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VOLUME 13

# CROSSING THE BOUNDARIES IN LINGUISTICS

*Studies Presented to Manfred Bierwisch*

*Edited by*

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MANFRED BIERWISCH

## PREFACE

It was in the course of 1980 that it dawned upon several friends and colleagues of Manfred Bierwisch that a half century had passed since his birth in 1930. Manfred's youthful appearance had prevented a timely appreciation of this fact, and these friends and colleagues are, therefore, not at all embarrassed to be presenting him, almost a year late, with a *Festschrift* which will leave a trace of this noteworthy occasion in the archives of linguistics. It should be realized, however, that the delay would have easily extended to 1990 if all those who had wanted to contribute to this book had in fact written their chapters. Under the pressure of actuality, several colleagues who had genuinely hoped or even promised to contribute, just couldn't make it in time. Still, their greetings and best wishes are also, be it tacitly, expressed by this volume.

Especially important for the archives would be a record of the celebrated one's works and physical appearance. For the convenience of present and future generations this *Festschrift* contains a bibliography of Manfred Bierwisch's scientific publications, which forms a chapter in itself. The frontispiece photograph was taken unawares by one of our accomplices.

The title of this *Festschrift* may allow for free associations of various sorts. One interpretation, however, should not be missed: there is the existential presupposition that boundaries do exist in linguistics. One of the most characteristic aspects of Manfred's work is that these boundaries are recognized. Bierwisch will never confuse syntax, semantics and pragmatics, nor, under his hands, will linguistics fade into psychology. But at the same time the conscious crossing of these boundaries is an equally characteristic trait of his approach in the study of language: Manfred Bierwisch has published in almost all areas of linguistics, and has worked in many adjacent disciplines. The list includes syntax, semantics, phonology, pragmatics, historical linguistics, language variation, aphasiology, graphematics, psycholinguistics – especially language and memory, and language and music – to mention the most important ones. In performing these wide-ranging studies, Manfred Bierwisch shows a trait somewhat similar to what we know about Leibniz's way of work: it is all done in the solitary enclosure of the library, but at the same time in intensive interaction with the major intellectual currents of his

era. Boundaries don't count here; Manfred quietly resides in the midst of his web, registering far away vibrations just as well as close-by turbulence.

Leibniz, the great founder of the Akademie der Wissenschaften, would doubtless appreciate the fact that, three centuries later, his spirit is still alive in this illustrious place.

*Nijmegen, The Netherlands*

W. K.

W. L.

## HARMONY PROCESSES\*

Harmony processes characteristically regulate the distribution of a given feature or feature complex in specific, not necessarily contiguous phonemes of a word. For example, in Finnish words the back-front contrast in rounded and in low vowels – but not in nonlow unrounded vowels – agrees with that of the stem, whereas in Navaho words, the contrast of anterior-nonanterior in coronal affricates and continuants – but not in other phonemes – is determined by the last coronal affricate or continuant in the word. Harmony processes fall into two distinct types depending on whether the harmonic features propagate in one direction only, or whether the propagation occurs in both directions. We shall term the former type, directional harmony, and the latter type, dominant harmony. We propose that the facts of dominant harmony are best described with the devices of autosegmental phonology, whereas those of directional harmony are best characterized by making use of the tree construction developed in recent work in metrical phonology.<sup>1</sup> We illustrate these proposals in sections 1 and 2 below; in section 3 we compare the descriptive effectiveness of the two mechanisms in dealing with different bodies of data.

## 1. DOMINANT HARMONY ILLUSTRATED

In languages with dominant harmony the vowels fall into two sets: a dominant set and a recessive set. As a first approximation one can say that the morphemes of the language are of two kinds. Dominant morphemes have vowels which belong to the dominant set and which never alternate with vowels in the recessive set. Recessive morphemes, on the other hand, appear in two different shapes: in words containing a dominant morpheme the vowels of recessive morphemes belong to the dominant set; in words without dominant morphemes, all vowels belong to the recessive set.

A typical example of dominant harmony is provided by the East African language (or language group) Kalenjin. As described by Beatrice Hall et al. (1974) Kalenjin has the two sets of vowels shown in (1a).

## 1

I will close with a quote from Frost himself. In an article on poetry called 'The Figure a Poem Makes,' he says the following, which feels to me not far from my own present understanding of the relationship between creation and intention:

Just as the first mystery was how a poem could have a tune in such a straightness as metre, so the second mystery is how a poem can have wildness and at the same time a subject that shall be fulfilled.

It should be of the pleasure of a poem itself to tell how it can. The figure a poem makes. It begins in delight and ends in wisdom. The figure is the same as for love. No one can really hold that the ecstasy should be static and stand still in one place. It begins in delight, it inclines to the impulse, it assumes direction with the first line laid down, it runs a course of lucky events, and ends in a clarification of life – not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but in a momentary stay against confusion. It has denouement. It has an outcome that though unforeseen was predestined from the first image of the original mood – and indeed from the very mood. It is but a trick poem and no poem at all if the best of it was thought of first and saved for the last. It finds its own name as it goes and discovers the best waiting for it in some final phrase at once wise and sad – the happy-sad blend of the drinking song.

*MIT*

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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