THE PHILOSOPHY OF GRAMMAR

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

ESSENTIALS OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR
MODERN ENGLISH GRAMMAR ON HISTORICAL PRINCIPLES *in* 3 *parts*
A SYSTEM OF GRAMMAR
LINGUISTICA
LANGUAGE
NOVIAL LEXIKE
HOW TO TEACH A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE
CHAPTERS ON ENGLISH
A GRAMMATICAL MISCELLANY OFFERED TO OTTO JESPERSEN

THE PHILOSOPHY OF GRAMMAR

BY

OTTO JESPERSEN

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To

MY OLD FRIEND

AND EVER-WILLING HELPER

G. C. MOORE SMITH

PREFACE

Il faut beaucoup de philosophie pour savoir observer une fois ce qu'on voit tous les jours.—ROUSSEAU.

THIS book has taken long in making, and like other pet children, it has borne many names. When I gave the first crude sketch of it as a series of lectures at Columbia University in 1909–10, I called it an Introduction to English Grammar; in the preface of the second volume of my *Modern English Grammar* (1914) I was rash enough to refer to " a forthcoming book on *The Basis of Grammar* "; in *Language* (1922) I spoke of it again as " a future work, to be called, probably, *The Logic of Grammar*," and now at last I venture to present it under the perhaps too ambitious title of " The Philosophy of Grammar." It is an attempt at a connected presentation of my views of the general principles of grammar, views at which I have arrived after long years in which I have studied various languages and have been preparing an extensive work on English Grammar, of which I have so far been able to bring out only two volumes.

I am firmly convinced that many of the shortcomings of current grammatical theory are due to the fact that grammar has been chiefly studied in connexion with ancient languages known only through the medium of writing, and that a correct apprehension of the essential nature of language can only be obtained when the study is based in the first place on direct observation of living speech and only secondarily on written and printed documents. In more than one sense a modern grammarian should be *novarum rerum studiosus*.

Though my concern has been primarily with linguistic study, I have ventured here and there to encroach on the territory of logic, and hope that some parts of my work may contain things of interest to logicians; for instance, the definition of proper names (Ch. IV), the discussion of the relation between substantive and adjective (Chs. V and VII), the definition of ' abstracts ' as nexus-words (Ch. X), the relation of subject and predicate (Ch. XI), and the tripartitions in the chapter on Negation (Ch. XXIV).

I have had many difficulties to contend with in writing this book; one of these is the proper arrangement of my chapters, inasmuch as the subjects they deal with interlock and overlap in the most bewildering way. My endeavour has been to avoid as far as possible references to *subsequent* sections, but it is to be feared that the order in which different topics are presented may here and there appear rather arbitrary. I must also ask the reader's indulgence for my inconsistency in sometimes indicating and sometimes not indicating the exact place where I have found a passage which I quote as an example of some grammatical phenomenon. This has not been found as necessary here as in my *Grammar*, where it is my principle to give exact references to all passages quoted; but many of the phenomena mentioned in this volume are such that examples may be easily found in almost any book written in the language concerned.

OTTO JESPERSEN.

UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN,
January 1924

Since this book was first published (in 1924) I have carried out and further developed some of the ideas it contains in volumes 3 and 4 of my *Modern English Grammar* and in *Essentials of English Grammar* to which the reader may therefore be referred.

O. J.

LUNDEHAVE,
HELSINGOR (ELSINORE).
November 1934

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ABBREVIATIONS OF BOOK TITLES, ETC.

Asboth Gramm = O. Asboth, *Kurze russische Grammatik*, Leipzig 1904.
Bally LV = Ch. Bally, *Le Langage et la Vie*, Genève 1913.
St = *Traité de Stylistique Française*, Heidelberg 1909.
Bloomfield SL = L. Bloomfield, *An Introduction to the Study of Language*, New York 1914.
Boyer et Speranski M = P. Boyer et N. Speranski, *Manuel pour l'Étude de la Langue Russe*, Paris 1905.
Bradley ME = H. Bradley, *The Making of English*, London 1904.
Bréal M = M. Bréal, *Mélanges de Mythologie et de Linguistique*, Paris 1882.
S = *Essai de Sémantique*, Paris 1897.
Brugmann Es = K. Brugmann, *Ursprung des Scheinsubjekts 'es,'* Leipzig 1914.
KG = *Kurze Vergleichende Grammatik*, Strassburg 1904.
VG = *Grundriss der Vergleichenden Grammatik*, 2te Ausg., Strassburg 1897 ff.
Versch = *Verschiedenheiten der Satzgestaltung*, Leipzig 1918.
Brunot PL = F. Brunot, *La Pensée et la Langue*, Paris 1922.
ChE = O. Jespersen, *Chapters on English*, London 1918.
Curme GG = G. O. Curme, *A Grammar of the German Language*, 2nd ed., New York 1922.
Dan. = Danish.
Delbrück GNS = B. Delbrück, *Grundlagen der Neuhochdeutschen Satzlehre*, Berlin 1920.
Synt. = *Vergleichende Syntax der Indogermanischen Sprachen*, Strassburg 1893.
Deutschbein SNS = M. Deutschbein, *System der Neuenglischen Syntax*, Cöthen 1917.
Diez GRS = F. Diez, *Grammatik der Romanischen Sprachen*, 4te Aufl., Bonn 1876.
E. = English.
Eliot FG = C. N. E. Eliot, *A Finnish Grammar*, Oxford 1890.
ESt = *Englische Studien*.
Falk & Torp DNS = Hjalmar Falk og Alf Torp, *Dansk-norskens syntax*, Kristiania 1900.
Fr. = French.
G. = German.
Gabelentz Spr = G. v. d. Gabelentz, *Die Sprachwissenschaft*, Leipzig 1891.
Ginneken LP = J. v. Ginneken, *Principes de Linguistique Psychologique*, Amsterdam, Paris 1907.

Gr. = Greek.

GS = O. Jespersen, *Growth and Structure of the English Language*, 4th ed., Leipzig and Oxford 1923.

Hanssen Sp. Gr. = F. Hanssen, *Spanische Grammatik*, Halle 1910.

IF = *Indogermanische Forschungen.*

It. = Italian.

Keynes FL = J. N. Keynes, *Studies and Exercises in Formal Logic*, 4th ed., London 1906.

KZ = Kuhn's *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung.*

Lang. (Language) = O. Jespersen, *Language, its Nature, Development and Origin*, London 1922.

Lat. = Latin.

LPh = O. Jespersen, *Lehrbuch der Phonetik*, 3te Aufl., Leipzig 1920.

Madvig Kl = J. N. Madvig, *Kleine Philologische Schriften*, Leipzig 1875.

MEG = O. Jespersen, *Modern English Grammar*, Heidelberg 1909, 1914.

Meillet Gr = A. Meillet, *Aperçu d'une Histoire de la Langue Grecque*, Paris 1913.

LI = *Introduction à l'étude des Langues Indo-Européennes*, 2e éd., Paris 1908.

LH = *Linguistique Historique et Linguistique Générale*, Paris 1921.

Meyer-Lübke Einführ. = W. Meyer-Lübke, *Einführung in das Studium der Romanischen Sprachwissenschaft*, 2te Aufl., Heidelberg 1909.

Mikkelsen DO = Kr. Mikkelsen, *Dansk Ordföjningslære*, København 1911.

Misteli = F. Misteli, *Characteristik der hauptsächl. Typen des Sprachbaus*, Berlin 1892.

MSL = *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique.*

Fr. Müller Gr. = Friedrich Müller, *Grundriss der Sprachwissenschaft*, Wien 1876.

NED = *A New English Dictionary*, by Murray, etc., Oxford 1884 ff.

Negation = O. Jespersen, *Negation in English and Other Languages*, København 1917 (Videnskabernes selskab, Høst).

Noreen VS = A. Noreen, *Vårt Språk*, Lund 1903 ff.

Nygaard NS = M. Nygaard, Norrøn Syntax, Kristiania 1906.

Nyrop Gr. = Kr. Nyrop, *Grammaire Historique de la Langue Française*, Copenhague 1914 ff.

OE = Old English.

OFr. = Old French.

OHG = Old High German.

ON = Old Norse.

Onions AS = C. T. Onions, *An Advanced English Syntax*, London 1904.

Paul Gr = H. Paul, *Deutsche Grammatik*, Halle 1916 ff.

P = *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*, 7te Aufl., Halle 1909.

PBB = (Paul und Braune), *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache.*

Pedersen GKS = H. Pedersen, *Vergl. Grammatik der keltischen Sprachen*, Göttingen 1909.

RG = *Russisk Grammatik*, København 1916.

PhG = O. Jespersen, *Phonetische Grundfragen*, Leipzig 1904.

Poutsma Gr = H. Poutsma, *A Grammar of Late Modern English*, Groningen 1904 ff.

Schleicher NV = A. Schleicher, *Nomen und Verbum*, Leipzig 1865.
Schuchardt Br = *Hugo Schuchardt-Brevier*, v. L. Spitzer, Halle 1922.
Sh. = Shakespeare.
Sheffield GTh = A. D. Sheffield, *Grammar and Thinking*, New York 1912.
Simonyi US = S. Simonyi, *Die Ungarische Sprache*, Strassburg 1907.
Sonnenschein = E. A. Sonnenschein, *A New English Grammar*, Oxford 1921 f.
Sp. = Spanish.
Spr. L. = O. Jespersen, *Sprogets Logik*, København 1913.
Steinthal Charakteristik = H. Steinthal, *Charakteristik der hauptsächl. Typen des Sprachbaues*, Berlin 1860.
Stout AP = G. F. Stout, *Analytic Psychology*, London 1902.
Streitberg GE = W. Streitberg, *Gotisches Elementarbuch*, 5te Aufl., Heidelberg 1920.
Sweet CP = H. Sweet, *Collected Papers*, Oxford 1913.
NEG = *A New English Grammar*, Oxford 1892, 1898.
Tegnér G = E. Tegnér, *Om Genus i Svenskan*, Stockholm 1892.
TG = *The Terminology of Grammar*, by the Joint Committee (1911), 7th impr. 1922.
Tobler VG = A. Tobler, *Vermischte Beiträge zur Französischen Grammatik*, 3te Aufl., Leipzig 1921.
US = United States.
Vendryes L = J. Vendryes, *Le Langage*, Paris 1921.
Vg. = Vulgar.
Vondrák SG = W. Vondrák, *Vergleichende Slavische Grammatik*, Göttingen 1906.
Wackernagel VS = J. Wackernagel, *Vorlesungen über Syntax*, Basel 1920.
Wegener U = Ph. Wegener, *Untersuchungen über die Grundfragen des Sprachlebens*, Halle 1885.
Western R = A. Western, *Norsk Riksmåls-grammatikk*, Kristiania 1921.
Wilmanns DG = W. Wilmanns, *Deutsche Grammatik*, Strassburg 1897 ff.
Wundt S = W. Wundt, *Die Sprache*, Leipzig 1900.

PHONETIC SYMBOLS

ˈ stands before the stressed syllable.

· indicates length of the preceding sound.

[a·] as in *a*lms.

[ai] as in *i*ce.

[au] as in h*ou*se.

[æ] as in h*a*t.

[ei] as in h*a*te.

[ɛ] as in c*a*re; Fr. t*e*l.

[ə] indistinct vowels.

[i] as in f*i*ll; Fr. qu*i*.

[i·] as in f*ee*l; Fr. f*i*lle.

[o] as in Fr. s*eau*.

[ou] as in s*o*.

[ɔ] open *o*-sounds.

[u] as in f*u*ll; Fr. f*ou*.

[u·] as in f*oo*l; Fr. ép*ou*se.

[y] as in Fr. v*u*.

[ʌ] as in c*u*t.

[ø] as in Fr. f*eu*.

[œ] as in Fr. s*œu*r.

[˜] French nasalization.

[c] as in G. i*ch*.

[x] as in G., Sc. lo*ch*.

[ð] as in *th*is.

[j] as in *y*ou.

[þ] as in *th*ick.

[ʃ] as in *sh*e.

[ʒ] as in mea*s*ure.

[ʼ] in Russian palatalization, in Danish glottal stop.

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