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Etholinguistics is the area of language study following the individual-oriented and context-bound traditions in linguistics, initiated in this part of the world by, respectively, Jan Baudouin de Courtenay and Bronisław Malinowski. It also draws on the neurocognitive language theory of Sydney M. Lamb and integrationism of Roy Harris, recognizing the relational character of language and focusing on the development of glottic identity. The discussion of glottic identity concentrates on the issue of orality and literacy, leaving the wide array of other possible perspectives for future analysis. It is acknowledged that the degree of literacy corresponds to how people function in language, to their attitude to language and to their knowledge in general. This in turn is reflected in the changes in the neural structure of human minds. The authors whose publications on orality and literacy proved helpful include, apart from Baudouin de Courtenay: Eric Havelock, Walter Ong and Paul Ricoeur.

ENTRANCE

Etholinguistics enters the stage as the study of human language behaviour, both genetically- and environmentally-based. It recognizes language as an individual cognitive system interconnected with other cognitive systems and it attempts to offer explanations on human language communication, culture, and learning by relying on its researchers' knowledge and introspection as well as input of practical nature, thus combining theory with laboratory and field research. Etholinguistics is, in fact, the study of the parameters conditioning one's *glottic identity*.

The roles of elementary parameters of etholinguistic investigation are performed by a truly diversified set which includes: locational, temporal, and ideological aspects of language functioning; individually configured cognitive subsystems; neurological equipment, temperament and information-processing style; orality vs. literacy. The primary concern here, presented in the 'Performance' part, will be investigation into the functioning of the literate and the illiterate mind, reflecting the philosophical slant in language analysis neither, however, in the form of analysis of the meaning of meaning nor the true or false value of meaning, but in relation to thinking in language and thinking about language.

Theoretical framework is provided by linguistic and anthropological sources, the biggest credit going to two Poles – Jan Niecisław Baudouin de Courtenay and Bronisław Malinowski, one American – Sydney M. Lamb, and one Englishman – Roy Harris.

Since etholinguistics is hoped to stay on stage as the area of language study, the ‘Instead of exit’ part of this paper sketches the possible advantages of pursuing this line of research.

PERFORMANCE

ACT I: LANGUAGE AND MIND

Each understanding of language typically implies a number of presuppositions and begs diverse questions. Each language definition reflects the state of art in language or language related research and the provenance of its author. The quantity and quality of these presuppositions and questions, coupled with one’s linguistic insight and the attitude towards the author’s knowledge, intuition and research goals, are some of the factors crucial for the approval or failure to approve the particular path of reasoning. The route followed here is that of language individualization vs. language idealization, language relationality vs. language reification, language uniqueness and polysystemicity vs. language uniformity and unity. To go beyond mere labels, or guideposts, language is vested in an individual and treated as a relational information network, a kind of or a part of this individual’s cognitive system, individually and thus uniquely configured. This direction is opposite to the one taken by those studying language of an ideal language speaker-hearer, be it reocentrically or psychocentrically oriented, in terms of shared by all members of a particular community symbolic rules and objects. The opposition, then, is between the realistic and the mythical, explained on several occasions by Lamb (1986, 1992, 1999, 2000/2004, 2002, 2004).

The purpose of this juxtaposition, satisfying the predilection of some scholars to view the world in terms of oppositions and echoing the great linguistic controversies between conventionalists and naturalists or between the analogists and the anomalists, is not to undermine the achievements of linguists working within the mythical paradigm, but to concentrate on the gains of pursuing the realistic one. Lamb’s realistic approach is neurocognitive in nature, identifying language use and learning with activation of an individual information network of relations and involving both verbal and nonverbal modalities. The meanings are arrived at as a result individual experience, including linguistic experience, by means of building a network of relationships. The experience of each person is different and thus the individual models of the world and the self in that world

are different; they are shared to some extent by members of a language community in the form of the 'common core' and the 'comprehensive composite', providing 'a certain fit' of the different cognitive systems and making communication possible (Lamb 1986, 2004). Basically, however, since communication between individuals is conditioned by the 'fit' between the meanings activated by different speakers, and these meanings are hardly ever the same, the challenge undertaken by etholinguistics is to report on the parameters instrumental in shaping individual cognitive systems, beginning with orality and the level of literacy.

ACT II: THE LITERATE AND THE ILLITERATE MIND

The interest in orality and literacy, pioneered by isolated instances of works on the oral and the written modes of expression, began to flourish in the Western world in the second half of the previous century. Years 1962-1963 witnessed the publication of four important works in the area: Marshall McLuhan's *The Gutenberg Galaxy* in the United States, Claude Lévi-Strauss' *La pensée sauvage* in France, Jack Goody and Ian Watt's "The Consequences of Literacy" in England, and Eric Havelock's *Preface to Plato* in Canada, which released a real outburst of intellectual activity devoted to, as it was to be known later, the explanation of the oral-literate question (Havelock 1991). Cultural anthropologists, mass media experts, linguists, and philosophers are among those who have hypothesized on the consequences of supplementing the natural human roles of the speaker and the listener with the culturally conditioned roles of the reader and the writer, i. e. resorting, in communication, not only to the ear and the mouth but also to the hand and the eye (cf. Havelock op. cit.). The consequences of becoming literate for one's glottic identity are treated here as truly fundamental, both from the diachronic and the synchronic perspective.

Viewed diachronically, the noetic functioning of individuals in oral cultures is reflected in modes of expression favourable for the oral retention and transmission of knowledge. According to Ong (1982), this kind of verbal expression tends to be: additive rather than subordinative; aggregative rather than analytic; redundant or copious; conservative or traditional; closely related to the human lifeworld; agonistically toned, empathetic and participatory rather than objectively distanced; homeostatic; situational rather than abstract. These nine features are provided simpler labels here, i.e. additive, formulaic, redundant, traditional, realistic, agonistic, empathetic, homeostatic, and functional; and are grouped with reference to different levels of language use.

The realistic and the functional aspects of language use in oral cultures are about conceptualizations and verbalizations being closely related to the practi-

ces and situations of everyday life; instructions are interwoven with individual life stories and reference is predominantly concrete. The general character of verbal expression is empathetic, serving identification with the goals of the community, and homeostatic, aimed at maintaining internal stability. To satisfy the requirements of mnemonic knowledge retention, the composition of messages is traditionally based on familiar structures with new elements administered sparingly and in small doses. The same requirements condition the redundant and the agonistic character of verbal expressions. Redundancy is necessary in order to make oral communication clear and effective, with some allowances made for momentary inattention on the part the listeners. If communication is agonistic, aggressive or striving to overcome in argument, it is dynamic and easier to follow. It may further be facilitated by some lexical and syntactical characteristics of the language used, the phrases that are additive or paratactic, and expressions that are formulaic, providing set epithets.

If Ong's classification is taken also as suggestive of a set of tendencies characteristic of literate expression and if contrasting pattern of classification is to be preserved, the language of literate people may be defined as more abstract and normative, more individualistic and objective, more innovative, succinct and cooperative, with a proportionately higher number of compound hypotactic sentences, and more creative. Writing enables handling knowledge in a more elaborate way, in terms of more complex language structures that could be transformed, refined and analysed repeatedly. Storage and retrieval of information no longer require the strong support of verified noetic composition, the extensive use of formulaic phrases or paratactic structures. Texts can become more innovative and less redundant. Writing becomes instrumental in distancing the author of the message from the message itself and from the here and the now. Rules and regulations can shed their homeostatic heritage and become less susceptible to temporary change. On the other hand, texts can be ascribed to particular authors and thus produced and recognized as subjective. Domination of hearing in communication is complemented by vision. Words become objects, language becomes independent from the language user (cf. Havelock 1986).

Ong's perspective is oriented towards language and its user. A perspective offered by Ricoeur (1976) takes into consideration the six constitutive elements of communication: the speaker, the hearer, the medium or channel, the code, the situation, and the message. The discussion of implications of writing deals with relationships between these elements and as such it is oriented metalinguistically, applicable both to the diachronic and the synchronic aspect of the oral-literal question. The relationship that is basic for all the others is the one that occurs between the message and the medium, referred to as 'fixation' and defined as inscription of the *noema* of discourse. The change in the relationship between the message and the speaker results in 'the detachment of meaning from the event', 'the semantic autonomy of the text' and possible dissociation between

the meaning of the text and the intention of the speaker: the text has an author but not a speaker. The message-hearer relationship in literacy indicates that the text is addressed to an unknown, universal reader. In the message and code area there are similarities in genres and composition, but Ricoeur also admits that while the locutionary aspect of speech act is most inscribable, there are obvious difficulties in rendering the illocutionary aspect, and the perlocutionary is the least inscribable: "The inscription of discourse is the transcription of the world, and the transcription is not reduplication, but metamorphosis" (Ricoeur 1976: 42). Finally, the most complex relationship, between the message and the reference: in oral communication the identifications are singular and references – situational; in writing there is no common situation, the distance between the reader and the writer may be not only spatial but also temporal, therefore it appears legitimate to ask: "...how is one to use the expressions of life fixed by writing in order to transfer oneself into a foreign psychic life?" (Ricoeur 1976: 44).

The conclusions from the two above classifications for thinking about language are far more evident than for thinking in language. The fixation of the message in the medium makes meticulous language analysis possible and leads to the distinction of 'units' in language. Texts, fixed more or less permanently and more or less impervious to external conditions, become detached from the particular event or situation as well as from a particular speaker. Their relative permanency extend the audience from those present when the act of speaking is actually performed to those distanced in space and time; the 'hearer' becomes less predictable if not totally unidentifiable. With the speaker becoming the author and the hearer becoming the reader, language gains independence from the language user. Abstraction, generalization and objectivism are some of the key terms mentioned in this context and their significance for thinking about language is widely recognized.

Yet, "...the impact of writing on the way people think is enigmatic and controversial" writes Harris (2009: 11), introducing the discussion on rationality and literacy. Ong and Ricoeur alike mention the non-verbal or perlocutinary effects of oral communication and the fact that written messages are devoid of non-verbal characteristics or render them in an abridged form. Havelock, quoted earlier in the article, stresses the novel involvement of vision in communication. The hypothesis referred to by Harris (2009) as a claim that 'writing restructures consciousness' is disclaimed and the opinion is offered that writing does restructure consciousness, the question remains in what way. The problem that Harris further presents as central to the discussion on rationality and its connection to orality and literacy is: "Does the literate mind differ in important respects from its predecessor, the preliterate mind? Or is this a flattering deception fostered by literacy itself?" (Harris 2009: 11). The way the alternative is presented – of real differences or differences by flattering deception – reveals that even if literate thinkers are eager to recognize deception, the superiority of the literate mind is implied. This

stands in contradiction to the arguments that Harris gathers against the view of preliterate minds being deficient or unable to think logically. Harris quotes Franz Boas, who professed ‘sameness of mental processes’ in all races and in primitive and civilized individuals, and Lucien Lèvy-Bruhl, according to whom any mind is making sense of the world ‘from which it had emerged’. Furthermore, Harris views research reported by Aleksandr Luria on differences in thinking between the literate and the illiterate not as pointing to the inability of the illiterate to think in abstract terms but rather as the inability of the literate to accept taxonomies other than their own, taken as universally obligatory. The naturally following reference is to Benjamin Lee Whorf and the question of whether thought determines linguistic expression or vice versa, to which Harris gives the answer: “Whorf recognizes a mutual influence, but pronounces ultimately in favour of the power of the language to dictate to its users. The language of the community, in his view, ‘represents the mass mind’” (Harris 2009: 55). And Harris traces it back to antiquity and pronounces ‘Aristotle’s language myth’ to be ‘one of the longest-lived myths in the Western tradition’. The myth is challenged by Harris, who views the process of encoding and decoding thoughts by means of a fixed code, either oral or visual, as the process of thought-transference or *telementation*.

Harris on the one hand seems to accept the opinion that there is/are no specific brain centre/-s for reading, writing or reasoning, on the other hand, however, he recognizes the existence of neurophysiological differences between the literate and the preliterate brain and between the mental processes of the literate and the preliterate mind. The differences are defined in terms of basic distinctions that the operations of the minds rely on, i.e. ODs, *operational discriminations*, which are opined fundamental to any linguistic communication, understood as reciprocal integration of activities by means of signs. More specifically, the literate minds become habituated to integrating the manual practices with the oral ones: making marks on a surface are integrated with speech activities (cf. Harris 2009). Neurologically, Harris talks about ‘adapting brain’s existing neuronal circuitry’; Lamb would probably define dealing with new ODs as ‘forming new neuronal connections’.

One of the consequences of literacy for thinking about language is the assumption of the equivalence of speech and writing, while in fact none of the writing systems in use, logographic, syllabic, alphabetic, or mixed, “captures with any approximation to accuracy the facts of speech as revealed by modern experimental phonetics” (Harris 2009: 139).

Another one is *decontextualizing* the word: reinterpreting it ‘as a decontextualized unit with a decontextualized meaning’: “The speaker loses his privileged role of being in absolute control of what his utterances mean, for the words used can now be referred for arbitration to a source independent of both speaker and hearer, i.e. the practices of written discourse, assumed to be controlled by those with a superior knowledge of the language” (Harris 2009: 140). Furthermore,

since the basic principle of contextualization is the ‘the principle of cotemporality’, assuming the relevance of a communication act to the current situation, decontextualization opens a range of new possibilities in linguistic functioning: “If literacy brings any ‘restructuring of consciousness’, this is where it lies, i.e. in consciousness of time” – writes Harris (2009: 141). The statement ‘You create your own text’ sums up Harris’ views on meanings, varying with contexts: “Meaning is always *in situ*, and never secure. To suppose that the meaning is ‘fixed’, whether by words or by actions or by both in conjunction, is tantamount to believing that signs come with a maker’s guarantee.” (Harris 2009: 163).

ACT III: THE POLISH CONTRIBUTION

The credit for treating speech as a context-bound activity, a ‘mode of action’ in fact, duly recognized by Harris (1998), goes to Bronisław Malinowski, influential in presenting the linguistic theory of language so advanced that it proves difficult, if not impossible, to resist the temptations of following Pisarkowa (2000) and quoting Gellner (1998: 149) here: “one can only ask oneself why the philosophers had to wait for Wittgenstein, when it was all there, ready, in Malinowski”. The breadth of Malinowski’s interests, coupled with his innovative methodology and extensive field research among the preliterate communities of the Mailu in Papua New Guinea and of the Kiriwina in the Triobirand Islands, resulted in putting forward propositions of fundamental significance for anthropology and linguistics. The fact that Malinowski not only lived among the local people but interviewed and communicated with them in the vernacular, recording texts ‘on the scene of action’ along with the reactions of the interviewees, allowed him to conclude: “The speech of a pre-literate community brings home to us in an unavoidably cogent manner that language exists only in actual use within the context of real utterance” (Malinowski 1935: vii). From the very beginning of his field experience, Malinowski was sensitive to insufficiency and frequent inadequacy of bilingual dictionaries, since “... there is no simple equivalence between two languages ever to be found which could be used right through” (Malinowski 1935: 13); he located the true sign meaning in the situation, the context of a particular communicative act, and emphasized the language functions that are basically social (phatic communion). Further, in determining any particular meaning of a lexical item he appreciated the value of the whole language, the network of meanings, situations and contexts: “... to study language outside the framework of its cultural realities the beliefs of the people, their social organisation, their legal ideas and economic activities must remain entirely futile” (Malinowski 1935: vii; cf. Pisarkowa 2000). Malinowski used photography as a regular aid and, in the introduction to the analysis of the Kiriwina language postulated the

use of film with sound-track (Malinowski 1935).

The data on Kiriwina were compiled in different forms: lists of lexemes and their English equivalents, with frequent additional comments useful in reconstructing the meaning evoked in each particular situation (Malinowski 1920); lists of glosses of varieties of particular items, supplied with explanations and comments (Malinowski 1935); phrases and sentences with literal and functional translations into English and extended comments of general and linguistic nature (Malinowski 1935). In case of magical formulas, the linguistic analysis includes notes of lexico-grammatical character and the general comments provide the information about, as Malinowski explains, the human and the supranatural contexts, classified according to more specific criteria and named, accordingly, sociological, ritual, structural, dogmatic and phonetic. The sociological context, of topmost importance for Malinowski, presents the when, where, why and who participates; the structural context, a brief presentation of how the formula is constructed, is treated as an introduction to the extended linguistic analysis of the formula; the ritual context describes the objects and actions accompanying the recitation of the magical formula; the dogmatic context explains the purpose and the cultural background of the formula; the phonetic context, finally, specifies the mode of recitation of the formula (Malinowski 1935).

Malinowski diligently registered those aspects of language use that were accounted for by context, like the not infrequent lack of personal markings, conjunctions or predicates; producing narratives with reported speech of different speakers intermixed; or dramatizing reports with parts of dialogues of speakers not clearly indicated. His data confirm scarcity of abstract and general terms in preliterate Kiriwina and signal the researcher's difficulty in determining the size of Kiriwina syntactic elements and in identifying the character of relations between the clauses, hypotactic or paratactic (cf. Pisarkowa 2000). Malinowski's conviction as to the meaning in a natural language being not given but resulting from the broad and narrow contexts had earlier been presented in a 1923 supplement to Ogden and Richards' publication on meaning (Malinowski 1923), where he referred to the power of words, rooted in pragmatic efficiency. In Pisarkowa's summary of Malinowski views such meaning is definitely idiosyncratic: "The idiosyncrasy of meaning in primitive language is strictly connected with the relation between the intellectual concept, the biological concept, and the magical attitude to the world" (Pisarkowa 2000: 330).

If Malinowski is the intellectual father of context-bound theories of language, the views on language individuality are the progeny of Jan Baudouin de Courtenay (cf. Lamb 1999). Contrary to Ferdinand de Saussure's theory, presenting language as basically social and abstract, imposed on, or reconstructed by individual minds and realized in individual speech acts (Saussure 1913/1966), Baudouin de Courtenay's psychological-social character of language indicates that language is socially induced but, like speech, individual – formed in the

course of each individual's development on the basis language fragments available. Baudouin de Courtenay's approach includes appreciating the influence of different types of thinking on one's language and the influence of languages, the native and each subsequent language acquired, on the way people think. The influence of thinking is tripartite: characteristic for language thinking in general; for some kinds of thinking, e.g. Ario-European; and characteristic of a specific, e.g. Polish, language thinking. Since 'lingualisation' (Pol. *ujęzykowanie*) is individually specific, the projection of reality is deemed equally individual (Baudouin de Courtenay 1915/1984). Thinking in language is not only different for the preliterate and the literate societies, it varies in the literate societies across groups of different levels of literacy development: the infants – not yet speaking individuals; the illiterate group – speaking but not reading or writing; and the literate – individuals with speaking, reading and writing abilities. Representatives of the fourth group exhibit the language type of thinking (Pol. *myślenie językowe*) enriched by consciously analytic type of linguistic thinking (Pol. *myślenie językoznawcze*), which radically changes the attitude of these individuals towards language (Baudouin de Courtenay 1915/1984). The analogy between members of preliterate communities and the illiterate groups in the basically literate communities may be too far-reaching, still, according to Baudouin de Courtenay, for the literate individuals language is represented mentally in the essentially graphic form. Graphemic representation of language in literate individuals then overrides the representation phonemic in character, in which the movements of speech organs (*kinemic* performance) are combined with accompanying acoustics (*acousmic* characteristics). Baudouin de Courtenay admits that it is virtually impossible for the literate individuals to envisage the language thinking of the illiterate, and speculates that it could be some kind of 'hallucinations of acoustic nature' (Pol. *dobrowolnie wywoływane obrazy halucynacyjne natury akustycznej*). Graphization radically changes the quality and increases the quantity of possible individual mental language representations; the processes of cerebration, phonation and audition become combined with graphic actions and visual perceptions. This results in redoubling 'language current' in the minds of literate individuals (Pol. *zdwojenie przebiegu prądów językowych*), both receptive and performative: if this current is preserved at the stable level, the obvious conclusion is that its intensity along the phonetic-acoustic routes decreases due to the formation of routes of graphic-visual nature (Baudouin de Courtenay 1915/1984). Once the 'current' is substituted by 'impulses' and 'routes' by 'neurons', the neurocognitive aspect of Baudouin de Courtenay's theory becomes even more evident. One practical implication of the above is that the illiterate have a superior ability to remember the orally transmitted messages, the other – that the literate cannot resist forming 'graphic myths' of various kinds.

INSTEAD OF EXIT

Within etholinguistics, the differences between the illiterate and the literate human language functioning occupy a prominent position on the list of parameters determining one's glottic identity. The idea of consciousness undergoing restructuring as result of literacy, whether in the form of Baudouin de Courtenay's redoubling the language current, Harris' new operational discriminations or Lamb's novel neuronal connections, appears self-evident and hardly refutable, reflected in the changed type and style of language expression. Literacy-induced alterations in mental language functioning are taken as being paralleled by abstract, generalized, objectified and objectivized thinking about language. Naturally, the sequel of literacy-rooted language analyses independent of language user is treated here as the one that warrants legitimacy of theories unbound by context and strongly undermined by Malinowski's findings.

The case for etholinguistics is decided on the merits of the tradition of thinking represented by Baudouin de Courtenay, Malinowski, Lamb and Harris – approaching language as a cognitive system interconnected with other cognitive systems, developed and shaped individually in the course of one's lifetime, determined genetically and environmentally. The primary concern of etholinguistics is the language user and this user's glottic identity.

The term *glottic identity*, introduced by Harris, but not ascribed any major role in his writings, is raised in etholinguistic to the status of central idea. Harris, when discussing the nature of language, writes: "The concept of 'a language' belongs with those in terms of which individuals and communities construct a glottic identity for themselves, and in different cultures this can be done in very different ways" (Harris 1998: 55). He also stresses that language description, from the integrational perspective, is "only one of possible components in the construction of a glottic identity. Other metalinguistic components may involve the classification of forms of speech by reference to sex, social status, age, etc. And there may be important criteria which are recognized in the community, but are not reflected in any specific metalinguistic terminology..." (Harris 1998: 57).

Alternative to treating language as an object of study in its own right, the matters challenging attention within etholinguistics are those connected with parameters shaping one's glottic identity. Etholinguistics is hoped to stay as the area of language study because it offers a range of possibilities, bridled only by researchers' themselves. One's glottic identity may be discussed in temporal, spatial and cultural terms, i.e. the time, the place and the cultural background the individual was raised in; it may cover the social aspect of language – the class and the family background; one's glottic identity is also determined by the factors of biological-cognitive nature like age, sex, interests, personality, information-processing style. Some of these parameters have already proved useful in analyzing translation, or rather – translator's presence in the text, i. e. the

influence of translator's glottic identity on the final product (Zaliwska-Okrutna in press). If the linguistic system of an individual is thought of as part of the individual semiotic system, the set of signs analyzed in the context of communication would expand to include gestures, postures, facial expressions, haptics, proxemics and other non-verbal modalities. Modern methods of observation, from filming, postulated by Malinowski, to neuroimaging techniques, applied in neurology, are hoped to offer valuable support and insight to investigating also these aspects of glottic identity.

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