

NOTES AND DISCUSSION

A PRACTICAL THEORY OF SYNTAX FOR TRANSLATION*

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0. *Introduction:*

The entire theory of syntax depends on an exact morphological definition of the *Verb* used as a 'predicate' in a 'proposition', all other associated elements being 'arguments' to the predicate. If a definition of the *Verb*, morphological or otherwise, is difficult to arrive at, one could at least identify the characteristics of a verb by listing them, or identify the verbs by listing the verbs themselves. In other words the 'Verb' is one of our primitive concepts, more or less taken to be a self-evident entity on an intuitive basis.

In whatever way a Verb has been conceived, all syntactic structures are defined in terms of it.

For purposes of translation, the levels of *syntax*, *morphology* and *lexicon* are mutually matched between any two languages that form the source and target languages of translation, in order to relate the respective language specific characteristics.

It is assumed further that the underlying 'universal' *amorphous* syntax is the same for both languages.

1. *Definitions:*

1.1. Morphological and syntactic constructions can occur as telescopic structures one within the other in an almost endless chain, limited only by practical necessity. The outermost structure is taken to be the 'macrostructure' or 'sentence'. We shall call it the *S-structure* here.

1.2. Such an S-structure is one that contains, as its *immediate* inner members, *one* (and only one) 'Verb' (simple or complex, to be described under a suitable grammar of verb morphology) and one or more *P-structures*, which are the 'arguments' of the 'verb' that represents the 'predicate' in a 'proposition'.

1.3. A P-structure is one that does *not* contain a verb as an *immediate* inner member. It may, however, contain as its immediate inner members other P-structures or a *C-structure*.

1.4. A C-structure is one that contains a verb as one of its immediate inner constituents along with one or more P-structures.

Unlike the S-structure, in which the verb may occasionally be elided or absent, a verb is obligatory as an immediate inner member in a C-structure.

1.5. A *Marker* is a structural constituent that helps to indicate the relationship between the structure to which it is attached and the immediate *outer* structure that contains it. A marker is attached to every immediate inner member of an outer structure.

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