"The careful study of languages with special attention to the *internal* logic of their evolution teaches us that there exists such a logic and that one can establish a whole series of purely linguistic laws which are independent of such non-linguistic factors as 'civilization', etc. But of course, these laws will not refer to "progress" or "regress" - and therefore from the view point of general historians (and of evolutionists in general; i.e. ethnologists, zoologists, etc.) they will lack the main 'ingredient' of evolutionary laws. And for this reason, this view on evolution of languages encounters active opposition"

(Trubetzkoy's letter to Jakobson, our italics, from Halle (1985))

On the development and current status of generative grammar in France: a personal point of view [*]

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From the mid-sixties to the mid-eighties, the field of generative grammar in France achieved impressive success which had repercussions on the development of generative grammar in several other countries, particularly in Italy and in Holland. Nevertheless, the development and the influence of the field in France seem to have stagnated and even decreased during the last decade.

While stressing the most significant results achieved by generative grammarians in France, this article attempts to analyze the puzzling difficulties of the field in France, and considers some ways in which what looks like a crisis might be overcome in the future.

We suggest in particular that the usual opposition between generative grammar and structuralism in France is not as clear cut as what is generally assumed. We claim that the debate that is currently taking place within linguistics is not confined to this domain. This state of affairs might help to explain what is at stake and what solutions might be found. We also analyze and perhaps clarify some current controversies that currently divide the French generativist movement, since the issues at stake might be puzzling for a reader not acquainted with the details of the French situation. As opposed to what is usually assumed in France and elsewhere, the discussion will lead us to suggest that these controversies are not confined to the French scientific community proper, but can be found in slightly different forms in other countries such as the US.

1.   FROM 1968 TO 1980

It is well known that France was one of the first countries outside of the United States in which the field of generative grammar was developed, along with the Netherlands, the former German Democratic Republic, and the Federal Republic of Germany.

This situation was, without doubt, related to the seminal work of R. Kayne. Kayne, who had received his doctoral degree from MIT in 1969, obtained a position at the University of Paris

VIII (Vincennes), where a small group of linguists, taking advantage of the opportunities that the events of 1968 had made possible, had established a program of general linguistics which was very different from what was available elsewhere. This group, which included M. Gross, J. Dubois and J.-Cl. Chevalier, was concentrated around N. Ruwet, who had been a visiting scholar at MIT during the academic year 1967-68, and whose influential introduction to generative grammar had been published in 1967.[1]

This program was soon strengthened by new professors and lecturers, including, in addition to Kayne, R. Carter, A. Rouveret, F. Dell, P. Encrevé, O. Ducrot, and in the mid-seventies J.-R. Vergnaud, G. Fauconnier, and B. Laks (among others), and also by the presence of J. Guéron in the English Department of the same university. It attracted a fair number of students such as H.-G. Obenauer, M. Ronat, B. Fradin, P. Barbaud, M.-T. Vinet, M. Borel, S. Schlyter, S. Moreira da Silva, M. do Nascimento, J. Gérard, J. Aoun, I. Haïk, D. Salamanca, M.-L. Zubizaretta, A. Azoulay-Vicente, R. Renault, P. Pica, V. Déprez, A. Mahajan, I. Hazout, and X. Lois, among others, who were to become known in their home countries or abroad.[2] . It also drew a number of visiting faculty and students from various countries to Paris, including J. Emonds, C. Smith, S. Schane, M.-L. Moreau, F. Kiefer, S.-Y. Kuroda, L. Selkirk, H. Van Riemsdijk, E. Williams, K.T. Taraldsen, P. Hirschbühler, L. Rizzi, A. Belletti, G. Longobardi, R. Manzini, M. Ambar, who had already played, or were going to play, a very influential role in the field.

The results achieved in the field of syntax from 1968 to 1980 were very impressive, as attested by the numerous books and articles published in that period. Kayne's *French Syntax* (1975), which was translated into French in 1977, had an enormous impact. This work was, to our knowledge, the first attempt to explain a vast array of phenomena (e.g. floating quantifiers, causative constructions, clitic placement and reflexive constructions) within an explicit theoretical framework, in this case the Extended Standard Theory. Kayne's work also demonstrated that rewriting rules were inadequate for the analysis of natural language, and that it was necessary to make reference to very general constraints and principles in order to account for data which would otherwise remain unexplained. Kayne's essays from the late seventies and early eighties, which were eventually republished in *Connectedness and Binary Branching* (1984), have had a far-reaching import on a large number of issues dealing with the theory of grammar. These include our understanding of the articulation of Bounding Theory and the Theory of Government (which was developed more recently in the so-called "Barriers framework"), and the role played in syntactic representations by very general constraints such as binary branching. Kayne's work in the comparative syntax of French and English has had an important impact on the rapid development of Romance and Germanic syntax throughout Europe.

Many examples of outstanding works by other linguists can be named. Vergnaud, who received a Ph.D. in Linguistics at MIT in 1974, had first formulated the basic concepts of Case Theory in his private correspondence with N. Chomsky in April 1977. This theory, which plays an important role in the so-called checking theory of the minimalist framework (see Chomsky 1992), is developed in some detail in Vergnaud's 1982 book *Dépendances et niveaux de représentation en syntaxe*, published in 1982. Together with Van Riemsdijk, Vergnaud also founded the GLOW in 1977. This association publishes a bi-annual newsletter reporting significant results in the field, and organizes an annual colloquium. More recently, it has created highly successful summer schools in generative linguistics in various European countries.

Among other influential essays and articles, were Ruwet's important work on the pronoun '*en*' (Ruwet (1970) also in Ruwet (1972)), D. Couquaux's essay on the syntax of predicative sentences (Couquaux (1979)), J. Guéron's articles on extraposition (Guéron (1980)), and Obenauer's book on interrogatives in French (Obenauer (1976)).

A. Rouveret's articles on the structure of result clauses, and, in collaboration with J.-R. Vergnaud, on the structure of French causative constructions (Rouveret (1978), Rouveret & Vergnaud (1980)), M. Ronat's articles, on the distinction between sentence grammar and discourse grammar (e.g. Ronat (1979a) and (1979b)), and A. Zribi-Hertz's essays on orphan prepositions and on the distinction between middles and neuter constructions in French (Zribi-Hertz (1978), (1984)), shed new light on previously unobserved or poorly understood domains of the grammar of French.

Pollock's transcription of N. Chomsky's lectures at the 1974 LSA Institute played a key role in the diffusion of the main ideas of trace theory in France and abroad. [3] His transcription of the lectures given in Pisa by Chomsky in 1979, in collaboration with H.-G. Obenauer, accelerated the dissemination of the main concepts of the Government and Binding framework. [4] His essays on the syntax of impersonal constructions (Pollock (1981), (1984)) offered new insights into the understanding of Agreement, Tense and Case, and paved the way for his 1989 article on the nature of IP (see section 2).

The ideas expressed by J.-C. Milner in his dissertation, published in 1978, led to a better understanding of the French nominal system, a topic that Milner takes up again in his 1977 article, republished in his collection of essays in 1982. [5] The structure of NP is also illuminated in the work of D. Godard (1986a, 1988) on the structure of relative clauses.

R. Carter's articles, some of which were recently reedited by B. Levin & C. Tenny at MIT (see Levin & Tenny (1988)), played an important role in the development of the field of lexical semantics.

2.   1980 TO TODAY

Some impressive results have been achieved in more recent years.

Pollock's influential 1989 article on the structure of IP shows that the inflection of the sentence, which used to be viewed as a single projection, may be split into two distinct functional projections.

The article argues for an elegant account of well-known differences in word order between English and French (cf. Emonds (1978)), and has already had a considerable impact on our understanding of the interaction of agreement and Case, and the crucial role of X' Theory in syntax. Both issues are currently being investigated under the so-called 'minimalist approach' to syntax.

The ongoing work of Obenauer ((1984), (forthcoming)) on operators characterizes different types of operators corresponding to different types of A' dependencies, a line of research which has crucially influenced the formulation of Rizzi's Relativized Minimality framework.

Although most of the work done by generative linguists in France was done on French in the period described in section 1, some important results have been attained in the study of other languages (see Rouveret (1990b) on Welsh, Spanish and Portuguese, Dobrovie-Sorin (1989) on Rumanian, and Pica's work on cross-linguistic variation in reflexives). [6]

Significant achievements have been attained in the field of phonology, as attested by the important article of F. Dell & M. Elmedlaoui on Berber (Dell & Elmedlaoui (1987)). The authors show that the syllable of Berber is organized in a number of discrete steps which are controlled by a sonority hierarchy. This has far-reaching consequences for our understanding of what a syllable is, and how syllables are parsed. [7]

The recent creation by the C.N.R.S. of a Research Group (GDR) devoted to generative grammar at the University of Paris VIII (under the direction of H.-G. Obenauer) and the presence of some generativists (H. Huot, C. Dobrovie-Sorin and D. Godard, among others) in the larger research group directed by J.-Cl. Milner at the University of Paris VII, attest to the current vitality of the field.

Despite the recent achievements, it cannot be denied that many projects never fulfilled the expectations that were created by the early success of generative linguistics in France.

This is the case, for example, of the edition of a comprehensive grammar of French. This project was initiated by Mitsou Ronat in the beginning of the 1980's, and was to be in the style of the Italian *Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione*. Although a large group of French generativists, among them J.-Cl. Milner, N. Ruwet, R. Kayne, J.-R. Vergnaud, A. Rouveret, M. Ronat, H-G. Obenauer, J. Guéron, D. Godard, P. Pica, and A. Zribi-Hertz, participated in this enterprise, it was aborted not long after being conceived. [8]

Moreover, it is in our view symptomatic of the problem that the number of special issues of French linguistics journals devoted to generative grammar has regularly decreased in the last decade, and that most French publishers are reluctant to publish books in generative grammar. The collective volume *La grammaire modulaire* (edited by M. Ronat and D. Couquaux, and published by 'Minuit' in 1986) was a rare exception to this trend. Publishers even hesitate to put on the market translations of N. Chomsky's work, since they often find it too technical.

From our point of view, most French generativists never really succeeded to spread the main ideas of the field to the vast majority of institutions : the universities located outside Paris, the French C.N.R.S., or more 'peripheral' institutions, such as 'l'École Pratique des Hautes Études'. Not surprisingly, generative grammar is barely represented in these institutions.

Although a number of efforts were made to explain the methodology of generative linguistics (see among others, Ruwet (1967), Milner (1973a)), no serious attempts were made to explain the 'internal' nature of the field (see below). A rare exception in this respect is the publication in 1977 of M. Ronat's interview with N. Chomsky, which raised tremendous interest even in circles which were traditionally considered to be hostile to generative grammar.(Ronat 1977a) The results of this attitude have been amplified by the fact that many generativist scholars did not have a solid understanding of the complex mechanisms of the French administration, as well as the rigid, if not insular, character of the French educational system. It should also be pointed out that despite some notable exceptions, there was a relatively poor commitment to the training of a larger group of students, at least by North American standards.

The situation was further aggravated by the general lack of appropriate funding for graduate students in France, by the virtual nonexistence of well organized and up-to-date libraries, and by the lack of technological facilities such as electronic mail. Finally, it should be mentioned that well-known anti-American feelings, usually confined to the political level, were not left unexploited at the level of linguistics.

This convergence of factors made it possible for more empiricist frameworks to keep the key positions in a wide range of institutions and moreover to succeed in dividing the small

number of generativist researchers, who very often began concentrating on meta-theoretical issues that might be important, but were, and remain today, difficult to resolve.

By the mid-eighties, prominent figures of the field had left the country and obtained positions elsewhere, while others started to doubt about the legitimacy of the field. [9]

3.   SOME GENERAL REFLECTIONS

Contrary to what is often assumed in linguistics, we believe that the situation faced by generative grammar today is not confined to this field, but is very reminiscent of the difficulties met by what was later to be called molecular biology in the forties and fifties in France, when the naturalist schools of Lamarck and Bergson were still dominant.

If we adopt a distinction made in Danchin (1987) between 'instructive theories' (that is theories which postulate the existence of a causal agent which is exterior to the system and directs its evolution) and 'selective theories' (which see contingent interactions as the only driving forces that make living systems evolve), the current debate in linguistics is exactly parallel to the debate which took place between J. Monod and his adversaries, as pointed out by Piattelli-Palmarini (1989). In both cases, there was a noticeable resistance to 'selective' theories. This opposition between 'instructive' and 'selective' theories - and the somewhat parallel opposition between what we might call 'descriptive theories' (that is, theories concentrating on the baffling diversity of live forms) and 'explanatory theories' (that is, theories concentrating on invariants of live forms) seems to have been a recurrent theme in the recent intellectual history of France (e.g. the debate between Einstein and Bergson about physics or between Russell and Poincaré about logic, among many others). The same type of distinction can be detected in various other fields, such as anthropology, psychology or history, where, according to 'selective' theories, what is in the mind of an individual is often not considered an appropriate object of study (see below).[10]

From this point of view, the current difficulties of the field of generative grammar in France can be related to the closure, shortly after Monod's death, of the prestigious and influential 'Centre de Royaumont pour les sciences humaines'. The center had been created in 1972 around various members, including among others N. Chomsky, J. Monod, S. Luria, J. Mehler, F. Dell, D. Sperber and F. Jacob. During its period of activity, the Center gave birth to several important colloquia and publications in France and elsewhere, such as *L'unité de l'homme* (Morin & Piattelli-Palmarini, eds. (1974)) and *Le débat entre Piaget et Chomsky* (Piattelli-Palmarini, ed. (1979)).

It is quite possible that a relative lack of knowledge of the history of science may have led the generativists of the mid-sixties to underestimate the difficulties lying ahead. This may also explain the fact that they did not seem to pay much attention to their potential enemies, or, even more surprisingly, to their potential allies.

It is a common belief that the development of generative grammar in France has been hindered by the enormous weight of European structuralism and its ideology. This is only partly true, however. Morris Halle's analysis of Jakobson's correspondence with Trubetzkoy, and his comparison of the ideas expressed by Jakobson and Trubetzkoy with those of, e.g., Martinet and Harris, clearly illustrate that European structuralists were highly divided on the issue of what constitutes the object of inquiry (e.g., whether or not phonemes constitute mental entities) (Halle (1985), (1988)). The debate between 'internalism' (that is theories where the object of inquiry is internal to the individual) and 'externalism' (that is, theories where the object of inquiry is external to individual) in our view reflects a distinction somewhat parallel to the distinctions

between 'instructive' vs ' selective' theories and 'descriptive' vs 'explanatory' theories made above. As Trubetzkoy's quotation at the beginning of the text already suggests, this debate had taken place among structuralists themselves.

From this point of view, the popularity of a certain type of structural linguistics in France, which influenced many other domains, might have been a trap for the field of French linguistics in general. In the following statement from C. Lévi-Strauss's "Towards a General Theory of Communication", the analogy between 'women' and 'phonemes' is obvious: both are to be conceived of as the minimal distinct external, 'measurable', objects, to be communicated :

"For any given society, thus, a conceptual opposition between the two types can always be described in relation to each other by using distinctive features(...). This amounts to saying that social organization (limited for the purpose of this paper to kinship systems, descend groups and marriage rules), refers to a level of communication where *the objects to be communicated are women* (...)

Therefore the following questions may be raised :

(1) Is it possible to describe social organization by invoking the conceptual framework provided by the theory of communication?

(2) If so, can any progress be made toward this new formulation for a better understanding of social organization ?

(3) What kind of relationship prevails between this new field of communication and others already acknowledged, such as language ? (...)

It might be said that the above statements do nothing more than state the obvious in a sophisticated manner. This is not true; they do not only clarify general relations between phenomena, but also show that *these relations may be measured, which is the aim of any scientific approach*." (Lévi-Strauss 1952, our italics)

We would like to stress that this statement illustrates an explicitly 'external' point of view which has not been unpopular in France, while poor attention was given to 'internal' ideas.[11] In this regard, it is characteristic that much recognition has been given to Saussure's general ideas expressed in the *Cours de linguistique générale* published by C. Bally and A. Sèchehaye, whereas the theoretical implications of both Saussure's seminal work on the phonological reconstruction of the vowel system of Indo-European and his important study on Lithuanian accentuation have only been given scant attention. Both phonological studies can be viewed as early attempts to build an 'internal' theory of phonology.[12]

It is not entirely surprising that, on the one hand, the majority of French intellectuals have tended to disregard generative grammar as soon as they realized that it was moving from a system of syntactic rules towards a theory based on a small amount of general constraints and principles.

On the other hand, the descriptive data on French which was collected by more traditional approaches has not always been taken into account by the French generativist school (see, on related issues, Ruwet (1991c)). French generativists have sometimes disregarded the amazing amount of data which had been accumulated by the European structuralist tradition, since this tradition was considered to be entirely hostile. As we have tried to show, this assumption was based on a partial misunderstanding.[13]

4. TWO 'POINTS OF TENSION'

We are now in a position to analyze two 'points of tension' which have developed within the field of generative grammar in France. The first point of tension is related to the history of a field adjacent to linguistics, psychonalysis. The influence of psychoanalysis on French linguistics (e.g. on the French variant of speech act theory (grammaire de l'énonciation)) cannot be denied. Generative grammar is no exception since at least one influential generativist, J.-Cl. Milner made explicit reference to that field.

As early as 1978, Milner formulated serious reservations with respect to the research program of generative grammar. He rejected in particular what he called a 'physicalist' interpretation of language in terms of a mental organ, and suggested that 'language' was to be studied in analogy to the 'taboo of incest' (cf. Milner 1978a, republished in revised form in Milner 1982a). Many linguists may have wondered what Milner had in mind. Although Milner was not very explicit about it, his proposal is best understood in the context of the current status of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Recall that the Lacanian school emerged in reaction to Freud's failure to relate his Libido theory (a qualitative description of the forces governing mental life) to any biological support, despite Freud's search for evidence from aphasia, hysteria, and language (cf. Kitcher 1992). Influenced by Saussurean linguistics and Hegelian phenomenology, Lacan proposed a system in which a part of language called 'lalangue' is conceived of as a tool for social interaction by which sexual behavior could be explained. Lacan always emphasized that his approach was not to be considered a science,[14] and that 'lalangue' has to be viewed as a social (nonbiological) concept (see Ragland-Sullivan & Bracher, eds (1991)).

Milner, who played an active role in founding the Lacanian school, tried to reconcile the Lacanian external definition of language with his work within Chomskyan linguistics. Milner addresses this problem in his (1978c) essay in Lacanian terms, claiming that 'language' (langue) is something we have a 'relation of love with', and that the 'subject of utterance' cannot be evacuated from linguistics. According to Milner, any theory of language involves a notion of communication. In our opinion, this essay contained all the ingredients of what was to become a dispute in which it is difficult to distinguish social or emotional factors from scientific arguments. In his 1989 book, Milner indeed argues that the Chomskyan program of research is disintegrating (*dégénérescent*).

Milner claims moreover that 'Chomsky reduces all language to biology'. However, Chomsky's distinction between External language and Internal language immediately disproves this claim. Since Chomsky does not say anything about the 'common sense' notion of language or 'external language', many other routes could have been followed by psychoanalysts, Lacanian or not. Since many of the criticisms adressed by the Lacanian school converge with some of the traditional themes of of analytical philosophy such as the Quinean notion of indeterminacy (see Miller 1991), or a strong versions of materialism or dualism (see, Milner's (1989) reference to Changeux (1983) and to Popper & Eccles (1977), respectively), it may suffice here to refer the reader to Chomsky's article in *The Behavioral and Brain Sciences* (1980), to the many reactions addressed to his text, and to Chomsky's answers.[15].

Let us also note that although the first part of Milner (1989) is devoted to a study of structuralism, the second part of the book often refers to an explicit system of principles and representations akin to the one of Chomsky (although Milner periodically tends to attack the existence of highly articulated mental representations on which linguistic mechanisms operate (see Milner (1984)). As in the case of structuralism, this suggests that one should distinguish between what people say and what they really do or can really do when they are actually

working to discover the inner mechanisms of language. This might indicate that, although much clarification is needed, a dialogue is still possible.

The same implicit resistance against internal mentalism can be detected in the work of other influential generativists such as N. Ruwet. His work constitutes what we would like to call the second point of tension, although it should be pointed out that Ruwet's proposals never raised the animosity described in the preceding paragraph.

In Ruwet's work, the line of argumentation against internalist mentalism takes a very different form than in Milner's. Although Ruwet never expressed his philosophical assumptions in detail, his 1991 essay is very useful to understand his view on the nature of grammar and philosophy. Elaborating on earlier work by Kuroda (1979) and Goldsmith & Woisetschlaeger (1982), Ruwet advocates a 'phenomenological ' and 'hermeneutic' approach of language. This approach makes explicit reference to the phenomenology of Heidegger (1936), and the political philosophy of Strauss (1953). Ruwet 's themes are indeed reminiscent of the classical themes of phenomenology, since syntax is taken to express certain ways of conceiving the nature of human beings and their relation to the world. Within his framework, such notions as the 'subjectivity.' or 'consciousness' of the speaker and the 'subjectivity of the linguist himself' have to be taken into account within the study of syntactic structure and its relation to semantic interpretation. On the one hand, Ruwet shares the platonism of Strauss (1953), and seems to believe that the study of the way we experience the world is as important as the study of the objects themselves. On the other hand, he also shares Heidegger's sensitivity of to the finite and limited character of human experience, and seems to be particularly skeptical about the enterprise of analytical philosophy (whose influence on generative grammar does need to be stressed, cf. Bloch 1980)). He explicitly endorses Rosen's (1991) criticism which claims that analytical philosophy is in fact an unconscious way of establishing what we could call a strong (Hegelian) version of phenomenology. Ruwet explicitly distances himself from a discipline which was never very popular in France (see Ruwet 1991b).

Phenomenology can clearly be analyzed as 'external' in its nature, from the point of view of traditional generative grammar and its traditional philosophical assumptions. It might be interesting however, to point out that many of the linguistic phenomena that Ruwet would take as supporting his view (the notion of consciousness, the fine-grained structure of the lexicon) are nowadays directly or indirectly treated in internalist terms by various generativist scholars (see the work of J. Higginbotham, K. Hale & J. Keyser, J. Gruber, among many others). The same is in fact true of Milner's views: the distinction between meaning and reference, the speaker's intentions, the notion of truth are among the issues which are seriously taken into account (cf. among others, the work of J. Higginbotham, P. Ludlow, I. Heim), although the problem of knowing whether these phenomena are part of the Grammar (in the technical sense) or not is still a subject of dispute.

At this moment, it is unclear to us how the two points of tension noted above will affect the field on the long run. For the time being, it may suffice to observe that either one of these approaches might constrain the range of relevant data in a different way, if data from language acquisition, language deficits, neurology, and other cognitive domains were to be dismissed as irrelevant. It is also unclear to us whether these scholars will participate with enthusiasm in a program of research where the notion of universal grammar is seriously radicalized, where parametric variation seems reducible to morphological properties, and where most constraints of language are reduced to effects of the interface of language with other cognitive faculties (cf. Chomsky 1992). One may wonder whether this approach would not conflict with the holistic

enterprise of phenomenology or with the socio-sexual character of 'lalangue' since different languages (in the external sense of the term) seem to be associated with different cultures and environments, and with different 'human experiences'. From this point of view, it might be symptomatic that despite important differences of style and content, both authors seem to be more at ease with fine-grained studies of a precise set of related languages, such as Latin and French (Milner) or with micro-analyses of subtle lexical variations (Ruwet), areas in which both authors make important contributions to the field in our opinion.

5.   CONCLUSION

After analyzing these two 'points of tension', we would like to stress that it is not so much the nature of the tensions themselves which are characteristic of generative grammar in France. After all, as we have noted with respect to structuralism and psychoanalysis, very similar tensions exist elsewhere despite the different forms the argumentation might take. For instance, the phenomenological approach also exists in the United States (see among others, Dreyfus (1979), (1982)). What is rather peculiar to the situation in France is that these tensions exist within the generative paradigm itself, and are mostly concentrated in Paris. We believe that these tensions should be fully acknowledged, made explicit, and worked through. One might even try to argue that a dialogue between members of the same paradigm might be fruitful and that such a dialogue, if possible, might turn what looks like a crisis into a renewal. What we find most regrettable is that the current situation has led to a state of confusion inside and outside generative grammar. This situation, of course, has not been left unexploited by other more empiricist frameworks, a state of affairs which in the long run might seriously weaken the field.

It is absolutely necessary to achieve a better knowledge and understanding of what questions are to be asked, what methods may be used, and what evidence may be thought relevant. Only in this way can a real confrontation of ideas be achieved within the paradigm of generative grammar, and between this paradigm and the various currents which constitute the French linguistics community.[16]

Hopefully the generative enterprise in France will be able to catch up with the growing programs in generative linguistics developed by its neighbors (attested by the other chapters of this volume), particularly at a moment when impressive results on a vast array of languages are being obtained (see note 6). There are several encouraging signs that such a renewal is possible.

We would like to mention the beginning of a more general distribution, across France, of generativist scholars or of scholars sympathetic towards generative grammar,[17] the existence of a new and dedicated generation of students, and the stable funding of young generativist scholars by the Fyssen Foundation.[18] Moreover, the recent invitation of outstanding generativist scholars such as M. Halle (among others), to give lectures at the Collège de France, has aroused interest in very broad circles.

It is imperative to strengthen generative grammar now, at a moment when the various branches which constitute cognitive science often (unconsciously) profess the same 'external' ideology as the one mentioned above, and when even generative grammar itself is sometimes conceived of by its own proponents (in France and elsewhere) as a purely technical enterprise.[19] This state of affairs is a dangerous one, since it might lead to a situation where the distinction between leading ideas and their technical execution would be neglected, if not forgotten, or to a situation where the distinction between notational variants and new ideas would be hard to establish. Surprisingly, it might lead to another version of the same ideology that generativists are claiming to fight against.

The paradoxical situation in France, which is without doubt in need of immediate correction, might then indicate that a broad and urgent effort of clarification and explanation is still necessary, thirty years after the generative enterprise began.

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FOOTNOTES

[1]   It should be noted that several founders of the program had left Paris VIII by the mid-seventies. J. Dubois took a position at the University of Paris X (Nanterre), M. Gross at the University of Paris VII (Jussieu), O. Ducrot at the 'École Pratique des Hautes Études'. François Dell, who had been a lecturer in the program, also left and took a full-time position with the C.N.R.S.

In this period, a smaller group of generativists was also formed at the University of Paris X (Nanterre) around J. Dubois, J.-C. Milner, A. Delaveau and F. Kerleroux, while other linguists whose work was not unrelated to generative grammar (J.-P. Boons, C. Leclère, J.-R. Vergnaud) gathered around M. Gross.

[2]   Namely, in France, the USA, Canada, Switzerland, Brazil, and Nicaragua.

[3]   A former teacher at the English Department of the University of Paris XII (Créteil), Pollock had been introduced to R. Kayne by E. Williams, who he had met in the 1974 Summer Institute organized by the Linguistic Society of America in Amherst, Massachusetts.

[4]   Chomsky's written version of the lectures (greatly expanded), published by Foris in 1981, has recently been translated into French by P. Pica, V. Déprez and A. Azoulay-Vicente (Seuil, Paris 1991).

[5]   Before obtaining a position at the University of Paris X (Nanterre) in the mid-sixties, J.-Cl. Milner visited MIT during the academic year 1965-66. He joined the University of Paris VII (Jussieu) in the mid-seventies.

[6]   Rouveret's (1990b) work shows that certain differences between Spanish, Portuguese and French can be reduced to the nature of the inflection in these respective languages. Carmen

Dobrovie-Sorin illustrates that surprising properties of Wh-movement in Rumanian can be reduced to the properties of COMP in that language. Pica's work (in collaboration with the Center for Cognitive Science at MIT, where he has been a regular visitor since 1987) has focussed on Binding Theory in an attempt to derive the alleged parametric variation within Binding Theory from the interaction of very simple morphological properties with general principles of Grammar (see for an alternative point of view Zribi-Hertz (1989) and Rebuschi (1988)). See also the work of G. Rebuschi and B. Oyharcabal on Basque (cf. also some of the articles published in Guéron (1989), Guéron and Pollock (1991), and Rouveret (1992)).

[7]   See also the framework initiated by J. Kaye, J. Lowenstamm (in Montreal) and J.-R. Vergnaud. In this framework, the notion of phonological feature is replaced by phonological element, and use is made of the notion of empty category in phonology. This move enables them to treat phonology in terms of principles and parameters similar to those employed in generative syntax (see Kaye, Lowenstamm & Vergnaud (1985) and J. Kaye (1990)).

[8]   The same contrast between France and Italy holds for other domains as well. Note, for example, that with the rare exception of P. Sauzet's work (Sauzet (1986)), the different dialects in France, whose survival is seriously threatened, have not been studied from a generative perspective. This situation contrasts again with what is observed in Italy, where this type of project is well under way, in collaboration with the broader project on Romance dialect variation initiated by R. Kayne at the City University of New York. This type of work is essential for the study of linguistic variation.

[9]   See Gross (1979), Ruwet (1991c) and Milner (1989). (See also section 4).

[10]   We are fully aware that a comprehensive treatment of the different disciplines mentioned in the text would require developments that are far beyond the scope of this paper. The reader interested in the issues is referred to Piattelli-Palmarini (1989), Lwoff & Ullman (1979), Holton & Elkana (1982), Eames (1989) Sperber (1975) and Stich (1983), among many others. We believe however that the parallel between the situation in linguistics and the situation in other related or non-related disciplines is more than a coincidence. We hope to be able to come back to this point and its relationship to other issues (e.g. the sequels of World War II) elsewhere.

        The reader interested in a review of the difficult relationship between Marxism and biology in general, and Marxism and the biology of language in particular, is referred to Jenkins (forthcoming). (see also, for a different point of view, chap 3 of Otero (1989)).

        We believe that this obvious point of friction is greatly responsible for the view, developed by many in France, according to which Chomskyan linguistics is to be associated with a form of authoritarianism (See the references quoted in Obenauer & Pollock (1990). Since Chomsky and others directly adress this and related issues, we refer the interested reader to Chomsky (1978), Otero (1989a (interview 10, interview 23), and Marshall (1980), among many others.

[11]   See Chomsky (1968) who develops very similar observations. Lévi-Strauss' structuralism here seems close to American Behaviorism for which, as Fromkin (1991) points out, science " consists of the accumulation of more and more data". When you have accumulated it all (and in terms of mechanistic principles this should be possible), you know the truth".

[12]   As pointed out to us by Morris Halle, Jakobson and Trubetzkoy's agreement on the idea that phonemes can be defined as sets of features - that is, that the features themselves constitute the phonemes (cf. Jakobson & Trubetzkoy (1975)), can be viewed as the origin of that part of

modern phonology which deals with features and feature geometry (cf. also on this point the references of Halle's work given in the text, and Halle (1992)). It is well known that Saussure (for whom phonemes were not abstract entities) was in disagreement with Jakobson and Trubetzkoy on this exact issue. Saussure's claim that the Indo-European vowel system can only be understood if we accept the existence of an abstract 'schwa' constitutes nevertheless a very important step towards non linear phonology (see, for example Gussman (1992)). Note that Saussure's dissertation, published in Leipzig in 1879 was not reprinted until 1987. It is important to note that, while much attention was paid to the somewhat general ideas of the *Cours de linguistique générale*, generativists in general did not pay too much attention to Saussure's earlier work.

C. Otero points out that our assertion that structuralism is at least partly internalist is at odds with the common belief that structuralist taxonomic procedures always lead to superficial generalizations (see Chomsky (1964), (1968) and Ronat's (1977a) interview with Chomsky). We don't challenge this point. What we challenge is the view according to which structuralists always in fact did what they said they were doing. Without entering into a detailed study of Chomsky's texts, and without denying the extraordinary character of the Chomskyan revolution, it is important to point out that, at least in the area of morphophonology, Chomsky himself acknowledges some similarities between his work and the results achieved by certain American structuralist scholars. This point suggests that our analysis can at least partly be extended to American structuralists. Chomsky (1975) claims for instance that Bloomfield's widely known "Menomini morphophonemics", "might be regarded as a segment of a generative grammar in the same sense" [of his 1951 Masters thesis]. Chomsky adds very honestly that some of Sapir's ideas "tended in a similar direction" (see also Chomsky (1983) in relation to section 4). The same point is stressed again, in an other context, in Chomsky & Halle (1968). From the point of view of the text, it is not without interest that Chomsky points out that he was unaware of the existence of this part of Bloomfield's work at the time he wrote his thesis. This unfamiliarity suggests that Bloomfield's Menomini article may not have been widely known at the time (See Bromberger & Halle (1989) on this very point). On the rather unique case of Hockett (1948), (brought to our attention by C. Otero), who advocates the psychological and biological reality of taxonomic procedures, see Chomsky (1980), and Otero (1989a:(interview 10)).

[13] This fact may have partly motivated the emergence of Gross' (1979) and Ruwet's (1991b) criticisms, which conclude in favor of more 'external procedures' such as 'taxonomic' (Ruwet) or 'distributional studies' (Gross). We think these conclusions are incorrect. (See section 4)

[14] That is not say that Lacan was not interested in the subject of science, nor that the Lacanian view on science did not influence Milner's work (see on this point, Banfield (1990b) and the references cited therein).

[15] See also Chomsky (forthcoming), and Obenauer & Pollock (1990). On the notion of 'psychological reality' and its interaction with social environment, see Chomsky (1983a). On the notion of communication, see Chomsky (1971) and on several points relevant to Milner's dicussion, Chomsky (1983b) and (1983c). See also, for another perspective Jenkins (forthcoming).

[16] On the distribution of what constitutes the different elements of the French linguistics community, see Grunig (1983) and the first issue of BUSCILA (Bulletin of the French Linguistic

Association). The association, which arose from the National Forum on Linguistics (Assises Nationales de la Linguistique) held in Paris in 1982, publishes reports about the French linguistics community on a regular basis.

[17] We could name, among others, N. Ruwet, A. Rouveret, A. Zribi-Hertz, L. Picabia, P. Bellier, R. Carter (Paris VIII), J.-Cl. Milner, D. Godard, C. Dobrovie-Sorin, J. Lowenstamm (Paris VII), J. Guéron, A. Delaveau, F. Kerleroux (Paris X), I. Simatos (Paris XIII), G. Rebuschi (Paris III), D. Sperber, P. Jacob, N. Clements, P. Pica (CNRS, Paris), B. de Cornulier (Nantes), J.-Y. Pollock (Rennes), I. Haïk (Caen), C. Muller (Bordeaux), D. Couquaux (Marseille), J.-P. Maurel (Toulouse), P. Sauzet (Aix), and J.-P. Angoujard (C.N.R.S., Nice).

[18] This foundation supported important work such as Zubizaretta' work on thematic theory and morphology and part of Pica's work on cross-linguistic variation, and more recently, some work related to the research of C. Jakubowicz (1991) on the acquisition of reflexives.

[19] See for a critical evaluation of current cognitive science Chomsky (1991b, forthcoming), where Chomsky opposes the functionalist idea according to which "computers think" and points out that what he considers the most relevant issues are rarely adressed within the current cognitive sciences. Chomsky's remarks and the general discussion of the text leads us to believe that it would be desirable to establish an interdisciplinary Institute in France which would be somewhat similar to the Dutch Max-Planck Institute. The recent creation of a division for the promotion of Cognitive Sciences within the French National Center for Research (CNRS) (the so-called 'Cogni-Sciences Program') might indicate that this is within reach.