

Foreword

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Prospects for a New Structuralism

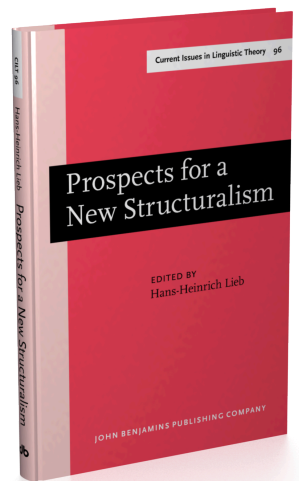
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Foreword

The beginnings of this book go back to the Fourteenth International Congress of Linguists, held in Berlin in 1987, in what was then the German Democratic Republic. At the time I organized an official Round Table, already under the title of the present book. A brief report on the Round Table has since appeared in the Congress Proceedings.¹

Some of the papers in this volume (Sgall, Heger, Bańczerowski et al., Wurzel) go back to contributions submitted to the Round Table but only one (Heger) is virtually unchanged. Three others (Carr, Seiler, Lass) were solicited after the Congress, and the remaining two (by Lieb) are also entirely new (the second Lieb paper replaces a Round Table contribution).

This book has been a long time coming, for reasons that were largely beyond the editor's control:

- (i) From the very beginning, this was not to be another collection of round-table papers but an exploration of a new position in linguistics. The philosophical issues raised were to be studied from different angles by different authors, and current linguistic frameworks were to be checked against the position by leading representatives. Securing cooperation on such a project proved to be much more time-consuming than I had suspected. I had eventually to accept that four authors who had been seriously interested were unable to contribute, each for a good reason:
 - Jerrold J. Katz, of the City University of New York, whose paper would have been an asset to Section I: Philosophical Issues

¹ Lieb, Hans-Heinrich. 1990. "Rundtisch/Round Table 12. Prospects for a New Structuralism". In: Werner Bahner, Joachim Schildt, and Dieter Viehweger (eds). *Proceedings of the Fourteenth International Congress of Linguists, Berlin/GDR, August 10 – August 15, 1987*. Vol. I. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag. 325-328.

- (however, Katz and Postal² may now be read in conjunction with Section I);
- Hans Uszkoreit (Universität Saarbrücken), who at the Berlin Round Table had read a paper on “The status of linguistic objects in GPSG and other Unification Grammars” but who was unable to submit a final version for inclusion in Section II: Frameworks;
 - Jacek Fisiak of the University of Poznań and Rolf Haberbeck of Siemens Nixdorf, who could not contribute their papers on, respectively, “Structuralism and applied linguistics” and “Structuralism and technology”.
- (ii) In 1989 the Berlin Wall came down; in 1990 West Berlin and East Berlin were once again a single city in a united Germany. Since, academic institutions in both parts of Berlin have been subject to dramatic reorganization (in some cases, dissolution); linguistics at my own university, the Freie Universität of West Berlin, was also affected. As a result, I was stopped short in my scientific endeavours.

While it is a loss that some of the papers did not materialize, the delay in publication is hardly a disadvantage: the foundational issues raised in this book have become much more pronounced in the meantime by Carr’s³ and Katz and Postal’s independent pleas for realism on the one hand and by the ‘connectionist’ challenge to recent cognitivism on the other, which may give the book a more interested readership. Still, I am sincerely grateful to the contributors, to the series editor, and to the publisher for their patience.

Berlin, Germany, June 1992

Hans-Heinrich Lieb

² Katz, Jerrold J., and Paul M. Postal. 1991. “Realism vs. conceptualism in linguistics”. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 14.515-554.

³ Carr, Philip. 1990. *Linguistic Realities*. An Autonomous Metatheory for the Generative Enterprise. Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press. (Cambridge Studies in Linguistics 53).