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Functional Grammar in Denmark.

A preprint on the occasion of the Fourth International Conference on Functional Grammar. Copenhagen, May 1990. Published by: The Functional Grammar Committee, Department of English, University of Copenhagen, Njalsgade 80, DK - 2300 Copenhagen S

Since generative grammar and glossematics are wrong, which framework will be useful to linguistics? Peter Harder asks this question and we all ought to answer it.

There are many reasons why a common framework will be fruitful. Within a common framework linguists can discuss and help each other, cooperate, while avoiding the risks of becoming more and more narrow-minded from doing science in their individual small areas, or amateurish, from trying to cover a large field while the others go deeper into narrow areas.

Generative Grammar and Glossematics are wrong, according to Peter Harder, because of their status as representatives of the 'formal' as opposed to the 'functional' paradigm.

Glossematics is basically formalist in the sense that 'form' is assumed to take priority over 'substance'. Dependency relations exist, but are not the stuff of which all linguistic facts are made. So the attempt to base a whole theory of language on such foundations is bound to lead to serious shortcomings.

Chomskyan Generative Grammar suffers from other shortcomings: At the heart of Chomsky's conception of language lies the notion of generative, syntactic principles - those which he believes to be genetically determined. But the type of ability that he focusses on is similar to fairly simple mathematical devices. Linguistic creativity in Chomsky's sense is like the creativity that enables us to go on counting: because we know the structure of language we can construct new sentences. And if some types of sentence are ungrammatical, the reason is sought in formal principles of syntactic combinability; principles of hierarchical structure and linear order. To the extent that combinability is a matter of what makes sense, this is largely ignored by generativists.

The functional paradigm in linguistics, which Simon Dik has introduced in reaction to generative grammar, relies on the use of language in communication as the basic linguistic fact to which all linguistic description must ultimately refer. Pragmatics is seen as the all-encompassing framework within which all subdisciplines must take their place; syntax is seen as instrumental in relation to semantics, and semantics with respect to pragmatics. The syntactic framework of Functional Grammar allows many issues to be raised and related in a descriptive procedure which seems to be flexible enough to make discussion between various views on individual issues fruitful. As a final point, Harder shows how the Functional Grammar framework may be useful as a way of organizing linguistic description so that different areas of linguistics can be related in a natural and revealing way.

In these few lines I am not able to do justice to Peter Harder's well argued and varied article.

Ole Tøgeby: *Speech Acts and Information Structure in Functional Grammar*. This article demonstrates that Functional Grammar has adequate categories for stating the rules for expressing pragmatic functions by grammatical means. The distinction between predicates and terms, between arguments and satellites, between operators and operands, and between levels of meaning are all adequate tools for explaining how pragmatic functions are expressed.

Lone Schack Rasmussen: *Case Relations and Functional Grammar*.

Lone Schack Rasmussen improves the Semantic Function inventory in order to make it possible to reformulate the semantic function hierarchy in such a way that it accounts for the relationship between semantic and syntactic functions without leaving part of the semantic functions out of the hierarchy. She shows that a model that does not concentrate all the semantic information on the Semantic Functions, but distributes it over different semantic factors, is preferable because, in spite of its simplicity, it attains a higher degree of flexibility and descriptive capacity. Some predicate frames turn out to be sufficient to give an adequate representation of the coded meaning of the Spanish verbs. Some of its main advantages reside in the fact that it offers an instrument for defining the semantic functions as belonging to a clearly delimited inventory, and that it shows that the "relational meaning of terms" is a combinatorial product of several semantic factors attached to the predicate.

Lisbeth Falster Jakobsen: *On Subject and Object Assignment in Danish. Der kom en soldat marcherende hen ad landevejen: Een, to! As*

not only argument constituents, but also satellites and other sentence constituents are the carriers of the pragmatic assignments, Lisbeth Falster Jakobsen proposes to set up a new “dimension” which deals with all sentence constituents as entities in their own right, regardless of their “derivational” history through the layers of the model. As a side issue she proposes a reconsideration of object assignment: closer general attention should be paid to the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations in the theory: the assumption of more or less closely knit paradigms in the Fund might account for many related phenomena without necessarily squeezing them into some grammatical rule. Her final proposal is a device to account for subject demotion in Danish - in this article called object assignment.

The following articles, which are also interesting, are included in the same volume:

Ole Nedergaard Thomsen: *Unit Accentuation as an Expression Device for Predicate Formation in Danish.*

Lars Kristoffersen: *Predicate Formation in West Greenlandic*

Michael Fortescue: *Aspect and Superaspect in Koyukon: an Application of the Functional Grammar Model to a Polysynthetic Language.*

Harmut Haberland & Ole Nedergaard Thomsen: *Grammatical Relations in a Functional-Pragmatic Grammar.*

Many linguists have felt that existing frameworks or linguistic schools have insufficient tools to give an adequate and integrated treatment of the relation between morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics in language performance. However, within Functional Grammar it seems possible to propose answers to how pragmatic and semantic categories correspond to grammatical categories, and how meanings and functions are expressed and signalled from the speaker to the audience.

