

Let me begin by offering my sincere condolences to Julia and the close family with the loss of a such a nice person. They carry over to Ferenc's extended family, the large group of his students and co-workers for which he was a real *pater familias*. This is what I could perceive personally during two visits to Budapest in each of which I gave a course on tense and aspect; one in Buda in 1997, the other one in Pest in 2010.

For me, five aspects of Ferenc are to be highlighted. First, there is Ferenc **the editor**, prolific, I may say, with more than 15 edited books. In that capacity, I got to know him being hardbound together in the quite voluminous Kiefer/Ruwet collection of papers called *Generative Grammar in Europe*, published in 1973, Ferenc with a paper on presupposition and me with a paper on temporal adverbials. In the preface, it was said: *There is nothing especially European about these papers. They could have been written in any other part of the world.* As an editor of the book *Hungarian General Linguistics* Ferenc made the same remark about Hungarian linguists. This awareness of the universal scope of linguistic theory clearly has to do with the fact that he had studied mathematics before going into linguistics.

There is another interesting remark in the preface of Kiefer and Ruwet: *the linguistic background with and against which European scholars have to work, is in many respects essentially different from the American tradition.* Here we see Ferenc the **power broker** in the good sense of that term expressing the feeling of responsibility: he was not only concerned about taking care of modernizing the valuable part of the European linguistic tradition as an editor but he understood also very well the need to address the interests of linguistics as a field of research that should be properly funded both at the national and European level. This explains his role in all sorts of international gremia enhancing the position of linguistics. I admire that aspect of his life.

The third aspect highlights the impressive career of Ferenc **the scholar**, as prolific and of high quality. In the mid-sixties he immediately understood the importance of Chomskyan syntax but being brought up in the European tradition already mentioned, he underlined with his co-author Samuel Abraham in *A Theory of Structural Semantics* the importance of semantics, much more popular in the European than in the American form of structuralism. Indeed, in his work there are clear semantic and pragmatic longstanding topics among which—above the phrase level of his beloved morphology—presupposition, tense, aspect and temporal adverbials. Our research interest overlaps, of course, in the domain of tense and aspect. Ferenc positioned his work in what you may call the

Vendler-Dowty-Davidson line in formal semantics, whereas I think the philosophical naïve-physics of the Aristotle-Vendler ontology does not belong in a linguistic theory about tense and aspect because it blocks compositionality at the cost of more abstract principles determining our dealing with time.

This brings me to Ferenc **the successful teacher and seeker** for new Hungarian research talent. As said, I was invited twice for a course on aspect and tense. He was aware of the fact that he invited someone outside his own stream, so it is reasonable to assume that, broad-mindedly as he was, he wanted his students and his staff to be confronted with other views than they were accustomed to. He asked nice questions and led the sessions with great naturalness. This brings me to Ferenc as the **perfect gentleman-host**, not only professionally but also personally. During each of the two visits, Gina, my wife, and I were invited for a Sunday afternoon dinner by Julia and Ferenc, at their house on the hill with many meandering roads. On both occasions, the taxi drive ended in despair at least half a mile away from their house, because the taxi driver supposedly could not find the address. We were much too late on both occasions, but Julia and Ferenc handled the painful situation very well so that we could feel less guilty about the absence of efficient diplomacy with regard to Budapest taxi drivers. Both times we had a nice dinner with a nice conversation about a lot of non-linguistic topics before walking down the hill. We also profited from Ferenc's love for the opera. The picture sent to Marianne and István was taken in the intermission of Verdi's Don Carlos in 2010.

I was so convinced of Ferenc's mental and physical strength that I put him on my to-do-list in mid-April in order to send him—after a long interval of non-contact—an e-mail to tell him that he would receive a copy of my new book on tense, aspect and modality to be published after this summer. Then I got the mail from Marianne and István on April 20. I was totally surprised and shocked by the unexpected news about his death last November. On my present to-do list I have replaced my note for Ferenc by a note to send the copy intended for Ferenc to István and Marianne. In this way, Ferenc will receive a posthumous gift to the institute, that is, to the current generation of scholars facing the task of continuing linguistic research in his spirit and on his level, with the energy that he had and with the open constructive social atmosphere he created there.

I hope that highlighting the five coherent aspects of his personality pays sufficiently respect to a man whom I regarded as a friend. Ferenc was a very cordial and warm personality making the most of his talents in the long time given to him.