This is a collection of essays on language theory written (two of them in collaboration with Gabriel Sandu) by the prolific logician and philosopher Jaakko Hintikka from 1980 to 1998. All of the essays have been previously published and most of them have been reviewed individually.

A new two-page introduction is added, in which the author, following John Locke’s metaphor, identifies himself as an underlaborer clearing the ground in preparation of more ambitious enterprises, but at the same time regrets himself that “though I am fully confident of the merits of my mission I am also aware that a great deal of recent language theory has been supported by the very ‘trees’ I am striving to fell and that most philosophers of language and linguists are therefore reluctant to accept my results.”

In the introduction, a brief description of the content of the book is provided. The author suggests that if there is a single new idea that he would like to highlight, it is the thesis of the first essay “The games of logic and the games of inquiry”: “From a Wittgensteinean or neo-Wittgensteinean vantage point, the crucial question in the philosophy of language and logic ought to be: What are the language-games that constitute the ‘logical home’ of our basic logical notions, especially quantifiers? Neither Wittgenstein nor his followers have come up with a satisfactory answer.”


The volume will be useful to scholars on Hintikka.

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