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A statement from the authors

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This is the first major paper that we have published on a website.

We are both University Research Professors, the highest rank that our University offers (1% of the University's teachers). We are retired but still active (founding) members of the Department of Linguistics at Memorial University, in Eastern Canada. We are both elected Members of the Royal Society of Canada, Canada's most distinguished Learned Society.

Between us we have published some forty volumes, two of them jointly: as follows. These two volumes deal with the grammar of (a) the Verb Phrase and (b) the Noun Phrase in IE languages.

Hewson John and Vit Bubenik..

1997. *Tense and Aspect in Indo-European Languages. Theory Typology, Diachrony.* Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins (403 pp).

2006. *From Case to Adposition. The development of configurational syntax in Indo-European Languages.* Amsterdam & Philadelphia. John Benjamins (419 pp).

Collectively, we have given over 200 scholarly papers to Learned Societies throughout the world, and have also published more than 400 scholarly papers and reviews in Learned Journals.

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The paper we present here has been offered for publication, over the past five years, to three well-known Linguistic journals, one in North America, and two in Europe, and was rejected by all three.

The major problem appears to be a deep-rooted anti-mentalism endemic since Bloomfield 1926: "A set of postulates for the science of language" *Lg* 2:153-64), where we read:

"The totality of utterances that *can be made* in a speech community is the language of that community" (italics added).

No such set exists, however: it is entirely a figment of Bloomfield's imagination. Real world sentences typically belong to a given time and situation, a mental context without which they often make no sense.

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Sentences do not exist BEFORE they are created by a speaker/writer. Direct observation reveals that there MUST be a speaker/writer BEFORE there can be any sentences.

Bloomfield and Chomsky's "set of sentences" is consequently a phantom created by Bloomfield in order to avoid any reference to the mind. Every sentence is, in fact, a new sentence, with its own time and space. *Most normal sentences have no permanence whatever.*

When Chomsky states "... a generative grammar is not a model for a speaker or a hearer" (Chomsky 1965:9), he is eliminating a fundamental linguistic element (speaker/hearer) that is scientifically observable. Eliminate what is directly observable, and you are no longer, alas, in the realm of science. Eliminate the speaker and you automatically eliminate sentences.

In the real world, in fact, languages have no sentences: this is cart-before-the-horse linguistics. It is a matter of simple observation that the speaker must have a language BEFORE any sentences can be made. We learn languages for one simple purpose: to create and understand sentences.

It is also a matter of simple observation that a language has (1) a vocabulary, (2) a grammar (nouns, verbs, adverbs, etc. which provide syntactic relations (see Otto Jespersen 1924, Chapter 9), and a sound system that can, in fact, be accessed by brain-surgeons (see above).

We hope that presenting this paper on a website may lead to a discussion of the *reality* of mental systems. The discussion could start with phonology, with the 319 vowel systems presented long ago by Ian Maddieson (1984) in his book *Patterns of Sound*: 319 mental sets, all of them *reconstructed* from the audible data by linguists. These mental systems have to be reconstructed by proper theoretical method, the very same method that was used 200 years ago in the reconstructions of Proto Indo-European, reconstructed data that is not accessible to direct observation: PIE *p *t *k *kw, for example, where the asterisk asserts the scientific validity of what is not directly observable, but systemically reconstructible

No one ever hears a phoneme: if the sound vibrates on the air waves, it is by definition an allophone, an item *with its own time and space.*

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It is now 70 years since the publications of George Miller and Wilder Penfield mentioned in our Introduction. These two works showed (a) that the measurable Working Memory is the mental background for the activities of speaking and hearing, and (b) that the neurosurgeons have demonstrated the reality of the linguistic areas of the brain, inaccessible to ordinary observation.

Bloomfield, Leonard. 1926. "A set of postulated for a science of language". *Language* 2:153-64.
Chomsky, Noam. 1965. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. MIT Press.
Jespersen, Otto. 1924. *The Philosophy Grammar*. New York: Norton.
Maddieson, Ian. 1984. *Patterns of Sound*. Cambridge University Press.