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INFLUENCES OF LINGUISTICS
ON THE INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH: CULTUROLOGY,
ANTHROPOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY

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Abstract. The contemporary linguistics is in expansion nowadays, interfering all the other human sciences and expanding its importance as well as its research field.

Considering and analysing the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, the point of view of Claude-Levi Strauss as well as the work of the contemporary linguists, the article suggests multidisciplinary analysis, showing a connection between a science of language, culturology and anthropology and refers to the sociological part in the contemporary multicultural world.

The aim of this article is to establish a connection between linguistics and interdisciplinary adaptation of language science, which exceeds its traditional boundaries and takes its legitimate position among the cognitive sciences.

Key words: linguistics, culturology, anthropology, multidisciplinary analysis.

1. Introduction

From the second half of previous century today, more than ever, we are talking about the mutual inter-entanglement of various humane sciences. In this light, the language science begins to rely on separate sciences from which some of linguistic disciplines have emerged, such as neuro-linguistics, psycholinguistics, socio-linguistics, anthropological linguistics, etc. Aphasia is not any more, for quite a long time now, a subject of interest of only neurology, but also of linguistics; let us think for a second of Jacobsson and his study on two groups of aphasia patients. Claude Lévy-Strauss has marked the twentieth century as the last Renaissance scientist whose anthropology has become an integral part of all the humanistic sciences, significantly marking also the science of language.

Essays on language, found in ancient scripts, were developed within the scope of philosophy. Plato's essay *On Language and Cognition* (Plato 1988: 19-55) in the dialogue named *Kratil* discusses and deals with both of language origin and its use: adequacy of the language expression, adequacy of names, real meaning of words regardless of the form... He also tries to give the definition of words, thinks about the research method, discusses the relationship between truth and language,

points to detect that the picture is not identical to the object it shows, talks about cognition of the essence of the things which is not necessarily correlated with the name given to it.

On the other hand, Aristotle (Aristotle:1991) is the first who points out the categorisation of words making the path for grammar and basic concepts it deals with. Aristotle is the first who talks about noun class, verbs etc.

We should not forget language essays in India, where Panini writes Sanskrit grammar “which is still, in some parts, unexcelled example of minutious analysis of language.” (Bugariski:1991)

2. Interdisciplinary domain of linguistic researches

Emile Benveniste, in his piece *Problèmes de linguistique générale (1 & 2)*, offers a brief overview of the development of linguistics, with particular attention paid to the work of Ferdinand de Saussure. Although composed of articles and lectures published during the first half of the previous century, the work still remains to be linguistic vademecum.

Benveniste already indicates to the interdisciplinary nature of linguistics. In this sense, he speaks of its relationship with sociology and social environment, and we are especially highlighting the relationship between linguistics and mathematics. When he talks about the traditional sciences for which the linguistics, as well as philology, was linked in diachrony, he also mentions the geography and history.

Of course, impact of these sciences was important in the development of science of language: XIX century produces dialectological atlases, and establishment of linguistic families is directly connected to history. However, we do agree with Benveniste, who seeks to find a place among exact sciences for linguistics too: «If the science of language must choose its models, they would be placed into mathematical or deductive, which fully rationalize its subject, while making a cluster of objective features with constant definitions» (Benveniste 1966)

Polysemy, which, in our opinion, represents currently the most fertile ground for semantic researches, will bring semantics even closer to logic, as well as to mathematical logic, and with mathematics itself. More about this, we will hear in the section that presents researches of Georges Kleiber, who successfully presents semantic expressions through exclusive use of symbols of mathematical logic.

3. Culturology

As a contemporary term, borrowed from sociology, “culturology” was first mentioned by the anthropologist Leslie White, who defines it as a scientific discipline that emerges and results from social sciences that study culture, as well as various systems of different cultures. In synchronicity, the culturology is closely linked with anthropology, sociology, economy, etc. In the diachrony, the culturology represents an historic discipline.

One of most significant representatives of Russian culturology, Youri Mikhailovich Lotman, introduces the term semiosphere, which deals with interactions of semiotics and culture. By this, he lays a path for culture as a product of symbolical characteristics. Benveniste follows this up in the mentioned piece: In culture, as well as in language, there is a cluster of symbols, relations of which are yet to be defined. As of today¹, the science of culture remains “substantive”. Is it feasible to extract formal cultural elements from a culture, as Lévi-Strauss does it, by introducing them into systems of kinship relations? For now, this question remains open. (By Benveniste 1966)

4. Anthropology

Anthropology is a scientific discipline that studies a human as a cultural and biological individual. The primary goal of anthropology is to compare exactly these cultural and biological similarities and differences.

Linguistic anthropology studies language as one of most significant features of a human being. In this sense, it is interested in various universalities, as well as in specificities of each and every language, while connecting it to the level of culture of a given community, its level of development, and at the same time it is interested in idiolects which shape the identity of each individual. As a linguistic discipline, it is closely connected to ethno-linguistics and social linguistics.

One of greatest contemporary anthropologists is surely Claude Lévi-Strauss, who expanded his scientific researches to other areas, including linguistics. His acquaintance with Jakobsson is very significant. In listing of some examples that are evidences of mutual influence of one scientist to another, and vice versa, we shall just point out in what measure linguistics influenced the anthropology, as well as other humanistic sciences Lévi-Strauss was engaged in.

The period between wars, which both scientists spent in USA, as a result had a fruitful cooperation and mutual inter-entanglement of linguistics and anthropology. Jakobsson's lectures that Lévi-Strauss attended, and vice versa, influenced largely on Lévi-Strauss's anthropology. He points it out: “I think that he [Jakobsson] deemed linguistic approach as significant for anthropology [...]. I personally think that the linguistics is one of main domains of cultural anthropology”.

In the IV volume of *Homme nu*, Lévi-Strauss emphasizes the importance of structural approach in his works, which is a result of Jakobssons's influence. In his opinion, it is an acceptable fact that structures have their own genesis, having in mind that any previous state of a structure represents a structure by itself. “We do not see why would be irrational to think that the most recent nature of reality rests in endless construction, instead of consisting of the accumulations of already con-

¹ The piece we are referring to was published in 1954. It is understandable that many things that Benveniste talks about here evolved in the meantime.

structed structures” (Piaget in Lévi-Strauss 1961: 58). Surely, goes on Lévi-Strauss, it is about structures which, through transformations, create new structures, which points out to their priority.

We could not talk about anthropology and linguistics interfering, as well as the basis of anthropological linguistics, without mentioning Benjamin Lee Worf and his hypothesis of language influence on people who speak it. In this hypothesis Sapir was also mentioned.

Ranko Bugarski in the introduction of the book written by Benjamin Lee Worf *Language, Thought and Reality* (LiVorf: 1979) points out: “These two names (Sapir and Worf) are usually connected to already mentioned hypothesis language reality, which is in literature called Sapir-Worf (or just Worf) hypothesis. Shortly, according to this hypothesis [...] some specific structures of certain languages have influence on people’s attitude to the world and their behaviour towards reality. According to this hypothesis people would live in somewhat different conceptual worlds and these differences – in the sphere of space-time perception, cause-effect and other relationships – would be caused by different grammatical structure of their mother tongue since their categories impose specific way of segmentation and classification of world of experience.”

The relationship between talk and thinking, as well as the influence of language on the structure of understanding of reality, directly indicate the influence of linguistics on anthropology.

5. Semantics as a linguistic discipline

Semantics was introduced into linguistics by Michel Bréal, and it was relatively late, in the second half of 19th century. Normally, semantics is explained as a science of meaning in general, of meaning of words, i.e. of meaning at the level of words, sentence and expression. The mentioned explanations, correct, but insufficient, should be supplemented by Saussure’s distinction between semantics and semiology, where the latter means “science that studies the life of signs within a framework of a social life” (Saussure: 1967), i.e. the science that studies all systems of communication, while overcoming the language, and addressing the alphabet, sign language, symbolic rituals, etc.

Semantics is closely connected to logic, which is clearly explained by Touratier in his work *Semantics*: in referring to Gottlob Frege and his example of Morning star and Evening star, he points out to the difference between denotation and sense. Denotation of “The Evening star”, explains Frege, and “The Morning star” is the same, but their meaning is different. Precisely, if the sense would be the same, it would have been a tautology: “Morning star is the Evening star”, which, of course, is not the case. However, there is a problem that emerges from the terminology: Frege talks about denotation and meaning, using German words “Bedeutung” for denotation, and “Sinn” for sense. Things become complicated once we introduce the third term, “Meaning”, which, in the linguistic terminology bears a separate techni-

cal meaning, but does leave a space for certain confusion. Nevertheless, this terminology difficulty did not prevent Frege to get to the right conclusion. (By Touratier: 2000)

This issue would not be possible to address without mentioning also “referent”, which, together with “meaning” and “marked” makes the famous Ulman Triangle. The concepts of referent and reference are very significant, because without them we would not be able to express concepts of beyond-the-language reality, such as “angel”, “God”, “love”, “patriotism”, etc.

In his work titled *Problèmes de sémantique, La polysémie en question*, Kleiber presents his approach of integrated metonymy, which explains: “Certain characteristics of some parts could characterize the wholesome”. As an example, he quotes the following sentences: “Americans descended on the Moon in 1969”; “My pants are dirty”. Of course, not all citizens of USA have landed on the Moon, and, of course, one stain on just one piece of pants means that whole pants are dirty. Through these simple examples, Kleiber explains that one predicate can be true in relation to the wholesome, while the comprehensiveness of that wholesome does not necessarily need to be reviewed. The principle of integrated metonymy relates to cognitive phenomenon, i.e. to the referent in the wider sense of the term. It is being based on the applicability of certain features which are in fact related only to certain parts of a given wholesome. This principle is useful for two reasons: in many instances, it is impossible to precisely determine to which part of the wholesome the statement is precisely related; on the other hand, the fact that it is possible to isolate one part of a wholesome proves the possibility to attribute some feature to the wholesome body.

In mentioning this principle, we are touching upon metonymy, which, same as metaphor, separates a long time ago from the exclusive realm of literature, so they become subject of interest of semanticists, since their understanding is made possible through polysemy. If we look at metonymy in wider sense, then we are in the domain of rhetoric, which, for a long time now, represents a point of interest of semanticists, whereby the ancient skill of orators is being linked to contemporary linguistic researches.

In Kleiber’s works, the influence of logics on semantics is evident. Namely, he represents full statements through logical formula such as for example:

$$\forall y(P'(y) \supset (\exists x(Px) \& R(x,y)))$$

$$\forall y(P'(y) \supset (\forall x(R(x,y) \supset (Px)) \text{ (Kleiber: 1999)})$$

6. Sociology

The most significant influence of sociology on linguistics, but we could freely say the other way around, is the creation of a linguistic discipline named sociolinguistics. Different dialects, idioms, sociolects, etc. represent the basic subjects of sociolinguistics. The phenomenon of bilingualism is also interesting, and in brings a

question about the native language, as well as about language or languages to which the child is exposed within or outside of the house.

Jean-Charles Rafoni, who studies French as mother tongue or second or other foreign language, points out the difference between mother tongue and foreign language: The concept [of mother tongue] is ambiguous since the first criterion for its determination is based on etymology: mother tongue is a language a mother speaks. There are many societies where the language of a biological mother is not the first language a child is exposed to, therefore, it is considered that the first language a child speaks is learned in a family or directly in social contact. That “anterior language learning”, which represents the mother tongue as the first spoken language, can be connected to the fact that some persons are simultaneously exposed to more than one language since the early childhood. Therefore, we cannot specifically talk just about one language as a unique linguistic system.

The next important characteristic of any mother tongue is the way of learning it. It is evident that a child develops the use of language of his surrounding without actually learning it, but by being in contact and constant interaction with his family. We do not teach a child, we simply talk to him and the process of learning a language goes on unconsciously. It means that this criterion is undoubtedly the most significant, although during that acquiring of language there is a certain family or institutional pedagogy. (By Rafoni: 2007)

Speaking about surrounding, Rafoni mentions the social surrounding which directly refers to sociolinguistics.

7. Conclusion

Without intentions to engage in discussions on anteriority of language or thinking, it is evident that a language represents a general feature of a human being. Its studying, which started even in antiquity, emphasizes its significance. Interdisciplinarity as a term is pretty new, but it exists from long ago, as thoughts on language existed even in ancient philosophy.

We presented names that left profound mark on linguistics, as well as some great men who had a lasting effect on linguistics and humanistic sciences.

The beginning of the 20th century is marked by the works of Ferdinand de Saussure, who founded structuralism, emphasising the difference between diachrony of language and asserted synchronous focus of linguistics.

Structuralism is represented not only by Jacobson, already mentioned, but also Troubetzkoï, Martinet, as well as Belić, who was greatly influenced by Copenhagen School and also Hjelmslev.

As far as descriptive and anthropological linguistics is concerned, we have mentioned Sapir and we can also emphasised the role of Bloomfield.

The second half of the 20th century is marked by the transformational-generative grammar developed by Chomsky. His work influenced other sciences, especial-

ly computer science, which was still in the cradle at that time, and was intertwined with the studies of Chomsky.

The contemporary linguistics makes it one of unavoidable sciences that have an impact on interdisciplinary researches, and linguistics itself, which goes beyond its traditional boundaries, onto a legitimate place among cognitive sciences.

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