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Generative Transformational Theory: Between Competence and Linguistic Performance

*Abdulla Anbar **

ABSTRACT

This piece of research is based on the idea that the theory of transformational generative grammar (TGG), which has been so popular in the United States, thanks to Chomsky's effort, has attracted considerable attention all over the world. In this theory, language is viewed as a cognitive human phenomenon. TGT describes the speaker's knowledge of the systems and rules of his language that govern performance.

TGG looks at language as an innate ability that is reflected in the users, ability to produce and interpret an infinite number of sentences. The elements of such transformations are originally syntactic and rhetoric. These rules effect changes to deep structure. Moreover, they contribute to detecting instances of irregularities arising from syntactic unpredictability. Furthermore, it has been revealed that transformational grammar is consistent with the Arabic syntactic theory in many ways. Both embody notions such as ordering, deletion, addition, surface structure, deep structure, competence and performance.

The paper reported here concluded that Sibaway did not only categorize constituents at the surface structure level, but also included the deep structure, the level that forms a base which directs the meaning of the syntactic construction. TGG also goes beyond the surface structure including the deep structure which provides a reasonable methodology that contributes to the final interpretation of the dynamic relation between language and thought.

The paper proceeds as follows: The first part introduces the Chomskyan theory of transformational generative grammar. The second diseusses the competence and performance. The third addresses the syntactic relations between the surface and deep structures. The fourth deals with the transformation elements. Finally, the fifth part deals with Sibaway's theory of form and meaning focusing on its generative and transformational perspectives.

Keywords: Generating, Transforming, Linguistic Performance, Competence.

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