

CHAPTER IIISome Remarks on Fillmore

"The best description is that which, comprehensiveness presupposed, is maximally grammatical : that is, makes maximum use of the theory to account for a maximum amount of the data" (Halliday quoted in Kress, 1976, 56).

Viewed in this light Fillmore's Case Theory (1969) appears to be wanting. He himself is aware that his case inventory is open to additions and modifications. He states that "some additional cases also may be needed" (p.25). Of course, he has modified his theory in his later versions (1971). As we have seen he has proposed the following cases in his first model (1968).

Agentive, Instrumental, Dative, Factitive, Locative, Objective and Benefactive.

But among these he has neither given the definition of Benefactive nor has he elucidated the concept with examples. He only mentions that to realize this case on the surface level "the B preposition is 'for' " (1968, 32) and he says (26, Fn. 36):

"B, too, is involved in the selection of verbs in the sense that some verbs do not accept B modification (\*He is tall for you) but the restriction there may have more to do with 'dependency relations between cases' than with

dependencies directly connected with the verbs. It appears, in fact, that those verbs which allow 'outer L' and B modification are precisely those which take agents. I have no ideas on how these dependencies can be stated, but it would appear that the second L and the B can appear only in sentences containing A's."

The Objective case is mentioned as the most neutral case. The definition of this case leaves a good deal to be desired, as he states that it is "the case of anything representable by a noun...." It may best be described as a blanket label for residual case.

In Fillmore's revised version (1971) there are some improvements. In this model he has proposed the following cases :

Agent, Instrument, Location, Goal, Experiencer, Source, Object.

The Dative case of the earlier model (1968) sometimes becomes Goal and sometimes Location. (Dillon, 1977, 71). The new case categories in the revised model (1971) are : Experiencer, Source and Goal. Amongst them the case categories Source and Goal seem to offer a solution to the problem of Adverbials, which was left unsolved by him. Consider the following examples :

206. It fell off the table.
207. We found an idiot in him.
208. We found a great leader in him.

In these sentences the underlined NP' s would be Source. So it appears that at least some of the previous O's are included in the new case category of Goal.

The case category of Experiencer in the modified version (1971) takes into account some verbs of perception like see and hear. Observe the following sentences :

209. John saw the ghost.
210. Robert heard a loud noise.

These sentences contain verbs of perception - See and hear, and John and Robert are the cases of Experiencer. This is so in Marathi too :

211. रामाला भूत दिसले.
212. स्तीशला मोठा आवाज ऐकू आला.

In these sentences रामाला and स्तीशला are treated as cases of Dative in Fillmore's first model (1968) and in his latter version (1971) it is labelled as the case of Experiencer.

Halliday on Cases :

Like Fillmore, Halliday also discusses the deep structures of language . Halliday speaks of the

participants (participating entities) and their different roles. And, what Fillmore calls 'the state or action identified by the verb' is called 'process' by Halliday. He says that "the term 'process' is understood in a very broad sense, to cover all phenomena to which a specification of time may be attached." But Halliday deals only with the English language. He does not claim his theory to be universal. But the types of processes described by him are interesting. He has classified clauses into three types. They are : (1) Action clauses, (2) Mental Process Clauses, and (3) Relational clauses.

The motivation for this division is the participant/s in the clause and the different roles played by it/them. He also clearly states that "a participant is not necessarily human or even animate ; the term PARTICIPATING ENTITY would be more accurate, but we shall use 'participant' as being less clumsy" (Kress, 1976, 160). The Action Clause involves the participant Actor and the role of Actor may roughly correspond to Fillmore's Agent. In this category he includes verbs of action which involve an active participant.

In Halliday's Mental Process clause two participants are involved. They are the PROCESSER who is "a human or at least animate being whose consciousness - feeling, perception - is involved". The other participant is the

PHENOMENON which is object quality, event etc. In this type of process Halliday deals with verbs of perception like - see, look, like, please, fear, frighten, convince, believe, say, speak etc.

In the third clause, that is, relational clause, the process indicates "a relation between two participating entities or between one participating entity and an attribute". This relation is shown by the insertion of 'be'. In this clause, there is an ATTRIBUTE and the ATTRIBUEND. For example :

213. She is a teacher.

214. She looks happy.

In these sentences a teacher and happy are the attributes and She is the Attribuend.

Another type of Relational clause is that which shows the relation of IDENTIFIED (element to be 'identified') and IDENTITY ('identity'). This type includes verbs like Seem, look, appear, sound etc.

The different labels attached to the participants and their different roles given by Halliday look more attractive. These three types of clauses are found also in Marathi ( as we have described them in Chapter 2 under three different categories of verbs ), albeit under more

traditional labels.) It may be suggested that the three types of clauses proposed by Halliday are applicable to English as well as to Marathi, and as they are in quite generalised forms, perhaps, they may be applicable to other languages also at the deep level. So although Halliday's model is quite different and also his motivation is different, it appears that at the deepest level, some of the phenomena may be universal.

We have described Halliday in some detail, as scholars considering Case Grammars generally tend to neglect him.

Now let us turn to a general evaluation of the treatment of cases in modern Linguistics. Here again, I will depend on Dillon (1977).

Dillon has presented a comprehensive though short, account of recent treatments of deep-cases. According to him, "Certain roles (he prefers the label 'semantic role' to 'deep cases') keep turning<sup>up</sup> in the grammars of diverse languages, and in recent years a number of linguists have tried to define a basic set of semantic roles that might be useful in the description of all languages." He notes that the labels and definitions differ from scholar to scholar and that they hope that eventually the discrepancies would be removed. However, Dillon himself is not optimistic about this. He thinks that such a thing will never happen because the case<sup>4</sup> concepts have each a central

core or prototype that most analysts would agree to and a number of associated properties, but they have fringes and overlappings with the fringes of other roles where a decision to assign one role instead of another will inevitably be somewhat arbitrary."

He illustrates this in a tabular form indicating the different case roles assigned by different scholars occurring the same set of sentences. The table is reproduced in the following page. It is obvious from the table that except in certain cases, sentence (1), (2) and (5) the labels are diverse. If the same set of sentences was analysed with Halliday's concepts it might have revealed further differences. However, there are problems in assigning role labels in Halliday's system as according to him the concept 'Process' which involves the notion of 'transitivity' is a property of the clause as a whole like 'mood' and 'theme'.

It is interesting to note how the same phenomenon considered in an altogether different system, that is, Halliday's theory can present a completely different view.

- ( 1 ) John broke the window with a stone.
- ( 2 ) John broke the window with a stone.
- ( 3 ) John broke the window with a stone.
- ( 4 ) The window broke.
- ( 5 ) The book is in the study.
- ( 6 ) They sent a wire to Washington.
- ( 7 ) They gave the prize to Mary.
- ( 8 ) Mary has the prize.
- ( 9 ) He washed the floor for Mary.
- (10) John saw the ghost.
- (11) He made a car out of soap.
- (12) It fell off the table.
- (13) He made a car out of soap.

agent	Agent	Agent	Agent	erg
instrument	Instrument	Instrument	Instrument ?	
affected	Objective	Patient	Object	nom
affected	Objective	Patient	Object	nom
locative	Locative	Location	Location	loc
locative	Locative	Location	Goal	loc
recipient	Dative	Beneficiary	Goal	loc
recipient	Dative	Beneficiary	Location	loc
recipient	Benefactive	Beneficiary	Goal	?loc
recipient	Dative	Experiencer	Experiencer	loc
-	-	-	Source	abl
-	-	-	Source	abl
effected	Factitive	Complement	Goal	nom

a Quirk et al. (1972) is basically a development of Halliday (1967-68).

b Fillmore-I is the model in Fillmore (1968) adopted in Stockwell et al. (1973), where neutral is used for Objective.

c Fillmore-II is the sketch given in Fillmore (1971).



( Dillon, 1977, 71.)



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New Tersey : Prentic Hall.
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- 3 Fillmore, C.J., 1971. "Some Problems for Case Grammar" in O'Brien, Richard J. (-eds.) : Georgetown Monograph Series in Language and Linguistics, no. 24. Washington : Georgetown University Press.
- 4 Kress, Gunther ed., 1976. Halliday : System and Function in Language. Oxford : Oxford University Press.