
This valuable addition to the literature on anaphora and reference tracking addresses the problem of accounting for anaphor choice and resolution in discourse. Ariel provides a particularly systematic survey of the types of NP anaphora to be accounted for, considers the implications of work done in psycholinguistics and discourse analysis for a general theory of anaphora, and presents her candidate, 'Accessibility theory', as a general account for context selection, although only referential anaphora is examined in this book. Accessibility theory is said to form a part of 'linguistic pragmatics' and to be situated between a syntactic theory such as GB, on the one hand, and a theory of general pragmatics such as relevance theory, on the other. Although the concept 'accessibility' is attributed to Relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986), the work bears obvious (and acknowledged) similarities to work by Givón (1983) and others. The overriding impression is of a linguist's version of Evans (1982).

Accessibility theory is described in detail in an introductory chapter. The basic claim is that speakers let hearers know the degree of accessibility to the hearer of the entity to be retrieved. They do this through their choice of referring expression, which linguistically encodes the relative accessibility of its referent. Accessibility is determined by the inherent 'Salience' of the antecedent (a function of its topicality and the degree of competition from other possible antecedents) and the 'Unity' between antecedent and anaphor (the actual distance between them in the text and other factors contributing to conceptual connectedness). Although this notion of 'accessibility' may seem superficially identical to previous discourse-analytic notions, it is claimed to differ from them in that it is not grounded in an idea of 'geographic' location according to the 'physical' source containing the relevant context material, but refers to 'mental' location within the memories and mental representations of speakers. The association of particular types of referring expressions with particular types of 'geographic' context (proper names with encyclopaedic knowledge, demonstratives with physical situation, pronouns with
immediate linguistic context) is epiphenomenal upon this more basic function. This important step makes it possible to make coherent sense of familiar evidence that most types of referring expressions can be used to refer to entities found in all types of context and that it is not simply recency of mention which is important in determining the ease of accessing an antecedent and hence the form of the anaphoric expression which may be used.

The remainder of the book divides into three parts. In the first Ariel presents a typology of referring expressions in discourse within the terms of Accessibility theory. A chapter is devoted to each of three types of Accessibility Marker – Low, Intermediate and High (crudely comprising proper names and definite descriptions; deictic expressions; and pronouns and gaps). However, subsequently it is argued that such a division is an oversimplistic representation of what is in fact a continuum with many distinctions in degree of accessibility. In Chapter 4 a general Accessibility Scale is proposed which is in general accord with existing hierarchies such as that of Givón (1983) but which ranks more expression types than are normally included in such scales. This is not presented as strictly universal but it is suggested that the same three criteria, of ‘Informativity’, ‘Rigidity’ and ‘Attenuation’, mediate the association between linguistic form and degree of cognitive accessibility in any language. The second part of the book considers sentence-level anaphora. Ariel argues that sentence anaphora is subject to the same accessibility considerations as discourse anaphora, and in Chapters 5 and 6 considers some of the implications of her findings for work in Binding theory. Chapter 7 is important for its detailed discussion of the effect of the nature of the relation between clauses on cross-clause anaphoric relations, a topic which has been relatively neglected. Ariel's notion of 'Unity' is promising, although she does not provide an adequate theoretical underpinning for it which would justify the inclusion of both macro-level connectivity between topics, frames, points of view, and so on, and sentence-level degree of connectivity between clauses (a similar criticism could be made for her notion of Salience and the criteria of Informativity, Rigidity and Attenuation). Finally, in Part III of the book Ariel considers the interaction of Accessibility with pragmatic and social aspects of language use. In Chapter 8 she describes the way she sees her theory as fitting with the general pragmatic theory of Relevance. Accessibility is seen as a conventionalized device to aid addressees to establish Relevance; together the two theories account for all aspects of the speaker's choice of referring expression and the addressee's interpretation of it. Chapter 9 considers uses which are apparent counterexamples to Accessibility theory, focusing upon gender issues.

The account is impressive in its coverage of anaphoric phenomena from different language types, with discussion not just of the more familiar NP anaphora and gapping from European languages, but also such phenomena as switch-reference and zero anaphora in languages such as Chinese which also lack rich verbal inflection. One omission is a discussion of logophoric pronouns and long-distance reflexives, which are relevant to the claims made that the Accessibility Scale correlates on the one hand with a scale of formal attenuation and on the other with scales of speaker empathy with the referent and speaker commitment to the proposition (see Chapter 9). The textual data used are mostly news media and literary works, with a general paucity of conversational data and lack of consideration of possible differences between genres. The book covers an immense amount of ground and is densely packed with brief reports of experimental and discourse-analytic findings, descriptions of phenomena in a range of different languages and summaries of other researchers' claims, all in aid of presenting a comprehensive picture of the evidence for and implications of Accessibility theory. For example, Chapter 8 contains a whirlwind tour of the implications of the theory for the notion of presupposition and for modularity. Although this is demanding for the reader, there are helpful summary remarks at the ends of sections, and its breadth of coverage will make the book an exciting starting point for further work on many fronts.

However, the book's scope inevitably means that much of what is discussed is covered in quite a superficial way, and since few readers will have detailed knowledge of all the different literatures or languages referred to, the author bears a heavy responsibility for accuracy and clarity of presentation. In this connexion I would have preferred to see consistent citation of original language examples rather than just morphemic glosses. The presentation is generally clear, with a few notable exceptions (in particular in Chapter 9, where on p. 205, for example, a description of raising/lowering accessibility appears to contradict the use of the terms high/low accessibility elsewhere). As far as I can tell, there are remarkably few errors in the book, either substantive or typographical. However, I did note several inaccuracies in the
description of Foley & Van Valin's (1984) work (consistently cited as 1983 in this book). For instance, the description of their notion of cosubordination on pages 135 and 146 is inaccurate (cosubordinate clauses need not lack a core argument supplied by a matrix clause and lie at the 'strong' end of the scale of clausal bonding not in between subordinate and co-ordinate clauses). The discussion of switch-reference with 'passive' subjects on pages 142 and 146 is also misleading because the languages in question generally lack subject-promotion processes and the arguments might better be identified as morphologically marked patients or undergoers. There are also occasional problems with argumentation. For example, on page 161 it is claimed that for some switch-reference systems 'same subject' and 'different subject' morphemes are Accessibility Markers differing in their degree of accessibility, but given the overall conception of Accessibility Markers this implies that DS morphemes are used when the subject is disjoint from that of the matrix clause but nevertheless otherwise accessible to the hearer, which does not seem to be the case.

There are some areas where the broad scope of the book has led to more general deficiencies. Although it is an important part of Ariel's argument that her notion of Accessibility is a cognitive principle and that the theory is underpinned by work on memory, nowhere is a sufficiently detailed summary given of psychological work in this area. Although reference to psycholinguistic evidence for the theoretical claims made is welcome, in many cases it is cursory, and more discussion could usefully have been given of the connections with computational work on anaphor resolution. Notions such as scripts, frames and schemas are not distinguished (just as elsewhere terms such as 'discourse topic' are used without explicit definition). Further, although Ariel suggests in her introductory chapter that a Parallel Distributed Processing conception of memory is necessary for her theory (15–16), in later chapters she reverts to discussion in terms of more traditional theories of memory (54). The variety of subsidiary claims and arguments means that although the major thrust of the book is clear, interesting related notions such as what we should take as the appropriate processing model of reference resolution lose the prominence they might otherwise have.

Despite these concerns, the book offers much of interest to linguists from numerous theoretical domains, including GB, functional grammar and discourse analysis, language typology and even historical linguistics, as well as to other researchers on natural language in related disciplines of cognitive science.

REFERENCES


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(Received 3 January 1992)


The term 'Functional Grammar' has multiple reference. In France the term has long been used for work by André Martinet and followers (for instance, Mahmoudian, 1979), while in the systemic corners of anglophone linguistics reference is made to recent Hallidayan work (Halliday, 1985). In North America it is not impossible to find a linguist who would only suspect a partly felicitous allusion to 'Lexical Functional Grammar'. Still, it is probably correct to say that most linguists now associate the label 'Functional Grammar' and the abbreviation 'FG' with the model developed by Simon C. Dik (University of Amsterdam) and followers. But whether they also know why the model is interesting or how it differs from other theories of