

Titel: BREV TIL: Eli Fischer-Jørgensen FRA: unsure (1956-05-10)

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Anvendt udgave: Louis Hjelmslev og hans kreds

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Istanbul 10/5/56

Dear Fischer-Jørgensen,

I did not intend to insult you by any suggestion that you could have overlooked that the example was a good one of incompatibility. If I used the word "notice" it was doubtless in the sense of "give verbal notice to". And what you did not notice, in this sense, is how extraordinary it is that Hjelmslev should cite an obvious example of the relation of incompatibility when he says that this is an improfitable relation to look for.

I was amused to hear about the unintelligible visitor. By the way the most unintelligible English that I have ever heard from a linguist was that of Jens Holt at the congress in London. There was one really comic thing. He chose the word wife to illustrate content-analysis, and referred to the word as she!

An excellent criticism of Sierstema's book and at the same time of gl ossematics is to appear in Archivum. I was invited to review the book there, but had already accepted for another journal so suggested that Haas might do it instead. He has written a long article instead of a review, and sent me a copy the other day. He has a gift, which I envy, for being incisive and polite at the same time. If you would be interested to see the paper before publication I might ask his permission to send it on.

Have you seen Jakobson's latest? -- or perhaps this is what you asked me: I have not got your letter beside me. The arguments now given in favour of binarity being something inherent in the system seem very illogical, and most of them just beg the question. (E.g. children have the idea of a pair before they have the idea of "one". But nobody is proposing to replace binarity by "unarity", nor is anybody saying that binary relations are not more common than non-binary ones. This is all of the point; Yours sincerely

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Richard