
[42] *Eli Fischer-Jørgensen (1911-2010) & Noam Chomsky (b. 1929) in the mid-1950s: a mediated connection.*

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In a plenary session report at the 8th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences in 1975, the Danish general linguist and phonetician Eli Fischer-Jørgensen compared the general spread of generative phonology with the period of the Neo-grammarians. Since the end of the 1930s, Fischer-Jørgensen had an important role as interpreter, historian and participant concerning the discussions about phonetics and phonology. In the important Trends (1975a), she allots more than 100 pages to the Generative Phonology; however, until that point, Chomsky's name appears rather rarely in her published works. Fischer-Jørgensen was invited by Morris Halle to contribute to a Festschrift for Roman Jakobson (1956), and this induced a correspondence (1955-57) between Halle and Fischer-Jørgensen. The correspondence reveals that Fischer-Jørgensen, through Halle, Chomsky's collaborator, became acquainted with an early Chomsky work (1955) concerning phonology, before she got direct access to Chomsky's paper. After having received the Festschrift, she also commented in a letter on the Chomsky-Halle-Lukoff-paper. Based on this correspondence I shall 1) Demonstrate how you may read some parts of Fischer-Jørgensen 1956 as a comment on the content of Chomsky's 1955-paper 2) Present and frame the Fischer-Jørgensen comments on the Chomsky-Halle-Lukoff paper; in her commentary, she refers to work done by herself in the same field (presented in 1948, but only published in 1961). My presentation sheds a sidelight on the changes in the phonological paradigms in the very early phase of generative phonology. References: Chomsky, N. 1955. "Semantic considerations in grammar". Monograph no. 8. The Institute of Languages and Linguistics, Georgetown University, pp.141-53. Chomsky, N, Halle, M. & Lukoff, F. 1956. "On accent and juncture in English". For Roman Jakobson (ed. By M. Halle et al.). s'-Gravenhage. Mouton, pp.65-80. Fischer-Jørgensen, E. 1941. "Phonologie". Archiv für vergleichende Phonetik 5. Übersichtsberichte, pp.170-200 (English version, 1951). Fischer-Jørgensen, E. 1956. "The commutation test and its application in phonemic analysis". For Roman Jakobson ed. by M. Halle et al.). s'-Gravenhage. Mouton, pp.140-151. Fischer-Jørgensen, E. 1961. "Some remarks on the function of stress with special reference to the German languages". Congrès international des sciences anthropologiques et ethnologiques. Compte-rendu de la Troisième Session Bruxelles 1948. Tervuren, pp.86-88. Fischer-Jørgensen, E. 1975a. Trends in Phonological Theory. A Historical Introduction. Copenhagen. Akademisk Forlag. Fischer-Jørgensen, E. 1975b. "Perspectives in phonology". Plenary session report at the 8th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences, Leeds 1975. ARIPUC 9, pp.215-235.