

Titel: Whitfield's notes on various documents by Hjelmslev, [Whitfield] 016-0110

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Anvendt udgave: Louis Hjelmslev og hans kreds

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LOUIS HJELMSLEV'S POSITION ...

(11)

but it has gone on to seek new ones.

Meanwhile, as Meillet was also to observe, an enormous task remained to be performed: that of ordering the facts of language from the point of view of language itself. And in 1934, when he was introducing his students at Aix-les-Bains to the theory of morpheme categories, Hjelmslev began by warning them that only a professional linguist could have any idea how little the field had been explored: "For the solution of the problem we have almost nothing more at our disposal than a number of descriptions of individual languages, descriptions of very different degrees of completeness, of very different degrees of clarity, and constructed according to very different methods. So it is clear that the problem cannot be solved in one move, indeed that in great part it simply cannot be solved but can only be set, and that we shall be able to get no further than propounding certain hypotheses and operating with certain prohibitions."

As we read these words, we may feel that Hjelmslev is moving backward — back to the skepticism that he had found unjustified in Peirce. Skepticism there certainly is, but I venture to think it is a skepticism ~~which~~ leading forward to a refinement of the idea of "an incomplete induction" in which he had seemed to put his trust — a refinement that eventually makes the very word "induction" seem inappropriate. Over and over, from very early, we find ^{expressions} ~~expressions~~ in his notes and unpublished papers of what we can now appreciate, with hindsight, as the direction in which his "incomplete induction" is leading him. Take, for example, the following, with its grandly mixed metaphors: