Analogical Modeling of Language

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Book Condition: New. Publisher/Verlag: Springer Netherlands | 1. Structuralist Versus Analogical Descriptions ONE important purpose of this book is to compare two completely dif ferent approaches to describing language. The first of these approaches, commonly called stnlctllralist, is the traditional method for describing behavior. Its methods are found in many diverse fields - from biological taxonomy to literary criticism. A structuralist description can be broadly characterized as a system of classification. The fundamental question that a structuralist description attempts to answer is how a general contextual space should be partitioned. For each context in the partition, a rule is defined. The rule either specifies the behavior of that context or (as in a taxonomy) assigns a name to that context. Structuralists have implicitly assumed that descriptions of behavior should not only be correct, but should also minimize the number of rules and permit only the simplest possible contextual specifications. It turns out that these intuitive notions can actually be derived from more fundamental statements about the uncertainty of rule systems. Traditionally, linguistic analyses have been based on the idea that a language is a system of rules. Saussure, of course, is well known as an early proponent of linguistic structuralism,...

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