CHRISTOPHER J. HALL 1992 *Morphology and Mind. A Unified Approach to Explanation in Linguistics.* London: Routledge. 1992. xx, 224 pages.

This book deals with a well-attested empirical tendency in natural languages which is the universal preference for suffixation over prefixation. This interesting cross-linguistic phenomenon is approached from a multidisciplinary and psycholinguistic perspective, and it may be in a way regarded as an excuse to develop and justify an integrated, non-restrictive view of explanation in linguistics.

This review is organised as follows. First, the relevant empirical data are briefly described and Hall's interpretation of the data is presented. Then, the author's conception of the controversial issue of explanation in linguistics is advanced, so that the general explanatory framework in which the data will be embedded is made clear. Finally, the main guiding line in Hall's account -the idea that the human mechanism of language processing plays an important role in the determination of language structure- is developed.

The universal preference for suffixation is represented by data such as those provided by Hawkins and Gilligan (1988). Hall captures this tendency by means of a Suffixing Principle, according to which "Bound morphemes are added to the ends rather than the beginnings of words, with greater than chance frequency" (Hall 1992:48). A related observation in Hawkins and Gilligan is that exclusive suffixing is predominant in head-final languages and exclusive prefixing occurs only in head-initial languages (note that the latter fact, however, does not interfere with the general tendency for suffixation, since, according to the authors, exclusive suffixing is considerably more frequent and besides, many head-initial languages are both prefixing and suffixing). Hawkins and Gilligan's observation leads them to the postulation of a Head Ordering Principle (HOP) which determines that the morphological head (the affix) appears in the same position as the syntactic one. Hall rejects the HOP as he does not accept that affixes are always heads in morphology; he actually examines the notion "head of a word" and decides (on the basis of inflection and some cases of derivation) that the category AFF does not have any inherent property of headship. Nevertheless, the correlation affix/syntactic head remains and Hall seeks to explain it. In this sense, he accepts Givón's idea that affixes arise historically due to the semantic and phonological decay of syntactic heads i.e., they come from free lexical items in head position. What Hall does not accept is Givón's explanation for the suffixing preference i.e., the idea that all languages exhibit head-finality currently or at some past stage, so that affixes arise at that moment and as a result there is a predominance of suffixes. As Hall remarks, there is very little evidence in favour of this claim, for example, the current ratio of head-final to head-initial languages is roughly fifty-fifty.

The tendency towards suffixation gives Hall a good chance to develop a whole theory of explanation. He distinguishes two approaches to the explanation of structural regularities: a formal, linguistic-internal approach (mostly adopted in generative linguistics) and a functional, interactive one (adopted before Chomsky and in general linguistics). The two conceptions are examined and a unified position which emphasises the role of function is defended. Within the formal approach, regularities are explained when they follow from formal universal constraints on the grammar. One important shortcoming of this conception is that it is too restrictive in that it tends to displace, rather than complement, other approaches.

In the functional approach, on the other hand, explanation is provided by a number of parameters, of which the major ones are either psychological or otherwise functional. Whereas the generative tradition claims to be explanatory within

the terms of the descriptive theory employed, functionalists often appeal to psycholinguistic mechanisms and processes as an important source of constraints on language structure i.e., explanation is external to the linguistic theory.

All in all, in his endeavour to adopt a unified position, Hall retains the descriptive dimension of the formal approach but claims that psycholinguistic principles of lexical access and organization ultimately explain the preponderance of suffixes over prefixes in the languages of the world.

The author examines several models of language processing and de cides on the so-called Cohort Model, which claims, among other things, that the recognition of a lexical item by the hearer occurs before the whole word is heard and the point of recognition depends on the extent to which the phonological form of the word is shared by other entries. For example, on hearing the word *trespass*, a pool of competing candidates which share initial acoustic properties (i.e., a "cohort") becomes activated. Thus, on reception of the first *s*, the cohort made up of the words *trespass, trestle* and *tress*, may be generated, and when the *p* is received, the last two will drop out so that a unique item is isolated in the cohort and recognition takes place.

The crucial point is that, as regards complex words, prefixation entails more complexity than suffixation both for representation and recognition, in the case of prefixed words two different processes of generation of possible candidates and subsequent selection are involved, one for the prefix and one for the stem, whereas in the case of suffixation a single process for the stem is enough, since, according to Hall, the suffix does not provoke the generation of a new cohort because the forms responding would be reduced to the suffix itself, and a single member cohort makes no sense. In short, the combination prefix + stem involves a greater cost to the lexical processor and this is why it decides on suffixes rather than prefixes.

On the whole, this book deserves the careful attention of all those whose interests include morphology and mind. It offers an interesting and contentful psycholinguistic program for addressing morphological problems.

References

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R. P. BOTHA, *Challenging Chomsky.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1990. XII + 268 pages.

The title of this book will undoubtedly arouse the interest of two types of readers: those who practising -or simply admiring- Chomskyan linguistics would be eager to see what sort of challenge there might be, wil-ling to confront it as if it were directly aimed at them; and those who being involved in different linguistic frame-works would be delighted to find in a book something they have at some time or other reflected upon. Obviously, the first group will anticipate the evident superiority of the *Master's* theories (to use Botha's own term) and the others will be willing to applaud the critics' comments as clearly more convincing. The two groups will get their part, it must be said, because this book achieves an admirable balance in presenting the strongest and the weakest aspects of Chomsky's viewpoint. Moreover, the style which Botha has chosen -presenting a confrontation in the context of a game being played in different fields- makes his work both amusing and appealing, without hiding