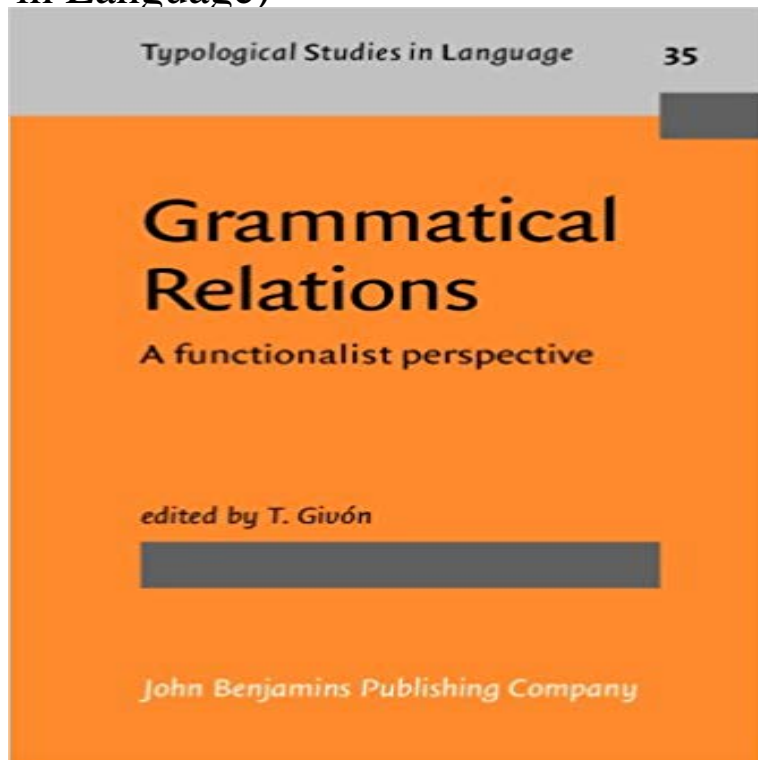


Grammatical Relations: A functionalist perspective (Typological Studies in Language)



This volume presents a functional perspective on grammatical relations (GRs) without neglecting their structural correlates. Ever since the 1970s, the discussion of GRs by functionally-oriented linguists has focused primarily on their functional aspects, such as reference, cognitive accessibility and discourse topicality. With some exceptions, functionalists have thus ceded the discussion of the structural correlates of GRs to various formal schools. Ever since Edward Keenans' pioneering work on subject properties (1975, 1976), it has been apparent that subjecthood and objecthood can only be described properly by a basket of neither necessary nor sufficient properties thus within a framework akin to Rosch's theory of Prototype. Some GR properties are functional (reference, topicality, accessibility); others involve overt coding (word-order, case marking, verb agreement). Others yet are more abstract, involving control of grammatical processes (rule-governed behavior). Building on Keenans' pioneering work, this volume concentrates on the structural aspects of GRs within a functionalist framework. Following a theoretical introduction, the papers in the volume deal primarily with recalcitrant typological issues: The dissociation between overt coding properties of GRs and their behavior-and-control properties; GRs in serial verb constructions; GRs in ergative languages; The impact of clause union and grammaticalization on GRs.

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