

I N T R O D U C T I O N

This dissertation is intended to be purely descriptive and no claims whatsoever are made here to any contribution to theory. The object of the work is to explore the possibilities of the application of Fillmore's Case Grammar to another language, Marathi, which as far as I know has not been described in this model. I am aware that this is a little presumptuous especially because the Marathi language has not been comprehensively described in modern linguistic terms. Descriptions of some aspects of Marathi in structuralist terms have appeared.

During the sixties some descriptions of some Indian languages were carried out at certain centres of linguistic studies like the Deccan College, Pune and Central Institute of English, Hyderabad. Of course, some universities also encouraged descriptions of Indian languages. But as far as I know not much work has been done on Indian languages, particularly, after Generative Transformational model. This presents a special problem because case grammars have developed after Transformational Generative grammar although many of these are modifications to Transformational grammar as Fillmore's

own case grammar. So the difficulties are further compounded. All that is offered by way of 'rules of transformation' in describing the derivational history of sentences from the deep structures to surface realizations are extremely tentative. I have used some rules in Chapter II, like - 'Subject fronting', Verb shunting, 'deletion of case marker', 'insertion of tense into the verb' etc. Some of these rules are those used by Fillmore himself in the derivation of English sentences. But the new ones we have posited for Marathi are our own and we have no theoretical or descriptive support for this.

Fillmore's position is that the semantic representation of sentences which he considers as the base component may be universal. It is tempting to state that my description of the derivation of the Marathi sentences from the same base component, that is, in terms of semantic representation may lend support to his theory. But I am aware that the amount of rigour required for such a claim has not gone into this work.

The scope of this work may be stated as simply an exercise in description following very closely what Fillmore himself has done in his work (Fillmore, 1968). But before taking up that task I have given a short review of the theoretical background to the proposal of case

grammar in Chapter I. This comprises a bird's eye view of the development of Chomskyan Transformational Generative theory and the later branching off of the same theory into the interpretive and generative schools. I have then given a short account of Fillmore's case grammar within the generative school.

In Chapter II, I have elaborated Fillmore's case concepts and given an account of his base component and transformational rules. In order to derive Marathi sentences I have used verbs apparently equivalent to those used by Fillmore in his derivation. The only change I have made is in the organization of the set of verbs. I have divided the verbs into the three traditional categories, Verbs of Action, Verbs of Perception, and Verbs of Incomplete Predication. I have really no theoretical justification for doing this. But I must say that this organization proved to be handy for the purposes of coping with the task. And, because some problems presented themselves in the description of the second and third categories of verb, I took recourse to using surreptitiously Halliday's theory of transitivity. This together with some of the insights from Fillmore's modified theory of 1971 seemed to solve some of the problems left unsolved by Fillmore 1968, and others that I confronted in my work.

In Chapter III, I have made some observations on Fillmore's case grammar. Most of what is said here is a review of available literature. No claim to any originality is made here. I have only added some observations viewing Fillmore from the point of view of Halliday, and also based on what I learnt in the course of applying Fillmore to Marathi.

In the course of doing the Second Chapter the Marathi sentences I have used are my own. In other words for the purposes of this work I have used myself as an informant and being a native speaker of Marathi I have also used my own judgements about the acceptability or otherwise of Marathi sentences used therein. I am aware that there may be differences of opinion about this.

The work has been reported following MLA style Sheet. All references in the body of the text are given by referring to the name of the author and year of publication. At the end of each Chapter a list of all the references is given in alphabetical order of author names. At the end of the dissertation a consolidated bibliography is provided.

CHAPTER I" The Case for Case " : Theoretical Background

Fillmore's first comprehensive case grammar was formulated in 1968, although he himself had put out some seminal ideas earlier in 1966. He made substantial changes to his theory in 1971. Besides Fillmore, several other scholars have contributed to the study of case, (Halliday : 1967, 1968, 1969; Quirk et al : 1972; Anderson, 1981; Chafe, 1970). For the purposes of this study, that is, 'deep case categories of Marathi' I am using Fillmore's 1968 model.

Most studies mentioned above, represent modifications to the now most influential linguistic theory, Transformational Generative theory. This is particularly true of Fillmore's, which I am using. It may not be out of place, therefore, to review briefly the motivation behind case grammars in general and Fillmore's in particular.

Post-structuralist linguisticians including Chomsky became concerned about the neglect of semantics in the Structuralist theories and they felt the need for bringing semantics within the scope of linguistic

description. The direction taken by linguistic studies within the transformational frame after Chomsky (1957) has been brilliantly analysed by Allen, et al (1971). In what follows I am going to summarize this before giving an account of case grammars.

The problems that confront the linguist when he tries to "define the place of semantics in a transformational generative theory of language are summed up by the following two questions. What are the precise differences, if any, between syntactic and semantic phenomena? Given that there are differences, what is the relationship between the syntactic and semantic components of the grammar? Should the syntactic component act as input to the semantic component? Thus, are syntactic phenomena not only independent of semantic phenomena but somehow 'prior' to them? Or should the reverse be the case? Further, if we decide that syntax should constitute the input to the semantic component, which syntactic subcomponent of the grammar should determine this input - the deep (or base) component, the surface (or transformational) component, or both?"

"Traditionally, the difference between syntactic and semantic phenomena, or between 'grammar' and 'meaning' has been reflected by the difference between

grammars and dictionaries, both of which have always been regarded as essential for the study of language. So in traditional grammar linguistic data was divided into grammatical and lexical phenomena. It captured the difference between semantic and syntactic representations. But without stating the exact nature of the relationship between them with the development of transformational generative theories of language it became clear that a linguistic description which treats the grammar and the lexicon as two separate entities without rules to interrelate them cannot serve as a descriptively adequate specification of the facts of language, or of the competence of native speakers." It was inevitable, therefore, to take account of the semantic relations between words in a sentence.

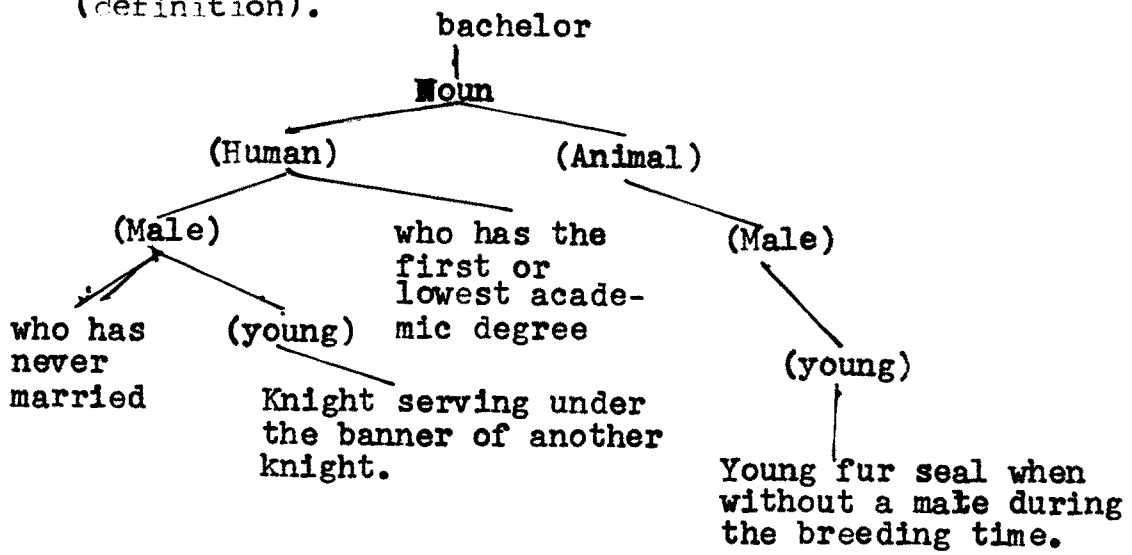
Taking into consideration these facts linguists recently have become aware of and concerned with the relationship between syntax and semantics and have indicated the possibility of achieving some degree of integration between these two areas of linguistic description. Chomsky's own approach (Chomsky, 1965) to the semantic interpretation of sentences is based on the work of Katz and Fodor (1963).

"Katz and Fodor define the semantic component of a linguistic theory as a 'projection device' which interprets abstract syntactic objects and which consists of a dictionary and a set of projection rules. An ideal dictionary will provide a meaning for each of the lexical items in the language, and the projection rules will assign a semantic interpretation to the strings which are generated by the syntactic base component?" It would be important to note that "in this system semantic interpretations are assigned uniquely to deep structures rather than to surface structures".

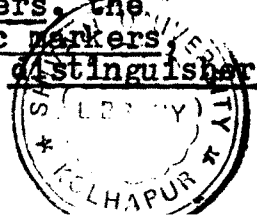
Katz and Fodor's theory is often described as the (transformational) interpretive semantics. According to their theory, "each lexical item in the deep structure 'receives a meaning' on the basis of semantic information provided in the dictionary. The projection rules then combine the meanings of the individual lexical items to arrive at a meaning for the whole sentence. This arrangement is the formal expression of a speaker's ability to understand any new sentence on the basis of words which it contains, and which the speaker already knows. However, a speaker does not obtain a meaning for a sentence on the basis of the lexical items alone. He is able to determine meanings not only for individual words and whole sentences, but also for the

significant sub-parts of sentences, such as a Noun Phrase, Verb Phrase etc. The projection rules reconstruct these aspects of a speaker's semantic competence by 'working upwards' through the various levels of constituent structure, establishing a reading for each constituent of the sentence before they yield a reading for the sentence as a whole."

According to Katz and Fodor the components of a Semantic theory are Dictionary and Projection rules. "The meaning of a sentence is a function of the meanings of the parts of the sentence. The system of Projection rules is just this function". A Dictionary entry would contain (1) Grammatical Markers (Noun, Verb etc.), (2) Semantic Markers (Human, Male...), (3) Distinguishers (definition).



N.B. The unenclosed elements are grammatical markers, the elements enclosed in parenthesis are semantic markers, and the expressions enclosed in brackets are distinguishers.



In, for example : "The old bachelor finally died."

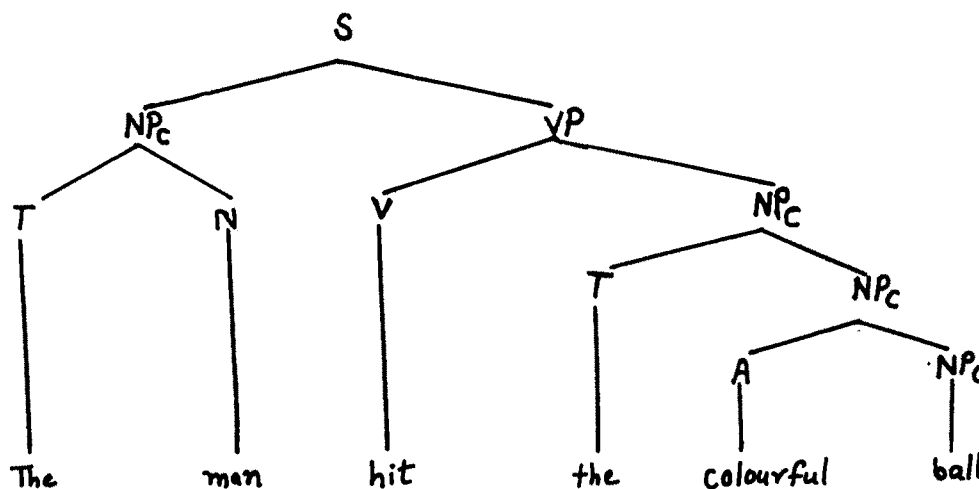
a feature from the distinguisher (YOUNG) is elevated to the position of a semantic marker.

Similarly, context sensitive dictionary entries : honest = virtuous in the context of female, provide for distinctions of certain kind.

Projection Rules :

Within Chomskyan framework "A sentence and its structural description provide the input to a semantic theory. A semantic theory has as its output a semantic interpretation".

Dictionary entries for each of the lexical items in the string of lexical items is the input to the projection rules. Projection Rules interpret the string by retaining only those readings which are compatible with the next lower level element in the phrase structure. The Projection rules apply from Bottom to top.



The projection rules apply from bottom to top of a P.S. tree amalgamating each successive element at the nodes marked by grammatical markers. So, the above string will be interpreted as follows :

Dictionary definition for ball = (1) round object (2) social activity (3) solid missile.

The "phrase" colourful ball selects only the following two readings :

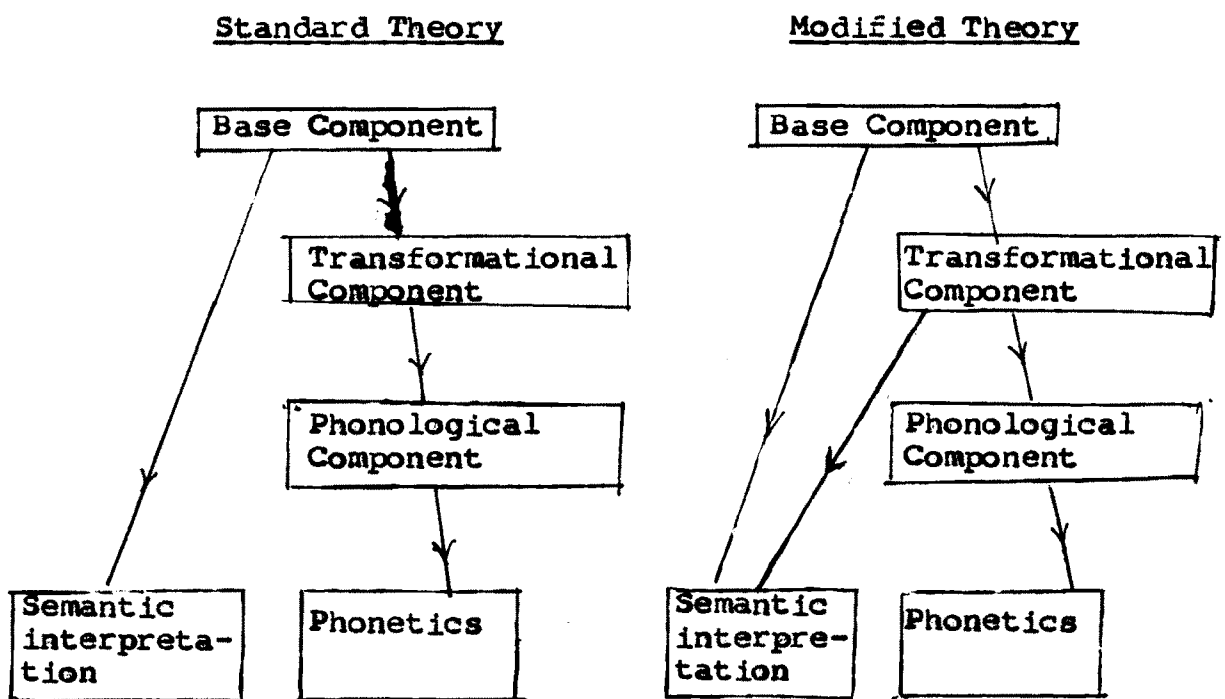
- 1) Colourful ball₁ - Social activity
- 2) Colourful ball₂ - Globular object

Further, the NP with the definite article the has a discourse function with both readings.

NP	1) the colourful	ball ₁
	2) the colourful	ball ₂
VP	1) hit the colourful	ball ₁
	2) hit the colourful	ball ₂
S	The man hit the colourful ball ₂	

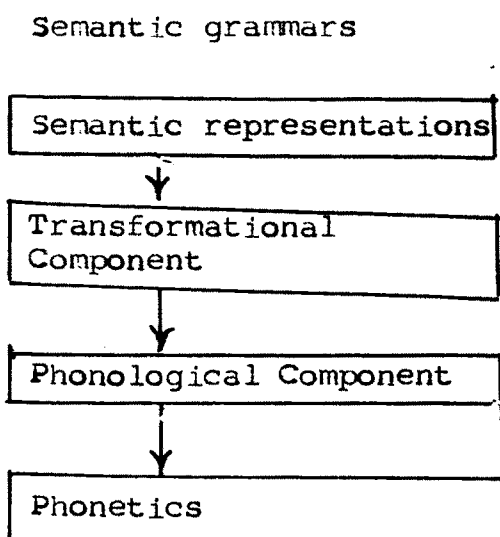
The NP (Subject) the man disambiguates the VP hit the colourful ball from other NP's (subjects) like A tragedy with the features [- CONCRETE] and [- ANIMATE] , as in "A tragedy hit the colourful ball₁" would be interpreted as having only one reading i.e. "Social activity".

These proposals reflect Chomsky's insistence on the independence of syntax. And the base component of defining deep syntactic structures occupies the central place in Chomsky's theory of language. The dictum in Katz and Fodor's linguistic theory was 'transformations don't change meaning'. But Chomsky has recently argued that "this restriction on the nature of transformations is too strong and there are cases where transformations have semantic effects, although these may be of a limited nature. And the difference between the standard theory and the modified theory concerning input-output relations may be represented diagrammatically as follows :



Some linguists have, however, argued that such meaning differences as referred to above could "all be expressed in the deep component of the grammar if the deep component were of a Semantic rather than syntactic nature". This has led to a different kind of Generative Transformational theory popularly known as Generative Semantics, such as proposed by McCawley and Fillmore. In this kind of theory referred to by Allen as Semantic grammars the input would be in terms of semantic representations.

And the "Basically unilinear structure of the input - output relations of a semantically-based grammar, as opposed to the ⁿtriangular organization of the standard theory (shown in the above digram) may be represented diagrammatically as follows":



Case Grammars :

Traditional studies of cases approach the problem in terms of form and functions. A definite set of cases, usually seven or eight, were identified on the basis of the forms of substantives in the language. They were given notional labels such as Nominative, Accusative, Ablative, and so on. The various functions of these cases in the language were described in such terms as 'Ablative of Instrument', 'Dative of person Affected', 'Accusative of Measure' and so on. (Dillon, 1971, 68-70). In short, case forms had very often several grammatical functions. It was also recognised that a single function was sometimes fulfilled by more than one form. My own study of Marathi cases described in Chapter II makes references to these phenomena. It is clear that such descriptions are based on surface phenomena.

On the contrary, transformational Generative grammar begins with deep structure phenomena or base component and tries to trace its history systematically until the actual utterances in terms of phonetic realizations are arrived at. We have already seen that within this school two different ~~types~~ of approach have emerged - the syntactic grammars and the semantic grammars. And Fillmore's Case grammar belongs to the latter type.

It will be noticed that the base component in Fillmore is semantic component as against Chomskyan's syntactic component. It may be interesting to note some details of whatever little attention is paid to the description of grammatical functions in terms of subject object and predicate in Chomsky (1965).

Chomsky's structural description of the syntactic component is given in terms of categorial labels such as S, NP, VP, Det, Aux, V etc. called the phrase marker. Such a description apparently does not provide for distinctions between subject NP's, Object NP's and so on. In other words, grammatical functions are not indicated, and, therefore, such a description cannot provide any clue to the 'meaning' of sentences generated by these Phrase-markers. Chomsky proposes to solve this problem by defining the functions of NP's in terms of category domination. The following definitions are proposed :

- 1) 'Subject of ' $[NP, S]$ meaning the NP immediately dominated by S is the subject.
- 2) 'Predicate of' $[VP, S]$ - meaning the VP immediately dominated by S functions as Predicate of the sentence.
- 3) 'Direct Object of ' $[NP, VP]$ - meaning the NP directly dominated by VP is the Direct Object.

4) 'Main Verb of' [V, VP] - meaning V directly dominated by VP is the main verb.

(Chomsky, 1965, 71)

Again, just as 'the complex symbol N is rewritten in terms of subcategorial labels like [\pm Human] and [\pm Abstract] (Chomsky, 1965, 82), it may appear that the complex symbol V could also be rewritten as follows :

$V \rightarrow$ [\pm V, \pm Progressive, \pm Transitive,
 \pm Abstract subject, \pm Animate Object]

(Chomsky, 1965, 90).

But we find that such a formula is inadequate for taking care of selectional restrictions associated with V. Chomsky has suggested the following rewrite for V :

$V \rightarrow$ CS/-

NP Adjective Predicate-Nominal Like + Predicate-Nominal Prepositional-Phrase 'that' + S' NP (of + Det + N) S' etc.

The lexicon might not contain items like :

markers which is central to his theory and relegates semantic function to the position of a mere interpretive Component. According to generative semanticists^{ci} this position is questionable. (Seuren, 1974). Among the generative semanticists, that is, scholars who believe that the semantic component is central to linguistic theory, Fillmore is one. His case Grammar is an attempt to give a deep structure representation of sentences which he believes may be universal.

Workers on Transformational Generative grammar represent attempts towards establishing language universals in terms of syntactic structures. They "have generally addressed themselves to three intimately related but distinguishable orders of questions : (a) what are the formal and substantive universals of syntactic structures ? (b) Is there a universal base and if so, what are its properties ? (c) Are there universally valid constraints on the ways in which deep structure representations of sentences are given, expression in the surface structure ?" (Fillmore, 1968, 2).

While most other scholars have concentrated, with very little success, to find answers to the first and third questions. Fillmore's essay "The Case for Case" is "intended as a contribution to the study of formal and substantive syntactic universals" that is a possible answer to the second question. (p.2)

It may be useful to note at this stage what formal and substantive universals are -

"Concerning formal universals we find such proposals as Chomsky's, that each grammar has a base component capable of characterizing the underlying syntactic structure of just the sentences in the language at hand and containing at least a set of transformation rules whose function is to map the underlying structures provided by the base component utterances in that language (Chomsky, 1965, pp. 27-30). A representative statement on substantive syntactic universals is Lyons' assertion (1966, pp. 211, 223) that every grammar requires such categories as Noun, Predicator and Sentence but that other grammatical categories and features may be differently arranged in different languages." (Fillmore, 1968, 1).

In the next Chapter we shall consider the nature of Fillmore's case component consisting ostensibly of universal case frames into which verbs of specific languages can be fitted, and frame features which specify the classification of that verb in that language.

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