

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

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**From the Selected Works of Emmon W. Bach**

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**Review of Peter Hartmann, *Syntax und Bedeutung*, Van Gorcum, Assen, 1964:**

Emmon W Bach



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**Syntax und Bedeutung:** erster Teil, die syntaktische Bedeutungsmatrix. Von Dr. PETER HARTMANN. Pp. viii, 272. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1964.

Reviewed by EMMON BACH, *University of Texas*

In one of Christian Morgenstern's poems, Korf (his ubiquitous protagonist) invents a pair of spectacles which condense texts to manageable proportions, for Korf is repelled by 'all des zwölfmal unerbetnen / Ausgewalzten, Breitgetreten'. The poem ends

Beispielweise dies Gedicht  
läse, so bebrillt, man—nicht!  
Dreiunddreissig seinesgleichen  
gäben erst—Ein—Fragezeichen!!

The reader of Peter Hartmann's voluminous works (note that the work under review is Part I) might wish for such a device. I give a few random passages together with a view through Korf's glasses:

In der Sprache wird syntagiert und muss syntagiert werden, weil—d.h. allein deswegen, weil—in allen Sprachen ein Art *informatives Arsenal* bereitsteht und mittels dieses Arsenal's Aussage-, Ausdrucks- und INFORMATIONSVOLUMINA sprachlich vergegenwärtigt werden können und sollen, die—aus welchem Grund und in welcher speziellen Form immer *mehr als ein* Sprachzeichenelement erfordern (6).

There are no languages which restrict the length of sentences to one morpheme (or word), BECAUSE there are always things to say that demand more than one element for their expression.

Da sowohl Stückelemente verschiedene *Ausdehnung* haben, Gruppen verschieden grossen *Umfang* durch verschieden viele Faktoren erhalten, und ausserdem das Formative in den Gruppen nach *Wertigkeit* (Leerstellen) verschieden sein kann, ist innerhalb eines Ganzen mit ebensoviel Sorten von Umfang, Ausdehnung, oder Erstreckung zu rechnen wie Sorten unter den zum Ganzen integrierenden Elementen anerkannt werden (146).

Since a construction can vary according to the type and number of its constituents, it can be expected to have the internal structure that it has.

Die Verwandtschaft, d.h. die basisbedingte *Materialidentität* mit der Sprache als solcher bringt es mit sich, dass die Einheiten und Verfahren der literarisierten (poetisierten) Sprache weithin mit denen der Normalsprache zusammenfallen: was ihre Besonderheit im Rahmen der neuen, höheren Verwendung nicht beeinträchtigt. Denn diese besteht in einer neuen 'künstlichen' *Wertigkeit* der überhaupt verwendeten Elemente (105).

Since literary language is LANGUAGE, its elements and combinations are identical to those of ordinary language; but since it is LITERARY language, these elements can play a role in a nonlinguistic esthetic structure.

Die in Form von (in/als) Zeichenkomplexionen auftretenden Sprachelemente ergeben eine verstehbare Mitteilung bzw. tragen dazu dadurch bei, dass sie in ZUSAMMENVORKOMMEN mit mehreren Informationsbasen eine Stelle erhalten. Sie stehen unter, zwischen anderen, ebenfalls semantischen, in Verstehen überführbaren (Teil-) Einheiten. Verstehbarsein in einem bestimmten Sinn, Ergeben oder Mitteilen einer bestimmten Information, "Haben einer Bedeutung" usw. kommen nur so vor, dass Einzelnennwerte (Sememe) unter anderen erscheinen [Anm. 11], sodass Einzelwerte stets matrixgebunden sind (7).

The meanings of the elements in an utterance are interdependent.

The book consists of an introduction, a series of comparisons between (among, with) language and other systems of 'geregelte Kombinatorik' from music to literature, and a long section on the syntax of language proper. A final chapter is devoted to three writers on syntax (Franz Schmidt, Manfred Sandmann, André Martinet). One might suspect that Hartmann is perpetrating a supreme irony in showing by example the falsity of his thesis that the purpose of syntax is to provide a matrix for meaning. The examples given above are not untypical. After one has peeled away the extra verbiage, what remains is either completely trivial or so vague as to defy either assent or attack. I recommend the book for students who need to be encouraged out of linguistics.

**Approaches in linguistic methodology.** Edited by IRMENGARD RAUCH and CHARLES T. SCOTT. Pp. x, 157. Madison, Milwaukee, and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967. \$6.00.

Reviewed by JAMES PETER THORNE, *University of Edinburgh*

This is a collection of thirteen papers on unrelated topics by thirteen authors, all of whom at the time of writing these papers were members of the Linguistic Circle of Madison. The editors, however, go to great lengths to claim a more significant connection among them. 'The impetus for this volume', they tell us, 'is the strong sense of concern felt by the contributors over the decline of objectivity in linguistic description. While receptive to the constructive theorizing of any school, the contributors are wary of the stifling effect which, in the long run, would result from the claim to exclusive generality made by any one methodology' (vii). It soon turns out that the methodology whose claim for exclusive generality the contributors are most wary of being stifled by is generative grammar. Interest in generative grammars, we are informed, has led to 'a noticeable disdain of "mere facts"' (4). And we are further informed (without being given references) that 'a certain amount of unpardonable inaccuracy has accompanied some recent examples of generative statement' (4). The present volume, the editors assure us, is intended to correct this tendency, 'to impress upon students of linguistics the crucial importance, in linguistic description, of judgments objectively formed and objectively maintained' (vii).

This pretentious introduction is doubly unfortunate because it leads one to