Complexities
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**Complexity 1: Linguistic categories depend on the linguistic reality they categorize but no less on the (generations of) linguists that define these categories.**

1. Old categories with divergent meanings: mood and modality

A linguist needs clear concepts. This is particularly difficult when the concepts have been around for a long time. This general point will be made explicit with an analysis of the current use of the notions mood, mode, modality, modus, French moeuf, irrealis and more, as well as their origin and development in Western linguistics, all the way back to Greek Antiquity. I will focus on the current relevance of older debates and, announcing the topic of the third lecture, the danger of applying concepts deemed appropriate for one language to another language.

2. A recent category with divergent meanings: negative indefiniteness

The notion of negative definiteness does not seem to be a difficult one. It is used for words such as nobody or personne as in I saw nobody and Je n’ai vu personne. However, personne is not exclusively negative and varieties of English use nobody together with the clausal negator, as I didn’t see nobody. Thus neither nobody nor personne would always be negative and this has created divergent and confusing uses of the notion of ‘negative definiteness’. I will unravel the conceptual confusions and this will also allow me to come up with a typology of negative indefiniteness, partially based on the research literature but also on a world-wide sample.

3. Language-specific vs. cross-linguistic categories: similatives

I support the idea that every language has to be described in its own terms ('linguistic particularism'). I do not support the idea that the concepts that one needs for this enterprise are ontologically different from the ones one needs for cross-linguistic analysis. This general point will be made with an analysis that starts off from the English word such. The reason for choosing this word is that it defies any neat categorization. Though it is similar to English determiners, adjectives and pronouns, it is no less different from them and in the English language it must be considered to be a one member category (if one's theory allows such categories) and thus provides strong support for linguistic particularism. But one also needs this category for language-specifically equally unique words and constructions in other languages. Furthermore, these unique categories are manifestations of a more general cross-linguistic category ('the similative'), which is ontologically no different from the language-specific ones.

**Complexity 2: Explanations of (a phenomenon in) a language refer to properties internal to that language, but sometimes very strongly also to properties of contact languages, external to the language in question.**

4. Language-internal vs. language-external explanations: multiple clause negation

For some kinds of multiple negation we more or less know how to explain them. Thus for French ne ... pas one invokes the so-called 'Jespersen Cycle', and preferably even in the Meillet (1912) version, antedating Jespersen (1917). But multiple negation comes in many different shapes and a particular problem is found when multiple negation is manifested in languages that are genetically unrelated but geographically close. What is due to language-internal development and what to contact influence? We will focus on the multiple negation in three contact situations: Austronesian and Papuan in New Guinea, Austronesian and Austro-Asiatic in Vietnam, Sino-Tibetan and Indo-Aryan in Nepal.