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Leonhard Lipka

The 13th International Congress of Linguists in  
Tokyo

Mr. Chairman - Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have been asked to give a report on the 13th International Congress of Linguists, held from 29 August to 4 September in Tokyo. Although this is a mission impossible to accomplish - in view of the dimensions of the conference and the simultaneity of several of its features - I shall try my best to give you an impression, which is by necessity both limited and subjective.

It is perhaps not unfair to say that the unformulated general theme of the discussions may be summed up under the motto "away from Chomsky". I will return to this point. Nevertheless, I find it most convenient to place the following remarks under headings derived from the Chomskyan dichotomy of deep and surface structure.

1. First to the Surface Structure of the Congress.

The number of participants, according to the official list, was 1420. A miniscule fraction of these were made up by anglicists that in principle belong to our group. Colleagues present were (in alphabetical order): Fries, Kühlwein, Leitner, Nickel, Viereck, Wienold, and myself (not in alphabetical order). Besides plenary sessions and 26 working groups, a total of 20 section meetings were held. For these sections a reading committee had chosen 222 principal speakers and 54 alternates, after turning down half of the submitted papers. It is clear that merely reading out the titles of the 222 papers would take up all the time we have tonight, including that for the reception by the city of Zurich. I will also refrain from giving a complete list of sections and working groups. However, I think it may be useful to characterize the plenary sessions and name the main contributors, since this will throw light on the weighting of the various branches

of linguistics and on the focus of the 1982 meeting.

Plenary sessions were held Monday through Friday from 9.30 to 12.00 a.m. and from 2.00 to 4.30 p.m. with the exception of Wednesday, left free for excursions and the banquet. Unfortunately, working groups met at the same time, viz. from 10.30 to 3.30 p.m. every day, thus making it impossible for participants to follow these groups and the plenary meetings.

There were 8 plenary sessions in all, beginning with "Syntax and Semantics" on Monday morning, with Givón, Kuno, and Shibatani as reporters, and "Syntax" in the afternoon, featuring Culioli, Simon C. Dik, Hudson, and Wasow. Tuesday morning had Bierwisch, Coseriu, and Lawrence Birnbaum contributing to "Semantics", while in the afternoon Aronoff, Dressler, Levi, and Zwicky spoke on the topic of "Morphology". The fifth session on Thursday morning dealt with "Phonetics and Phonology" with Henderson, Lehiste, and John J. Ohala reporting. Next was "Historical Linguistics", reporters being Theodora Bynon, Tovar, and Watkins. A plenary session on "Psycholinguistics" was held on Friday morning, featuring Levelt, Oksaar, and Slama-Cazacu. The final, eighth meeting was devoted to "Sociolinguistics" with contributions by Haugen, Knobloch, and Mackey.

Thus syntax and semantics were most prominent, both being discussed in two sessions each, while half a day only was devoted to morphology, phonetics and phonology, historical linguistics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics respectively. I believe that this is a rather balanced and representative division of the wide field, which at the same time faithfully reflects current trends and interests in linguistics. Let me conclude the superficial outline of this central component of the conference by saying that preprints of the plenary session papers had been distributed well in advance, so that the oral presentation was usually confined to a relatively short summary or further specification of certain points, which left ample room for discussion in the meetings themselves.

The section meetings also took up the topics of the plenary sessions in eight groups. Furthermore there were sections on the recent history of linguistics, word semantics, text-linguistics, prag-

matics, semiotics, and writing systems, to name only a few. The most remarkable subjects were discussed in the working groups. Let me pick out those I find noteworthy and unusual: mood and modality, universals of linguistic action, interdisciplinary perspectives in linguistics through nonverbal communication studies, nonverbal behaviour for linguists, shared knowledge in language use, intonation, functional grammar, language contact in Europe, Japanese expressions in news reporting, and the origin of Japanese (the latter two being the only direct contributions here concerned with the language of the host country).

I would like to finish this part of my report with a remark on the languages used. The vast majority of contributions on all levels were made in English. In the plenary session two reporters used French and one spoke German. Both French and German were also used by several people in the section meetings, but these languages definitely represented a very strongly marked option.

## 2. I now turn to the Deep Structural Content of the Congress.

As mentioned before my presentation is bound to be subjective, and it is affected by the simultaneous and parallel course of events. Thus, plenary sessions and working groups were held largely concurrently, and up to six section meetings took place at the same time. Since I have not yet developed the gift of ubiquity, I can only report on a single event at a time.

The first plenary session on Syntax and Semantics and the afternoon session on Syntax were clearly no longer dominated by an orthodox generative approach on the basis of autonomous syntax. Functionalism was in the centre of most contributions. Thus, Givón, in his paper "Typology and Functional Domains" argued for functional domains, such as e.g. 'topic identification', that represent a continuum (e.g. from zero anaphora to cleft constructions) and are said to be "reasonably universal". Kuno discussed "Principles of Discourse Deletion", claiming that less important information is deleted first and more important information last. Shibatani's paper was entitled "Toward an Understanding of the Typology and Function of Case-Marking". He point-

ed out that the most obvious function of case-marking is discriminatory and that many languages have mixed (ergative and accusative) case-marking systems.

The outstanding contribution, in my opinion, was Dik's "Some Basic Principles of Functional Grammar". Arguing for a functional view of natural language, his model attempts to yield functional explanations, pragmatic adequacy, and psychological adequacy. He distinguishes three levels of function: 1. *Semantic Functions* (Agent, Goal, Recipient, etc.), 2. *Syntactic Functions* (Subject and Object), and 3. *Pragmatic Functions* (Theme and Tail, Topic and Focus). Semantic functions are coded in predicate-frames which are the building blocks for predications. These are mapped into linguistic expressions through 'expression rules'.

Hudson's attempt to introduce another non-transformational theory of language structure, called 'Word Grammar', did not seem particularly convincing to me. More limited in scope than the other papers was the "Interim Report" on idioms by Wasow and others, which considered the place of idioms in generative grammar.

The morning session on Tuesday, on Semantics, was rather disappointing to my mind. Bierwisch's paper on "Formal and Lexical Semantics" was concerned with the conceptual interpretation of lexical items and the role of thematic relations in compositional structure. Both topics were treated on a rather abstract level. In the presentation and discussion, Bierwisch was rather longwinded, vague, and repetitive. Coseriu's contribution "Pour et contre l'analyse sémique", was a summary of his well-known position, which he further outlined in his oral statement and in his answers to relatively few questions. An unexciting joint paper entitled "Integrating Semantics and Pragmatics" was presented and defended by Lawrence Birnbaum.

The best plenary session I attended was the one deceptively labelled "Morphology". Practically all papers under this surface title were concerned with word-formation. Aronoff's contribution entitled "Potential Words, Actual Words, Productivity and Frequency" reported work on the productivity of the 'Word Formation Patterns' -iveness, -ivity, -ibleness, and -ibility, attesting the death of -ibleness.



Dressler dealt with "Word Formation in Natural Morphology". According to him 'Natural Morphology' investigates universals based on extralinguistic entities or semiotic principles containing naturalness scales. It is functional, with one function expressed by several techniques and one technique serving more than one function. For Dressler, the functions of word formation rules are the enlarging of the lexicon and the motivation of complex words. Material from a wide range of languages was used for illustration.

The paper by Levi, "Complex Nominals: New Discoveries, New Questions", was based on her dissertation of 1978 on the same subject, but contained several novel problems and points of view and an outline for research. The term 'Complex Nominal (CN)' encompasses three sets of data: 1. Compound Nouns (such as *apple cake*), 2. Nominalizations (such as *parental refusal*), and 3. Denominal Adjectives + Nouns (such as *musical clock*). For Levi all non-lexicalized CNs can be transformationally derived by just two processes: predicate deletion and predicate nominalization. The last paper in this session by Zwicky, was entitled "An expanded View of Morphology in the Syntax-Phonology Interface". He argued that in a broadly conceived generative-transformational framework morphology could be said to contain several distinct components: 1. **word formation rules**, 2. **allomorphy rules**, and 3. **morpho-phonemic rules**. The latter were said to be distinct from the phonological component proper. Furthermore Zwicky recognizes a relational, a syntactic, and a lexical component.

With the exception of Dressler, all reporters confined themselves to non-lexicalized complex lexemes. In the discussion it was admitted that lexicalization is an extremely important phenomenon in morphology, which should be included and investigated in future research.

The topic of word-formation that had been one of the main features of the 1977 International Congress of Linguists at Vienna also came up in various section meetings, especially in the one on Morphology. There, two papers were concerned with lexical derivation in Dutch, one with German prefixal verbs, and one with derived feminine words in Modern Hebrew. Gender switching and a tendency to feminize in Canadian French were discussed by another speaker. A further presen-

tation dealt with the velar nasal in Standard English and posited a g-insertion rule to account for the ŋ/ŋg alternations, as in *singer* vs. *finger*.

The section on 'Word Semantics' also contained a paper on word-formation, viz. my own contribution entitled "A Multi-Level Approach to Word-Formation: Complex Lexemes and Word Semantics". I argued that the differences between complex and simple lexemes are best captured by such an approach, which includes morphological, syntactic, functional, and pragmatic aspects, but especially semantics. In this section there was quite a variety of topics, ranging from an investigation of the meanings of Italian *da*, over Hebrew words of dress, to a Montague analysis of English verbs of motion. Our colleague Kühlwein read a paper in contrastive lexicology on the meaning and use of the terms of *beauty* in French and English.

The last section meeting I can report on is the one on 'Text-linguistics and Discourse Analysis'. Within this frame our colleague and present host Udo Fries made a very sound and convincing case for a diachronic textlinguistics. His proposal for establishing a diachronic dimension in the field, together with his demonstration of the aspects neglected in the past, seems to have been well taken. Another outstanding paper in this section, in my opinion, was by Roger van de Velde on "Coherence Relations in Texts and Inferential Processing". Further contributions were concerned with Basque sentences and discourse, discourse analysis of translation, the flow of discourse in English and Japanese, and sentence order in Japanese.

I would not like to finish this report without mentioning the titles of the papers read by the remaining anglicist colleagues present at Tokyo. Leitner spoke on "Indian English, A Critique of Ethnographic Analysis", Nickel on "Contrastive Linguistics, Error Analysis and Their Relevance for Language Planning Including Language Minimization", Viereck on "Presentation and Interpretation of English Dialects: Computer-Assisted Projects", and Wienold on "Linguistics-Based Revision of Foreign Language Teaching Materials".

Let me close with an overall characterization of the Congress: as noted before, the influence of Chomsky and generative syntax has

almost disappeared from present-day linguistics. The days of transformational orthodoxy are gone. Functionalism of various shapes can be found in many contributions. Pragmatic aspects of language are widely recognized. A further distinctive feature of the conference, particularly noticeable in the working groups, was the strong interdisciplinary tendency in modern linguistics. I believe that all this variety is to be welcomed and preferred to the more orderly but sterile orthodoxy of the past.

One very last remark which was well planned and should have provided coherence with the next report. A group of European linguists, at the end of the Congress, travelled home via a two-day stop in Hongkong. I understood that the next speaker on our programme, J. Spencer, is from Hongkong. Although we didn't meet then, I had hoped to meet him today and to hand on to him. But apparently he has stayed in Hongkong. So instead I simply say: thank you very much for listening.