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GRAMMATICAL FEATURES OF THE LEXICON OF LIGHT INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT: - This unique three-volume survey brings together a team of leading scholars to explore the syntactic and morphological structures of the world's languages. Clearly organized and broad-ranging, it covers topics such as parts of speech, passives, complementation, relative clauses, adverbial clauses, inflectional morphology, tense, aspect mood, and deixis. The contributors look at the major ways that these notions are realized, and provide informative sketches of them at work in a range of languages. Each volume is accessibly written and clearly explains each new concept introduced. Although the volumes can be read independently, together they provide an indispensable reference work for all linguists and field workers interested in cross-linguistic generalizations. Most of the chapters in the second edition are substantially revised or completely new – some on topics not covered by the first edition. Volume iii covers typological distinctions in word formation; lexical typologies; inflectional morphology; gender and noun classes; aspect, tense, mood; and lexical nominalization.

KEYWORDS: Lexicon grammar, usage, feature.

INTRODUCTION

Language typology studies what the languages of the world are like. When people ask 'What is linguistics?', from my point of view one of the best answers is 'the study of what the languages of the world are like'. I an honoured to have been joined by some excellent linguists in the achievement of this second edition of Language Typology and Syntactic Description for Cambridge University Press. I am especially grateful to Matthew Dryer for coming in as co-editor when my health began to fail. Many thanks also to Lea Brown, for the

invaluable help she gave Matthew in preparing the manuscript. The Australian National University has always been generous in its support of my work. Except for the two and a half years I lived in Cairns, 2001 to 2003, it has been my base since I moved to Australia in 1975. I recognize the support I received from James Cook University during my time in Cairns. I came up with the idea used to organize the first edition at a conference on field work questionaires held at the Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC. I said the best way to prepare for field work is to gain a good idea of what to look for. People thought this was right so I was asked to do the organizing. There have been surveys in the past but I believe none with this scope. The first edition has served as a reference manual and a textbook around the world and I have no doubt the second edition will as well. I have been pleased by the number of good linguists who have told me they have referred to our survey while doing field work valuable to us all. Interest in the question of what the languages of the world are like is a longstanding one, but in the modern era Joseph Greenberg is an outstanding scholar who did important early work himself and was a model for others to do the same. In an obituary for Joseph Greenberg by Steve Miller the distinction is made between taxonomists who are lumpers and splitters. Steve Miller says: It is fitting that it was Darwin who first thought of the distinction between lumpers and splitters; the OED gives him the first citation of the words as applied to taxonomists. Lumpers gloss over or explain differences in pursuit of hidden unities; splitters do the opposite, stressing diversity Joseph Greenberg was a linguistic lumper and his dream of recreating the ur-language of humanity must stand as one of the greatest lumping dreams of all time. He dreamed of deep unity, and he spent an extremely long career pursuing evidence for it. He was still publishing highly technical evidence when he died, at age 85. It is sad that he never published a manifesto, but he was a scientist and his inductive sensibility was not prone to making sweeping statements unsupported by minute attention to evidence. The nearest he came was in his conclusion to the controversial 1987 Language in the Americas, a book that grouped all languages in the western hemisphere into three families: 'The ultimate goal is a comprehensive classification of what is very likely a single language family. The implications of such a classification for the origin and history of our species would, of course, be very great.' Very great, as in, language was invented once and we might even have some ideas about what that language sounded like. I was with Joseph Greenberg at Stanford University when he was doing his work, scouring through the part of the library that had grammars, making his counts: if you find construction x in a language you will always find, or you will be likely to find, construction y. This kind of commonality intrigued him. More from Steve Miller: The splitters of linguistics have this problem: they're just not as interesting as the lumpers. The splitters' story is that the origins of language are irretrievable, so we should value every language for its expressive ability, but not for its place in the grand drama of linguistic diffusion. Greenberg, and the Nostraticists, and others who have tried to talk about language as a unity, dreamed something that may never be provable, but will continue to inspire us as a story that unites the human race as part of an ongoing story. We give aid to both the lumpers and the splitters but I believe most of all to the lumpers. Languages differ from each other but only to a certain degree. Humankind is united in its use of language. This is an important message for us all as we go about our pursuits and combine with others to deal with the world.

The traditional parameters used for morphological typology of languages starting from the nineteenth century were largely based on the differences in their internal word structure. These parameters are of two kinds. The first one is based on the transparency of morphological boundaries between the morphemes within a grammatical word, and the second one relates to the degree of internal complexity of words (see E. Sapir (1921)). 2.1 Transparency of word-internal boundaries Based on this parameter, three types of language are recognized: isolating, agglutinating, and fusional. An isolating language typically has a one-to-one correspondence between a morpheme and a word; that is, in such a language every morpheme is an independent word. An example of an almost perfectly isolating language is Vietnamese, as illustrated in (1) (Thompson (1987:207)). (1) Chi ˆ ay quˆ ´ en s/he anaphoric forget 'She (or he) forgets', or 'She (or he) has forgotten', or 'She (or he) will forget' Every word in this sentence is invariable. There is no morphological variation for tense, or for grammatical function. Where English grammar would require a reference to time in the verb in every sentence, in speaking Vietnamese one is not required to have this. The time reference is understood from the context; so (1) could also be translated as 'She (or he) has forgotten' or as 'She (or he) will forget'. If time reference is important, a time word or an aspect marker – also a separate word – can be inserted. In (2), an 'anterior' aspect marker is used in the same sentence as (1) to indicate that the action of 'forgetting' started before the time of the utterance. The notion of structure in word-formation implies that some items in the lexicon can be considered partially motivated in terms of an association between their form and their meaning. Some words in a language are 'unanalysable'; the association between form and meaning is conventionalized by speakers' usage. Other words consist of isolable parts with form and meaning of their own combined in a principled way. Languages differ in how much derivational motivation (and hence derivational complexity) they allow for individual words. For instance, the body-part terms eye, beard or moustache in English are not decomposable; the association between their phonological form and their meanings can be considered arbitrary. In contrast, the word eye-lash consists of two parts, eye and lash, each of which relates to an independent word. The existence of parallel formations in the language (e.g. eye-brow, finger-nail, etc.) confirms the idea of the regularity of the relationship between eye and lash. Decomposable terms in some languages can correspond to non-decomposable ones in others, e.g. Portuguese c´ılio 'eyelash'.

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