

# General preface

 <https://doi.org/10.1075/cilt.17.03gen>

Pages vii–xiv of

**Integrational Linguistics: Vol. I: General Outline**

**Hans-Heinrich Lieb**

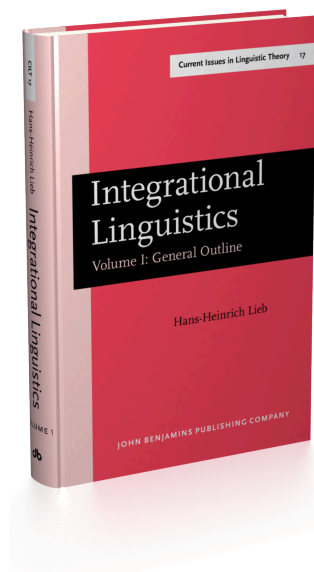
[*Current Issues in Linguistic Theory*, 17]

1983. xxiii, 527 pp.

© John Benjamins Publishing Company

This electronic file may not be altered in any way. For any reuse of this material written permission should be obtained from the publishers or through the Copyright Clearance Center (for USA: [www.copyright.com](http://www.copyright.com)).

For further information, please contact [rights@benjamins.nl](mailto:rights@benjamins.nl) or consult our website at [benjamins.com/rights](http://benjamins.com/rights)



## GENERAL PREFACE

The civilians were still more concise: what they offered being more in the nature of a decree - than a dispute.

Such a monstrous nose, said they, had it been a true nose, could not possibly have been suffered in civil society - and if false - to impose upon society with such false signs and tokens, was a still greater violation of its rights, and must have had still less mercy shown it.

The only objection to this was, that if it proved any thing, it proved the stranger's nose was neither true nor false.

From *Slawkenbergius's Tale*

Anybody who comes up with six volumes on anything owes the reader some explanations. The six volumes on Integrational Linguistics (at present, Vols I to III are complete, Vols IV to VI are in preparation) present a unified approach to basic problems of linguistics that will be briefly characterized in this Preface. In Sec. 1 I outline the development of the approach; its reception is characterized in Sec. 2; and Sec. 3 contains a bird's-eye view of all six volumes of *IL*. ("Integrational Linguistics" and "IL" refer to the approach, "*Integrational Linguistics*" and "*IL*" to Vols I to VI.)

### 1 *History of IL*

In the years of 1965 to 1969 I developed a theoretical framework for dealing with language variability in space and time, concentrating on

variation in time. Lieb (1968a) is an incomplete and preliminary English version of the framework, which was eventually published in German as Lieb (1970a). (References are to the Bibliography of Integrational Linguistics in Vol. I of *IL*, or to the List of References of Vol. I.)

The 1970 framework was explicitly conceived as a contribution to a theory of language *not* a theory of grammars. In 1970 I started work on a theory of *grammars* that rejects a conception of grammars as algorithms; instead, grammars are construed as empirical axiomatic theories. This conception is worked out in detail in Lieb (1974b), (1976b). It is applied to theoretical problems of research on language universals in (1975a), (1978a), and to problems of contrastive linguistics in (1980k).

The 1970 framework for language variability does not include a theory of language *systems*; the traditional core of general linguistics was deliberately left for later treatment. The typical 'modern' approach to variation was reversed in my own work: Instead of starting from an 'abstract' language system that must then be related to linguistic reality, I first developed a framework for language variability that was then presupposed in a theory of language systems.

In 1972 I began work on a general syntax as part of a theory of language *systems*; again, a theory of language systems is understood as part of a theory of language not a theory of grammars. A first draft, written in 1972, was published as a working paper in 1975 (Lieb (1975b)). Using German for initial orientation I proposed a surface syntax that assigns a key role to word paradigms, intonation, and grammatical relations.

In 1972 I also initiated a research group on Theory of Language and Theory of Grammars (with Applications to German) at the Freie Universität Berlin, which formally completed its work in 1982. It consisted of three to five members at any given time; sixteen people plus a number of students participated during its ten-year official existence.

From the very beginning the group concentrated on two correlated problem areas: (i) questions of a theory of language systems, (ii) empirical problems in the description of Modern German. In both areas my 1972 paper served as a starting-point.

Subsequent work by Lieb, Eisenberg, Fischer, Hartmann, Lutzeier, Wiese, and others continued to emphasize syntax and semantics, both in general and with special reference to German (see the Bibliography of Integrational Linguistics). There is a large amount of agreement among these authors with respect to syntax; what is eventually adopted, is a much improved version of the Lieb (1975*b*) framework. Semantic conceptions show a greater amount of diversity. *IL* contains my own version of the syntactic theory in its most recent form (with considerable improvements on previous formulations) and presents a general morphology and a general semantics for which I take sole responsibility. A first sketch of my morphological and semantic theories is contained in Lieb (1976*b*); they have been steadily refined over the past seven years. More recently I have concentrated on the study of intonation; this is also a current research interest of other members of the group.

By 1977 a sizable body of research had accumulated for which a characteristic label seemed to be helpful. For reasons to be explained below (Sec. 0.1) the term "integrational linguistics" appeared to be appropriate. It was formally introduced in Lieb (1977*c*).

## *2 Reception of IL*

There are three major areas on which work in IL has concentrated so far:

- (i) a theory of language variability in time;
- (ii) a theory of grammars construed as empirical axiomatic theories;
- (iii) a general syntax and semantics understood as parts of a theory of language not a theory of grammars.

It should be correct to say that my own work in (i) and (ii) has been largely ignored. Lieb (1968*a*) was rejected as irrelevant by King (1972), and Lieb (1970*a*) was extensively reviewed only by Heger (1971) and Schnelle (1974). There have been few reactions to Lieb (1974*b*), (1976*b*). As usual, part of the blame may rest with the author. Some factors are, however, clearly historical.

Lieb (1968*a*), (1970*a*) deals with language variability within a

*theory* of language at roughly the time when Labov and others were beginning to establish the sociolinguistic paradigm of variation studies. It is well-known that Labov tended to belittle the role of theory as opposed to the importance of *empirical method*.

For obvious reasons Lieb (1968a), (1970a) is incompatible with the generative orthodoxy of the time: It deals with language *variability*, and it does so within a theory of *language* rather than indirectly through a theory of *grammars* - a distinction that was unacceptable anyway in generative quarters.

My theory of grammars (1974b), (1976b) again appeared at the wrong time. Interest in formal aspects of grammars had waned drastically in generative grammar; and formally-inclined linguists were getting increasingly fascinated by another new-comer, or rather, late starter, Montague grammar. This situation has been basically unchanged ever since.

It might have been expected that a theory of grammars conceived as axiomatic theories would meet with some interest in the philosophy of science. My conception of axiomatic theories considerably modifies the received, Carnapian view of axiomatic theories that was prevalent in the philosophy of science in the sixties. In the seventies, however, the conception proposed by Sneed (1971) for axiomatic theories in physics was being propagated by influential philosophers (Stegmüller (1973)) as a true alternative to the received view and applied as such even in the theory of literature (Göttner and Jacobs (1978)) and in linguistics (Finke (1979)). Sneed's conception remedies various shortcomings of the Carnapian view just as my own does (and in partly similar ways). It can hardly be set up as an alternative incompatible with a Carnapian conception. Still, preoccupation with the 'new' view may have been sufficient to block reception of a proposal that looked too much like the 'old'.

Despite historical and other obstacles to the reception of IL, some of its tenets are slowly gaining recognition. This holds, in particular, of the claim that a theory of language must be sharply distinguished from a theory of grammars and that the latter should be related to the former in a specific way (Oesterreicher (1975), (1979), Christie (1980), Bartsch and Vennemann (1982), Vennemann and Jacobs (1982)). The conception

of grammars as axiomatic theories of a specific type is also beginning to be received (Vennemann (1978:212), (1982:240)).

The third major area on which work in IL has concentrated so far is syntax and semantics. Most of this work is too recent to have made an impact. I am hopeful that the *IL* volumes may help to change this situation.

### 3 Contents of Volumes I to VI

The six volumes are based on research that spans a period of eighteen years; they summarize, present, and refine the results of an approach that I have been developing since 1965.

Of the three areas (i) to (iii) that were distinguished at the beginning of Sec. 2, the theory of language variability is briefly summarized and discussed in Part A of Vol. I. This theory underlies my subsequent work both in the theory of grammars and the theory of language (areas (ii) and (iii)) that is directly documented in the six *IL* volumes. Vol. I contains a general outline of the overall approach. Vol. II develops a *theory of grammars*; this is applied in Vol. III. Vols IV to VI present an extended fragment of a *theory of language*, more specifically, of a theory of language *systems*.

VOLUME I: GENERAL OUTLINE. This volume contains a detailed overview of Integrational Linguistics and serves as an introduction to Vols II to VI, which as a rule are more technical. Vol. I outlines a major fragment of a theory of language systems (Parts B to F: a general syntax, morphology, morphosemantics, lexical semantics, and syntactic semantics) that is presented in greater detail in Vols IV to VI. In addition, Part G of Vol. I characterizes the theory of grammars that is formally developed in Vol. II and applied in three theoretical studies in Vol. III of *Integrational Linguistics*.

VOLUME II: A THEORY OF GRAMMARS. This volume contains a theory of scientific grammars by which a grammar is an axiomatic theory in a sense that applies to empirical disciplines. The form of axiomatic grammars is characterized in detail, and their adequacy, their advantages, and their relations to grammars of other types, in particular generative grammars,

are investigated. Grammars are taken to be 'formulated in terms of' a presupposed theory of language (or linguistic communication). This is made more concrete by presupposing a theory of language that consists of (i) the theory of language variability proposed in Lieb (1970<sub>a</sub>) and (ii) a preliminary version of the theory of language systems developed in Vols IV to VI of *IL*.

Volume II essentially consists of Lieb (1974<sub>b</sub>), (1976<sub>b</sub>); the theory of grammars is here published for the first time as a coherent whole and in a single place. A general introduction relates the theory to recent developments in the philosophy of science.

VOLUME III: LANGUAGE UNIVERSALS AND LANGUAGE CONTRAST. This volume investigates the concept of language universal, making use of the conception of grammars developed in Vol. II, and studies the role of language universals in linguistic explanations. A 'pragmatic' concept of language universal is proposed that is relativized to requirements made by the researcher. Various foundational problems of contrastive analysis are clarified by means of the theory of grammars of Vol. II.

Volume III contains three studies (Lieb (1975<sub>a</sub>), (1978<sub>a</sub>), (1980<sub>k</sub>)) that were intended to form a sequence but are here published jointly for the first time.

VOLUME IV: SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS. This volume presents the syntactic part of the theory of language, and its semantic part to the extent that it deals with syntactic meanings, in particular, with sentence meanings.

In the general syntactic theory syntactic structures are construed as surface structures in a strict sense that are largely based on properties of lexical words. A word is understood as a pair that consists of a word paradigm and a concept in a psychological sense. The set of lexical words forms one component of the lexicon (which also has a morphological component); at the same time it is a component of the syntactic subsystem.

Syntactic structures serve as a basis for syntactic relations, or rather, syntactic functions: the nucleus function, *n*-place complement functions, and others. Each function restricted to a linguistic system

has a semantic content, a certain set of semantic functions. The transition from meanings of words that occur in a sentence to meanings of the sentence is achieved by applying semantic functions that belong to the semantic content of relevant syntactic functions.

Sentence meanings are conceived as representations of 'conditions of use': The meanings of a sentence jointly represent a disjunctive condition that must be satisfied by speaker and speech-event in any normal utterance of the sentence. A composition procedure for sentence meanings is characterized that is based on syntactic functions and their semantic content.

VOLUME V: MORPHOLOGY AND MORPHOSEMANTICS. This volume contains the morphological part of the theory of language, and its semantic part to the extent that it deals with word-form internal meaning composition.

Word-form structures and other morphological structures are construed as surface structures that are largely based on properties of 'lexemes', i.e. stems and affixes. A lexeme is understood as a pair that consists of a morphological paradigm and a concept in a psychological sense (the 'empty concept' in case of an affix paradigm). The set of lexemes forms the morphological part of the lexicon (whose first component is the set of lexical words); at the same time the set of lexemes is a component of the morphological subsystem.

Morphological structures serve as a basis for morphological relations, or rather, morphological functions: the morphological nucleus function,  $n$ -place complement functions, and others. Each function restricted to a linguistic system has a semantic content, a certain set of morphosemantic functions. Given meanings of a word form that can be derived compositionally, the meanings are derived from meanings of lexemes that occur in the word form by applying semantic functions that belong to the semantic content of relevant morphological functions.

All morphological meanings are construed as concepts in a psychological sense. A composition procedure for meanings of stem forms and word forms is characterized that is based on morphological functions and their semantic content.



VOLUME VI: LEXICAL SEMANTICS. This volume presents the theory of lexical meanings that is part of the theory of language. Lexical meanings are the morphological meanings and the meanings of lexical words and their forms. All lexical meanings are construed as concepts in a psychological sense. This conception is made precise and defended against well-known objections. It is argued that the conceptual view of lexical meanings can deal with the traditional problems of lexical semantics: lexical fields, semantic relations between words, vagueness, and others.

#### 4 *Concluding remarks*

The *IL* volumes do not completely represent all IL research for two reasons. First, relevant work by authors other than myself is related to my own conceptions but not discussed in any detail; moreover, no attempt has been made to cover such work systematically beyond inclusion in the Bibliography of Integrational Linguistics in Vol. I. Second, even my own conceptions are unevenly represented:

- (i) The theory of language variability is characterized only briefly in Part A of Vol. I.
- (ii) Of my work in the theory of linguistics (i.e. in that branch of the philosophy of science whose domain is linguistics as a discipline), my theory of grammars, which belongs to the theory of *linguistic description*, and its offshoots are included (Vols II and III). On the other hand work on linguistic method (Lieb (1980*j*), (forthc.*e*)), on the status of linguistics as a scientific discipline (Lieb (1976*e*)), and on its relation to other disciplines (Lieb (1976*a*)) is not represented.

I would like to conclude this Preface by every author's wish for at least some readers who are knowledgeable, unprejudiced, and sufficiently interested to discover flaws and shortcomings that the author failed to notice. (Any civilians among my readers are referred to Slawkenbergius.)

Hans-Heinrich Lieb