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JAN FIRBAS

LINGUISTIC RESEARCH IN THE
BRNO PHILOSOPHICAL FACULTY AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS
WITH THE LINGUISTIC SCHOOL OF PRAGUE*

When recalling the beginnings of the Prague Linguistic Circle, V. Mathesius says the following: 'The lack of close contact with the Prague philological workers, which used to depress me, was felt with equal intensity now by Jakobson, who had been accustomed to a very different atmosphere in his pre-Prague years. We often discussed the need for a discussion and working center for young linguists, and it was quite natural that we attempted to form it. I have noted down that on March 13, 1925, I invited to a gathering Jakobson and Trnka, and with them S. Karcevskij, who, later on, was to become lecturer in Russian in Geneva but at that time still acted as a master of the Russian Senior High School in Prague. On October 14, that same year, I again invited Jakobson, Trnka, Karcevskij, and with them B. Havránek, who, at that time, was preparing for his lectureship on Comparative Slavic linguistics.'¹ Reading these recollections from a Brno point of view, one cannot fail to notice two names — B. Havránek's and R. Jakobson's. Both are closely connected not only with the Prague Linguistic Circle, but also with the Brno Philosophical Faculty.²

Further names closely connected with the Brno Philosophical Faculty appear on the list of members published in the Report on the Activities of the Prague Linguistic Circle in the First Ten Years of its Existence (1926—1936):³ Josef Ludvík Fischer, Vladimír Helfert, Josef Kurz, Václav Machek, Mihajlo Rostohar, František Trávníček, Pavel Trost, Bedřich Václavek, Josef Vachek, Frank Wollman.

The names mentioned so far certainly invite an account of the relations between the Prague Linguistic Circle and the Brno Philosophical Faculty. The present paper presents a modest contribution towards such an account. It is limited in its aims, concentrating on purely linguistic issues. On the other hand, as the end of the Circle's activities has by no means put an end to the work at and further elaboration of the problems raised by the Circle, the present paper will have to take into account also

* An English version of a Czech paper delivered at a festive session of linguists, held at the Brno Philosophical Faculty on 23 May 1969 on the occasion of the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the University of Brno.

¹ V. Mathesius, *Ten Years of the Prague Linguistic Circle* (a slightly abridged translation by J. Vachek of *Deset let Pražského lingvistického kroužku*, *Slovo a Slovesnost* 2, 1936, pp. 137—145), published in J. Vachek, *The Linguistic School of Prague*, Bloomington—London 1966, p. 139.

² On the occasion of the Sixth Slavic Congress, held in Prague in August 1968, Brno University granted the two scholars honorary doctorates of linguistic sciences.

³ The Report has been kindly made accessible to me by Dr A. Erhart. It is written in Czech.

the work of the pupils of the former members of the Circle. In other words, the purpose of the present paper is to give a brief outline of the purely linguistic work in which the members of the teaching staff of the Brno Philosophical Faculty have applied or developed the ideas of what has come to be called the Linguistic School of Prague. It is fair to say that the limitation to purely linguistic issues is merely due to the present writer's not feeling competent to deal with matters non-linguistic. He finds it regrettable that this limitation excludes from his observation the works of a number of prominent scholars, such as those of Josef Hrabák and Jiří Levý.

I. By way of introduction it may not be out of place to adduce a few notes on the world of ideas that prepared the way for the emergence of the principles of the Prague Linguistic School. As can be gathered from the recollections of the members of the School and naturally also from their works, at the very outset the Prague theory managed to combine the diachronistic approach of the Neogrammarians with the synchronistic approach characteristic of the current of thought initiated by Wilhelm von Humboldt. It was further profoundly influenced by Russian and Polish linguistic thought. (Let us mention at least Baudouin de Courtenay in this connection.) Equally important was the influence of the Saussurean school, American linguistic thought and the original ideas of the Prague Anglicist V. Mathesius. It is not without interest that, quite independently of Saussure, he coined his terms as early as five years before the appearance of Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale*.⁴

Interesting notes on the beginnings of the Prague School have been offered by R. Jakobson in an article⁵ published in *Index*, a Brno monthly, in 1934, a year after Jakobson became a member of the teaching staff of the Brno Philosophical Faculty. Jakobson's notes are worth perusing for two reasons: their author is not only well acquainted with the trends and currents in the wide world of learning, but also—perhaps just because he does not come from Czechoslovakia—throwing revealing light on facts and relations that may escape a Czechoslovak scholar's notice. He points out, for instance, a number of links existing between pre-Gebauerian Czech linguistic thought and the Prague School theory. He mentions B. Bolzano's pupil Vincenc Zahradníček, who 'draws a clear dividing line between the world of linguistic signs and that of objects'; A. Schleicher's pupil Ignác Jan Hanuš, boldly raising interesting stylistic and semantic questions; Čeněk Šercl and his semantic inquiries. Of particular interest for a Brno linguist is Jakobson's mention of František Matouš Klácel, who in his *Počátky vědeckého mluvnictví českého* [The Beginnings of Czech Grammatical Research], published as early as 1843, severely criticized 'the method of crude empiricism', which changes objective reality into 'a heap of sand every grain of which is viewed in isolation', and emphatically reminded Czech students of language that only constant reference of single items of knowledge to the respective wholes ensures true understanding, and that in an inquiry into the laws of language the dialectical unity of analysis and synthesis must be aimed at. In his article Jakobson even draws attention to the influence exercised by T. G. Masaryk, the founder of the University of Brno, on the formation of the Prague School's views on the relation between diachronic and synchronic linguistics. Jakobson points out that the *Thèses* of the Prague School come much nearer Masaryk's standpoint than Saussure's.

⁴ Cf. J. Vachek, *Dynamika fonologického systému současné spisovné češtiny* [The Dynamism of the Phonological System of Present Day Standard Czech], Prague 1968, p. 16.

⁵ *O předpokladech pražské lingvistické školy* [On the Pre-conditions of the Emergence of the Prague Linguistic School], *Index* 6, Brno 1934, pp. 6–9.

Thus they maintain that 'On ne saurait poser de barrières infranchissables entre les méthodes synchronique et diachronique comme le fait l'école de Genève. Si l'on envisage en linguistique synchronique les éléments du système de la langue du point de vue de leurs fonctions, on ne saurait juger non plus les changements subis par la langue sans tenir compte du système qui se trouve affecté par les dits changements'.⁶ For the sake of comparison Jakobson adduces the relevant passage from Masaryk's *Základové konkrétné logiky* [The Foundations of Concrete Logic]:⁷ '... in dieser Hinsicht gilt für die Sprachforschung dasselbe, was wir über die Sociologie gesagt haben... Darum betonen wir nochmals, daß das Studium der Entwicklung eines Dinges mit dem Studium des Dinges selbst verbunden werden müsse — eine Regel, die den Historikern aller Fächer immer wieder nicht eindringlich genug wiederholt werden kann.'

By quoting Masaryk's standpoint, Jakobson did not curry favour with the then head of state. In his article *O potenciálnosti jevů jazykových* [On the Potentiality of the Phenomena of Language],⁸ Mathesius explicitly says the following: 'It is fair to state that the difference between static and dynamic [= synchronistic and diachronistic, J. V.] linguistic problems was first clearly envisaged by the present writer when he was reading, during his university studies, T. G. Masaryk's remarks on linguistics in his *Versuch einer concreten Logik* (Vienna, 1887).'

In fact, as early as 1911, seven years before Masaryk became President, Mathesius explicitly acknowledged his indebtedness to the quoted standpoint.

It is well known that the views of those who regarded or regard themselves as adherents of the Prague Linguistic School do not constitute a dogmatically fixed and unified body of principles. It may, however, be safely assumed that the overwhelming majority of these scholars would subscribe without much hesitation to all or nearly all the points raised by B. Havránek, K. Horálek and P. Trost in a Czech reply prepared for the Fourth International Congress of Slavists⁹ and entitled in J. Vachek's English translation *The Contribution of Structural Linguistics to Historical and Comparative Studies of Slavic Languages*.¹⁰ The main points of this joint statement may be briefly summarized as follows:¹¹

- (i) language is a system and must be examined as such;
- (ii) the most essential feature of language is its functional character;
- (iii) synchronistic and diachronistic analyses cannot be opposed to each other; both are important; but investigation should begin with the synchronistic approach

⁶ *Thèses présentées au Premier Congrès des philologues slaves*, Travaux du Cercle linguistique de Prague I, Prague 1929, p. 6. Reprinted in *A Prague School Reader in Linguistics* (ed. by J. Vachek), Bloomington 1964, p. 34.

⁷ For the benefit of the reader who is not well versed in Czech, the corresponding passage from the German version of the book is quoted. Cf. T. G. Masaryk, *Versuch einer concreten Logik*, Vienna 1887, p. 193.

⁸ *Věstník Král. české společnosti nauk*, třída filos.-histor., Prague 1911. Reprinted in J. Vachek's English translation *A Prague School Reader in Linguistics* (see here note⁶), pp. 1–32. (The quoted passage occurs on p. 32.)

⁹ *Réponses aux questions linguistiques au IV^e Congrès International de Slavistes*, Moscow 1958, pp. 50–53.

¹⁰ *A Prague School Reader in Linguistics* (see here note⁶), pp. 463–467.

¹¹ The wording of the summary is that offered by E. Dvořáková [= Golková] in her review of *A Prague School Reader in Linguistics* (see here note⁶), published in SPFFBU A 14, Brno 1966, pp. 180–181.

because the present-day stage of language may be understood more reliably and comprehensively than the previous ones;

- (iv) within the standard language there are various functional languages or styles;
- (v) it is necessary to differentiate between language as a system and concrete utterances in which language is realized;
- (vi) language is a system of signs established by convention.

Other important principles adhered to by the Prague School will be discussed in the following sections of the present paper. Four of these sections will be devoted to the work of four prominent scholars whose names will remain linked with the history of the associations of the Brno Philosophical Faculty with the Linguistic School of Prague. Another section will briefly survey the work of those pupils of the four mentioned scholars who are on the teaching staff of the Brno Philosophical Faculty and who have contributed more or less to the development of the Prague linguistic theory. The concluding section will touch upon the question of the attitude of the Prague School towards new trends in linguistics.

II. Havránek, who together with V. Mathesius and B. Trnka belonged to the leading Czech linguists of the Circle and who was one of the founders of the Circle's periodical *Slovo a slovesnost*,¹² came to Brno University in 1929. When characterizing Havránek's Brno years (1929—1945), K. Hausenblas is right in emphasizing that Havránek's attachment to the Circle's cause proved beneficial to both sides: Havránek contributed effectively to the elaboration and propagation of a number of theoretical and methodological principles of the Circle, at the same time applying them to, and developing them in, his own work.¹³ His association with the Circle evoked his theoretical interest in Modern Czech. His Brno researches offered further proof of the correctness of the Circle's rejection of the Neogrammarian tenet that the study of the present-day stage of a language is to be regarded as unscientific. It was chiefly due to Havránek that Standard Czech began to be studied as a functionally differentiated means of communication. And it was also due to him that as to its methodicalness the work in this field came very near that done in the sphere of phonology.¹⁴ One of Havránek's most remarkable contributions to the theory of standard language is his differentiation between the norm of the standard language and the codification of this norm. By the norm of the standard language Havránek understands all the grammatical and lexical means regularly used by the standard language.¹⁵ Codification, on the other hand, offers a systematic linguistic description of the norm.¹⁶ Havránek was, moreover, the first to emphasize the specific functions of Colloquial Czech, distinguishing it both from Standard and from Common Czech.¹⁷ All these findings were naturally in harmony with his dynamic conception of language synchrony.

¹² Nowadays *Slovo a slovesnost* is one of the official organs of the Institute of Czech Language of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. Havránek is still its editor in chief.

¹³ Cf. K. Hausenblas, *K sedmdesátinám Bohuslava Havránka* [Bohuslav Havránek Septuagenarian], *Slovo a slovesnost* 24, Prague 1963, p. 3.

¹⁴ Cf. M. Dokulil, *Stav a úkoly zkoumání morfolgické stavby současné češtiny* [The State and Tasks of the Inquiry into the Morphological Structure of Contemporary Czech], *Slovo a slovesnost* 29, Prague 1968, p. 230.

¹⁵ Cf. B. Havránek, *Studie o spisovném jazyce* [Studies on the Standard Language] (a collection of the author's papers on problems concerning the standard language), Prague 1963, p. 30.

¹⁶ Cf., op. cit., pp. 119 ff.

¹⁷ Cf., e.g., op. cit., p. 60 and pp. 65—68.

Havránek's pioneer approach to the problems of standard language could not but lead him to active participation in the Circle's campaign¹⁸ against dilettantism and incompetence in expert treatment of language and against purism failing to appreciate the communicative needs of the language users.

Havránek examined Czech in its entire complexity, not neglecting the study of dialects. His work *Nářečí česká* [Czech Dialects]¹⁹ exerted a considerable influence on the Brno dialectological studies, which before his coming to Brno had always been primarily diachronistic in character. Havránek's work was incentive to inquiries into the relations existing within Modern Czech, especially between its standard and its non-standard varieties.

But Havránek's Brno researches into Standard Czech were not exclusively synchronistic. Even before his coming to Brno Havránek was interested in problems of historical phonetics and historical dialectology. In Brno he wrote his *Vývoj spisovného jazyka českého* [The Development of Standard Czech],²⁰ a work even nowadays regarded by Bohemicians as unsurpassed.²¹

It is not possible to give a full account of Havránek's relations to the Prague School as they can be traced back to his Brno years. But even a brief account of these years cannot leave unmentioned his phonological studies;²² the second part of his extensive monograph *Genera verbi v slovanských jazycích* [The Voice in Slavonic Verbs],²³ combining Neogrammarian methodological exactness with a new functional and structural approach; his studies offering synchronistic analyses of non-present-day Czech (cf. e.g., *Jazyk Máchův* [Mácha's Language],²⁴ *Lidový podklad jazyka Babičky Boženy Němcové* [The Vernacular Substratum in the Language of Božena Němcová's Babička].²⁵

From Havránek's minor studies, for instance, that concerning the problem of tense and aspect (published in *Mélanges Bally*)²⁶ influenced M. Dokulil's inquiry into the system of the Czech verb²⁷ and F. Kopečný's inquiry into the Czech verbal aspect.²⁸ Both Dokulil and Kopečný studied under Havránek in Brno.

III. It was in 1933 that Roman Jakobson was called to Brno University. He was Vice-President of the Prague Linguistic Circle and together with N. S. Trubetzkoy the most prominent spokesman of those members of the Circle who were not of

¹⁸ See the collective volume *Spisovná čeština a jazyková kultura* [Standard Czech and Language Cultivation], Prague 1932.

¹⁹ Published in *Československá vlastivěda III, Jazyk* [An Encyclopaedia of Knowledge of Czechoslovakia, Vol. III, Language], Prague 1934, pp. 84—216.

²⁰ Published in *Československá jazykověda, Řada II., Spisovný jazyk český a slovenský* [An Encyclopaedia of Knowledge of Czechoslovakia, Second Series, Czech and Slovak Standard Language], Prague 1936, pp. 1—144, 217—220.

²¹ Cf. K. Hausenblas, op. cit., p. 3.

²² E.g., *Ein phonologischer Beitrag zur Entwicklung der slavischen Palatalreihen*, *Travaux du Cercle linguistique de Prague* 8, pp. 327—334.

²³ *Rozpravy Král. čes. společnosti nauk, tř. fil.-histor.-jazykozpytná, nová řada 4, Praha 1937.*

²⁴ *Studie o spisovném jazyce* (see here note¹⁵), pp. 164—194.

²⁵ Op. cit., pp. 200—210.

²⁶ Geneva 1939, pp. 223—230.

²⁷ *Vývojové tendence časování v současné spisovné češtině* [Tendencies in the Development of the Contemporary Czech Conjugation], published in the collective volume *O češtině pro Čechy* [On Czech for Czechs], Prague 1960, pp. 192—221.

²⁸ *Slovesný vid v češtině* [Verbal Aspect in Czech], *Rozpravy Československé akademie věd, roč. 72, seš. 2, Prague 1962.*

Czechoslovak origin. In February 1939 occurred—to use Jakobson's own words—his 'outrageous separation from Brno University'.²⁹

Besides purely linguistic questions, Jakobson was also keenly interested in literary theory. He even tackled problems common to both fields of research, such as those concerning the relations between language and literature, the theory of translation, the theory of verse. He also proved an earnest student of cultural history.

Even before he came to Czechoslovakia, Jakobson had already been a scholar of repute. He was co-founder and Chairman of the Moscow Linguistic Circle and played a most significant role in constituting the Russian formalistic school. In Czechoslovakia he gradually moved away from formalism towards structuralism. Quite structuralistic and in fact prophetic rings the thesis put forth by him and J. Tynjanov in 1928: 'L'histoire littéraire est intimement liée aux autres "séries" historiques. Chacune de ces séries est caractérisée par des lois structurales propres. En dehors de l'étude de ces lois, il est impossible d'établir des connexions entre la "série" littéraire et les autres ensemble de phénomènes culturels. Étudier le système des systèmes, en ignorant les lois internes de chaque système individuel, serait commettre une grave erreur méthodologique'.³⁰

As will be shown later on, the correctness of Jakobson and Tynjanov's methodological requirement has been corroborated also by the work done by the linguists of Brno University.

Together with N. S. Trubetzkoy, V. Mathesius, B. Trnka and B. Havránek, R. Jakobson is one of the originators of the Prague phonological theory. Moreover, together with B. Havránek and B. Trnka, he laid the foundations of historical phonology. In this respect Jakobson's most important contribution produced during his Brno days was his paper *Observations sur le classement phonologique des consonnes*.³¹ In it he presented his consistent binary³² conception of distinctive features. (As to the Brno view on the distinctive features, it will be touched upon in sections five and six of the present paper.)

From Jakobson's other studies that date back to his Brno days and which have had a world-wide appeal, let us mention at least two of his morphological studies: *Zur Struktur des russischen Verbums*³³ and *Beitrag zur allgemeinen Kasuslehre*.³⁴ They are to be regarded as truly pioneer achievements in the field of structural morphology. As Dokulil remarks,³⁵ they may not be so systematic in character as the contributions offered in the sphere of phonology or in that of the theory of standard language, but they revealingly treat of marked and unmarked phenomena on the morphological level.

It is impossible here to do full justice to Jakobson's versatile Brno activities. Among other things, he took part in the discussion of the aims of the periodical *Naše řeč*,³⁶ and on various occasions, like V. Mathesius, B. Havránek and other

²⁹ Cf. M. Jelínek's interview with R. Jakobson, *S Romanem Jakobsonem*, Universitas 68, Brno 1968, No. 1, p. 51.

³⁰ Quoted after N. Ruwet from his preface to R. Jakobson, *Essais de linguistique générale*, Paris 1963. See pp. 8—9.

³¹ *Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Phonetic Sciences*, Ghent 1939, pp. 34—41.

³² According to N. Ruwet, the term 'binary' has never been used by Jakobson himself. See N. Ruwet, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

³³ *Charakteris Guilelmo Mathesio quinquagenario . . . oblata*, Prague 1932, pp. 74—84.

³⁴ *Travaux du Cercle linguistique de Prague 6*, Prague 1936, pp. 240—288.

³⁵ *Op. cit.* (see note¹⁴), p. 230.

³⁶ Cf. his paper *O dnešním brněnské českém* [On Present-Day Czech Purism], *Spisovná čeština a jazyková kultura* (see here note¹⁸), pp. 85—122.

members of the Prague Linguistic Circle, informed the expert and even the non-expert wider reading public of the principles advocated by the Prague Linguistic Circle. Mention has already been made of his informative article published in the 1934 volume of the Brno periodical *Index*.

In this connection, the Brno Germanist A. Beer should be named. Admirably acquainted with the achievements of Czechoslovak scholarship in various fields of research, he was for a number of years editor-in chief of the periodical *Naše věda* [Our Scholarship]. Though familiar with the aims of the Prague Linguistic Circle, he never subscribed to them. It is regrettable that no real dialogue had ever taken place between him and the adherents of the Circle.

IV. To a considerable extent B. Havránek's and R. Jakobson's ideas influenced the work of F. Trávniček, who was a member of the professorial staff of the Brno University for forty years (1921—61). It was evidently under the impact of these ideas that in the early thirties, i.e. at the time of the well-known controversy over correctness in Standard Czech usage, Trávniček turned his attention to problems of contemporary Standard Czech. He did not take active part in the controversy, but it was clear from his writings on which side he stood. Let us mention here at least his extensive paper *O jazykové správnosti* [On Correctness of Usage].³⁷ It is based on the idea that language fulfils its task if it fully satisfies the speaker's communicative needs: the linguist has to bear this in mind when judging the correctness of means employed by a language. Trávniček's views are here in perfect harmony with the principles of the Circle. The same functional approach is reflected even by the title of his linguistic causeries originally published in *Lidové noviny*,³⁸ *Nástroj myšlení a dorozumění* [A Means of Thought and Communication].³⁹

Trávniček's interest in synchronistic linguistics, evoked by the activities of the Circle, is further evidenced by his work at the fourth edition of J. Gebauer's *Příruční mluvnice jazyka českého* [A Handbook of Czech Grammar],⁴⁰ at the compilation of an entirely new dictionary, *Slovník jazyka českého* [A Dictionary of the Czech Language], prepared in collaboration with P. Váša,⁴¹ as well as by the publication of his *Stručná mluvnice česká* [A Concise Czech Grammar].⁴² Special mention must of course be made of his comprehensive, synchronistically conceived, two-volume grammar, entitled *Mluvnice spisovné češtiny* [A Grammar of Standard Czech], which appeared after the end of World War II. In this work, the historical development of Czech is considered only when it secures a better understanding of the present-day language. The principle is observed according to which the linguistic phenomena are viewed not in isolation, but in their interrelations: an attempt is made to find out to what extent and how the examined linguistic phenomena function within a system determined by usage.

It is evident that the impact of the teaching of the Prague School on Trávniček's work was by no means insignificant. Although he never fully subscribed to the methodological procedures applied by the Prague group, its activities in the thirties

³⁷ Published in the collective volume *Čtení o jazyce a poezii* [Readings on Language and Poetry], Prague 1942, pp. 101—128.

³⁸ One of the leading Czech dailies, which appeared in Brno and to which Karel Čapek and other prominent Czech intellectuals used to contribute.

³⁹ Prague 1939.

⁴⁰ Prague 1939.

⁴¹ 1st ed., Prague 1937; 4th ed., Prague 1952.

⁴² 1st ed., Prague 1941; 3rd ed., Prague 1945.

brought about a turning point in his work. This is also borne out by the choice of problems dealt with in his papers of that period. A number of problems taken up by them were the same as or similar to those studied by the Czech Anglicists, who belonged to the most ardent supporters of the new ideas.

Thus Trávníček discusses the grammatical and the so-called psychological subject, i.e. phenomena dealt with—from the purely linguistic point of view—by V. Mathesius within the framework of his theory of functional sentence perspective. Like V. Mathesius, Trávníček is interested in the principles of word order. Another problem of his is that of the passive voice, a problem tackled also by the Anglicists V. Mathesius and I. Poldauf. After Trávníček, the question of negation will be taken up by the Anglicist J. Vachek.

An important contribution to a better understanding of the functional differentiation of Standard Czech is Trávníček's study *O umělecké mluvě* [On Artistic Language].⁴³ The influence of the Prague School can also be traced in his *Úvod do českého jazyka* [An Introduction to the Study of the Czech Language].⁴⁴ The third 1952 edition of this handbook (published in Prague), however, uncritically embraces J. V. Stalin's pronouncements on linguistics. In 1950, Trávníček in fact severed his ties to the Prague School when publishing his interpretation of N. J. Marr's doctrines in an article entitled *Akademik Marr a jeho směr v jazykovědě* [Academician Marr and the Trend Initiated by him in Linguistics].⁴⁵

In the fifties Trávníček takes active part in a campaign against structuralism and consequently also against the teaching of the Prague School. Among the entries that in the bibliography of his works⁴⁶ are listed under the years 1951—4, a number of items pertain to this campaign, e.g. a short article entitled *Strukturalismus — nepřítel naší jazykovědy* [Structuralism—an Enemy to our Linguistic Research],⁴⁷ a brochure entitled *Český jazykovědný strukturalismus ve světle Stalinova učení o jazyce* [Czech Linguistic Structuralism in the Light of Stalin's Teaching on Language],⁴⁸ and the paper *Objektivismus a kosmopolitismus v naší jazykovědě* [Objectivism and Cosmopolitanism in our Linguistic Research], published in the first issue of the linguistic series of the present *Sborník prací FFBU*.⁴⁹ In this paper, he levels vehement attacks at the conception of language as a system of signs; at the comparison of genetically unrelated languages, in other words at what Mathesius has termed linguistic characterology; at endeavours to evolve a general, universal theory of grammar. He severely censures the adherents of structuralism for their ahistorical and immanentist approach to language and strongly disapproves of structural typology. All these supposed defects are ascribed by him to the allegedly objectivistic and cosmopolitan character of structuralism. No one of the contributors to the subsequent issues of the linguistic series of *Sborník prací FFBU* has continued in this vein. It is difficult not to agree with M. Jelínek⁵⁰ on the following points. A Bohe-

⁴³ Prague 1947.

⁴⁴ 1st ed., Brno 1947.

⁴⁵ *Naše řeč* 34, pp. 1—6.

⁴⁶ Z. Tyl, *Soupis prací akademika Františka Trávníčka za léta 1948—1958* [A Bibliography of Academician František Trávníček's Works published in the years 1948—58], *Studie ze slovanské jazykovědy* [Studies in Slavic Linguistics], Prague 1958, pp. 469—76.

⁴⁷ *Tvorba* 20, Prague 1951, pp. 893—894.

⁴⁸ Prague 1951.

⁴⁹ Brno 1952.

⁵⁰ M. Jelínek, *Akademik František Trávníček* [Academician František Trávníček], *Sborník prací FFBU A 9*, Brno 1961, pp. 5—6.

micist can hardly afford to disregard Trávníček's monumental work on the Czech language. It is regrettable, however, that a scholar of so high repute who during his academic career was successful in schooling his students in the principles of adequate observation of language phenomena as well as in teaching them to base generalizations only on well-established facts should not himself have been on guard against drawing hasty and unjustified inferences when propagating the teaching of N. J. Marr or campaigning against that of the Prague School.

V. The youngest of the four prominent linguists who played important parts in the history of the associations of the Brno Philosophical Faculty with the Prague Linguistic School is Josef Vachek.⁵¹ After the end of World War II he founded the linguistic section of the Brno Department of English, organizing it on a truly modern basis and for almost two decades remaining director of the linguistic studies in the Department. It is due to him that in the fifties the mentioned section was one of the two places—and after A. Kellner's death, for a time, the only one place in the University—where students had the opportunity of getting acquainted with the teaching of the Prague School. His acceptance of Academician B. Havránek's call to join the Institute of Czech Language of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences meant a serious loss to the Brno Department of English.

Vachek's acquaintance with the teaching of the Prague School was first-hand and intimate. At Charles University he was a pupil of V. Mathesius, B. Trnka, Oldřich Hujer and Miloš Weingart. He was in fact also a pupil of B. Havránek and R. Jakobson, although they were actually not his university teachers. For though in Vachek's student days professors in the University of Brno, they took part in the meetings and other activities of the Prague Linguistic Circle. In this way, together with the four above-mentioned prominent scholars, they had a marked share in moulding Vachek's personality as well as his conception of language and language study. Vachek became a member of the Circle in 1931.

Vachek's habilitation work bears the title *Obecný zápor v angličtině a češtině* [Universal Negation in English and Czech].⁵² It is worth noticing that it does not pertain to phonology, the field to which Vachek has undoubtedly devoted most of his attention. Let us point out in this connection that Vachek is not merely a phonologist; nor is he only an Anglicist; he is also a Bohemicist and a general linguist.

As has already been indicated, especially in the early fifties the Prague phonologists found themselves in a defensive position and had carefully to weigh the methods used and the results achieved.⁵³ Vachek certainly could not be blamed for not paying sufficient attention to the phonic material in his phonological interpretations, for 'severing his interpretations from the phonic material'. In all his phonological works, including the monograph *On Peripheral Phonemes of Modern English*,⁵⁴ an outcome of research extending for over ten of his Brno years and based on a number of papers published in various periodicals, he has paid constant regard to phonetic realization. The monograph is a contribution towards historical

⁵¹ For a more detailed appreciation of J. Vachek's contribution to English studies, see the present writer's *Professor Josef Vachek Sexagenarian, A Tribute to his Work in the Field of English Studies*, *Brno Studies in English* 8, Brno 1969, pp. 9–20.

⁵² *Prague Studies in English* 6, *Facultas Philosophica Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis*, Prague 1947, pp. 9–73 (with an extensive English summary on pp. 65–72).

⁵³ J. Vachek, *Prague Phonological Studies Today*, *Travaux linguistiques de Prague* 1, Prague 1964, p. 9.

⁵⁴ *Brno Studies in English* 4, Prague 1964, pp. 7–100.

phonology, and together with the studies by B. Havránek, R. Jakobson, B. Trnka and others, it offers palpable proof of the falsity of the assertion that the Prague phonological theory is ahistoric. In the mentioned monograph, Vachek concentrates his attention on phonemes that are either not 'fully integrated' in the phonemic pattern or exhibit a very low functional load. He rightly finds that the existence of such phonemes bears out the fact that language is not a closed, fully balanced system.

It is not without interest to note that Vachek's pre-war term 'phonological unit' (adopted from N. S. Trubetzkoy)⁵⁵ in fact covers what is nowadays usually called 'distinctive feature'. He does not, however, concur with the Harvard group in the amount of emphasis laid on the importance of the distinctive features. In his researches into the history of phonological systems he has shown that it is often not the distinctive features, but rather the phonemes as wholes that are the bearers of systemic tensions which frequently result in important reconstructions of the phonological system.⁵⁶ Similar conclusions have been arrived at by A. Lamprecht in his monograph to be touched upon later in this report.

Vachek regards language as a system of systems (sub-systems, levels). A change effected in one sub-system can have repercussions in another sub-system or in all the other sub-systems. Retaining their specific characters, the sub-systems co-operate with one another. This approach to language, substantiating R. Jakobson and J. Tynjanov's view quoted here earlier on p. 98, is successfully applied by J. Vachek especially in his monograph *Some less Familiar Aspects of the Analytical Trend of English*.⁵⁷ As in other studies, even in this monograph, Vachek often has recourse to the method of linguistic characterology, the concept of which may be explained in his own words as follows: 'By comparing the means with which different languages satisfy essentially the same kinds of communicative needs and wants, the analyst can arrive at what is typical of this or that language. The sum of such typical features, duly arranged in their hierarchy is dealt with by the descriptive approach called by Mathesius the linguistic characterology.'⁵⁸ Applying this approach, Vachek finds, for instance, that the Modern English verb is less dynamic than its Modern Czech counterpart. Ultimately, he traces this difference to the analytic and the synthetic character of English and Czech respectively.

It is hardly possible to give here a detailed account of all the works of Vachek brought out during his Brno period. For a number of years, students have gratefully appreciated the set of his mimeographed university textbooks, covering practically all the prescribed course of the theoretical study of English and offering an excellent introduction to the current state of research.⁵⁹ It was on his initiative that the series *Brno Studies in English* began to appear. In a triad of books (*Dictionnaire de l'École de Prague*,⁶⁰ *A Prague School Reader in Linguistics*,⁶¹ *The Linguistic School of*

⁵⁵ See J. Vachek, *Phonemes and Phonological Units*, Travaux du Cercle linguistique de Prague 4, Prague 1936, pp. 225-239. Reprinted in Prague School Reader in Linguistics (ed. by J. Vachek), Bloomington 1964, pp. 143-149.

⁵⁶ Cf. J. Vachek, *The Linguistic School of Prague* (see here note¹), p. 59.

⁵⁷ *Brno Studies in English* 3, Praha 1961, pp. 9-78.

⁵⁸ Cf. J. Vachek, *The Linguistic School of Prague* (see here note¹), p. 6.

⁵⁹ Recently an abridged English version of his *Historický vývoj angličtiny* [The Historical Development of English] (5th ed., Prague 1967), entitled *A Brief Survey of the Historical Development of English I-II*, has been brought out as a mimeographed textbook by the State University of Leiden (Leiden 1969).

⁶⁰ In collaboration with J. Dubský, Utrecht-Anvers 1960.

⁶¹ Bloomington, Ind., 1964.

Prague⁶² he has made the teaching of the Prague School accessible to a wide scholarly public all over the world.

VI. The names of B. Havránek, R. Jakobson, F. Trávníček and J. Vachek will remain linked up with the beginnings of the researches carried out by the Brno Departments of Czech, Russian, Slavonic and English Languages on the lines marked out by the Linguistic School of Prague. A number of other prominent scholars should be named in this connection: Jaromír Bělič, Miloš Dokulil, Josef Filipec, Karel Horálek, Alois Jedlička, František Kopečný and Pavel Trost. They are all pre-war students of the Brno Philosophical Faculty, each of them a pupil of at least two of the three great masters—B. Havránek, R. Jakobson and F. Trávníček. At present they are either professors at Charles University (Bělič, Horálek, Jedlička, Trost) or hold posts of senior research workers in the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (Dokulil, Filipec, Kopečný). As none of them has become a full-time member of the teaching staff of the Brno Philosophical Faculty, their work does not fall within the narrow scope of the present paper. It has, however, to be borne in mind that it is also thanks to them that Brno can boast of having become an important centre of linguistic research developing the ideas of the Prague Linguistic Circle.

Another prominent scholar, a pupil of B. Havránek and R. Jakobson, is to be named here: the late A. Kellner, after World War II Professor of Slavonic Languages. (He died in 1953.) The dedicatory words opening the volume published to honour his memory⁶³ rightly emphasized that his work had thrown new light on the linguistic situation in the Ostrava Region and had opened up new vistas to modern Czech dialectological research. He fully appreciated the significance of phonological interpretation in dialectological research. This is borne out by his two-volume monograph *Východoláská nářečí* [The East Lachian Dialects]⁶⁴ and a number of his articles, e.g., *Příspěvek k fonologii slezskopolských nářečí na Těšínsku* [A Contribution to the Phonology of the Silesio-Polish Dialects in the Těšín Region].⁶⁵ He will be gratefully remembered by his students for acquainting them with the works of V. Mathesius and J. Vachek at a time when structuralism had fallen into disfavour.⁶⁶ It will be possible to come back to Kellner's work again when mention is made of the activities of the research group formed by members of the Brno Department of Czech and Slovak Dialectology.

It is now time to say a few words about the work of those members of the younger generation of linguists who are on the teaching staff of the Brno Philosophical Faculty and who in some way have developed the ideas of the Prague Linguistic School. All of them graduated after World War II and studied under at least one of the following five teachers: Havránek, Jakobson, Kellner, Trávníček and Vachek.

There is one significant feature that the Brno Philosophical Faculty shares with other centres of linguistic research in Czechoslovakia: a conspicuous post-war increase in the number of papers and monographs treating of syntactic problems. This is not only due to an increased number of workers engaged in linguistic research, but also to the fact that the post-war generation of linguists has naturally turned its attention

⁶² Bloomington—London 1966.

⁶³ *Adolfu Kellnerovi, Sborník jazykovědných studií* [In Honour of Adolf Kellner, A Collection of Linguistic Studies], Opava 1954.

⁶⁴ Published as Volumes III and IV of the series *Moravská a slezská nářečí* [Moravian and Silesian Dialects], Brno 1946, 1949.

⁶⁵ *Recueil linguistique de Bratislava I*, Bratislava 1948, pp. 191—197.

⁶⁶ I owe this information to Dr. M. Čejka.

to problems not coped with in the pre-war years owing to understandable preoccupation with phonological problems.⁶⁷

A syntactic work of outstanding importance entitled *Vývoj českého souvětí* [The Development of the Czech Complex Sentence] (Prague 1960) has been left behind by the prematurely deceased Jaroslav Bauer, who in an original way develops the line of thought represented by Jan Gebauer, Josef Zubatý and František Trávníček. As has been fitly stressed by M. Komárek in a review of the book,⁶⁸ Bauer is consistent in applying the principle established by modern linguistics according to which the language system is to be viewed as a whole and hierarchically ranked above its components. In accordance with this principle he endeavours to view the development of the clausal system (i.e. the system constituted by complex-sentence types) in its entirety, never interpreting individual complex-sentence types in isolation, but only in regard to the development of the entire system. It is particularly in this respect and also because in comparing Czech with other Slavonic languages he does not confine himself merely to form, but pays due regard to function as well that Bauer is to be associated with the Prague School.

An even closer association with the Prague School is revealed by the syntactic researches carried out by Milan Jelínek and Miroslav Grepl. This is also reflected by the problems they have chosen for discussion. Jelínek is keenly interested in questions of word order and functional sentence perspective, i.e. in questions the study of which was considered by V. Mathesius to be one of the most important tasks of functional syntax. Another question of equal importance is that of the so-called complex condensations. Jelínek has taken it up in regard to Slavonic languages. He is further keenly interested in stylistics: apart from general questions, he concentrates on problems connected with the stylistic differentiation of the standard language. Inspired by B. Havránek's work in this field, he has offered a number of valuable contributions to the theory of the standard language. For the benefit of the language user he has popularized the results of his research in occasional papers and in a practical handbook of stylistics, intended for journalists and entitled *O jazyku a stylu novin* [On the Language and Style of Newspapers] (Prague 1957).

Miroslav Grepl also works at problems of word order and functional sentence perspective. He examines them within the wider framework of a theory of utterance, which is his main concern at the moment. An important contribution to this theory is his monograph *Emocionálně motivované aktualizace v syntaktické struktuře výpovědi* [Emotionally Motivated Actualizations in the Syntactic Structure of the Utterance] (Brno 1967), in which he endeavours to present an overall view of the organization of linguistic means producing the emotive colouring of the utterance. Some of his ideas are further developed by Svatava Prokešová. Together with J. Bauer, he published, in the form of a mimeographed university text-book, *Skladba spisovné češtiny* [A Syntax of Standard Czech]⁶⁹, unmistakably marked by the functionalist approach.

A positive attitude towards the Prague School has been adopted by the Brno linguists specializing in Russian syntax. An ever growing inclination for the teaching of the Prague School has been revealed by the methodology employed by Romau

⁶⁷ For a more detailed list of works produced by the younger generation of Brno linguists, see *Universitas Brunensis 1919—1969*, Brno 1969.

⁶⁸ M. Komárek, *Studie o vývoji českého souvětí* [A Study in the Development of the Czech Complex Sentence], *Naše řeč* 44, Prague 1961, p. 71.

⁶⁹ 3rd. ed., Prague 1967.

Mrázek. He emphasizes the necessity of establishing the invariant meanings of linguistic constructions, of studying paradigmatic correlations and interrelations existing between the levels of the language system. He is the author of the monograph *Syntaxis ruského tvoritel'nogo* [A Syntax of the Russian Instrumental Case] (Brno 1964), based on material drawn not only from Russian, but also from other Slavonic languages. Another student of Russian syntax is Stanislav Žaža. The impact of the Prague Linguistic School on his work can be traced especially in his contrastive studies, in which he compares Russian with Czech. This holds good particularly for his share in the *Přiruční mluvnice ruštiny I—II* [A Handbook of Russian Grammar] (Prague 1961, 1960). V. Mathesius's ideas have influenced his inquiries into the interrelations between the syntactic, phonic and graphic levels of contemporary Russian.

Another syntactician is R. Večerka, the author of a monograph entitled *Syntax aktivních participií v staroslověnině* [A Syntax of Active Participles in Old Church Slavonic] (Prague 1961). In this book he endeavours to determine the place of participles within the Old Church Slavonic system of syntax. This structural approach has made it possible to establish a number of features that would have remained undiscovered had the discussed phenomena been examined in isolation.

Very closely associated with the Prague Linguistic School is the linguistic research team formed by the Brno Anglicists J. Firbas, H. Breithutová, E. Golková, J. Hladký, J. Ondráček and A. Svoboda, all of them former pupils of J. Vachek. They work primarily in the sphere of linguistic characterology (a term coined by V. Mathesius, see here p. 102), comparing English with Czech, occasionally also with German and Italian. At the moment they focus their attention on problems raised by the theory of functional sentence perspective and on questions concerning the function of the verb in the very act of communication. Problems of functional sentence perspective (=FSP) are studied both from the synchronic and from the diachronic point of view. Close attention is also paid to the relations between FSP and intonation. The results of the group's researches have been published mainly in Vols 1, 3, 4, 7 and 8 of *Brno Studies in English* (Prague 1959, 1961, 1967, Brno 1968, 1969).⁷⁰

In the sphere of phonology, even in Brno, the post-war years have witnessed an increased interest in diachronistic problems. Apart from Vachek's works, it is the contributions by A. Bartoněk and A. Lamprecht that are to be mentioned in this connection. Lamprecht's monograph *Vývoj fonologického systému českého jazyka* [The Development of the Phonological System of the Czech Language] (Brno 1966) throws new light on the development of the Czech consonantal and vocalic systems and describes the phonological developments not only of the standard language and the central dialects, but also of all the main dialectal varieties of the Czech language.

Inspired by Vachek's contributions to diachronistic phonology, A. Bartoněk, a classical philologist, has produced two monographs, entitled *Vývoj konsonantického systému v řeckých dialektech* [The Development of the Consonantal System in Greek Dialects] (Prague 1961) and *The Development of the Long-Vowel System in Ancient Greek Dialects* (Brno 1966). Together with Vachek's and Lamprecht's works, Bartoněk's monograph proves the falsity of the statement that Prague School phonology is ahistoric. The development of the phonological system in the idiolect of a child is described by J. Pačesová in her book, entitled *The Development of Vocabulary in the*

⁷⁰ An occasional collaborator with the group is the Bohemist K. Pala. See his contribution to *Brno Studies in English* 7.

Child (Brno 1968). The book is a contribution towards a pedolinguistic project directed by K. Ohnesorg.

Special mention must be made of the work done in the spheres of word formation and dialectology. Under the heading of the former comes M. Jelínek's extensive monograph on Czech action nouns.⁷¹ The articles of Z. Rusínová and D. Šlosar contribute to a better understanding of the development of the Czech word-formative system, the authors employing the method of comparing synchronic cross-sections representing various periods of development. Problems of word-formation are also tackled by J. Jiráček (especially in his unpublished monograph on international substantival suffixes in Russian). In principle, all the named scholars subscribe to the theory of word formation advanced by M. Dokulil⁷² (this applies especially to Z. Rusínová and D. Šlosar), which points to another link associating the Brno linguists with the Prague School.

As to dialectological research, solid foundations have been laid for it at the Brno Philosophical Faculty by B. Havránek, F. Trávníček and their pupil A. Kellner. J. Vachek is certainly right when stressing that 'ever since the days of Adolf Kellner... it has become a matter of course to demand that the results of dialectological research work should not only be formulated in phonological terms but also evaluated with regard to their bearing on a better understanding of the phonological development of the given language.'⁷³ It is not, however, possible to say that this requirement has been fully complied with. This is chiefly due to the atmosphere prevalent in the fifties which in the Czech and Slavonic Departments considerably impeded an effective development of phonological research. Thus A. Lamprecht's monograph *Středoopavské nářečí* [The Dialect of the Central Opava Region], published in 1963 (Prague), could offer phonological interpretations only very sparingly. More room to phonology is devoted in J. Skulina's monograph *Severní pomezí moravskoslezských nářečí* [The Northern Border of the Moravo-Silesian Dialect Region], published in 1964 (Prague), and in A. Vašek's monograph *Jazykové vlivy karpatské salašnické kolonizace na Moravě* [Linguistic Influences of the Carpathian Pastoral Colonization in Moravia], published in 1967 (Prague).

The comparatively little attention paid by the Brno University dialectologists to phonological problems can also be partly accounted for by their preoccupation with what they regard as one of their main tasks: to cover the parts of grammar so far neglected by dialectological research. This is why they have turned their attention mainly to dialectal syntax and dialectal word-formation. The above-mentioned Z. Rusínová and D. Šlosar work in the latter field. The former is covered mainly by J. Chloupek, V. Michálková and J. Balhar, who do not, however, confine themselves to dialectal syntax only. In their work they endeavour to consistently distinguish between *parole* (purely utterance) and *langue* (systemic) phenomena; to contribute towards a better understanding of the specific character and position within the national language of dialectal syntax in particular and of the spoken syntax in general; to gain a deeper insight into the formal and functional differentiation of the national language. Let us add in this connection that the basic principles of the theory of the

⁷¹ Included in *Tvoření slov v češtině 2, Odvozování podstatných jmen* [Word Formation in Czech 2, Derivation of Substantives], Prague 1967. See pp. 562—653.

⁷² *Tvoření slov v češtině 1, Teorie odvozování slov* [Word Formation in Czech 1, Theory of Word Derivation], Prague 1962.

⁷³ Cf. J. Vachek, *Prague Phonological Studies Today*, *Travaux linguistiques de Prague* 1, Prague 1964, p. 9.

standard language have been successfully popularized in J. Chloupek's booklet *Pověry o češtině* [Superstitions about Czech] (Brno 1968).

Two further works should be mentioned in this connection. The sphere of research concerning language unions ('alliances de langues', 'Sprachbünde'), the importance of which has become evident also thanks to Havránek's and Jakobson's papers (published during their Brno days),⁷⁴ is represented by A. Vašek's above-mentioned monograph. Together with other works by Vašek, the book is a contribution toward a better understanding of extralinguistic contacts and interferences. Vašek has also contributed some papers to the theory of utterance.

The second note concerns dialectological research carried out by non-Bohemists, who obviously have far less opportunity to engage in such work. Nevertheless, the Brno Department of German, directed by L. Zatočil, has successfully tackled problems of German historical dialectology. In regard to the associations with the Prague School, mention should in this connection be made of the first chapter of Z. Masařík's book *Die mittelalterliche deutsche Kanzleisprache Süd- und Mittelmährens* (Brno 1966). It takes up the problem of relations between phonemes and graphemes.

As to the lexical level, it is intensively studied by a group of Romance scholars, led by O. Ducháček. The other members of the group are R. Ostrá and E. Spitzová. Like the members of the Prague School, Ducháček views the vocabulary of a language as a system and strives to discover its structural laws. His theory of semantic fields,⁷⁵ however, is to be regarded as a conception that is to a large extent independent of the Prague School.

VII. By way of concluding the present paper, it seems appropriate to raise the question of the attitude assumed by the Prague Linguistic School to recent developments in linguistics. A dictum of V. Mathesius and the standpoints of J. Vachek and K. Hausenblas will throw some light on the matter. According to J. Vachek, Mathesius used to say in his seminar classes that language is a fortress that can and must be assailed from different sides. This attitude makes it imperative to take great pains in weighing the pros and cons of another scholar's approach or solution, to endeavour to appreciate even his diametrically opposed view, and if necessary to disagree with him without belittling his achievements. It is in this spirit that Vachek⁷⁶ deals with Chomsky's criticism⁷⁷ levelled at the Prague School phonological theory. Vachek shows in which respects he cannot agree with Chomsky, as well as in what he finds Chomsky's main contribution to the development of modern linguistics.

Vachek protests against Chomsky's view that the Prague approach is to be described as taxonomic in the sense that the facts of the phonic level are only enumerated and classified, no notice being taken of the relations existing between them and other linguistic facts. Vachek's view of language as a system of systems certainly entitles him to raise this protest. For it is the relations between phonemes and the relation

⁷⁴ B. Havránek, *Zur phonologischen Geographie. Das Vokalsystem des balkanischen Sprachbundes*, Archives Néerlandaises de Phonétique expérimentale 1933, pp. 28–34. R. Jakobson, *Sur la théorie des affinités phonologiques entre les langues*, Actes du Quatrième Congrès International de Linguistes, Copenhagen 1938, pp. 48–58.

⁷⁵ Cf., e.g., his *Le champ conceptuel de la beauté en français moderne* (Prague 1960).

⁷⁶ J. Vachek, *On Some Basic Principles of 'Classical' Phonology*, Zeitschrift für Phonetik, Sprachwissenschaft und Kommunikationsforschung 17/1964. The paper appeared during the period of Vachek's external membership of the staff of the Brno Department of English (1962–5).

⁷⁷ Expressed in N. Chomsky, *The Logical Basis of Linguistic Theory*, Preprints of Papers for the Ninth International Congress of Linguists, Aug. 27–31, 1962 (Cambridge, Mass.), pp. 509–574.

between the phonemic and the other levels that he pays particular attention to in his work.

Vachek further shows that Chomsky is not right in blaming the members of the Prague group for subscribing to principles that cannot be consistently applied to the examined material. Even here Vachek is entitled to raise his voice in protest. Both his monograph on peripheral phonemes, produced during his Brno days, and his monograph on the phonological system of Present-Day Czech,⁷⁸ produced after he left Brno for Prague, show that the existence of exceptional cases is no proof of the inadequacy of the applied principles, but is due to the fact that language does not constitute a perfectly balanced, fully closed, self-contained static system. The special circumstances in which the principles do not apply indicate places in the system which are to be regarded as fuzzy points, 'indicators of the fact that, at the given time, the system has some structural problems to solve, in other words, that far from being a static structure, it is a structure in motion' (p. 419).

Together with other members of the Prague group, e.g. R. Jakobson and B. Trnka, J. Vachek has shown that the regularities of language differ in character from those examined by natural sciences. He concludes therefore that the methods of mathematical modelling are not applicable to the two types of regularities to the same extent. Nevertheless, like other members of the Prague group, J. Vachek is not opposed to the methods of algebraic linguists and mathematical models. He even points out the possibility and usefulness of an attempt at a synthesis of Chomsky's conception and that of the Prague group.

The attitude of the Prague School to the new trends in linguistics has also been very aptly expressed by K. Hausenblas.⁷⁹ He points out that the new trends concentrate rather on the characteristic features of the language structure itself than on the characteristic properties revealed by language in the course of its functioning in the act of communication. He thinks, however, that due regard to the network of wider relations displayed by the examined phenomena—on the very essence of which new revealing light begins to be thrown by cybernetics—requires also most consistent attention to those aspects that have come to be termed by the Prague group 'function', 'functional', 'functional character', etc. When the linguistic theoretician succeeds in arriving at a tolerably adequate, more exhaustive, more exact description and interpretation of the structure of language, a description applicable even outside linguistics, he will necessarily have to return to problems of function.

Viewed in this light, the prospects spread out before the Brno linguists who subscribe to the functionalist and structuralist approach to language advocated by the Prague Linguistic School do not appear to be without hope for the endeavour to achieve a better understanding of the functioning of language.

⁷⁸ J. Vachek, *Dynamika fonologického systému současné spisovné češtiny* [The Dynamism of the Phonological System of Present Day Standard Czech], Prague 1968.

⁷⁹ Op. cit. (see here note¹²), p. 3.

PRAŽSKÁ ŠKOLA A JAZYKOVĚDNÉ BĀDÁNÍ NA BRNĚNSKÉ FILOSOFICKÉ FAKULTĚ

(Souhrn referátu)

Jan Firbas

Historie Pražského lingvistického kroužku (PLK) je úzce spjata s historií jazykovědného bádání na brněnské filosofické fakultě. Ve zprávě o činnosti PLK za první desetiletí jeho trvání, tj. od r. 1926 do 1936, jsou v seznamu členů uvedena tato jména, nerozlučně spojená s brněnskou filosofickou fakultou:¹ Josef Ludvík Fischer, Bohuslav Havránek, Vladimír Helfert, Josef Kurz, Václav Machek, Mirko Novák, Mihajlo Rostohar, František Trávníček, Pavel Trost, Bedřich Václavek, Josef Vašek, Frank Wollman. Konec existence Kroužku neznámá ovšem konec působení jeho myšlenek. Je proto třeba věnovat pozornost i pracím těch žáků bývalých členů Kroužku, kteří tyto myšlenky dále rozvíjejí, a tak se svými učiteli vytvářejí tzv. pražskou lingvistickou školu. V tomto smyslu pojal autor svůj referát šířeji. Naproti tomu se v něm soustřeďuje na tematiku čistě lingvistickou a na práci těch členů pražské školy, kteří po delší dobu působili nebo nyní působí jako učitelé na brněnské filosofické fakultě. Proto se autor v referátu nezabývá např. dílem literárních vědů, bývalých absolventů, později učitelů brněnské filosofické fakulty Josefa Hrabáka a Jiřiho Levého, ani dílem bývalých brněnských posluchačů Karla Horálka, Aloise Jedličky, Pavla Trosta (vesměs učitelů Karlovy university) a Jaromíra Běliče, Miloše Dokulila, Josefa Filipce, Františka Kopečného (vesměs starších vědeckých pracovníků Československé akademie věd). Vyčerpávající referát o vztazích mezi pražskou školou a brněnskou filosofickou fakultou by se ovšem musel podrobně zabývat i jejich pracemi.

V první části referátu podává autor několik poznámek o myšlenkovém kontextu, z něhož pražská škola vyšla. Pražské škole se podařilo spojit diachronistický přístup mladogramatický se synchronistickým přístupem směru, jehož zakladatel byl Wilhelm von Humboldt. Na formování pražské koncepce hluboce zapůsobilo i lingvistické myšlení ruské a polské. Neméně důležité byly práce školy Saussurovy, americký jazykozpyt a — řečeno slovy R. Jakobsona — originální rysy pražské anglistiky, reprezentované V. Mathesiem.

Zajímavý pohled na pražskou školu podává R. Jakobson v brněnském *Indexu* v r. 1934. Vedle skutečností již zde uvedených upozorňuje na styčné body existující mezi pražskou školou a českým lingvistickým myšlením předgebauerovským. Pokud jde o názor pražské školy na poměr lingvistiky diachronní k lingvistice synchronní, podtrhuje, že teze PLK stojí mnohem blíže názoru Masarykovu, vyslovenému v knize *Základové konkrétné logiky* v r. 1885, nežli stanovisku Saussurovu.

Opráje se o stat, kterou vypracovali u příležitosti IV. mezinárodního slavistického kongresu v r. 1958 B. Havránek, K. Horálek, V. Skalička a P. Trost, referent pak uvádí teze, s kterými by bez výhrad nebo téměř bez výhrad souhlasila většina těch, kteří se hlásili nebo hlásí k pražské škole.

Druhá až pátá část referátu je věnována brněnské badatelské činnosti čtyř vědců, jejichž jména jsou nerozlučně spjata s historií pražské školy na brněnské filosofické fakultě: Bohuslava Havránka (učitelem fakulty byl v letech 1929—45), Romana Jakobsona (1933—39), Františka Trávníčka (1921—81), Josefa Vačka (1945—62, externě do 1965). Velmi čestné místo vedle nich zaujímá předčasně zemřelý Adolf Kellner (1945—53).

Bohuslav Havránek na brněnské universitě dobudovává svou teorii spisovného jazyka. Je to především jeho zásluha, že se spisovný jazyk začíná zkoumat jako nástroj funkčně diferencovaný. Z nejcennějších přínosů Havránkovy teorie je její pojetí normy v jazyce a její dynamická koncepce jazykové synchronie. Současnou češtinu studuje Havránek v celé její složitosti, jak o tom svědčí i dílo *Nářečí česká*. Podstatná ovlivnilo brněnská dialektologická bádání, která do jeho příchodu byla v podstatě zaměřena historicky. Průkopnické pojetí spisovného jazyka nemohlo Havránka nést k účasti na boji PLK proti diletantskému purismu, dostatečně nechápajícímu aktuální potřeby dorozumivací praxe.

Havránkovy zkoumání spisovného jazyka nezůstává v oblasti synchronie. V Brně vzniká jeho *Vývoj spisovného jazyka českého*, dílo, které bohemisté dodnes považují za nepřekonané. Mezi jinými pracemi z brněnského období Havránkova referent připomíná i jeho práce fonologické, druhý díl velké monografie *Genera verbi v slovaných jazycích* a práce, které podávají synchronní analýzy českého jazyka staršího období.

¹ Tuto informaci mi laskavě poskytl doc. dr. A. Erhart, CSc.

Spolu s N. Trubeckým, V. Mathesiem, B. Trnkou a B. Havránkem patří k předním tvůrcům fonologické teorie pražské školy Roman Jakobson. Spolu s B. Havránkem a B. Trnkou je také spolutvůrcem fonologie historické. Nejzávažnější Jakobsonovou fonologickou prací z brněnského období je studie *Observations sur le classement phonologique des consonnes*. Podává v ní svou důsledně binaristickou koncepcí distinktivních rysů.

K jiným Jakobsonovým pracím, které vzbudily světový ohlas, patří *Zur Struktur des russischen Verbums* a *Beitrag zur allgemeinen Kasuslehre*, průkopnické práce v oboru strukturální morfologie, objevené pojednávající o příznakových a bezpříznakových jevech v plánu morfologickém.

Jakobson zasahuje i do diskuse o českém purismu, informuje veřejnost o vzniku a zásadách PLK. Ještě před příchodem do Brna (1928) vyslovil s J. Tynjanovem zásadu, zdůrazňující, že „studovat systém systémů a nevědět přitom o vnitřních zákonech každého jednotlivého systému by bylo hrubou metodologickou chybou“.² Správnost této zásady potvrdily především brněnské práce Vachkovy.

Vedle otázek čistě lingvistických zajímá se Jakobson též živě o otázky literárněvědné. Obrací se i otázkami pomezními, společnými oběma disciplínám. Intenzivně řeší i otázky kulturně historické.

Činnost PLK a brněnské Havránkovo a Jakobsonovo působení nezůstaly bez vlivu na dílo Františka Trávníčka. V třicátých letech se Trávníček začíná živě zabývat o problematiku současného českého spisovného jazyka. Do boje proti purismu sice přímo nezasahuje, ale je zřejmé, že se postavil na stranu PLK. Zajímavý je výběr témat statí, které v té době píše. Mnohé z nich pojednávají o problémech, kterých si všimla nebo všimne i funkčně strukturální československá anglistika. Vyvrcholením Trávníčkových snah o lepší poznání současného českého spisovného jazyka je jeho *Mluvnice spisovné češtiny*, pojatá synchronně a k starším jazykovým stadiím přihlížející jen tehdy, vyžaduje-li to lepší pochopení současného stavu.

V padesátých letech se Trávníček přímo obrací proti strukturalismu a tím i proti učení pražské školy. Je třeba litovat, že velký vědec, který své žáky mistrně vedl k vědecké akribii a odpovědnému zobecňování zjištěných fakt, sám se v propagaci učení Marrova, v boji proti strukturalismu a v přecení Stalínových statí o jazykovědě nedovedl vyvarovat nedostatečně fundovaných závěrů.

Nejmladším ze čtyř čelných jazykovědců, kteří jsou nerozlučně spjati s historií pražské školy na brněnské filosofické fakultě, je Josef Vachek. V době, kdy působí v Brně, dostává se pražské škola do defenzivy. Vachek znovu promýšlí a domýšlí výsledky jejího badatelského úsilí. Jeho dílo nejenom vyvrací řadu námitek vznášených proti pražské škole (Vachkovy fonologické práce např. nejsou odtrženy od zvukového materiálu, neomezují se jenom na dnešní stav jazyka), ale svědčí o podnětnosti a životnosti jejich myšlenek. Nejzávažnějšími Vachkovými díly vzniklými za jeho brněnského působení jsou *Some Less Familiar Features of the Analytical Trend of English* a *On Peripheral Phonemes in Modern English*. Objevně v nich pojednává o historii fonologického systému angličtiny a nově osvětluje — často metodou lingvistické charakteristiky — i nefonologické roviny anglického jazykového systému. Přesvědčivě dokazuje plodnost přístupu, který chápe jazyk jako systém systémů. V triptychu knih, tvořeném slovníkem lingvistických termínů pražské školy, čítankou z nejzávažnějších jejích prací a úvodem do jejího lingvistického myšlení, seznamuje světovou lingvistickou veřejnost s výsledky badatelského úsilí pražské školy.

Bylo by nespravedlivé se v této souvislosti nezmnít o díle předčasně zemřelého Adolfa Kellnera, který plně docenil závažnost fonologické interpretace nářečního výzkumu a svými pracemi razil cestu moderní české dialektologii (srov. jeho *Východolabská nářečí*).

Šestá část referátu se pokouší stručně informovat o tom, do jaké míry a jakým způsobem mladší generace fakultních učitelů-lingvistů (z nichž každý je poválečným absolventem a žákem alespoň jednoho z pěti výše jmenovaných učitelů) rozvíjí myšlenky pražské školy. V referátě se uvádějí jmenovitě i nejzávažnější práce, pokud jeví vztah k pražské škole. (Pro velký počet pracovníků i prací nelze takto postupovat v této části souhrnu.) Je přirozené, že poválečná lingvistická generace obrátila svou pozornost hlavně na problémy syntaktické, na které se před válkou — především pro pochopitelné soustředění na fonologii — v dostatečné míře nedostalo.

O postihnutí vývoje českého souvčetněho systému a změn jeho složek neodděleně, ale v souvislosti s tímto vývojem, se se zdarem pokusil předčasně zemřelý Jaroslav Bauer. Ještě úžeji jsou v své syntaktické práci spojeni s pražskou školou Milan Jelínek a Miroslav Grepl. Nejzávažnějšími Jelínkovými pracemi jsou snad ty, v nichž intenzivně promýšlí obecnou problematiku stylu a problematiku stylové diferenciacie spisovného jazyka. Greplův zájem se soustřeďuje především

² Podle francouzské verze publikované v úvodní studii (z pera N. Ruweta) k Jakobsonově knize *Essai de linguistique générale*, Paříž 1963, str. 9.

na teorii promluvy. Mj. se s úspěchem pokusil o celostní pohled na jazykovou výstavbu citové stránky výpovědi. Ke kladnému pojmání pražské školy dospěli i syntaktici rusističtí Roman Mrázek a Stanislav Žaža. Mrázek zdůrazňuje potřebu hledání invariantních významů konstrukcí, studia paradigmatických korelací a souvztažnosti jednotlivých plánů. U Žaži se vliv pražské školy projevil především v jeho zkoumání vzájemného vztahu syntaktického, fonického a grafického členění současné ruštiny. K syntaktikům patří i Radoslav Večeřka, kterému strukturální pohled umožnil ukázat na řadu rysů v staroslověnském syntaktickém systému, které až dosud při izolované interpretaci unikaly pozornosti badatelů. Velmi úzce s pražskou školou je spjat tým anglistických pracovníků, vedený Janem Fírbasem. Tým především pracuje na lingvistické charakteristice angličtiny; v rámci této tematiky se pak především soustřeďuje na zkoumání funkční perspektivy větné (= aktuálního členění větného) a na fungování slovesa v samém aktu sdělení.

Vedle prací Vachkových jsou závažnými příspěvky k historické fonologii studie Arnošta Lamprechta a Antonína Bartoněka. Lamprecht zkoumá vývoj českého konsonantického i vokálního systému; studuje přitom nejen fonologický vývoj kulturního jazyka a centrálních dialektů, ale i fonologický vývoj všech hlavních nářečních útvarů českého jazyka. Bartoněk vrhá nové světlo na fonologický vývoj konsonantických i vokálních systémů starořeckých dialektů. Fonologickým vývojem idiolektu dítěte se zabývá Jaroslava Pačesová. Úzký vztah k pražské škole jeví i brněnské práce z oboru tvoření slov. Brněnští pracovníci na tomto poli (Milan Jelínek, Jiří Jiráček, Dušan Šlosar, Zdena Rusínová) v podstatě přijímají slovotvornou teorii Miloše Dokulila.

V oblasti dialektologie, jednom z nejdůležitějších úseků brněnské lingvistiky, se v ovzduší boje proti strukturalismu mohl stěží realizovat Kellnerův požadavek důsledné fonologické interpretace, i když si autoři dialektologických monografií (Arnošt Lamprecht, Josef Skulina, Antonín Vašek) závažnosti takové interpretace byli plně vědomi. V současné době považují dialektologové pracovníci spojení s brněnskou filosofickou fakultou za jeden ze svých hlavních úkolů zpracování těch částí mluvnice, jimž se dosavadní dialektologická bádání vyhýbala. Jde především o nářeční syntax (zpracovávanou Janem Chloupkem, Věrou Michálkovou a Janem Balharem) a nářeční tvoření slov (zpracovávané Zdenkou Rusínovou a Dušanem Šlosarem). Dialektologičtí pracovníci se přitom neomezují na nářečí, ale snaží se o zjišťování specifických rysů mluveného jazyka vůbec, a tak i o lepší pochopení výrazové a funkční rozrůzněnosti národního jazyka. O lepší poznání mezijazykových kontaktů a interferencí usiluje ve svém dialektologickém bádání Antonín Vašek.

V sedmé, poslední části referátu se autor dotýká otázky, jak se pražská škola staví k novým směrům v lingvistice. Na příkladě Vachkova rozboru Chomáckého kritiky fonologického učení pražské školy ilustruje otevřený postoj většiny příslušníků této školy k těmto směrům. Referát končí zdůrazněním, že úplný a exaktní popis a výklad jazykové struktury je nedosažitelný bez rozřešení otázek kladených problematikou funkční.

