General linguistics and the study of Dutch. The case of C.F.P. Stutterheim (1903-1991)

1 author:

Jan Noordegraaf
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
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GENERAL LINGUISTICS AND THE STUDY OF DUTCH

The case of C.F.P. Stutterheim (1903-1991)[1]

Jan Noordegraaf

1. Introduction

In their paper on structuralism in Belgium and the Netherlands, Parret & Van de Velde (1980: 145) argue that a number of fundamental texts written in Dutch "have had no international influence, although these books, once translated into German or English, would undoubtledly have become well known works of linguistic and philosophical structuralism". Among the books they mention one finds Stutterheim's voluminous dissertation *Het Begrip Metaphoor* ('The Concept of Metaphor') from 1941. The first four hundred pages of this work are devoted to a historiography of the concept of metaphor; they are followed by an extensive systematic-critical discussion of the same concept.

Parret & Van de Velde maintain that Stutterheim, and also Dutch scholars such as H.J. Pos, A. Reichling, and P.A. Verburg, could be categorized as structuralists. Structuralism in their publications shows up largely in its concerns with problems of theory formation in linguistics and a definition of the object of this science, as well as in philosophical questions about the relationship between language and the world, language and experience, and language and subject. Parret & Van de Velde conclude:

> The mingling of linguistics and philosophy of language is characteristic of structuralism in the Netherlands. The blending of philosophy has meant that structuralism is theoretically better founded here than in the Anglo-Saxon world, where linguists separated themselves from philosophical theories in order to maintain their autonomy (Parret & Van de Velde 1980: 159).

Note, however, that the characterization of Pos as a structuralist grammarian has been seriously questioned (Daalder 1992). Reichling's position as a structuralist seems to be much clearer - Albrecht (1988: 51) mentions him as the centre of a "holländischen Schule" -, whereas the relation of Verburg's theory of 'delotics' to linguistic structuralism has not yet been examined in any detail.

In this exploratory paper I would like to take the case of the Dutch linguist C.F.P. Stutterheim to examine the extent to which this alliance between linguistic structuralism and philosophy of language has been more than a contingent one. Following Stutterheim's *faits et gestes* will also allow me, on the one hand, to discuss part of the impact of Saussure and linguistic structuralism in the Netherlands; I will do this by pointing out some of the main issues in Stutterheim's writings. On the other hand, the biographical component of this article will shed some light on the introduction of general linguistics in the Netherlands at an institutional and organizational level.[2]

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[1] A Dutch version appeared under the title "Oude meesters: C.F.P. Stutterheim en de taalkunde" in my book *Van Hemsterhuis tot Stutterheim. Over wetenschapsgeschiedenis.* Münster: Nodus Publikationen 2000, 158-186). (ISBN 3-89323-286-9).

[2] All quotations from works in Dutch have been rendered into English.

2. The life and times of C.F.P. Stutterheim

2.1. Preliminary

Cornelis Ferdinand Petrus Stutterheim was born in Amsterdam on 21 May 1903; he died at Oegstgeest, a small town near Leiden, on 22 June 1991. His long and most productive life has fairly well been documented. Stutterheim has written down his remniscenses about his personal and scholarly life both in a booklet (1988a) and in an article (1988b). Following his death, several elaborate obituary notices have been published, written by scholars who were well acquainted with Stutterheim's life and works (cf. Dresden 1993, van Bree 1995). I would refer the interested reader to these publications for further biographical details.[3]

2.2. Formative years

Stutterheim fell under the spell of literature as a schoolboy of fifteen. He devoured all the poems and prose he could get hold of, and later decided that Dutch was the subject he wanted to study at university. In 1923, he enrolled as a student of Dutch language and literature at what was then called the Municipal University of Amsterdam. Among his teachers was Frederik August Stoett (1863-1936), a conscientious philologist, himself a student of the founding father of the 'scientific' study of Dutch, the nineteenth-century professor Matthias de Vries (1820-1892) from Leiden, who had propagated first and foremost a historical and empirical approach in matters linguistic (cf. Noordegraaf 1985: 329 ff.). Strikingly, it was at the behest of the distinguished philologist Stoett that Stutterheim began to study Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916[1], 1922[2]). Although Stoett never engaged in the study of theoretical linguistics, he appears to have been keenly aware of the importance of the work of this Swiss scholar (Salverda et al. 1971: 11). Note that in particular in the second half of the 1960s Stutterheim returned to what he deemed to be the "humble" and "serviceable" philological and etymological work of editing and annotating texts from older language stages. For instance, just as his former teacher did, Stutterheim published an edition of G.A. Bredero's (1585-1618) well-known play *Spaanschen Brabander* (1618).

It was during the lectures on Gothic that the young Stutterheim came to the conclusion that from a scientific point of view the study of literature could not compete with that of language. "Comparative Linguistics, relations between languages, etymology, Proto-Germanic, Grassmann's Law, Grimm's Law, Verner's Law, Thurneysen's Law, Sievers' Law .... Now that was scholarship" (1988b: 318). Stutterheim's turn to linguistics - "Literature as an academic subject had disappointed me", he concluded (1988b: 320) - was largely due to his teacher of Gothic, the brilliant and demanding professor Richard Constant Boer (1863-1929). Moreover, next to Stoett (cf. Stutterheim 1941: vii) it was Boer who instilled in his student the emphasis on precision which was to become such a distinctive feature of Stutterheim's own work. It is beyond any doubt that Stutterheim admired this "unforgettable teacher" very much (Stutterheim 1954a: 28; cf. 1941: viii).

The study of general linguistics as one of the subjects for the *kandidaats* examination (approx. B.A.) in Dutch had been introduced and regulated in the Academic Statute of 1921. At Amsterdam University it was taught by the Sanskrit scholar Barend Faddegon (1874-1955). The textbook used was *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte* (1880[1], 1920[5]) by Hermann Paul (1846-1921) - a

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[3] Cf. also van Bree 1991a; 1991b. A full list of Stutterheim's publications up to 1971 can be found in Stutterheim 1971: 298-312, an updated version of which was published in Stutterheim 1988a: 24-37. For an extensive interview on the occasion of his retirement as a Professor of Dutch Language at Leiden University cf. Salverda et al. 1971. A number of letters written by Stutterheim to his supervisor H.J. Pos can be consulted in the Pos Archives, which are kept in the Amsterdam University Library.

very influential work in this field for many years - , and although he was not very impressed by Faddegon's lectures as such, Stutterheim's curiosity was awakened: "What, I asked myself, were according to Paul, the principles of linguistics? [...] the book made an overwhelming impression on me. It made several things clear to me, including the realization that my knowledge and abilities were still minimal" (1988b: 319). Four years later, Saussure's *Cours* (1922²) made a similar impression on the young student.

Did Stutterheim's reading of the *Cours* in the second half of the 1920s result into a 'paradigmatic change' to a fundamentally different, structuralist view of linguistics? As a matter of fact, I do not think so. Still a student at the time, Stutterheim did not attend the First Congress of Linguists at The Hague in 1928 nor did he write his two 1929 Amsterdam M.A. theses within the new structuralist framework.[4] I suppose, however, that his study of Paul and Saussure may have had a catalytic effect, perhaps somewhat similar to Saussure's own Cartesian *Bewusstseinserklärung*.[5] For when reading grammars and other linguistic writings it struck Stutterheim

> that for many questions very different and sometimes contradictory opinions were put forward. I could not possibly simply take this as the Holy Writ. It amazed me, it disturbed me, and continued to do so for quite some time (1988b: 320).

In fact it continued to disturb him all his life. Seeking for means to formulate the underlying problems "as distinctly as possible at the outset" Stutterheim added philosophy[6] and psychology to his study of Dutch. As he saw it, language research or, at any rate some aspects of it, could not be properly performed without a training in philosophy; and as demands were made on the mind of the language user in many contemporary linguistic writings the study of psychology was also an indispensable tool for the investigation of language (1988b: 320-321).[7] The quest for the presuppositions and foundations of linguistics was to become another distinctive feature of Stutterheim's scholarly work. If one might say that Saussure suffered from a writer's block when confronted with the manifold questions concerning the fundamentals of linguistics - he never managed to write a book on these matters, as is well known - it can be argued that it was problems of this very nature which prompted Stutterheim to discuss these and related themes time and again in his own writings.

Following his *doctoraal* examination (approx. M.A.), Stutterheim became a teacher of Dutch and History at a secondary school in Tiel, a small town in the province of Gelderland. The 1930s saw him working there on what was to become his magnum opus *Het Begrip Metaphoor. Een taalkundig en wijsgerig onderzoek* ('The Concept of Metaphor: A linguistic and philosophical

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[4] One thesis was a critical analysis of the concept of 'modality' in (Dutch) linguistics (published as Stutterheim 1930); the other included the annotation of two Middle Dutch plays.

[5] As Bühler put it: Saussure's book mirrors "durchgehend und aufregend die methodische Skepsis eines Forschers, der das Handwerk und Ergebnis genau so gut versteht wie andere, aber es nicht unterlassen kann, in seiner Weise die Reinigungsprüfung der DESCARTESschen Meditationen am Befunde der Linguisten noch einmal vorzunehemen" (Bühler 1934: 7).

[6] "It was rather exceptional, perhaps even unique, that a student of Dutch of his generation had studied, for example, Mauthner's language criticism and Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen*", his later Leiden colleague and close contemporary, Carlo A. Zaalberg (1986: 16) remarked.

[7] "When, as a student, I heard what Paul, Wundt Van Ginneken and others had to say about language and linguistic phenomena, I wondered whether it was possible to put linguistics into practice without a reasonable amount of education in psychology" (Stutterheim 1974: 27).

investigation'). Initially, Stutterheim had been writing a dissertation on the substantive under Faddegon, but after a year it turned out that this was not a practicable subject. Subsequently, completely on his own initiative, Stutterheim developed a new research project. The *Metaphoor* was written under the supervision of the linguist Hendrik J. Pos (1898-1955), who had been appointed professor of philosophy at the Municipal University of Amsterdam only in 1932. As a matter of fact, Stutterheim had never followed his lectures.[8] A rather liberal *promotor* (doctoral thesis supervisor), Pos allowed Stutterheim to go his own way: he never made any changes to the structure of the thesis, and made only a few critical remarks on the text. Due to the complicated situation created by the Second World War, Albert W. de Groot (1892-1963), professor of classical languages and general linguistics at the same university, had eventually to act as the formal supervisor, Pos being interned as a hostage by the German authorities. In 1941, Stutterheim received his doctorate *cum laude*.

2.3 Up for a professorship

The Second World War brought about a cataclysmic disruption in the private and professional lives of Dutch scholars and, of course, of all other citizens. Its consequences were manifold and long-lasting: people perished or had to go underground, several universities were closed, careers were broken, books and libraries were destroyed, national and international communications were seriously disturbed. After five years of war and occupation, the general feeling that one had was to try to make a fresh start, to build up things with a new élan. In linguistics too we observe the expression of this spirit. Various initiatives were taken to breathe new life into the Dutch linguistic scene (cf. § 3).

In 1946, Pos and de Groot tried to have their former *promovendus* appointed to the vacant Amsterdam chair of Dutch language. Their attempts failed, however. Instead of the "versatile" Stutterheim, the Faculty of Arts preferred to continue a long-standing tradition by appointing an "all-round philologist", Wytze G. Hellinga (1908-1985; cf. Noordegraaf 1994: 279).[9] That Stutterheim was regarded as a qualified scholar also becomes clear from the attempts made in 1947 by a group of Faculty members which included Gesa Révész, A.W. de Groot, H.J. Pos, and A.J.B.N. Reichling S.J., to have Stutterheim appointed to a new chair of Comparative Literature. This chair, however, was only to be established many years later. "For one reason or another", the disappointed Stutterheim wrote to his former supervisor Pos in October 1947, "there appears to rest a curse on me". Be this as it may, the year 1948 saw Stutterheim's appointment as a member of the Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences. I presume that the ever influential H.J. Pos had a hand in this. Note that the appointment of an ordinary teacher of Dutch at a Rotterdam *gymnasium* as a member of the most prestiguous Royal Academy was a "rather unusual initiative", as an insider once remarked (Dresden 1993: 65).

In 1956, Stutterheim was nominated for a professorship at the University of Leiden. He had

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[8] On H.J. Pos cf. the important biography written by Derkx (1994). In the years 1924-1932 Pos had been teaching as a Professor of general linguistics and classical philology at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. Pieter A. Verburg, a former student of his, had worked in London for some time as a private tutor, and there he had started his research for a doctoral dissertation on metaphor. On his return to the Netherlands, he consulted his former teacher who had to inform him that a dissertation on this subject was already in preparation. It was a result of these "special circumstances" that Verburg (1941) was among the first to publish a review of Stutterheim's work.

[9] Stutterheim must have been aware of this preference on the part of the faculty, for in 1946 he published an annotated edition of two Middle Dutch plays, as he wrote to H.J. Pos, "in order to show that I am indeed qualified to edit texts, and, when necessary, to contribute my mite to higher education" ('mijn steentje tot het Zulo bij te dragen'; letter of 28-3-1946).

the choice: general literary theory or Dutch linguistics. He opted for the Dutch chair just for practical reasons,[10] and consequently concentrated on linguistic themes, continuing however to publish on literary subjects too. His *Conflicten en grenzen* ('Conflicts and boundaries', 1963), a collection of studies in the field of general literary criticism, was awarded a prize in 1965 by the illustrious Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde, the Leiden Society for Dutch Language and Literature.[11] One should not be amazed by Stutterheim's activities in the field of literary theory. Right from the time he wrote his doctoral dissertation, Stutterheim had been intensively engaged in both linguistics and literary theory (cf. 1971: 9). His book *Problemen der literatuurwetenschap* ('Problems of literary theory'; the title is a rather telling one) from 1953 has been of importance for the developing academic study of literary theory in the Netherlands: Stutterheim pointed out methodological aporias and displayed sound scepticism concerning unrealistic expectations prevailing in the field (cf. Goedegebuure & Heinders 1996: 13). It may be assumed that Stutterheim still sought to solve the question he was confronted with in his student days: is it possible to study literature in a 'scientific' way, or, in other words, is "literatuurwetenschap", the study of literature, possible at all (1966: 35)?

Stutterheim's appointment as a professor of Dutch language had several consequences for the Leiden syllabus: among other things, the content of the 'Modern Linguistics' courses was considerably expanded - though not at the expense of historical grammar and Middle Dutch. However, dialectology (including language geography), till then the pride and core of the Leiden Dutch programme, disappeared from the syllabus.

On 7 October 1971, Stutterheim retired from Leiden University. On that occasion he gave a valedictory lecture on one of his favourite subjects, "Accentual relationships as Viewed and Used in Language" (1974). Until the late 1980s he continued publishing on a variety of topics. His first scholarly paper appeared in 1930, his last one was published posthumously, in 1995.

2.4. Linguistic writings

Stutterheim has published on almost every aspect of linguistics, both modern and historical. What is conspicuous by its absence is what can best be described as 'language variation': dialectology including language geography, and sociolinguistics. Unlike his predecessor, the distinguished dialectologist Gesinus G. Kloeke (1887-1963), he never engaged in fieldwork, but practised linguistics sitting at his desk, on the basis of introspection, reflecting critically and theoretically on what he had found in the writings of others (van Bree 1995: 154).

While browsing through Stutterheim's linguistic publications in the field of Dutch, we soon realize that he never composed a fully-fledged Dutch grammar, or dedicated an elaborate monography to a particular Dutch language phenomenon. In his *Uit de verstrooiing: gesproken en geschreven taalkundige beschouwingen* (which we may loosely translate as 'Scattered reflections on spoken and written linguistic considerations', 1971), for which Stutterheim himself selected twenty of his articles, one does find a number of articles of a descriptive character, dealing with stress phenomena, the verbal system of Primitive Germanic, ellipsis, and adverbial adjuncts among other things. Nevertheless, I definitely would not characterize him as a descriptivist (cf. Salverda et al. 1971: 30). In general, Stutterheim's linguistic publications often have their point of departure in problems which had been unduly neglected by Dutch grammarians (cf. 1971: 155). "Prolegomena to a theory of grammar", "Some lacunae in Dutch grammars" are telling titles within this framework. Stutterheim provides the reader with thorough analyses of certain

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[10] In 1954-1956, Stutterheim had been teaching as a temporary lecturer in the absence of the professor of Dutch at Leiden, G.G. Kloeke. This had given him experience in giving lectures on Dutch language (Salverda et al. 1971: 24).

[11] In 1985, the Maatschappij appointed him an honorary member. Cf. Zaalberg 1986.

language phenomena, convinced that having started whatever detailed research one is always to arrive at questions pertaining to scientific theory, methodology and philosophy of science (cf. 1974: 30). These questions include terminology and definition; to Stutterheim's regret they have attracted less attention or have been regarded as less essential, in particular in transformational-generative grammar (1982: 35).

One of Stutterheim's works that has become a classic is his *Het Begrip Metaphoor* ('The Concept of Metaphor') from 1941. A book of some 700 pages, it is, like Gaul, divided into three parts. Firstly, principles of terminography are dealt with; secondly, four hundred pages are devoted to a historiography of the concept of metaphor in rhetoric, linguistics and philosophy; and, thirdly, the concept of metaphor is subjected to systematic critical discussion. The concluding chapter contains just two pages. Stutterheim (1988a: 12-14; 1988b: 321-323) has given a brief overview of the contents of his book,[12] so I can restrict myself to pointing out the following. In the chapters on the concept of metaphor in linguistics (1941: 162-340), Stutterheim discussed the theories of F. Brinkmann, Wilhelm Wundt, Wilhelm Stählin, H. Werner, H. Pongs, Hedwig Konrad and Anton Reichling (1898-1986) - in general on a critico-referential basis. However, when dealing with Reichling's theory as put forward in the latter's doctoral dissertation *Het Woord: Een studie omtrent de grondslag van taal en taalgebruik* ('The Word: A study of the basis of language and language use', 1935), Stutterheim did not hesitate to express his preference for this theory. In Reichling's "influential book" (Beheydt 1995: 42) one finds a fully developed word theory, which satisfied Stutterheim more than any of the theories that he had read about the linguistic aspect of metaphor. For the same reason he considered Reichling's work, like that of Saussure, to be "a milestone in the development of general linguistics" (1949: 70). In this praise of Reichling's word theory, Stutterheim deviated from his usual immanent-critical approach.

The year 1949 saw the publication of his *Inleiding tot de taalphilosophie* ('Introduction to the Philosophy of Language'), "[d]ie einzige Einführung in die Sprachphilosophie, die diesen Namen verdient", as Coseriu (1970: 2) once put it. In this book Stutterheim discussed anew a number of questions which had also received attention in his 1941 thesis and other publications of his, such as language criticism, language and speech, and onomatopoeia. The *Inleiding* shows his abiding interest in general theory and philosophy. Of the nine chapters I mention here "The origin of language", a masterly and compact elucidation of a most abstruse subject (cf. Reichling 1951b: 184). The book *Ursprung und Vorgeschichte der Sprache* by Geza Révész (1878-1955), which had appeared in 1946, had made this subject topical again. Around the same time, H.J. Pos also devoted some papers to this topic.

Stutterheim's treatise *Taalbeschouwing en taalbeheersing* ('The observation and mastery of language') appeared in 1954. In this book, Stutterheim disputes the thesis put forward by W. Betz in his 1918 *Psychologie des Denkens*:

> Die Muttersprache lernt man ohne jede grammatische Unterweisung und den grössten Teil des Wortschatzes über man später verfügt, erwirbt man beim Lesen aus dem Zusammenhang ohne Lexicon und ohne jedesmal zu fragen (Betz 1918: 339).

Stutterheim, on the other hand, defended the thesis that the instruction in a certain part of Dutch grammar, if taught in a certain way, could indeed advance the quality of language use. In his arguments Stutterheim made crucial use of the distinction between the various "levels of

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[12] Another summary is to be found in Warren A. Shibbles' *Metaphor: An annotated bibliography and history* (Whitewater, Wisc.: The Language Press 1971), 275-277. Sidney Hook, the American philosopher, whom Stutterheim met at the Congress of Philosophy in Amsterdam in 1948, promised to have Stutterheim's *Metaphor* translated into English, but eventually nothing came out (C.F.P. Stutterheim, personal communication).

consciousness" The term 'Bewusstseinslage' had been coined by the 'Erlebnis' psychologists whose research had yielded important results in early twentieth century language psychology. Stutterheim (1966: 66) has always been of the opinion that the concept of 'level of consciousness' was still scientifically tenable, and useful for mastering certain linguistic problems. As he saw it, two kinds of linguistic knowledge may be distinguished. In the first place, we have knowledge at the level of language use, and in the second place knowledge based on observation of or theoretical reflection about language (1954a: 143). Stutterheim deemed this to be an "undeniable fact" (1954a: 141). A recurrent theme in both his linguistic and literary writings, he used it not only in his doctoral dissertation (1941: 217 sqq.; cf. 1937), but also in his criticism of generative grammar in 1967; cf. also 1974: 31-33; 1982: 24).[13]

Summing up, we may conclude that Stutterheim moved with equal ease in the fields of literary and linguistic theory. The binding element in much of his scholarly work is to be found in his critical attitude which prompted him to discuss first and foremost the fundamental issues, and to reflect on them.

3. The rise of general linguistics in the Netherlands

The study of general linguistics as one of the subjects of academic language study had been introduced and regulated in the Academic Statute of 1921. At many Dutch universities it had been added to the teaching load of one of the language professors,[14] while at others a special professorship for general linguistics had been established. Only the 1950s saw the rapid creation of chairs of general linguistics, which were to be instrumental in the eventual breakthrough of linguistic structuralism in the Netherlands. Some more institutional factors guiding this development may be pointed out here.

In 1948, *Lingua. International Review of General Linguistics* was founded by A.W. de Groot and Anton Reichling "with the intention of participating in the international development of linguistics" (Verkuyl 1990: 16). The extensive network of relationships built up before the war by the widely travelled A.W. de Groot initially played an important role in eliciting contributions. Browsing throught the first volumes, one is struck by several papers published in French; a number of Dutch linguists also contributed, e.g. H.J. Pos, P.A. Verburg, J. Gonda (1905-1991) and the renowned C. C. Uhlenbeck (1866-1951), E.M. Uhlenbeck's uncle, who had been living in Switzerland from 1936. Stutterheim contributed two articles on modern stylistics, and a couple of reviews, including one of A.W. de Groot's *Algemene Versleer* ('General Metrics') from 1946 and one of a dissertation from the faculty of law in which Reichling's word theory was applied to legal texts.

One of the other institutional channels through which new ideas on linguistic science could reach Dutch language students was the meetings of "Het Nederlands Philologen-congres" ('the Dutch Congress of Philologists'). Founded in the late 1890s, this society held its bi-annual congress around Easter; in 1946, the list of its members counted 1200 names. To my mind, the establishment of general linguistics as an independent discipline is clearly reflected in the proceedings of these congresses. At the 1946 Amsterdam congress, Stutterheim read a paper in the section 'General Linguistics', which was chaired by Anton Reichling. 'General linguistics' was a new section then, set up alongside the traditional philological sections in response to a wish expressed at earlier congresses, as the congress chairman H.J. Pos remarked. From 1946 the section, later on department of general linguistics became a platform where many structuralist-

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[13] To be sure, the distinction between 'language use' and 'observations about language' can also be found in the works of H.J. Pos (cf. Daalder 1996) and Anton Reichling (cf. Elffers 1994: 247-248).

[14] For example, H.J. Pos at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; G.S. Overdiep, professor of Dutch language, at Groningen; Jos. Schrijnen at Utrecht; Jan de Vries at Leiden, Jac. van Ginneken at Nijmegen.

orientated linguists could put forward their ideas, where discussions took place, e.g. on the concept of system in structuralism (E.M. Uhlenbeck), on Bloomfield's and Saussure's linguistic ideas (A.F.G. van Holk). These congresses were very well attended; the 1956 congress, for instance, drew some 850 participants, which is a quite considerable number at least to Dutch standards. At the Leiden congres of 1958 the general linguistics section, chaired by A.W. de Groot, received by far the most attention of all the sections. At the Groningen congres of 1960 the general linguistics section finally received "the central position it deserved", as de Groot (1960: 37) put it. In other words, in the 1950s the Philological Congress was seen as a proper place to discuss subject of a general linguistic nature within a structuralist framework. At any rate, it was not only populated by traditional 'philologists'.

The rapid decline of the broadly based Philological Congresses in the course of the 1970s was related to the sharp rise of specialized conferences and societies, in matters linguistic in particular to the "Algemene Vereniging voor Taalwetenschap" (AVT; 'General Society for Linguistics'),[15] founded by Wytze G. Hellinga, Professor of Dutch in Amsterdam, and C.F.P. Stutterheim. It was Stutterheim who formulated the society's "manifesto", which was published in various Dutch periodicals. According to this manifesto, linguistic research in the Dutch speaking areas was inadequately organized, fragmented as it was in various specialized societies and working groups. Everyone concerned in the study of language was urged to join the new society, to promote the study of all parts of linguistic research, e.g. by raising funds and publishing a yearbook, The manifesto was co-signed by linguists such as Christine Mohrmann, then secretary of the Comité International Permanent de Linguistes, Anton Reichling, and E.M. Uhlenbeck (cf. Stutterheim 1950). Stutterheim was also Chairman of the Society from 1950 until 1964. For several years the society had a modest periodical of its own, the 'Orgaan van de Algemene Vereniging voor Taalwetenschap'; a yearbook never materialized during this period. During the last five years of Stutterheim's chairmanship, however, the society was somewhat in decline. In 1964, the Utrecht professor of general linguistics, Henk Schultink (*1924), formed a new board at Stutterheim's request, and managed to blow new life into the society. Lectures were organized so that the newest linguistic and related developments could be discussed by the members of the Society (Verkuyl 1990: 15). From 1970 on the AVT has had its annual one-day conference and its own yearbook.

A "Fonologische Werkgemeenschap" ('Phonological Working Community') was set up within this framework. In it, Stutterheim brought together five linguists, including Anthony Cohen (1922-1996), who jointly wrote a *Fonologie van het Nederlands en het Fries. Inleiding tot de moderne klankleer* ('Phonology of Dutch and Frisian. An introduction to modern phonology'; cf. Salverda et al. 1971: 21; Cohen et al. 1959: v). This textbook made the results of the past decades of phonological research on a structuralist basis accessible to students of Dutch. The *Fonologie* appeared in 1959 and went through several reprints. It may be noted that not a single member of this team was a professional scholar of Dutch; Cohen was later to become professor of English at Utrecht University.

Stutterheim was also an active member of the "Leidse linguïstenkring" ('Leiden linguistics circle'), whose members included A.W. de Groot, A. Reichling, P.A. Verburg, and E.M. Uhlenbeck. This circle, founded in the second half of the 1940s, was just a "small circle of colleagues" (Uhlenbeck 1967: 233) that held monthly meetings;[16] its history still has to be written. Verburg (1975: 17) spent "many fine hours" within this company, and Stutterheim once remarked that "he was much indebted to this group for his linguistic knowledge and insights" (Salverda et al. 1971: 22). A.W. de Groot used to discuss the many topics he was working on in

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[15]   NB: it was not called the 'Society for General Linguistics'.

[16]   "The number of members is only small, some ten to twelve. Things are being done very informally" (Salverda et al. 1971: 22).

this circle. He sent preliminary versions of his papers to other members in a high tempo, eager to hear their critical reactions (Uhlenbeck 1967: 233-234; cf. De Groot 1949: 6).

4. Stutterheim and linguistic research in the Netherlands

The linguistic landscape. Between 1920 and 1950 the study of Dutch was dominated by language geography. Well-known practitioners of this discipline in the Dutch-speaking world were Gesinus G. Kloeke, Jac. van Ginneken (1877-1945) and Ludovic Grootaers (1885-1956). It was not until the 1950s that attention shifted to the study of modern Standard Dutch, in part due to structuralist ideas, which began to influence the study of Dutch around that time (cf. van Bree et al. 1997: 35 sqq.). Not only the field of phonology became a focus of attention, as I already pointed out, but also syntactic phenomena received their due share in studies such as A.W. de Groot's *Structurele Syntaxis* ('Structural Syntax', 1949; cf. Block 1996), Henricus F.A. van der Lubbe's (1911-1991) *Woordvolgorde in het Nederlands. Een synchrone structurele beschouwing* ('Word order in Dutch. A synchronic and structural dissertation' of 1958, a successful book which went through various reprints), and Piet C. Paardekoper's (*1920) many Bloomfieldian books and articles on syntax (cf. Kaldewaij 1992).

When Stutterheim was appointed to the chair of Dutch at Leiden in 1956, he changed the syllabus. Whereas under his predecessor Kloeke historical grammar and dialectology held sway and the study of modern Dutch had only a minor place in the programme, now modern grammar was to receive its rightful place. From now on students had to devote attention to the works of Etsko Kruisinga (1875-1944), H.F.A. van der Lubbe, P.C. Paardekooper, and A.W. de Groot, and dialects completely disappeared from view (cf. van Bree 1991b: 43). It might thus be thought that modern structuralist grammar had finally come of age at Leiden's Dutch department. But what theoretical insights did Stutterheim actually communicate to his students? According to one of them, in his lectures Stutterheim, who was without any doubt one of the most intelligent people he had even met, liked "to drag every structuralist through the mud", and found pleasure in pointing out flaws in other people's writings (J.M. van der Horst in Zonneveld 1991: 500).

On the other hand, A.W. de Groot, an early structuralist himself, once characterized Stutterheim as someone who "had a clear understanding and a positive appreciation" of the structuralist turn which linguistics had taken (de Groot 1960: 41), as "a kindred spirit" (de Groot 1959: 142). Be this as it may, their approach *in linguisticis* was fundamentally different. Whereas de Groot sought to establish an empirically valid conceptual system which could be used to describe any language (Elffers 1995: 2),[17] a fully-fledged description of the Dutch language system has never been a central aim in Stutterheim's work.

Linguistic method. From 1930, Stutterheim published on philosophy, Dutch and general linguistics and literary criticism. His work is characterized by a philosophical approach to the study of language and an interest in the theory of knowledge as well as methodological and terminological problems. The following exapmple will illustrate this assertion. In his very first paper, Stutterheim (1930) was concerned with a critical analysis of the concept of modality mainly as used by Dutch grammarians. The critico-referential method he applied is in principle 'immanent', as he called it; it is a method which uncovers the internal inconsistencies and contradictions in an argument. In this paper Stutterheim pointed out how various terms were used by grammarians who apparently were not aware of the problems connected with them. As he emphasised with reference to the complicated questions pertaining to the concept of modality, the linguist should

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[17] Incidentally, it may be noted here that de Groot had written a book on general linguistics in the summer of 1937 in which he made it clear that he deviated from the views of Saussure and his followers in many respects, though he admired Saussure very much. Cf. Noordegraaf 1994: 287 n.9.

always strive to make the correct distinctions. Next to this 'immanent criticism' Stutterheim distinguished 'transcendental criticism', which examines whether the results of linguistic research and their description are in conformity with reality (cf. 1937: 264-265; van Bree 1995: 151-152). In this connection he always stressed the importance of clear, correct terminology.[18]

Stutterheim's *Inleiding tot de taal-philosophie* (1949) has been characterized by Reichling (1951a,b) as a combination of the theory of science applied to linguistics, and immanent linguistic criticism of language and science. The first aspect deals both with the boundaries between and other disciplines and with the right methods to be used to study linguistic issues; the second examines the logical and practical coherence of linguistic concepts and methods. Time and again, Stutterheim emphasized two requirements to be met by empirical research, viz. correspondence and coherence (cf. 1949: 18).

In a paper given at the Dutch Congress of Philologists in 1946, "Enkele prolegomena tot een theorie der grammatica" ('Some prolegomena for a theory of grammar'), Stutterheim argued that grammar is a descriptive science, which implies that its terms refer to real language phenomena; its concepts should form a system which is *coherent* and consequently unassailable to immanent criticism. Although most grammars fail in this respect, one should be reserved in particular when criticizing them e.g. for lack of systematicity. The *correspondence* with reality is prior to the coherence of the system; hence, if necessary, the system's inconsistency should be accepted for the sake of the correspondence with reality. Subsequently, Stutterheim (1946: 97) applied these requirements to the subdivision of the adverbial adjuncts in Dutch grammar. As he put it in his 1947 *Stijlleer* ('Stilistics'):

> the discovery of new facts, in relation to which the existing theory fails, makes us aware that this theory is fundamentally incorrect, although it may explain other phenomena in a satisfactory way. Thinking should never be allowed to balk at sacrificing simplicity to a more complex truth (1947: 121).

And in 1960 it read:

> Never should facts be neglected for the sake of a greater unity in description, and never should anything that has not been proved a fact, or has not at least been made acceptable, be put forward as a fact (1971: 102).

Obviously, he did not want to sacrifice a correct but complex decription of the facts to the 'elegance' of the system. First and foremost, Stutterheim wished the facts to speak for themselves (Foolen 1993: 80), but I would like to add that in this respect he was definitely not a naive observer. As he stated in a 1961 paper, during the last half century linguists have realized the extreme difficulty of discovering the facts of language, and how complicated a job it is to describe them in a scientific way (1971: 251).

All in all, I think we may conclude that Stutterheim is an adherent of a strictly inductive approach (cf. 1971: 11, 19, 29); moreover, he definitively displays rigour in the heuristic phase of linguistic research by continuously asking himself: are the facts secure? Is the terminology adequate and do we have the correct definitions?

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[18] "The terminology needed for grouping together or differentiating should be unequivocal and not, for instance, at the same time diachronic and synchronic, or phonetic and phonological" (1971: 102). This approach seems to be in line with the structuralist requirement "that all concepts of the theory be rigorously defined", as Ebeling once put it (Stutterheim 1982: 37).

Linguistic theory. As I have already pointed out, Stutterheim claimed that linguistics is an observational science in its own right (e.g. 1974: 32). When writing a grammar of a certain language, it is impossible to do without general concepts developed within the field of theoretical linguistics (1951: 73). But what type of linguistic theory did he adhere to?

As a consequence of Stutterheim's critical attitude towards systems and theories it is rather difficult to attach him to a certain school, but it has been suggested that his linguistic frame of reference was mainly structuralist in the Saussurean or Prague sense (van Bree 1995: 153). I think it is safe to conclude that Stutterheim was well acquainted with the structuralist approach and that he 'talked in the paradigm'. Let me give some examples.

In one of his early papers Stutterheim (1933) showed his acquaintance with Saussure's work by referring to the *Cours* (1922^2) in connection with some statements on general issues. He did the same in *Metaphoor* (1941) - though in fact he referred to Wundt more frequently than Saussure here. As to the Saussurean verdict that 'language is a system' Stutterheim (1971: 102) once remarked that this could only be regarded as a "working hypothesis".

In his descriptive work Stutterheim used the instruments provided by various structuralist scholars. He accepted the general priority of linguistic 'form' (*re* accent cf. 1971: 6; *re* distribution 1971: 206) - "a continuing heritage from the neogrammarians" (Joseph 1995: 225), and just as other contemporary Dutch structuralists such as Reichling and Uhlenbeck he was of the opinion that a sentence consisted of a "fatische" ('phatic') and a "musische" layer (1971: 59; 1975: 261). He dealt with phonological problems ("Gothic and phonology"), and when describing accentuation in Dutch he used phonological terms such as 'minimal pairs'. In an attempt to describe the verbal system of a reconstructed language he applied primary oppositions ("Structuralism and reconstruction", 1960).

A theoretical issue which surfaces at several occasions in his work is the distinction between 'langue' and 'parole', a distinction which Saussure first introduced into linguistic theory in a clear way (1941: 280) and which Stutterheim himself endorsed (cf. Booij 1972: 138). Stutterheim (1954a: 77) thought intonation belongs to the 'langue', whereas other Dutch scholars did not share this view. Consequently, he raised objections against Karcevskij's distinction between 'proposition' and 'phrase', as taken over by Reichling. In Stutterheim's view, the 'propositio' was just an abstraction derived from observation of language and did not exist as a linguistic entity (1971: 27).

According to Stutterheim the borderline drawn by Saussure between 'langue' and 'parole' was not very clear (1954a: 3). In the debate on the definition of the sentence and the relationship between sentence and word, Stutterheim (1951: 74; cf. 1949: 45) endorsed A.H. Gardiner's statement: "the 'word' is the unit of language, whereas the 'sentence' is the unit of speech". He defended the British Egyptologist against the criticisms by E.M. Uhlenbeck (1951: 238) and A.W. de Groot, and did not hesitate to point out that de Groot's counter argument suffered from a curious *petitio principii*. Sentences have a linguistic status different from phonemes and words; they are 'made', and not 'used', Stutterheim argued. So, as late as 1975, he criticised the Czech scholar Jan Firbas who in a lecture did not take this distinction into account when discussing "the use of sentences" (1975: 276-277).

The year 1955 saw the untimely death of his former doctoral thesis supervisor and long-time friend H.J. Pos. Reflecting upon the latter's work Stutterheim noted that both phonology and structuralism had contributed new impulses to Pos's thought on language philosophy. However, they had not introduced fundamental changes into this thought because it had been moving into the same direction from the start. He concluded:

> It would be wrong to call Pos simply a structuralist. Pos has never sought to provide a description of the system of a certain language in a way that was characteristic of structuralism. And according to his publications [...] he was also interested in other [...]

matters (1971: 232).

One may ask whether this characterisation does not perfectly apply to Stutterheim himself. A 11 in all, it can be concluded that some features of Stutterheimian linguistics are a continuing heritage from his historical-grammatical training (priority of form, 'rigor', and inductive approach); in addition, his critical attitude was fostered by his readings in philosophy (e.g. Mauthner) and psychology (e.g. Wundt, 'Erlebnis 'psychologists) in the second half of the 1920s.

5. On generative grammar

The last seminar Stutterheim gave to his Leiden students[19] before he retired, viz. in the academic year 1970-1971, was devoted to a book on Dutch syntax written within the transformational-generative (TG) framework. The *Syntaxis* (1968) by Albert Kraak and Willem Gerrit Klooster was set up to satisfy the need by university teachers for a new Dutch textbook on syntax following the rapid developments in linguistics which had been going on from the late 1950s onwards. This didactically motivated book was not a full-blown Dutch syntax, but rather a demonstration of generative principles on the basis of Dutch language material. Its authors provided an introduction to TG grammar and discussed only certain aspects of Dutch sentence structure, including adverbial adjuncts. In an article from 1970 Stutterheim showed that the facts with regard to these adverbial adjuncts were more complicated than Kraak and Klooster had suggested (cf. 1971: 199-208).

Although generative grammar and in particular the metaphors it used never aroused Stutterheim's enthusiasm (van Bree 1995: 153-154), it is definitely incorrect to say that initially he banned generative work from his department (cf. Zonneveld 1991: 500). In the academic year 1969-1970 he allowed his then assistent to give an introductory course on transformational grammar for students of Dutch. Whereas Stutterheim did acknowledge that Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* of 1957 had opened "a new phase in the development of linguistics" (1970: 20), he maintained his reservations about the scientific standard of Chomsky's theory (Salverda et al. 1971: 28).

His critical attitude towards generative grammar may in part have been fostered by the way the American linguist Paul Postal had attacked in a 1965 review not only André Martinet's *Elements of Linguistics* (1964), but also structuralism in general. First of all, Stutterheim (1967a) felt forced to point out that Postal had completely misinterpreted both Anton Reichling and E.M. Uhlenbeck as far as their semantic theory was concerned. Subsequently, in a paper entitled "Een mislukt beroep op de taalgebruiker" ('An unsuccesful appeal to the language user') Stutterheim (1967b) critizised the way in which Postal appealed to the language user for his argumentation on the difference between *John drove his wife to Chicago* and *John drove his wife to despondency*. Those acquainted with Stutterheim's approach will immmediately recognize the way he has been trying to expose inaccurate formulations and terminological vagueness in Postal's paper. The heart of the criticism, however, has to do with the way Postal sought to call upon "the English speaker's knowledge of grammatical relations". Inevitably, this leads us, as Stutterheim (1967b: 26-27) argued, to the distinction between language observation and language use, which - to Stutterheim - was an irrevocable fact. Complicated as this distinction might be, it should not be immediately smoothed away like Postal did, Stutterheim argued (1967b: 27). Inevitably, this question also brings us to the status of linguistics as an empirical science which has to meet two requirements: adaequacy or correspondence, and coherence or logicity ("logiciteit"). Consequently, two questions were put forward by Stutterheim: did Postal make a clear distinction between language use and language observation? And was his argument in accordance with the facts so that it

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[19] I was one of them.

stood up to immanent criticism? The answer was an unequivocal 'no'.

The point I would like to make is not: who was 'right' after some thirty odd years? I think his anti-Postal paper provides another demonstration of the way Stutterheim used to deal with contentions by other scholars, subjecting their argument to general terminological and methodological scrutiny. Many laters later, Stutterheim (1988b: 326) deplored the fact that there had never been a response to his very "fundamental argument".

Graduation party of Dr Joop M. van der Horst, Leiden, 6 June 1986. Having received Stutterheim's *Het Begrip Metaphoor* (1941) as a present, van der Horst's 'Doktormutter', Professor Frida Balk-Smit Duyzentkunst, asks C.F.P. Stutterheim to autograph this copy. Next to Stutterheim the author of this article.

6. Concluding remarks

Although Verkuyl (1990: 16) wishes to discern a Leiden linguistic 'school' which was headed by Stutterheim in the 1950s, I would like to emphasize that Stutterheim supervised only three doctoral dissertations; never did he aim at the formation of some sort of 'school': he considered himself to be too sceptical for that (Salverda et al. 1971: 26). There is no such thing as a 'Stutterheim school'. Nevertheless, one of the students whose dissertation he did supervise was Dick M. Bakker (1934-1985), later to become Professor of Dutch language at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, who in various highly critical publications pointed out the limits and flaws of both Saussurean and Chomskyan systematizing thought (cf. Janssen 1986: 19). In his approach to problems in the field of the philosophy of language Bakker felt in many respects related to the approach Stutterheim had proposed in his 1949 *Inleiding tot de taal-philosophie* (Bakker 1988: 181). It should be noted that Bakker's historiographical research in general can be characterized as aiming at clarification of the foundations of linguistic theory. In this, Bakker followed in the footsteps of his teacher who in his monograph on the Metaphor had shown himself to be "one of the best - if not the best - in the Netherlands of the experts on the history of language science" of that time (Verburg 1952: 252). After all, though this is not made explicit

by the title or subtitle, *Het Begrip Metaphoor* gives an eminent historiography of the subject under discussion, taking up more than half of this wide-ranging book (Verburg 1975: 11). When recalling the way Stutterheim's supervisor, H.J. Pos, dealt with the history of linguistics in his university lectures,[20] it is safe to conclude that here one has come across a typically Dutch tradition within linguistics and linguistic historiography, viz. the 'historical-critical approach' (cf. Noordegraaf & Vonk 1996: 139-142). Linguistic historiography is subservient to general linguistic theory, in that it seeks to carry out a permanent critical investigation of the presuppositions and foundations of linguistic science.

It is evident where Stutterheim's main interest lay: "Epistemological, methodological and terminological problems interest me most" (cf. De Keyser 1965: 315). As such, he is a distinguished representative of the 'critical' tradition in general linguistics in the Netherlands.

"I often have doubts and I like that. I did not borrow my scepticism from anyone; it is clearly innate in me", Stutterheim once remarked (Salverda et al. 1971: 26). This feature of his character had a two-sided effect. On the one hand, Stutterheim did not establish a linguistic school, on the other he maintained his distance to various linguistic theories, not propagating particular theories or methods; he was definitely not what one would call a "builder of systems" (van Bree 1991b: 44). "Questing for the systematics and regularities in linguistics, he refused to accept one particular linguistic approach or to set up a system himself. It appears that eventually he avoided any system", Dresden (1993: 64) observed. Consequently, an explicitly articulated theoretical framework is lacking (Booij 1972: 137; cf. Foolen 1993: 80-81).

Struggling with the problematics of the metaphor in the 1930s, Stutterheim took as his main points of reference not Saussure or the Prague Linguistic Circle, but what he saw as more relevant sources: language psychologists such as Wundt, language critics sich as Mauthner, and the works of Karl Bühler (1934) and Anton Reichling (1935). In the 1930s he came across the distinction drawn by the 'Erlebnis' psychologists between the various 'levels of consciousness'. This was one of his favourite topics which often cropped up in his publications, implicitly or in the form of "reflection and experience", or maybe as "logical and psychological interpretation" (1974: 33; cf. Evers 1971, Daalder 1991: 50-51). He still used it in his discussion of the work of Postal in the late 1960s. I do not think this topic is a typically structuralist feature.

In his descriptive studies dating from the postwar era, Stutterheim hardly ever appealed to 'Prague' linguistics; his references were mostly to Dutch works or to works published in the Netherlands. As I pointed out before, Stutterheim used Saussurean distinctions and terminology, accepted them, but his reseach programme never aimed at providing an exhaustive descriptive system of the Dutch language. Stutterheim considered Reichling's *Het Woord* just as Saussure's work to be "a milestone in the development of general linguistics" (1949: 70), and I think important structuralist conceptions may have come down to him via Reichling's 1935 magnum opus. In the latter's works, too, a full description of a language never received any priority. Reichling, who can be placed in the philosophically and psychologically oriented substream of Dutch structuralism (Elffers 1994: 239), put basic linguistic notions in the very first place.

Stutterheim's very first article from 1930 dealt with a critical examination of ideas about the concept of modality within a 'traditional' linguistic framework. In the postwar era he accepted several doctrines taken from Saussurean structuralism for descriptive purposes, while

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[20] "On the one hand, he developed a positive statement of his own theoretical understanding of the essence - or, as it was called then: the idea of language. At the same time, he discussed critically and historically concepts of other linguists, past and present. The two methods were intimately linked. The design and development of his own theory gained depth and perspective by simultaneous confrontation with other basic models and, conversely, in adopting a critical stance, this historical research in turn drew on the essential criteria from his own theoretical principles, or more specifically, on principles of linguistic philosophy" (Verburg 1975: 3).

maintaining his philosophical-psychological critical attitude towards this trend. In the late 1960s he took up a similar critical position regarding generative linguistics (cf. ' 5). My conclusion is that what we may call Stutterheim's 'philosophy of language' has remained relatively independent of linguistic structuralism throughout.

7. Coda

In fact, Stutterheim himself has aptly summarized the influences "his" linguistics had undergone: "Language criticism, phenomenology, structuralism, and Reichling's theory of the word. But it also has something of my own" (Salverda et al. 1971: 30). The flavour of "his own" contribution may best be illustrated by the following anecdote. Not without manifest pleasure, Stutterheim has preserved for posterity a statement by A.W. de Groot, who once remarked: "Stutterheim is the bad concience of language scholarship. I do not blame him for that, but I do blame him for also being *my* bad conscience". Stutterheim added, however, that he had also always been his own bad conscience: "And that is one of the relatively few properties that I do not blame my DNA molecule and myself for" (1988b: 327).

In a certain sense, Stutterheim's scientific distance and relativism looks rather modern, and may even make a post-modern impression. Reality, "the world", he ultimately experienced as a "mystery" (Salverda et al. 1971: 29-30) that man was never to grasp fully. Thus, to him building an over-all linguistic system could have no priority. The language researcher should be satisfied with charting only parts of the map, or not even that. For as Stutterheim once said in Rilke's words: "ich möchte Sie, so gut es kann, bitten, lieber Herr, Geduld zu haben gegen alles Ungelöste [...] und zu versuchen *die Fragen selbst* liebzuhaben" (1941: I).

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