

Titel: BREV TIL: Leonard Bloomfield FRA: Louis Hjelmslev (1934-08-28)

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Anvendt udgave: Louis Hjelmslev og hans kreds

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82 Blegdamsvej, Copenhagen (Ø).

August 28, 1934.

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My dear Professor Bloomfield,

I am indebted to you for the most valuable linguistic papers which you have been so kind to send me some time ago: A Set of Postulates for the Science of Language, On Recent Work in General Linguistics, Linguistics as a Science, your review of Ries's book Was ist ein Satz?, and your necrology of Albert Paul Weiss. I daresay that I agree with you in a great many essential points, and I admire very much your keen endeavours to place linguistics on a rational basis and the force with which you maintain the importance of linguistics for human science in general.

I have just now read your recent book Language, and I must tell you that I have been filled with enthusiasm by reading it. For the first time we possess a really good, at the same time copious and clear survey of the science of language, equally useful for beginners and for advanced students. It will take too long to enter upon details here, but I want to tell you that your chapter on Phonetic structure has given me a most pleasant and at the same time curious surprise. In the Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen, we had undertaken, in connection with the International Phonological Association, to give a phonological description of Modern Danish; our discussions on the subject have lead us to abandon a great part of the phonological doctrines of the Prague

Circle, and we had decided recently to endeavour a pure functional description, defining phonemes exclusively by their function in language. In a small committee, consisting principally of Mr. H. J. Uldall (who by the way has been in the States and has recently delivered a description of the Achumawi Phonemic system in the International Journal of American Linguistics) and of myself, we have endeavoured to arrange the Danish phonemes according to their possible combinations. What you have written about American English (and some other languages) is almost quite analogous to our own attempt, and your work has indeed been very welcome to us. Uldall and I will try to finish our phonemic description of Danish before the Phonetic Congress at London next year, where we will probably be present both of us.

At the recently established University of Aarhus, where I am now professor of linguistics, I shall have to read a course of general and comparative linguistics for beginners, and the best will be to use your Language as a text-book for this purpose. The only difficulty about this is that the book is rather expensive for our students. So I venture to ask you if it would be possible to admit the students a reduction of the price. I should be extremely thankful to you if you would propose this to the publisher. I do not know exactly how many copies we will need, but it must be 25 at least, and probably more. I begin my lectures on September the 19th, so I should be very glad to hear from you as soon as possible. As I am not yet settled in Aarhus, you may write to the above address.

With my best regard Yours sincerely.