied en cap*, R. *s nog do golový*, Pol. *od stóp do głowy*). Where the relation  $A = B$  is squeezed into the same frame, the resultant type suggests intermittency, except that Spanish then substitutes *de ... en* for *de ... a* and Italian, similarly, *di ... in* for *da ... a*: *from time to time*, R. *ot vrémeni do vrémeni* alongside erratic Sp. *de cuando en cuando, de tarde en tarde* (with intensification: *de mal en peor*), and It. *di tempo in tempo* <sup>18</sup>).

Russian tolerates zero links on a generous scale, particularly in folk speech: *žit'jó-byt'jó* 'day-to-day life', *kotóryj den'*, *kotóryj god* 'year in, year out' (lit. 'which day, which year?'), *učít' umú rázumu* 'to teach one worldly wisdom' (lit. intelligence / reason); also in a negative vein: *ne mnógo ne málo (p'jat' let)* 'approximately five years' (lit. 'not much, not little'), and with characteristic repetition of a preposition which, on its second appearance, functions vicariously as a link: *po dobrú po zdoróvu* 'safely, without harm' (lit. 'in a friendly fashion / in a sound way'), *do porý do vrémeni* 'provisionally' (lit. 'until the time / until the term', with synonymic variation) <sup>19</sup>. Side by

<sup>18</sup>) Similarly German imposes the use of *von ... zu* (*von Stunde zu Stunde, von Zeit zu Zeit*) instead of *von ... nach* to signal intermittency rather than distance. This pattern of matching *von* and *zu* must be distinguished from their junction in certain titles of nobility: (*Herr*) *von und zu (Stein)*. F. *de jour en jour* has acquired a progressive meaning: 'as the days pass'. Cf. fn. 12 above.

<sup>19</sup>) Similarly in Polish: *na łeb na szyję* 'headlong' (lit. 'on the head, on the neck') beside such more numerous full-bodied binomials as *o chlebie i wodzie* 'on

side with this schema one finds in Russian also less racy types reminiscent of Romance and Germanic: (*izjézdít'*) *iz koncá v konéc* 'to travel all over' (lit. 'from end to end'), *ru'ot i méčet* 'is furious' (lit. 'tears and flings'), (*služit'*) *véroj i právdój* 'to serve loyally' (lit. 'with faith and truth' [or 'justice']), *te ili inýje* (indef.) 'some' (lit. 'those or others'). Other language families tolerate this construction on a more modest scale: *day in, day out*, G. (playful) *soso lala* 'fairly, reasonably well' (the latter a reduplicative nonsense word; for tone and meaning cf. F. *comme ci, comme ça*), F. (sens) *dessus dessous, au jour le jour*, Sp. *un si es no es*, Gr. *ándres gynaîkes*. The pattern abuts on compounds of the type It. *chiaroscuro* <sup>20</sup>). Derivational and syntactic conditions may favor the zero link, compressing the binomial, as it were, to its barest minimum: *East and West, but East-West territory*; G. *West und Ost*, but *Westöstlicher (Divan)*; *wear and tear*, but *hit-run (car)*, *lend-lease (bill)*; R. *P'otr i Pavel*, but *Petropávlovskij*; Am.-E. *down 'n' outer* 'underdog' is emphatically colloquial in its deviation from this trend.

Where an overt link exists, it is commonly placed between A and B: L. *sûrsum ac deorsum* 'up and down'. However, it may also be retroactively attached at the tail end, as in L. *terrâ marîque, longē lâtêque* 'far and wide', or may consist of two non-contiguous elements, of which one (=  $l_1$ ) precedes the core of F, while the other finds a niche between A and B, expanding the skeleton of the binomial to  $l_1 + A + l_2 + B$ . Homeric *patêr andrôn te deôn te* illustrates yet another possibility. Among the ideally suitable composite links (*either...or*, G. *entweder...oder, sowohl...als auch*, L. *aut...aut*, etc.) some turn out too cumbersome to qualify for this particular service; easily the most satisfactory results are achieved with the aid of negative correlatives: *neither...nor*; G. *weder...noch*, L. *nec...nec*, It. *nè...nè*, F. *ni...ni*: (*ne savoir*) *ni A ni B* 'not to know A from B', Sp. *id.*: *ni fu ni fa* 'neither one thing nor the other', (*no tener*) *ni pie ni cabeza* 'to be absurd', OF. *ne...ne*: *ne cuers ne cors* 'neither heart nor body', R. *ni...ni*: *ni dat' ni vz'at'*

bread and water', *chuchać i dmuchać* 'to take excessive care [in dealing with living beings]' (lit. 'to blow [against the cold] and puff [against the heat]'), *do bitki i do wypitki* '(he) is a jolly good fellow' (lit. 'for fighting and for drinking'), *do tańca i do rózańca* '(she) is good for everything' (lit. 'for dancing and for reciting the rosary').

<sup>20</sup>) Note the loan translations of this once highly fashionable term of painting: pre-Cl. Sp. *claro escuro* as early as in Juan de Mena, mod. *claroscuro*, F. *clair obscur*, G. *Hell-* beside *Halb-dunkel*, etc.

(= *toč' v toč'*), *ni k selú ni k górodu* 'irrelevant' (lit. '[is a road leading] neither to village nor to town').

The pattern of composite link reconciling prepositional and conjunctive ingredients, in this order of distribution, is exemplified by *without...and* (G. *ohne* or *sonder...und*, Sp. *sin...ni*) and *between...and* (and its foreign counterparts). That the latter group stands halfway between conjunctions and full-fledged prepositions follows from Sp. *entre yo y tú* 'between me and you', 'both I and you', with the nom. *yo*, *tú* substituted for the obj. *mí*, *ti* which any authentic preposition would have governed <sup>21</sup>).

Another sequence showing *l* yanked out of its expected position is by *fair means and foul*, with *fair* and *foul* torn asunder rather than jointly preceding or following *means*. It is arguable that historically the "illogical" ordering, apparently confined to English, arose through contamination of these latter possibilities of adjectival position (the former primarily in the Anglo-Saxon, the latter preëminently in the Latin tradition), in a climate of intense Germanic-Romance symbiosis uniquely characteristic of the English language. However that may be, the titillation of the unexpected plus the concomitant pressure of sequences like *in town and out* have helped transform a mere infelicity into a stylistic adornment valued for providing a break in the monotony of frozen patterns; cf. *sweet notes and sour*, *The Cold Wind and the Warm* (title of a modern play).

The number of links available for use in trinomials is typically quite reduced, *and* beside less frequent *or* providing the best services:

(a) *bell, book, and candle; calm, cool, and collected; man, woman, and child; rag, tag, (also tag, rag, —) and bobtail*; R. (*eto vsegdá*) *býlo, jest' i búdet* 'this has always been, is, and will be so';

(b) (*in any*) *way, shape, or manner*. <sup>22</sup>)

<sup>21</sup>) What has become in Spanish the accepted norm, frequently rendered, in translations by 'both X and Y', exists in other languages as an unacknowledged conversational variant (cf. coll. Am.-E. *between Frank and I*). The hybrid status of 'between' may be attributed to the fact that it is the only preposition fundamentally governing two nouns (loosely used, even more than two: coll. *between Bill and Bob and their mother*).

<sup>22</sup>) The lapidary style of tripartite statements architected on the model of Caesar's laconic message *uēnī, uīdī, uīcī* and favored by political programmatic sloganeering (G. *ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer!*) and by modern eye-catching advertisement (*one week, one line, one dollar*) gains in "punch" by

## X. EXPANDED BINOMIALS

The formula  $A + l + B$  and its closest variations mark the bare frame of a binomial, a frame self-sufficient in many instances (and even occasionally reducible to  $AB$ , a plain juxtaposition), while in others one finds it draped in miscellaneous fashions.

If the grammatical equipment of a language includes one or two sets of articles, their (a) absence, (b) unique presence in initial position, or (c) repeated presence before substantival members (including words substantivized) makes for considerable diversification:

(a) *brain and brawn, facts and figures, by fits and starts, friend(s) and foe(s), from hand to mouth*; F. *pieds et poings (liés)*; Sp. *con alma y vida, con pelos y señales, a sangre y fuego, de tomo y lomo, a tuerto o a derecho, contra viento y marea*;

(b) *the ifs and ands*; G. *das Drum und Dran, im grossen und ganzen, in die Kreuz' und Quere*; F. *les hoirs et ayants cause*; Sp. *la flor y nata, las vueltas y revueltas*;

(c) *the birds and the bees, the quick and the dead*; F. *les causes et les effets*; Sp. (a) *las duras y (a) las maduras*.

Aside from each language's general budgetary provisions for articles, several complicating factors enter into the picture: to mention but a few, the unequal affinities of singular and plural to articles, the rôle of prepositions as temporary barriers to their spread, the dissimilar need for attaching them to intrinsic substantives and to words contextually substantivized <sup>23</sup>).

dispensing altogether with links. Such complete paratactic sentences, however, are very rarely coterminous with trinomials. Metric considerations may favor the introduction of a link, as in Hernando de Acuña's famous sonnet: "Un monarca, un imperio y una espada".

<sup>23</sup>) The use of the article may be imposed by external conditions having little or no direct bearing on the inner structure of  $F$ , but rather flowing from the grand strategy of the entire sentence. In highly colloquial, not to say journalistic, English, an indefinite article has thus become the commonest way for speakers to usher in any substantival or verbal binomial pressed into service as a qualifier: *a bows-and-arrows project, a cat-and-dog life, a file-and-forget work*. Contrariwise, a substantival or adjectival binomial followed, immediately or at short distance, by *of* is ordinarily heralded by a definite article: *(the) bread-and-butter (of the festival), (the) life and soul (of the book), (the) how and (the) why (of it), (the) hot and healthy (blood of both)*. Binomials relatively protected from such influences, hence most amenable to sharply focused observation, are those found in adverbial phrases in which either they or their immediate constituents occupy the terminal segment of the whole: *(to a) greater or lesser (degree or extent)*.

In some English binomials the articles rival possessives or demonstratives, with varying degrees of freedom of alternation; others are obligatorily preceded by a possessive, a demonstrative, or some such quantifier or qualifier as *all* and *every*, if they are substantives, and by *too* – ordinarily repeated –, if they are adjectives: *one's (own) flesh and blood*, *(to follow) their ins and outs*, *in this day and age*, *to all intents and purposes*, *in every nook and cranny*, *(every) now and then*, *too little and too late*.

A and B may be root morphemes susceptible of no further synchronic analysis as in *day and night*, *a sangre y fuego*, or each member may muster an equal number of morphemes, typically two, which in turn are either bound or free: *a/live and kick/ing*, *foot/loose and fancy/free*, *up hill and down dale*, *from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot*. Bi- and pluri-morphemic clusters may have one constituent in common; by dint of repetition this segment that they share, whether grammatical or lexical, welds them the more indissolubly together (as do rhyme and alliteration through a similar hammering effect): *bigger and better*, *hither and thither*, *sooner or later*, *upwards and downwards*, *for better or for worse*, *highways and byways*, *day in and day out*, *on again off again*, and, in the penumbra of grotesquely facetious formations, *tweedledum and tweedledee* 'trivial difference.' Unusual concatenations of circumstances: in *betwixt and between* the common prefix and the two distinctive radicals happen all three to have faded; in R. *ni voobščé ni v částnosti* symmetry is jeopardized because the contour of the first trimorphemic half is less sharply outlined than that of the second; *upside down*, *inside (and) out*, *indoors or out*, *in town and out* are so many illustrations of a noteworthy compression achieved through unique mention of the common ingredient within the confines of A (cf. also *believe it or not*, Sp. *quieras que no* 'whether you like it or not').

Speakers sporadically pair off a mono- and a bi-morphemic member, especially in a language replete with binomials such as English:

*beans and brownbread*, *bought and paid for*, *broom and dustpan*, *coffee and doughnuts*, *few and far between*, *fire and brimstone!*, *to fish 'or cut bait*, *hail and farewell*, *(come, despite) hell and high water!*, *skull and cross bones* (emblem) <sup>24</sup>).

<sup>24</sup>) Cf. Pol. *placz i zgrzytanie zębów* 'weeping and the gnashing of teeth'. The Russian equivalents (*pláč* and *skrežetánije zubów*) are less habitually joined.

*Rockets and guided missiles* seems on its way to join this majority group <sup>25</sup>). Witnesses to minority usage include *corned beef and cabbage, by railroad and/or bus* (– *plane*). Examples of subtler disparity in volume or design between the two halves: *between the devil and the deep (blue) sea, over the hills and far away*. Two facts stand out, so far as English is affected: first, for the most part it is B rather than A that contains the larger number of morphemes (the margin almost never exceeds one); second, the semantic attrition of *brim-* pushes the respective compound to the very edge of the category, placing it in the neighborhood of semianalyzable words (Bloomfield's *cranberry*).

Repeating a preposition may fulfill a variety of purposes <sup>26</sup>), e.g. serve to restore clarity by counteracting the disruptive influence of *not* in English (*matters of fact and not of fancy*) or add a touch of emphasis and plasticity. At this juncture oscillation is not uncommon, given the dispensability of this ancillary feature: *by hook or (by) crook*.

## XI. THE POSITION OF THE BINOMIAL IN THE SENTENCE

In Standard Average European a binomial self-contained may be transferred from one context to another with a fair measure of freedom: *all and sundry, fire and water, odds and ends*. This is especially true when it represents an adverbial group, from whichever form-class its members, solidly glued together, have been recruited: *first and foremost, now and then, still and all, win or lose*; G. *ab und zu*, R. *vverx i vniz* 'up and down', Gr. *nûn kai aei, nûn te kai pálai*. Certain pairs of semantically self-sufficient verbs also enjoy relative syntactic autonomy: *to hire and fire, to hem and haw*.

Other binomials, particularly those hinging on adjectives and the majority of such as contain transitive verbs, lack that degree of independence and maneuverability. However, speakers enjoy limited freedom in attaching them to varying numbers of words that qualify for rounding out their meaning:

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<sup>25</sup>) *To live and let live* stands apart, reminding one by its configuration of G. (*nach bestem*) *Wissen und Gewissen*.

<sup>26</sup>) The initially legalistic term *au fur* (obs. var. *à fur*) *et à mesure* described an aberrant trajectory, representing, on O. Bloch's authority, an elaboration on *au fur et mesure* (17th century), which in turn was an amplification of OF. *au fuer* provoked by the obsolescence of *f(e)ur*.

(cars, jobs, salaries) bigger and better, (fish, pups) fresh and frisky, (books, friends, ideas) old and new, (to be able, know, learn to) read and/or write, a rough-and-ready (analysis, frontier-life, manner); give or take (a dollar, a mile, a year) in either direction.

A third group of binomials is confined to a strictly limited number of successions, sometimes to unique sequences, permeated with the unmistakable flavor of "idioms", sayings, proverbial phrases, i.e., essentially lexicalized or nearing the point of lexical congelation. The limiting factor may be a preposition:

(for) better or worse, (to) bits and pieces, (in) this day and age, (with) hammer and tongs, (by) leaps and bounds, (by) line and level, (under) lock and key, (with) might and main, (without) rhyme or reason, (through) thick and thin, (without) welt or guard; G. (auf) Biegen und Brechen, (ohne) Furcht und Tadel, (im) grossen und ganzen, (in) die Kreuz' und Quere, (über) kurz und lang, (nach) Lust und Laune, (bei, durch) Nacht und Nebel, (mit) Rat und Tat, (... von) Ruf und Rang, (ohne) sein Wissen und Wollen; Sp. (a) sangre y fuego, (de) tomo y lomo, (contra) viento y marea.

Very frequently this controlling function devolves upon a verb:

(to give one) cards and spades, (to play it) cool and coy, (to receive) cove and key, (to want one) dead or alive, (to play) fast and loose, (to blow) hot and cold, (to know) the ins and outs, (to live as) man and wife, (to mind one's) p's and q's, (to be or sit) on pins and needles; G. (ihm vergeh-t or -en) Hören und Sehen, Kopf oder Schrift (lesen) 'to toss up', Mord und Brand (schreien); F. (c'est) à prendre ou à laisser; Sp. (ir, tomar) las duras con (or por) las maduras.

Verb and preposition may jointly exercise the controls: G. (mit) Mann und Maus (untergehen). One can obviously point out transitional cases between Groups I and II, and II and III.

## XII. MUTUAL ADJUSTMENT OF THE TWO MEMBERS

Whenever a language happens to preserve two or more variants of a given word, the one normally less or even least favored – as the older, rarer, or socially unattractive – may, by way of exception, receive preferential treatment if such a choice consolidates the balance of a binomial. In German, for instance, where, much as in English, the trend is toward either equality of length as between A and B or greater length of B, one finds *Freud' und Leid*, *Hab' und Gut*, *Reih' und Glied* in preference to standard *Freude*, *Habe*, *Reihe*. At intervals such an

arrangement may yield a fringe benefit, such as a rhyme, perfect or imperfect (*Freud*: *Leid*). The effectiveness, in this respect, of *to* and *fro*, presumably at the stage corresponding to the pronunciation [to] and [fro], gave an additional lease on life to *fro*, more advantageous – in this context alone – than *from*. In this country the trinomial *reading*, *(w)riting*, *'rithmetic* won out over its competitor *read*, *(w)rite*, and *cipher* on account of the splendid orchestral support (alliteration) received from the proverbial three R's. Frenchmen went to the length of transforming half-understood *feur* < OF. *fuer* (L. *forum*) into *fur* for the sake of a tempting approximation to (and, colloquially, a rhyme with) *mesure*, in whose company *fur* is uniquely allowed to occur. A similar latitude of tolerance is familiar from proverbs, riddles, and songs (G. *wie die Alten sungen, so zwitschern die Jungen*).

### XIII. RELATION OF A AND B TO F

Semantic relations of different orders obtain between the two members, taken separately and jointly, and the binomial as a whole. If, to tap the reservoir of English examples, the link is *and*, the binomial may literally represent the exact sum of A plus B, as in *brother and sister*, *husband and wife*, *heroes and heroines*, *shoes and socks*, *shirt and tie*, *cup and saucer*, *knife and fork*, *ham and cheese*, *lamb and salad*, *salt and pepper*, *joy and sorrow*, *right and left*, *Greek and Latin*. Elsewhere the two items evoke so many conspicuous features of an unnamed multifaceted whole – as if speakers were bent on identifying that whole by a few strokes, bold but hardly random, rather than on describing it by means of a tedious bill of particulars. The rich imagery suggested by *blood and thunder!*, *flesh and blood*, (Biblical) *milk and honey*, *soap and water*, *song and dance*, *sugar and spice*, *tooth and nail* transgresses, if one may judge from introspection, the precise contours of the twin objects expressly mentioned. Between these two extremes of literalness and symbolism there stretches a continuum of finely graded possibilities. Literalness prevails in matter-of-fact statements in prose; symbolism, loaded with magic power, reigns supreme in blessings and curses, in emblems and circumlocutions in poetry.

The same potency of figurative use explains why A and B, viewed in isolation, may be highly technical words which, except in this privileged context, are hardly ever on the average speaker's lips. Usually the meaning of just one member, either A or B, has begun to lose

some of its transparency (cf. n. 1, above). Examples in point are *warp and woof* (beside rarer *warp and weft*) and *to hem and haw*. G. *in Bausch und Bogen*, at present almost exclusively associated with verbs of (sweeping) condemnation and rejection, pertained originally to the realm of commerce, if *Bausch* stands for 'pad, bolster' and *Bogen* for 'sheet'. The domain of law is represented not only by oft-mentioned F. *au fur et à mesure*, but also by G. *mit Kind und Kegel* 'with the whole family', beside antiquated *er hat nicht Kind noch Kegel, für Kind und Kegel sorgen*, in which *Kegel*, totally opaque to the uninitiated, signifies 'child born out of wedlock', cf. the family names *Kögel* and *Kegelmann*. Lexical archaisms of other than technical background are embedded in *spic(k)-and-span* 'new and fresh'; *spick* seems identical with obs. *spick* 'spike or nail', cf. G. *funkelnagelneu*, likewise suggestive of the shiny metal surface of an unused nail. Morphological erosion obscures the meaning of A and B in G. (*das ist*) *gang und gäbe* 'this is the usual thing'.

Can a pattern be established for this process of partial or almost total blurring? Do languages tend to dispense with the translucency of A rather than of B, or viceversa? The scant evidence on hand allows of no such categorical assertion. What has prolonged the lifespan of *Kind und Kegel* and *au fur et à mesure* beyond normal expectancy is the pleasing interplay of alliteration and rhyme, respectively, with a desirable distribution of syllabic weight (ratio 1 : 2). As for *spick-and-span*, it probably owes its survival, continued momentum, and progressive liberation from the adjunct *new* to the coexistence of the playful type *chitchat, riffraff, splish-splash*, characterized by a neatly prescribed alternation of short stressed vowels, by a preference for noisy consonants effectively spread over each syllable, and by a discernible measure of semantic imprecision.

#### XIV. BINOMIALS VERSUS COMPOUNDS

Binomials as here narrowly defined, especially if devoid of a link, may come into contact with those compounds whose constituents pertain to the same form-class and are conjoined rather than subordinated: *composer-critic, editor-novelist, gentleman-farmer, teacher-scholar*, and an occasional adjective like *bittersweet* <sup>27</sup>).

<sup>27</sup>) G. *bittersüss* is a pertinent counterpart, less so *bitterböse, bitterernst* (in these *bitter-* tends to acquire a limiting effect: 'angry, serious to the extent of bitterness'). Note the same contrast between, on the one hand, G. *vollschlank*

The techniques for drawing a dividing line between the two categories will vary from language to language. With many living languages a contrast in prosodic conditions may yield a clue to the descriptivist. An inflectional feature may likewise serve as a classificatory criterion; thus, even if the absence of a link in *teacher-scholar* were not a distinctive trait, the pl. *teacher-scholars* would set this compound apart from

*birds and bees* (– and beasts), *boots and saddles*, *bumps and grinds*, (raining) *cats and dogs*, *cocks and hens*, (these) *comings and goings*, *cups and saucers*, (not . . .) *deeds nor words*, (on) *elbows and knees*, (all) *eyes and ears*, (to all) *intents and purposes*, (by) *leaps and bounds*, *pots and pans*, *rats and mice*, *at sixes and sevens*, *sticks and stones*, *ups and downs*,

which en bloc exhibit the comportment of true binomials <sup>28</sup>). Where, as in Spanish, formal adjustment of A to B or viceversa is infrequent, an erratic by-form, all circumstances considered, points in the direction of composition: cf. *agri/dulce* with its characteristic connective –i– (as in *verdi/negro*, *verdi/seco* beside *verde*, *altibajos* ‘uneven ground’ beside *alto*) versus *agrio*, OSp. *agro* ‘sour’ < ĀCRU and the relic *agre* < ĀCRE in *vin/agre*, lit. ‘sour wine’.

A historical boundary can be drawn most effectively between binomials and the playful (“expressive”) variety of reduplicative compounds exemplified by *crisscross*, *splish-splash*, F. *pêle-mêle* <sup>29</sup>). The starting-points are radically different. The history of an authentic

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‘slightly buxom’, lit. ‘buxom slender’, and, on the other, *vollwertig*. *Butterbrod*, in contrast to *bread and butter*, involves no coördination, inasmuch as *Butter* limits the way of serving or consuming bread.

<sup>28</sup>) The situation is different when a singular and a plural are paired off, e.g. (a) *bacon and eggs*, *beer and skittles*, *cat and kittens*, *cheese and crackers*, *coffee and rolls*, *fame and riches*, *fish and chips*, *fox and hounds*, *fuss and feathers*, *head and shoulders*, *meat and potatoes*, *neck and heels*, *skin and bones*, *skull and cross bones*, *from soup to nuts* (obligatory plural in *coat and pants*) or, in inverse order, (b) *beans and brownbread*, *cookies and cake*, *peaches and cream*, *potatoes and gravy* alongside semantically isolated *Letters and Science* (originally *Sciences*). The marked superiority of (a) over (b) is in consonance with the oft-observed tendency of English to shorten A, while lengthening B.

<sup>29</sup>) See M. R. Haas, “Types of reduplication in Thai (with some comparisons and contrasts taken from English)”, *SIL*, Vol. I, No. 4, 6 pp. (separate pagination).

binomial begins with the gradual rapprochement of two independent words, one of which, in the course of their joint travel across the ages, may influence the other or merge with it into a new unit not easily divisible (which some linguists label "hypermorpheme"). Conversely, formations structured like *crisscross* and *splish-splash* (here distinguished from congeries of nonsense words, such as G. *dideldumdei*, *lirumlarum*, Sp. *patatín*, *patatán*, copiously represented in nursery rhymes) have a single starting point: *cross*, *splash*; the desired measure of jocose variation is achieved by the prefixing (*dilly-dally*) or suffixing (*whimsey-whamsey*) of fanciful by-forms, in harmony with a preëxistent vocalic schema. Not a few of these formations may have been spontaneous; others were arrived at through gradual elaboration, and in chosen instances (including that of F. *pêle-mêle*) several transitional stages along the main line as well as some abortive experiments staged along side-lines are open to inspection<sup>30</sup>). The penetration of *pêle-mêle* and *bric-à-brac* into English might have run afoul of serious hindrances, had not these formations satisfied the demands of both languages, the lender and the borrower, for a certain type of acoustically appealing compounds. Diachronically, Am.-E. *mumbo-jumbo* 'fetish, bugaboo', whatever its status in native western Sudanese, also seems more of a jocular compound than of a binomial.

A cross between compound and binomial – in highly colloquial discourse – is exemplified by *pribbles* and *prabbles* and Sp. *mondo y lirondo* 'pure, without admixture'. Of the five critical features involved the link (*and*, *y*) ascends to the binomial, so does the (optional) rhyme in the Spanish, and the (equally optional) alliteration in the English phrase; the legacy of the compounds includes vocalic variation (*i-a*)

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<sup>30</sup>) Conceivably OF. *mesle*, *mesle* 'mix, mix!' or 'confuse, confuse!' was a command akin to Sp. (narrative) *pinta que pinta* 'painting like mad', *dale que dale* 'doing something obstinately' and remotely similar to F. (concessive) *coûte que coûte* except for an amusing extra touch of irony or sarcasm. Medieval texts, including MSS of Chrétien's romances, reveal a good deal of imaginative toying and tampering: *melle pelle*, *pelle melle*, *brelle mesle*, *melle et brelle* (the 19th-century straggler *méli-mélo* stands apart). The speakers' eventual choice displays a thoroughly satisfactory balance between qualitative variety (oral vs. nasal release), economy (both initial consonants are labials), and clarity (the strategic second place has been assigned to semantically transparent *mêle*). Cf. the earlier statement on *bric-à-brac*.

and, above all, the coinage of such nonce-words, the etymologist's despair <sup>31</sup>), as *prabble* and *lirondo*.

As is to be expected, even languages genetically and typologically very much akin may clash in their preferences for binomials versus compounds, unless they altogether dodge the issue by having recourse to a third solution. Take the names of color patterns: where iridescent, opalescent, or merging hues are to be suggested (not necessarily contiguous on the chromatic scale), German favors straight composition: *Grünblau*, *Schwarzrot*, *Graubraun*; English, the use of a limiting qualifier: *greenish blue*, *reddish black*, *greyish brown* (speaking of hair, also *graying brown*). For sharply contrasting colors in adjacent surfaces (emblems, escutcheons, flags, ties, etc.), German again champions composition: *Schwarzweiss* (distinct from *Schwarz auf Weiss*), *Blauweiss*, also triadic *Schwarzrotgold*, whereas English here resorts to *Blue and Gold*, *in black and white*, *a gold-and-white theater*, *a red and white stocking*, *a red and yellow river of flame*, beside *Black, Red, and Gold* <sup>32</sup>).

## XV. SEQUENCE OF MEMBERS

Inevitably any study in irreversible binomials culminates in an attempt to answer the primordial question: Can any specific reason be adduced for the precedence of A over B? One may distinguish between two orders of possible answers: those that aim to explain the crystallization of individual sequences, a string of problems comparable, as regards their severely limited breadth and their historical slant, to pinpointed etymological riddles; and those broad enough to aid the analyst in the recognition of certain patterns. Only the latter category need concern us here.

By way of preliminaries, remember not only the slight margin of vacillation among speakers of the same language, not infrequently

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<sup>31</sup>) L. Spitzer's and J. Corominas' approaches to the ancestry of *lirondo* (see the latter's *DCELC*, s.v.) are infelicitous, inasmuch as both are under the delusion that the process essentially involved a blend of two or three isolated words. Actually one witnesses here the conflation of two patterns of juxtaposition.

<sup>32</sup>) Characteristic of English is again the spread of *and* at the expense of other connectives; contrast *in black and white* (and, similarly, Sp. *blanco y negro*) with G. *schwarz auf weiss*, R. (instr.) *čórnym po bělomu*.

within the same family (*Dad and Mom* ~ *Mom and Dad*, *broom and dustpan* ~ *dustpan and broom*), but especially the predictable discrepancies, as regards hardened sequences, between individual languages. *By land and by sea* matches Gr. *katà gèn kai katà thálattan* and F. *sur terre et sur mer*, but clashes with G. *zu Wasser und zu Lande* and with Sp. *por mar y tierra*. *Public and private* echoes Sp. *público y privado*, disagreeing with Gr. *ídios kai dēmósios*. English distinctly favors *cat and dog*, especially in stereotyped expressions: *cat-and-dog (life)*, *(to rain) cats and dogs*; Spanish insists on *(como) perros y gatos*, and French on *(comme) chien et chat*. *Odd or even* is at variance with Sp. *pares o nones*, as is *black and white* with Sp. *blanco y negro*. *From head (or top) to toe* is diametrically opposed to Sp. *de pies a cabeza*, R. *s nog do golový*, and Pol. *od stóp do glow*, all four sequences inescapably rigid<sup>33</sup>). Such divergences are encouraging, since they prompt one to reckon, to an appreciable extent, with the agency of purely linguistic forces.

Researches so far conducted have led to the isolation of six discrete forces frequently operating in unison. Nothing in the resultant pattern indicates that further additions are impossible or unlikely, and the discovery of a much richer interplay is to be expected.

#### (A) *Chronological priority of A*

By this force we mean not the precedence of the referent of A over the referent of B in real-life situations (*divide and conquer*, *spit and polish*, *hit and run*), but the expansion, with the passage of time, of a monomial (A) into a binomial (A + I + B). To describe its action, let us examine, by way of digression, the more neatly observable transformation of some binomials into corresponding trinomials. *Here and there* has been occasionally converted into *here, there, and everywhere*;

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<sup>33</sup>) A few additional examples may dispel any residual doubts. *From north to south* and Sp. *del sur al norte* are antipodes, while *east and west* contradicts G. *West(en) und Ost(en)*. *More or less*, G. *mehr oder minder* (or *weniger*), F. *plus ou moins*, Sp. *más o menos*, Ptg. *mais ou menos*, It. *più o meno*, R. *bóleje ili méneje* form an overwhelmingly powerful league – but one whose pressure has fallen short of dislodging Pol. *mniej lub więcej*. Even in the case of a modern political emblem propagandized as transcending national boundaries a trace of non-conformism is detectable: *hammer and sickle*, which may have suggested itself through its appealing vowel sequence *a . . . i* (*i . . . a* would have evoked frivolity or futility) and, more important, through such preëxistent groups as *hammer and tongs*, displays a suspicious deviation from orthodox R. *serp i mólot*.

*eat and drink*, into *eat, drink, and be merry*; *lock and stock*, into *lock, stock, and barrel*; *vim and vigor* (apparently on a less wide scale) into *vim, vigor, and vitality*; *snakes and snails*, into highly comic *snakes and snails and puppy-dog tails* <sup>34</sup>). Sometimes the central rather than the concluding member of a trinomial seems to represent an accretion: (to live) *high and handsome* beside less trivial *high, wide, and handsome*; for still other variations see Section VI, above. Once this principle of gradual elaboration, by way of afterthought or deliberate anticlimax, has been accepted, at least as an ever-present strong possibility, it is arguable that some monomials may have undergone a comparable extension to binomials through a process of refinement and self-correction (humorous effects are less likely in this transition). In our own time, *man power* has begun to yield to *man-and-woman power*, still fairly infrequent as of this writing. Older examples can be unearthed only through detailed paleontological probings. An inconspicuous *drum corps* – if lexicographic records corroborate this conjecture – may have been metamorphosed into more specific and, let us admit, more impressive *drum-and-bugle corps* or *fife-and-drum corps* <sup>35</sup>).

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<sup>34</sup>) One suspects a similar line of development – pending confirmation by historical records – in the cases of *apples, peaches, and cherries* – *fuir, fat, and forty* – *hook, line, and sinker* – (an easy) *hop, skip, and jump* – *round, firm, and fully packed* – *screwed, blued, and tattooed*. Students of primitive Christianity reckon with the extension of a pristine binity into a trinity and even a quinity. On the other hand, some trinomials may conceivably owe their very existence to an intrinsically triadic configuration, e.g. those based on Caesar's laconic *uēni, uīdī, uīcī* (including Lope de Vega's *vine, miré y fui vencido*), traffic signs of the type *stop, look, listen* (which A. Stevenson wittily applied to his recent exploratory tour behind the Iron Curtain), or facetious Sp. *correve(i)dile* 'gossip, mischief-maker', lit. 'run, see [= look], and tell him'.

<sup>35</sup>) The implication is obvious: had the original tag been *bugle corps*, the "padding", applied in the reverse direction, might have produced \**bugle-and-drum corps* – all other conditions being equal. The point is that they were not exactly equal, *bugle* [bjugl] being, by the discernible margin of one phoneme, the longer form with a distinctly stronger claim to the position of member B. In other words, *drum and bugle* "sounds better" than its opposite which, on account of this handicap, may not have been quite so readily adopted, even if some speakers had attempted to launch it. The pièce de résistance in this chain of speculative arguments is the fact that *drum*, if relegated to the position of B, is preceded by a word of equal syllabic and phonemic weight: *fife-and-drum corps*. Yet this entire embroidery is in urgent need of historical corroboration.

(B) *Priorities inherent in the structure of a society*

Pairs of words may next be ordered in accordance with a hierarchy of values inherent in the structure of a given society, or alliance of societies <sup>36)</sup>. The originally patriarchal character of those most intimately associated with I.-E. and Semitic languages is echoed to this day by such sequences as:

*Adam and Eve, boys and girls* (also, in the maternity ward: *a boy or a girl?*), *brother(s) and sister(s)* (R. *brat i sestrá*, Pol. *brat i siostra*), Br.-E. *butler and cook* (as a household team), *father and mother* (R. *otc i mat'*), Am.-E. *guys and dolls, heroes and heroines, husband and wife* (R. *muž i žena*, Pol. *mąż i żona*), *Jack and Jill, King and Queen, man and maid* (— and wife), *Mr. and Mrs. . . .* (G. *Herr und Frau . . .*, etc., Sp. *Señor . . . y Señora*), *Romeo and Juliet* (*Paul et Virginie*, etc.), *son and daughter*.<sup>37)</sup>

An equally powerful social prism elevated parents above children, the old above the young (provided they were assigned to the same level of prestige by virtue of family background or occupation); this particular scale extended to the realm of animals: *cow and calf, hen and chicks, father and son* (in firms: *Dombey and Son*), *man and boy, mother and child*, G. *Mutter und Tochter, Onkel und Nefte, Tante und Nichte*, R. *ocý i děti* 'parents (lit. fathers) and children'.<sup>38)</sup> The supremacy of ruling classes shines through in stereotyped *master and servant, merchant and farmer, poet and peasant, prince and pauper, rich and poor*: Sp. *nobles y pecheros* (— *y villanos*). The same rigid subordination prevails in reference to the figures of the chessboard (Sp. *ni rey ni roque*) and to two sharply discrepant professions that the same individual, paradoxically enough, may have exercised, as when Hans Sachs was called

<sup>36)</sup> This hierarchy applies also to divine and supernatural powers and allegorized abstractions, cf. the device *Dieu et mon droit*; Sp. (*sin encomendarse*) *a Dios ni al diablo* 'recklessly' (lit. 'commending oneself neither to God nor to the devil'). Pol. *Bog i ojczyzna* 'God and fatherland'.

<sup>37)</sup> Courtly society tended to rank the sexes differently; therefore the conflict between *men and women* and *ladies and gentlemen* resolves itself into a clash of currents of nonverbal culture. Cf. R. L. Stevenson's essays entitled *Virginibus puerisque*.

<sup>38)</sup> The reason for this illogical pairing, familiar from the title of Turgenev's trailblazing novel, seems to be primarily rhythmical: *roditeli* ('parents') *i děti* would have placed an excessively long A ahead of B; *ocý i synov'já* (or poet. *syný*) would have made B inopportunistically oxytonic. Concomitantly, *ocý* suggested itself on account of its mildly poetic overtone.

anticlimactically *ein Schuhmacher und ein Poet dazu* (invariably in this order). Within the same setting it is customary to assign different rungs of the ladder to humans versus animals; to stronger or more highly prized versus weaker or less valued animals; to animate beings versus contraptions, and so on:

(food for) *man and beast; horse and cow, cat and mouse; horse and buggy*  
(– and cart), *man or machine; the sun and the moon.*

If it is true that the dictates of society impose a more or less arbitrary time perspective on a language <sup>39)</sup>, then the acceptance by historically-minded western societies of a straight line stretching from the past through the present to the future not only has predetermined expressly temporal formulas, such as *before and after, yesterday and today*, and the fuller trinomial *past, present, and future* (cf. R. *eto vsegdá býlo, jest' i búdet*), but, less obviously, has also prearranged untold pairs in which relative timing – with or without a suggestion of cause-and-effect connection – is subtly implied:

*cash-and-wrap (counter), clean-and-wax (job), heat 'n' eat, kiss-and-tell (beau), live and learn, seize and hold, shoot and kill, sit 'n' snack, spit and polish, stop and shop, wait and see, wear and tear, woo and win; birth and death, challenge and response, marriage and divorce, question and answer, rise and fall, wedding and reception; from rags to riches, from start to finish.*

Cultural ranking controls the exact labeling of meals: *fish and chips, meat and potatoes, pork and beans, scotch and soda* <sup>40)</sup>; the arrangement,

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<sup>39)</sup> This hypothesis is traceable to B. L. Whorf's challenging speculations; the validity of these has lately been examined in two symposia, the proceedings (or epitomized results) of which have become available in two separate miscellanies: (a) *Language in culture*, ed. H. Hoijer (Chicago, 1954); (b) *Language, thought, and culture*, ed. P. Henle (Ann Arbor, 1958).

<sup>40)</sup> Binomials pervade the English menus on both sides of the Atlantic (*cake and ice cream* or in reverse order *corned beef and cabbage, fish and chips, ham and eggs*, etc.). The construction is overtly coördinative, except that the position of the members implies a minimum of subordination (A stands for the main dish, B for the vegetable or any other accompanying feature). In most languages subordination is made more explicit by the use of some characteristic preposition upgrading one item and downgrading the other. In the jargon of French cuisine *à* indicates three things – (a) a national or social style (... *à l'anglaise, à la turque, ... à la boulangère, à la ménagère, à la meunière*); (b) a sauce or gravy

however unsophisticated, of furniture, crockery, and household tools: *table and chair, cup(s) and saucer(s)*; the distribution of rôles and significant ingredients in ritualistic ceremony, artistic performance, light entertainment, sports, and daily living: *words and music, piano and orchestra, theme and variations, prelude and fugue, fox and hounds, dine and dance*; the procession of metaphysical entities: *body and soul* (also F. *corps et âme*, Sp. *cuerpo y alma*). To a speaker immured within a single culture and less than highly sophisticated each of these fairly arbitrary successions is bound to appear "natural" or "logical".

(C) *Precedence of the stronger of two polarized traits*

The third force is operative only in those binomials in which antonyms are pitted against each other: Their relative order may be dictated by the same leanings, on the part of the speakers, that preside over the selection of an active and a passive partner in lexical polarization<sup>41</sup>). In many speech communities pairing off habitually such opposites as 'right' and 'left', 'black' and 'white', 'true' and 'false', 'light' and 'heavy', 'day' and 'night', 'mountain' and 'valley', there

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(... *au beurre noir, au jus*); (c) the accompanying item: *oie farcie aux pommes, foie gras d'oie aux truffes, rognons sautés aux champignons, dinde farcie aux marrons, jambon frais aux fèves de marais*. The emphasis is clearly on qualifiers and characterizers conveying a soupçon of the manner of cooking and seasoning. Slavic languages use different devices; e.g., Russian suggests (a) by *po* (*čšúka po židóvski*), (b) frequently by *pod* (... *pod bélym i krásnym sóusom*), (c) by *s* (*baránina s kartófelem i smorčkámi, piláv s risom i černoslivom, kotléty s pečónym lúkom, vepr' s xrénom, barán'ja grudinka s répoju, gov'ádina s sardél'kami*). Polish similarly links the satellite by means of *z*: *figa z makiem* 'fig with poppy-seed' (fig. 'absolutely nothing'), *flaki z olejem* 'tripe with oil' (fig. 'utterly boring'), *groch z kapustą* 'peas and cabbage' (fig. 'confusion, pell-mell'). Correspondingly the traditional Spanish construction is with *con*: *huevos con jamón, pichones con naranja, pollo con arroz, tortilla con jamón* (or else *en*, to suggest enclosure: *trucha en pan, perdices en escabeche*). This holds true even of sauces: *lengua con salsa de almendra, merluz con salsa verde*, also *arroz con leche*, although here the Gallic fashion has made some inroads via loan translations: *merluza a la vinagreta, perdices a la crema, pollo al vino blanco*. English gastronomy, then, is fairly isolated in falling back on binomials.

<sup>41</sup>) On this phenomenon see my articles "Lexical polarization in Romance", *Lang.*, XXVII (1951), 485-418, and, from a higher vantage point, "Diachronic hypercharacterization in Romance", *ArL*, IX (1957), 79-113, esp. 103-106, and X (1958), 1-36.

develops a tendency for one of the two contrasted features to assume the status of a basic or positive trait and for its opposite to signal the lack of that trait, i.e., a reversal of the normal situation <sup>42</sup>). The ranking, at least as a relativist is tempted to view it, is again intrinsically social, but this time, unlike under (B), manifests itself exclusively in the verbal layer of a culture. Whereas lexical polarization betrays the stronger partner diachronically through the measurable influence it exerts on the weaker, diverting it from its normal orbit, the stronger partner in an average I.-E. bi- or multi-nomial asserts its superiority synchronically by rushing to occupy the first place. In English the link is, for the most part, *and*, not infrequently *or*, in exceptional cases zero (e.g., *upside down*):

*all or nothing, black and white, to buy and sell, credit and debit, (to play) fast-and-loose, feast and famine, friend and foe (- and enemy), full or empty, give and take (- or take), good or bad, hand and foot, heaven or hell, hit or miss, hot and cold, laughter and tears, life and/or death, light and dark, love and hate, more or less, old and new, rights and wrongs beside right(ly) or wrong(ly), (through) thick and thin, ups and downs, upper and lower, victory (triumph -) or defeat, war and peace, win or lose, work and play, yes or no.*

Differences between languages are acutely perceptible here. *The quick and the dead* jibes with Sp. *vivo o muerto*, R. *živój ili m'órtvyj*, but clashes with *dead or alive*, the ordering of which obeys a rhythmic rather than semantic principle. English is tolerant of *left and right* beside *right and left*, while German resolutely supports *rechts und links*, echoing F. *à droite et à gauche*, OSp. *a diestro y a siniestro*. Many, but not all, languages oppose 'mountain' to 'valley': *(over) hill and dale*, G. *Berg und Tal*, F. (obs.) *à mont et à val*. *Back and forth* strikes an outsider accustomed to G. *vor- und rückwärts* as a baffling sequence, possibly rooted in a motion characteristic of a widely practised trade (cf. naut. *to back and fill*); in sheer phonetic bulk *forth* perceptibly exceeds *back* (even where *r* has been muted), cf. R. *vzad i vper'ód*. *Ebb and flow* for once matches G. *Ebbe und Flut*, while the very derivation

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<sup>42</sup>) C. F. Hockett remarks in his contribution to the miscellany *Language in culture*, ed. H. Hoijer, p. 120: "The pairing is not just semantic; it is also shown structurally. In each pair, one member is the 'major' member; this is shown by the selection of that member, rather than the other, in asking a colorless question about the degree of the particular quality".

of F. *re-flux* 'ebb' leads one to expect its subordination, in sequential terms, to *flux*; literary usage has actually sanctioned, since Corneille and Fénelon, the formula *le flux et le reflux*, cf. R. *priliv i otliv*.

#### (D) *Patterns of formal preferences*

A force of exclusive concern to the linguist and apt to elude the vigilance of a sociologist is the purely formal preference of numerous speech communities for a certain configuration of the binomial, describable by the qualitative and quantitative distribution of sounds, accentual and tonal schemas, total lengths of segments (with separate attention to the number of syllables, to the number of phonemes, and to their phonetic duration), and the like. The power of this agency is best testable where interference by its rivals is at a minimum, e.g. in stereotyped pairs of synonyms and in designations of matching objects where the pressure of social hierarchization seems weak or altogether inoperative.

Thus, Modern English displays a very marked partiality to short plus long: either monosyllable plus (normally paroxytonic) disyllable, or two monosyllables of unequal size; rarely a mono- or di-syllable plus a polysyllable. Microscopic examination of each case history would have to take into account not only contemporary pronunciation, including the latitude of its major territorial and social varieties, but also such phonic conditions as prevailed at the presumable locale and time of the actual coinage and initial acceptance:

*aches and pains, aid and abet* (– and *succor*), *all and any, at or near* . . . , *beam and rafter, bed and board, beer and wine, big and little, bow(s) and arrow(s), buckle and (bare) thong, bumps and grinds, by and large, cap and gown, (to give one) cards and spades, cheap and nasty, (without) chick or child, to chop* ('to barter' > 'to alter') *and change, cops and robbers, death and destruction, (to make) ducks or drakes (of or with) 'to throw away carelessly', eating and drinking* (– and *scratching*), *neither my eye nor my elbow, facts and figures, fair and foolish* (– and *sluttish, – and softly*), *(to win) fame and fortune, far and away* (– and *wide*), *fast and furious, fat and fulsome* (Am.-E. – and *sassy 'saucy'*), *fine and dandy* (– and *fancy*), *(to go through) fire and water, (a dress) fits and flatters, (by, to cry in) fits and starts, fun and games, (creatures) furred and feathered, fuss and bother, ghosts and goblins, glow and glitter, gold and silver, guts and glory, hale and hearty, hares and hounds, (to agree like) harp and harrow, health and happiness, high and dry* (– and *mighty*), *(over) hill and dale, horse and rider, (to run) hot and heavy, hue and cry, in and out, joy and sorrow, Am.-E. kit and caboodle 'crowd, pack', lamb*

*and salad, law and order, lean and lanky, (by) leaps and bounds, (without) let or hindrance, long and lazy, for love or money, low and lonely, meek and mild, neat and clean, neck and crop 'bodily, completely', (in every) nook and cranny, now and again (- or never), null and void, odds and ends, oil and vinegar, part and parcel, peace and quiet (- and prosperity), to pick and choose, (to sit on) pins and needles, poor but honest, pot and kettle ('equally black'), pure and simple, (to live or lie at) rack and manger 'in reckless abundance', (to go to) rack and ruin, rags and tatters, root and branch, rough and tumble (- and ready), safe and sound, salt and pepper, sex and slaughter (- and drinking), shoes and stockings, sin and shame (- and corruption), slick and slimy, to slip and slide, slow and steady, snips and snails 'odd ends', soap and water, sound and fury, a spit and a stride, (to walk the) straight and narrow, strong and stormy, stuff and nonsense, tea and coffee, to and fro, tried and tested (- and true), true and trusty, up and down, (exchange of) views and volleys, vim and vinegar, waifs and strays, (the) whys and wherefores, wind and weather, (by one's) wits and fists.*

An accurate statistical tabulation would no doubt bring out even more graphically the preponderance of this pattern. Exceptions do exist (*chapter and verse, classes and masses, a gentleman and a scholar, hither and yon, mended or ended, pepper and salt, salaries and wages, tattered and torn*, the last-mentioned echoed by *forlorn* in a famous nursery rhyme), but fail by a wide margin to exceed 10% and can almost invariably be accounted for by powerful constellations of special circumstances inimical to this deep-rooted predilection <sup>43</sup>).

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<sup>43</sup>) This picture represents a gross simplification of reality, inasmuch as it has been drawn without any previous agreement on the yardsticks of measurement. Here are, succinctly outlined, just a few of the complications all too easily overlooked in a bird's-eye view. *Bright* and *shiny* each number five phonemes: does the fact that the latter alone spreads them over two syllables recommend it for the position of B? *Life* contains four phonemes, one more than *limb*; did this ratio prevail at the time when the sequence *life* and *limb* crystallized? How does one go about counting the (partially preserved) *r* in *hair*, *hearth*, *short*? In cases like *pots and pans*, *cats and dogs* (beside older *dogs and cats*), *time and tide* (*tide and time* recorded as late as 1592), where the number of phonemes and syllables is equal, does the phonetic duration of contrastable sounds merit separate consideration? Add to the multiplicity of verifiable facts the latitude of interpretation in the analysis of an utterance into its constituent phonemes: *key* allows of the segmentation [*ki:*] and [*kij*]. As a result of this overgrowth of intricacies, utmost care must be exercised if one analyzes along the suggested line such binomials as include members of approximately equal size, e.g. *beck and call*, *blood and iron*, *boot and sole*, *brush and comb*, *bull(s) and bear(s)* (in the jargon of Stock Exchange brokers), *chalk and cheese*, *come and go*, *cross and/or pile*,

Various other languages exhibit the same tendency in more sporadic fashion:

G. (mit) *Ach und Krach, Furcht und Schrecken, kurz und bündig (und kernig), Land und Leute, Lug und Trug, (nach) Lust und Laune, (bei) Nacht und Nebel, Pech und Schwefel, voll und ganz, Wind und Wetter, wirklich und wahrhaftig*; F. *au fur et à mesure, mes yeux et mes oreilles*; Sp. *ni carne ni pescado, dares y tomares, ir y venir, (hablar) largo y tendido, mondo y lirondo, con pelos y señales, de pies a cabeza, a roso y velloso, sal y pimienta, sano y salvo, (echar) sapos y culebras, tira y afloja*; Ptg. (*não confundir*) *alhos com bugalhos*<sup>44</sup>); R. *bez vědoma i soglāsija* 'without knowledge and consent', *sploš' da r'ádom* 'oftentimes' (lit. 'throughout and side by side'), *šútki i pribaiútki* 'jokes and sayings', *v dol' i poper'ók* 'lengthwise and athwart', *vstréčnym i poperéčnym* 'to everybody' (lit. 'to those walking in the opposite direction and across'); Pol. (*szkóda*) *czásu i atlásu* 'waste of time and money' (lit. 'and satin'), (*rozmawiać jak*) *gęś z prosięciem* 'to talk like a goose to a young pig' (= 'conversation de sourds').

#### (E) *Precedence of A due to internal diffusion*

As the fifth force one may set down internal diffusion, i.e., the imitation of a characteristic segment (either A ... or ... B) within the tradition of a single language. The first timid modulations may involve mere variants; once a pair or a cluster has sprung into existence and the sequence falls into an attractive pattern on rhythmic and semantic grounds, the new model stands a more than even chance of provoking imitation of some sort through its appeal to imaginative minds. This inner proliferation is not uniquely peculiar to any language but it seems more strongly pronounced in Germanic than in Romance (and in English than in German).

In a few chosen instances one dimly recognizes the semantic background of a given prepossession, as when the upper parts of the human body (*head, neck, hand*) are granted a privileged position:

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*great cry and little wool, deeds nor words, a feast or a fast, free and easy, hearth and home, here and there, hide nor hair, hip and thigh, knife and fork, (by) line and level, (under) lock and key, the long and short (of it), merry and wise, once and again (- and away), from pillar to post, pcts and pans, rain or shine, to rant and rave, safe and sane, (when all is) said and done, short and sweet, (with) shot and shell, sink or swim, (nothing but) skin and bone, slow but/and sure, snow and ice, song and dance, ways and means, wild and woolly, young and old.*

<sup>44</sup>) Private communication of Professor F. G. Lounsbury, who overheard the phrase in Brazil.

(over) *head and ear*, from *head to foot*, *head over heels*, *head and shoulders* (above), (not to make) *head or tail* (of); *neck and crop* (– and heels, – or nothing), *hand and foot* (– and glove), *hand over head* (– over fist), (on one's) *hands and knees*, from *hand to mouth*.

A staple food like *bread* also indisputably qualifies for leadership: *bread and butter* (–cheese, milk, water).

Elsewhere it is the sheer frequency of certain binomials, in unison with their particularly stimulating contours, that has provoked flurries of imitation among speakers pre-conditioned to this genre or figure. *Hot and cold* served as the common starting-point for such relative newcomers (some of them doubtless ephemeral) as *hot-and-bothered*, *hot-and-healthy*, *hot-and-heavy*, *hot-and-spicy*, with *hot-and-* gradually congealing into a favorite prefix-like segment and B acquiring the desirable proportions of a disyllable stressed on the penult. Antonymic (to search, in places) *high and low* blazed the trail for less transparent (nearly synonymic?) *high and dry*, *high and handsome*, *high and mighty*. We recall the development of *fair-and-* as being equally dynamic. The molecule *good and* . . . may have cut loose from polarized *good and evil* and from the vigorous phrase (to shake) *good and hard*, propagating to *good and ready*, (for) *good and all*, and climaxing in *good and mad* (– and sick, – and dead), (to be) *good and finished* (with), (he gave him his) *good and proper*, in which *good and* is practically tantamount to an adverb ('completely'). *Cut-and-* has failed to advance quite so far, being paired off alternately with past participles (*cut and dried*) and imperatives (obs. *cut and come again*, of meat that cries: "Come cut me"; and slangy *cut and run*). *Try and* . . . is noteworthy as the colloquial equivalent of standard *try to* . . . (To be) *up and walking* (climbing, or any other suitable verb of motion) genetically represents a telescoping of two disparate constructions: *to be up* plus *to be walking*; so potent is the tendency to recruit A and B from the same form-class as to prompt speakers to use *up* participially: (an) *up-and-coming writer* and even as a fully inflected verb: (coll.) *she ups and gets engaged*, *they up and shoot themselves* (Rupert Brooke), with *up and* providing a suggestion of suddenness, unexpectedness. An eloquent example of the proliferation of B is: *double* (little –, neck–) or *nothing*, with overtones of gambling. Finally, a binomial may be stationed at the intersection of two currents of diffusion: thus, *once and for all* connects, on the one hand, with *once and again* (–and away):

on the other, with (*for*) *one and all* (*to hear*), *still and all*. The exact itinerary cannot, of course, be traced without painstaking attention to minute historical details <sup>46</sup>).

The power of this force is sufficient to overcome adverse rhythmic conditions: *hands and knees* called into being *elbows and knees*, much as *life or death* paved the way for *freedom or death*, though *elbows* and *freedom*, being distinctly longer than their partners, would normally tend to occupy the position of B. In other instances this force overrides considerations of social hierarchy, usually after some struggle: *cat and mouse*, obviously uninvertible, after some oscillation tipped the scales in favor of *cat and dog*, while *cock(s) and hen(s)* prepared the listener for *cock-and-bull* (*stories*): without this counterforce one would expect a dog to outrank a cat and a bull to eclipse a cock. Sometimes the connection is oblique: the matching of *hunger and thirst* (= G. *Hunger und Durst*), rhythmically awkward, derives its justification from *eat and drink*, smooth in every respect and demonstrably influential, since it was expanded into *eat, drink, and be merry*, left its impress on *eat and run*, and exerted lateral pressure on obs. *meat and drink*.

#### (F) *Transmission of sequences through loan translation*

The sixth isolable force engaged in the shaping of sequences is external diffusion, i.e., borrowing via loan translation. Literalism has at all times held sway in organized religion; so a dogma carries with it, across language borders, not only the elements of which it is composed, but, to the very limit to which syntax can be stretched, the design by which these constituents are soldered, cf. the various ren-

<sup>45</sup>) Otherwise a preposition very rarely matches an adjective (*by and large*, as against trivial *by the by*, *by and by*, Am.-E. *by and then*).

<sup>46</sup>) Similarly the geneticist may feel inclined to examine jointly *back and forth* (- and edge), *before and after* (- and behind), *black and blue* (- and white), *cold and damp* (- and wet), (*to play*) *fast-and-easy* (- and furious), (*the*) *long-and-short* (*of it*) beside (*to confer*) *long and hard*, *odds and ends* (rare var.: - and events), *over and above* (- and beyond). The cluster *life and soul*, *life or death*, (*threat to*) *life or limb*, (*the*) *lives and loves* (*of . . .*), *to live and learn*, *to live and let live* shows a more intricate convolution. *Pen and pencil* and *pen-and-ink* (*drawing*) may have originated independently, yet buttress each other. Examples from other languages: G. *kurz und gut* (- und bündig, -und kernig) and, in a broader sense, Pol. *to i owo, tędy (i) owędy, tam i zpowrotem*; Sp. *sano y salvo* (-y bueno).

ditions of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, frequently overruling rhythmic and other considerations. The poetic passages of the Old Testament, saturated with imagery, and the happenings and parables narrated in the Gospel abound in binomials with which many other languages have ever since been resounding: thus *cherubim* customarily precedes *seraphim*, *milk and honey* sounds so homemade as to remind few speakers of Ex. 3 : 8 (Hebr. 'æraeʃ zəbat ḥālāb ūdeḇāš), *loaves and fishes* 'material benefits' calls to mind John 6 : 9, 26. Lexical clusters and complete proverbial sayings traceable to pagan antiquity, such as *Scylla and Charybdis*, *bread and circuses* (L. *pānem et circēnsēs*), *divide and rule* (L. *dīvide et imperā*), *(the question) here and now* (*hīc et nunc*) also tend to assume the rôle of fixed binomials, even at the cost of breaking – as does the last-mentioned – a deeply ingrained native preference for a rhythmic model. Captain Bayard (1473–1524), long regarded as the embodiment of chivalric virtues, has gone down in history not only as *le chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*, but also, in German annals, as *der Ritter ohne Furcht und Tadel*, in Spanish, as *el caballero sin miedo y sin tacha*, and in Russian, as *rýcar' bez stráxa i upr'óka*, whereas English only partially follows the prototype: *fearless and faultless knight* <sup>47</sup>).

#### (G) *Interplay of the six forces*

The next step after isolating these six forces as best one can is to observe their subtle interplay. It is not uncommon to recognize two forces pressing jointly in the same direction, as in *(to play) cops and robbers*, *crown and country*, *drawn and quartered* (B, D); *to do or die*, *to make or break* (a man, one's future) (C, D); *black and chartreuse*, *blue and silver* (D, E.) On the other hand, forces counterbalancing or partially blocking one another are less often and less directly observed in action: Since binomials in many instances are something of a dispensable frill or adornment rather than a strict necessity for the conveyance of messages, they simply may not come into existence unless produced by an ensemble of favorable conditions. At rare intervals the relative magnitude of potentially opposing forces can be indirectly

<sup>47</sup>) Playful reduplicative words here excluded from further inquiry are also liable to migration: cf. *mishmash* ~ G. *Mischmasch*, *zigzag* ~ G. *Zickzack*, F. *zigzag*, the international *pingpong*, etc. In the process, their evocative power may be materially reduced.

gauged. Thus, the contrast between mandatory *life and/or death* (C) and prevalent *dead or alive* (D) suggests that the quantitative superiority of *alive* over *dead* (in numbers of phonemes, syllables, and morphemes), an excess tending to predetermine its place as member B, outweighs the latent claim of *dead* to the same position, on semantic or socio-cultural grounds <sup>48</sup>). However, the scanty evidence at hand does not encourage the establishment of any hierarchy – even remotely comparable to Bartoli's areal norms – by virtue of which any of the six forces here isolated would be shown conclusively, i.e., to the point of predictability, to take precedence over the others.

## XVI. AREAS OF APPLICATION

A dynamic speech community cheerfully accepting binomials as a welcome embellishment or a nourishing ingredient of oral and written expression may give tremendous impetus to their spread. Just as certain cultures delight in jokes, especially puns, or spice small talk and day-to-day messages with proverbs, riddles, or songs, so others seem to revel in interlarding with binomials actual utterances or the storehouse of available labels. Characteristic of the present-day American scene is the mushrooming use of binomials in all kinds of tags, titles, and names other than those – protected by tradition – of persons and geographic entities. Business is fully aware of this trend and alive to its challenge, and aggressive advertisement techniques have intensified a hundredfold the resultant “divertimento”.

Examples can be picked out at random, if one bothers to scan lists of book titles (especially, but not exclusively, fiction and drama): *Of Men and Marshes*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, *Pride and Prejudice* <sup>49</sup>);

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<sup>48</sup>) Attention has been drawn in earlier sections of this chapter to the resolution of some other conflicts, as visible in *elbows and knees*, *freedom or death*, *hunger and thirst* (E suspending D), and *divide and rule* (F suspending D). If subordination of the smaller to the larger unit and of the remote to the near-by be regarded as social conventions, then *chapter and verse* and *hither and yon* (cf. *here and there*) may rate as illustrations of B suspending D; in the case of the latter one may likewise invoke C as the driving force. The most elusive of the six forces is A, whose impact must be laboriously pieced together from fragmentary or lacunary historical evidence. One suspects its share of influence in the case of antirhythmic *Auto-and-Truck Rentals*.

<sup>49</sup>) Binomials in book titles are an old convention, especially where they announce the names of the chief protagonists: *Erec et Enide*, *Calisto y Melibea*,

motion pictures: *Chills and Frills*, *The Barbarian and the Geisha*; film series: *People and Places*; ballets: *Beauty and the Beast* < F. *La Belle et la Bête*; musicals: *Plain and Fancy*; radio shows: *Bid 'n' Buy*; popular magazines: *Sight and Sound*; trade journals: *Tailor and Cutter* (British); lectures of popular appeal: *Ranch and Range*; non-professional societies: *Pets and Pals*; funds: *Saints and Sinners*; clubs: *Town and Country*; contests: *Love and Life*; firms: *Cu! 'n' Curl* (Oakland hairdresser), *Stop (Park-) and Shop* Market; restaurants: *Owl and Turtle* (San Francisco); coffee-houses: *Cup 'n' Saucer*, *Sit 'n' Snack* (both in New York); services: *Wash-and-Wear* garments ("we clean 'em, you wear 'em"); miscellaneous catch words used by advertisers: *Nice 'n' Strong* (promoting facial tissues), *Ship and Travel*, *Shop and Save* <sup>50</sup>). All these labels patently cater to popular taste (note the fashionable substitution of studiously informal 'n' for academic *and*), and the whole trend ties in with mnemonically effective fancy names of bars and restaurants (*Hotsy-Totsy*), newspaper columns (*Flickety-Flack*; cf. *flic-flac*, the equivalent of G. *klipp*, *klapp*, and laugh-provoking *rickety*), also of brands and manufacturing techniques (*Hi-Fi* [hàj fáj] for *High fidelity records*). A further ramification of no mean importance is the order, especially if it is not alphabetical, in which the names of business partners appear, with B more often

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*Persiles y Sigismunda*, *Hermann und Dorothea*, *Ruslân i L'udmila*, *Tristan und Isolde*. Closer to modern taste is the coördination of abstracts (*The Decline and Fall* . . . , *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, *Grandeur et servitude* . . . , *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Prestuplénije i nakazánije*, *Vojná i mir*), of emblems (*Le rouge et le noir*), and of categories of persons, suggested by a plural, primarily among Russian novelists (Turgénev's *Ocy i déti* matches Dostojévskij's *Unžónnyje i oskorbl'ónnyje*; cf. D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* and the contemporary bestseller *The Naked and the Dead*), or by a singular (Moratín's *El viejo y la niña*). What sets off modernism at its least restrained is, first, the infiltration of "flashy" binomials into such fields, ordinarily averse to playfulness and flamboyance, as historically oriented humanities (M. I. Rostóvcev, *Élinstvo i iránstvo* . . . ; Yu. Tyn'ánov, *Arxaisty i novátory*) and pure science (H. George's *Progress and poverty* and Herdan's recent *Languages as choice and chance*); second, the ever quickening increase in frequency, which cannot be demonstrated without statistic tabulations; and third, the surprise element created by the juxtaposition of words rarely matched in unpretentious discourse (Maugham's *The Moon and Sixpence* and Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*).

<sup>50</sup>) The current fashion in American advertising is to avoid the use of a capital in spelling member B – for the sake of greater intimacy?

than not surpassing A in length: *Funk and Wagnalls*, *Mills and Malan* (co-owners of a Seattle shop), *Rodgers and Hammerstein*.

## XVII. SPECIAL STYLISTIC EFFECTS

Aside from their general spicing effect binomials may from time to time be called upon to perform specific duties of no slight concern to the stylistician.

In bilingual environment or among sophisticated users of a language discernibly composed of variegated lexical strains, some held esthetically in higher esteem than others, B may function as the gloss of an A too cryptic to be promptly apprehended or, conversely, as the disguise, the sublimation of an A too plain to satisfy by itself. Such situations, we recall, arose more than once throughout the long birth pangs of literary English.

In a different climate there may develop the fashion – conceivably restricted to certain styles or levels of discourse – of splitting, for emphasis' sake, any fissionable whole. Instead of lumping together (as the situation objectively demanded) all denizens of Burgos refusing hospitality to the Cid, the composer of the oldest extant Spanish epic visibly enjoyed segregating men from women ("mugieres e varones, burgeses e burgesas"); also, on more than one occasion he zestfully substituted for colorless "nobody" (*nadi*, *ninguno*) the gaudy binomial *moros nin cristianos* <sup>51</sup>). Less than a century later Gonzalo de Berceo perfected this technique of ornamental fission <sup>52</sup>).

The very cohesiveness of an irreversible binomial lends it a cachet of racy folk speech resisting artful elaboration by the literate. And yet masters of elegant English style have succeeded in denting this line of resistance as its most vulnerable point, namely where the identity of A and B neutralizes the issue of reversibility. An ornamental adjective inserted before B, supererogatory by colloquial standards, may embellish such a sequence at the discretion of a writer rhetorically inclined: *day after endless day* (*went by*), (*they trudged*) *mile after weary*

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<sup>51</sup>) See *Cantar de Mio Cid*, ed. R. Menéndez Pidal (Madrid, 1908-11; 2d ed., 1944-46), pp. 338, 374, 573, 766.

<sup>52</sup>) *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*, ed. Solalinde, quatr. 24 a-c: "Quantos que son en mundo justos e peccadores, / coronados e legos, reys e enperadores, / allí corremos todos, vassallos e sennores".

*mile* <sup>53</sup>). I know of no counterparts in other European languages of such gently extendible binomials.

As regards nonliterary style, suffice it to point out the numerous binomials used as effective circumlocutions in the "Australian" rhyming argot which has lately struck roots in the prisons of this country's West Coast <sup>54</sup>). The fundamental code of this argot consists in replacing a given word ("meaning") by two or more words of which the last ordinarily rhymes with it, thus providing the clue. Not all substitute groups are binomials, as here defined, but quite a few are:

*apple and banana* 'piano', *bacon and eggs* 'legs', *ball and bat* 'hat', *bing and biff* 'siff', i.e. 'syphilis', *bees and honey* 'money', *block and tackie* 'shackle', i.e. 'legiron' or 'handcuff', *boat and oar* 'whore', *bottle and glass* 'arse, buttocks', *bottle and stopper* 'copper', i.e. 'policeman', *brace and bits* 'tits', i.e. 'teats', *bread and jam* 'tram', *brothers and sisters* 'whiskers', *bubble and squeak* 'speak', *bugs and fleas* 'knees', *bull and cow* 'row', *cats and kitties* 'titties', i.e. 'breasts', *chair and cross* 'horse', *cheese and kisses* 'the Mrs.', i.e. 'one's wife', *cheese and spices* 'prices', i.e. 'morning line on horses', *chews and molasses* 'glasses', i.e. 'spectacles', *chip and chase* 'face', etc.

The enormous social range of the deliberately moulded or modified binomial is one of its most salient features, placing it in one class with protean and ubiquitous rhyme and alliteration <sup>55</sup>).

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<sup>53</sup>) This procedure is not without parallel; cf. concise *once in a while* beside more graphic *once in a long while*.

<sup>54</sup>) My information is based in its entirety on D. W. Maurer's stimulating and carefully documented article " 'Australian' rhyming argot in the American underworld", *Am. Sp.*, XIX (1944), 183-195.

<sup>55</sup>) Despite its restriction to a small number of better-known languages this paper affords hardly more than a fleeting glimpse of the total problem. Within this self-imposed limitation numerous side-issues such as the obvious link between *boy and girl*, *East and West* and *boy meets girl*, *East greets West* have been disregarded. Also, only the surface of the available bibliography has been skimmed. In retrospect, attention should particularly be drawn to R. D. Abraham's article "Fixed order of coördinates - a study in comparative lexicography", *MLJ*, XXXIV (1950), 276-287. The value of this study resides in a freshly collected pile of material (five hundred English and four hundred Spanish "coördinates", i.e., binomials, plus a handful of examples from German, French, and Italian thrown in for good measure); in the survey and judicious appraisal of earlier opinions voiced by O. Jespersen (1905), O. Behaghel (1909), F. N. Scott (1913), J. Morawski (1927), and the latter's predecessor C. Salvioni - all of them staunch supporters of rhythmic hypotheses and Morawski also a keen

## XVIII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In recent years, linguistic science has been experimenting on a generous scale with new delimitations and fresh groupings of facts. Essentially each proponent has had to show cause why his suggestion deserved attention, first, by arguing the inner logic of the segmentation advocated, its freedom from circularity and inconsistency (this point needs no restatement); and second, by defending its wisdom, the direct benefit scholarship may reap from its acceptance, and the amount of concessions and adjustments that this acceptance may entail.

To begin with the latter, irreversible binomials, not unlike the

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student of characteristic successions of sounds; and in his broad counter-proposal to the effect that an interplay of rhythmic and semantic forces determines the configuration of each formula. Less cogent, as the author himself admits in a series of candid disclaimers and retractions (pp. 285-286), is his proposed array of nine categories of semantic preference: "The desirable usually precedes the undesirable, the more important the less important, the light the dark, the masculine the feminine, the positive the negative, the principal the subsidiary, the greater the smaller, the near the far, the top the bottom, the present the future" (p. 284). Abraham cites many noteworthy examples here omitted, e.g. *bride and groom*, *dot and dash*, *flint and steel*, *Pat and Mike*, *push and pull*, *tall and thin*, and documents a few colorful "quadruplets" and even one "quint": *peanuts, popcorn, crackerjack, and candy*; Sp. *amar, honrar, cuidar y obedecer*; (Cub.) *Fulano, Zutano, Mengano y Esperancejo*; (vinieron) *Pedro, Pablo, Chucho, Jacinto y José* 'everybody came'.

Here are some additional bibliographic clues. L. Spitzer, "Estudios etimológicos", *AILC*, II (1942-44), 14, adduces some Latin "fórmulas bimembres . . . usuales en donaciones y testamentos". For Spanish W. Beinhauer, "Beiträge zu einer spanischen Metaphorik", *RF*, LV (1941), 1-56, 184-206, offers a storehouse of information (esp. 8, 17, 28, 30, 34, 39-40, 46-47, 191); on *corriente y moliente*, originally applied to smoothly running millstones, see M. Herrero, *RFE*, XXVII (1943), 93-94. E. Lommatzsch's Introduction (dated 1915) to Tobler-Lommatzsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*, I (Berlin, 1925), pp. xiii-xiv, lists groups such as *bec a bec, bien et bel, ne tite ne mite, tost et isnelement*, etc.; many pertinent passages have been examined in other contexts, cf. M. Roques, *Rom.*, LXXIII (1952), 194 (*Erec*); E. R. Curtius, *ZRPh.*, LXVIII (1952), 187 (*Girart de Vienne*), and M. Dubois' forthcoming review, in *RPh.*, of A. Burger's Villon vocabulary. The Italian scene was surveyed in C. Salvioni's masterly review (*GSLI*, XXXIX [1902], 366-391) of R. L. Taylor, *Alliteration in Italian* (New Haven, 1900); for new bits of information see S. Heinimann, "Einige affektische Verstärkungen der Negation im Italienischen", *VR*, XI (1950), 189-201 (esp. 190, 194, 200), and F. Ageno, "Premessa a un repertorio di frasi proverbiali",

characteristic varieties of hypercharacterization <sup>56</sup>), represent one of several features transcending the minimum bounds of linguistic economy and therefore serving the needs of expression much more than those of bare communication. In a cross-section of a language model they may claim a not inconspicuous place at or near the border-line between tightly structured grammar and loosely connected lexicon. Denude a language of its share of uninvertible binomials, and its "mechanism" can still be manipulated with reasonable efficiency; but it will have lost much of its rich orchestration. This is doubly true because binomials are so closely intertwined with other supporting devices through a system of alliances ("concomitancies") that any attempt to strip a language of them would unfailingly produce a far-reaching chain reaction.

The operational advantage of pressing into service binomials as here defined consists in that numerous loose ends disappear and that facts long deemed too elusive or accidental to warrant serious attention suddenly fall into tidy patterns, complex and partially overlapping, to be sure, but nonetheless confirmed by each new finding.

Binomials can be satisfactorily examined within the framework of grammar at its austere. But the results of the analysis become incomparably richer and scarcely less precise if one takes into account not only the morphological skeleton, but also the semantic, stylistic, and broadly cultural pulp and teguments.

YAKOV MALKIEL

*University of California*

to appear in *RPh*. Spitzer's stylistic approach, in terms of affectivity (hysteron proteron; see *Aufsätze zur romanischen Syntax und Stilistik* [Halle, 1918], pp. 274–280), was sharply rejected by K. Ringenson ("Dies et diu-num", *St. N*, X [1937–38], 33–34 and 46). A purely literary opposition, such as Med. Lat. (12th-century) *nani et gigantes* (J. de Ghellinck, *ALMA*, XVIII [1945], 25–29), need not have left any linguistic reflex. Interesting side-issues include the use of onomatopoeia: "nec mu nec ma argutas" (Petronius, 57.8; A. Ernout: 'Tu ne sais dire ni a ni b'), cf. OProv. *ni bat ni but*, etc. (I. Frank, "Babariol – barbarian dans Guillaume IX", *Rom.*, LXXIII [1952], 229); the loss of meaning suffered by a loan translation, as when G. *das a und das o* lamely imitates *alpha and omega*; the suggestive shape of certain fictional names, such as Gogol's *L'âphkin-T'âphkin*; the slightly archaic overtone – a potential source of elegance – attaching to *peu ou prou*, *sans feu ni lieu* in modern French (cf. M. Bataillon, *BH*, LIV [1952], 290, 323).

<sup>56</sup>) See *ArL*, IX (1957), 79–113; X (1958), 1–36.