

Programm

In dieser Veranstaltung sollen Texte gelesen und diskutiert werden, die die kanonische moderne Grammatiktheorie Chomskyscher Prägung entweder in ihrer Gesamtheit oder aber zumindest in wesentlichen Aspekten in der ein oder anderen Weise in Frage stellen, z.B. von Paul Postal, Pieter Seuren, Peter Culicover, Ray Jackendoff, Nick Evans, Stephen Levinson, Martin Haspelmath, Daniel Everett, Shalom Lappin und Geoffrey Pullum. In jedem einzelnen Fall werden zwei Fragen zu beantworten sein: Erstens, wie gut sind die Argumente gegen die Chomskysche Grammatiktheorie? Und zweitens, was soll nach Meinung der AutorInnen an die Stelle dieses Grammatikmodells treten?

- *Die Idee der Universalgrammatik ist total fehlgeleitet.*

Evans & Levinson (2009)

Darin gibt es bereits viele kurze Kommentare, von Mark Baker, Edith Bavin, Iris Berent, Charles Catania, Morten Christiansen and Nick Chater, William Croft, Robert Freidin, Adele Goldberg, Daniel Harbour, Martin Haspelmath, Daniel Margoliash and Howard Nusbaum, Bob McMurray and Edward Wasserman, Bjorn Merker, Andrew Nevins, Derek Penn et al., David Pesetsky, Steven Pinker and Ray Jackendoff, Geoff Pullum and Barbara Scholz, Luigi Rizzi, Paul Smolensky and Emmanuel Dupoux, Maggie Tallerman, Michael Tomasello, Heidi Waterfall and Shimon Edelman.

Hinzu kommt ein Sonderheft von *Lingua* (2010, vol. 120:12), incl.:

1. Abels & Neeleman (2010)
2. Bolender (2010)
3. Cormier et al. (2010)
4. Crain et al. (2010)
5. Duffield (2010)
6. Hudson (2010)
7. Keenan & Stabler (2010)
8. Kemmerer & Eggleston (2010)
9. Koschmann (2010)
10. Lee et al. (2010)
11. Longobardi & Roberts (2010)
12. Malaia & Wilbur (2010)
13. O'Grady (2010)
14. Reuland & Everaert (2010)
15. Rothstein & Treves (2010)
16. Safir (2010)
17. Sandler (2010)

18. Levinson & Evans (2010)

Sowie: Harbour (2011)

- *Das minimalistische Programm ist irgendwie unwissenschaftlich. (Nochmal ein Schritt nach unten von GB, und dieser Paradigmenwechsel ist nur verstehbar, wenn es sich um einen Kult handelt.)*

Lappin et al. (2000)

1. Reuland (2001)
2. Roberts (2001)
3. Uriagereka (2001)
4. Lappin et al. (2001)

- *Es gibt Sprachen, die nicht über Rekursion verfügen können. (Und Gott und Chomsky haben mich beide enttäuscht.)*

Everett (2005)

1. Nevins et al. (2009b)
2. Everett (2009)
3. Nevins et al. (2009a)

- *Die Chomskysche Linguistik ist kaputt.*

Levine & Postal (2004); Postal (2012)

- *Schon "Syntactic Structures" 1957 war eigentlich schlecht. (Und von da an ging's bergab.)*

Pullum (2011)

- *Die moderne minimalistische Syntax ist grauenhaft.*

Sternefeld & Richter (2011)

- *Jedwede syntaktische Theoriebildung ist sowieso zum Scheitern verurteilt.*

Haspelmath (2010)

- *Chomskys Theorien sind in genau dem Maße verdorben wie er selbst als Person.*

Seuren (2004)

1. Grohmann (2005)
2. Kiss (2007)

- *Das Argument von der Unzulänglichkeit des Reizes ist ungültig.*

Pullum & Scholz (2002)

1. Legate & Yang (2002)
2. Lasnik & Uriagereka (2002)
3. Berwick et al. (2011)

4. plus neuere Diskussion auf dem Blog *Faculty of Language* von Norbert Hornstein (nach "poverty of the stimulus" und "eagles" suchen)

- *Außerdem geht alles auch einfacher.*

Culicover & Jackendoff (2005)

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“Chomsky steht eben für die Faszination am großen, philosophischen Entwurf, da ist ihm die Falsifizierbarkeit seiner Hypothesen relativ egal”, meint Martin Haspelmath. Bei aller Anerkennung der Leistung Chomskys, der die Linguistik von einer reinen Geistes- in eine Naturwissenschaft verwandelt habe -, in den aktuellen Debatten der Disziplin spielten seine Theorien heute nicht mehr die entscheidende Rolle. Reine Chomskyaner seien unter Linguisten kaum noch zu finden. In einem Punkt kann sich Haspelmath aber trotzdem mit Chomsky identifizieren: “Mit vielen seiner politischen Ansichten bin ich völlig einverstanden.” (FAZ, 2011)

(The fact that non-mainstream linguists have fewer job chances can be seen from the fact that many job announcements now include descriptions such as "formal syntax", "formal semantics", etc. What do you do if you belong to the non-negligible minority of linguists who happen to believe that mainstream formal approaches to linguistics are misguided? (e.g. if you think that the fuzzy approaches to grammar that were highlighted in a recent LINGUIST posting are on the right track) By contrast, I haven't seen a job announcement for fuzzy syntax or cognitive semantics yet.) (1994) First, at least as far as North America is concerned, the great majority of syntacticians seem to teach and work within GB, even in provincial places where they have no chance of influencing theoretical developments (1993)

... dass man sich in *einem* Punkt [...] enig ist: dem Wunsch nach einer begründeten und wohl-
verstandenen Überwindung zentraler die Linguistik bestimmender Maßgaben und eventuell auch
Autoritäten. Es soll sich dabei aber nicht um eine Palastrevolution handeln und schon gar nicht
um einen Bildersturm. [...] Eine Modifikation der bisherigen strukturell gefassten Herangehenswei-
se drängt sich aber auf. Wieweit sich momentan und insbesondere in diesem Band die artikulier-
te Kritik und Unruhe schon zöur Konzeption und Sicht einer neuen Linguistik geklärt hat, mag
für die verschiedenen Autoren hier in unterschiedlicher Weise zu beantworten sein. [...] Über die
rein strukturelle insbesondere die Chomskysche Linguistik hinaus sollten uns Linguisten mehr die
dynamischen, prozeduralen und schließlich prozesualen Erscheinungen der Sprache beschäftigen.
(Ballmer, 1985, in Nachchomskysche Linguistik)

Most people will agree that there are many controversial aspects to the person of Noam Chomsky, especially as regards the period after 1960. [...] Does this man deserve a niche in the academic hall of fame? I doubt that very much. His thinking is certainly sharp, quick and broad in superficial extension, but it lacks depth, flexibility and above all vision. Nor is it really inquisitive, or at least it hasn't been since the mid-sixties. From that period on, we see a man who digs in his intellectual heels and defends his fort, warding off ideas that might widen his perspective or make him look at things from a different, perhaps more promising, perspective. We see a man who, having made a very promising start, rapidly began to abuse the enormous amount of social power he had acquired, eliminating dissidents while putting up an innocent face to the outside world. A man who professes high ideals of freedom and dignity in his political writings but practises the opposite in his academic activities. We see a compulsive prima donna, a clever manipulator of public opinion, a man who has consistently put his own person above the ideals that all unusually gifted persons occupying a leading position in any sphere of life have a special duty to pursue. (Seuren, blog, Oktober 2013)

Texas Conference on Goals of Linguistic Theory, 1969:

“After his verbal presentation, there was an opportunity fothe audience to use a microphone, up toward the front. Those who wanted to ask a question or comment had to raise their hand and be called on by whomever was in charge. Haj Ross did that, *took the microphone, started to talk*, hadn't finished and Chomsky interrupted him. Quite brutally. Haj just turned around and *walked away* while Chomsky went on with his interruption. Ross's gesture signaled that this was a

breakdown of coummnication, that he felt that Chomsky had broken the rules. Which I believe he had. (Postal, in Ideology and Linguistic Theory, p. 134, 1996.)

“Another thing happened in 1969 or so. There was a conference in Austin, Texas, and I went down there with Noam. We sat next to each other on the plane. Noam was giving a paper, and I was going to read Morris Halle's paper, because Morris had been invited but couldn't come for some reason. At the meeting, after Noam's talk, there was a question period, and I was asking a question from the back of the room and Noam was at the podium. Noam wouldn't let me esay the end of the question. He starting drowning be out from the podium. *He had a microphone and I didn't*. So I had to *sit down*. (Haj Ross, in Ideology, p. 125).

“This was the source of a sad incident at the 1969 Texas Conference. There, after a talk by Chomsky, Ross stepped forward and presented Chomsky with counterexamples to his proposals. At each point, Chomsky cut him off and refused to let him finish, saying that no individual linguistic examples could possibly be counterexamples to his proposals. In retrospect, it appears that he was invoking the Quine-Duhem thesis, saying that only the theory as a whole when ultimately completed could be falsified. But since we did not believe the Quine-Duhem thesis [...] we thought he was just being dismissive. We saw his treatment of Ross as scandalous and aggressive behaviour. From our perspective, Ross was right [...] But from Chomsky's [...] perspective, Ross was talking nonsense.” (George Lakoff, in Ideology, p. 125).

“The “dissension” between, say, Jackendoff and others (many of them not my students: Lakoff, Postal, etc.) was from about 1966 or so. I was never really part of it... my one participation in the debate was in 1969, at a conference in Texas, where I flew in and flew out immediately at the impassioned request of a former student there, Stanley Peters, who wanted me to make some public response to the by then rather hysterical tone of the generative semanticists, all pretty childish in my opinion, and in 1969 I had quite different things on my mind.” (Chomsky, in Barsky, a Life of Dissent, p. 151).

“I myself was only marginally involved, as I did not belong to the MIT tribe. But I had published my PhD-thesis Operators and Nucleus in 1968, and I had written a few articles, all in the GS spirit. Having met Chomsky personally in 1966 at Frits Staal's home in Amsterdam, I met him again at MIT in early December 1970, at the start of a month-long visit, naively unaware of the change that had taken place. On that occasion, he treated me in the rudest possible manner, after which others quickly explained to me what was going on. I remember having a feeling of great disappointment, which, fuelled as it was by multiple later manifestations of academic impropriety, has deepened over the years into moral abhorrence. In his old age, Chomsky is not doing well, morally speaking.” (Seuren, Blog, Oktober 2013)

“All of this being said, I agree that Chomsky has often shown a ferocious and rude style towards opponents, your anecdote about Ross being an example. When I was at MIT in 1976, Joan Bresnan received a similar treatment, much to my dismay. It is also my personal experience that you cannot communicate with Chomsky if you really disagree about something he finds important. He has a notorious inability to imagine that there are rational persons with opinions other than his own.” (Seuren Blog entry, Jan Koster, Oktober 2013)