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## Basic tenets of Tagmemics

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Basic Tenets of Tagmemics

as interpreted by D. Thomas from K. L. Pike

1. Language can naturally and intuitively be described in terms of units, and these units all contain aspects of feature (contrastive or identificational characteristics), manifestation (realizations and variants), and distribution (function in next higher level of constructions).
2. Language can naturally and intuitively be described in terms of hierarchies, interacting but distinct and independent. They are usually conceived of as phonological, grammatical, and semantic hierarchies.
3. Language is social behaviour, so should be able to be described in the same theoretical framework as behaviour, and should be considered always in the light of its behavioural context.
4. Language change proceeds across bridges of shared components, so there is always some flux and indeterminacy at points where units meet or share components.
5. Both the analyst and the observed native speakers are unavoidably involved in a description of language, including the analyst's pre-suppositions regarding the nature of logical consistency and logical adequacy. Formal logicalness is therefore not considered universally necessary, as there may be higher laws of logic or consistency that we don't yet understand.
6. Language can be viewed from different standpoints, all equally valid. Among these standpoints are those of particle, wave, and field. Descriptions as particles generally affords a simpler description, but wave and field effects and insights cannot be ignored. There can be secondary developments, such as treating particles as waves, or waves as particles. Insights from all points of view are regarded as valid. (There are many unexplored ramifications which a theory must leave room for if it is a live theory. A closed theory is dead.)
7. Elements in formulas can be described as form--meaning composites with slots and fillers. This composite has often been referred to as a tagmeme or a phonotagmeme. The tagmeme was originally conceived of as just a simple slot-filler correlation, but now on at least certain levels of grammar is seen to be more complex, involving a correlation of structural slot : class of fillers :: structural role : semantic role.
8. There is no binary or other constraint on constructions. A construction may be composed of one, two, or more elements.

9. A hierarchy contains a series of levels which may be different in kind as well as in size.

10. Distinctions can usually be drawn at all levels between nuclear and peripheral items, (even though wave action may blur the boundaries somewhat).