

Rezensionen

Advances in Role and Reference Grammar, (Current issues in linguistic theory 82), ed. by ROBERT D. VAN VALIN, Jr, John Benjamins Publishing C., Amsterdam/Philadelphia 1993, 569 pp.

Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) was first introduced in VAN VALIN and FOLEY 1980 and further developed and fully expounded in FOLEY and VAN VALIN 1984 (hereafter FSUG). The theory presented there in terms of some of the details of the theory and in terms of the number of aspects of grammar the theory encompasses. The book is divided into two parts. The first part is a 164 page synopsis of RRG written by VAN VALIN. The second part is comprised of 10 papers by different authors that either demonstrate how the theory can lead to better understanding of specific problems in the analysis of individual languages, or were influential in the development of the present version of the theory. None of these papers appeared in print previous to this in their present form, though a few appeared in earlier, less polished forms in *Davis Working Papers in Linguistics*. The papers by CUTRER, NUNES, and JOLLY are condensed versions of MA theses. There are topic and language indexes, and a short introduction by the editor.

RRG is said to be a "structural-functionalist" theory of grammar, in that it assumes that "grammatical structure can only be understood and explained with reference to its semantic and communicative function" (p. 2), yet unlike some of the more radical functional approaches assumes that the grammar of a language does constitute a structural system in the Saussurean sense. It is a monostratal theory of grammar, though there are different representations for semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic aspects of grammar. The syntactic representation of the clause divides the clause into the nucleus (the predicate), the core (the nucleus and its arguments), and the clause (the core plus the periphery, i.e. temporal and locative adjuncts, etc.). Modifying these layers are operators with scope over the nucleus (aspect), the core (directionals, modality, negation), and the clause (status, tense, evidentials, illocutionary force). These layers can be joined together in different ways in complex sentences. RRG assumes three types of nexus relation, based on whether the non-matrix clause is embedded (subordination), or, if not embedded, if it is dependent (cosubordination) or not (coordination). The combination of the three levels and the three types of nexus give nine different juncture-nexus types, the strongest being nuclear cosubordination and the weakest being clausal coordination. The order of these juncture-nexus types in terms of strength corresponds iconically with the tightness of the semantic linking between the two propositions involved. This correspondence is represented as the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy in RRG, and figures prominently in discussions of the marking of clause juncture.

The semantic representation is a system of lexical decomposition (based on DOWTY 1979) of verbs into states, ACTIVITIES, achievements, and accomplishments, with the latter two being built on the former two plus BECOME and CAUSE operators respectively. Thematic roles are assigned on the basis of the type of verb and position in the semantic structure. As there are tests for the types of verb, the assignment of thematic roles is independently motivated, and not done arbitrarily as in other theories. At a higher level of analysis that interfaces with the syntactic representation, differences between thematic roles are neutralized, resulting in the macroroles ACTOR and UNDERGOER, prototypically the agent and patient in a transitive relation. These universal macroroles then link up to language specific syntactic functions. RRG does not posit the grammatical relations 'subject' and 'object', only the construction-specific pivot (pragmatic or semantic) and direct vs. core arguments.

One major difference between the theory presented in FSUG and the one presented in the Synopsis is the inclusion of an information structure projection into the formalism, based on the theory of information structure developed by KNUD LAMBRECHT (1986, 1994). In the Synopsis VAN VALIN shows

how information structure influences syntactic structure, and argues that the concept of Verb Phrase (which is not posited in RRG as it is not universal) is simply a grammaticalization of unmarked information structure. Though not discussed in the Synopsis, VAN VALIN also shows elsewhere (1990a) how information structure (as well as GRICEAN inference) is important to understanding anaphoric phenomena, and in fact obviates the need for any type of syntactic rules of coreference involving c-command, etc.

While the Synopsis is now to be taken as the standard form of the theory, those interested in the motivations for the development of the theory and more detailed explications of some aspects of the theory might still want to read at least some of the chapters of FSUG (particularly Chs. 1, 2, & 4), and VAN VALIN 1987, which is a revision of Ch. 7 of FSUG.

I have often used the RRG approach in my own work on Sino-Tibetan morphosyntax (e.g. LAPOLLA 1993), and find it very helpful for understanding language structure. RRG was not developed on the basis of English, but rather on 'exotic' languages such as Lakhota, Tagalog, and Dyrbal, so does not assume the universality of features such as VP, 'subject', etc. that may be useful for English but are not reflected in all the languages of the world. I have found this aspect, and the fact that thematic role assignment is not arbitrary as in other theories, to be two of the major strong points of RRG.

Of the ten papers in the rest of the book, four deal with clause-internal syntax, essentially case marking, five deal with the syntax of complex sentences and the linking of arguments to semantic representations, and one is a hitherto unpublished 1980 paper by MICHAEL SILVERSTEIN that is not directly about RRG, but was very influential in the development of the RRG conception of case marking and clause linkage.

In *Semantic and syntactic factors in control* (167–196), L. MICHELLE CUTRER discusses the semantic and pragmatic factors involved in the identification of the referential dependence between an overt argument in the matrix clause and an unexpressed argument in the non-matrix clause in a complex biclausal structure. She first compares several theories of control, including that presented in FSUG, showing how the RRG analysis of obligatory control based on verbal semantics, i.e. that causative and direct speech act verbs entail undergoer control while all other verbs entail actor control, accounts for phenomena that cannot be accounted for in a principled way by other theories. She then goes beyond the scope of the FSUG analysis of obligatory control to show how an extension of the RRG analysis which adds certain clause linkage and pragmatic factors can also correctly predict the distribution of arbitrary or non-obligatory control, such as in rationale constructions and indirect questions.

Serial verbs and complement constructions in Mandarin: A clause linkage analysis (197–234), by MARK HANSELL, shows how the RRG typology of juncture and nexus types can account elegantly for all of the different phenomena involved in serial verb and complement constructions in Mandarin Chinese. These two types of construction are initially discussed separately, as the latter have been seen as distinct from serializations in the past, but complement constructions are later shown by HANSELL to be a subtype of serial verb construction, with the semantic differences between the two types corresponding to different degrees of tightness of syntactic linkage. For example, the tightest linkage, nuclear cosubordination, expresses direct causality in the Complement of Result construction, while the loosest linkage, clausal coordination, expresses a sequence of unrelated actions in the juxtaposition type serial verb construction. The analysis here gives a unified account of the various phenomena of serial verb constructions in Mandarin, and at the same time the Mandarin data lend support to the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy of RRG, which predicts that tighter linkage between two syntactic units should be correlated with tighter semantic relations between the two propositions expressed.

Juncture and nexus are also the focus of the following paper, *Subordination and cosubordination in Nootka: Clause combining in a polysynthetic language* (235–274), by WILLIAM H. JACOBSEN, JR. This paper is a detailed study of seven Nootka texts, including discussion and text counts of types of clause and number of juncture and nexus types. The findings highlight the importance of the nexus type COSUBORDINATION posited by RRG, as this type of nexus commonly occurs at all three levels of juncture in Nootka, while subordination occurs only at the core and clause level, and coordination occurs only at the clause level.

Unlike in most theories of grammar, where preposition assignment is arbitrary and so the preposition(s) a verb takes must be listed in the lexical entry for each verb, RRG assumes there are systematic principles for predicting the preposition(s) a verb takes based on the independently derived semantic structure of the verb. In *Preposition assignment in English* (275–310), JULIA A. JOLLY goes beyond the brief discussion of this aspect of the theory in FSUG to cover a broad range of data and prepositions. JOLLY gives a three-way classification of prepositions by function: non-predicative prepositions, prepo-

sitions which mark arguments that are not in the logical structure (LS; i.e. the semantic representation) of the verb yet share an argument with the verb, and predicative prepositions, which are said to take the entire LS of the main verb as an argument. The rules for predicting the form that the preposition will take in English from the semantic representation are as follows: Given an argument that is the first argument (i.e. is the experiencer or locative argument) of a two place stative verb that is embedded under the BECOME operator (as in achievement and accomplishment LS's), and that argument is not the Undergoer, then that argument will be marked by *to*, as in (1) (based on JOLLY's (29), p. 285):

- (1) *Rita walked to the store.*
[walk' (Rita)] CAUSE [BECOME **be-at'** (store, Rita)]

If the non-macrorole argument is the second argument (i.e. the theme) of a two place stative verb embedded under the BECOME operator, then it will be marked by *with*. This covers both the instrumental and accompaniment meanings of *with*. Given an argument that is the first argument of a two place stative verb that is embedded under the BECOME NOT operator, and that argument is not the Undergoer, then that argument will be marked by *from*, as in (2) (p. 292):

- (2) *John took the book from Bill.*
[do' (John)] CAUSE [[BECOME NOT **have'** (Bill, book)] & BECOME **have'** (John, book)]

If the non-macrorole argument is the second argument (i.e. the theme) of a two place stative verb embedded under the BECOME NOT operator, then it will be marked by *of*. These are all non-predicative uses. Predicative *with* has the same function as the non-predicative *with*, that of marking non-macrorole themes, but involves the addition of an argument (which in this case is an effector-theme). This is represented by the addition of the predicate **use'** in the LS:

- (3) *Greta fought the dragon with the sword.*
[DO (Greta, **fight'** (Greta, dragon))] & [**use'** (Greta, sword)]

Predicative *from* and predicative and non-predicative *for* are also dealt with, though I will not give the specifics here for lack of space. JOLLY deals only with English, but what makes this analysis satisfying to me is that it reflects the facts of other languages just as easily. For example, in Sino-Tibetan languages there is wide-spread isomorphy of agentive, instrumental, and ablative marking, and also of locative and dative marking, and these patterns follow naturally from the analysis given here. In Chinese the verb for *to use* is used for adding an instrumental argument, much like in the semantic representation of predicative *with* in English, and the verb *to give* is used for adding a benefactive argument, much as the LS of a sentence involving benefactive *for* in English involves the same LS as that for *give* (see p. 303–304).

On deviant case-marking in Latin (311–374), by LAURA A. MICHAELIS, deals with the problem of so-called 'quirky' case marking in Latin, where subjects are marked with the genitive case instead of the nominative case and direct objects are marked with genitive, dative, or ablative case instead of the usual accusative case. It is shown that the facts of Latin case marking follow from the RRG view of transitivity and case marking. Transitivity is determined in RRG by the number of macroroles, not the number of direct verbal arguments, and in the case of these Latin verbs there are two direct arguments, but less than two macroroles. In the RRG analysis of case marking, non-macrorole direct arguments are given the dative case by default. In the case of genitive and ablative objects, there is a marked linking of the locative argument to undergoer status (and accusative marking), and the theme then takes ablative or (less commonly) genitive marking. Those impersonal verbs that have a single direct core argument but no macrorole assignment mark that argument with the genitive case, resulting in genitive 'subjects'. This account not only handles all of the data discussed using only the default case assignment rules plus one rule for the coding of marked linkage, predicting the type of marking the arguments of a verb will have based on the logical structure of the verb, it also predicts that dative marked objects will be more common than genitive or ablative marked objects, as the former is due to the unmarked default case assignment while the latter two are due to a marked type of linking.

Argument linking in English derived nominals (375–432), by MARY L. NUNES deals with the structure of English nominals derived from verbal expressions, a topic not dealt with in FSUG. She shows that the assignment of prepositions within the NP can be predicted on the basis of the semantic repre-

sentation of the verb. The concepts of the layered structure of the clause, the assignment of macroroles, and the linking algorithm are all applied to the analysis of the noun phrase. An interesting difference between the clause and the NP is that NPs are inherently intransitive due to the fact that there is never more than one direct core argument in the NP. This argument is the one that in English appears after the nominalized verb and is marked with *of*. When the verb is a two-macrorole state, achievement, or accomplishment verb, the argument that fills the direct argument slot of the NP is the one that is the Undergoer in the finite clause. The NP then patterns ergatively rather than accusatively (i.e. selects the Undergoer rather than the Actor as the direct argument), even in an accusative language such as English. RRG differs from most of the other theories of grammar in not assuming an exact structural parallel between the clause and the NP, and so does not impose clausal grammatical relations on the NP. Because of this, it does not need to take the double genitive of English (e.g. *the enemy's destruction of the city*) as basic or universal the way other theories do. The prehead genitive in English is instead treated as a topic expression, and so appears in what is called the LEFT DETACHED POSITION of the NP, which in finite sentences is outside the clause. As many of the ad hoc stipulations of other theories are due to trying to reconcile grammatical relations to the facts of the NP, and as the bases for the RRG analysis (the assignment of thematic roles and the linking of thematic roles to macroroles) are independently motivated, the RRG analysis is much more rigorous and faithful to the typological data.

In FSUG, attribute and identificational constructions were treated as one-place predicates, though in *On the syntactic and semantic alignment of attributive and identificational constructions* (433–464) LINDA SCHWARTZ argues that they should be analyzed as two-place intransitive predicates because of their behavior cross-linguistically. She considers two possible analyses, one with the subject as theme and the attribute/identification-set as location, and one with the roles reversed, and uses data on the behavior of these constructions as 'unaccusatives' or 'unergatives' in five different languages to argue for the latter analysis. The discussion here also lends support to the RRG arguments (e.g. CENTINEO 1986, VAN VALIN 1990b) that split intransitivity is a language specific and construction specific phenomenon, and it is the logical structure of the syntactic construction that determines its nature as 'unaccusative' or 'unergative'. While the analysis is convincing for the languages considered, only languages that have either no copula at all or use a copula for both attributives and identificationals were considered. That is, no languages that use a copula for nominal predication but no copula for attributives were considered. It would seem in these languages (e.g. Chinese) that the LS of the attributives is the same as that for the other stative verbs (i.e. [**predicate'** (x)], e.g. [*tall'* (man)]), while the identificationals would be of the type discussed by SCHWARTZ (i.e. [**be'** (x, y)], e.g. [*be'* (man, lawyer)]). This analysis is supported by the fact that in Chinese an attributive can appear with the copula, but only if it is nominalized.

As mentioned above, *Of nominatives and datives: Universal Grammar from the bottom up* (465–498), by MICHAEL SILVERSTEIN, is not a paper in or about RRG, but was influential in the development of the theory of case marking and the theory of clause linkage of RRG. It covers some of the same ground as SILVERSTEIN 1976 and 1981, discussing the determination of case marking as involving at least four semantic-pragmatic domains (inherent lexical content, clause level propositionality, clause-clause logical relations, and discourse reference-maintenance), but discusses case marking as parallel to the differentiation of vowels, color terms, and tense distinctions in terms of requiring a formal-functional hypothesis about the division of categories, with the categories each being represented by foci, members that are of necessity within that category no matter what its range. For example, in a two vowel system we assume a formal-functional hypothesis such that /ə/ and /a/ are foci, though each covers a broad range of phonetic realizations, whereas in a three vowel system the range that /ə/ covers in the two vowel system is evenly split between two foci, /i/ and /u/. In a two-term system of color terms, 'black' and 'white' each cover a broad range of hues, while in a three-term system two terms ('black' and 'red') will split the range that the term 'black' covers alone in the two term system. SILVERSTEIN argues, using data from Dyirbal, Chinook, and English, that the nominative/absolute vs. dative marking opposition is similar to these foci in anchoring the case marking systems of the different possible languages to dimensions of the four semantic-pragmatic domains mentioned above. SILVERSTEIN argues that "without the anchoring of such a formal-functional hypothesis ... syntax, and indeed all of grammar, merely floats in a sea of speculation and ingenious formal tricks" (p. 497).

ROBERT D. VAN VALIN, JR. & DAVID P. WILKINS, in *Predicting syntactic structure from semantic representations: Remember in English and its equivalents in Mparntwe Arrernte* (499–534), argue that given the RRG conception of the semantic representation of the verb and its complements, it is possible to predict the form that the complement of a particular verb will take. The basic concept is that already

established with the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy, that the tighter the semantic connection between two clauses, the tighter the semantic linking of the two clauses, and the greater the deformation of the dependent clause (vis-à-vis an unmarked main clause), will be. In the case of English *remember*, the three different complement types are cognition (*that*), psych-action (*to*) and direct perception (*-ing*) complements. The differences among these three are a function of the nature of the thing remembered. Semantic redundancy rules based on the nature of the thing remembered then link the decomposed semantic representation to the semantic type of complement, which is then linked via the IRH to the syntactic type of complement. The paper also compares English *remember* with the different verbs in Mparntwe Arrernte that cover the same semantic range.

The analysis of Turkish adverbials and clause structure presented by JAMES K. WATTERS in *An investigation of Turkish clause linkage* (535–560) discusses each of the different types of clause juncture in Turkish and how the markings used for the different types of juncture correlate with the typology of juncture types given in FSUG. While in general the Turkish data conform the predictions of FSUG, they show that peripheral constituents are not subject to the same restrictions in sub-clausal junctures as clausal operators, and this discovery led to the revised version of the RRG view of clause structure presented in the Synopsis.

Overall the papers are of a consistently high quality, and hang together well as a volume because of the way they complement each other. I recommend this book to anyone interested in morphosyntactic typology, the semantics-syntax interface, or grammatical theory in general. Rather than reading the papers in the order in which they appear in the book, though, I would suggest reading SILVERSTEIN'S paper first,¹ then the Synopsis, then all the papers on case marking, and finally those on clause linkage, including the paper by VAN VALIN and WILKINS, which is probably best read last.

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¹ A small caveat: SILVERSTEIN'S prose is at times difficult to get through, though the paper is well worth the extra effort. VAN VALIN'S style, and that of most of the other papers, is quite accessible.