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How is it different?

LFG is closely attuned to the overt perceptible expressions of language, and to the abstract relational information that they directly express. LFG has a constraint-based, parallel correspondence architecture; it has no serial derivations (unlike transformational grammar); there are no "deep structures" or "initial structures." Abstract relations are locally distributed as partial information across words and over fragments of structure, and may be monotonically synthesized in any order in parallel. Being designed for a wide range of nonconfigurational and configurational language types, LFG departs radically from most other grammar formalisms in one striking way: it is noncompositional, allowing the "content" of a computation to vary depending on its context.

These descriptions may sound mysterious to the newcomer, but LFG is simple. Both linguists doing primary research on languages have found it easy to use, and because LFG is mathematically well defined and simple, it is also easy to implement. It has been employed in many computational systems, ranging from