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Abstracts:

COORDINATE GRAMMAR

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Chomsky (1959a) presented an algorithm for constructing a finite transducer that is strongly equivalent to a Chomsky-normal-form context-free grammar for all sentences generated by that grammar with up to any specified finite degree of center embedding. This article presents a new solution using a variety of COORDINATE GRAMMAR to assign nonembedding (paratactic) structures strongly equivalent to those assigned by an embedding grammar, which can in turn be directly computed by a finite transducer. It proposes that the bound on center embedding is really a consequence of a bound on alternation between right and left embedding, called here ZIGZAG EMBEDDING. Coordinate grammars can also be used to assign nonembedding structures equivalent to those with up to any specified finite degree of coordinate embedding (the occurrence of a coordinate structure as a member of a coordinate structure of the same type). It concludes that coordinate grammars or the finite transducers strongly equivalent to them are psychologically real, and that the existence of a finite bound on the degree of zigzag and coordinate embedding is a consequence of the increasing size and complexity of such grammars or transducers as the bound increases.

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**STRUCTURAL PHYLOGENY IN HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS: METHODOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS
APPLIED IN ISLAND MELANESIA**

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Using various methods derived from evolutionary biology, including maximum parsimony and Bayesian phylogenetic analysis, we tackle the question of the relationships among a group of Papuan isolate languages that have hitherto resisted accepted attempts at demonstration of interrelatedness. Instead of using existing vocabulary-based methods, which cannot be applied to these languages due to the paucity of shared lexemes, we created a database of STRUCTURAL FEATURES—abstract phonological and grammatical features apart from their form. The methods are first tested on the closely related Oceanic languages spoken in the same region as the Papuan languages in question. We find that using biological methods on structural features can recapitulate the results of the comparative method tree for the Oceanic languages, thus showing that structural features can be a valid way of extracting linguistic history. Application of the same methods to the otherwise unrelatable Papuan languages is therefore likely to be similarly valid. Because languages that have been in contact for protracted periods may also converge, we outline additional methods for distinguishing convergence from inherited relatedness.

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THE ROLE OF SEMANTICS, ARGUMENT STRUCTURE, AND LEXICALIZATION IN COMPOUND STRESS ASSIGNMENT IN ENGLISH

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It is generally assumed that noun-noun compounds in English are stressed on the left-hand member (e.g. *cóurtroom*, *wáitchmaker*). However, there is a large amount of variation in stress assignment (e.g. *silk tíe*, *Madison Ávenue*, *singer-sóngwriter*) whose significance and sources are largely unaccounted for in the literature. This article presents a study in which three kinds of factors held to play a role in compound stress assignment are tested: argument structure, lexicalization, and semantics. The analysis of 4,353 noun-noun compounds extracted from the Boston University Radio Speech Corpus shows that there is indeed a considerable amount of variation in stress assignment. Overall, semantics turns out to have the strongest effect on compound stress assignment, whereas an approach relying on argument structure is much less successful in predicting compound stress. The article presents for the first time large-scale empirical evidence for the assumption that lexicalization has an effect on compound stress assignment. The article also makes a methodological contribution to the debate in showing that (and how) corpus-based studies using acoustic measurements can shed new light on the issue of variable compound stress.

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THE LOGICAL STRUCTURE OF LINGUISTIC THEORY

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The object of inquiry in linguistics is the human ability to acquire and use a natural language, and the goal of linguistic theory is an explicit characterization of that ability. Looking at the communicative abilities of other species, it becomes clear that our linguistic ability is specific to our species, undoubtedly a product of our biology. But how do we go about determining the specifics of this Language faculty? There are two primary ways in which we infer the nature of Language from the properties of individual languages: arguments from the POVERTY OF THE STIMULUS, and the search for universals that characterize every natural language. Arguments of the first sort are not easy to construct (though not as difficult as sometimes suggested), and apply only to a tiny part of Language as a whole. Arguments from universals or typological generalizations are also quite problematic. In phonology, morphology, and syntax, factors of historical development, functional underpinnings, and limitations of the learning situation, among others, conspire to compromise the explanatory value of arguments from observed crosslinguistic regularities. Confounding the situation is the likelihood that properties found across languages as a consequence of such external forces have been incorporated into the Language faculty evolutionarily through the BALDWIN EFFECT. The conflict between the biologically based specificity of the human Language faculty and the difficulty of establishing most of its properties in a secure way cannot, however, be avoided by ignoring or denying the reality of either of its poles.

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