

SOME LOGICAL CONTRADICTIONS IN THE THEORY OF THE PHONEME
REGARDED AS A BUNDLE OF DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

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This paper attempts to show the inadequacy of the "bundle theory" of the phoneme.

Subjects

The theory of the phoneme regarded as a bundle of distinctive features deduced from the oppositions among phonemes, which was advanced first by Prague phonologists, has become widespread and used also in the phonology of the Norwegian language. There is, however, a certain contradiction between the theoretical premises according to which a phoneme is a term of all oppositions and the methods of determining its phonological content. The distinctive features of phonemes are usually determined not on the level of the whole system but on the level of a subsystem. Thus the so-called phonological (linguistic) content of a phoneme based on the oppositions into which the phoneme in question enters consequently is only part of its phonological content. The method of determining the distinctive features of phonemes having no correlatives has some logical errors.

Conclusion

Both the assumption that the phoneme is a bundle of distinctive features and that distinctive features reflect the linguistic nature of the phoneme can be called in question.