

Cognitax Tool Grammar: Re-factoring the Generative Program  
A pervasive action dimension for linguistic description, theory and models <sup>12</sup>

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Working Version 29.0

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

For a short introduction to the approach and concepts of Tool Grammar see (Smith L. , 2017): “[On Tool Grammar](#)”, *Inference: A Review of Science*, Vol. 3 Issue 3 2017 In response to: Noam Chomsky “[The Galilean Challenge](#)” (Vol. 3, No. 1), a somewhat different version of which appears here in section 4.

<http://inference-review.com/article/on-tool-grammar>

This is a preliminary and frequently changing dynamic document responsive to reader critique and is likely not the latest version available by contacting the author. (Note the title has changed.<sup>3</sup>) The later version always supersedes the earlier and typically may include major revisions. Comments and challenges are welcome for future versions. The extended version under development is freely available on request from the author.

The most recent version is typically found on LingBuzz.

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<sup>1</sup> We are indebted for the incisive comments of readers who suggested constructive improvements even as the ideas presented here were sometimes at considerable variance with their own current working frameworks. We owe special thanks to the following for comments on either parts or the whole of this work: John Hewson, Paul Postal, Vit Bubenik, Pieter Seurens and Willem de Reuse.

<sup>2</sup> We had considered an alternative title for this paper since it seeks to explain malformation: “A Review of Verbal Misbehavior”

<sup>3</sup> From version 12.9 ‘Cognitax’ replaces ‘Pragmatax’ to clarify that Tool Grammar is distinct from pragmatics, as well as separate work that may refer to grammatical tools. Both were absent from the title in an earlier version.

## Change Log

- 2018-12-19
  - Two sections now published as journal articles
  - Inverted Number chapter appeared in 2020
  - Reflexivization chapter expanded and updated, largely excised here
  - Added very preliminary rough working section on ergativity.
  - Minor. Changes
- 2018-4-2019
  - Inverted number published in Etudes/Inuit Studies 43: 1-2 2020
  - Added section: reflections on articles in Inference on-line journal
  - Improvements to section on reflexives as management of uncertainty
- 2018 -6-5
  - Added commentary on article in InferenceReview
- 2020-09-25 Minimal edits, minimal cleanup, Reflexivity, Ergativity separated out
- 2020-11-13 Major reorganization
- 2020-12-12 Revise some sections in preparation for publication

## Operative Motivating Hypotheses of Tool Grammar

1. A modest change in the generative grammar paradigm adverting to structural intention results in a superseding architecture enabling oversize new descriptive and explanatory advantages, as well as reintegration within larger theories of cognition. This remedies the difficulties arising from a generative model of linguistic cognition which has no inputs.
2. There exists an empirically evident necessity for representation of linguistic structural action intent which has been generally overlooked in the theory of language, including centralized configurational syntax in the generative program. A mathematical system without inputs is ill-suited to model a human generative process. Linguistic structural actions are atoms of human language: they write on a mental blackboard to which linguistic (trans)formations and insertions refer.
3. Linguistic structural action intent extends the basic Chomskyan focus on linguistic creativity (unbounded generation from finite means) to a new level of representation useful for explaining and constraining the inventive means by which the species-specific features of human language are effected. Theoretical gains are sought by extending the Chomskyan idea to generation of structure from intent.
4. The inclusion of intention in linguistic rules both enables solutions of resistant and intractable problems, and otherwise enables a wider set of more generalized and more natural solutions while probing explanations for the profoundly important syntactic observational effects uncovered by generativist methodology (e.g. locality, crossover, C-command, control).
5. The exclusion of linguistic intention and action from generative rules introduces artefactual complexity and precludes the strongest possible natural constraints on characterizations of the human faculty of language.
6. Theorizing based on linguistic action intent leads to thinner, simplified, more directly empirical argumentation compared to the indirections necessitated by complex syntactic analysis based on central configurational syntax.
7. The inclusion of linguistic action intent in generative rules enables a deepening understanding of the role of generative constructs such as C-Command and Merge in the computational facility which underlies human language, revealing a new level of significance for Minimalism's most basic claims.
8. Functional explanations based on linguistic intent for a wide range of unacceptable sentences contribute to an understanding how human languages are readily learned largely in the absence of exposure to negative data.

9. Careful examination of linguistic intent as a methodology can greatly reduce the entropy of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic theory by independently explaining a plethora of ill formed sentences in a straightforward way, leaving a more tractable set of separate theoretical problems for these disciplines.
10. Scientific validity is enhanced by revising the architecture of generative linguistics from a bi-directional sound-meaning connection to a functional connection between linguistic action intention and external linguistic representation.

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## 1 Introduction and Summary<sup>4</sup>

Are there alternate paths to explanatory theories based on extensions or revisions of Chomsky's programmatic axioms and architecture of linguistic competence? Specifically, might scientific validity be enhanced by re-factoring the architecture of generative linguistics from a directly mathematical sound-meaning connection to a functional connection between linguistic intention and linguistic expression? Can the operational presence of structural intention in generative grammar illuminate further the fundamental significance of C-Command and Merge operations of the Minimalist Program? Might linguistic structural intent extend the basic Chomskyan focus on linguistic creativity (unbounded generation from finite means) to a new level of representation useful for explaining and constraining the inventive means by which the species-specific features of human language are effected? Can theoretical gains be achieved by extending the Chomskyan idea to generation of structure from linguistic intent oriented more to the creative generative process of sentence creation than interpretation by the listener? Is Chomsky's profound attention to the creativity of human language enhanced by extension to the domain of linguistic structural intent?

The main thesis of the present work is that there exists an empirically evident necessity for the representation of linguistic structural intent which has been generally overlooked in the theory of language, including notably centralized configurational syntax in the generative program We propose and motivate Tool Grammar<sup>5</sup>, in which a sentence is an action, a performance wherein intention is central rather than syntax A sentence intention is a formative set of decisions for external representation of thought by means of highly constrained, conventional, interlocking structures and processes, which we call 'tools' Each tool is an intentional device for specific effect in the process of utterance generation, distinguished from the traditional concept of a linguistic 'rule' by the explicit specification of intent added to the standard structural input and output conditions. The data essential for motivating linguistic descriptions is thus enhanced by explicit field transcriptions of evident user action and intent using a controlled scientific vocabulary Tool Grammar (TG) postulates that sentence generation exhibits linguistic cognitive actions most fundamentally and syntax processes more procedurally, parallel to but distinguished from the Chomskyan hypothesis that humans are fundamentally "syntactical animals". (Searle, June 29, 1972) The crux of resolution for this contrast is whether TG better can enable stronger constraints on the definition of human language than more rigidly syntax-centered accounts A revision of the architecture of competence shifting away from the strict centrality of syntax can increase the potential for explanatory power in the generative program.

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<sup>4</sup> We recognize that Shakespeare's admonition will apply as much to what might be said here as it is to what has gone before: "There are more things in heaven and earth, (...), Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. " Hamlet (1.5.167-8)

<sup>5</sup> The term "tool grammar" (TG) is intended as a handier nickname for "Instrumental Grammar". Importantly, the term 'tool' is not used in any anthropological, archeological, anti-generativist, or reductionist sense, but only to signify that in the formation of a sentence a speaker has access to an array of devices, lexical and structural, for the purpose of externalizing an intended representation of meaning. Since TG does not derive from the toolkit approach of (Culicover & Jackendoff, 2005) or other proposed systems presented as tool sets we sometimes identify it as Cognitax Tool Grammar.

Several specific conceptions of language characterize the TG approach to linguistic analysis

- While the Generative Program has not always built on a clear definition of the basic units of language, TG defines a sentence as that externalized communication structure which carries the selective representation of meaning resulting from the targeted set of speaker decisions made for the purpose of effecting linguistic intent. This definition orients the sentence to speaker action rather than interpretation thereby distinguishing linguistic intent from the wider phenomena of interpretation and implication that characterize receptive activities. A language therefore is conceived not so much as a set of sentences that need to be accounted for, but a set of structures considered in the context of active decisions about structure and representation on the part of the speaker.<sup>6</sup>
- While the Generative Program has classically taken as its basic problem to develop a theory of the non-directional syntactic connection between meaning (logical form) and output (e.g. phonological form), (Chomsky, *Sophia Lectures*, 2014) TG re-factors the architecture of language competence rather to connect linguistic intentions to output as a directional generative process. This at once adds an intention generator as a new module in the competence framework and also defines a new relationship to truth functional interpretation semantics and the study of implication. For TG, the meanings hearers take from an utterance, which are evidently various and diverse, involve a different set of processes from the speaker's intentional engagement to represent particular meaning structures. This means that the various interpretations that might or might not be taken from a particular utterance warrant a separate analysis from that of the representation the speaker intended to make. Another consequence of this re-factoring is that the source of creativity and recursion is moved outside the purveyance of syntax to the intention module.

TG holds that language has the external representation of meaning as a purpose and tools as a means of action. Natural constraints on the inter-compatibility of tools render many rules and constraints on configurational syntax unnecessary, since unacceptable sentences often reflect the incompatible misapplication of tools. A broad swath of linguistic ill-formedness can be attributed to structures involving incompatible intents.

As an illustration, the following examples provide a taste of how the intention of the passive tool can conflict with the intentions of other tools: the passive structure, drawing attention away from the agent, is vulnerable to conflict from a tool centering on the agent.

Al visited the sick woman.

The sick woman was visited by Al.

What was surprising about Al was that he visited the sick woman.

\*What was surprising about Al was that the sick woman was visited by Al (him).

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<sup>6</sup> The development of a formal definition of the word is implicit in the procedures and results of TG but is not elaborated here. Suffice it to characterize a word as a prepackaged structure that is merged into an incrementally expanding hierarchical structure as a speaker makes decisions of representational and structural intent. The means by which words are selected in accordance with pattern matching against internal semantic representation are sufficiently involved and interesting that they deserve separate treatment not undertaken here.

We observe here incompatibility between tools in opposition, at cross purposes, to both add and take away special attention to the agent This is one tip-of-the-iceberg example of the myriad issues, far beyond the simple topic/focus conflict seen here, that can be handled in a straightforward way if intention is represented in linguistic rules When this approach is extended to many other areas of syntax, attractive and simplified solutions become available for a surprisingly wide range of problems

The operative hypotheses of this paper surround the question whether linguistic rules are preferably formulated in terms of linguistic structural intentions, a theoretical position that has perhaps not heretofore been fully examined to resolution. From a preponderance of diverse cases involving linguistic problems that resist authoritative solutions, we seek to demonstrate that linguistic theory is strengthened when it inclines toward incorporation of components of linguistic action and intention.

The goal is to show that the exclusion of linguistic intention and action from generative rules introduces artefactual complexity and undesirably precludes the discovery of powerful natural constraints on characterizations of the human faculty of language The inclusion of intention in linguistic rules both enables solutions of otherwise intractable problems and enables simpler, more natural solutions generally while probing explanations for the profoundly important syntactic observational effects uncovered by generativist methodology (e.g. locality, crossover, C-command, control).. Theorizing based on linguistic intent leads to thinner, simplified, more directly empirical argumentation compared to the indirections necessitated by complex syntactic analysis based on central configurational syntax TG argumentation, by adding a new dimension of recordable and verifiable data subject to independent validation, thereby enjoys resistance to the view that it is merely stipulative or reductionist and facilitates a new way of looking at generative grammar By accounting for a wide range of unacceptable sentences in terms of natural limitations on linguistic intent, TG contributes to an understanding how the complexity of human languages can be learned largely in the absence of negative data.

## 2 Re-factoring the Generative Program

To test our theses we select from among difficult and vexing problems in syntactic theory. We present and defend empirically transparent and radically penetrating mechanisms for these problems while rigorously constraining the notion of a human language in support of the primary Chomskyan goals of explaining infinite linguistic creativity from finite resources and rapid child language learning in the context of poverty of stimulus data We conclude that syntactic theory requires specification of structural intent in order properly to solve a set of the most difficult theoretical challenges.

When syntactic phenomena are understood to be conditioned by linguistic action/intent descriptors, difficult problems yield to straightforward solutions: conflicting intents yield ill-formed sentences. When generalizations are sought at an incorrect and incapable level of representation, unnatural and unnecessarily contrived solutions unavoidably result By incorporating intention action directives into linguistic structure building, syntactic problems generally acquire a facilitative utilitarian resolution: much of syntax is transformed into

functional processes of cognitive mechanics Important fundamentals of syntax are reducible to a particular form of structural cognitive manipulation and syntax is no longer so autonomous a component of linguistic competence Much of the Chomskyan Weltanschauung and the resulting theories can be retained and revalidated, but much also is to be gained by re-factoring the organizational structure of linguistic science.

TG represents a sub-paradigmatic shift in syntactic theory to the extent it can be integrated to the minimalist program Some tenets are revised but important elements are retained. The concepts of poverty of stimulus, universals, ill-formedness, recursiveness from Merge, interpretation, generative capacity, filtering, and so forth are reapplied in an alternative architecture of linguistic competence

We present a range of arguments from linguistic and poetic data that action intents are at the generative core in a set of syntactic processes When the intentions underlying structural decisions are examined, separate from the internals of syntax, semantics and pragmatics, all three may be subject to simplification, potentially increasing the scope of constraints on the operations of human language.

The entire enterprise of investigating linguistic intent is seen finally to highlight the thesis that constructs such as C-Command and a lexical merge operation may be deeply fundamental to a linguistic ability wherein tools are used to produce sentential products TG brings out the essential theoretical importance of a Merge operation since it is logically inescapable that lexical choices in any realistic process of sentence generation become assembled into hierarchical structures, and the latter are among the best motivated of linguistic theoretical constructs. Merge is a tool for assembling other tools.

To the extent that the generative program can provide explanations in terms of universal grammar, it becomes less perplexing and paradoxical how children can learn highly complex natural languages so expeditiously, while at the same time developing intuitions about classes of sentences that they deem unacceptable despite never having been exposed to those them Since TG provides an architecture and modularization oriented to linguistic intent and affords simple and natural explanations for many types of ill-formedness, it has the potential to contribute to an understanding how languages are learned in the absence of this negative data.

It may bear emphasizing that the Cognitax Tool Grammar approach to human language builds on, rather than undermines, the generative program of the Chomskyan School of linguistics The main impetus is to use as a database the vast collection of linguistic effects to be found in work on generative syntax These would not be available and could not have been conceived were it not for the Chomskyan insistence on theoretical rigor as a required framework for targeted data collection of a kind that is necessary for scientific progress Far from aligning with positions that are antithetical to the Generative Program such as (Tomasello & Ibbotson, 2016) or (Everett, 2012), TG carries the direction of research to a new sphere in the same domain Chomsky identified early that rule recursion can be associated with one dimension of linguistic creativity, the generation of an unbounded set of structures from finite processes but it is a misrepresentation to identify linguistic creativity merely with recursivity Chomsky later provided a further profoundly insightful formulation whereby the merging of pairs of subunits into larger

structures also satisfies the need for structural unboundedness. By providing that pairs of units can be combined into a larger structure, whether lexical items or phrasal substructures, the Merge process of the Minimalist Program affords even greater formal explanation for the unique capability of human linguistic capability.

Rather than seeking to undermine or displace the generative program, the proposed revision in the present work would amplify its importance even further to any extent that additional explanatory power is made available. Chomsky's massively influential foundations of generative grammar builds from profound observations on the creativity of human language. To the extent that a revised architecture can uncover a new level of linguistic creativity, it validates the Chomskyan proposal by judiciously extending its initial programmatic formulation. The inclusion of linguistic structural intent in linguistic analysis opens further the possibilities for discovering new dimensions of linguistic creativity.

### 3 Background: Cognitax is Linguistic Action

Architectural work on large symbolic systems frequently leads to the observation that undue complexity arises when there is an attempt to capture and express regularities at the wrong level of generalization, i.e. where natural conditioning properties are inexplicit or unexpressed. A primary thesis of TG is that there has been excessive idiosyncratically contrived complexity and resulting instability in Chomskyan theories of syntactic competence when generalizations have been sought apart from the factors that condition them. This implies that superior solutions might be achieved at a different level of representation. The vast syntactic literature seeking explanations for which sentences of a language may or may not be acceptable can be reviewed for potential reanalysis if the fundamental reasons for linguistic structure formation are examined in detail. Syntax might be significantly reduced in a utilitarian context to cognitive mechanics of a utilitarian kind. TG explores the world of syntax with the mindset of cognitive functional mechanics.

The origin of the present works goes back to discussions with an anthropologist finely attuned to the linguistic actions of a native language. As she gathered material and made progress on the phonology, morphology, lexicography, etc. of the language she was so carefully archiving, it seemed a gaping insufficiency that linguistics could not offer elicitation field tools for the vocabulary of social life actions that interested her. Linguistics offered methodologies for phonetic transcription, phonemic discovery and transcription, morphological analysis, syntactic description, and promising scientific frameworks for theory, but there was little tradition for recording or analyzing the semantics of the actions that are so obviously carried out in the process of speaking. This stood in stark contrast with the myriad expressions available in every language to characterize what a speaker is doing with words. Elicitation of semantic detail can be difficult, yet every field linguist asking what something means has likely known the experience of hearing rather than what the speaker is doing when words are used. This suggests a dimension of semantics which is closer to the surface origination and easier to elicit and describe than the intricacies derived after difficult thought about receptive interpretation in a truth functional model theoretic semantics framework. TG assumes the validity of a particular methodology: when a linguist elicits or records data s/he could well write down an answer to the question what a speaker is doing when a certain form is used. What is the action?

Chomsky's massively influential generative program has fundamental attributes which are

unassailable, but nevertheless extensible. Language is cut up into competence and performance to put scientific focus on cognitive ability, adding a divide and conquer strategy necessary in the midst of the overwhelming complexity of human language. It brings to center stage rapid language learning in childhood and the startling recursive creative potential of language, while also imposing empirical constraints on putative theories and mechanisms. Generative mapping, with its emphasis on formalization, testing, and minimal contrasts of sentence acceptability, provides discipline to guide hypotheses toward the counterexamples necessary for progress. There has been an extraordinary collection of distinctive facts and patterning effects for a large number of diverse language phenomena. Its methodology has been highly effective as a stimulant to scientific advancement, but can also entail forward interests involving new perspectives. For all the fecundity of the unfolding Chomskyan vision, theories have retained syntax, and neither semantics, pragmatics nor higher cognition, as the core focal center of language generation.<sup>7</sup> While the range of data has widened broadly, the area of focus, syntax, has remained narrow relative to the full range of operational linguistic phenomena. The fundamental unit of study, the sentence, has arguably remained without a satisfying definition. In TG we explore whether a shift in perspective can be advantageous, wherein language is viewed not so much as centering around syntax as the structural action semantics of intentional<sup>8</sup> purpose.

Among many dimensions of scientific challenge, the generative program has focused on the speed and ease of child language learning but has not so much set a paramount goal to explain why in the world's languages there should be such variability, or instability or ambiguity.

TG adopts the idea that elements of language are to be understood as having an intentional functional purpose. Elements of this idea have existed in linguistics for some time, generally involving the analysis of a relatively limited set of abstract functional concepts such as focus, theme, {fore|back}ground etc. TG is distinguished by placing an elaborated system of functional intention at the controlling generative core of language and elaborating a rich set of functional concepts/categories used to explain linguistic phenomena. We advert to tangential prior work by a wide range of researchers, including Halliday's systemic functional approach (Halliday, 2004), lexical functional grammar (Bresnan, 2001), the psychomechanics and psychosystematics of Gustave Guillaume, Walter Hirtle and John Hewson (Hirtle) (Hewson), cognitive linguistics of e.g. Wallace Chafe, George Lakoff, and Leonard Talmy (Lakoff) (Talmy), construction grammar of e.g. Charles Fillmore, George Lakoff, Goldberg, and Ronald Langacker (LANGACKER, 1986) (Langacker, 1999), [André Martinet's](#) *Functional Syntax: (Langue et Fonction, Paris : Denoël, 1969, ©1962, Studies in Functional Syntax, München, Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1975, Syntaxe générale, 1985, Fonction et dynamique des langues, Paris, Armand Colin, 1989.)*, the Prague School, and so forth. A goal of TG is to bring diverse elements of various theories into a unified, inter-compatible linguistic framework, while discarding orphaned beliefs disconfirmed by ongoing empirical work.

TG is compatible with, and benefits from, restricted elements of each of these traditions but distinguishes itself by extending the role of specifying linguistic intention to a much greater degree and in much greater resolution than has previously been proposed. It also seeks to

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<sup>7</sup> Paradigmatic and other systematic aspects of morphology have on occasion also been overlooked.

<sup>8</sup> Since much of this work is about linguistic 'intention' it should be clarified that what is meant is the plainer meaning related to planning and not the philosophical sense of 'intentionality' relating the representations to the content they refer to. The latter topic, which is not considered here, is clarified, for example in (Georges Rey, 2015).

integrate with Chomsky's generative program re-combining characteristics of various approaches at the same time

Special mention should be made of Pieter Seuren's work on Semantic Syntax and his pioneering formulations of the computerized means by which semantic initiatives can result in syntactic results His work showing how lexically driven patterns result in syntactically formed configurations in a computationally transparent style are helpful in conceiving the manner by which linguistic intentions might resolve into patterns of acceptable and unacceptable sentences While our theoretical framework is different, we take from Seuren's endeavors the belief that linguistic theory is enhanced, not just by the notion of formalization emphasized by Chomsky, but by actual formal implementation as a generative computer program, which is arguably an optimum goal for formalization in linguistic theory.

Whereas various authors have shown overlap between the syntactic and pragmatic components of linguistic competence, e.g. (Chierchia, 2004) (Horn, 2000), etc., our aim is to explore a reorganized view of linguistic generation based on the central concept of linguistic tools which are used to realize a generative component of linguistic intent Rather than examine only the structural and configurational generalizations, i.e. syntax-generative rules, and what their projection onto truth functional semantics might involve, we propose to investigate more narrowly what the speaker intends to do and how s/he does it structurally A sentence intention is a formative set of decisions for external representation of thought by means of highly constrained, conventional, interlocking structures and processes, which we call 'tools' We refer below to this general area of investigation as 'cognitax' tool grammar. Cognitax concerns the decisions speakers make in formulating the structure of sentences Without proposing that the full-blown inferentially derivable meaning of a sentence underlies and explains syntactic structure, it presents a view in which syntax is not so autonomous as it is often conceived Cognitax as a discipline is separate from truth semantics and pragmatics insofar as the intentions underlying utterances can be demonstrated to have psychological reality separate from the processes of truth semantics, interpretation and inference By demonstrating its independent necessity in explaining the phenomena of language we aim to demonstrate its psychological reality as domain of representation in linguistic processing. Cognitax is neither inferential semantics nor pragmatics but a set of separate representations marking linguistic structural intent.<sup>9</sup>

The present work on TG is limited to core phenomena roughly associated with syntax and its semantic correlates It bypasses for the most part important broad areas of linguistic science such as truth functional semantic interpretation, discourse, background encyclopedic awareness, and so forth In this way the work may seem initially less ambitious than works such as (Seuren) and (Halliday), but since many of these wider fields of research involve pre-linguistic cognitive processing in one way or another, TG may be found by adjustment to be compatible and to interact with these and other theoretical frameworks as part of a larger program of re-factoring linguistic analysis We see advantages to encouraging more of a theoretical lingua franca for linguistic science,

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<sup>9</sup> Investigations of the evident interactions among cognitax, semantics and pragmatics best awaits preliminary exploration of the former.

## 4 Some Philosophical Context

Tool Grammar conforms to a view of sentence generation that has emerged in the literature of philosophical linguistics, as led and exemplified by Paul Pietroski. While we adhere to different lines of approach, Pietroski provides discussion of a number of important theses which open many of the questions we do:

- Verbs and nouns can be associated with instructions how to access combinable concepts that are formed into conjoined larger concepts.
- It is implausible that the theory of semantics be limited to truth-conditional semantics in the sense of functions involving “satisfaction conditions” on truth and reference.
- Theories of conceptual construction may involve conjunction of monadic concepts to produce derived monadic concepts in a way that suggests conceptual structures tend more to the binary than directly to higher orders of adicity.
- The central role of syntax may be to enable instructions access or constructs into a format that allows to be conjoined to create larger concepts.
- If one extends the model of concept combination looking for an analog in grammatical combination by the inclusion of a concept of construct labelling, there emerges an understanding for the existence of grammatical types.

Tool grammar significantly adds the concept of named instructions for the formation of grammatical structures.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

## 5 Variations on Chomsky’s Galilean Challenge

A version of this section is published as (Smith L. , 2017).

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

## 6 Ill-Formedness and a Working Methodology

If language engages the application of a set of tools, ill-formedness, in all its variation, can result from picking the wrong tool for the intended task, or combining incompatible tools, or not having the prerequisites for some tool. In general, unacceptable sentences don’t occur in normal usage and it is natural to seek the most direct explanation. Syntactic theory has never come close to explaining all the sorts of ill-formedness documented in the literature. (Ross J. R., Haj Ross's papers on syntax, poetics, and selected short subjects, 2014) We present the hypothesis that there are so many manners of ill-formedness because there are many tools in a language that have natural restrictions on their use. Examples of ungrammatical sentences might be likened to trying to paddle an elevator or forcing square pegs into round holes, or where there is no hole at all. A goal of this paper is to demonstrate new resources for the explanation of patterns of unacceptability.



Since we claim that structural action semantics can be transcribed, and is at the core of the language faculty, an operative question arises whether problems which have been considered unresolved, controversial, or even intractable might succumb more easily when the fundamental actions of language are factored in.

The methodology for exploring our hypotheses will be to survey and comment on selected problems and key data from the following sources, with some emphasis on central or difficult problems:

- Standard textbooks in generative grammar

- Well documented unresolved problems and issues

- Specific works documenting areas where generative grammar is incapable

- Problems of metaphor, stylistics, and poetics which in their finesse can be regarded as quality control on syntactic theory

We pursue this program of investigation below, undertaking preliminary analyses to explore a theoretical goal of discovering strong constraints on the limits of human language.

## 7 Specific Objectives and Scope

A full exploration of the relationship between linguistic intention and expressed linguistic realizations is a vast project so we must begin by limiting the scope of initial work. From one perspective, our purpose here is initially somewhat negative insofar as we aim to show that there can be alternative explanations to be explored for many unacceptable sentences which have been attributed only to configurational aspects of linguistic generation. So our first goal is to look again at why sentences may not be grammatical or acceptable, from another angle, based on the premise that for transparent and coherent reasons many recombinant structures, which may look possible when viewed from the limited perspective of independent variation, may not, instead, ever be of a nature ever to be preconceived due to cognitive constraints. In the context of these original questions, we begin to explore the nature of a system that uses linguistic intention to preclude instances of what would not be said for utilitarian cognitive reasons. A number of scholars have pursued a more functional view of linguistic structure and have conceived certain linguistic rules as functional elements using a limited range of operational concepts such as theme, focus, background, and so forth. Our goal, in contrast, is to envisage a larger framework where the role of functional intent is massively expanded to provide operational workings that support and pervade the manifestations of syntax in a more encompassing way that also can enable more powerful constraints on universal grammar in the sense fundamental to the generative tradition. Our use of the term 'tool grammar' reflects an interest in analyzing as many syntactic phenomena as possible for underlying functional explanations.

Tool grammar presents a minimal hypothesis that careful examination of linguistic intent can greatly reduce the entropy of syntactic and semantic theory by independently explaining a plethora of ill formed sentences in a straightforward way leaving a more tractable set of separate remaining theoretical problems.

Whereas Chomsky's minimalist program proposes a generative account of the syntax-centric connections between sound and meaning to include the creative, recursive component within those connections, we advert to the challenge of integrating such a system with cognitive creative linguistic intention and explore the implications of reconfiguring the program of research to incorporate such a level of creative linguistic cognitive action into the generative enterprise. We contemplate steps beyond a minimal revision such as adding a linguistic action interface to the syntactic component in addition to the phonological and semantic ones, and put it rather at the center of sentence generation. It is beyond the scope of initial work to proceed the full distance into this research program so we limit our goals to demonstrating the feasibility and advantages of such an approach while programmatically outlining some directions that seem promising for future progress, and also observing in passing evident opportunities for imposing strong general constraints on for form of possible language structures.

Formalization of linguistic theories is important to afford testability and to guide data collection toward an understanding of important structural effects. Linguistic science has progressed to the point where theories have begun to be formalized as actual implementations in computer code. Implementations as computational prototypes, even strictly within the domain of linguistic theory, may be especially revelatory for generative systems since they can not only validate the empirical claims but can bring new theoretical questions to light. Although we are not aware of a data base of regression tests for the acceptable and unacceptable sentences of any language we are preparing to implement our own proposals as a working prototype. This aspect of TG studies is beyond the scope of the present work but should be understood as an important longer term goal for scientific validation. While focusing on theoretical linguistics, we also envisage work toward a model of linguistic competence which lends itself to incorporation in active computational models that generate and interpret sentences. Unlike the Chomskyan model of syntactic competence which statically and declaratively represents syntax knowledge in a standalone system, we intend, by flowing from structural intention to syntactic output, to encourage a view of syntax which might eventually be incorporated in engineered solutions for natural language problems. While we adhere to the importance of linguistic analysis and modeling, we also anticipate a possibility of machine learning algorithms attempting automatically to mediate between specifications of linguistic intent and surface syntactic structures. Hidden Markov models and other statistical techniques may produce valuable linguistic engineering systems without hand crafted linguistic rules, and may bear useful similarity to neural models of brain functioning. While there may eventually be computer implementations, cognitax TG is initially formulated in the tradition of linguistic theory rather than computer science and as such neither inherits nor exhibits meaningful similarities to semantic grammars in the discipline of artificial intelligence.

We intend this work to be empirical but programmatic and incremental. We present arguments that a set of syntactic phenomena are attractively explained if the analysis includes a specification of linguistic intent for structures observed in data, but the objective is programmatic and exploratory with limited goals. The sole objective is to show that structural decision actions can contribute to an explanation of linguistic patterning. Discussion is limited to classic, challenging or resistant problems which motivate use of structural action conditioning factors that impose general constraints on generation by eliminating incompatible co-occurrences.

Since we can practically address only a subset of linguistic problems we leave open the possibility that some well-studied phenomena with settled solutions might or might not have purely configurational solutions as presented in mainstream work in autonomous syntax without a component of linguistic intent. We motivate the need for a linguistic action dimension in a set of cases and outline a preliminary alternative architecture of competence, but it is beyond the intended scope to examine the full range of syntactic processes which might thereby be impinged, nor to present a complete alternative system. To the extent our arguments are successful, theoretical syntax can benefit from incorporating a new dimension, but it would be premature to try to anticipate the full range of implications. There remain a wide range of deeply studied syntactic phenomena to be examined from the perspective of linguistic action intents. We do not here exclude autonomous syntactic solutions. For this reason, and since many questions are left open, any definitive conclusions about the degree of difference between alternative systems and architectures of competence would be premature and speculative. This caveat allows for the possibility that previous solutions presented in the literature may be not impinged by specifications of structural intent.

In summary, the objective, therefore, is only to argue that linguistic intent can condition syntactic patterning while outlining an alternative architecture of linguistic competence without articulating a full technical proposal in detail. Our process of analysis is an exploratory pilot to consider whether evident constraints on structure tend toward strong generalizations to help define the notion of what a human language is and can be.

We do not address issues of semantic analysis or semantic theory beyond the narrow and functionally restricted domain implicit in the tool grammar concept. The specification of linguistic structural intent has a qualified semantic nature but is limited to actions affecting structural choices and excludes issues of interpretation, compositionality, implication, inference, possible worlds, as well as the wider spectrum of linguistic truth-functional semantics as a general discipline. Notably, we do not propose that the full specification of the meaning of a sentence underlies the generation of syntactic structure as in the earlier tradition of generative semantics. Our position is that one very limited tranche of semantic information is associated with linguistic choice, leaving issues of interpretation apart for separate study. Where work on generative semantics was challenged for not providing sufficient constraints on universal grammar, our hypothesis is that the theoretical use of one dimension of semantics in syntactic analysis, structural intention, opens the possibility not only of providing a stronger level of universal constraints, but one that covers data more completely. Generative semantics derives syntax from meaning; TG derives structure from intentions that result in selections of lexical items and constructions. In TG, syntax is not completely autonomous from a semantic realm, but neither is it fully enmeshed with the elaborations of interpretive semantic theory.

Our proposals include preliminary statements of compatibility constraints on the combination of structural elements. To the extent that these provide simpler explanations for complex phenomena, or preclude unresolved exceptions and resolve residual puzzles they become subject to comparison with systems of purely configurational constraints in generative. We argue that constraints on generation using representations of linguistic intent hold promise generally to simplify the statement of linguistic universals, thereby advancing the Chomskyan goals for a

specification of competence The ideal result would be a simpler system of constraints that stabilizes and grows as new discoveries are made, while providing better coverage for a wider range of data with fewer exceptions It is interesting when analyses we develop in the TG framework seem to validate and replicate a set of Chomskyan conclusions that were not based on linguistic intent.

Finally, it is noted that many syntactic phenomena can be analyzed either as alternative related structures introduced into an utterance as a formational process, or as a basic pre-compiled lexical structure which is optionally transformed to an alternate form by a transformational rule We do not in the present work undertake a comparison of the differences between lexical and derivational patternings, that is, between alternative formative constructions and options in the dynamic process of construction For this reason we refer to the constructions involved in such alternations using the non-committal term '(trans)formation'.

## 8 Actionemes as Pseudo-Code

Actionemes are clusters of properties that represent linguistic action intent We present hypotheses about linguistic actions using dollar sign actioneme symbols such as '\$insertReflexive' Actioneme symbols (represented with '\$' symbols) represent preliminary hypotheses aiming toward a standard vocabulary of linguistic action intents They are utilized as a form of pseudo-code for methodological convenience with an understanding that the process of formalizing TG should call eventually for a range of mathematically explicit, more rigorous elements and forms The purpose of pseudo-code is to engage higher level questions of structure, process and organization without falling into detailed questions at a lower level of generalization. Actionemes are shorthand in discursive presentations for a feature and function formalism which is conceptualized for a machine implementation as a generative system A useful and conciliatory default assumption is that actioneme features inhabit and extend the feature space often referenced in syntactic and semantic theory but are given a revised and radically more enlarged role than has been countenanced previously. Pseudo-code representations abstracting away from the higher resolution of the most detailed analysis can be borrowed from computer architecture where it is exceedingly useful for preliminary analysis of procedural processes and is essential for discussions of alternative approaches prior to formalization into machine executable form

The current work primarily considers issues of theoretical linguistics but can also be part of a design process for a computerized system that aims to properly formalize TG theory as an operational generative system subject to regression testing against a database of sentence forms Actionemes often require phrases and reflect an internal complexity This suggests the possibility either of a form of feature representation (e.g. \$inquireJudgment [+inquire, +judgment]) or of embeddable function representation. (e.g. inquire(judgment()) ), and might possibly involve mixed representations The use of embedded functions implies a tree

representation, begging the question, which we leave open, whether representation of action intentions fits naturally into the merged tree structures that result from lexical selection and assembly into increasingly larger units. Whatever the form of improved theoretical statements our hypothesis is that constraints on cognitive compatibility among linguistic tools can be formulated as patterns of actioneme feature or function complexes, and that, furthermore these can be integrated into the larger matrix of a linguistic theory. The general thesis is that linguistic tool intents are involved in a restrictive cognitive utilitarian mechanics, which can explain many linguistic phenomena, and is compatible with a variety of linguistic theories. Our current purpose is to advocate for the general approach so issues of formalization are not here addressed.

## 9 Motivation for a New Orientation

It is possible to look at the tradition of generative mechanical syntax and intuitively feel incompleteness with regard to an understanding of the essence of human language Meaning is treated in generative grammar, but it doesn't have the central role that can seem from the outside as indispensable to any well-ordered discipline of linguistics. The present work attempts to address a void by bringing the particular semantics of linguistic action, what a user is doing when a particular structure is chosen, back into central focus, albeit in a controlled and limited way.

There is an essential tradition of transcription in linguistics As a profession, linguists record data to systematically reflect structure in phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, etc. But what of the particular purposes of the uses of language structures? Syntacticians don't generally systematically encode the elements of sentence intent as a commonly accepted practice, as they do the basic elements in other domains. Yet, structural action semantics is the glue that connects semantic intention to form.

All of language, considered as a phenomenon, is oriented around intended meaning, and syntax in particular is in service to it Syntax can be understood as a meaning representation and delivery system, so one would expect, a priori, the severest of epistemological problems to arise should it be abstracted sufficiently away from the glaring reality of its essential purpose. Semantics has not found the centrality of its role in linguistic syntax perhaps because in its various manifestations it is not so directly observable or accessible and brings inherent difficulties as a result.<sup>10</sup> Even the narrower spectrum of linguistic ntion cannot be recorded except indirectly It must be inferred to an extent beyond other dimensions of more direct representation. Yet, just as physical particles are discovered without any means of direct observation, contemporary linguistics has recognized the necessity to investigate central phenomenon with inferential work While there are many scholars engaged productively in the **broad** generative enterprise of meaning theory, we propose here to focus directly on one particular and highly constrained dimension associated with meaning, the connective processes of utilitarian intent, as integral to the analysis of syntactic phenomena .

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<sup>10</sup> There is a well known principle of psychology whereby one's beliefs and attitudes are formed much by exigencies of circumstance, possibility, and realistic ability.

Syntactic work has historically inclined toward semantic analysis insofar as it has regularly imported quasi semantic elements (tense, modality, aspect, case, subcategorization, selectional restrictions, etc.) to accomplish its work. In TG similarly, we propose to extend the reach of syntax into the domain of structural intention so as to identify underlying factors and investigate their role in explaining linguistic patterns.

We propose an incremental ground-up approach to developing conventions for sentence action transcription. Our exclusive interest is in the inventory of linguistic actions rather than truth functional intensional systems, or other variants based on formal logic. We bring a narrow selection of semantico-intentional elements forward for their relevance in syntactic construction and patterning. Tool grammar distinguishes itself from traditional semantics, among other ways, by refraining from an insistence that all meaning representations be compositional in order to leave open the possibility that generative systems may be compiled for speed and function in ways that do not reflect the expectations of truth functional semantics.

It is crucially indicative that human languages already have built-in vocabulary for expressing what one speaker posits another is doing in the course of language use. These expressions are a valuable basis of preliminary action transcription because they emanate from inside the system we would like to study. Users interpret linguistic intentions and report them using vocabulary already in the language.

We begin by extracting from everyday language terms that describe what some speaker is doing, or intending, or trying to do, by using a particular linguistic construction. We propose to draw upon this innate natural vocabulary as a stimulus to widen the scope of the study of grammar. We limit ourselves in semantics only to descriptions of conventionally recognized linguistic actions and the intentions that underlie them.

The TG approach does not in wholesale manner begin by rejecting the general thesis of configurational explanations for syntactic patternings, but only presents the advantages in particular but theoretically important cases of an amplified analysis, controlled in the domain of structural intent, which, after all, is *prima facie* quite natural to a functional view of generative processes. Arguing prior to full formalization, we use pseudo-code actionemes to explore the fundamental issue of the controlling factors for the occurrence of many patterns from reflexive anaphors to poetic structure. We refer to the TG regularities conditioned by linguistic action intent, and thereby having characteristics different from purely syntactical rules, as components of the *cognitax* of a language. The structures and processes of *cognitax* constitute a *tool grammar* for a language so may be thought of as synonymous terms for our purposes. The former is intended to convey the inseparability of cognitive sentence planning decisions from the understanding of syntactic structure, while the latter denotes the utilitarian aspect.

As noted, Tool Grammar is inspired by the observation that natural languages include numerous terms to describe linguistic actions (*assert, deny, ask, tell, etc.*), so there is reason to believe that external observations about action intents can be refined to a form of

scientifically valuable data for theorizing about the processes underlying language behavior. Language itself thus provides some metadata about language which can afford a basis for developing a closed, controlled scientific vocabulary for systematically transcribing the linguistic intents associated with linguistic structures. The TG framework includes the hypothesis that those competent in a language are thereby able to ascertain intents underlying linguistic utterances, albeit in a naïve, unformalized form, that, for linguistic analysis, ultimately will require ongoing development in a standard scientific process of empirical rectification.

Beyond conscious awareness and the formulation of a controlled vocabulary of actioneme primitives, a central goal of a theory of action intents is integration with processes of structure formation in an overall theory of structural linguistic action. TG furthermore has the potential to reveal that constraints on well-formedness correspond often to high level cognitive disciplines and strategies for managing complexity, uncertainty, integrity, consistency, information density and other cybernetic principles of information representation. TG can be summarized as a fully formalizable theory of cognitive utilitarian meta-linguistic structural action intents. An important goal is to achieve over time as work product a scientific controlled vocabulary for the range of linguistic intents available in human communication.

## 10 Syntax Within Compatible Intents: Arguments for Intention Grammar

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

### 10.1 Abstract

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

Arguments are presented for adjusting the architecture and practice of theoretical syntax to incorporate the concept of purpose. Evidence supports re-formulating processes and formations in theoretical syntax by simply adding requirements of linguistic intent as input conditions. This provides the context of function and purpose for the speaker decision and action to use any syntactic element, affording manifold benefits for syntactic theory. The evidence reflects a range of theoretical concerns: Empirical Limitation, Psychological Reality, Overgeneration, Simplicity, Modularization of Cognitive Models, Scientific Definitions, Creativity, Interpretation, Premature Mathematicization, Directness of Explanation, Lack of Alternatives, and Stylistic Mechanisms.

### 10.2 Thesis

The purpose of this paper is to present a set of arguments from challenging data to the effect that the goals of theoretical syntax (empirical grounding, coverage, explanation, learnability, etc.) can be better served if syntactic formations and processes are formulated so as to incorporate input requirements of linguistic intent, representing function and purpose for the speaker's decision to use a particular syntactic tool.<sup>11</sup> We refer to this as the Intentional Syntax Hypothesis (ISH).

There exists an empirically evident necessity for the representation of linguistic structural intent which has been generally overlooked in the theory of language, including notably centralized configurational syntax in the generative program. We propose and motivate Intention (Tool) Grammar<sup>12</sup>, in which a sentence is an action, a performance wherein intention is central to generative framing, rather than syntax. A sentence intention is a formative set of decisions for external representation of thought by means of highly constrained, conventional, interlocking structures and processes, which we call 'tools'. Each tool is an intentional device for specific effect in the process of utterance generation, distinguished from the traditional concept of a linguistic 'rule' by the explicit specification of intent added to the standard structural input and output conditions. The data essential for motivating linguistic descriptions is thus enhanced by explicit field transcriptions of evident user action and intent using a controlled scientific vocabulary. Intention (Tool) Grammar (TG) postulates that sentence generation exhibits linguistic cognitive actions most fundamentally and syntax processes more procedurally, parallel to, but distinguished from, the hypothesis that humans are quite so fundamentally "syntactical animals". (Searle, June 29, 1972) One crux of resolution for this contrast is whether stronger constraints on the definition of human language are available than for more rigidly syntax-centered accounts. A revision of the architecture of competence shifting away from the strict mathematical centrality of syntax can increase the potential for explanatory power in the theoretical syntax.

Constraints on the inter-compatibility of intents can render many rules and constraints on configurational syntax unnecessary, since unacceptable sentences often reflect the incompatible misapplication of tools. A swath of linguistic ill-formedness can be attributed to structures involving incompatible intents wherein actions involving conflicting purposes are rationally unexpected or inconceivable.

### 10.3 Goals and Criteria for Evaluation

Science abhors finalization. Every theory at every stage of science, can exhibit a set of advantages and advances as well as a set of limitations. The well-known advantages of Chomsky's radical innovation via generative theories of syntax have been extensive, even vast, having led to stunning advances in the understanding of human language following introduction

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<sup>11</sup> 'Speaker' and 'hearer' are conventionally understood to include linguistic activities in which there is no verbal speaking or hearing as in the case of signing or other modalities.

<sup>12</sup> The term "tool grammar" (TG) is intended as a handier nickname for "Instrumental Intention Grammar". Importantly, the term 'tool' is not used in any anthropological, archeological, anti-generativist, or reductionist sense, but only to signify that in the formation of a sentence a speaker has access to an array of devices, lexical and structural, for the purpose of externalizing an intended representation of meaning. Since TG does not derive from the toolkit approach of (Culicover & Jackendoff, 2005) or other proposed systems presented as tool sets we sometimes identify it as Cognitax Tool Grammar.



of the generative program in 1957 (Chomsky, *Syntactic Structures*, 1957) and continuing through and beyond the pursuits of the minimalist program. These are sufficiently well-known that they need not be referenced and recited here.

Similarly, in the spirit of Chomsky himself, it is valuable always to explore beyond current conventional understanding to identify limitations which might be addressed. Here is a list of proposed limitations, representative of aspirational goals for syntactic theory, which can be used as criteria to evaluate the advantages of the proposal to attach specifications of intent to the analysis of syntactic formations:

10.3.1 Empirical Limitation: Speakers and psycholinguists have verifiable access to the reasons for which speakers utilize a syntactic formation. These are available for exploitation as inputs to theoretical syntactic processes since they can be duefully transcribed from contextual observation and validated with psycholinguistic methods.

10.3.2 Psychological Reality: It is an evident limitation for comprehensive modeling of cognition to have no inputs to syntactic generation; psychological reality is enhanced by providing the intentional inputs that evidently underly sentence generation.

10.3.3 Overgeneration: Lacking inputs, syntactic generation has had necessary recourse to over-generation of syntactic candidates prior to later stage culling of impossible utterances using interpretive, pragmatic, semantic, etc. means. Alternatively, early steps in generation can preclude and thwart bad sentences where conflicting intents identify them as non-starters, thus curtailing a flood of non-productive generation.

10.3.4 Simplicity: Insofar as rational intents underly speaker generation, simple rules of compatible combination can avoid complex or contrived analyses depending exclusively on configurational structure and context. In symbolic systems, unnecessary complexity and ad hoc formulation frequently results when phenomena are addressed at the wrong level of generalization lacking pertinent fundamental information.

10.3.5 Modularization of Cognitive Models: Neighboring disciplines of human cognition are limited in the ability to model cognitive flow and interaction when presented with a component having no psychological interface.

10.3.6 Scientific Definitions: Theoretical Syntax generally lacks but reasonably aspires to complete definitions for its formational structures. Many well-studied constructs such as Passive, Dative Shift, etc., are well characterized as patterns, configurations, and relationships, but without specifically defining what they are in terms of purpose, function and intent. Even a term such as 'subject' resists definition. As with any tool, it is necessary, in order to characterize in properly, to specify how and why and when it is used.

10.3.7 Creativity: Beyond Chomskyan syntactic creativity, discoveries based on intention extend into a wider spectrum of types, as for example to instrumental creativity by individuals and groups observed creating new formations for linguistic expression. (Smith L. , *On Tool Grammar*, 2017)

10.3.8 Interdisciplinary Connection: Transcriptions of linguistic intent encourages (re)connecting with the anthropological perspective on language, which was so fruitful in earlier periods of

linguistic science. So also for openings to sociological theory, and better understanding of diachronic language change. (Smith L. , 2019)

10.3.9 Interpretation: In syntax-centric models (operationally if not epistemically) semantics is cast as an interpretive process downstream from syntactic configuration, but the hearer interprets from what the speaker intends, so a natural generative role for semantics is not retrospective, but formational intention.

10.3.10 Premature Mathematicization: While aspirational formalization and mathematicization are useful for testability, the manifold powers of symbolic representation allow opportunities for superficial artifice, compatible with surface data patterns but insufficiently integrated into larger processes of cognition. Prematurely formalized solutions force choices which may be undermotivated in the context of the data of intent.

10.3.11 Directness of Explanation: To any extent that complex and indirectly inferred intermediate apparatus can be eliminated from linguistic explanation, while accounting more directly for the same observations, the resulting theories can be enhanced. It is a limitation when theoretical explanation is less direct, transparent, natural, or cognitively realistic.

10.3.12 Lack of Alternatives: Whenever a phenomenon can be explained by recourse to speaker linguistic intent, but not conceivably or convincingly in terms of syntactic configurational structure, it points to the limitations of syntax without specification of intent.

10.3.13 Stylistic Mechanisms: To any extent that the effectiveness and impact of stylistic usage cannot be understood in configurational terms, an opening is provided for the benefits of considering the facts of structural intent.

The upshot from this list, and the launching point for this paper, is the observation that Chomsky himself often presciently referenced linguistic intention for consideration as a module of symbolic action. Here we ask whether it is now opportune to incorporate intention into the theory of syntax. For the arguments we present below, we propose that these goals and criteria are useful for evaluating evidence for the adoption of our thesis. To the extent any of them is met in the arguments that follow we invite the reader to consider that support has been adduced for our general thesis.

## 10.4 The Specific Proposal

We propose to adjust syntactic theory to allow choice of lexemes, morphology, structures, formations, transformations to include a specification of linguistic intent by the speaker. This approach incorporates the view that sentence construction involves a set of formational actions by the speaker, each reflecting a specific intent. For present purposes we consider only syntactic formation.

### 10.4.1 Definition of Intention (Tool) Grammar

Utterances are built with structural actions each characterized as a linguistic structural process. Each has input requirements, output effects, and, importantly, a specification of linguistic intent.

### 10.4.2 Corollary

Many unacceptable sentences never would be generated in normal discourse in case they artefactually represent divergent contradictory intentions which rationally would not be projected by rational mind in a cognitive process unified around a decided set of goals. This relieves the configurational syntactic component from the responsibility to exclude these sentences, thereby potentially simplifying the syntactic component and vesting it with added psychological reality.

## 10.5 The Arguments

Following is a series of arguments for the Intentional Syntax Hypothesis. For a wide-ranging thesis we have sought to present interesting, challenging and diverse cases. We invite their use as evaluation templates for additional analysis of phenomena the reader may be familiar with, particularly where problems have been resistant to effective solution.

### 10.5.1 Conflicting Intents and Passive Structures

We here make a simple and mundane observation that leads to far-ranging implications for syntactic theory and the architecture of linguistic grammar in a cognitive model. Routinely accessible observations surrounding passive constructions imply clearly that linguistic intention is directly involved in syntactic formation, and that formal recognition of intentional input to syntax affords two large benefits: 1) simpler, more direct empirical accounting for unacceptable structures 2) a long-missing opportunity finally to define basic linguistic categories and concepts such as ‘passive’, which generally have been characterized largely in terms of configurational patterning without involving the essential specification of what they are for.

Our aims in this section:

- Motivate an alternative architecture for linguistic syntax in a larger cognitive model
- Enable formational elements of syntax to be properly defined by specification of purpose.
- Demonstrate a corroborating side effect explaining why passives can typically be stative and involve past participles and perfectivity.

We demonstrate that the passive construction involves a purposeful cognitive action and is not simply a mechanical or configurational manipulation without demonstrable intent. We represent a structural linguistic action (or a combined set of such linguistic actions), as an ‘*actioneme*’, symbolizing it using a dollar sign (\$)’. An actioneme is analogous to but different from the ‘sememe’ of traditional linguistics. It is a basic psychological component of linguistic structural intent and action contrasted with any semantic mapping from post hoc interpretation.

Actionemes are introduced as pseudocode in the tradition of symbolic system architecture where it is efficient and customary to summarize and rationalize actions less formally in the design stage of system architecture prior to later formalization in actual implementation.

The actioneme is a basic recording of what users are doing, the originating linguistic mental action, as a linguistic element or structure is selected and formed. It specifies communicative intention but does not include any full semantic specification of received utterance meaning,

since the latter is a matter of reception rather than generation. The term *actioneme* signals an emphasis on what forms are intended to do, while larger traditional questions of what they may be taken to mean in reception are not directly engaged. Interpretive semantics generally involves discovering consequential impacts and inferences from what a speaker is believed to be saying rather than what the speaker has intended to do and actually does in structuring an utterance. It is the difference between the potential receptive content of a message and the expressive strategies used to present the content. What is taken to be said, versus what is done, and how.<sup>13</sup>

We take the received meaning of an utterance to be based on, but distinct from, the projection of thoughts which the speaker undertakes to represent, mediated by the set of decision actions used to formulate representation in external form.

We observe that every element of linguistic (trans)formation<sup>14</sup> has intentional cognitive content and use a well-known example here to illustrate.<sup>15</sup> The passive form of a sentence evidently is not functionally equivalent to the active form:

- (1) Al visited the sick woman.
- (2) The sick woman was visited by Al.
- (3) What was surprising about Al was that he visited the sick woman.
- (4) \*What was surprising about Al was that the sick woman was visited by Al (him).

This indicates that an actioneme is operative in the passive example:

\$bringPatientIntoEventFocus. The active form can be explained as an unremarkable default or, possibly, since one can posit two possible functional intentions, as reflecting \$exhibitEventAgencyFocus. When a phrase highlighting and focusing special characteristics of the agent (such as “What was surprising about” or “Of all the foolish acts given her allergies”) is added, the tool drawing focus away from the agent becomes incompatible.

- (5) Of all the foolish acts, given her allergies, Al visited the sick woman in his wool sweater.
- (6) \*??Of all the foolish acts, given her allergies, the sick woman was visited by Al in his wool sweater.

These examples show a cognitive “cognitactic” conflict<sup>16</sup> between tools in opposition, trying in a

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<sup>13</sup> We differentiate our work from the earlier contentious tradition of generative semantics since we do not advocate that syntax should be directly derived from an underlying semantic representation in logical or other form, but that it is useful to posit an intermediary action phase involving cognitactic decisions that determines aspects of how structures will be built. Intention/Tool grammar involves this indirection and does not address the historical arguments for or against generative semantics.

<sup>14</sup> Or construction, as the reader prefers. Throughout this work transformations may be cast as alternate constructions depending on considerations which we do not presently take up.

<sup>15</sup> In case a theory denies the existence of a particular transformation and construes syntactic alternations to have been produced directly, our arguments still apply, because at some point in sentence production a choice of structure is made and must be reconciled with other choices.

<sup>16</sup> A cognitactic incompatibility is a situation where the use of one tool does not make sense in the context where another tool has been used. A representation involving both puts them in conflict. These may either be viewed as constraints on construction, as we do here for purposes of demonstration, or might possibly be built into the individual tool structures so they are not candidates for conflicting insertion into structure. In either case we maintain that the filtering of incompatible structures follows from the common sense utility of the structures rather than abstract configurational structures.

single sentence, at cross purposes, to both add and displace special attention to the agent. This illustrates a natural Cross Purpose Constraint on the intentions underlying syntactic structure. Here, one would simply, at the same time, not put the agent in focus and remove it from focus.

As evident as actionemes might be in syntactic processing, they should not be viewed as unredeemable subjective intuitions without rigorous scientific validation or theoretical rationalization. Actionemes can be regularized and codified in ongoing investigations, and their validity as data can be established and replicated in a scientific process by properly interviewing linguistic consultants, by social science research practices, and by psycholinguistic experimentation. This robustly meets the challenge of testability which has been prominently raised by the generative program for all of linguistic theory.

There are fundamental advantages in precluding and obviating an irrational possibility by affirming that it would not be generated in the first place.

1. This affords an a priori preferable architecture insofar as there cannot be psychological reality or plausible modeling for a syntax that has no inputs. In addition, greater simplicity is achieved, while also enabling a computational model necessary for fast processing, when the architecture stems the irrational over-generation of non-sensical possibilities, limiting dead-end structures to which no felicitous output might be attached.
2. In a re-construal of theoretical syntax to include intentional inputs we also enable a further major benefit for linguistic theory. Elements of syntax can be properly defined. Where the configurational version of syntax can only characterize patterns and relationships among syntactic forms, intentional grammar has the advantage of adding in the intent, purpose and rational for the structure itself. This enables a functional definition of passive as focus presentation. The passive is not merely a patterning, but an intentional action with configurational results. That is definitional for the formation, the what it is, and explains why passive structures are distributed so widely in the world's languages. There is great utility in promoting patients into focus pursuant to a default formation where causation and agentivity hold a natural focus. While focus and function have long been observed for passive, intention grammar brings it into its own as a definitional feature.
3. As a side effect of this reanalysis a prominent correlation falls out naturally and fully explained. Passives can typically be stative, and also involve past participles and perfectivity. This fact wouldn't be amenable to explanation except by reference to the inherently implied past stative nature of the patient, an element having been acted upon, in perfectivity, relative to the prior agentive predicate.

Summary:

By simply adverting to one additional empirical fact, an intention to refocus on the patient, which is passed over in exclusively configurational analysis, syntactic theory is brought to a more psychologically plausible architecture, a simpler and less artefactual accounting, achievement of a scientific definition, and understanding of the co-occurrence of perfective verb forms, and a wider perspective, explaining why passives occur in the world's languages.

## 10.5.2 Evidence from Meta Reference

John Ross in one of his squibs raises a point of direct interest to the hypothesis that intentional tools underlie human language competence. (Ross J. , 50 Years of Linguistics at MIT, 2013)

- (7) One mystery squib of mine was a question: what is the source of *that* in this sentence: “The rules of Clouting and Dragoff apply in that order.”?

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

In summary, Ross’s observation provides primary direct evidence for the existence of intentional tools and their usage in manipulative sentence formation. If a linguistic structure refers to an action, such as ordering, then that action is evidently real and must have taken place.

### 10.5.3 Basic Constraints on Focus Constructions

This section demonstrates that the inclusion of intention in rule formation, in observation of evident fact, leads to natural explanations for ill-formed sentences that would not in any case be attempted due to incompatible intents at cross purpose to each other.

Cleft and Pseudo-Cleft constructions are documented in many treatments of English syntax, illustrated, for example, by (McCawley, 1998) p. 66:

- (8) I gave a watch to my brother.  
(9) \*It was a watch to my brother that I gave.  
(10) \*What I gave was a watch to my brother.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

Summary: This example illustrates the simplicity, directness, and empirical common sense of intention analysis, suggesting evidence might well be marshaled in a range of syntactic environments. Here, multiple focus elements tend to be in conflict but are compatible when one reinforces another as a focus refinement.

### 10.5.4 Crossover Phenomena

Configurational patterns can be examined to determine whether they are spurious, epiphenomenal, and/or artefactual, resulting from attempted analyses looking only at the artificially separated level of morpho-syntactical facts. Just as it is well-known in the study of symbolic systems that overly complicated ad hoc solutions can result when using the wrong level of generalization, we observe that explanations completely internal to syntax patterning can yield to more explanatory natural accounts when referred to the level of intentional actions.

In this section we re-analyze well-known Crossover Effects as artificial and artefactual consequences of interpreting configurational patterns as exclusively the result of configurational processes. Reexamination in terms of syntactic intention provides simpler and more plausible explanations.

Consider crossover phenomena in the following sentences where subscripts mark co-indexation (co-reference). (Wikipedia) Words with subscripts refer intentionally to the same person.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

### 10.5.5 Poetics as an Argument for Psychological Reality

In the Jakobsonian tradition whereby stylistics is treated as a core linguistic topic, we advert in this section to the necessity of referencing intentional actions as essential tools in the artist's toolbox.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

To summarize, as an affirmation of the nature of the material we are dealing with, the analysis observes the actioneme \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve) in significant effects well apart from everyday utilitarian syntactic considerations; it is evident in art. As a linguistic action dimension, evident in linguistic structure, its power, to the extent it is real, becomes supportively evident in neighboring disciplines. To deny it would be as to tell a viewer using a new higher power telescope that they are not in fact seeing what they see since the viewed objects do not appear in existing maps of the skies

### 10.5.6 Verb Subcategorization by Certainty for Unified Thinking

In this section we bring forward action intents for a set of data to show how a systematic set of unacceptable, unexpected sentences can be explained in a simple manner. We show that mathematical/configurational devices are not necessary when it is considered that the deviant sentences would result from cognitive intents that are incompatible in a way that would reflect disunified thinking in a manner that is unexpected inside or outside human language expression. Putative malformations empirically point to dis-integrated, irrational linguistic actions.

We consider a challenging case of complement subcategorization for verbs. We illustrate how both verbs and their complements can activate their own separate actions and show these must be compatible when used in tandem.

Verbs are subcategorized for propositions, exclamatives and questions, but licensing a complement versus noun phrase is separate. (Johnson, 2004)

- (11) a. John asked me what the time is/the time (Question)
- (12)b. I'll assume that he's intelligent/his intelligence (Proposition)
- (13)c. Bill couldn't believe how hot it is/the heat (Question)
  
- (14)a. John wondered what the time was/\*the time (Question)
- (15)b. I'll pretend that he's intelligent/\*his intelligence (Proposition)
- (16)c. Bill complained how hot it was/\*the heat (Exclamative)

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

Summary: The foregoing demonstrates the value of transcribing and utilizing action intents in syntactic analysis. We have seen the dis-integration resulting from any dysregulated flip within a sentence from one way of thinking to another incompatible one. If one sets up for an attitude to certainty, then releases that context, to adopt the opposite attitude within structures intended to be coupled, it reflects a lack of integrated thinking. Whereas the Cross Purpose Constraint frequently operates to rule out unexpected sentences, and might be posited here, it is also helpful to label certain incompatibilities of intent as a Unified Thinking Constraint.

### 10.5.7 Placement Alternations as Exigencies vs. Stylistic Options

In this section we undertake to lay out how intentional grammar of purpose can account for the interplay of required processes and optional stylistic ones, offering in both cases transparent explanations why data patterns as it does.

A significant problem that presents a challenge to configurational analysis is a documented set of placement alternations.

The phrase “at noon” seems often to follow the verb object. (data from (Johnson, 2004) p. 46)

- (17) a. Jill ate it at noon.
- (18) b. \* Jill ate at noon it.
- (19) a. Jill ate spätzle at noon.
- (20) b. \* Jill ate at noon spätzle.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

We quote Johnson for his recognition of the value of finding a solution: “This is a deeply mysterious affair. Why should movement transformations exist? A goal of much current research in syntax is to find an answer to this mystery. “

The answer we provide is that (trans)formations are tools that exist to implement specific effects, and various tools are, or are not, stylistically optional and are, or are not, functionally compatible with other tools, producing a variety of patterns of output. The benefit of the approach here is to loosen the mathematical and configurational syntactic formalism to allow patterns of syntactic action intent to more simply and directly account for the phenomena.

### 10.5.8 Complement versus Adjunct in Noun Phrases as Definitional Integrity

The aim in this section is to illustrate a constraint on the application of intents beyond those involving compatibility. Here we observe that some information is definitional in the sense that it is essential to the definition of a term. When essential information is observed to be modified, it is not then evidently further modifiable by an incidental/circumstantial predicate.



We consider the contrast between complements vs. adjuncts as presented in (Carnie, 2007)

As a preliminary, consider the semantics of what essentially makes a thing a book. It has to have something like potential reading material on pages. This is essential, yet there are many variants of books whose differences don't involve the essentials. A book can still be a book without a (red) cover.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

Summary: We have observed that the intentional selection of tools by the speaker is constrained not just by relative compatibility among them, but also by their ordering. Modifications of essential, definitional aspects must precede any incidental, circumstantial modifications in order to preserve the hierarchical integrity of fundamental elements. We can refer to this as the Definitional Integrity Constraint.

### 10.5.9 Wallace Stevens' Poetry

A well-known poem by Wallace Stevens' shows artistic use of actionemes This can be drawn out effectively as a process already evident in the first verse:

Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird by Wallace Stevens  
(first poem/stanza of 13)

- (21) Among twenty snowy mountains,
- (22) The only moving thing
- (23) Was the eye of the blackbird

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

Summary: To the extent these intended actions by a poet are evident from the experience of reading the poem there might well be diminishing doubt about the reality of intentional linguistic actions as elements of language competence. How might the stylistic actions of poets ever be properly analyzed if linguistic theory does not advert to a most basic intentional aspect of linguistic generation?

### 10.5.10 Postal Puzzles

When observed data can explain a phenomenon that is otherwise unexplainable it validates the notion that such data is valuable to syntactic theory. Paul Postal has noted the challenge to theoretical syntax of two sets of profoundly puzzling data on his web page. (Postal, 2014)

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

#### 10.5.10.1 Conclusion

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

Again, the formations of syntax preclude one intention undoing the action of another. Where there is a construction that buries an element, e.g. the agent, from prominence, it is not logical to expect, as a matter of unexceptional routine, a cognitive actor to simultaneously apply a tool, not only to exhume it, but to foreground it as a salient feature of expression, informational staging, and communicative focus. It's as if one invited a friend to view the coin collection, then, as preparation rather than placing it out on a table, put it away in the closet where it might only be thought of, referenced, and implicitly observed unless/until that decision is reconsidered. Speakers of natural language avoid routinely undoing what they are at the same time doing, so syntactic structure characteristically lacks that kind of surprise. Syntactic analysis is illuminated by simply asking what a speaker is doing when s/he utters a sentence.

### 10.5.11 Even/Only Phenomena

Since the advent of the concept of C-Command, its cognates and descendants have loomed large in the history of generative syntax. From investigating data patterns in many languages, there is every reason to believe in its importance in the history of linguistic science. There remains the question whether it might reflect some underlying factor. Does its efficacy in explanation derive from association with concomitant features of sentence generation and/or some deeper process underlying it? We open the question: what are the sources of the apparent utility of the C-Command concept.

In this section we consider some aspects of the phenomena surrounding the use of 'even/only'. Erlewine references a basic principle in reference to 'only' that depends on the configurational notion of c-command: (Erlewine, 2011)

The associate of *only* must be in its scope:

(24) \* [Which boy]^ does John only like \_\_\_ ?

**Principle of Lexical Association (PLA)** An operator like *only* must be associated with a lexical constituent in its c-command domain [at S-structure].

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

Summary: These examples show the potential for cognitactic solutions to widen understanding of linguistic phenomena and to illuminate the underlying essence of fundamentally configurational solutions involving c-command by pointing to processes at a level of representation beneath the configurational one.

We are therefore able to conclude that there is evidence that where C-Command appears explanatory it may rather serve as a data pattern indicator pointing to underlying explanations using intention data for evaluation as candidates offering a higher level of explanation.

## 10.5.12 Covert Modification in Floated Quantifiers: Iteration and Totality

English quantifiers ‘all’, ‘both’, ‘each’ do not behave like ‘most’, ‘one’, and ‘many’ since they permit ‘floating’ from a subject NP to a position to its right, as illustrated by (McCawley, 1998) p. 98:

- (25) All/Most of the Chopin etudes give me great pleasure.
- (26) The Chopin etudes all/\*most give me great pleasure.
- (27) Each/One of the guests made a speech.
- (28) The guests each/\*one made a speech.
- (29) Both of Tom’s hands were filthy.
- (30) Tom’s hands were both filthy.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

Summary: This case accumulates the evidence for the potential of mechanisms of linguistic intention in developing theories with expanded explanatory power beyond those available in configurational accounts that do not transcribe or utilize the available data of speaker linguistic intent.

## 10.6 Summary

From the foregoing set of arguments together with the Goals and Criteria set out at the beginning, we are able to conclude that there is much potential in syntactic theory for admitting the data of linguistic intent to simplify theoretical accounts and make them both more directly motivated and amenable to arguments that they supply a higher order of scientific explanation. It is especially noteworthy for data considered that a single constraint against incompatible intents can avoid unnecessary complexity in theoretical syntax while providing new explanatory power.

The breadth of these claims and the implications for syntactic inquiry mean that much has yet to be explored, and further discussion and challenge is welcomed.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

## 11 Extended Arguments for Tool Grammar

### 11.1 Labrador Inuttut Inverted Number Marking: Ongoing Questions

Published in *Etudes/Inuit Studies* 43: 1-2

#### **Abstract**

There is a fascinating and *prima facie* perplexing patterning in Inuttut, the Labrador dialect of Inuktitut, wherein the quite regular markers of singular and plural in verbal inflectional markers appear inverted in second person forms. We explore this linguistic problem and show two things:

that progress toward a solution is facilitated by incorporating representations of linguistic intent, and also that the consideration of intent, by adding a level of data, opens the phenomenon for deeper understanding by presenting new hypotheses to be explored. Making such features available in grammatical derivations allows the systematic generation of patterns which would otherwise be impossible, thereby obviating gaps in the potential for grammatical explanation and highlighting psychologically plausible mechanisms for diachronic change. It is disadvantageous for any theory of grammatical competence to allow any phenomenon of strong grammatical patterning to remain unaccounted for. By viewing grammatical structures as the result of tool invention by individuals and groups in the linguistic past, the study of the intellectual history of linguistic innovation can potentially uncover particularly clever and insightful processes related to desiderata of cultural adhesion. This approach opens new hypotheses for the evolution of the language from the proto stage.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

## 11.2 Inverse Number Marking Phenomena Elsewhere

We now turn to a set of apparent examples of inverse number marking apart from second person inflection. These occur in Dagaare, a language of the Niger-Congo group, and have been discussed extensively, including summary of previous work, in (Grimm, 2009) (Grimm, 2013). Grimm presents data suggesting that there is in Dagaare a single synchronic suffix, /ri/, which marks singular in one class of nouns, but plural in another (data from Grimm):

“same stem, yet -ri codes the plural interpretation for ‘child’ and the singular interpretation for ‘seed’”:

Singular	Plural	Stem	Gloss
b`i`e	b`i`ir`i	bi-	‘child’
b`ir`i	b`i`e	bi-	‘seed’

He gives further examples illustrating the plural interpretation for lexemes glossed ‘child, tree, forehead, basket, pig, scorpion’, and singular interpretation for ‘seed, hoe (metal instrument), prop/pillar, root, dry spot, horn’ Grimm notes this sort of inverted number marking may be rare in the world’s languages but is nevertheless attested in Kiowa and Pacific New Ireland languages.

This data raises a number of questions and Grimm advances the discussion by analyzing and documenting the semantic source of the two classes in terms of individuation. He points out difficulties in the theory of markedness for this data since singular/plural are generally regarded as unmarked/marked respectively, while their patterning is contrary to this in the Dagaare classes. Grimm does not address the thesis of (Smith L. R., 1979) wherein it is considered whether

morphemes may function as markers of markedness, i.e. that singular and plural may be unmarked for two different classes, allowing a single morpheme to refer to the marked case in each. We deprecate this alternative position in the interest of pursuing a tool grammar solution as a deeper and potentially better motivated probe into the inverted number phenomena.

What is unmistakable in data presented is that all of Dagaare lexemes illustrating the singular interpretation clearly illustrate nouns referring to a collective system, and, furthermore, the ones with plural interpretation do not <sup>17</sup>

This data points clearly in the direction of an actioneme which reflects semantic dimensions of individuation per Grimm, and also count classification. Namely we posit that the morpheme seems cognitively unified around an actioneme \$assertCountable. The logic of this is that for a collective system countability arises and only makes sense where the individual element underlying the collection is conceptualized, while for the individuated noun, the possibility of counting arises just when the individuals are collected into a plural grouping.

This solution is related to a theory of individuation but offers an explanation why a single morphological form might be used to represent opposing valences: they are unified in the higher conceptualization of imposing countability. This solution illustrates an advantage of a tool grammar approach. If we analyze in terms of what the speaker is doing new possibilities arise, and in this case we open a window into a process that is natural and inherent as speaker action moves in the direction of counting. An analysis based on markers of markedness might unify the sense of the opposing forms, but, unlike tool grammar, it cannot provide an explanation why they should be unified in the first place, or at all. There is an apparent requirement here for the representation of linguistic intent in generative rules.

### 11.3 A Tool Grammar Theory of Reflexives:

**[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]**

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

What is reflexivity? Beyond the traditional generative focus limited to how it can be rationalized and generated self-referentially in a mathematical syntax without inputs, what is it? We propose in a modest paradigm shift a system of structured psychological linguistic actions for managing uncertainty and show evidence and benefits that ensue for superseding the basic non-exempt regularities per the seminal work of (Chomsky, 1981), which have continued until present as the basis for wider generative treatments including cases of exempt/logophoric phenomena. (Dana Cohen, 2018).

The generativist scientific model/paradigm for morpho-syntax is specifically detached from

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<sup>17</sup> It is possible here to observe how a marker of markedness might present as an appearance in morphological patterning.

linguistic intention and generally operates from a null state, thereby lacking any inputs to a cognitively unstimulated mental module. A modest change, simply adverting to structural intention, results in a superseding architecture and less hermetic model (Tool Grammar) that offer new descriptive and explanatory advantages, as well as reintegration and interconnections within larger theories of cognition.

We present revised groundwork for non-exempt reflexives on which extended generative treatments, including cases of exempt/logophoric phenomena, depend. By expanding the scope of data to include intention, we provide functional explanations for syntactic formational process. A simpler analysis is achieved beyond C-Command control and the Extended Projection Principle. The specification of intent, which defines Tool Grammar (TG), challenges current views of the architecture of competence.

What is reflexivity? Beyond the traditional generative focus on how it might be generalized, and generated self-referentially, in a mathematical syntax without inputs, what is it? We propose in a modest paradigm shift that reflexivity is a system of structured intentional/psychological linguistic actions for managing uncertainty and show evidence and benefits for adopting this hypothesis. The foundational analysis presented covers the basic non-exempt regularities per the seminal work of (Chomsky, 1981), which have until present continued as the basis for wider generative treatments including cases of exempt/logophoric phenomena (Dana Cohen, 2018).

The generativist scientific model/paradigm for morpho-syntax is remarkable as a cognitive component in two respects: it is specifically detached from linguistic intention, and generally operates from a null state thereby lacking any inputs to a cognitively unstimulated mental module.

A modest change adverting to structural intention results in a superseding architecture and less hermetic model that can offer new descriptive and explanatory advantages, as well as reintegration and interconnections within larger theories of cognition.

The standard architecture has yielded rich results in the discovery of a large number of syntactic effects which are lasting fundamental discoveries, but progress is limited by adherence to an isolative architecture for the complex competence of language. New progress is enabled by abandonment of a concept of syntax as a circumscribed mathematical entity that is formally unconnected to larger cognitive processes.

We present revised groundwork for non-exempt reflexives on which extended generative treatments, including cases of exempt/logophoric phenomena, depend. A treatment of acceptability patterns and syntactic effects of reflexive anaphors improves on purely configurational syntactic analysis by expanding the scope of data to include intention and providing functional explanations for syntactic processes. By associating a specification of linguistic action intent with each formational process, which is the distinguishing feature of Tool Grammar (TG), a simple, functionally motivated analysis is achieved which probes beyond the undergirding configurational elements of C-Command control and the Extended Projection Principle. This opens a new scientific window and

challenges current views of the architecture of competence.<sup>18</sup> Derivative future theories of exempt reflexives can be built on the revised foundation.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

### 11.3.1 Overview

We aim in the following to:

- Survey step-by-step the principles of reflexivization in classical/standard binding theory to show how they derive from underlying structural linguistic actions. Syntactic principles are seen to be motivated by higher functional principles.
- Present an alternative foundational analysis that covers the basic non-exempt regularities per the seminal work of (Chomsky, 1981), which have continued as the basis for wider generative treatments including cases of exempt/logophoric phenomena (Dana Cohen, 2018).
- Illustrate how derivative future theories of exempt reflexives can be built on the revised foundation.
- [NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

### 11.3.2 Conclusions

Configurational analyses of reflexives have continued to stimulate further investigation without benefit of a pervasively functional perspective. They uncover and probe syntactic and other effects of linguistic structures and processes, but do not explore reasons why any particular linguistic mechanism exists or how it functions in a utilitarian context. They detour around the evident data of psychological intent. They do not seek the founding purpose behind the reflexive construction. In our analysis we juxtapose against this evolved structuralist approach a cognitactic analysis using functional explanations of intent which adhere to principles of cognitive strategy rather than screening effects for particular architectural configurations. Functional constraints preclude infelicitous generation without reliance on extensive filtering apparatus to overcome massive over-generation.

A simplified cognitax solution was proposed to handle the basic non-exempt anaphor data involving four aspects of descriptive patterning: precedence, clause mate locality, C-command, and abstract subject relationship. Continued complementary work can be undertaken to re-analyze the complexities of exempt anaphors.

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<sup>18</sup> Note that we use dollar sign pseudocode for architectural investigations into a system which is amenable to proper formalization and machine implementation.

We question a priori the functional barrenness of a purely configurational approach since communication is intentional, so we therefore advocate a functional actioneme tool grammar analysis that is well supported even by the accumulated observations of generative analysis. We build from the configurational approach as a necessary step in the deepening progress of understanding.

We approach the problems of reflexivization from a revised architectural perspective and arguing for a different level of analysis.

We inquire why C-Command should have the notable explanatory power that has been attributed to it and conclude that a true generalization has been only indirectly represented. The sisterhood referred to in C-Command is, from another perspective, a relation to a clause predication. The configurational branching in structure reflects the application of predicative tools. We propose that C-Command holds to the extent it does because it corresponds to discrete actions of clause predication with their corresponding intents

With this overlay and congruence, the actioneme approach is an advance, because it explains why C-Command should hold where it does, namely, that there are tools, such as reflexive constructions, that can be constrained to act principally in direct predications. We posit that non-exempt reflexives outwardly/explicitly revise a probability expectation of difference of reference. The scope of that expectation is at its basis within the clause predication. As such, we believe cognitax provides an explanation why the C-Command configuration, fencing off the more remote predicates as it does, should have been relevant. In this way, TG can be viewed as a more ambitious generalization to cover the additional dimension in the non-exempt data. Beyond the devices of traditional generative grammar there is evidence for a more inclusive superseding functional apparatus.

TG illuminates questions about the architecture of competence. Whereas generative studies have traditionally separated syntax from motivational cognitive inputs, TG would delineate a strictly restricted controlled vocabulary of linguistic intents and present these as interconnected with a set of syntactic construction processes. The empirical basis of actionemes supports the hypothesis that there is an additional component in the architecture of linguistic competence which is the source of certain of the structures that have traditionally been the subject matter only of configurational syntax.

The summary of the summary is that configurational analysis has taken syntactic theory quite far, but as in all science there is further to go.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

#### 11.4 Auxiliary Movement and WH in Questions



A representative syntactic analysis per (Carnie, 2007) (chapters 7,11) accounts for subject verb inversion in questions by positing a null unpronounced complementizer in the superordinate structure.

- (31) AI can go.
- (32) Can AI go?

In place of this abstract syntactic element we posit the actioneme \$askAboutPredication<sup>19</sup> for interrogative sentences which merely reflects the action undertaken by the speaker. In place of exclusively configurational apparatus, intentional, explicitly functional processes offer more direct empirical explanations for many aspects of morpheme choice and syntactic construction. The interrogative (trans)formation tool<sup>20</sup> puts the predication in focus by fronting its superordinate verbal element as a means of signaling an interrogative rather than declarative intention. We similarly associate a lexical tool with \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve) in WH questions. This inserts the WH word and triggers movement to focus position at the front of the sentence. In both cases fronting is correlated with doubt.

- (33) AI can see WH.
- (34) What can AI see?

It would seem that an element for which information is unknown and requested should be fronted to focus position. Both of these tools serve to cue the listener by excluding declarative garden path interpretations involving structures that would otherwise begin as non-question constructions, only to spring question status on the listener late in processing.

Here are some actioneme analyses of common interrogative types involving \$askAboutPredication (the intent of questioning) and \$declareUnknown (holds the place of a nominal about which information is requested).

- (35) Are you meeting? \$askAboutPredication triggers auxiliary fronting
- (36) Who(m) are you meeting? \$declareUnknown, \$askAboutPredication triggers aux fronting
- (37) Who will meet you? \$declareUnknown plus \$askAboutPredication where both are already in front focus position.
- (38) \*Whom you are meeting? \$declareUnknown plus \$askAboutPredication requires fronting of both.
- (39) You are meeting who(m)? \$declareUnknown on an element in the context of previously established (echo) basic predication does not ask about predication so does not trigger subject auxiliary inversion.

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<sup>19</sup> This is an umbrella representation summarizing more than one \$unknown type: {\$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve), \$askForWhomAssertionTrue} etc.

<sup>20</sup> Many structures alternations can be analyzed either as transformations or choices of related constructions. We leave these questions open but advert to both possibilities.

Focus movement can involve fronting somewhat generally. The composite cognitactic act involving both actionemes pairs inquiry about which individual or class might be involved (\$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve)), with inquiry about the truth of the resulting implied assertion (\$askAboutPredication). A generalization might be roughly formulated:<sup>21</sup>

### Interrogative Focus Fronting Transformation

#### Front question items

\$askAboutPredication associates with the superordinate predicate element, which it fronts locally over the subject

\$declareUnknown adheres to a specific focus of interrogation and moves it to the front of the sentence.

Given this framework consider

- (40) Who do you think Al will invite?
- (41) \*Who do you think that Al will invite?

By positing \$declareUnknown for 'who' fronting it follows that it should not be compatible with 'that' complements since the latter involve a packaging strategy per the 'factive' actioneme \$assertSpecificFact. Declaring an unknown for specific established circumstances is using tools at cross purposes.

Consider indirect question verbs such as 'wonder':

- (42) I wonder are you meeting?
- (43) \*I wonder you are meeting?
- (44) I wonder whether you are meeting
- (45) \*I wonder whether are you meeting?
- (46) I wonder who will meet you.
- (47) I wonder what he has done. (Tends not to presuppose something was done.)  
\$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve),
- (48) I wonder what has he done. (Tends to presuppose something was done.)  
\$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve), \$askAboutPredication

These inherently reflect asking and can involve either an \$askAboutPredication (trans)formation or, alternatively, a 'whether' lexical actioneme \$presentBinaryOption in lieu of subject auxiliary inversion. These do not co-occur because asking generally about a predication and asking about a specific binary option are different and mutually exclusive linguistic acts.

The actioneme analyses offer simple and direct transparent solutions that enable less of a

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<sup>21</sup> Generally, wh questions front the interrogative in which some nominal constituent is associated with uncertainty: \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve). Both elements, the wh object and the auxiliary, are fronted: they are both targets of questioning. \$askAboutPredication is involved in auxiliary movement, and wh-movement is a reflection of \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve) on the nominal.

requirement for complexity and contrivance in a syntax-central system.

## 11.5 The Role of Intention in Verbal Control

### *Introduction and Summary*

The scientific goals of the Minimalist Generative Program (MGP) (Chomsky, A minimalist program for linguistic theory, 1993) have been advanced via a traditional architectural assumption that a grammar connects meaning to sound (sign, etc). The most general purpose of the present work is to ask and evaluate the question whether scientific goals can be better supported rather by an alternative architecture wherein grammar is viewed as connecting linguistic structural intention to sound (sign, etc.), oriented more to speaker generation than listener interpretation. In this view, linguistic structure is connected to intentional sentence formation by means of speaker-oriented actions to effect desired structural representations as a process separate from semantic interpretation. The generative process of the sentence producer is separated from the interpretational or anticipatory process of implicit semantic rendition.

One of the most far reaching architectural revisions in the generative program since its inception has been the re-orientation, as part of the minimalist formulations, from top-down generation, building syntactic structures (outward from an initial S symbol toward elaborated hierarchical configurational structures), inversely, to the reverse bottom-up process whereby complex hierarchical syntactic trees are built as elements are injected and merged as constituent elements. This shift to expansive grafting engenders new possibilities and advantages for the architecture of competence insofar as elements are adjoined by means of the (putatively) maximally simple rule of Merge as proposed by Chomsky. The analysis we present explores the hypothesis that sentence generation is further best modeled as a process wherein lexical items are selected and merged into structures, along with directives for particular forms of structural realization, and both of these decision types are controlled by a formative specification of structural intent. This is linguistic intentional action on the part of the speaker. We thus argue for a revised architecture wherein linguistic rules, be they lexical insertions or structural formations, are conditioned by factors of linguistic structural intention. For convenience we refer to this approach as Tool Grammar (TG) as explained below.

Rather than seeking to undermine or displace the minimalist program the proposed revision would amplify its importance to the extent that additional explanatory power becomes available. Chomsky's massively influential findings of generative grammar originates from profound observations on the creativity of human language. To the extent that a revised architecture can uncover for exploration a new level of linguistic creativity it validates the Chomskyan proposal by judiciously extending its initial programmatic formulation. Further, any modifications which increase the simplicity of linguistic theory enhance the viability of the Minimalist approach.

One of the attributes of the Generative Program has been to motivate the discovery of a large number of syntactic patternings associated with structural attributes. These constitute a database of scientific effects which provide an opportunity for ongoing research. Presently we will focus on a pervasively fundamental and central syntactic effect to provide a laboratory for the study of

linguistic action intent To develop supporting arguments and have them carry significant weight the approach that follows will be to consider the phenomenon of verbal control, one of the most difficult, long-studied and least resolved of problems in generative syntax In his formidable comprehensive analytical summary (Landau, Control in Generative Grammar, 2013) both lays out the considerable complexities of this problem and concludes that it has not been resolved: (Landau, Control in Generative Grammar, 2013, p. 258)

Difficult questions remain open; some of them are as old as the earliest studies of control. Perhaps more than in other areas of linguistic research, problems in control are challenging in that they bear no obvious mark as to *which* part of the grammar they belong to; lexicon, syntax, semantics or pragmatics – the proper analysis is always up for grabs. If history is any clue, the future of control holds many more surprises.

The subject of verbal syntactic control represents a watershed challenging area of research in the history of generative syntax and is particularly ripe for analysis based on Landau's comprehensive and penetrating research summary of the phenomena observed and recorded over several decades Furthermore, his follow-on analysis (Landau, A Two-Tiered Theory of Control, 2015), advancing toward a comprehensive theoretical treatment, highlights key issues and presents new opportunities for understanding. The difficulty of the problem presents an opportunity as a gateway challenge for new theories of syntax To the extent that competitive explanations become available in the domain of verbal control, enabling theories engage the theory of syntax in a non-superficial way.

The numerous linguistic effects observed in the MGP are essential scientific waypoints, but also further afford a means of stimulating and testing new theoretical hypotheses To the extent that the specification of linguistic intent can strengthen the constraints on linguistic form and therefore the range of possible human languages, it also addresses Chomsky's over-riding concern with understanding how children learn language so expeditiously in the face of its complexity and their exposure to limited data, known widely as the poverty of stimulus problem A potential advantage of linguistic rules which are intention-aware is an opportunity to provide unified solutions to difficult problems where previously difficult syntactic challenges have partitioned out to semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and so forth, in a dispersed and often less than fully integrated way. If TG can simplify the generative apparatus and constraint ecology it has the potential to advance the primary goals of the generative program A principal aim of Minimalist theory is simplicity so TG is supportive of its general tenets to the extent that the conception of Universal Grammar can be rendered less complex.

The general purpose here, then, is to examine control data (partially) outside the historical context of syntactic configurational analysis, placing it rather within a revisionist framework referred to as Tool Grammar (TG) TG is circumscribed by the claim that syntactic theories can be improved if linguistic rules are enhanced by the addition of formal specifications of linguistic structural intent as part of their input conditions. By requiring a formal statement of user structural intent for each linguistic rule or process, a significantly different kind of analysis oriented to structural and functional purpose is enabled.

The methodology of our analysis will be to work through key data and syntactic effects that Landau has collected, endeavoring to present for consideration the advantages of a TG perspective. Since TG diverges significantly from previous approaches it is fairly discontinuous from the argumentation of configurational syntax so the analysis proceeds without investigating previous analyses point by point, as Landau has done so thoroughly in any case.

Throughout we will bring Landau's data forward to provide commentary and analysis from the perspective of structural intent. For convenience of reference, examples will be numbered sequentially but the page reference and a brief topic tag will be given when examples are drawn from (Landau, *Control in Generative Grammar*, 2013). In view of the seminal nature, comprehensiveness, and clear explication of Landau's work we will assume the reader is familiar with it.

The MGP creates new frontiers in the science of language, which themselves beg inquiry into where further explorations might lead. The examination of verbal control based on Landau's compendium of observations is an important frontier area central to the theory of syntax.

#### Overview of Verbal Control as a Test Environment

In the history of the MGP, Idan Landau's work on verbal control stands out for its assiduity, scientific comprehensiveness and relentless theoretical advancement on a single cluster of related syntactic phenomena. The choice of verbal control for long term persistent scientific analysis is particularly penetrating because it is at the very center of complex sentence formation, involves manifold resistant complexities, and, beyond its own mysteries, interlaces with both semantic and pragmatic processes.

To recap, Landau has both rigorously surveyed the large field of verbal control studies and also insightfully penetrated the accumulated data effects to propose ever more comprehensive theoretical solutions, making it possible to leverage this work in a particular strategic way. We use (Landau, *Control in Generative Grammar*, 2013) as a summary of observational effects which must be accounted for, and reference (Landau, *A Two-Tiered Theory of Control*, 2015) as the most advanced theoretical milestone for any ongoing research.

We investigate where these facts might lead as we seek to apply the principles of TG to verbal control. Here are the specific empirical and theoretical questions that arise from Landau's consolidation:

#### Questions Implied by Verbal Control for Linguistic Theory:

- A. Why, precisely, do certain groups of verbs cluster together in the observational effects that emerge from examining verbal control as a phenomenon?
- B. What are the implications of accepting classes of verbal control verbs as basic observational data to be accounted for in theory?
- C. Why does verbal control exist in natural languages?
- D. How can entropy in the theory of control be reduced and simplicity increased?

- E. Verbal control, viewed as a type of interlocking between verbs as they are merged into syntactic structures, raises empirical and theoretical questions about generative sentence building. What are the theoretical advantages of coordinated lexical selection by speaker intention in sentence building versus noisy random disjoint selection and over-generation subject to massive semantic filtering? Which model best approximates human competence?

These are questions we will return to after the following sections which undertake to strategically leverage the results of Landau's work.

### *A Fundamental Starting Point*

It is essential to our purpose that we begin by looking at classes of predicates that emerge from syntactic patterning as primary data. In the literature of configurational syntax, classes of verbs that surface from the observation of shared syntactic behaviors are often considered derivatively incidental rather than fundamental to theoretical motivation.

Here are a set of crucially important classic raising/control distinctions presented by (Landau, *Control in Generative Grammar*, 2013, p. 10) <sup>22</sup>

#### Raising to Subject

(1) *seem, appear, turn out, happen, begin, continue, stop, likely, certain, sure.*

#### Raising to Object

(49) believe, consider, prove, show, take, expect, allow, prevent, depend on.

#### Subject control

(50) try, condescend, promise, decide, plan, agree, hope, prefer, wonder, refrain.

#### Object control

(51) persuade, encourage, recommend, appeal, force, plead, order, urge, dissuade

Considering these classes as primary data raises important questions. Why do such classes exist? At what level are these classes defined? What are their definitions? Can one predict whether there could be verbs falling into more than one definition? What do these classes tell us about human language capability and its organization? What are the implications for human language ability with and without such classes? The emergence of these data prompt many such questions.

By merely examining the usages implied by these classes in a spirit of wishing to provide descriptive linguistic transcriptions, it is possible to infer a working approximation of structural action intention underlying these classes. We simply inquire what the speaker is doing: What is the action? Following is a reasonable approximation (in what might be a line of successive

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<sup>22</sup> Landau: "Both raising and control predicates come in two versions. In one version, the matrix dependent is a subject (as in (22)), and in the other one it is an object. We provide below a sample from each category (drawn from the English vocabulary)."

approximations as TG evolves). As noted below, we express these sets of intention features informally as *actionemes* marked with initial dollar signs, complex collections abbreviated for purposes of architectural discussion in a form of pseudocode, as is common in developing an architecture for symbolic systems. In a more formalized representation they would appear as sets of binary features and/or functional specifications.

- A. Raising to Subject  
\$addVerbXSpeakersExternalObservationDirectedToSubjectOfV
- B. Raising to Object  
\$addVerbXExternalMentalConditionDirectedToSubjectOfV
- C. Subject control  
\$addVerbCommitmentToAgencyEnactmentDirectedToActionOfV
- D. Object control  
\$addVerbAdvocacyForAgencyEnactmentDirectedToSubjectOfV
  
- E. Raising, Generally: \$addVerbConditionExternalToAgencyEnactment vs.
- F. Control, Generally: \$addVerbConditionInternalToAgencyEnactment

In these last two we encounter one example of a fundamental hypothesis in the domain of cognitive syntax, namely that human language appears characteristically to be concerned in an operational way with the causality of events and situations. We frame this context as \$AgencyEnactment and further hypothesize here that there is a potential to differentiate those conditions internal to a causality chain, i.e. those controlling the eventual occurrence or non-occurrence of an event, from external ones involving conditions less impactful on direct causality, describing, rather, factors of the surrounding and framing context. Syntactic constructions routinely involve additive predications on more central verbal assertions, and these can be of these internal and external types impacting the processes of syntactic formation. We therefore operate on the working hypothesis that internal/external distinctions on \$AgencyEnactment are transcribable and psychologically real. This claim is summarized in the following:

#### The Bounded Causality Hypothesis

The cognitive distinctions observable in linguistic patterning distinguish predications internal and external to the causality chain of events and situations (\$AgencyEnactment).

We present hypotheses about linguistic actions using dollar sign symbols and refer to them as ‘actionemes’. Actionemes are clusters of properties that represent linguistic action intent. They represent preliminary hypotheses aiming toward a standard controlled vocabulary of linguistic action intents. They are utilized as a form of pseudo-code for methodological convenience with an understanding that the process of formalizing TG should call eventually for a range of mathematically explicit, rigorously defined elements and forms. The purpose of

pseudo-code is to engage higher level questions of structure, process and organization without falling into distracting questions at a lower level of more detailed specification. Actionemes are shorthand in discursive presentations for a feature and function formalism which is conceptualized for a machine implementation as a generative system. A useful and conciliatory default assumption is that actioneme features inhabit and extend the feature space often referenced in syntactic and semantic theory, but are given a revised and radically more enlarged role than has been countenanced previously.

Even as initial renderings, subject to revision, these characterizations enable a new perspective on the processes of verbal control. We have here, for example, as one feature (Single actionemes are mnemonics for multiple features and functions.), a signifier of “direction to”, according with the occurrence of ‘to’ as the external sign of complementation. This offers an explanation why ‘to’ is selected to mark control and not some other lexeme. The claim is that the speaker is directing one predication to another for a purpose of modification, so it is no accident that directional ‘to’ has been chosen for this purpose in English. Structural directionality is part of what is intended.

Variant specifications of the linguistic intention are possible in the short term, highlighting a longer term need to evolve and conventionalize a control vocabulary for actioneme formation. The variants below, for example, reflect alternative approaches refined at a different level of abstraction to characterize putative concurrent underlying factors, which in more formal terms would be represented as complexes of binary features or function relationships.

G. A,B, i.e. raising classes together reflect

\$addVerbExternalMentalReactionReSituation or

H. C,D. i.e. control classes together reflect:

\$addVerbInternalAgencyEnactmentRoleInSituation

These actionemes as summary transcriptions of linguistic actions are postulated to provide a basic empirical platform for further theoretical formulations. To the extent they correspond to a psychological reality they afford some explanation for why the verb classes occur. Such transcriptions, short for complexes of particular features, represent underlying data for syntactic analysis but also serve as directives for syntactic formation of the sentence. They are also subject to validation by psycholinguists using experimental techniques.

The mental constructs implied by these pseudo-code transcriptions provide necessary but not sufficient conditions for the explanations we pursue as to why control verbs and the verbs they control should co-occur as they do. The higher control verb provides characterization of the lower, controlled proposition. In this way it is necessarily the case that the controlled verb is selected first since it is natural first to conceive a predication then subsequently consider what framing it should take in sentence construction, while the inverse, to choose a framing then ask what to frame, is not operationally plausible. We observe from this that linguistic framings are imposed on propositional material which precedes it as conceptual background. Given an accessed proposition, one decides how to frame it in formulating an expression, not infrequently based on reference to mental processes, as we see in the case of control structures.



We observe from these structures a necessary refinement on the functioning of any linguistic merge operation which in the process of sentence generation builds syntactic structures bottom-up as e.g. lexical items are selected by the speaker to implement intentions for expression. Specifically, it is not logical in a computational system that linguistic intentions would be selected randomly for after-the-fact reduction by any means, while compatibility of intents among selected elements is most natural to the production of a structure conformant to what is intended.

A propos of the present classes, we observe, from an intentional perspective, that controller and controllee verbs in verbal control constructions exhibit an interlocking relationship: they are selected as a coordinated sub-unit and in reference to each other. This evidently would not be the result of random coincidence or filtering from random juxtapositions since this contravenes the integrated function which is evident in their purpose. For this reason we posit the necessity of a species of merge wherein a characterization verb is selected in connection with a particular proposition, effecting certain interlocking connections. This substructure, first constructed independently, becomes available for merge into a the larger syntactic structure. This contrasts with the over-generation and filtering philosophy of the Minimalist Program. The interlocking features include co-reference of subjects, insertion e.g. of 'to' and other possible elements such as tense and aspect.

This process, as we have just described it, introduces the concept of packaging, which reappears often when looking at syntactic problems from the perspective of intention. There is a plausible view even, that pervasive features of syntax such as complementation and syntactic embedding/hierarchy itself are resultant from the mechanisms of intentional packaging. This topic is too broad to consider here but should be kept in mind as a potential benefit of intention analysis.

Note: Sections here are omitted in this version. The remainder of the body of this section is currently being refined.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

### *Wager Class Verbs as a Proof of Concept Challenge*

We proceed next to some directly persuasive confirmatory evidence for the reality of TG processes. In the context of heretofore perplexing observations about the patterns associated with so-called wager class verbs we pursue the potential to develop a quasi mathematical proof that a specification of linguistic intention is necessary for the proper scientific account of syntactic phenomena.

The structure of the argument is to observe a classic problematic syntactic pattern which has been inherently and persistently resistant to configurational analysis or resolution, but which is directly and simply explained by simple reference to transparent actionemic features which are independently required. By recording evident action in its verbal usage, the previously

confounding pattern yields easily to a simple, straightforward, and transparent solution. Thus, to the extent that a competitive configurational analysis with at least comparable explanatory features is not forthcoming a convincing tool grammar treatment of these phenomena emerges as a strong theoretical test of its theoretical necessity.

To frame the argument, recall that previously we adduced evidence for a structural intention involved in the formation of object raising verbs:

\$declareMentalProcess

With this in mind we adduce one important class of verbs that persists as a major unsolved problem in the generative program commonly referred to as the so-called Wager Class of Verbs. These are discussed extensively in (Pesetsky 1992) and are documented there as due to Paul Postal. They are ECM agentive verbs referring to cognition:

Wager Class Verbs

Examples: *wager, assure, say, insist, allege*

These are significant by virtue of the behavior by which they do not normally allow a raised or ECM subject as in

(52) \*They say Sue to be enjoying the summer.

while, significantly and surprisingly, permitting such when used in apposition:

(53) Sue, who they say to be enjoying the summer, has left.

With this in mind, we turn to a primary question of what is intended in the structure of the apposition. We observe immediately that the function or purpose or intent of an apposition construction is to help identify the nominal which it supports, or to identify the feature of the nominal that makes it currently relevant. This is a linguistic intention that can be transcribed directly: \$specifyIdentity. Significantly, identification, the specification of identity, beyond the generality of cognition, is itself a mental process. Once we recognize this, we can see that in the apposition actioneme, \$specifyIdentity, we have a clear instance where the intent is per the general, previously motivated actioneme for object raising verbs:

\$declareMentalProcess

This is explanatory: apposition emerges as a raising context by consistent, regular means in a tool grammar actionemic context.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> From the TG perspective, merely characterizing the class of verbs that exhibit raising only generally, as ones of cognition, does not draw an empirically fine distinction of linguistic intent, leaving observable information untranscribed. In fact the broad 'cognition' feature, as in alternate analyses, does not suggest an explanation for the apposition use. It is factual and useful to

This not only explains the acceptability alternation but then also provides us with strong independent evidence that the analysis of linguistic structural intent has verifiable validity. The presence of mental process was established a priori by observing a class of verbs, then subsequently in the present case found to be syntactically functional in a context which has been resistant to a configurational analysis lacking specification of linguistic intent. The case of wager class verbs is appropriately specific because it depends on apposition which is a syntactic configuration with particular and evident functional purpose, bringing linguistic intent more to the surface than it is in many constructions. It is significant that the apposition cases do not involve added lexical material, but only a syntactic formation.

Further, we see the actionemic role confirmed when a wager class verb is used in question formation, also a mental process of identification involving syntactic formation:

- (54) \*We wagered some guy to have won.  
(55) Which guy did we wager to have won?

In summary, the wager class verb phenomenon is susceptible to a straightforward explanation based on transcription of linguistic action intent. It provides direct supporting evidence both for the explanatory usefulness and psychological reality of actionemic features in syntactic analysis. To any degree that configurational analyses remain unable to provide a convincing explanation for wager verb phenomena, the tool grammar approach receives direct support which may be difficult to circumvent, thus providing a proof of concept challenge.

### *Implications and Conclusions*

In summary, we have proposed that actionemic transcriptions of linguistic intent explain the generalizations associated with the verb classes that are operative in control/raising verbs, exhaustive/partial control distinctions, lexical tense licensing, and wager verb phenomena.

This analysis also provides an explanation for the selection of the infinitivizer ‘to’ from among other possibilities. ‘To’ is a reflection, as a directional particle, of the additional predication ‘to’ an element in the actioneme complex. This exploits the generality within uses of ‘to’ as a preposition and so forth, e.g. ‘add to’, ‘attach to’, etc..

Based on the foregoing analysis we can consider progress toward analytical goals for a TG treatment of verbal control

- A. Why precisely do certain groups of verbs cluster together in the observational effects that emerge from examining verbal control as a phenomenon?

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embed any characterization in a functional perspective and specify more specifically that they declare a mental process.

We have observed that two prominent classes of verbs emerge from examination of tense and partial control patterning in the phenomena of verbal control. Each of these classes consists itself in five distinct, diverse and empirically separate but consistent classes of verbs. Important questions arise from Landau's landmark primary work in this area. Why these classes should cohere? Why do they exist? How are they to be treated linguistically so that they emerge as natural objects? For TG, by introduction of linguistic structural intention into the theoretical framework, we have seen that each is characterized by a clear and separate intent.

- B. What are the implications of accepting classes of verbal control verbs as basic observational data to be accounted for in theory?

The fact of providing a solution to the problem of explaining the coherence of these verb classes is itself an argument in favor of the TG perspective. These classes are direct evidence that structural intent is operative in natural language sentence generation. By allowing linguistic rules to be conditioned by linguistic intent we enable a simpler, more highly constrained, and more easily learned conception of human language.

We also gain from this approach insight into the nature of a set of hidden internal cognitive categories. We have seen, for example, evidence that linguistic processing is structured to preserve internal agency integrity.

- C. Why does verbal control exist in natural languages?

Once we advert to the intentional provenance of verbal control, the regularities uncovered by Landau, namely the inflexibility of tense shifting and the requirement of exhaustive control emerge as strong explanatory factors for why verbal control should exist in languages. By intentionally restricting feature shifting between the matrix and embedded clauses it becomes possible to reduce a situational structure with very high functional load and statistical frequency to a reduced, non-repetitive, very efficient and somewhat flattened structure. By precluding any process from allowing inter-clausal shifting, and allowing a redundant subject not to be expressed, the mechanics and efficiency of expression are facilitated for very common verbal relationships. Furthermore, as we have seen, verbal control packages elements of causality and agency so as to make them impervious to confounding interference, thereby enabling linguistic expressions better to assert logical relationships and causality without causing undue complexities of semantic interpretation.

- D. How can entropy in the theory of control be reduced and simplicity increased?

From many examples of systems of symbolic computation it is well-known that attempts to express a process with a view to generating the desired outputs can lead to extraordinary complexity if the process is expressed at an infelicitous level of generalization. Processes in the Generative Program are generally expressed either at the level of syntactic structure formation or semantic/pragmatic interpretation and filtering. There is a very fundamental question whether the reformulation of some rules at the level

of linguistic structural intent can simplify a model of linguistic competence, thereby increasing our understanding how it is that children might learn an extraordinarily complex system from exposure to a relative paucity of data.

In the history of the Generative Program there have been theoretical modifications intended to simplify the operation of core processes, but the complexities outside the core and toward the periphery have become highly specified of configurational detail in ways that can seem suited to particular problems rather than general function. Alternatives to what can appear to be over-specification can help to determine whether current theories have burdensome uncertainties in the global computational construct relative to available confirmatory data.

We have seen in the case of verbal control that by introducing a properly motivated level of linguistic structural intent, complex configurational solutions that appear unrelated to important generalizations can be replaced by simple factors with natural justifications. We have contrasted previous work where verbal control should be conditioned by Tense, Agreement and Attitude semantics with TG solutions that employ elements that appear to emerge naturally from the expressive function of the classes of verbs.

We therefore propose for consideration and re-validation in the generative paradigm that a theory modification whereby linguistic rules can be conditioned by linguistic structural intent can lead to a simpler, more empowered theory of linguistic structure, reducing the uncertainty associated with particular solutions and improving the entropy of a generative model as a whole.

- E. Verbal control, viewed as a type of interlocking between verbs as they are merged into syntactic structures, raises an empirical and theoretical question about generative sentence building. What are the theoretical advantages of coordinated lexical selection by speaker intention in sentence building versus noisy random disjoint selection, subject to massive semantic and pragmatic filtering? Which model best approximates human competence?

When the Minimalist Generative Program inverted the original logic of generative grammar by introducing a Merge operation to build sentences lexically from bottom up rather than compositionally by expanding on an initial #S# symbol, a framework resulted which is highly amenable to a putative cognitive reality of how humans themselves must generate sentences. The idea that words are somehow assembled into larger structures, while automatically developing a hierarchical structure in the process, is one that is compatible not only with a variety of traditions in linguistics but one that also models linguistic generation in a manner less abstracted from actual utterance performance. Syntactic Merge, in one form or another, is a likely watershed convergence point for linguistic theories going forward. Its importance is buttressed and supported by the Tool Grammar view of linguistic generation.

It is evident that a control verb and the one it controls need not be viewed as either statistically or cognitively independent events. Nor is it necessary to export the

considerable puzzles of linguistic structure to semantic and pragmatic interpretation in cases where they might be addressed at the point of intentional lexical selection.. Lexical merge is readily adaptable to mechanisms that would provide for the interlocked selection of lexical items and structures This seems a theoretical necessity from the co-occurrent patterns of interlocking that are present in the data of verbal control

In previous analyses of verbal control it has been left to semantic interpretation and pragmatic filtering to remove incompatible formations In TG, where there is a formative specification of structural intent, it is natural to provide for the generation of compatible forms at the point where they are introduced and where it is expected to be simplest and most efficient With intent in mind, a speaker would naturally choose items compatible with a set of communicative strategies In this way we arrive at the conclusion that TG has the potential to model and approximate human competence more effectively than a syntax-centric configurational approach relying on a plethora of syntactic structures that must always be filtered only by semantic and pragmatic components.

While the formal notion of a sentence has been central to the formalist characterization of what a human language is in the generative program, there has perhaps never been a satisfactory definition of what a sentence is From the inception of rules of linguistic intention we conceive within the TG perspective the beginnings of an outline of a satisfactory definition, namely as a unit of structure based on a set of individual but coordinated decisions to project the representation of a coherent set of linguistic intentions into an external medium so that they may be interpreted by others This manner of definition has not been available as long as linguistic intention has been excluded from linguistic description

Finally, we observe that while other studies have found verbal control not to be a unified linguistic process, the method of TG brings forward a level of linguistic representation where more can be unified than might otherwise have been expected Verbal control is not so diverse as it might initially seem

Having here analyzed the high level issues of verbal control, we envisage companion research which undertakes to seek explanations for many detailed observations that Landau has summarized These would seem to promise to be readily forthcoming in the TG framework Landau's penetrating landmark work has enabled a new generation of linguistic insights.

#### 11.6 Islands and Embedded Wh Constructions

Wh words are used in relative clause constructions in addition to questions What these contexts share is a role for holding a place where information is to be filled in In this section we consider a set of classical syntactic constraints on Wh structures with a view to examining whether they can be aided, illuminated, or replaced by actioneme analysis.

Carnie's discussion (Carnie, 2007) (p 334) of Ross's classic movement-constrained islands includes complex phrases containing relative clauses:

- (1) What did he claim that he read t in the syntax book?  
(movement out of simple C)

- (56) \*What did Bill make the claim that he read t in the syntax book?  
(Out of C to head N)
- (57) \*Which cake did you see the man who baked t?  
(out of Adjunct to head N)

A purely syntactic approach holds that there can't be movement out of a clause if it's in a configuration dominated by a Determiner Phrase, as in a complement or adjunct to a head noun. The configurational solution is incomplete from the cognitive perspective insofar as an operational intent is not specified.

We note a parallel between

- (58) the claim that he read in the syntax book  
(59) the man who baked the cake

In both cases the embedded sentence serves to clarify information about the head, using 'that' and 'who' respectively. We propose that both structures involve `$declareUnknown(alias $positVariableToResolve)` (which claim; which man). Corresponding to 'that' and 'who' the sentence embedding tool functions to fill out the restricting or unknown information for the head nouns. We express the Wh actioneme with an alias to elaborate the functional role: `$declareUnknown (alias $positVariableToResolve)`. The function of the embedded sentence can be characterized as `$embedSentenceToSpecifyObject`.

There is no such head noun or associated structure in

- (60) He claimed that he read something in the syntax book

Evidently a reason is needed to explain why movement of the wh-word `$declareUnknown (alias $positVariableToResolve)` can't break out of a nominal construct such as 'make a claim that' or 'see the man who', as in the unacceptable sentences above. The `$declareUnknown (alias $positVariableToResolve)` of the wh words declares incomplete, unknown knowledge so it is natural to expect that one wouldn't ask for information via `$askAboutPredication` and `$declareUnknown (alias $positVariableToResolve)` about an element that is simultaneously being used to specify an element used to lay out the very question.

The interrogation tools are not compatible with packaging a construction designed to identify or clarify the same information. The function of the that-clause and relative clause is `$embedSentenceToSpecifyObject`, for both 'the claim', and 'the man'. In this TG interpretation it is clear that the actions `$embedSentenceToSpecifyObject` and `$askAboutPredication` or `$declareUnknown (alias $positVariableToResolve)` are incompatible.

These data suggest a preliminary constraint on clause specification constructs:

Unknown Specification Constraint (Corollary of Cross Purpose Constraint)

In the context of `$embedSentenceToSpecifyObject`, use of a `$declareUnknown`

element is inappropriate in an embedded S functionally specifying a head, because the introduction of an unknown is at cross-purposes with the process of specification.

Finally, to illustrate further, consider the sentence below. The clause 'who baked \_\_\_ cake' specifies which man is spoken of. There is an inherent contradiction in using an element such as the object of 'bake' both in a process to specify a head noun and to declare an unknown in an interrogative context.

(61) \*Did you see the man who baked which cake?

Even though there is no overt embedded sentence, a similar form of analysis can elucidate the unacceptability of

(62) \*Whose did she buy book?

since the possessor both specifies the book and also has that role undermined by a structure which declares it unknown.

We leave detailed analysis for future work, but note there are even minimal pairs that contrast the act of specification with addition of ancillary detail. These involve 'about', which has a built-in looseness of specification:

- (63) He read a/the book about computer science.
- (64) He dropped a/the book about computer science.
- (65) What did he read a book about?
- (66) \*What did he read the book about?
- (67) \*What did he drop a/the book about?

Carnie also considers wh-islands involving more than one wh item in a sentence. He presents relevant data:

- (68) I wonder what John bought t with the money.
- (69) How do you think John bought the sweater t?
- (70) \*How do you wonder what John bought t1 t2?

And we add a question with two wh words:

(71) \*What do you wonder who bought?

Some other examples:

- (72) You wonder what Al photographed.
- (73) You wonder who photographed the ape.
- (74) \*?Who do you wonder photographed the ape?
- (75) \*Who do you wonder what photographed?



And also:

- (76) You wonder who photographed what? (Echo context only)
- (77) ?Who do you wonder photographed what?
- (78) \*You wonder what who photographed.
- (79) Who saw what?
- (80) \*Who what saw?

There are infelicities in these sentences when there are two wh-phrases, especially when both of them are fronted. The wh-island constraint has often been presented as a pure syntax configurational solution, e.g. Don't move a wh phrase skipping over another wh phrase that has been moved.

Actionemes let us approach the question by examining the compatibility of multiple unknowns.<sup>24</sup> We propose \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve) for positions where wh-words occur. In case the wh-word is fronted to produce a question form (embedded or matrix) we propose the interrogative actioneme \$askAboutPredication. The \$declareUnknown element may involve manner, agent role, patient role, etc.

We propose that multiple \$declareUnknown actionemes are incompatible in a single scope involving \$askAboutPredication, since introduction of a second unknown confounds and thwarts the processing and resolution of the first unknown in the context of interrogation. There occur two \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve) elements in each of the unacceptable sentences above. Use of one unknown variable requires the other elements in the local scope to be known in order to establish the possibility of reasonable questioning. The exception is an echo context where the question reflects a just previous utterance which anchors some items in the verbal exchange.

This suggests a constraint:

#### Unknown Interrogation Constraint (Corollary of Cross Purpose Constraint) V. 1

In the context of \$askAboutPredication, use of multiple \$declareUnknown elements is inappropriate, because the introduction of a gratuitous unknown is at cross-purposes with the process of questioning another one.<sup>25</sup> Doubt confounds resolution of doubt.

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<sup>24</sup>The following may be echo questions, and reflect different phenomena:

- ?How do you think Al bought what?
- ?I wonder what Al bought how.

Insofar as these latter two are considered good sentences they could be reduced from compounds with equal constituent reduction but without two movements, but it seems closer to a natural consequence if use of multiple wh-words depends on the compatibility of the elements being questioned.

<sup>25</sup> This constraint may well be generalized with the foregoing one.

The questionable acceptability of

(81) ?Who do you wonder kissed the ape?

seems also to argue that the presence of two unknowns, even if one is embedded in an indirect question lacking a wh-word, can be the source of a difficulty.

In a similar way, a reprise of the traditional Subject Condition is possible:

(82) That the police would arrest several rioters was a certainty/doubtful.

(83) \*Who was that the police would arrest a certainty/doubtful?

'That the police would arrest several rioters' is in a subject role. Frequently in syntactic analysis it is construed that wh elements can't be moved out of subjects.

Here we observe that 'was a certainty/doubtful' is used to \$assessLikelihood, while the unacceptable sentence at the same time includes \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve), which is the endpoint of uncertainty. A prerequisite of establishing likelihood would seem to be having firm premises rather than introducing one that is itself uncertain. We propose a tentative constraint subject to ongoing refinement.

#### Likelihood Uncertainty Constraint

In the context of \$assessLikelihood, use of a \$declareUnknown element is inappropriate in a determining role for the proposition under assessment, because the introduction of an unknown is at cross-purposes with the process of establishing a foundation for determining likelihood. Likelihood assessment cannot be based on definitional uncertainty. Definitional uncertainty is \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve) associated with an argument implied within the definition of a verb.

Finally, consider the traditional Coordinate Structure Constraint

(84) I like Mary and John.

(85) \*Who did you like Mary and t?

(86) \*Who did you like t and John.

(87) I ate some popcorn and drank some soda.

(88) \*What did you eat t and drink some soda?

(89) \*What did you eat some popcorn and drink?

Looking at the higher intent of these coordinate sentences, each reflects an actioneme \$expressSimilarityOrParallelismByConjoiningAssertions.

Now the act of \$declareUnknown (alias \$positVariableToResolve) is incompatible with the explicit establishment of similarity or parallelism among assertions..

## Conjunction Constraint on Unknowns in Assertions

Assertions Conjoined for Similarity or Parallelism should not include an unknown since its lack of clarity works directly against effective comparison.

In summary, the actioneme approach recurrently presents itself as an alternative to purely syntactic traditions such as those of the structural technical solution proposed in the Minimal Link Condition (all movement is local i.e. to the closest non-filled landing position across complexes of structural tree derivations).<sup>26</sup> The attractiveness and viability of actioneme analysis here shows its promise to favorably rework numerous well-studied syntactic phenomena whose solutions have not seemed always to readily stabilize over successive generations of research. The observations of this section suggest the need for further work in wide reaches of observed syntactic complexity. If they are correct it would be expected that new principles at the level of cognitax would emerge and be validated.

### 11.7 More on Island Constraints

In this section, we further examine various configurational syntax constraints that have been proposed to consider whether they might be enhanced or replaced by cognitactic constraints. We consider data that emerged from consideration of the A-over-A principle (a rule applying to category A must apply to the higher A) (Chomsky, *Current issues in linguistic theory*, 1964), the Empty Category Principle (Chomsky, 1981), and later generalizations as they were further strengthened.

Consider the following:

- (1) I treasured my trip to Africa.
- (90) \*Africa, I treasured my trip to.
- (91) My trip to Africa, I treasured.

‘my trip to Africa’ involves the actioneme \$describeExperience’, ‘to Africa’ is an action \$clarifyTrip as part of describing experience, while ‘Africa’ is \$assertPlace as part of clarifying the trip. Fronting implements \$bringToFocus so the problem with the sentence above can be characterized as focus being put on a disproportionately minor embedded detail. This suggests a constraint:

#### Subordinate Focus Constraint

Don’t bring subordinate embedded details into focus without strong contrastive stress to mark awareness of the special emphasis on a minor subordinate predication.

This phenomenon doesn’t have only to do with depth of predication as the following show, but degree of details, associated with categories such as manner, place, and other predications less

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<sup>26</sup>We forego consideration of echo questions.

central to the event.

- (92) What-i did he say that he was reading i?
- (93) What-i does she believe that he said that he was reading i?
- (94) What-i are they claiming that she believes that he said that he was reading i?
- (95) What do you think that they are claiming that she believes that he said that he was reading i?
- (96) \*How-i have they forgotten which problem they should solve i?

(Santorini, 2007) p. 12

In the following we observe that wh fronting applies to the verb object when manner is declared unknown, but not vice versa. This shows a hierarchy of detail preventing a wh action on an interconnected detail ('how' is intimately related to the notion of a solution) when a more basic element is to be resolved is \$declareUnknown. Similarly, the data shows that for the verb subject to be declared unknown and fronted confuses the purpose when the essence of the unknown, i.e. selection of a particular one ('which'), is intimately connected with the manner of solution ('how').

- (97) ?Which problem have they forgotten how they should solve?
- (98) \*How have they forgotten which problem they should solve?
- (99) \*Which problem have they forgotten how should be solved?

(Santorini, 2007) p.12

In the following examples associated with the Empty Category Principle we see similar processes at work:

- (100) \*How did John ask whether Bill fixed the car?

The indirect question associated with 'whether' is inappropriate to frame an assertion in which manner is unknown. Similarly, 'that', which points to a fact (\$assertSpecificFact) is not compatible with a predication in which the subject is unknown:

- (101) \*Who does John believe that will fix the car?
- (102) Who does John believe will fix the car?

(Santorini, 2007) p. 12

Nor is it functional to interrogate an adjoined predication for which a major argument is unknown:

- (103) \*Which bike did you ride before Al fixed?
- (104) \*How i do you wonder when Al baked the cake i?

(Chomsky, Barriers, 1986)

These too show the general theme of not interrogating embedded refinement details This points to the validity of constraints at the level of linguistic structural intention.

The above observations accumulate to a general conclusion that many constraints on configurational syntactic processes can be simplified, improved, replaced, and/or be made more general by use of cognitactic analysis.

### 11.8 Polarity Items

It is a challenge syntactically to exclude the positive form for negative polarity items in analogous constructs.<sup>27</sup> (Carnie, 2007) ( p 133)

- (1) I didn't have a red cent.
- (105) I hadn't seen her in a blue moon.

The acceptability of the above calls for an explanation of the unacceptable positive analogs:

- (106) \*I had a red cent.
- (107) \* I. didn't have 5 red cents
- (108) \* I had seen her in a blue moon.
- (109) \* I hadn't seen her in 2 blue moons.

Consider some plausible actioneme pseudocode to represent linguistic intention for the negative cases 'red cent' reflects a tool that utilizes a rhetorical symbol for an amount rather than inserting an actual monetary amount.: \$addHyperbolicRhetoricalSymbolForVerySmallestAmount.

The article 'a' instantiates \$assertSingleItem Combining these we get salient focus on there being only one, a minimal amount These combine with \$denyHaving ('not have') to yield the derived pseudocode \$denyEvenMinimumViaSymbolForVerySmallestAmount \$denyHaving makes use of the rhetorical device This is a plausible account of the acceptable negative polarity sentences above But what about the ill formed ones?

We are brought to the question: Why would one use \$ addHyperbolicRhetoricalSymbolForVerySmallestAmount and \$assertSingleItem without further purpose such as negating it rhetorically? If one wanted to assert the holding of a small amount, its literal value could be evoked, or alternatively a generality such as e.g. 'almost nothing'. But here there is not an amount but only a rhetorical symbol for a radically small amount. An amount could not even be implied because there is no such value attached to what is rather only a rhetorical device There is evidence here for a constraint on actionemes: "Don't add purposeful rhetorical elements and then not use them"

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<sup>27</sup> Note 'even' can be added. Note also: \*I didn't have 5 red cents.

To elaborate in more detail, ‘a red cent’ is rhetorically useful as a worthless mythical absolute minimal symbolic denomination. For stylistic effect, some tools used together implement a useful construct There is no role for \$ addHyperbolicRhetoricalSymbolForVerySmallestAmount (‘red cent’) if it is not put to some use.

Here is similar construction illustrating the same relationships:

- (110) He doesn’t have a penny to his name
- (111) \* He has a penny to his name

This analysis suggests that negative polarity is not a phenomenon of configurational syntax but one of sentence construction actions A similar analysis applies to ‘blue moon’.

Lawler offers a collected overview of negative polarity with key examples which we consider below. (Lawler)

- (112) He didn’t ever see it.
  - (113) \* He ever saw it.
- Also: ‘ever the fool’ means without end, over endless time

‘ever’ = \$assertOverTimeEndNotReached  
Negation is present \$assertNotSee

For stylistic effect, these tools together implement \$assertFailToSeeOverTimeEndNotReached There is no role for \$ assertOverTimeEndNotReached (‘ever’) if it is not put to some use since the same circumstance is effected by use of \$assertFailToSee in its bare form This is an example of the

Superfluous/Null Construct Constraint

Do not introduce an actioneme if the result would be the same as if it were not introduced.

Now consider:

- (114) He hasn’t called in weeks/hours/days/years/eons.
- (115) \*He called in weeks.

“in weeks” = \$assertUnexpectedlyLongTime  
Negation is present in \$assertFailToCall

For stylistic effect, these tools together implement \$assertFailToCallOverLongTime There is no role for \$assertUnexpectedlyLongTime (‘in weeks’) if it is not put to some use Without negation the actions sum to an effect whereby the event happened at any point during a time longer than

would be expected, which leaves open the possibility that it happened within the expected time frame This also is ruled out by the Superfluous/Null Construct Constraint.

Consider also that positive polarity items are unacceptable when negated:

- (116) I would rather have pie.  
(117) \* I wouldn't rather have pie. (Except as echo.)

'rather' = \$assertPreferredAlternative

This actioneme is incompatible with a negative insofar as it convoluted to propose an alternative in order not to use it, i.e. it avoids wasted effort to set up a circular disuse of an alternative.

- (118) I sorta like cake.  
(119) \* I don't sorta like cake.

'sorta' = \$assertIndefinitePartialDegree

This is ruled out because one must avoid building extra detailed structure for a partial degree of predication, when the predication is vacated by negation This illustrates a constraint to rule out building gratuitous structure for no purpose When structure is created it must be utilized.

These positive and negative polarity phenomena indicate a need for a constraint on the combination of actionemes in building sentences:

#### Wasteful Structure Constraint

Don't build complex actioneme structures then not use them, or contradict them, or circumvent them.

In reality the operative factor in polarity patterning is not negation, as the name negative polarity might suggest, but useless elaboration Negation rather can be a valid form of use for rhetorical elaboration.

Now consider examples from (Giannakidou), used to argue that some current explanations of negative polarity, i.e. downward entailment and nonveridical conditioning, can't explain the full range of data.

Analysis of logical implication in polarity constructs has led to a hypothesis that negative polarity items are sanctioned by downward entailment, but Giannakidou cites counter examples lacking negation that are not downward entailing: (Giannakidou)

- (120) He doesn't have any sense.  
(121) \* He has any sense

'any' = \$anticipateAtLeastSomething

Negation is present in \$assertFailToHave

For stylistic effect, these tools together implement \$assertFailToHaveAbsoluteMinimum There is no role for \$anticipateAtLeastSomething ('any') if it is not put to some use, since without negation it asserts vacuously that what might occur in bland circumstances is what would in any case be expected This amounts to insinuating an attitude into the situation that has no purpose since circumstances are such that the attitude is not appropriate.

Consider also:

(122) Most children with any sense steal candy.

(123) Children with any sense steal candy.

Here we have a similar situation, susceptible to the foregoing actioneme analysis, except that negation is not overt but implied by the partitive formation which countenances children of different types A varied collection can involve individuals of varying degrees sub-selected by having or not having the anticipated sense so there is a useful role for the actionemes.

Now consider an idiom showing actioneme structure similar to 'any' above.

(124) He wouldn't lift a finger.

(125) \* He would lift a finger.

'lift a finger' = \$positSymbolOfNegligibleEffort

Negation is present in \$assertFailTo

For stylistic effect, these tools together implement \$assertFailToMakeNegligibleEffort There is no role for \$positSymbolOfNegligibleEffort ('lift a finger') if it is not put to some use.

These constructs are in the family of actionemes used for disparagement, referred to as 'minimizers' Note that there also exist disparagement contexts that do not involve explicit negation, but do so implicitly by dividing groups of people into classes with and without the property, thereby introducing the implied negation:

(126) Most people who would lift a finger have their own reasons.

(127) People who would lift a finger have their own reasons.

Also from Giannakidou, consider that polarity items can be licensed in interrogative and conditional environments Here is the context:

(128) Ruth didn't lift a finger to help.

(129) \*Ruth lifted a finger to help.

Anticlimax: This is ruled out as an unused minimizer for dramatic effect.

(130) Ruth doesn't give a damn what I think.



(131) \*Ruth gives a damn what I think.

Anticlimax: This is ruled out as a superfluous, unused minimizer introduced for dramatic effect.

These negative polarity items are sanctioned in questions and conditionals:

(132) Did Ruth lift a finger to help?

In the question, 'lift a finger' arises in the context of interrogative possibility that a dramatic minimizer could be appropriate.

(133) If you give a damn, you'll listen.

Here too the possibility is raised by the question that dramatic minimization could be appropriate since every question raises the possibility of a positive and a negative.

Giannakidou further cites data that are a problem for both the nonveridical and descending entailment conditioning of polarity items Consider 'only' and emotive factive verbal contexts:

(134) I am glad he said a word!

(135) 'I'm glad we got any tickets.

(136) Mary regrets that she lifted a finger.

(137) Only Mary {gives a damn/said anything}

Both 'glad' and 'regret' are \$assertPossibilityofAlternative so the dramatizing minimizer is licensed by implication of the negative possibility Similarly, 'only' asserts the possibility of others with different properties so can contrastively utilize the dramatizing minimizer.<sup>28</sup>

In summary, we have observed that cases of negative and positive polarity can be quite generally understood by means of analysis of the linguistic actions involved in utterances, and that a configurational syntax account, which has been uncertain and problematic, is challenged by the empirical potential of the cognitactic perspective.

## 11.9 Donkey Pronouns

TG posits a set of linguistic actions for use in the formulation of syntactic rules It affords cognitive utilitarian solutions to syntactic problems without, since they are separable, directly facing the mass of significantly resistant linguistic issues that have been investigated in the disciplines of semantics, pragmatics, and philosophy Nevertheless, since these can overlap and interact extensively with syntactic analysis, there is reasonable hope that TG solutions might offer new perspectives even in these disciplines It is worthwhile, therefore, briefly to illustrate that TG analyses may extend beyond syntactic problems to issues in traditional semantics and pragmatics TG may be especially helpful where confounding issues of acceptability and

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<sup>28</sup> We do not consider scalarity, which Giannakakos rejects

permissible interpretation of particular utterances arise. In this section we address the classical problem of so-called “donkey pronouns” that is associated with theories of dynamic semantics and discourse representation theory

First, let us establish the importance of donkey sentences for work in semantics and pragmatics generally. It follows that it is important if TG can provide a substantive explanation because the issues surrounding the donkey sentence problem underlie a significant set of analyses in dynamic semantics To quote (Geurts, 2011):

“In large part, the motivation for developing dynamic theories of interpretation, beginning with DRT, was the realization that the dichotomy between referential and bound-variable (occurrences of) pronouns is less natural than one might think—less natural in the sense that some pronouns don't fit comfortably in either category.”

We provide and contrast an alternative TG analysis using analysis and examples drawn from this survey article (Geurts, 2011) (GA):

In the following sentence GA takes ‘his’ to refer to ‘Pedro’, illustrating a referential use of the pronoun.

(1) Pedro beats his donkey.

In TG we would postulate linguistic actions such as the following for elements of the above sentence.

**\$assertReferenceToPedro<sup>29</sup> (‘his’)**  
**\$assertPedroHasDonkey (‘his’)**  
**\$assertPedroBeatsDonkey (‘beats’)**

GA holds that, in the following, “no farmer” cannot be referential, so the pronoun ‘his’, which refers to it, cannot be either With a reference analysis ruled out, the pronoun is viewed as being one of binding that involves quantifiers.

(138) No farmer beats his donkey.

TG avoids reliance on abstract theoretical distinctions of reference vs. binding and favors a less cultivated treatment based on direct linguistic actions In contrast with the previous example, illustrating reference to ‘Pedro’, TG here posits cognitive actions involving reference to concepts or thought constructs This makes unnecessary an analysis built on a pivotal assumption that there can be no reference to a set that can be empty:

**\$imagineFarmer (‘farmer’) = concept**  
**\$imagineFarmerHasDonkey (‘his’)**

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<sup>29</sup> Linguistic actions can be naturally expressed as functions such as \$assertReference(Pedro), \$assertHas(Pedro,Donkey), but we forestall detailed formalizations in this paper which seeks only to show the viability of a TG approach.

**\$ImagineFarmerBeatsDonkey ('beats')**  
**\$assertNoRealInstantiationsOfImaginedFarmer('no')**

Beyond this, the TG approach also enables us to avoid reliance on configurational constraints to explain patterns of occurrence for particular interpretations. Where a syntactic configurational constraint is called upon in GA, namely that a pronoun must be C-commanded by that to which it refers (i.e. be a sister constituent or contained in one) TG relies on cognitive utilitarian constraints. Thus, in the following sentence the fact that 'his' cannot refer to 'farmer' would be explained in a syntactic account because 'his' is not C-commanded by farmer.

(139) His donkey likes no farmer.

In contrast, the cognitactic TG approach provides an alternative hypothesis based on a natural role for sequencing of cognitive processes referring to mental constructs:

### **Imaginary Construct Sequence Constraint**

**Don't refer to an imaginary concept until the act of imagination has been stimulated in the utterance.**

Above, our analysis enabled us to obviate the substantiation of the abstract claim that in "Pedro beats his donkey" 'his' can function either as a referential term or a bound variable. This distinction was also called on in GA to explain the difference in interpretation of the following sentences:

(140) Pedro beats his donkey, and Juan beats his donkey, too.

(141) Every farmer beats his donkey, and Juan beats his donkey, too.

In the first, but not the second of these sentences the second "his donkey" refers either to Juan's donkey or Pedro's donkey. In the second sentence 'his' must refer to Juan. This is attributed to the proposed distinction by GA that 'his' can be construed, abstractly, either as a referential item or bound variable, but there is an alternative explanation in TG. In the first clause of the second sentence a conceptual construct is referenced:

(142) Pedro beats his donkey.

**\$assertReferenceToPedro ('his')**  
**\$assertPedroHasDonkey ('his')**  
**\$assertPedroBeatsDonkey ('beats')**

(143) Every farmer beats his donkey.

**\$ImagineFarmer ('farmer') = concept**  
**\$ImagineFarmerHasDonkey ('his')**  
**\$ImagineSetOfAllFarmers ('every')**  
**\$assertInstantiationOfAllFarmersBeatDonkeys ('beats')**

Given an action analysis, we are able to account for the fact that ‘his’ refers only to Juan in the second sentence by postulating a natural constraint on use of imaginary concepts to avoid semantically confusing situations:

### **Imaginary Construct Differentiation Constraint**

**Don’t coordinate an imaginary concept inside a construct involving parallel assertions about a parallel non-imaginary referential element.**

In the second sentence “Juan beats...” sets up a concrete referential context which is incompatible with the imaginary construct reference in “Every farmer beats...”.

In further consideration, GA illustrate their general point that “the dichotomy between referential and bound-variable (occurrences of) pronouns is less natural than one might think”:

- (144) Pedro owns a donkey.
- (145) It is grey.

GA dismisses a co-reference account for ‘it’, first because “a donkey” is not seen as itself referential based on the fact that the negation of the first sentence “Pedro doesn’t own a donkey” doesn’t refer to some donkey Pedro doesn’t own, but rather denies there is any such donkey. Further, the negation makes the second sentence unacceptable.

- (146) Pedro doesn't own a donkey.
- (147) \*It is grey.

This is taken to point toward a conclusion that indefinites such as “a donkey” are quantifiers rather than referential items. But general problems arise here, as GA describes. We quote at length:

“However, if we construe “a donkey” as an existential quantifier, how does it manage to bind the pronoun across a sentence boundary?”

“The problem ... is related to the fact that the pronoun and its indefinite antecedent occur in different sentences. The following examples show, however, that similar problems arise within sentences:

If Pedro owns a donkey, he beats it.  
Every farmer who owns a donkey beats it.”

“...it is obvious that the pronouns don't refer, so they can't be co-referential with their antecedents, either. Nor are the pronouns bound by their antecedents, for they aren't c-commanded by them. “

“a donkey” is too deeply embedded for it to c-command “it” [...] Hence, the neuter pronouns in these sentences cannot be construed as bound variables.”

“apparently, indefinites are neither quantifiers nor referential terms, and this problem entrains another one, for as long as it unclear what indefinites mean, it will also remain obscure how they can serve as antecedents to pronouns. “

The TG approach shifts the entire problem to an account that would rely instead on a principle of avoiding useless actions The following actionemes are involved in imaginary cases of indefinites such as “doesn’t own a donkey”

- (148) \*If Pedro doesn’t own a donkey, he beats it.  
(149) \*Every farmer who doesn’t own a donkey beats it.”

**\$ImagineDonkey**  
**\$ImagineXownsDonkey**  
**\$AssertXdoesn’tOwnDonkey**

In a TG treatment a cognitive utilitarian constraint such as the following would account for the data:

### **Concept Negation Closure Constraint**

**Don’t refer to an imaginary concept invoked for the purpose of establishing its negated existence.**

The above overview illustrates some cases where TG brings the possibility of a wider range of solutions to areas of investigation where syntax, semantics and pragmatics intersect We have shown the relevance of action analysis for some general preliminary questions of pragmatics and discourse representation theory, but have not attempted to examine the extensive detailed analysis of GA or the extensive literature of these fields, presenting only some preliminary contrasts to indicate where further investigation can be fruitful While our general purpose is to propose an approach to facilitate better understanding of syntactic problems, we have endeavored in this section to illustrate how action-based analysis interacts with some problems of traditional semantics, pragmatics and the philosophy of language to reduce the burdens of explanation or restrict the domain of unexplained data The linguistic intent of cognitax is available to contribute to the investigations in the philosophy of language and its border areas.

## 11.10 Wh-islands in degree questions

### Introduction

(Abrusan M. , 2011) proposes in an extensive investigation that degree questions with wh-islands are unacceptable exactly when they are not susceptible in formal semantic analysis to a most informative true answer This approach follows in the spirit of earlier semantic analysis (Fox, 2007), which argues that other types of weak islands are blocked by Maximization Failure (MF),

wherein maximization functions fail for certain operator scale conditions This vein of work involves important assumptions about the architecture of cognition which contrast with those that we will explore. Our purpose is to propose and support more direct and simpler, less elaborated hypotheses regarding the representation of degree scales as universally dense (Fox, 2007).

We present a simple analysis based on Tool Grammar (TG) TG holds, simply, that for each element of structure in a sentence there must be specified an element of linguistic structural intent, and that the intents of some tools are mutually incompatible, thereby explaining patterns of acceptability/unacceptability There are various ways in which TG might be formulated, but they have in common the constant of specification of linguistic action intent for each structural element, which is the element of TG theory considered here

Evidently, the intents of TG to be presented could be conceivably be recast in a custom tailored formalism of e.g. intensional/propositional logic. / They do not in themselves logically exclude the general thesis of a semantic analysis for wh-degree terms but do present a narrowed analysis restricted to a more limited domain of structural intent Using a pseudo code representation, as is standard for architectural design for symbolic systems, we postpone formalization in order to focus on the fundamental issue of what are the controlling factors underlying wh-island patternings

An important theme of this section is that the TG approach raises the possibility of simplifying solutions not only for theories of syntax, but for the theories of semantics and pragmatics as well. This is made possible by introducing a new level of data representation which is not included in most forms of linguistic analysis, namely that of speaker intent To the extent that this modularization is natural to the underlying systems for the purposes of explaining linguistic patterns, it is expected that the resulting analyses can involve both simpler argumentation and simpler solutions than those of approaches lacking such a perspective Since they is based on field observations by native speakers, TG specifications can be inoculated against the view that they are merely stipulative or reductionist. These are supported to the extent that the addition of a new dimension of recordable and verifiable data is subject to independent validation.

We assume familiarity with (Abrusan M. , 2011) and (Fox, 2007) without reconstructing their arguments We proceed by extracting the data from the work in question and proposing for it a TG analysis involving structural intents These are examined for intention conflicts and principles of incompatibility are proposed.

Both MF and TG raise important questions about the architecture of linguistic competence in a cognitive framework It is beyond the scope of the present section to attempt fully to investigate these issues here, but we seek to advance the level of understanding by presenting the fundamental tenets of TG to contrast with those underlying MF.

Brief Orientation

The problem we address can be observed in the following data<sup>30</sup>:

- (1) a. Which glass of wine do you know whether you should poison t?  
(150) b. \*How much wine do you know whether you should poison t?

When wh questions are formed from with degree constructions they are acceptable in some cases and unacceptable in others This is explained in (Abrusan M. , 2011) by undertaking formal semantic analysis to show that no meaning interpretation is possible for the ill-formed sentences The problem is cast not as syntactic but one of filtering structures whereby interpretation is blocked An alternative architecture views sentence generation as a separate process from semantic interpretation and accepts the challenge of excluding the ill-formed sentences as part of structure formation TG essentially associates a linguistic intent with each structural element and seeks convincing rationales why some combinations of intents may be incompatible Based on experience with complex symbolic systems, it is commonly found that natural generalizations are only possible if sought at the appropriate level of representation, and undue complexity may otherwise result The TG hypothesis is that when intents are associated with structures simpler and more natural solutions can result For TG, semantic analysis remains valid and important but is construed as more centered in the processes of interpretation than generation This approach can leave an analysis such as (Abrusan M. , 2011) valid and highly interesting, but less explanatory for the process of generation.

In the above example (Abrusan M. , 2011) would posit that there is no viable semantic interpretation for 1b We do not review the arguments which are well explained in the source article For TG a sentence is a set of linguistic mental actions in which various intentions are exercised to produce a linguistic representation for interpretation by the addressee TG proposes that there can be a limited, finite controlled vocabulary of linguistic intents which is putatively available and universal to some considerable degree, although those latter possibilities are not explored here.<sup>31</sup> For 1b,. we might propose that the structure “How much wine” reflects an intent to inquire about a continuous scale judgment, while “do you know whether” represents an intent to inquire about a definite determination We represent these intents in TG using dollar symbol phrases that we refer to as actionemes:

- (151) “How much wine”                    ≈~     \$inquireContinuousScaledJudgment (CSJ)  
(152) “do you know whether”           ≈~     \$inquireDefiniteDetermination (DD)<sup>32</sup>

The fundamental claim of this section is that intents such as these can be incompatible A sentence would not be generated to simultaneously inquire about a definite determination when it is predicated on the burden of a second unresolved inquiry about a judgment on a continuous scale We will discuss this further below, but the general claim is that there is evidence for a constraint in natural language against aggregation of too much uncertainty (duty of inquiry) in

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<sup>30</sup> Data is from the source papers referenced above.

<sup>31</sup> The vocabulary of intents may well be largely shared among languages but the structures reflecting intents is evidently much more various and subject to universalities of a different order. Furthermore, the constraints on cognitive may have components of universality as well as specificity to particular languages.

<sup>32</sup> The intent is not actually associated with the phrases presented here but is rendered that way here for purposes of discussion.

cognitive representations The over-arching generalization is that cognitive processing can impose constraints to manage representations that involve uncertainty We posit controls on uncertainty overload as a defining cognitive factor in the definition of natural languages.

### Source of Actionemes

Tool Grammar is inspired by the observation that natural languages include numerous terms to describe linguistic actions (assert, deny, ask, tell, etc.), so there is reason to believe that transcribed observations about action intents can provide a form of scientifically valuable primary data about the processes underlying language behavior The contention is that language itself provides some metadata about language and that this can provide a basis for developing a closed, controlled vocabulary for systematically transcribing the linguistic intents associated with linguistic structures The Tool Grammar framework includes the hypothesis that those competent in a language are thereby competent in ascertaining intents underlying linguistic utterances, albeit in a naïve, unformalized form that, for linguistic analysis, ultimately requires additional extensive refinement in a standard scientific process Beyond conscious awareness and the formulation of a controlled vocabulary of actioneme primitives, a central goal of a theory of action intents is integration with processes of structure formation in an overall theory of structural linguistic action. TG furthermore has the potential to reveal that constraints on well-formedness correspond often to high level cognitive disciplines and strategies for managing complexity, uncertainty, integrity, consistency, information density and other cybernetic principles of information representation TG can therefore be summarized as a theory of cognitive utilitarian meta-linguistic structural action intents.

### Formalization of Actionemes

Actioneme symbols (represented with initial ‘\$’) are utilized for methodological convenience with an understanding that the process of formalizing TG should call eventually for a range of mathematically explicit, more rigorous elements and forms Actionemes often require phrases and reflect an internal complexity This suggests the possibility either of a form of feature representation (e.g. \$inquireJudgment [+inquire, +judgment]) or of embeddable function representation. (e.g. inquire(judgment()) ), involving, possibly, mixed representations The use of embedded functions implies a tree representation, begging the question, which we leave open, whether representation of action intentions fits naturally into the merged tree structures that result from lexical selection and assembly into increasingly larger units. Whatever the form of improved theoretical statements, our hypothesis is that constraints on cognitive compatibility among linguistic tools can be formulated as patterns of actioneme feature or function sets, and that, furthermore, these can be integrated into the larger matrix of a linguistic theory. The general thesis is that linguistic tool intents are involved in a restrictive cognitive utilitarian mechanics, which can explain many linguistic phenomena, and is compatible with a variety of linguistic theories. Our current purpose is to advocate for the usefulness of the general approach so issues of formalization are not here addressed.

### A TG Prospectus for wh Agreement

(Abrusan M. , 2011) proposes in an extensive investigation that a set of degree questions with



wh-islands have patterns of acceptability that can be explained by a theory that the ill-formed sentences are excluded because they can receive no semantic interpretation. These arguments proceed along the lines of (Fox, 2007), based on the thesis that any question must have a maximally informative answer, i.e. one that implies all other true answers. Our purpose is not to dispute the semantic analysis presented, which is careful and sophisticated, nor to deny the underlying insights, but to open the question whether there might be some account that could explain why sentences ill-suited to understanding might not be generated in the first place.

### The Conflicted Determinacy Thesis

In this section, we present a TG thesis that there are four structural intents that interact to preclude the principle set of unacceptable sentences presented in (Abrusan M. , 2011). We analyze the verbal data as involving in some cases an inquiry about a process of evaluation and other times one involving an establishment of a definite determination. We distinguish these as distinctly different linguistic actions. For the wh elements, we also distinguish crucially between the act of selection from a limited pre-selected set and a judgment about a continuous scale of measurement. Each of these intents is introduced by means of lexical item tools, with which they are associated.

Here are the associations of intents, with lexical material covered by a basic set of examples in the article. We note that a rigorous test of the semantic filtering hypothesis presented would benefit from examination of a wider range of lexical items and structures, but we restrict ourselves here to the specific patterns presented in the paper since space limitations prevent a full examination of a number of pertinent structural features.<sup>33</sup>

#### \$inquireEvaluation:

- “think that you should”
- “need to know whether”
- “arguing about whether”

#### \$inquireDefiniteDetermination

- “know whether”

#### \$inquireSelectionFromPre-SelectedSet

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<sup>33</sup> A full examination of the semantic filtering hypothesis might draw on a wide sample of structural contexts. Here are sample patterns that incline to favor the tool grammar approach: *\*Is determined,*, *can you determine*, *\*is listed*, *\*is ascertained*, *is to be ascertained*, *\*did you find*, *do you find*, *\*is specified*, *is recommended*. Note also that the yes/know feature of *\*know whether* is not compared semantically against the instrumental *\*know how*, and these too conform to tool grammar expectations.

“which glass”  
“how many books” if inquiring about a known count

### \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment

“how much wine”  
“how many books” if inquiring about unknown count  
“how many pounds”  
“how many points”

We use the following abbreviations to represent the compatibility or conflict of intents

E = \$inquireEvaluation  
DD = \$inquireDefiniteDetermination  
PS = \$inquireSelectionFromPre-SelectedSet  
CSJ = \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment

Here is the intent compatibility table:

	E	DD
PS	OK	OK
CSJ	OK	*

### Intent Compatibility Table

This pattern of compatibility is attributed to a principle of cognitax (syntax grounded in higher cognition) which is hypothesized to control the uncertainty or indeterminacy in an inquiry. A definite determination has a higher requirement to reduce uncertainty, while an evaluation process evidently would have built-in expectations of uncertainty. Inquiry about a continuous scale judgment is interpreted as having a higher level of inherent uncertainty and indeterminacy than inquiry about a pre-selected set.

### Principle: Conflicted Determinacy Constraint

Inquiring about a continuous scale judgment conflicts with the aspiration to high certainty inherent in inquiring simultaneously about definite determination, since prior cognitive processing is a pre-requisite to laying the groundwork for determinacy. Binary absolute judgment can't be determined based on an uncertain categorization judgment. There is a stricture not to overload inquiry about a definite determination with excessive unresolved uncertainty: preselection is tolerable, discrimination on a continuous scale is excessive.

Note: Continuous scale judgments are more uncertain and cognitively burdened than predetermined selection.

Corollary: It's ok to embed inquiry about an uncertainty into an inquiry about an evaluation

Following are the data from (Abrusan M. , 2011) illustrating the application of this constraint We interpret sentences marked with '?' as basically acceptable with possible overtones of less determinacy associated with secondary variables which are beyond the scope of the present work.

- (153) a. Which glass of wine do you know whether you should poison t?  
\$inquireSelectionFromPre-SelectedSet  
\$inquireDefiniteDetermination  
PS/DD
- (154) b. \*How much wine do you know whether you should poison t?  
\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireDefiniteDetermination  
\*CSJ/DD
- (155) a. Which glass of wine do you think t0 that you should poison t?  
\$inquireSelectionFromPreSelectedSet  
\$inquireJudgment  
PS/E
- (156) b. \*How much wine do you know whether you should poison t? (=1b)  
\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireDefiniteDetermination  
\*CSJ/DD
- (157) c. How much wine do you think you should poison t? (Our example)  
\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireJudgment  
CSJ/E
- (158) How many books do you know whether you should burn t?

There are two theoretical intents here contrasting \$inquireSelectionFromPre-SelectedSet with \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment Only the former results in an acceptable sentence.

\$inquireSelectionFromPre-selectedSet  
\$inquireDefiniteDetermination  
PS/DD  
\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireDefiniteDetermination  
\*CSJ/DD

- (159) (4) a. \*How many pounds does the World Anti-Doping Agency know whether the boxers lost last year?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireDefiniteDetermination  
\*CSJ/DD

- (160) b. ?How many pounds does the World Anti-Doping Agency need to know whether the boxers lost last year?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireJudgment  
CSJ/E

- (161) (5) How many points are the judges arguing about whether to deduct?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireDefiniteDetermination  
CSJ/E

Based on the regularity of patterning in the above we propose that a TG solution should be considered as against the semantic filtering solution proposed by Abrusan, particularly since the actioneme transcriptions represent independent primary data, confirmable by consulting with native speakers.

#### The Vacuous Judgment Thesis

We present next a second TG thesis employing three structural intents that interact to preclude a further set of unacceptable sentences presented in (Abrusan M. , 2011) We analyze the verbal data to involve inquiry whether or not a set of circumstances is, or is not, the case We advert to the possibility that this distinction bears a relation to that of a pre-selected set as in the previous section, but treat it as distinct for purposes of initial analysis and explication here. For the wh elements, all examples involve judgment about a continuous scale of measurement, which is the action intent we presented previously. Each of these intents is introduced by means of lexical item tools, with which they are associated.

Here are the associations of intents with lexical material:

\$inquireIsTheCase:

“did drive”  
“does have children”

\$inquireIsNotTheCase

“didn’t drive”  
“doesn’t have children”

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment

“how fast”  
“how many”

We use the following abbreviations to represent the compatibility or conflict of intents

ITC = \$inquireIsTheCase  
NTC = \$inquireNotTheCase  
CSJ = \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
(PS = \$inquireSelectionFromPreSelectedSet)

Here is the intent compatibility table:

	ITC	NTC
(PS	OK	OK)
CSJ	OK	*

#### Intent Compatibility Table

An important aspect of this analysis is the observation that selections from pre-selected sets are inherently negatable in the sense that negation of a subset can be interpreted as the complement. In this sense we propose that SelectionFromPreSelectedSet is meaningfully negated by taking the complement, while ContinuousScaleJudgment cannot be.

With this in mind, the pattern of compatibility in data taken from the paper is attributed to a principle of cognitive utilitarian mechanics oriented to avoiding useless constructions reflecting vacuous situations. An inquiry about a judgment on a specific situation that never occurs has no value. This is an instance of a general avoidance of useless constructions, and may be considered axiomatic in a system where each structural element is introduced by specific intent for specific purpose.

Principle: Vacuous Judgment Constraint in Non-negatable Circumstances

Inquiring about a judgment concerning a specific circumstance that never occurs fails to be generated because it serves no purpose to posit a value for a non-entity.

Caveat/Qualification: In the case where alternatives are intended (\$inquireSelectionFromPreSelectedSet), negation of a circumstance can imply the occurrence of the alternative circumstance which is non-vacuous.

Following are the data from (Abrusan M. , 2011) that illustrate the application of this constraint.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> The following data support the conclusion that the operative factor is CSJ vs. PS.  
How many records didn't John break? (of a list)  
How many types of errors didn't John make? (known types)  
How many time trials didn't John drive? (in the schedule)

- (162) (6) a. How fast did John drive?  
 \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
 \$inquireIfTheCase  
 CSJ/ITC
- (163) b. \*How fast didn't John drive?  
 \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
 \$inquireNotTheCase  
 \*CSJ/NTC
- (164) (7) a How many children does John have?  
 \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
 \$inquireIfTheCase  
 CSJ/ITC
- (165) b. \*How many children doesn't John have?  
 \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
 \$inquireNotTheCase  
 \*CSJ/NTC

But notice the acceptability of both of the following:

- (166) (8) a How many colors did Al pick?  
 \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
 \$inquireIfTheCase  
 PS/ITC
- (167) b. How many colors didn't Al pick?  
 \$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
 \$inquireNotTheCase  
 Ps/NTC

Since the constraint seems a reasonable one for structure generation, is based on transcribable primary data, and covers the data presented, we propose that a TG analysis should be evaluated for its simplicity and explanatory value along side semantic and syntactic accounts.

#### The Scalable Modifier Thesis

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How long didn't John drive? (if e.g. split between drivers or activities)  
 How many models didn't he drive in his Nascar career?  
 \*How many races didn't John enter? (unless types of races)  
 \*How many miles didn't John drive (unless e.g. comparing alternate drivers)  
 How many laps didn't John drive (in the race)?  
 \*How exhausted wasn't John?  
 \*How important wasn't John?  
 \*??How important didn't John feel?

In this section, we present a TG thesis that there are three structural intents that interact to preclude the data presented for responsive and rogative verbs (Karttunen, 1977)<sup>35</sup> We assume familiarity with these categories and their use in the (Abrusan M. , 2011) paper.

Here are the associations of intents with lexical material:

\$assertScalableStateOfResultantKnowing :

knows/told us/remembered/guessed/forgot

\$assertBinaryStateOfUncertainInquiry

wondered/asked/investigated

\$assertAboveAverageDegree

mostly

We use the following abbreviations to represent the compatibility or conflict of intents

AAD = \$assertAboveAverageDegree  
 SSRK = \$assertScalableStateOfResultantKnowing (responsive)  
 BSUI = \$assertBinaryStateOfUncertainInquiry (rogative)

Here is the intent compatibility table:

	SSRK	BSUI
AAD	OK	*

Intent Compatibility Table

This pattern of compatibility is attributed to a principle of cognitax which is pro-forma intended

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<sup>35</sup> Responsive predicates (know-class)

Verbs of retaining knowledge know, be aware, recall, remember, forget

Verbs of acquiring knowledge learn, notice, find out

Verbs of communication tell, show, indicate

Verbs of decision decide, determine, specify, agree on

Opinion verbs be certain about, be convinced about

Rogative predicates (wonder-class)

Inquisitive verbs wonder, ask, investigate, examine, consider

Verbs of relevance matter, be relevant, be important, care

Verbs of dependency depend on, be related to, have an influence on, make a difference to

to prevent combined modifications (predications) using fundamentally incompatible predicates (Since multiple categories of such incompatibility are envisaged we anticipate a feature checking mechanism, even though a feature formalism is not extensively developed in this section Note also that we might propose a specific “Degree Scale Compatibility” constraint to prevent the conflict of strictly binary categorical predicates with inherently opposite scaled degree ones, but choose to generalize the constraint in anticipation of an extended inventory of such conflicts.)

#### Principle: Compatible Modification (Predication) Constraint

Structures involving incompatible modification (predication) features are precluded, such as those which on the one hand imply degree scales, and those that in their binariness preclude them.

In this case elements which do not match for scalable modification are blocked.

Following are the data from (Abrusan M. , 2011) illustrating the application of this constraint.<sup>36</sup>

(168) (8) John mostly knows/told us/remembered/guessed/forgot which girls came to the party.

‘mostly’ = \$assertAboveAverageDegree

Responsive verbs = \$assertScalableStateOfResultantKnowing

AAD/SSRK

(169) (9) \*John mostly wondered/asked/investigated which girls came to the party.

‘mostly’ = \$assertAboveAverageDegree

Rogative verbs = \$assertBinaryStateOfUncertainInquiry

\* AAD /BSUI

We conclude that a TG solution based on the primary data of linguistic intention offers a simple, direct alternative to semantic filtering.

#### Additional Conflicted Determinacy Data

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<sup>36</sup> Note that there are various dimensions of useful data which are not presented in Abrusan. We restrict analysis here but note that the following are generally supportive of our thesis.

rarely wondered

\* individually wondered which girls (Plural)

\*Partially wondered

\*Overall wondered

mostly hypothesized

mostly speculated

Mostly wondered which of

John mostly *wondered/asked/investigated* which of the girls came to the party.

\*I partially wonder where she is.

I partially know where she is.



In this section we extend earlier analysis and consider a complement of data presented in (Abrusan M. , 2011) To a considerable extent this section overlaps and reflects the data and processes already covered We present a TG analysis here for completeness in covering the source paper.

We again present a TG thesis that there are four structural intents that interact to preclude the starred, unacceptable sentences from being generated Although TG offers solutions for more nuanced irregularities in those sentences marked with “?” we do not consider them here.

Here are the associations of intents with lexical material, overlapping, as we have indicated, with what has been presented previously.

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment CSJ  
“how many inches, wine, kilograms, pounds”  
“how tall, much”

\$inquireSelectionFromPre-SelectedSet PS  
“what hair color”  
“which problem”  
“how fast”  
“how many, X or Y”

\$inquireJudgment E  
“are considering whether we can”  
“investigating whether it is useful”  
“wondering whether it is worth losing”

\$inquireDefinitiveDetermination DD  
“find out whether”  
“discover whether”  
“forget whether”  
“know whether”  
“know who”  
“predict who”  
“regret who”

We again use the following abbreviations to represent the compatibility or conflict of intents

E	=	\$inquireEvaluation
DD	=	\$inquireDefiniteDetermination
PS	=	\$inquireSelectionFromPre-SelectedSet
CSJ	=	\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment

Here is the intent compatibility table:

	E	DD
PS	OK	OK
CSJ	OK	*

### Intent Compatibility Table

Again, this pattern of compatibility is attributed to a principle of cognitax which is understood to control the uncertainty or indeterminacy in an inquiry. The data in this section is covered by the Conflicted Determinacy Constraint presented earlier. We reproduce it here for reference in reading the examples below.

#### Principle: Conflicted Determinacy Constraint

Inquiring about a continuous scale judgment conflicts with the aspiration to high certainty inherent in inquiring simultaneously about definite determination, since prior cognitive processing is a pre-requisite to laying the groundwork for determinacy.

Binary absolute judgment can't be determined based on an uncertain categorization judgment. Don't overload inquiry about a definite determination with excessive unresolved uncertainty: preselection is tolerable, discrimination on a continuous scale is excessive.

Note: Continuous scale judgments are more uncertain and cognitively burdened than predetermined selection.

Corollary: It's ok to embed inquiry about an uncertainty into an inquiry about an evaluation.

Following are the data from (Abrusan M. , 2011) illustrating the application of this constraint.

- (170) (10) a. ?How many inches of legroom are the airline executives considering whether we can remove from economy class cabins (without people noticing)?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment

\$inquireJudgment

CSJ/E

- (171) \*How many inches of legroom did the airline executives find out whether we can remove from economy class cabins (without people noticing)?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment

\$inquireDefinitiveDetermination

\*CSJ/DD

- (172) (11) a. ?How much wine are scientists investigating/examining whether it is useful to drink in order to stay healthy?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireJudgment  
CSJ/E

- (173) b. \*How much wine did scientists discover whether it is useful to drink in order to stay healthy?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
definitiveDetermination  
\*CSJ/DD

- (174) (12) a. ?How many kilograms are the boxers wondering whether it is worth losing next year (in order to have a better chance to win)?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireJudgment  
CSJ/E

- (175) b. \*How many kilograms did the boxers forget/realize/tell you whether it was worth losing last year?

\$inquireContinuousScaleJudgment  
\$inquireDefinitiveDetermination  
\*CSJ/DD

- (13) \*How tall does Mary know whether she should be? (in order to join the basketball team)

\*CSJ/DD

But PS is ok: What hair color does Mary know whether she should try?

PS/DD

- (176) (14) a ?Which problem does Mary know who should solve?

PS/DD (plus extra unknown 'who', which adds excessive uncertainty for inquiry seeking a definitive determination).

- (177) b. \*How tall does Mary know who should be?

\*CSJ/DD plus extra unknown 'who' same issue as above

- (178) (15) \*How fast did Mary predict who should be?

\*CSJ/DD plus extra unknown 'who' same issue as above

- (179) (16) \*How fast does Mary regret who should be?

\*CSJ/DD plus extra unknown 'who' same issue as above

(180) (17) a. ?How many pounds are the boxers wondering whether to lose next year?

CSJ/E

(181) (18) ?How much cough syrup does the WADA need to know whether you took?

CSJ/E

(182) (19) ?How many pounds does the WADA want to know whether the boxers lost?

CSJ/E

(183) (20) ?How many pounds do the boxers know whether they need to lose next year:  
5 pounds or 7 pounds?

PS/DD

In conclusion we find that this data also conforms to the TG analysis, suggesting it should be considered as a viable explanation for the observed patterning.

## Conclusions

The goal in this section has been to widen the discussion of possible explanations of degree term phenomena. We have presented a novel approach using the linguistic action intents of Cognitax Tool Grammar and shown how it efficiently covers a set of previously analyzed data using only common sense constraints.

This approach involves an architecture of competence which is different from that underlying previous syntactic and semantic analyses, so emerges as an important part of an evaluation of competing theoretical frameworks.

The TG analysis is neither stipulative nor reductionist because it includes an additional level of data representation compared to other approaches, and this data can be directly elicited and transcribed from native speakers.

The structural intents of TG could be formalized using a custom tailored application of intensional/propositional/possible world logic.

The TG approach does not encompass full semantic interpretation, so cannot exclude the general thesis of a semantic analysis for wh-degree terms. It only presents evidence for the viability of a narrowed syntactic analysis restricted to a domain of structural intent. Parallel ongoing research extends the arguments for the TG approach, based on analyses of a wide range of syntactic, pragmatic, and semantic phenomena. To the extent that the TG approach proves viable and

scientifically illuminating it can provide a level of structural cognitive compatibility explaining why many ill-formed sentences might not normally be generated. The filtering consequences of incompatible intents undertaken, when proven generally well motivated, to reflect an important module in the architecture of competence and serve to simplify theories of natural language sentence generation by removing complex cases to a level where they might be more naturally resolved.

## 12 Some Historical Antecedents to Cognitax

In and from (Austin, 1975) there has been extensive work on the pragmatic and related aspects of language via linguistic use groupings such as locutions, illocutions, perlocutions, performative verbs, illocutionary acts<sup>37</sup>, and so forth.<sup>38</sup> Classical work into the pragmatic effects on syntax includes (Searle J. , 1979), which gives a taxonomy of pragmatic types, examples and analysis of verbal classes, and specific discussion of effects on syntax. In early generative studies there was interest in pursuing concrete derivational relationships between verbs of linguistic action and other aspects of syntactic study. John Ross pursued a performative verb hypothesis (Ross J. , On declarative sentences, 1970) that would have a verb like 'say' underlying indicative sentences. The mainstream of the generative enterprise veered quickly away from generative semantics (involving syntactic decomposition of lexical items and other abstract devices).

Later traditions of generative work constructing purely syntactic solutions have indirectly provided evidence for what we present as actionemes. An example of this, among many, is Landau's postulation of underlying locative elements for experiential verbs (Landau, The Locative Syntax of Experiencers, 2010), which in our terms outlined below would be recast as an action intent (actioneme e.g. \$assertLocative). This example illustrates a body of work pointing in the direction of cognitax analysis but stopping short of any proposal to orient linguistic syntax itself to structural action semantics.

This initial scaffolding is seminal, but does not portray the large universe of diverse language actions that are evidently at work in the full spectrum of language constructions, nor does it provide a systematic means for construction solutions using them.<sup>39</sup>

The European functionalists proposed that pragmatics and semantics underlie syntax. (Dik, 1981) Although there are sufficient differences to make a full contrast with his theories of

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<sup>37</sup> (Sadock, Speech Acts, 2004) summarizes Austin's rough-out of illocutionary types

1. VERDICTIVES: acts that consist of delivering a finding, e.g., acquit, hold (as a matter of law), read something as, etc.
2. EXERCITIVES: acts of giving a decision for or against a course of action, e.g., appoint, dismiss, order, sentence, etc.
3. COMMISSIVES: acts whose point is to commit the speaker to a course of action, e.g., contract, give one's word, declare one's intention, etc.
4. BEHABITIVES: expressions of attitudes toward the conduct, fortunes or attitudes of others, e.g., apologize, thank, congratulate, welcome, etc.
5. EXPOSITIVES: acts of expounding of views, conducting of arguments, and clarifying, e.g., deny, inform, concede, refer, etc.

<sup>38</sup>See (Sadock, Speech Acts, 2004) for an overview.

<sup>39</sup>A useful and far -ranging treatment that maintains the formal separation of pragmatics from syntax also includes analysis of reflexives and other phenomena used to show interaction effects and some operational intermingling. (Ariel, 2008)

secondary interest, the role of intention as the initiator of linguistic events appears in Dik's work. (Dik, 1981) (p.8). Dik does not identify a level of linguistic action or elaborate a level of linguistic intention so distinctly or with such a functional load for the generation of syntax as we propose here Nor does he explicitly relegate the generation of linguistic intention, the anticipation of addressee interpretation, or addressee interpretation definitively to a higher cognitive domain. He views them more as intertwined in general with syntactic processes than as separate higher cognitive function In contrast, for TG we propose linguistic action as an explicit level of generalization justified by its facility for explaining syntactic and other phenomena.

### 13 Tools versus Rules

A tool is not equivalent to a rule It encompasses more and serves a different purpose A rule is a productive regularity observed by a linguist It can be a generalization or a requirement or a tendency but it cannot in our view purposefully be used by a speaker to build a communication structure A rule is for the theorist describing an observable pattern, a tool is for someone with an intention trying to accomplish something A linguistic tool is useful in building a communication structure, which is an assembly of intentions represented by their particular forms A set of sentences can be described statically or be abstractly generated by rules, but these auto-generated sentences do not serve a utilitarian purpose Tools, in contrast, can be wielded to specific effect As the product of tools, sentences are inherently useful, whereas a purposeless generation of a syntactic structure is not.

We posit two fundamental types of linguistic tools: lexical and (trans)formational.<sup>40</sup> A user constructing a sentence amalgamates a complex of intentions by selecting and assembling lexical items Lexical items are merged into integrated structures according to constraints of phrase structure and phrase merging As lexical items become merged they form configurations which become eligible for (trans)formation Transformations are linguistic tools that reflect the intention to configure or modify the communication in a particular manner for particular effect They take syntactic structures in configurational syntactic complexes as input and generate modified configurational syntactic complexes as output, but always with some stylistic or other informational intent.

Formally, a rule can be characterized as a well-known schema with two basic parts: structural requirements and structural effects

#### RULE

Structural input requirements

Structural output effects including optional introduction of new material  
(Extraneous parameters)

The structural requirements specify under what conditions of structure the rule is applicable The structural effects specify the effects on the input structure when the rule applies. A third part records extraneous parameters of applicability as required by a particular theory A rule may thus be characterized as 'optional', or can be selected as 'active' among a collection of universally

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<sup>40</sup> An alternative view of grammar would create the respective constructions independently without the intervention of transformation mechanisms. We do not consider this possibility here.

available rules and conditioning effects which may or may not be activated in a particular language Any number of ancillary parameters can be considered.

A tool, in contrast, can be specified with these same parts, but including, crucially, an additional part to specify utilitarian intent.

## TOOL

Utilitarian intent

Structural input requirements

Structural output effects including optional introduction of new material

(Extraneous parameters)

To illustrate the difference, consider one simplified case of adding a lexical item and effecting a (trans)formation A user chooses to insert a perfective morpheme to communicate that an event is completed There is an input requirement that there be an event of continuance instantiated in a verb New material is specified The effect of the tool is to merge the new material, the perfective marker, into the input structure.

Perfective Tool:<sup>41</sup>

Intent: \$assertCompleted

Input requirement: verb of continuance: “He eats”

New material: ‘have + en’

Output effect: merge perfective marker: “He has eaten”

Now, consider the operation of a classic stylistic (trans)formation.

Passive Tool:

Intent: \$ bringPatientIntoAgencyEventFocusFrontToSalientPosition

Input requirement: verb plus object: “He eats the cake”

New material: ‘be + en’ (‘by\_’)

Output effect: The cake is eaten by him.

Move object to front, subject to by-phrase, Merge passive marker: “The cake is eaten by him” Note: This structure might alternatively be analyzed as a lexical choice involving no transformational restructuring.

A main difference from standard generative grammar is that TG would incline to natural utilitarian solutions as part of the human endowment for problem solving with tools. The linguistic mind is projected as not so abstractly foreign to the conscious utilitarian human mind All grammatical devices have been intantiated, given the constraints of universal limitatiaons, by humans Rationales for tools may be recognizable and understandable as intuitive inventions Every linguistic rule may have been some inventor’s novel idea at some point prior to adoption by a community, and must be understandable with regard to motivation and intended effect.

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<sup>41</sup> Operations are not formalized where we intend only to illustrate high level concepts.

Empirical investigation will determine whether we risk a disservice to the tradition of a human linguistic lineage if we assume all intricate language capacity results from no other processes than a simplified setting of parameters. (Chomsky, The minimalist program, 1995) A language may, alternatively as here, be understood as an inventory of tools, selected from a universally available tool construction set (limited and extensible under meta constraints), together with a selection of parameters to determine how tools are individually configured and interact with one another This possibility for innovation and invention beyond n-ary parameter choices can be advantageous in the case it is verified, as we suspect, that the variety of language constructions cannot be insightfully understood as a simple setting of parameters..

The crucial analytical difference between a rule and a tool is that the latter specifies intent using vocabulary of linguistic action descriptors We anticipate these can be conventionalized over time from linguistic fieldwork in order to develop a putative universally available set, even while the structures realized from them can be differentiated and diverse We hypothesize is that the listing of intents in a sentence involves a necessary operational characterization of meaning which will be more useful in the understanding of syntax than those associated with semantic interpretation and deriving from formal logic, which are less tractable and more removed from the psychological mechanics of utterance generation For the purposes of TG, meaning is circumscribed as a series of functional and intentional steps taken to enact a plan for desired effects. These are able to be observed and captured by the field linguist undertaking the analysis of language.

#### 14 Distinguishing Grammar from Meaning

Since TG endeavors to motivate syntactic rules using action directives of intent, expressed in a controlled and circumscribed semantic vocabulary, the question naturally arises as to the fundamental distinction between grammar and meaning, and how it might be characterized in linguistic theory Chomsky's original contrast usefully distinguishes types of ill-formedness that intuitively seem either structural or semantic: (Chomsky, Syntactic Structures, 1957) p. 15

- (1) \*Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.  
(184) \*Furiously sleep ideas green colorless.

Whereas the first of these is viewed as grammatically correct but semantically amiss, the second lacks even grammatical well-formedness in the common view Since TG views linguistic tools as devices for building structures to represent ideas externally, we are led to a natural expression of the grammar vs. semantics distinction based on the proposal that lexical items and syntactic structures are complementary tools for representing configurations of thoughts:

Semantic ill-formedness results from the combination of incompatible ideas in the formation of an utterance.

Grammatical ill-formedness results from the use of functionally incompatible tools, lexical or (trans)formational, in building structures for external linguistic representation

In the first example above, green is a color, ideas cannot sleep at all, let alone furiously, which factors put the ideas at odds In the second, less than optimal, example, assuming no expressive



license, commas, or the like, which are other matters, the tools have requirements which are not met:

‘sleep’ has a slot designed for following/predicating a noun

‘furiously’ is a tool designed to fill a slot modifying a verb

‘ideas’ is a tool designed to fill a slot/predication calling for a noun

‘green’, ‘colorless’ are tools designed to fill slots preceding/modifying a noun

This original pair of examples was used to make a particular point by Chomsky, which is not quite the same as our concern here, so the contrast is not so targeted for our purposes. It combines elements of semantic and grammatical conflict and is also subject to various expressive and stylistic interpretations rendering them more acceptable. A better example for our purposes illustrates the point more directly:

(185)            \*In sleeps the.

We propose that the inclusion of a dimension of structural action semantics in the formulation of rules as tools still enables a clear distinction between meaning, which concerns ideas, and grammar, which concerns representational structures.

In general there are two types of linguistic tools: lexical and structural. Lexical tools are selected to map configurations of ideas to a conventionalized word structure. They bring with them constraints on the selection of other words that can co-occur with them. Structural, or (trans)formational tools build structure and determine the form of presentation of the source ideas as they are represented in the external medium. Because there are two types of tools<sup>42</sup> there are three main types of grammatical ill-formedness depending on whether a tool conflict is

- lexical-lexical (e.g. subcategorization) e.g. \*In sleeps the.
- structural-structural (formational conflict) e.g. \*It was a watch to my brother that I gave.
- lexical-structural (e.g. government). e.g. \*I wonder you are meeting?

In later sections of this paper we undertake to illustrate various types of tool conflict in reference to standard and difficult problems in linguistic analysis.

While on the subject of the grammar/meaning distinction it is useful to lay out what a linguistic utterance is in TG terms, and to clarify the relationship to semantics. TG holds that there is a higher context of cognitive ideation from which an utterance emanates, but it is not an intended part of the output linguistic utterance. A linguistic utterance is conceived as action directives selected in a higher pre-linguistic cognitive component. There are two types of action directives

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<sup>42</sup> There are more to the extent that one considers the exigencies and incompatibilities that arise when lexical items are merged into larger structures. These questions are elaborated in a later section.

from which an utterance is formed:

- A selection of lexical items, which are pre-packaged objects of expression with semantic affinities at the level of the higher cognitive domain, deemed sufficient (pattern) matches for the ideas to be represented. The intent of lexical tools is always the same, to represent in conventional form configurations of ideas to be represented. Lexical tools include constraints specifying restrictions on other lexical items that co-occur in their presence. Lexical items do not include full semantic specifications, which must be constructed for the utterance by the addressee by reverse engineering based on the conventional packaging of words.
- A selection of formational tools, which are directives determining various aspects of how the utterance will be structured. Each formational tool is associated with an action intent such that some tool intents may not be compatible where the objectives in the tool use are in conflict. Passives, clefts, focus constructions, and so forth, including the full range of syntactic constructions discussed in the syntactic literature, are products of formational tools.

With these two inputs, procedures of tool application suffice to generate the utterance. A sequence of merge operations renders the complex of lexical items into a single hierarchical structure while the formational tools render the structure per their input and output specifications into a derived form of representation. The generated structure is linearized as output in the expressive medium, e.g. sound, signing, etc.

Here it is worth re-emphasizing that for TG the utterance generation does not envisage the full range of possible semantic interpretation. There can be, and often are, misunderstandings. The understanding of what is meant or intended or implied or anticipated for an utterance is in the province of the higher and more general cognitive realm. It can of course be modeled by the speaker prior to the generation of the output representation, and is characteristically interpreted by the addressee on receipt. Nevertheless, interpretation is a separate process from intention so a restricted set of specific action intents must at some level be specified for the formational structure tools. A thesis of TG is that unacceptable conflicts can best be identified and understood in the domain of intention. This involves a restricted aspect of linguistic action semantics which must be associated with the process of syntax formation. In this way semantics is partially but not fully separated from syntax for TG in the way that Chomsky once prescribed:

[T]he study of meaning and reference and of the use of language should be excluded from the field of linguistics...[G]iven a linguistic theory, the concepts of grammar are constructed (so it seems) on the basis of primitive notions that are not semantic ..., but that the linguistic theory itself must be chosen so as to provide the best possible explanation of semantic phenomena, as well as others. (Chomsky, *Essays on Form and Interpretation*, 1977) p. 139

In a larger sense, the fields of full semantics and syntax are modularized apart in TG because the full meaning of an utterance is associated with independent cognition before and after the generation of its output representation TG includes a limited range of semantic actions in syntactic specifications.

This partial similarity to the Chomskyan approach, in separating full semantics from syntactic generation, belies, nevertheless, a major difference. While the generative enterprise characteristically has syntax at the center of linguistic competence, embodying the essential language properties of creativity, productivity, recursion and infinite range, TG places all of these in the cognitive sphere which generates directives to a less empowered and more compact syntactic component. Cognition is central to the TG view of generative linguistics with the syntactic component in a service role and one dimension of structural action semantics active at the interface. For this reason TG syntax can appropriately be labeled “cognitax”. The organization of the TG system and its utterance derivation processes are discussed further in a later section.

To illustrate briefly, consider a substantial case, among many, where these limited semantic factors play a role in generative syntax is the selection of complements for verbs. A small subset of these admits of indirect question complementation. (Johnson, 2004) p. 51

- (1) a. Martha denied that John has left.
- (186) b. Martha said that John has left.
- (187) c. \* Martha wonders that John has left.
- (188) a. \* Martha denied whether John has left.
- (189) b. Martha said whether John has left.
- (190) c. Martha wonders whether John has left.

Here we see that 'say' and 'wonder' allow an indirect question. We propose that they can implement the action \$countenanceAlternative. In contrast, 'deny' doesn't. Furthermore 'wonder' doesn't allow 'that' clauses for the meaning under consideration.

- (191) \*Al wonders that Sue will leave.

This illustrates a role we propose for cognitax actions. The indirect question complementizer 'whether' is a tool used by the speaker to \$raiseAlternativesAsQuestion, while 'deny' has the action \$ruleOutAlternative. The complementizer 'that' effects \$assertSpecificFact. This allows unacceptable sentences to be ruled out by a constraint based on actionemes more direct than configurational syntactic mechanisms.

#### Cross-Purposes Constraint

Don't introduce structures that work against each other in basic utilitarian intent such as raising and excluding the possibility of alternatives in the same construction.

In this case we see some verbs explicitly raise the consideration of alternatives and are compatible with complementizers that envisage the same. There is no practical point in raising alternatives while also denying them. A verb like 'deny' that works to narrow the possibilities to a single specific action requires a complement that is consonant with that intent, and is restricted to

a specific action These evident characterizations tend only to be available by direct representation of intention in syntactic theory and are obfuscated by indirection in approaches which do not retain action/intention at the core of linguistic generation.

## 15 Linguistic Fieldwork and Actioneme Transcription

TG views meaning as being projected by action, so the corresponding approach to data collection may be quite different from the direct asking of what forms mean For cognitax what one does with a sentence and its parts is more useful for development of a tractable linguistic theory than questions such as what a sentence or other item might imply or “mean” in a truth functional setting The operative question is what the user seeks to achieve by using a form We advocate that elicitation frames generally take the form: What is the speaker doing with a word, morpheme, phrase sentence, etc.? This includes minimal contrasts against expressions lacking the form in question. For those doing anthropological or other field work it is daunting to specify all the implications of a meaning of a linguistic element. The TG view of meaning is operational An element may conceal a readily accessible meaning in any declarative sense but have operational effect to be understood by contrasting examples with and without the form in question What, for illustration, is the declarative meaning of ‘even’ There may be no answer prior to asking what speakers are observed to be doing when using this item in specific circumstances Even as lay speakers, subjects are aware of a plethora of linguistic acts at all levels of structure, and are able to express and refer to these routinely, albeit in crude and raw form, with a general or dedicated native vocabulary A single sentence or any of its units may, and characteristically does, involve a multiplicity of actions and subjects are not in general at a loss for vocabulary to describe them.

TG can rely on elicitation techniques such as the following, which are well-known to field linguists in any case:

- 1) What was the speaker doing when s/he used that element?
- 2) Why is that element there?
- 3) What’s missing if you take that element out?
- 4) Can you say something to show me how you would use that element in a different context?
- 5) If you took that element out what could you put in there that would do about the same thing? What are the differences?

To illustrate this general idea of transcribing linguistic acts, it is instructive to look, first informally, at everyday words that describe the kinds of actions speakers have in mind even independent of any theoretical linguistic interest In English, for example, the vocabulary describing language actions is very large It is premature to pursue a fixed conventionalized list of descriptors but it is useful to explore the domain by means of a sparse sampling of illustrative examples.

Some are common and general:

Speak, Talk, Verbalize, Say, (promise, swear)

Many describe the structure of argumentation:

Argue, Contend, Deny, Refute, Contradict, Prove/Disprove, Counter, Give a reason, Reason, Imply, Presuppose, (Dis)Claim, Associate, Deduce, Generalize, Correct,

Reinforce, Assert, Hypothesize, Support, Evade, Suggest, Ignore

Some are essentially social beyond the basic interpersonal component inherent in other examples:

Deliberate, Discuss, Consult, Set expectations, Confer

Others have to do with rhetoric:

Introduce, Expand on, Summarize, Emphasize, Hedge, Indicate, Highlight, Insist, Gloss over, Be ironic

A good many are judgmental

Flatter, Insult, Denigrate, Praise, Bemoan, tattle, blab, babble

Many pertain to specific contexts:

Joke, Sermonize, Read, Lecture, Pray, Preach, Rhyme, Wax poetic, Sing, Order (at retail)

They can be idiomatic:

spill the beans, let the cat out of the bag,

Some terms describe language use but do not reflect a speaker intent:

Be boring, Make no sense, Is confusing, stumble over words, be unclear

Of particular note, some such terms are of such general linguistic utility that they might be segregated out for the frequency of their utility

Negate, Question, Declare, Declare Unknown, Command, Indicate, Express doubt, Express certainty, Leave unspecified, Emphasize, Downplay, Focus on.

Others are so basic and general that they can be inferred from and associated somewhat reliably what has been held to be a grammatical construction.

Quantify ('the dogs'), Locate (locative case), Attribute (bike's color), Modify ('run quickly')

This is but a small sampling of what is a large inventory of such terms. It is a major, albeit ultimately valuable, undertaking beyond the present scope to map out and analyze the full descriptive taxonomy. While some terms can be used to describe non-linguistic acts, they also have major or central uses where they do reflect language behavior. Many terms have such a dual role.

As natural language terms, linguistic action descriptors often overlap and cross-classify one another. Just as the phoneme is an abstraction<sup>43</sup> often composed of multiple parts (/p/ bilabial, voiceless, /au/ [a] [w]) so these can be thought of as popular emic elements, which we refer to as linguistic 'actionemes' made up of analytical distinctive features that can combine in a variety of ways.

Usage of natural language descriptors in the field have the benefit of reflecting the interpretation of actual participants. While they can be used profitably in transcription of linguistic passages,

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<sup>43</sup> The term 'abstraction' here is used in a non-technical sense when referring to phonemes, etc. in this paper without wanting to raise questions of exact theoretical or psychological status.

scientific refinement and regularization can provide a formal, principled, canonical set over time. While further work is required to fully inventory, categorize, interpret and codify such expressions, we illustrate transcription of intention in an informal and exploratory way in this paper. Even with some informality, such transcriptions are empirically verifiable. Since they are manifest in popular usage, inquiry and experiments can determine and validate when and whether particular transcriptions have been accurately imposed on data.

There has been a recent focus on field methods for semantic and pragmatic research and regular coverage in conferences, including *Semantics of Under-Represented Languages in the Americas (SULA)*. (Matthewson, 2004) (Gibson, 2010) (Sprouse, 2012). These areas of methodological interest are important for recording linguistic actions in syntactic and general studies as well.

In summary, speakers are typically doing many things at once when they utter a sentence, and it is valuable for the linguist explicitly to record individual actions implicit in the use of each sentence. There would be two primary questions to investigate in field explorations:

**Generalizations:** Generally, what is the speaker doing when s/he uses a particular form or structure X?

**Scenarios:** Given an element X, what would typically be going on when a speaker uses X and what would a speaker be doing by the use of X in that context.

Directing field work toward the discussion of scenarios and situations, as advocated, in recent studies, enables more specific descriptions of what is being done with each tool. This is an important dimension beyond the bare judgments of acceptability and the glossed translations that have historically been the focus of syntactic studies. For TG the most fundamental records would be the actions in a sentence without involving a full exploration of inferences, truth conditions etc., which speak more to theories of anticipation, interpretation, inference, and so forth. We see linguistic action and intention explicitly mentioned when speakers talk about language. This provides an important empirical basis for linguistic theory.

## 16 Syntax Emerging from Action Semantics: Lexical Selections & Categorizations

As we posit cognitax rules and their related constraints, we observe that such representations have not emerged historically as a well defined level in the extra-syntactic domain of semantics. This appears to be true because their manifestation can be more directly associated with syntactic than interpretational phenomena. What seems superficially to be syntactic can often be profitably reanalyzed as inferentially rooted in structural action semantics.<sup>44</sup>

This question as to what is syntactic and what is cognitactic is illustrated in data such as the

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<sup>44</sup> We need not immediately resort, however, to any view that all traditional syntactic processes should be recast as basically semantic, and must leave issues in this area open for future research. We advert to various possibilities that a syntactic component and syntactic processing can be independently required as intermediations.

following which illustrate \$indicateSpecific ‘the’ and \$indicatePossessor possessive ‘s’:  
(Johnson, 2004)

- (1) \* the Mary’s book
- (192) \* the the man’s toy
- (193) \* a the man on the moon’s nose

Just as a verb cannot receive multiple subjects, indirect objects, etc. so a noun cannot have multiple determiners selected from the set: definite, indefinite, possessive There is only one slot in the lexical tool’s compatibility matrix. This is generalized as a syntactic phenomenon insofar as the definitional, lexical nature of a noun specifies that it is subcategorized and checked for no more than a single determiner.

These facts have been viewed as particularly syntactic as evidenced e.g. by phrase structure rules and other implementations of theory, but there is a connection to structural action semantics worthy of consideration The relationship between syntax and semantics is usefully viewed as functionally intimate given user intentions and cognitactic constraints are evident It seems inefficient and infelicitous, for example, that a noun would be subject to \$identifyPossessor and \$indicateSpecific since specifying a possessor tends itself to make the possessed element specific Adding two specifiers is similarly redundant and of no purpose, or cognitactically contradictory if one is definite and the other indefinite The action evident in adding a determiner may be subject to a constraint proscribing a duplicate or contradictory application of a specifying tool

Notwithstanding the foregoing, syntactic structure is not immediately and radically diminished by addition of a level of linguistic structural intent. Basic, pared down syntactic information remains necessary to formally define the notion of ‘duplicate’: various elements must be assigned to the specifying class in order to formulate a constraint that repeated elements should not be specified. One could try to move toward formalizing this by positing an actioneme \$ascribeSpecificity to cover definite and indefinite determiners, possessives, numerals, etc A portmanteau could of course be created in cognitax to implement a syntactic slot category but this would still need to be aligned with some lexical categorization This approach may be challenged as partially begging the question as to the nature and relations of syntax. If syntactic phenomena are coded in lexical entries there remains a syntactic presence whose extent is indeterminate without extensive investigation of the cognitactic level. Under all theoretical models intimate connections between syntax and cognitax appear to persist and require formal recognition.

Ongoing research is nevertheless required because actions involved in lexical selection may interact with other cognitax actions in ways that suggest that a variety of selection restrictions could often be recast as cognitax action constraints. In the following cases cognitax interactions appear to be at least partially at work

- (194) \* Many happy the puppies barked. (Johnson, 2004)
- (195) \* He ate should apples.

In the first, we observe that ‘many happy’ and ‘the’ both assert manners of specificity, but do so

in conflict by juxtaposing a set with a singleton In the second, obligation modality is applied to a passive object rather than a willful action, violating an actioneme constraint: “Create obligations only for will-enabled actions.”

Co-occurrence constraints and substitution classes are extensively discussed in (Johnson, 2004) leading to the same sorts of questions.

Note, for example, there are adverbs where it is not transparently and immediately evident how a syntactic solution would be displaced by cognitactic constraints.

- (196) A very happy child
  - (197) The extremely large boat
  
  - (198) I have deliberately misled.
  - (199) I have noticeably erred.
  
  - (200) A deliberately angry child
  - (201) The noticeably large boat
  
  - (202) \* I have very misled.
  - (203) \* I have extremely erred.
- (Johnson, 2004)

But note:

- (204) I have very much misled.
- (205) I have erred to an extreme degree.

To keep some questions open, in cases like these it is nevertheless interesting to consider a cognitax solution It is possible to analyze ‘very’ and ‘extreme’ as asserting degree on some dimension: \$assertExtremeDegreeOnDimension On this account the unacceptability of verbal modification for these adverbs could be ascribed to the absence of an explicit dimension for the verbs ‘misled’ and ‘erred’ in contrast with ‘happy’ and ‘large’.

It would appear some verbs could be binary with regard to inherent understanding of degree or extent, e.g. \$assertInherentDegreeDimension For others, degree or extent is expressed in an ancillary element of extent, degree or amount So it would be infelicitous to have \$assertExtremeDegree unless degree or extent had been specified via ‘much’ or ‘degree’.

These examples illustrate what may currently appear to be a fungible boundary between syntax and semantics and point to a need for further research We leave these questions open and believe they raise useful problems, but ones that can only be fully understood if the role of linguistic action is considered.

### 17 Limitations of Cognitax Constraints to Displace Mechanisms of Syntax

The intent of TG is to argue the advantages of including structural action semantics in linguistic rules as a means to better formulate constraints on language generation processes As noted,



questions of the boundaries circumscribed around syntax per se remain Whether cognitax mechanisms are limited to enabling a circumscribed set of better syntactic descriptions or go a distance further toward more fully eliminating the burden placed on syntactic mechanisms is left open as a principal research question In this section we briefly consider a number of cases in order to highlight these questions rather than to resolve them Some of the data is drawn from (McCawley, 1998)

The word order of auxiliary verbs can be used to illustrate fundamental syntax, as for example in McCawley's recitation that "passive 'be' cannot precede any other verb": (McCawley, 1998) p.1

- (1) John has been arrested.
- (206) \*John is had arrested.

We leave the most fundamental questions to one side, allowing that syntactic mechanisms can be at work here, but note that a cognitax solution may be possible insofar as the 'had arrested' tool complex indicating past action calls for an agent, while the 'is' tool to establish some state itself calls for a patientive subject A possible view of the ill-formedness is that it reflects trying to do two things at once using tools which, even if they were compatible, independently need resources which are not supplied.

In another case, simple stipulative word order specification seems at work and the existence of syntactic functionality cannot reasonably be denied given current insights: (McCawley, 1998) p. 2:

- (207) I admire her.
- (208) \*I her admire.
  
- (209) Je l'admire. 'I admire her.' Fr.

Nevertheless, each case of required word order must be analyzed separately to understand if there might be a cognitax intention underlying some observed alternation Contrast the following data, for which a case can be made that the word order constraints are cognitactic rather than syntactic: (McCawley, 1998) p. 2

- (210) I will go to Boston soon/tomorrow.
- (211) I will soon/\*tomorrow go to Boston.
  
- (212) I \*tomorrow/soon will go to Boston.
- (213) Tomorrow/soon I will go to Boston.

We hypothesize that rather than a simple predication of syntactic order on 'soon' and 'tomorrow' cognitactic rules may be involved For 'tomorrow' we countenance the actioneme \$assertSpecificTimeOfFutureEvent as a specific expectation of time, while 'soon' is more an assertion of general expectation \$assertGeneralExpectationOfEarlyFutureEvent In this analysis '\*will tomorrow go to Boston' is less felicitous because a specific expectation is requires the essential specifics of an entire proposition, including the subject, action and goal At an interior

location it breaks apart the wholeness of the integral material it would seek to modify; the adverb of time is inserted between the time modal and the rest of the predicate, misleadingly, as if the whole were subdivided for a reason. The specificity involves increased certainty requiring the target object to be packaged without countervailing internal complexity.

On the other hand ‘will soon go to Boston’ has the more general time adverb placed in position immediately between phrasal constituents it can modify since a general expectation of time can apply monotonously to an internal constituent, i.e. the modal or ‘go to Boston’

Similarly, for ‘\*tomorrow/soon will go’, ‘soon’ placed here is more acceptable because there is a reason for pre-posing it to modify ‘will’, namely that the special expectation of time ‘soon’ is connected to the intention or expectation of ‘will’. Placing the specific ‘tomorrow’ before ‘will’ displaces it away from a default position modifying a packaged proposition to a placement for exploiting a relationship to the modal verb, where the uncertainty of internal factors goes against the certainty of the time adverb

We present this analysis as a plausible approach for relegating a superficially syntactic phenomenon to cognitax processes. The analysis can benefit from further investigation and validation, but is particularly interesting because the constraint it implies is a hypothesis that the faculty of language has special mechanisms for managing uncertainty in the structures it generates. We observe these principles of cognitive organization elsewhere in our reprise of configurational analyses to an extent that indicates the possibility of an important operation in the faculty of language.

Despite the evident intrusion of cognitax hypotheses into traditional syntactic domains it appears clear that a set of processes seem to persist as more purely configurational syntactic mechanisms. These include well known patterns of syntactic agreement, for example, as well as the necessity that lexical insertions, most conspicuously verbs, bring in subcategorization possibilities and constraints that impose requirements on the syntactic output. The following data illustrate this point: (McCawley, 1998) p. 2, p 17 <sup>45</sup>

- (214) I put it there.
- (215) \*I put there.
- (216) \*John put in the vase.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> At the same time it is attractive but speculative to consider that any lexical piece might have an actioneme functional specification that could explain syntactic patterns. To illustrate with one example among an exceedingly large number of candidates, if ‘see’ involves \$assertVisualPerception, it would be natural to expect the perception to be encoded without an overt targeting preposition. Similarly, if ‘look’ implies \$assertVisualTarget the occurrence of the target preposition ‘at’ might also be anticipated.

- (1) I saw (\*at) John.
- (2) I looked at/\*0 John.

<sup>46</sup> Some sentences in this set would be acceptable in discourse environments supplying the missing elements. This raises another set of questions and leaves open the question of additional ways that cognitax might explain the

- (217) \*John put the flowers.
- (218) \*I wish Jerry would stop looking at.
- (219) \*They spent the whole evening thinking about.
- (220) \*This drug has only been used in the treatment of.

The comments of this section illustrate that while the scope of the present work does not extend to the boundary between cognitax processes and those of a more purely syntactic character, it does raise unanswered and important questions that can only be addressed by careful investigation of linguistic intent and action.

#### 18 Testability, Verifiability, Formalism

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

#### 19 Theoretical Status, Universals and the Architecture of Competence in the Chomskyan Framework

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

#### 20 Toward a TG Generative Framework

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

#### 21 Extending the Minimalist Rule Framework for Cognitax Tool Grammar

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

#### 22 Relationship of TG Cognitax to Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

#### 23 Relationship to Speech Act Research

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patterning of utterances.

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

## 24 Dynamic Semantics and Discourse Representation Theory

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

## 25 TG and Information Structure

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

## 26 Rhetorical Structure Theory<sup>47</sup>

[NB: This updated section is available on request in the extended document.]

## 27 Stronger Constraints for Modeling the Faculty of Language<sup>48</sup>

Analysis of particular linguistic problems in the TG framework yields a set of putative constraints on linguistic structure formation. We have proposed a preliminary set of constraints at the level of cognitive intentional formation:<sup>49</sup>

- Single Focus Constraint
- Overlapping Exclusion Constraint
- Cross Purpose Constraint
- Required Purpose Constraint
- Vacuous Action Constraint
- Constraint on Elaboration Beyond Essential
- Unknown Specification Constraint
- Unknown Interrogation Constraint
- Likelihood Uncertainty Constraint
- Subordinate Focus Constraint

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<sup>47</sup>Computational approaches generally do not aim so directly toward formulations of psychological theories for the faculties of language. We limit ourselves by not covering other approaches connected with machine computation, such as computational semantics, computational pragmatics, bidirectional optimality theory, spoken dialog systems, and Bayesian methods in general.

<sup>48</sup>Computational approaches generally do not aim so directly toward formulations of psychological theories for the faculties of language. We limit ourselves by not covering other approaches connected with machine computation, such as computational semantics, computational pragmatics, bidirectional optimality theory, spoken dialog systems, and Bayesian methods in general.

<sup>49</sup> Some of these constraints are discussed only in the expanded version of this paper.

- Conjunction Constraint on Unknowns in Assertions
- Superfluous/Null Construct Constraint
- Wasteful Structure Constraint
- Specific Expectation Constraint
- Incompatible Estimation Constraint
- Advanced Notice Quantification Constraint
- Imaginary Construct Sequence Constraint
- Imaginary Construct Differentiation Constraint
- Concept Negation Closure Constraint
- Conflicted Determinacy Constraint
- Vacuous Judgment Constraint in Non-negatable Circumstances
- Compatible Modification Constraint
- Conflicted Determinacy Constraint

These constraints remain individually to be validated in further investigations over time but even in their first proposals they accumulate to attest to a reality in the faculty of language that underlies rapidly learned creative language use based on sparse data. They clearly overlap in ways that suggest that they can be combined to produce a smaller more general set. The constraints combine to impose the possibility of more concentrated and stronger limitations on the notion of possible human language than those resulting from the analysis of syntax-centric configurational rules alone without incorporating factors of linguistic action and intent. It is evident that many of them may be conflatable in a strictly formal analysis to a single meta constraint:

#### Linguistic Intention Umbrella Constraint

In selecting an element for construction of a sentence to represent meaning do not make a choice which conflicts in intent with another element chosen for this sentence.

This general conclusion places the present work distinctly within the Chomskyan paradigm, even if it proposes a subparadigmatic shift in perspective, because stronger constraints on the characterization of the human faculty of language contribute to an understanding of infinite linguistic creativity from finite resources and how it is that children learn language so quickly when the data experience to them is so limited.

## 28 Summary and the Architecture of Competence

See also the *Introduction and Summary* and the section *Implications for the Generative Program* for a high level summary.

We have presented arguments that humans are not so extensively and fundamentally “syntactical animals” (Searle, June 29, 1972) as is assumed in the pervasive Chomskyan Generative Program. Instead, Tool Grammar (TG) postulates that sentence generation exhibits linguistic cognitive intention actions most fundamentally and syntax processes more procedurally. Evidence has been

presented to demonstrate that there exists an empirically evident necessity for representation of linguistic structural intent which has been generally overlooked in the theory of language, including notably centralized configurational syntax in the generative program. The creativity of sentence generation is positioned in the context of speaker intention at a higher cognitive level than syntax formation. This revision of the architecture of competence extends the potential of the generative program beyond current limitations.

Arguments for TG emerge from considering a range of difficult and vexing problems in syntactic theory. We have pursued empirically transparent and radically penetrating solutions for these problems under strong constraints on the bounds of human language. We find support for the hypothesis that syntactic theory requires specification of structural intent in order properly to solve a set of the most difficult theoretical challenges, and, further, that this brings unavoidable implications for the architecture of linguistic competence.

Evidence has been presented that the notion of possible human language may be more narrowly constrained by means of limitations on processing in the sphere of intention and action than by those available by consideration of syntactic processes alone without components of intention and action. This work, therefore, while compatible with aspects of many approaches, is in support of the primary Chomskyan goal of explaining infinite linguistic creativity from finite resources and rapid child language learning in spite of a poverty of stimulus data.

A sentence in TG is a set of actions, a structure building performance where the initiative of intention is central rather than any primary syntactic scaffolding. Each tool is an intentional device for specific effect in the process of utterance generation. It is distinguished from the traditional concept of a linguistic 'rule' by the explicit specification of intent added to the standard structural input and output conditions.

Language has communication, via external representations of internal meaning, as a purpose and tools as a means of action. Tools include lexical items, build/merge/move mechanisms and functional manipulations [(trans)formations] under constraints on usage and context. The initial structure of sentences is implicit in the choice of lexical items to effect intent. They are assembled by merge operations which aggregate elements into larger constituents.<sup>50</sup> (Trans)formations are manipulative tools applied to basic structures to realize the intent, manner and impact of delivery. Tools, lexical and (trans)formational, embody observed regularities traditionally captured as 'rules' in linguistic descriptions but they always include as an essential core component the specification of purposeful utility for intentional structural effect. Natural constraints on the cognitive inter-compatibility of tools render many rules and constraints on configurational syntax unnecessary, since unacceptable sentences often result from the incompatible misapplication of tools.

Recursive functions of language in TG are formed in cognitive ideation rather than just within operational syntax, and they precede language specific structure formation. Creative, generative and recursive linguistic capabilities emanate not from a source syntactic component but from pre-syntactic linguistic cognitive abilities that result in linguistic action directives. Recursive,

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<sup>50</sup> John Hewson (personal communication) observes the history of syntax might have been redirected by the postulation of NP + VP => S, rather than S => NP + VP.

anticipative, and creative linguistic productivity is located in a higher level linguistic cognitive facility, cognate with those of semantic extraction, inference, or pragmatic derivation. The latter are interpretive and characteristically more oriented to the perspective of the addressee. Language tools are more operational than interpretive and mediate between cognition and expression by providing the necessary structure..

The data essential for motivating linguistic descriptions can be enhanced by explicit field transcriptions of evident user action and intent using a controlled scientific vocabulary. Linguists traditionally transcribe phonology, lexicology, morphology and syntax, but less consistently the intentional force of utterance components. Transcriptions of structural action semantics are restricted and accessible, as well as observationally prior, compared to truth semantics or intensional logic, which are inferential, indirect, derived, more obscure and proportionately complex. They may or may not necessarily adhere to principles of traditional semantics such as strict compositionality. Full semantic processing involves secondary procedural information often associated with addressee interpretation, rather than declarative knowledge that is basic to sentence origination and generation. Semantic action directives use only the simpler restricted action elements of meaning involved in the intentions of sentence generation, not full-blown interpretive semantics. Semantic interpretation, anticipation, inference, pragmatic construal and model theoretic mappings are deferred to the separate capabilities associated with general cognition and linguistic understanding. The formalization of linguistic intents requires a new technical controlled vocabulary containing a restricted set of general action descriptors centered on a universal central core.<sup>51</sup> As a methodological aid for linguistic description, adding linguistic intent to linguistic structure building rules ultimately lessens the burden on the separate disciplines of semantics and pragmatics. The transcription of linguistic intent, of which speakers may be conscious, inoculates the approach against the view that its elements are purely stipulative.

TG describes a performative mechanism for generating externalized representations of meaning from which conveyed meaning is derived by means of a separate interpretation by the addressee. Action tools build structures to externalize representations of meaning. Sentence formation is not direct communication but the posting or publication of representations of thoughts left to be interpreted by addressees to extract and construe meaning. Sentence formation is fundamentally different and separate from sentence interpretation. Linguistic utterances satisfy internal intentions by presenting characterizations of thoughts mediated by conventionalized linguistic devices. A word is a fundamental language schema bridge used to map thoughts to external representations.

TG represents a sub-paradigmatic shift in syntactic/semantic theory to the extent it can be integrated to the generative program. Although not an essential scientific purpose, in accordance with traditional formalist definitions of a language as a set of acceptable sentences<sup>52</sup>, tools, properly formalized and operating under natural constraints, together with a component able to

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<sup>51</sup> If there are universal tendencies in the inventory and taxonomy of linguistic actions this clearly does not necessarily extend directly to the range of structures used to represent those actions since languages have highly diverse means of expression.

<sup>52</sup> We reject the definition of a language as a set of sentences, but propose that TG could be configured to generate such a set for those committed to this view.

generate linguistic intentions, have the recombinant generative capacity to output all and only the well-formed sentences of a language, but crucially involve notations of functional role as a scientifically empowering dimension.<sup>53</sup> Certain syntactic and cognitive dimensions of language can be conflated by adding an explicit level of structural action semantics subject to cognitive compatibility constraints. Traditional generative theories seeking to account for the speed of child language learning and universal structure would benefit in their aims from a universally available vocabulary of possible sentence intent elements. TG also seeks to address the vast variability in linguistic patterning among natural languages as a natural consequence of the possibilities of new tool invention and recombination under the constraints of functional compatibility. Speed of child language learning can be further understood to the extent that constraints on structure formation can be shown to follow from natural universal cognitive restrictions on tool formation and compatibility. By accounting for a wide range of unacceptable sentences in terms of natural limitations on linguistic intent, TG contributes to an understanding how the complexity of human languages can be learned largely in the absence of negative data, and how intuitions might develop about the unacceptability of sentence types that have never been present in the learning environment.

The difference between semantics and grammar is seen as the difference between ideation and expression. Semantic ill-formedness results from incompatible ideas ('colorless green'), while grammatical ill-formedness results from the incompatible use of tools ('colorless sleeps').

A swath of linguistic ill-formedness can evidently be attributed to the presence of incompatible cognitive intents in the elements of unacceptable sentences. When syntactic phenomena are understood to be conditioned by linguistic action/intent descriptors, various difficult problems evidently yield to straightforward solutions: conflicting intents yield ill-formed sentences. TG seeks to bring much of the subtlety of syntax over into the realm of cognitive utilitarian mechanics, lifting burdens of explanation from syntax and transporting them to a specialized facility for utilitarian cognitive efficiency. This is accomplished while separating the utilitarian mechanics of externalization by the speaker from cognitive issues of semantic interpretation, anticipation, disambiguation, inference, and so forth, leaving the fields of semantics and pragmatics unconfounded, and separated as a domain of higher order cognition. Intentions result in the generation of thought-representational sentences, but neither interpretation nor communication can be fully effected until after a separate process of extraction is carried out by the addressee. Many formerly syntactic problems appear vulnerable to the thesis of incompatible intent, separating and reducing the challenges for theories of syntax, semantics and pragmatics.

When generalizations in symbolic systems are sought at an incorrect and incapable level of representation, unnatural and unnecessarily contrived solutions unavoidably result. Re-modularization of cognitive systems can afford more rational coverage of observed phenomena. By incorporating one dimension of action meaning into linguistic structure building, a large set of syntactic problems acquires a facilitative functional means: much of syntax becomes utilitarian mechanics of a specialized cognitive kind. Fundamentals of syntax are reducible to a particular form of cognitive utilitarian processes. The theory of grammar enjoys benefits when the

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<sup>53</sup> The mounting complexity of contemporary solutions to syntactic problems can be symptomatic of what is known in software systems as a 'kludge', i.e. an addition of ad hoc complexity that may not be necessary if the system is structurally reorganized on different principles.



complex model of linguistic cognition is re-modularized around the separate domains of expression and understanding.

TG seeks to model the psychological mechanisms underlying observable language. A specific language is a set of tools for posting and interpreting representations of thought adapted to a particular culture. Language (competence), in conformance with the generative paradigm, consists of the facility for linguistic tools governed by natural constraints on their formation and inter-compatibility. The set of sentences in a language is an effectuation rather than its embodiment or definition. The end purpose of linguistic descriptions is to create models of the natural human competence to learn and employ the world's languages.

We have proposed a new level of constraints on generation using representation of linguistic intent and hypothesize that generalizations at this level can simplify the statement of linguistic universals which is essential for generative grammar.

Linguistic rules evidently require linguistic structural intentions, a theoretical position that has not heretofore been thoroughly presented. From a preponderance of diverse cases involving linguistic problems that resist authoritative solutions, we have argued that linguistic theory must incorporate components of linguistic action and intention. A set of problems in linguistic theory has served to demonstrate that the dimension of structural intent must necessarily be considered for adequate solutions to emerge. The absence of this level of representation in syntactic theory can plausibly account for limitations in advancing the theory in linear progress toward additional foundational achievements.

We conclude that there is evidence for the hypothesis that the exclusion of linguistic intention and action from generative rules introduces artefactual complexity and undesirably precludes the strongest possible natural constraints on characterizations of the human faculty of language. The inclusion of intention in linguistic rules evidently both enables solutions of otherwise intractable problems and enables simpler, more natural solutions generally. While probing explanations for the profoundly important syntactic observational effects uncovered by generativist methodology (e.g. locality, crossover, C-command, control). Theorizing based on linguistic intent shows potential to provide a thinner, simplified, more directly empirical argumentation compared to the indirections necessitated by complex syntactic analysis based on central configurational syntax. TG argumentation can be not infrequently inoculated against the view that it is merely stipulative or reductionist because the addition of a new dimension of recordable and verifiable data is based on primary field transcription and is subject to independent validation.

Finally, with regard to recent developments in the generative program, we note that our own investigations highlight the thesis that the Merge view of syntactic organization may likely be revalidated in TG as a fundamental discovery in the sphere of linguistic competence, a topic whose full major implications are beyond the reach of the present work. We conclude that scientific validity can be enhanced by revising the architecture of generative linguistics from a merely mathematical sound-meaning connection to a functional connection between linguistic intention and linguistic expression.

## 29 Wherefore Symbolic Syntax

The following commentary advocates the importance of linguistic structural intention in the context of discussion and excerpts in (Robert Berwick, 2019) “The Siege of Paris” Robert Berwick Noam Chomsky (BC) and (Uriagereka, 2019) “Kept in Mind” (with reference to Language in Our Brain (Friederici, 2017) )(JU) recently published in *Inference* 4:3.

True creativity can be very simple, so elemental that almost none ever come close to approaching it. It consists often in the mere huge achievement of deeply understanding and melding two disciplines that may not have had each other’s sufficient acquaintance. Noam Chomsky may have shortcomings when viewed from particular perspectives, but stepping back to where all is in view, one sees he has repeatedly advanced the Linguistic Problem to engulf and submerge many particular objections. First there was Linguistics and Mathematics, requiring the invention of computational rewrite systems, for the latter’s relevance to the former. Soon Theoretical Psychology was pried open to make a space for Linguistics in Rapid Learning Theory. Subsequently, the Aspects model, and rejection of Generative Semantics, conjoined Linguistics with the Philosophy of Science to define the utility of a Competence/Performance distinction, Interpretive Semantics, and working idealizations in general as a divide-and-conquer strategy strictly necessary for progress in something as dauntingly and multi-variately complex as human language. For the sake of theoretical quality control, he reverts reflectively *en passant* for a period to the early rationalist phase of French Philosophy. Then, and emergent all along, he brings forward Evolutionary Biology as a co-discipline for understanding rapid language acquisition, among other motivations.

Throughout, Chomsky intimates that simplicity itself has a profound role to play, since it must lurk behind the telling quick enablement of Syntax in the child’s second and third years. In due course, hands are joined with Occam for perhaps the greatest creative realization of all, that if a mind puts A and B together one gets simply a set of A and B, but also potentially an explanation for hierarchy and much that must otherwise be a mystery: Merge. Merging two linguistic elements is the building block of Linguistics as Computation that explains the signature role of unbounded hierarchy in the human expressive capability, and more.

Chomsky repeatedly steps to the side and brings in new disciplines and so avoids a linear descent into the constrictive limitations of a single theoretical thread. Of course, what he used to say is revised: it’s science after all. Linguistics has for a while been in a catch him if you can posture, but the bigger question all along will be: Where next?

The nub is always new, as we observe reflecting on JU’s review. How might one next do the Chomskyan Klein bottle attachments so that what used to be outside is now inside, but still outside also, envisaging an integrative theory of the whole? There are subdivisions in the theory of human psychology, but ultimately the humanness of language is a holistic creation.

First, we consider BC, and observe how easily radically positions can be misunderstood. They rightly assert:

The human language faculty is a species-specific property, with no known group differences and little variation. (BC)

From some perspectives (variationist and contrastive linguistics) this would might seem preposterous insofar as language seems superficially vastly variant. The competence/performance and variationist set-asides in pursuit of central fundamentals might seem an abdication. Is it all an oversimplification? Certainly not, for what is not often noted is that Chomsky has aspired to abstract cybernetic and computational truths as stepping stones. His

placement of linguistics inside the discipline of psychology can only be a longer term vision as he operates with restrictions on selected planes.

There is most recently an open question whether Chomsky's founding of syntax on the simplicity of Merge might be understood as an attachment to information theory. Shannon proceeded from the minimalist datum bit while Chomsky would build from the minimalist operation. Is this a property of human cognition, or intelligence more generally in information theory? Chomsky shows he is conscious of skirting this realm, frequently referring to "computation" as against e.g. abstract neurons in engineered networks, even in the era where we begin to discover computational operations within the cell.

Forward from here, it is necessary to distinguish the abstract knowledge in Chomsky's Cybernetic Competence from an incrementally more ambitious quest for Operational Competence. To make progress Chomsky cut through the vast complexity of human language setting a goal to generate all and only the sentences of a language while assigning meanings and pronunciations (and of course aspiring beyond). This idealization enabled very heavy theoretical lifting, but the decision to study artefactual sets of sentences leads naturally to a more daunting reality wherein sentences are actually functional operational actions taken to effect purpose. The pursuit of abstract computational structures and knowledge led to vast discoveries of syntactic effects in natural languages, those patterns of sentence formation that both reflect computational structure and motivate further research. What next? The scope of endeavor must be gradually expanded.

Chomsky's recent focus shifts laterally (and bifocally) to a renewed biological emphasis where he asks: "Why only us?" (BC and elsewhere) implying a "species-specific genetic apparatus" (BC) hailing back to Tinbergen, Lorenz, Lenneberg, Halle, etc., but emphasizing the concomitant importance of "environmental triggers" (BC) and the confoundingly complex and discontinuous obscurity of evolutionary changes. He resists the tempting simplistic explanations for the evolution of language in favor of a conjoint view involving genetic inheritance and cybernetic computation. It is well summarized in BC, describing language as a

finite computational system generating an infinite array of hierarchically structured expressions. This is the basic property (BP) of language.

...

The BP is best explained, we argued, as the expression of an underlying computational system, an example of those innate repertoires to which Tinbergen, Lorenz, and Lenneberg called attention.

At some point we are required to look beyond the empirical data restrictions Chomsky utilized in propelling cognitive science so far over 50 years. When does the methodological constraint noted by BC become a limitation?

Every structured expression has a definite semantic interpretation ....

The statement may be true in its usefulness but it is a simplifying restriction and consciously imposed bias that invites eventual reconsideration and refinement. In fact, more basically, every structured expression is also an action that embeds functional purpose, which may or may not be properly received or beneficently and monotonically interpreted. A human sentence follows from a set of intentions, raising the question whether theory can be advanced by providing features of intention as inputs to syntactic generation. This is the question asked in Tool Grammar, an enterprise in Generative Grammar distinguished only slightly by the minor adjustment that sentence generation originates from structural intentional features.

Tool Grammar is modest in its aspirations. Whereas Chomsky drew attention to the relatedness

of structure and meaning:

- Al ate the pear.
- The pear was eaten by Al.
- It was Al who ate the pear.

these sentences take their particular form due to structural linguistic intentions. This is clear when intentions conflict as in:

- \*What was surprising about Al was that the pear was eaten by Al.

This bad sentence attempts at once to draw attention to, and draw attention away from the agent. Tool Grammar seeks only to incorporate features of intention as input to syntactic rules on the grounds that such are evident and reliable data impinging on structure in many ways beyond what is seen in this simple example.

As syntactic theory advances to model more than an abstract competence it is an opportunity to provide it with the architectural benefit of inputs. Otherwise, by uncharacteristically modeling a component of cognition without inputs, syntactic competence limits its relevance to adjoining disciplines.

In fairness, modeling without inputs has facilitated rather than impeded scientific investigation. Idealization is required for scientific advance, but methodologies must be adjusted with advancements. It is a plain fact that sentences are intentional actions, and a huge number of words in any natural language reflect this reality: *imply*, *rescind*, *state*, *predict*, etc. It would be quite remarkable if syntactic modeling were to indefinitely overlook hundreds of verbs telling us that producing sentences involves undertaking intentional actions. Models divided cannot stand. The generative architecture has in some ways made use of a bias toward the perspective of the listener rather than the speaker: sentences are interpreted but not engendered. Chomsky conceived of “interpretive semantics” and strenuously resisted the undermining of methodological idealizations from premature consideration of the complexities of “Generative Semantics”.

Intention-centered grammar is on firm common ground with the research program summarized by BC:

Language *production* is a matter of externalization.

While this statement can attach to a powerful hypothesis that the structure of language recapitulates the structure of thought, it leaves open the question whether there might be more dimensionality in a functional domain, involving structural intention. It foregrounds the question of the architecture of language and allows a lateral shift to where what is externalized is the representation of intention. Surely there is an intentional component antecedent to syntactic structure. (Chomsky himself repeatedly adverts to a “conceptual-intentional” interface.) Before continuing to consider the JU review, we note the extensive and convincing discussion in BC of genetic and evolutionary issues, as well as the refuted misunderstandings of critics and the relation to earlier literature. We note their observation:

the chasm between phenotype, algorithm, and neural implementation remains just that—a chasm. We do not yet understand the space of algorithms that might inform, or guide, the BP.

This statement creates an invitation to consider modules and architecture. To proceed from productive cybernetic mathematics to a more ambitious model of motivated generation, an intentional module is required beyond Cybernetic Competence. Discoveries about genetic

realization can proceed in parallel with investigations how sentence result from complexes of intentional features.

This enterprise complements BC's advance of Cybernetic Competence to understand how hierarchical structure gets reduced to linear output when spoken or signed:

The ability to process sequential information is shared across many vertebrate species—perhaps all. A slight alteration in the wiring of a simple sequential processor is sufficient to endow it with a push-down stack. This makes for a significant improvement in its computational power. It is a point of some significance: a push-down stack is needed to process hierarchical structures. In our example, which is entirely notional, we assume that sequential processing is realized via a shift register, where information flows in from the left and is stored in the individual registers that hold data.

BC present this schema as purely conceptual but it connects with JU's review of brain science since it begins to raise the important open questions regarding the operations involved in modeling an active exercising process versus capturing latent summative knowledge. A register stack operation is proposed as a notional analog in the process of sentence processing. This can be a landing in the new world of emergent linguistics if we extrapolate sufficiently from JU and revise cognitive architectures so they become involved in experimental studies.

In the push down stack model, focus turns to a computational operation involved in the linearization of hierarchy, and one that takes substantive input, far come from the early days where generativity was associated with an abstract (quasi null) initial symbol #S# -> NP + VP. We arrive now where in considering pre-linguistic operations one encounters the operative time investigated in France by Gustave Guillaume in the 1950s. Linguistics, to its credit, has come full circle to consider the pre-linguistic constructs and processes intimated by European Structuralism. We note in passing, also, the loose conceptual relation of Merge to the supporting/supported recursion of Dependency Grammar.

JU thoroughly illustrates that we are at a juncture in the science of human language. We are sumptuously tantalized by the JU preliminary summarization regarding the inevitable and proven necessity of a computational theory of (linguistic) mind:

No one knows. For that matter, no one knows what a symbol is, or where symbolic interactions take place. The formal structures of linguistics and neurophysiology are disjoint.... There is an incommensurability between theories of the brain,  $T_B$ , and theories of the mind,  $T_M$ .

Immediate answers lie in levels of detail language science has not descended into, and reconciliation seems far away:

We may not figure this out within our lifetimes.

We are perhaps not on the brink of entering the chute but possibilities can emerge as linguistics reconnects with the philosophers and poets (and Chomsky himself, repeatedly intimating an intentional interface) who hold that speaking is doing, with a multiplicity of actions in a typical sentence. Do you ask, imply, cast aspersions, justify, remind, emphasize, compare, discount, etc.? Since actions are more organically holistic than configurational structures, they may be more amenable to profiling in the brain, especially since emotional overtones abide: e.g. refutation is not a passive structure. It is a rare sentence that doesn't have an affective sideband. Linguistic intentions must be factored because they are indisputably observable and interactive with other dimensions of linguistic expression.

JU's review adverts to Chomsky's later thinking as a key to the progress described in Frederici's book:

... something like the minimalist program is its underlying theory. Minimalism is a streamlined version of generative grammar, and it is precisely *because* of this theoretical streamlining that finding syntax within the brain is even possible.

This validates Chomsky's pursuit of simplicity to explain some biological touchstones of human language, but it also brings the irony of asking what might be simpler still per the shifting of Chomskyan scientific creativity at each round of analysis. While Chomsky pursues simplified models of linguistic cognition, it is fair to observe that particular linguistic solutions can sometimes result in complexities and ad hoc contrivances to account for real world data. This does not detract from the Minimalist Program but does reflect that there is much still to be understood in linguistics, a general observation that explains why Chomsky's own program can involve periodic scientific reformulations.

Can features of structural linguistic intention, such as e.g. *emphasize* Manner, to **functionally** explain some adverbial phenomena, afford additional substantial simplicity to generative syntactic theory? This hypothesis of Tool Grammar can intermediate to reconcile brain and symbolic-computational models. As a fund of empirical data it cannot be disregarded as a reasonable candidate for conditioning effects.

It is facilitative to quote JU on multiplexing, because his point is exactly the state of affairs that could not yet have been sufficiently represented in linguistic models as psychological isolates:

A lot is going on at any given time within a given brain, and experimenters have to ingeniously subtract what is irrelevant from whatever task is observed. This is familiar enough from daily life. We do many things at once.

Linguistic structural actions may already be evident in brain effect observations as the particularity of resolution increases.

Everyone expects that more activity in a given area means more information processing. No one has a clue whether it is more information or more articulated information, or more interconnected information, or whether, for that matter, the increased neuro-connectivity signifies something else entirely.

We know objectively that sentences involve action intentions and that these can be transcribed reliably, even from the natural language vocabulary we routinely use (deny, remind, emphasize, excuse, generalize, etc.).

The dimensions of inquiry are defined by the limitations of classical linguistics (JU):

*Language in Our Brain* is written in the expectation, or the hope, that a division of labor into phonetics, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics more or less corresponds to the tasks the brain executes in aggregating representations from more elementary bits.

*Is there an unnecessary empirical narrowing in not asking, what next?*

*Regarding current Minimalist operations, JU questions Frederici's belief that*

Merge... has a well-defined localization in the human brain

JU's circumspect conclusion seems well founded:

...present-day observational technology does not seem capable of teasing apart these different components of syntax at work, so it seems to me premature to claim that the observables localize Merge.

But the scientific promise really comes from the important window that JU himself definitively opens. With regard to "*The man sailed the ship.*", JU observes that

...the relationship between *sailed* and what (*the*) *ship* denotes is logically prior to that between what (*the*) *man* denotes and the rest of the sentence. In [speaking] *the ship* is merged first, but what is first said is *the man*. The speech sequence (as perceived) and the

syntactic sequence (as generated) are at odds.

Some considerable degree of separation of speaking from listening is necessary as the scientific model of language is extended. JU takes note of real time sequencing in the process of linguistic generation so departs from the notion of more static linguistic competence that the Chomskyan launch used so effectively. Orientation to speaker and projection from the pre-externalization time domain are both features of a more incorporative program such as Tool Grammar. These hearken back philosophically to Gustave Guillaume who held that there is no sentence without a speaker, in whom utterances are prepared at a level he calls Incidence in the real time work-up phase he terms Operational Time. In “old ship” the adjective *old* cannot be attached until the noun *ship* has been selected. Generative Linguistics in these measures can usefully return to an upshot of European Structuralism by jettisoning a small part of an idealization that might evolve from propellant to retardant.

In the midst of these advances outlined in JU, anticipatory caution is warranted, however, that in the world of computation, both simplicity and the sequential time domain can be compromised by pre-compilation and parallelization, so further complexities in the correlation of brain function with symbolic manipulation may yet be on the horizon.

JU clearly identifies operational differences within the time domains of generation and reception, relegating the difficulties to the competence/performance distinction.

Generative grammar addresses this [...] by separating competence from performance.

Competence reveals that [...] Merge works from the bottom up.... That what is first encountered in speech is *the man* is a fact of performance, a matter of parsing. This poses a serious puzzle. Hearing or reading a sentence is an affair from before to after. It is not bottom up. ... After the phrase *the man* has been parsed, it is held on a memory buffer in order to allow the mental parser to concentrate on what comes next, so as to establish thematic integration.

While this may be a useful extension of the classic competence/performance distinction, it might also be viewed as out of step with a deeper implication of Chomsky’s re-orientation of syntax to Merge. The latter can be viewed as notional and mathematical, of course, and interpreted as a construct of held knowledge, but it also lends itself easily, and we believe more productively, to the alternative view that each Merge is an intentional action. The advent of Merge might be taken to move the boundary between competence and performance modestly inward to the period in operative time where lexical items, grammatical strategies, morphological realizations, etc. are being selected. In that case the Performance concept retains its importance, distinct as regards such factors as time and memory limitations, outside perturbation, shifting attention etc., but it retracts slightly to allow the theory of language to evolve more as a model than an unintegrated store of human capability. Similarly, it may be wise to separate the role of meaning in speaking, where intention is a clear controlling factor, from that of understanding, where the variability and outside modulation of interpretation play a significant role.

JU’s review is excellent for having brought forward the organizing questions concerning the future of linguistics in an expanding laboratory context where the architecture and implementation of models become increasingly important. JU cleverly demurs, leaving important questions for the reader to reflect on:

The question is how the thing works; indeed, the question of what the functional language network might be doing should, in my view, be subordinated to the distinction between competence and performance. What the mind must know and what the brain must process are very generally orthogonal.

This is a sophisticated position that allows for the processes of listening to be rectified in terms of the inverse ones of generation by means of “analysis by synthesis”. One might iteratively generate and revise structural hypotheses as a means to effective perception, or alternatively one might pursue theories which separate speaking and listening somewhat more.

This conclusion, regarding the proper application of the competence/performance distinction might best be appreciated as a hypothesis, with thanks to JU for having presented it so clearly. Alternatively, Tool Grammar prefers to broaden the scope of verifiable data available to syntactic theory in an endeavor to afford internal simplification, but also, in its retention, to move the competence boundary slightly in the hope that the divide between theoretical and experimental linguistics might narrow. Is it tenable to indefinitely model an aspect of human competence in a module without inputs?

In reaction to Flechsig’s prediction

[I]t is rather unlikely that psychology, on its own, will arrive at the real, lawful characterization of the structure of the mind, as long as it neglects the anatomy of the organ of the mind.”

JU turns the tables for a more symmetrical dependence, leaving us with an important take-away:

I am left wondering whether neurobiology shouldn’t have to take in all seriousness the central results of cognitive psychology—including the competence/performance divide—if seeking a lawful understanding of the human mind.

We ask the question whether edging toward the middle might not be most productive. The modeling of intelligence in the Chomskyan tradition can continue to aim more to be real, and less to be artificial.

What is next?

### 30 Shortcomings and Future Work

We have presented the broad outlines of an alternative approach to (syntactic) utterance generation by motivating the need to include specifications of intent in formulations of linguistic processes. We supported the proposals by presenting an array of solutions to challenging problems. It would be premature to propose a fully elaborated system architecture but we have considered broadly some consequences and implications for linguistic theory and the architecture of competence. The work is limited to schematic analysis in support of a TG framework without attempting detailed formalization, broad coverage of the full range of syntactic processes. Similarly, we withhold analysis and judgment on the large number of syntactic processes which may be presented as derivational transformations, but are also (often equivalently) amenable as elaborated structures inserted directly from the lexicon making structural transformation unnecessary.

Any work such as the present must necessarily have shortcomings due to the newness and comprehensiveness of the general approach, as well as the limitations of early stage analysis. It is expected that further research can improve the particular analyses presented here. There are many particular shortcomings including the absence or insufficient coverage of morphology, diachronic issues, cross-language data, opportunities for experimental validation, and so forth. It is hoped,



nevertheless, that the general approach might afford new insights to the many language phenomena which remain today mysterious. The constraints on construct formation in particular might be expected to undergo ongoing revision as future work proceeds. Much depends on the extent to which future work might help articulate and reinforce further constraints on the formation of linguistic structures at the level of intentional action.

A principal secondary hope for this theoretical work has been that a framework might emerge which could eventually lead to the engineering of new systems for language generation and recognition. While pursuing linguistic theory, it is advantageous to advance linguistic science toward modeling linguistic competence in software. If the thesis that linguistic structural action semantics are operationally at the center of human, it is possible that the formulation of linguistic tools could lead to new engineering possibilities for Chomsky's generative program. Much future work is required and progress may depend on other shifts in perspective by the next generation of linguistic scholars.

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