

Preface and acknowledgements

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Linguistics and Pseudo-Linguistics

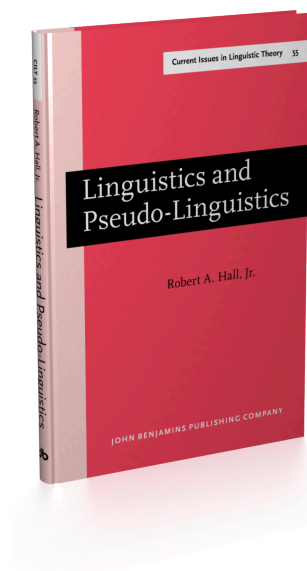
Robert A. Hall, Jr.

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although the intellectual impulse behind the transformational-generative grammar (TGG) movement of the 1960's and 1970's is by now largely spent, the use of TGG as a weapon in academic power-politics is unfortunately still wide-spread. The same is true of the (not unrelated) "deconstructionist" movement in literary criticism. It is, therefore, still appropriate to present, as energetically as possible, the case against TGG and "deconstructionism," to expose the harm they have done to linguistics and to literary criticism, respectively.

With this aim in mind, I have therefore gathered in this volume twelve of my essays, published between 1965 and 1985. The first ten contain animadversions on various aspects of TGG; the last two, on Derridian deconstructionism, especially insofar as it is based on an erroneous and untenable conception of language. I hope that the considerations presented in these articles and book-reviews will persuade the reader to look on both of these approaches with a critical eye.

I have left the essays pretty much as they were written, with only a few additions (mostly to mention significant later developments) and a few rectifications of errors. In one or two instances, there are minor typographical discrepancies between articles (e.g. in the use of single or double quotation-marks). There are some repetitions from one article to the next (e.g., in my definitions of theology, science, and religion), which I have not excised, since most users will probably be referring to the essays separately, rather than treating them as a continuous span for reading at a single sitting. All the references, however, have been gathered together in one listing at the end of the volume.

For permission to reprint these articles and reviews, I am indebted to the editors and publishers of the various journals as indicated under each title.

Ithaca, N.Y.
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R.A.H. jr.