

Spitzová, Eva; Ducháček, Otto

[Ullmann, Stephen. *Language and Style*]

*Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. A, Řada jazykovědná.* 1968, vol. 17, iss. A16, pp. 112-116

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/100121>

Access Date: 30. 11. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

gories in Modern Danish, (11) Contribution to an Analysis of the Structure of Written Danish, (12) The Three Main Types of Grammatical Connexion, (13) Semantic Problems in Logics and Linguistics, (14) The Importance of Distribution versus Other Criteria in Linguistic Analysis (tento příspěvek byl přednesen na světovém lingvistickém kongresu v Oslo jako jedna z hlavních přednášek), (15) Evolution and Structure in Linguistics, (16) Rasmus Rask's Conception of the Development and Structure in Language, (17) Darwin and Linguistics, (18) The Foundation of Comparative Linguistics: Revolution or Continuation?, (19) The Sentence-members and their Order — after Thirty Years. — Statě jsou seřazeny v chronologickém sledu; předchází jim nekrolog z pera E. Fischer-Jørgensenové a na konci je připojen soupis Diederichsenových prací, jakož i redakční komentář. Tento komentář se týká zejména těch článků, jež jsou zde otištěny poprvé (jejich rukopisy byly nalezeny v Diederichsenově pozůstalosti).

Sám název sborníku (dán. *helhed* = angl. *totality, whole, celost, celek'*) naznačuje zaměření Diederichsenových obecnějazykových studií. Jde tu o základní problém vystávající v řadě ohměn: vztah mezi paradigmatickou a syntagmatickou rovinou, mezi klasifikací a analýzou, mezi morfologií a syntaxí atp. (8, 9, 14 aj.). Stanovisko, jež D. v těchto otázkách zaujímá, představuje jistým způsobem kompromis mezi dánskou glosématikou a americkým deskriptivismem, kdežto názory pražské a ženevské školy nejsou zpravidla ani brány v úvahu! Stejně je tomu i v otázce klasifikace syntagmatických vztahů, již se D. zabýval v řadě statí (7, 12 aj.); zde se mj. můžeme poučit o obsahu některých typicky glosématických termínů (užívaných Hjelmslevem aj.): subordinace (hypotaxe) = „selektce“ (ab = a, ≠ b), koordinace (parataxe) = „kombinace“ (ab = a, = b), predikace (nexus) = „solidarita“ (ab ≠ a, ≠ b). — Neznalost názorů pražské lingvistické školy se projevuje i v níjak zarímaně stati o aktuálním členění věty v germánských jazycích (4), kde se užívá termínů „Anfangsfeld“, „Aktualfeld“, „Inhaltsfeld“ apod.

Jiná závažná tematická oblast, reprezentovaná ve sborníku čtyřmi články (15–18; až na první dosud nepublikovány!), jsou dějiny jazykovědy. Často se tvrdí, že lingvistika (filologie) nabyla charakter vědecké disciplíny teprve na začátku minulého století ve spojitosti se vznikem srovnávací indoeuropeistiky (revoluce v dějinách bádání o jazyce!). Podle Diederichsena však dílo R. Raska, F. Boppa, W. Humboldta a jiných představuje pouze organický článek ve vývoji jazykovědy: myšlenky o vzniku příbuzných jazyků ze společného základu, o pravidelnosti hláskového vývoje atp. se porůznu objevují již u badatelů 17. a 18. století (Leibniz, Stierhielm, Pantopiddan, Turgot aj.). Úloha R. Raska ve vývoji jazykovědy je vůbec ceněna velmi vysoko, zejména proto, že vedle historického hlediska se u něho zřetelně projevuje i hledisko strukturální (chápaní jazyka jako systému). D. se dále vyslovuje proti přeceňování vlivu přírodních věd na vývoj jazykovědy v 19. století, zvláště vlivu Ch. Darwina na názory A. Schleichera.

Souborné vydání vybraných prací P. Diederichsena je třeba ocenit jako záslužný čin: Mezinárodní lingvistická veřejnost tak získává možnost seznámit se se závažnými studiemi, z nichž některé jsou tu tiakem publikovány poprvé, jiné sice byly otištěny již dříve, ale značným dílem zapadly, jednak proto, že vyšly v nesdačno přístupných sbornících a časopisech, jednak i pro své jazykové roucho (práce uveřejněná v dánském jazyce má asi stejnou mezinárodní publicitu jako práce napsaná česky!). Soudíme, že takovýto způsobem (vydáním svazku vybraných prací) lze uctít badatele, ať již žijícího nebo zemřelého, daleko lépe než vydáváním různých jubilejních nebo pamětních sborníků, představujících nezřídka nahodilý sběr statí bez jakékoli vnitřní souvislosti.

Adolf Erhart

*Stephen Ullmann: Language and Style.* Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1966, VIII + 270 pp.

In the reviewed volume, the author presents eleven papers of his, written during the last eight years; most of them were published already in journals or proceedings of congresses and conferences. The book is divided into three sections, dealing with three main themes: problems of meaning, problems of style and relations between language and thought.

In the first article, called *Semantics at the Cross-Roads*, the author contemplates upon the possibilities of applying the structural method in semantics. This method has born rich fruit in phonology, morphology and syntax, but so far, no major success has been achieved in the attempts to apply it in semantics, many structuralists showing themselves reluctant

to deal with problems of meaning, partly because of the frequent abuse of the term "meaning", partly because of the widespread belief that structural viewpoints are inapplicable to problems of meaning, but mainly for the reason that semantic phenomena cannot be described with the same scientific rigour as the formal elements of language. Nevertheless, the roads already show themselves which may be taken by the structurally oriented semantics. They are the statistical analysis of word-frequency and other lexical features, the efforts to identify the characteristic tendencies of a language and, lastly, the search for the way the vocabulary is built up and for the principles and the hierarchy of values underlying its structure.

The following paper, entitled *The Concept of Meaning in Linguistics*, presents the summary of knowledge which linguistics has reached in the field of the study and definition of meaning. Two methods in particular have been applied here (and against both of them various objections have been raised), namely the analytical and the operational methods. Both of them are complementary, as the former refers to language and the latter to speech. The author, among other things, deals with the statistical method of "measurement of meaning", accepting it as a way which makes possible objective establishment of the "emotive connotations" of meaning. It seems to us, however, that a great disadvantage of this method is the fact that a linguistically untrained speaker, on whom apparently the method is based, is often not aware of the emotive connotations; moreover, the affective meaning of a word is not the same with all the users of a language.

In the study called *Semantics and Etymology*, the author points out that new, structurally oriented semantics forms an important contribution to the etymological studies in several points: it renders possible a new approach to the distinction between descriptive and historical viewpoints (this problem is studied in more detail in the following paper). The study of the structure of vocabulary makes it possible for etymology to widen substantially its horizons — etymological studies carried out from the viewpoint of associative fields show that changes of meaning are sometimes the result of the influence of a word belonging to the same associative field (as it is, e.g., the case of the Fr. word *marouffe*) or even of the influence of a word belonging to another associative field (e.g. Fr. *viande*). Lastly, the structural method offers a new approach to the problem of the motivation of words.

*Descriptive and Historical Methods in Semantics.* As is well known, Saussure denied any possibility of combining the descriptive and historical methods in linguistics. Ullmann tries to find out in his paper whether and how far this principle is applicable to semantics. He comes to the conclusion that in the analysis of some problems (popular etymology, motivation, emotive and evocative effects, difference between polysemy and homonymy) the two perspectives actually have to be kept carefully apart. Yet the following affirmation seems to be too categorical: "...whatever criteria we use, they must be strictly synchronic: the history of the terms in question will throw no light on the present position..." We believe that even in analysing the above mentioned phenomena it is not possible to eliminate completely the historical approach; to be able to state, for example, that the Engl. word *crayfish* really is a result of popular etymology, we must know the history of this word, which comes from Old French *crevice*. On the other hand, other problems can be resolved with success only if the two methods are combined: certain synchronic phenomena can be recognized only in the light of their diachronic consequences (e.g. the fact that the Middle French *nouer* "to swim" was replaced by the New French *nager* proves that its homonymy with the verb *nouer* "to tie" was felt intolerable), and, on the contrary, the background of some semantic changes can be discovered only through an analysis of the situation prevailing in the language before the change took place. Furthermore, the combination of the synchronic and diachronic approaches makes it possible to formulate problems which otherwise would have remained unnoticed — by studying the lexical fields (called also conceptual fields) we may follow the changes of entire conceptual spheres.

The last and most extensive paper of the first part, called *Semantic Universals*, is dedicated to the problem of the existence of general laws in semantics. The paper is rather a summary of tasks to be accomplished, as most of the semantic phenomena have not yet been studied widely enough to allow the universals to be unequivocally formulated. The author distinguishes between three types of universals: unrestricted universals, statistical universals and parallel developments. In descriptive semantics, it seems we may notice the following universal features: the existence of (phonetically and semantically) motivated words on the one hand and of conventional words on the other; the relation between concrete and abstract terms (in this connection, the author also touches the well-known and much discussed problem of "primitive" languages); the "law of distribution" (differentiation of

meanings) and the "law of synonymic attraction" (accumulation of synonyms designating important realities) in synonymy and, lastly, polysemy (but not homonymy). Most of these phenomena, if studied by means of statistical methods, would yield a substantial contribution to the semantic typology of languages. In historical semantics, extension and restriction of meaning are evidently universal processes. Metaphors and metonymies are often identical in numerous, even not cognate languages and it seems that there exist some general tendencies that govern the formation of metaphors, e.g. the transition from concrete to abstract or synaesthesia. An exact determination of the degree of universality of the mentioned processes would enable us to calculate the probability of certain semantic changes both in the past and in the future development of a language. In order to be able to formulate universal tendencies in the structure of the vocabulary, the study of which is still in its beginning, it would be necessary to study the question of "lexical constants" in more detail, to try to construct a general classification of concepts for all languages and, as far as the study of lexical fields is concerned, to concentrate not on the differences between these fields in various languages, as in has been done till now, but on what they have in common.

The second part of the book, dedicated to problems of style, is based mostly on the author's own investigations in this field, contained in two works of his, "Style in the French Novel" and "Image in the Modern French Novel", dealing principally with Proust's and Camus's style. The first and relatively extensive paper of this part, *New Bearings in Stylistics*, yields general information on stylistics and its methods. The author claims that stylistics should be considered a "sister science" of linguistics, because it is concerned not with the elements of a language as such, but with their expressive (i.e. non-communicative) potential. Here we would like to state, however, that other branches of linguistics are also concerned with the expressive aspects of language and that expressivity should not be separated from the rest of the linguistic phenomena. According to the author, we must distinguish between two main types of stylistic studies: those which are concerned with the style of a language (i.e. with the stylistic resources of a language), and those which explore the style of a writer (i.e. those exploring how a writer makes use of the resources at his disposal). The stylistic resources of a language may be studied on three levels: phonological (e.g. onomatopoeia), lexical (word-formation, synonymy, ambiguity, etc.) and syntactical (conversions, word-order, direct, indirect and free indirect speech and others). On all levels, attention has to be paid to the fundamental distinction between expressive devices in the narrower sense of the term (emotive overtones, emphasis, rhythm, symmetry and others) and evocative devices, whose stylistic effect results from their association with a particular milieu or register of style (e.g. faulty pronunciation, slang or dialectal terms, archaic forms). The styles of individual authors, or the so-called idiolects, may be studied by means of numerous methods. The author discusses three of them: the statistical method, the application of which he considers problematic, although he does not deny its advantages in establishing the authorship of anonymous or questionable works, in determining the chronology of works by the same writer or in indicating the frequency of a stylistic device in a given work; the psychological approach, to which Spitzer's much criticized "philological circle" belongs. Ullmann seems rather to overestimate Spitzer's method, not being aware of its excessive subjectivism. The one that best answers the purpose of modern stylistics is the third approach, the functional one: According to it, — "style appears not as a psychological document but as one of the essential components of any literary work, which has its own distinctive part to play in the structure of the latter". This point of view is clearly reflected in Delbouille's definition of a "stylistic fact" as a "linguistic element considered in its utilization for literary purposes in a given work". This approach may be applied both when studying the micro-context and the macrocontext and it allows us to concentrate on a particular element or group of elements as well as to embrace the entire style of an author. Of course, if we concentrate on a single element, we must not choose it *a priori*; it has to emerge from the work itself. The author concludes his article expressing the conviction that this "active and vigorous young science, which is still somewhat inchoate and unorganized" will help in the future to "heal the rift" existing between linguistics and literary science.

In the following article *Choice and Expressiveness in Style* the author examines the narrowly specialized question of choice of stylistic devices. In a detailed way and giving numerous examples from the writings of French authors, he discusses the differences between conscious and unconscious choice, the aesthetic significance of the choice, its implications and its limits and he warns against overestimation of the significance of choice, which could lead to the out-of-date conception of language and thought as independent entities.

The paper *The Reconstruction of Stylistic Values* is dedicated to the problem of studying literary works of past epochs. If we do not know the contemporary linguistic usage sufficiently, we are exposed to certain danger in stylistic reconstructions, such as "errors of addition" (for instance, if we see an expressive image where there was none for the contemporaries), or "errors of omission" in the grammatical and lexical spheres, as well as the problem of recognition of archaisms. Sometimes it is very difficult to avoid these dangers, and often we succeed in avoiding them only because the writer himself or contemporary grammarians call our attention to the expressivity of an image or the archaic nature of a word. The more a critic is aware of the difficulties he has to face and the more concrete data he possesses about the linguistic background, the smaller the probability of errors will be.

The last of the studies dedicated to questions of stylistics is *The Nature of Imagery*. Besides metaphors there exist also metonymical images, although they are by far less frequent (e.g. the title of Stendhal's novel *Le rouge et le noir*). Not every metaphor, however, is an image; to be considered an image, a metaphor has to be concrete and sensuous and there must be something striking and unexpected in it. From the point of view of the form of the image, we distinguish between simile and metaphor, i.e. between explicit and implicit imagery, between image by analogy and image by identification. The metaphor — a condensed comparison — is more expressive. As far as the inner structure of the image is concerned, both simile and metaphor are based on a binary relation: on an association between two terms which have some element or elements in common. For a more detailed study of this phenomenon we need specific names for the terms, and Ullmann takes over the terminology of I. A. Richards, who proposes "tenor" for the thing we are talking about, "vehicle" for the thing to which we are comparing and "ground" for the common feature or features. Most frequently the imagery is classified according to its vehicles, but it also may be classified according to the tenor, or the ground, or according to the relation between tenor and vehicle. The functions of the imagery in the wider context of a literary work are numerous. The author analyses cases where images act as symbols — in the sense that they express one of the main themes of a literary work. Sometimes the symbol is embodied in the very title of the work. Further, images may fill the function of the motivation of the hero's actions or of the value-judgements of a person; they may express the writer's philosophical ideas or experiences or they may serve as part of the linguistic portrait of a person.

The last section of the book contains two papers. In the first, and the more extensive of them, called *Words and Concepts*, the author deals with the part played by words in the elaboration of our concepts and in our analysis of the world. The idea, now pronounced so often and so urgently, that language is not merely a means for expressing our thoughts, but that it can influence the latter, was formulated already by Bacon. The idea is generally recognized now, but it is not easy to illustrate. This task can be fulfilled only by close co-operation of a number of scientific disciplines: philosophy, psychology, neurology, anthropology, linguistics and others. The question dealt with by the author is only one aspect of the problem and it may be approached from different angles. The evidence given by aphasia, namely by the form which Lord Brain calls aphasia of the "word-meaning schema", is of considerable value for the study of this question. General denominations stand for class-concepts (for whole categories of objects, qualities, events, etc.). As Goldstein shows on an example of colour amnesia, the patient, if he loses a particular word, may also lose the whole class-concept and the corresponding ability to generalize, to classify his experiences into categories and to assume an abstract attitude. Although sometimes the ability of abstract thought need not be so damaged as the difficulties in speech might suggest, there can be no doubt that aphasia has a negative impact on thinking. Within the framework of ordinary language, we may examine the influence of language upon thought by means of two major theories evolved in present-day linguistics. According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis language itself shapes ideas and is the program for mental activity, analysis and synthesis. Whorf affirms that "we dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages". Ullmann characterizes this theory as an "over-dramatized picture of man trapped within the walls of his native language"; he admits that there is some truth in it, but it is very difficult to find specific instances to prove it, mainly for the reason that "thought and language are so closely linked, and it is so difficult to conceive of the former without the latter, that it is often impossible to say which influenced the other". The other theory which helps us to explain the influence of language on thought is the theory of lexical fields. Some words referring to intellectual, moral, psychological or social phenomena are untranslatable to another language, which is often caused by a different classifica-

tion of the same conceptual sphere in different languages. This fact shows itself clearly by the study of lexical fields. When the classification is more detailed, the speakers are better aware of the differences between the individual concepts. The relation is reciprocal: language expresses thought, but, on the other hand, as soon as a lexical field takes shape, it confers fixity and permanence to the concepts. The shortcomings of words, too, bear evidence of the influence of language upon thought. Ullmann identifies himself with the approach of modern linguistics which does not judge, but describes and interprets, but he adds that if we transcend language and explore its influence on thought, we cannot avoid certain value-judgements and deny that some features of the vocabulary have a negative effect on our thinking — they can block it, misdirect it or hamper it in some other way. These features are either inherent in the very nature of the language (as, for instance, vagueness and “hypostatized” abstractions) or specific of a given language (e.g. gaps in vocabulary, which are not always easy to fill, ambiguity, misleading metaphors). In connection with this paper it is necessary to ask whether it is possible at all to formulate the problem in the way the author does it, that is as the problem of influence of language upon thought. Numerous studies, both linguistic and philosophical, prove that language and thought are inseparably linked and that the relation which exists between them is always that of mutual influence. After all, the conclusions reached by the author himself point to the same fact.

The last article of the book is called *Classical Influence on the Vocabulary of the French Renaissance*. The introduction of latinisms dates practically from the time when French began to exist as an independent language, but it was not before the fourteenth century that the “re-Latinization” grew into a systematic and conscious movement. It reached its height in the sixteenth century, which also marked the beginning of direct borrowings of Hellenisms which till then had come to French only indirectly, through Latin. Such a lexical influx on the one hand enriched the language with new concepts and, on the other, influenced its structure, especially its vocabulary (disappearance of old words, changes of meanings, rise of new homonyms and disappearance of old ones in the cases where one of the homonymous words was replaced by a neologism, influx of synonyms, substantial reduction in the number of motivated words) and its style: there were created two styles, a simple one, based largely on native words, and an abstract, erudite one, which contains many Latinisms and Hellenisms. This stylistic differentiation exists even now. It is mainly the merit of classical influence that French has grown into this precise, clear and elegant language which has become the international language of diplomats, philosophers and artists.

The reviewed book testifies the author's modern, structural approach to linguistic facts, his clear view of the studied problems and his thorough knowledge of what has been written on them till now; sometimes it seems, however, that he applies the device of modern linguistics — to describe and interpret, but not to judge — even in his attitude towards the views of other authors, especially when writers of *belles-lettres* and their views on language are concerned. It is a pity, too, that the book does not contain an index of authors, which would contribute to a better orientation of the reader. But even so the book is very well arranged, the studied problems are always illustrated by numerous examples and the work is a useful manual for anybody who looks for well founded general information on semantics and stylistics.

Eva Spitzová — Otto Ducháček

Eugenio Coseriu: „Tomo y me voy“, Ein Problem vergleichender europäischer Syntax. Vox romanica, Bern, Francke Verlag, 25/1, 1966, p. 13 — 55.

La construcción paratáctica „tomo y“ y sus equivalentes en distintos idiomas ya fueron objeto de numerosos estudios sintácticos. En la primera parte de su artículo, el autor presenta un resumen crítico de todas las obras que, según su conocimiento, trataron o mencionaron dicha construcción. Los primeros quienes se fijaron en ella fueron, en 1535, Juan de Valdés en su *Diálogo de la lengua* y, menos de un siglo más tarde, Gonzalo Correas en el *Vocabulario de refranes y frases proverbiales y otras fórmulas comunes de la lengua castellana*. R. J. Cuervo, en su *Diccionario de construcción y régimen de la lengua castellana* y en *Apuntaciones críticas sobre el lenguaje bogotano*, menciona las construcciones *coger y y agarrar y*. Dos hispanistas