Functional Grammar (FG; Dik 1997) has a very restricted view of grammatical relations (GRs). Employing the traditional notions of Subject and Object, FG recognizes GRs only if they generalize over both arguments of a bivalent predicate. For its functional motivation, Subject is assumed to be the grammatical implementation of the extra-grammatical notion of perspective on the state of affairs which is represented in a sentence. Perspective is exclusively expressed by a combined set of morphosyntactic coding and behavioural properties typically associated with subjects in the linguistic literature, such as zero case marking, verb agreement, constituent order, conjunction reduction, raising etcetera. Objects provide a secondary perspective, and are associated mainly with dative shift. Under this strict definition, only very few languages turn out to have Subjects, and even fewer have Objects. Also, FG does not allow for multiple subjects, as in Role & Reference Grammar (Van Valin & LaPolla 1997) and other theories. In our paper, we would like to reconsider this position in FG, making GRs applicable to a wider set of languages. At the same time, this will provide us with a broadly applicable typology and a diachronic scenario relating the respective language types historically. Taking a sample of languages of Europe and North and Central Asia for our empirical basis, we will discuss a definition of GRs in terms of the linkage of the core arguments to the Dynamic Expression Rules of FG as introduced in Bakker (2001). Rather than implement a type of competence model of a grammar, these rules seek to model what speakers actually do when uttering a sentence. We will look at a restricted set of morphosyntactic phenomena as proposed in Givon (1997) as the explanandum and a language specific subset of functional features as the explanans of our exercise.

REFERENCES


