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Reviewed by Maria Kok

## 1 Introduction

*Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* ('Turns and concepts') provides Finnish-speaking readers with a collection of articles that deal with linguistic paradigms, paradigm changes, terminology, and concepts. Linguistic theories, fields, and methods presented in *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* comprise e.g. language acquisition research, dialectology in Finland, language research and the reception of linguistic theories in the Soviet Union, semantics and semiotics, sign language research, Cognitive Grammar, and Construction Grammar. Rather than a systematic introduction to this broad spectrum of research traditions, *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* is an anthology in which the topic and focus of each article reflects the field of interest and expertise of its author(s).

The book consists of an introduction chapter followed by two main parts, each comprising five chapters. The chapters in Part I, "Käänteitä" ('Turns'), examine the concept of *turn* or paradigm shift both on theoretical and practical levels. Part II "Käsitteitä" ('Concepts') is dedicated to linguistic concepts and terminology in the same fashion.

Most articles in *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* can be characterized as historically oriented meta-research that introduce the reader to specific linguistic fields and disciplines and also the Finnish research traditions in which these disciplines have been applied. The book is clearly aimed at Finnish readers – researchers, teachers, and students – and seeks to raise awareness of the types of linguistic studies that have been the most relevant in Finland. Because of these local and historical aspects, *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* is not a replacement for nor can it be replaced by general introductory literature on linguistics (e.g. the Oxford Handbook series). It fills a specific need by providing understanding on linguistic research paradigms and concepts in certain local and cultural contexts.

## 2 Introduction chapter: a map for the reader

The introduction chapter of the book, written by Markus Hamunen, provides the reader with a map or a manual that enlightens the purpose and the set-up of *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä*, and even allows the reader a glimpse to its making process.

Hamunen opens this chapter by pointing out how the diversity of modern linguistics has raised the need for meta-theoretical research. *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* seeks to provide a common space to discuss the plethora of research paradigms, methods, concepts, and traditions. Further on Hamunen reveals how the idea for the book was born from a set of meta-theoretical workshops organized at the Annual Conference of Linguistics in 2013–2015. The relations to previous research are also acknowledged: *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* seeks to take its place alongside works such as Dufva & Lähteenmäki (2002) and Haddington & Sivonen (2010) that introduce the most influential linguists and their achievements to the Finnish audience.

In Sections 3–4 Hamunen clarifies how concepts such as *turn*, *tradition*, *concept*, and *term* should be perceived. Section 5 explains the set-up of the book and provides a short overview of each individual chapter. In Sections 6–7 some general and practical ideas are given on how the book might be used. As Hamunen states in Section 6, special attention is given to make each individual chapter suitable to be used as course literature. When I introduce the chapters one by one, I will therefore seek to pay special attention on their possible application as course material.

## 3 Part I: articles on turns and paradigm changes in linguistics

The chapters in Part I, “Käänteitä” (‘Turns’), deal with the concept and nature of turns and paradigm changes in linguistics. The concept of turn is discussed theoretically and in general terms but also in more field specific and practical ways.

The opening chapter of Part I by Tapani Kelomäki, “Kielitieteen käännteistä” (‘On turns in linguistics’), functions as a theoretical, historical, and conceptual analytical framework for Part I and also for the entire volume. Most research paradigms that are introduced in this first chapter will be further discussed in the following chapters. Each of them will be more accessible if

“Kielitieteen käännteistä” is carefully read first.

Kelomäki first addresses the ontology of turns through concept analysis. Turns are further discussed as recognizable developments that are placed into local and temporal frameworks either by contemporaries or by historians afterwards. Linguistic turns can also be seen as social and discursive entities that are “spoken into existence” when the community of researchers detect and name a certain development and adopt it as a part of scientific and cultural discourse (see Latour 1987).

Examples are further provided on developments that rightfully can be called turns. According to Kelomäki, the birth of historical-comparative linguistics in the early 1800s was a methodological leap that turned the national, romantically oriented speculative language studies into an empirical and systematic research paradigm. The structuralist turn about 100 years later was also a genuine turn beyond dispute, as well as the generative turn initiated by Noam Chomsky in the late 1950s. Not just any change in research tradition can be called a turn, however. According to Kelomäki, some changes in tradition are turns only in the rhetoric sense. As we shall see in the proceeding chapters (e.g. Kurki & Mustanoja, pp. 87–120), changes can also be of accumulative nature.

The second chapter in Part I examines traditions and paradigm shifts in language acquisition research. Hannele Dufva (pp. 61–86) takes the reader to a journey through history, starting from the late antiquity and the times of St. Augustine leading to our own era. The prescriptive tradition lasted to the end of the 19th century. Three main turns in language acquisition studies can be discerned after that. These are 1) the structuralist and behavioristic turn during and after the II World War, 2) the cognitive turn, mainly based on the ideas of Noam Chomsky, and 3) the social turn which started in the 1990s and continues to be the leading paradigm. Dufva does not, however, reduce the rich history of language learning practices to these main turns, but also points out many alternative approaches during each of them. At the end of her article, Dufva considers the next turn we may be anticipating in language pedagogy and language acquisition research.

Dufva’s historical review with its well-chosen source literature offers a starting point for many types of introductory courses in language didactics and pedagogy. It is also one of the few articles in this volume that might be accessible to readers without previous knowledge in linguistics (see Hamunen’s article, p. 22).

In the third chapter of Part I, Tommi Kurki & Liisa Mustanoja discuss the

history of Fennistic dialectology and variation research in terms of paradigm change and renewal. According to their view, changes in Finnish dialectology from the days of August Ahlqvist to present are better characterized as *waves* rather than *turns*. A wave is defined as a theoretical and methodological renewal that does not necessarily involve a change of direction or turning away from the established practices. As important waves of change in Fennistic dialectology Kurki & Mustanoja present 1) the set-up phase by August Ahlqvist in the 1860s–1870s, 2) the Neogrammarian renewal introduced by E. N. Setälä, 3) the sociolinguistic wave, 4) the development of Conversation Analysis, and 5) the introduction of folk linguistics, as well as the increasing use of various quantitative methods. Each of these waves has shaped the methodology of Fennistic variation research by bringing in fresh influences – and maybe by washing away some practices no longer needed. Renewals such as folk linguistics have not, however, involved “turning away” from sociolinguistics, and to call Conversation Analysis a “reaction against” classical dialectology would be a misrepresentation of contemporary Fennistic variation research, where combining different methods and types of data is a common practice. Kurki & Mustanoja’s well-written chapter provides pleasant background reading for any course on variation research, even on elementary level.

The reasons for paradigm changes do not always originate from those that are involved in actual research. Linguists, just like any other scientists, belong to the larger society and must live by its rules. Mika Lähteenmäki describes in his article how a community of linguists had to adapt to the pressure from outside and conduct their research in exceptional circumstances. During the 1920s–1930s linguists in the Soviet Union were not free to choose which turn to take: they were supposed to subscribe to Marxism-Leninism and their research was expected to be sociologically oriented. Lähteenmäki’s article presents an interesting view to a society most of us know little about. I was especially intrigued by Section 5, which discusses the reception of Saussure and Sapir in the Soviet Union and the criticism received by those who translated their works.

The last article in Part I examines developments and turns in semantic and semiotic studies. Rather than offering a clear-cut historical review on semantic approaches in linguistics, Tommi Nieminen takes his reader to a thought-provoking adventure where three ways to analyze meaning and meaning making are weighted against each other. First, meaning can be approached as a concept or as a reified entity, which corresponds

to the traditional Saussurean view, in which a linguistic sign is assumed to consist of the formal part – *the signifier* – and its referent in real life – *the signified*. Meaning can also be understood as truth-condition. This is an even older view that exists already in classical philosophy. The third, a usage-based view on meaning is based on the philosophy of language of Wittgenstein (1999) and C. S. Peirce (1998). Nieminen's article, "Merkitöntä merkityksentutkimusta eli mieletöntä semantiikkaa" ('Meaningless meaning study, senseless semantics'), is by no means an easily approachable text. The reader who wishes to fully benefit from its insights needs to be well-acquainted with the basic literature on semantics, semiotics and philosophy of language. This may be too much expected from a student on elementary or even intermediate level. Students on advanced level are more likely to enjoy this interesting article that prompts critical thinking.

#### 4 Part II: articles on concepts and terms

Part II of the volume at hand, "Käsitteitä" ('Concepts'), also consists of five chapters. Each of them discusses the use of chosen concepts and terms in specific fields of language research.

Part II opens with a chapter on sign language research. Tommi Jantunen examines the concept of *sign* (*viittoma* in Finnish) and problematizes the way in which it is used as a term. His criticism is mainly aimed at the traditional definition and the extension of the term. In sign language studies, a sign has traditionally been defined as a relatively short set of hand movements and positions that have a meaning comparable to a word or lexeme in spoken language. Each individual sign is preceded and followed by transitional movements that have often been compared to the empty spaces between words in written text. Experimental studies have shown, however, that native sign language speakers may recognize a sign from these transitional movements. These findings suggest that these assumed transitional movements may form an integral part of each sign. This, in turn, has practical consequences to the ways in which sign language should be studied, taught and represented in sign language dictionaries.

Readers who are not acquainted with sign language studies may be puzzled with certain terms such as *phonetic* or *phonological* being used in connection to a language without audible sound. It seems to be a common and widely accepted practice in sign language studies to apply the term *phonetic* on the

concrete level of producing, communicating and perceiving signs (cf. *parole*), while *phonological* is applied to the more abstract level of sign language structure (cf. *langue*) (see Liddel & Johnson 1989; Jantunen 2011). Jantunen explains the practice but does not question it, at least not on this occasion. It is understandable that there are components in sign language that can be compared or even considered analogous to phones and phonemes in spoken language. It would be interesting to know, however, if the terms *phoneme*, *phonetic*, and *phonological* have been critically examined in connection to sign language.

In the fourth chapter of Part II Jaakko Leino compares two different views on lexical units in Construction Grammar: the so-called *Words and Constructions* and *Words as Constructions* approaches. Construction Grammar (CxG) is introduced as a “family of theories” that perceive constructions as basic units of language description and define constructions as conventionalized unions of form and meaning (e.g. Fillmore 1989; Goldberg 1995). While these definitions are shared by those that subscribe to CxG, two different schools exist concerning the notion of construction. According to the Words as Constructions approach, constructions can be of any size between a morpheme and an entire text, including words (e.g. Fillmore 1989: 34), while the Words and Constructions approach (e.g. Goldberg 1995) defines constructions as grammatical frameworks that are filled up with lexical elements. Leino compares these two approaches and ends up – at least to my understanding – slightly in favor of the Words as Constructions view. According to him, Words and Constructions does have its merits: it is more in accordance with the traditional view where a language system is considered to consist of a lexicon and a set of rules by which the lexicon is used (e.g. Hakulinen & Karlsson 1979). Words as Constructions, on the other hand, is regarded more logical: if morphemes and sentences are constructions, why should the level between them not be considered a construction?

Anyone who has encountered difficulties with Construction Grammar literature will find Leino’s article most encouraging and instructive, for it helps the reader to navigate through many terminological and conceptual inconsistencies. Without knowing about these two competing “camps”, a reader may either be confused or doubt his/her own literacy and in both cases miss out on the good that CxG has to offer.

In his thought-provoking and creative article, Michael O’Dell examines the communicative situation in the light of three metaphors: language as a

tube, as a path, and as a dance. The tube metaphor corresponds to the classical speech chain model (Shannon 1948), where information is exchanged by *sender* and *receiver* through *code* and *channel*. While the tube metaphor is useful in explaining the basic constituents in a communication act, it is a rough generalization that does not account for all variation and dynamics involved in real life language usage.

As a more refined tool, O'Dell introduces the path metaphor where the communicative space between participants is compared to a natural landscape such as a forest. Instead of clear-cut roads, the communication channels exist as a network of circulating paths. The participants enter the landscape and either use the pre-existing paths or make new paths by themselves. Either way, their actions will leave marks to the network of paths that gradually changes.

The dance metaphor (Cummins 2013) seeks for a better understanding of the participants' roles. According to O'Dell (p. 258), both the tube metaphor and the path metaphor compare a communication act to a game of tennis where A sends a message to B, who receives and decodes it and sends another message to A. In real life communication, however, the participants' roles are not always unambiguous nor can the act itself be segmented clearly into sending and receiving turns. This applies especially to so-called *joint speech* (Cummins 2013): when people cheer their favorite football team or pray in the church together, they produce co-ordinate linguistic messages. It is not clear, however, where the message originates from or to whom it is intended.

As an attractive detail, each main section of the article opens with a quote from research literature or from fiction. The examples O'Dell uses to illustrate his point are partly taken from outside linguistics and not always easy to follow. Especially examples on pp. 256–257 that should clarify the concept of “heteroclinic network” – I honestly need to confess – remain on such level of abstraction that I had to give up and turn to the next page. On the other hand, the account of *stigmergia* (see Grassé 1959), a behavior of termites (p. 254), beautifully illuminates the concept of the path metaphor.

In the next chapter, Aleksis Mäkilähde and Emmi Hynönen discuss the notion of linguistic norm and examine its role in three contemporary research paradigms: Cognitive Grammar (CG), Basic Linguistic Theory (BLT) and Systemic-Functional Grammar (SFG).

Norms are first defined as principles that are used to estimate whether a linguistic act or expression is grammatically correct or not, and how well it corresponds to the pragmatic and social standards of language use. Because each grammatical theory has its own views on language, the roles

and applications of norm and normativity may differ.

Cognitive Grammar (CG), developed by R. W. Langacker, has been a popular semantically oriented grammar theory since 1990s. The corresponding concept for norm in CG is *convention*, for Langacker (1987: 57) characterizes language as a “structured inventory of conventional units”. These units refer to lexemes or conventionalized idioms or other linguistic structures that are mastered by the individual and shared by the community of speakers. Terms such as *norm* and *normativity* are seldom used in CG but expressions can be regarded according to their well-formedness or even correctness and incorrectness. As far as I can see, Section 3 of this article is a helpful overview of CG in general, but it is hard to discern the exact role of norm – or convention – in this theory. Much more attention is devoted to the question whether CG can rightfully be called an empirical or usage-based approach.

The same applies to Section 4 that deals with Basic Linguistic Theory (e.g. Dixon 2009a; 2009b; 2012). First BLT is briefly though adequately introduced as a descriptive framework in typological studies of language structure. The corresponding concept to norm in BLT is *rule*. Dixon (2009a: 2–3) characterizes language systems as sets of structures and rules that can be inductively generalized through corpus-based observation. Section 4 further consists of a great deal of discussion on whether BLT can rightfully be compared to natural sciences, as Dixon claims, and whether its methods should be called empiric or not. This discussion, however, is not easily connected to the notion of linguistic norm or rule.

The section on Systemic-Functional Grammar, on the other hand, succeeds in communicating how norm, rule and rule breaking are perceived in SFG. Even though the authors themselves do not seem equally satisfied with the outcome of their study (p. 293), they bring to light many interesting details: Instead of right and wrong, SFG rather distinguishes between more and less likely expressions. Even so-called incorrect expressions are of interest in SFG because they may be used intentionally, i.e. as means of irony or humor (pp. 291–292). The well-chosen quotes add to the qualities of this section. In hindsight, the whole chapter might have improved if Cognitive Grammar and Systemic-Functional Grammar had been elaborated more and if the section on BLT had been omitted and saved for another occasion.

Part II as well as the entire volume is concluded by an article on Construction Grammar and its relation to the tradition of *analogy*, a concept with a long and diverse history. Markus Hamunen and Unni Leino first



introduce the traditional view of analogy, which, in fact, has not changed much since the days of Aristotle. This concept has referred – and still refers – to perceived similarities between comparable items or phenomena. Concerning productivity, analogy refers to creating something new based on an already existing model. During the long history of linguistics, analogy as a concept has endured a wide range of treatments and many stages of popularity. In Construction Grammar the concept of analogy seems to be out of fashion. Hamunen and Leino, however, demonstrate how it can still be a part of the toolbox. They illustrate their point with well-chosen examples.

I have no doubt that this chapter will work well as reading material for any course on Construction Grammar, or even as a design for an entire classroom course. Especially section 4 on neologisms, schemes and expression types would be extremely well-suited for an interactive classroom session where students would be able to discuss the examples provided here and perhaps present their own.

## 5 Conclusions

*Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* should not be regarded as a systematic handbook or comprehensive introduction to all linguistic theories and methods that have been practiced in Finland. It is above all an invitation to join the meta-theoretical linguistic research and discussion. Each article in the collection deepens the understanding of the discussed linguistic approach, but also contributes to the self-understanding of linguists who conduct research in these fields of linguistics.

The reader is well taken care of: *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* is pleasantly written, and the concepts and terminology are thoroughly explained. I do have some doubts whether the book will indeed also be accessible to the lay reader, as Hamunen (p. 22) claims. This may be too much promised. Most of the articles require some basic knowledge of, or at least involvement as a student in, linguistic research. For professionals and students, however, *Käänteitä ja käsitteitä* is a fine and most welcome resource.

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