

FOLLOWING CARL BACHE'S LECTURE ON HJEMSLEV

by
Cindie Aaen Maagaard

I grasp little about the linguist's method
except this: his rigorous precision
recalls an anatomist's.

The object of his study is limited
to the immanent. Isolating the corpus,
rejecting the transcendent,

his mind, sharp scalpel, partitions
the sign – substance severed from form,
content from expression.

Slivers of language are slivered into
the ever slimmer. Division upon division begets
the indivisible

and the dissection of the complex arrives
at the simple. To apprehend the whole is to lay bare
each constituent

as functive, defined through how it fits
in its relations. Structuralist inheritance: describing the thing through its differing
and its dependence.

Glossematics. The pun's on math, the gloss is
'a science of the tongue'. Science is a method of poetry: a search for the exact
in the lab of language.

