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Chien-ching Mo, **Lithuanian Syntax: A Case Grammar Description,**

The Liberal Arts Press, P.O. Box 7-99, Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, 1981. (300 pages).

There are very few books dealing with questions of Lithuanian syntax, if one does not count prescriptive and normative school grammars written for the Lithuanian schools. Dr. Mo's book is a pioneering book: for the first time, the Lithuanian language, primarily the spoken language, is analyzed from the point of view of the case grammar. The most important proponent of case grammar is Professor Charles J. Fillmore, particularly since his article "The case for case" was published in the book **Universals in Linguistic Theory** (1968).

At that time, many linguists were interested in finding some features of various languages which could be considered universal. One promising area was the analysis of case. By the way, to forewarn the uninitiated: case grammar does not deal with the so-called surface cases, such as the nominative, genitive, accusative, etc. They are interested in the cases in the deep structure of the language. Just to give a simple example. Let us look at the following three sentences:

1. The key opened the door.
2. John opened the door with the key.
3. John used the key to open the door.

Now, on the surface, 'the key' in the first sentence is the subject, thus, nominative, using the classical analysis. In sentence #2, 'the key' is the object of the preposition 'with', and in sentence #3, 'the key' is the direct object, thus, accusative. But the adherents of case grammar approach will consider all these occurences of the noun 'the key' as being the Instrumental (case) because the speaker wanted, primarily, to indicate HOW, with what kind of a tool, the door was opened. In the article we have already mentioned, Fillmore says,

"The case notions comprise a set of universal, presumably innate, concepts which identify certain types of judgments human beings are capable of making about the events that are going on around them, judgments about such matters as who did it, who it happened to, and what got changed. The cases that appear to be needed include:

Agentive (A), the case of the typically animate perceived instigator of the action identified by the verb.

Instrumental (I), the case of the inanimate force or object causally involved in the action of state identified by the verb.

Dative (D), the case of the animate being affected by the state or action identified by the verb.

Factitive (f), the case of the object or being resulting from the action or state identified by the verb, or understood as a part of the meaning of the verb.

Locative (L), the case which identifies the location or spatial orientation of the state or action identified by the verb.

Objective (O), the semantically most neutral case, the case of anything representable by a noun whose role in the action or state identified by the semantic interpretation of the verb itself;" . . . (Charles J. Fillmore,, "The Case for Case", **Universals in Linguistic Theory,** p. 24-25).

In such a way, for example, most of the expressions of certain locality, or location, no matter how expressed, will have to be considered as Locative, although most of the modern languages do not have a special case for that. Thus, the case grammar would consider any of the three usages of 'Minnesota' as being Locative:

1. Minnesota is cold.
2. It is cold in Minnesota.

3. It is cold in the State of Minnesota.

If one reads the quotation again, one will have to observe that the verb is the central semantic and, because of that, the central syntactic part of speech, and the verb has to be analyzed in terms what possible (deep) cases it may govern, or require. And that is what Dr. Mo's book is mainly about: how to classify the various verbs of Lithuanian from this point of view. Although the book goes much further: in order to show how the deep cases are expressed with various syntactic correlations, much of the surface structure description of Lithuanian is also given, except phonological analysis which does not pertain much to the problems discussed in the book.

The book has four basic chapters: 1. Case Grammar Theory and Modifications; 2. The Base Component; 3. A Case Grammar Classification of Lithuanian Verbs; 4. Realization Rules. There is also Bibliography (pp. 276-285) and an Appendix (pp. 286-300) which is really a partial case grammar lexicon of Lithuanian verbs.

Like many of the theoretical approaches to language analysis which aim at analyzing the deep structure of any language, the case grammar theory does not claim a unified approach. In other words, nobody can agree upon some basic problems: how many cases to posit, what are these basic cases, etc. Dr. Mo admits this quite frankly:

"The case theory is hindered by a lack or precise definitions for the deep cases and by the problem of what and how many cases are really relevant to language description", (p. 266).

However, Dr. Mo, for the very first time, uses this approach in analyzing spoken Lithuanian, and finds that this approach can be fruitfully used for Lithuanian. Thus, it is a new and valuable contribution not only to Lithuanian linguistics but also to the general linguistic theory.

We would like to conclude this brief review with Dr. Mo's words:

"As mentioned before, very little material is presently available in Lithuanian within the framework of case grammar. An attempt has been made to describe accurately the data available to me, but I make no claim that the analysis offered here is in any way complete. As there will undoubtedly be other promising avenues for further research and more data will become available, this analysis very likely will be altered — although I hope that the basic assumptions are correct". (p. 275).

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