PAPER 6 (DESCRIPTIVE LINGUISTICS)
TAGMEMICS

Tagmemic theory is concerned primarily with grammatical analysis and is especially associated with Kenneth Lee Pike. It is an offshoot of structuralism. Structuralism ignored functions of a linguistic form and concentrated only on form. Tagmemics fuses together the form as well as the function of a linguistic entity. According to this approach, utterances can be analyzed simultaneously at three interpenetrating levels, where each level represents a hierarchy of units. These levels are lexical (with the minimum unit being morpheme), phonological (having phoneme as the minimum unit), grammatical (in which the minimum unit is tagmeme). The grammatical component is a series of syntactic statements concerning sentence, clause, phrase, and word level structures. The lexicon lists the formal unit of language while phonological components give the phonemic sentence a phonetic realization in the language.

Pike rejected the idea of a sentence as being the minimum unit of grammar and recommended a hierarchical order and labeling. It has three semi-autonomous but interlocking levels or modes -- phonology, grammar and lexicon. It stresses the hierarchical ordering of grammatical units into ranks of levels -- morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and discourses.

Immediate Constituent analysis of the structaralists insists just on binary cuts, but tagmemics always goes in favor of string constituent analysis, and have many cuts. Tagmemics, unlike a structural analysis asks for the function of the categories and not merely their naming. It is a "slot and filler grammar"; a slot being a position in construction frame. The filler class is the co-relation between a grammatical function like subject and class of fillers like nouns that can fill that function. But neither the slot nor the filler itself is important, it is the tagmeme which is significant. The slot is the function and filler being the category. A tagmeme, therefore, is the co-relation of a slot and the class of items that can occur in that slot. Hence we have sentence level tagmemes, clause level tagmemes, phrase level tagmemes, word level tagmemes and morpheme level tagmemes. For example:
"The boy ate all his candy yesterday" has the following tagmemes:
1. Base -- transitive clause + intonation tagmeme
   T -- cl Int: F
2. Clause level tagmeme
   S: NP + Pr: tv + O: n+ Tense: past
3. Phrase level tagmeme
   Det: det + H: n

4. Word level tagmeme
   ate -- Nuc: Verb stem + Tense: past

5. Morpheme level Tagmeme
   eat

The + and + signs are important in tagmemic formulae; in a generalized formula + precedes obligatory component tagmeme and + precedes optional component tagmeme.

In the same way as mentioned above, the sentence: "He likes books" consists of three tagmemes -- the `subject' slot filled by a pronoun, the `predicate' slot filled by transitive verb, and the `object' slot filled by a noun. Formulatically, it can be represented as

S: pn + P: tv + O: n

In bringing together into one unit, the tagmeme, of a grammatical function and a formal class seem especially valuable in the analysis of languages where a variety of formally different elements in English nouns and pronouns can function both as subjects and objects.

In this connection, one of the fundamental aims of tagmemic theory has been stated by Longacre: "Tagmemics is a reaffirmation of function in a structuralist context.

TAGMEMICS
(Exponent: Kenneth L. Pike)

A tagmeme is defined as "the correlation of the grammatical function or slot with a class of mutually substitutable items occurring in that slot." In other words, it is the relation between function and category. The subject position filled by a Noun phrase, the predicate filled by a verb, etc, are examples of tagmemes.

e.g. Sentence: She saw John.

This sentence has 3 tagmemes

Subject	+	verbal	+	object
pronoun		transitive verb		noun

Here, the subject, verbal, and object slots are filled by a pronoun, a transitive verb and a noun respectively. The formula for such a sentence = SVO.

In tagmemics, a construction is a string of tagmeme units. These constructions can exist at various levels -- e.g. the morpheme, the word, the phrase, the sentence, and so on. The tagmemic analysis given above (she saw John) belongs to the level of the sentence. An example of tagmemic analysis at the syllable level is presented below:

Tagmemic units = b e g in the syllable beg.

tagmeme1		tagmeme 2		tagmeme 3
non syllabic slot	+	syllabic slot	+	non syllabic slot
b		e		g

Tagmemic has been most fertile as far as the description of exotic languages is considered. A number of Red Indian and African languages have been described on the tagmemic model. It seems that this model is particularly convenient in describing languages that have not been studied before.

SYSTEMICS
(Exponent: M. A. K. Halliday)

The four crucial concepts in systemics are structure, unit, class, and system.

Structure: A linear or horizontal relation as implied in statements about the structure of an NP, sentence, syllable, etc.

The units used in systemic grammar are sentence, clause, phrase, word, and morpheme. The units of phonology are tone group, foot, syllable and phoneme. There is a hierarchical relation or rank existing amongst different units. The sentence, for example, belongs to the highest rank, the clause right below it, the phrase next to it and so on.

The term 'class' refers to a group of items corresponding roughly to parts of speech. In order to explicate class it may be useful to use Halliday's notion of choice. At every point in a structure, a speaker is faced with a number of choices. Thus, once a speaker has said:

I saw a ...

he is free to say table, cat, man, tree, etc. He has a fairly open set of words to choose from, and this open set constitutes a class. Table, cat, man, tree, etc., belong to the class of nouns.

The kind of choice that a class offers has a wide range. As opposed to this, the choice offered by a system has a restricted range. The system of tense in English, for example, offers a choice between two items only: present and past. The system of number in English offers only two choices (singular and plural) and the system of gender three (masculine, feminine, neuter). Systemic analysis is popular with British socio-linguists.

STRATIFICATIONAL GRAMMAR
(Exponent: Sidney Lamb)

This model of language description raises a number of interesting theoretical issues. Not much linguistic description has been attempted within this model.

In this model, language is analyzed in terms of the following levels or strata: sememic, lexemic, morphemic, and phonemic. Each stratum has its own structure. At the sememic stratum the distinctive meaning units of the language are set out in a network of relations. Thus the sentence

The man caught the tiger.

has the following semantic units:
Tiger, catch, male, human, agent, goal, past.
At the lexemic stratum the distinctive lexical units man, caught, tiger, etc., are linked together in a sentence structure. At the morphemic stratum, morphemes appear in a successive string. At the phonemic stratum, simultaneous bundles of distinctive features make up a string of phonemic units.