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Anvendt udgave: Louis Hjelmslev og hans kreds

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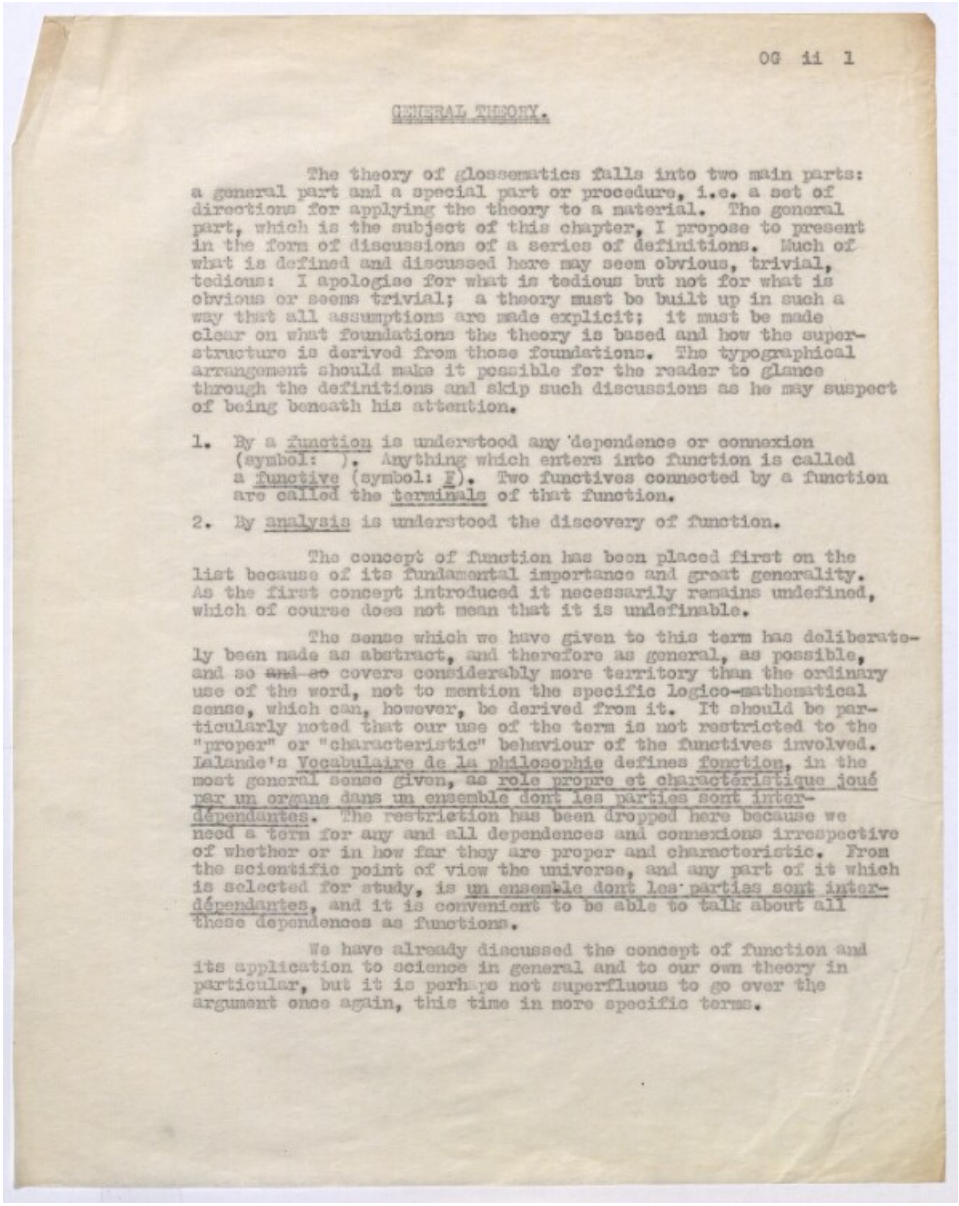

OG ii 1

GENERAL THEORY.

The theory of glossematics falls into two main parts: a general part and a special part or procedure, i.e. a set of directions for applying the theory to a material. The general part, which is the subject of this chapter, I propose to present in the form of discussions of a series of definitions. Much of what is defined and discussed here may seem obvious, trivial, tedious: I apologise for what is tedious but not for what is obvious or seems trivial; a theory must be built up in such a way that all assumptions are made explicit; it must be made clear on what foundations the theory is based and how the superstructure is derived from those foundations. The typographical arrangement should make it possible for the reader to glance through the definitions and skip such discussions as he may suspect of being beneath his attention.

1. By a function is understood any dependence or connexion (symbol: ). Anything which enters into function is called a functive (symbol: F). Two functives connected by a function are called the terminals of that function.

2. By analysis is understood the discovery of function.

The concept of function has been placed first on the list because of its fundamental importance and great generality. As the first concept introduced it necessarily remains undefined, which of course does not mean that it is undefinable.

The sense which we have given to this term has deliberately been made as abstract, and therefore as general, as possible, and so ~~and so~~ covers considerably more territory than the ordinary use of the word, not to mention the specific logico-mathematical sense, which can, however, be derived from it. It should be particularly noted that our use of the term is not restricted to the "proper" or "characteristic" behaviour of the functives involved. Lalande's Vocabulaire de la philosophie defines fonction, in the most general sense given, as role propre et caractéristique joué par un organe dans un ensemble dont les parties sont interdépendantes. The restriction has been dropped here because we need a term for any and all dependences and connexions irrespective of whether or in how far they are proper and characteristic. From the scientific point of view the universe, and any part of it which is selected for study, is un ensemble dont les parties sont interdépendantes, and it is convenient to be able to talk about all these dependences as functions.

We have already discussed the concept of function and its application to science in general and to our own theory in particular, but it is perhaps not superfluous to go over the argument once again, this time in more specific terms.