XXV. LINGUISTICS*

Academic and Research Staff

Prof. R. Jakobson
Prof. A. N. Chomsky
Prof. M. Halle
Prof. J. A. Fodor
Prof. J. J. Katz
Prof. R. P. V. Kiparsky

Prof. E. S. Klima
Prof. J. Kurylowicz
Prof. G. H. Matthews
Prof. Krystyna Pomorska
Dr. S. Bromberger
Dr. J. B. Fraser
Dr. M. F. Garrett

Dr. S-Y. Kuroda
Dr. A. Schwartz
Dr. D. E. Walker
G. B. Gragg
P. L. Peterson
J. J. Viertel

Graduate Students

G. D. Bedell IV
T. G. Bever
E. W. Browne
S. W-C. Chan
P. G. Chapin
R. J. Carter
J. P. Dean
R. P. G. DeRijk
R. C. Dougherty
J. E. Emonds
J. L. Fidelholtz

M. L. Geis
R. Goldfield
J. S. Gruber
J. W. Harris
T. A. Huntington
R. S. Jackendoff
L. Jenkins
T. F. Hofmann
R. S. Kayne
J. P. Kimball

R. L. Mendelsohn
Amy E. Myers
D. M. Perlmutter
P. S. Peters, Jr.
C. B. Qualls
J. R. Ross
M. S. Snow
Carol A. Spielman
R. J. Stanley
Florence Warshawsky
Nancy H. Woo

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research of the linguistics groups aims to develop a general theory of language which encompasses all that can be known about language. This theory attempts to reveal the lawful inter-relations existing among the structural properties of different languages and among the different levels of a given language. As regards subject matter, therefore, all aspects of language are of interest to our group. Work now in progress deals with the phonology, morphology, and syntax of a score of different languages and the abstract features of these linguistic levels, with language learning, language disturbances and speech perception, with linguistic change (syntactic as well as phonological), with semantics, the philosophy of language and the history of ideas concerning the nature of language, with the poetic use of language and the structure of literary works, with the mathematical and logical foundations of linguistic theory, as well as with the abstract study of symbolic systems similar to natural languages.

Since many of the problems of language lie in the area in which several disciplines overlap, an adequate and exhaustive treatment of language demands close cooperation of linguistics with other sciences. The inquiry into the structural principles of human language suggests a comparison of these principles with those of other sign systems, which, in turn, leads naturally to the elaboration of a general theory of signs, semiotics. Here linguistics touches upon problems that have been studied by philosophy. Other problems of interest to logicians — and also to mathematicians — are touched upon in the studies devoted to the formal features of a general theory of language. The study of language in its poetic function brings linguistics into contact with the theory and history of literature. The social function of language cannot be properly illuminated without

the help of anthropologists and sociologists. The problems that are common to linguistics and the theory of communication, the psychology of language, the acoustics and physiology of speech, and the study of language disturbances are too well known to need further comment here. The exploration of these interdisciplinary problems, a major objective of this group, will be of benefit not only to linguistics; it is certain to provide workers in the other fields with stimulating insight and new methods of attack, as well as to suggest to them new problems for investigation and fruitful reformulations of questions that have been asked for a long time.

M. Halle

A. ON THE STOIC THEORY OF TENSES

It is well known that the Stoics took great interest in linguistic and especially semantic questions, as fitting into the scheme of their logic. They may be considered, in many ways, to be the precursors of the modern science of language. Thus, we find clearly formulated in Stoic thought Saussure's distinction between signifiant and signifié, the latter, as a signified thing, being differentiated from the thing in itself.[1] in contradistinction to the signifiant ($\tau\grave{o}\ \sigma\eta\mu\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu o\nu = \overset{c}{\eta}\ \phi\omega\nu\acute{\eta}$) and the thing in itself ($\tau\grave{o}$ $\tau u\gamma\chi\acute{a}\nu o\nu = \tau\grave{o}\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\tau\grave{o}\varsigma\ \overset{c}{u}\pi o\kappa\epsilon\acute{\iota}\mu\epsilon\nu o\nu$), which are corporeal and material by nature, the signifié ($\tau\grave{o}\ \sigma\eta\mu\alpha\iota\nu\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu o\nu$) is incorporeal, nonmaterial ($\overset{a}{\alpha}\sigma\acute{\omega}\mu\alpha\tau o\nu$). The signifié is also designated by the term $\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\grave{o}\nu$ (Lat. dicibile). Now, $\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\grave{o}\nu$ is 'that in or by which the $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$ is realized'.[2] The Stoics define the $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$ "to say or tell" as 'the emission of a sound-continuum indicating the thing conceived'.[3] This definition corresponds to the modern conception of the semiological function. One might thus be justified in attributing to the $\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\grave{o}\nu$ two values: on the one hand, that of the signifié; on the other, that corresponding to the notion of the 'sign'[4] used by Saussure. Rather than draw a parallel, as Steinthal does, between the $\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\grave{o}\nu$ of the Stoics and the 'innere Sprachform' of Humboldt,[5] one is inclined to see in the $\lambda\epsilon\kappa\tau\grave{o}\nu$ a notion very similar to the Saussurian 'form'.

It is also well known that the Stoics contributed to the elucidation of inflexional categories. Particularly in regard to the verb, they have provided us with a theory and a classification of forms of tenses in Greek.[6] The principles of opposition on which their classification is based bear a striking resemblance to the notions of correlation, correlative pair, and correlation mark, used by R. Jakobson and N. Troubetzkoy. The present ($\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\sigma\tau\grave{\omega}\varsigma\ \pi\alpha\rho\alpha\tau\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\grave{o}\varsigma$) and imperfect ($\pi\alpha\rho\omega\chi\eta\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu o\varsigma\ \pi\alpha\rho\alpha\tau\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\grave{o}\varsigma$) are opposed, respectively, as imperfective tenses ($\overset{a}{\alpha}\tau\epsilon\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\iota\varsigma$), to the perfect ($\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\sigma\tau\grave{\omega}\varsigma\ \sigma u\nu\tau\epsilon\lambda\iota\kappa\grave{o}\varsigma$) and pluperfect ($\pi\alpha\rho\omega\chi\eta\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu o\varsigma\ \sigma u\nu\tau\epsilon\lambda\iota\kappa\grave{o}\varsigma$), as perfective ($\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\iota o\iota$). These four tenses, as a whole, are opposed, as definite tenses ($\overset{u}{\omega}\rho\iota\sigma\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu o\iota$), to the two indefinite tenses ($\overset{a}{\alpha}\acute{o}\rho\iota\sigma\tau o\iota$), aorist and future. The aorist in particular is opposed, as indefinite perfective ($\sigma u\nu\tau\epsilon\lambda\iota\kappa\grave{o}\varsigma\ \overset{a}{\alpha}\acute{o}\rho\iota\sigma\tau o\varsigma$), to the two definite perfectives, perfect and pluperfect. The present and imperfect alike bear the correlation mark ($\sigma u\gamma\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha$) of duration ($\pi\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma$); the perfect and

pluperfect that of completion ($\sigma \upsilon \nu \tau \acute{\epsilon} \lambda \epsilon \iota \alpha$); and the aorist and future that of indeterminateness ($\alpha o \rho \iota \sigma \tau \acute{\iota} \alpha$).

The Stoic system of tenses applied to the Greek verb is very close to that put forward by J. Kurylowicz[7]:

imperfective	perfective
present	——
past	past
future	future

The main feature of this system, according to Professor Kurylowicz,[8] is the fact that, in the perfective aspect, there is no present tense. Thus, the tense that is left out is the present because it expresses, not perfectivity, but the anteriority,[9] conceived by Professor Kurylowicz to be the reference of the result of an action to a certain time.

In the Stoic system, the perfect and the aorist[10] together share the function of perfectivity, but the former is distinguished from the latter by its definite character, since it expresses the "just now" ($\tau \grave{o} \, \acute{\alpha} \rho \tau \iota$) in opposition to the pluperfect, which expresses the "long ago" ($\tau \grave{o} \, \pi \acute{\alpha} \lambda \alpha \iota$). By the adjunction of $\acute{\alpha} \rho \tau \iota$, the aorist $\acute{\epsilon} \pi o \acute{\iota} \eta \sigma \alpha$ becomes the equivalent of the perfect $\pi \epsilon \pi o \acute{\iota} \eta \kappa \alpha$. The Stoic system, in which definite forms of the completed are indeed incorporated, may be represented as follows:

imperfective	definite perfective	indefinite perfective
present	perfect	——
imperfect	pluperfect	aorist
		future

The Stoic system is also valid for the distribution of tenses in the Modern Greek verb:

imperfective	definite perfective	indefinite perfective
present	perfect	——
imperfect	pluperfect	aorist
future		future

The distinction introduced by E. Benveniste, in his article on the relations of tenses in the French verb, between two levels of enunciation, that of historical narrative and that of discourse, is a line that cuts across the Stoic distribution of tenses in Modern Greek, placing the aorist, imperfect, and pluperfect on the side of historical enunciation, and all tenses, including the aorist, on that of discourse, to which the present, future, and perfect[11] properly belong.

P. Colaclides

References

1. Cf. J. Lohman, "Le concept du nom," _Actes et mémoires du Ve Congrés International de Sciences Onomastiques_ (Salamanca, 1958), Vol. I, pp. 7-8. It is Sextus Empiricus (adv. Math. VIII, 12) who has preserved for us the Stoic conception of this point.

2. According to the definition of the value of -to- by E. Benveniste, Noms d'agent et noms d'action en indo-européen (Paris, 1948), p. 167.

3. Sext. Emp. adv. Math. VIII, 80: τὸ τὴν τοῦ νοουμένου πράγματος σημαντικὴν προφέρεσθαι φωνήν.

4. Sext. Emp. adv. Math. VIII, 258: τὸ σημεῖον ... ἐν λεκτῷ τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἔχει.

5. H. Steinthal, Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft bei den Griechen und Römern I (Berlin, 1890), pp. 296-297.

6. Cf. H. Steinthal, op. cit., pp. 307-317, and J. Wackernagel, Vorlesungen über Syntax I (Basel, 1926), p. 15. Besides Priscianus, it is the scholiast Stephanos (Bekkeri Anecdota Graeca II, 1816, pp. 891-892) who has given us a sketch of the Stoic theory of tenses.

7. J. Kurylowicz, The Inflectional Categories of Indo-European (Heidelberg, 1964), p. 92.

8. Ibid., p. 93.

9. In his study "Les relations de temps dans le verbe français," Bulletin de la Société de Linguistique de Paris, t. 54 (1), pp. 69-82, Professor Benveniste distinguishes between the function of anteriority and that of the completed, both being assumed by the forms of the perfect in French. In referring to the perfect in Greek, in his article, "Catégories de pensée et catégories de langue," Les Études Philosophiques (1958), p. 425, he writes: 'The perfect is not allotted a place in the system of tenses in Greek and remains apart, indicating, according to circumstances, a mode of temporality or a way of being of the subject'.

10. In Sextus Empiricus, adv. Math. X, 101-102, we find the aorist ἥψατο as a perfective form opposed to the durative form ἅπτεται. According to Sextus ἥψατο in fact means τερματίζειν τὴν ψαῦσιν. It is also worthy of note that, in order to express the aspect of movement in the aorist ἥψατο, Sextus uses the perfect form κεκινῆσθαι. Cf. J. Lohmann, "Gemeinitalisch und Uritalisch," Lexis III (9), p. 195.

11. The status of the perfect in Modern Greek was first brought out by H. Seiler in his book, L'aspect et le temps dans le verbe néo-grec (Paris, 1952), in which he characterized it as a tense relating solely to the actualized situation, i.e., the actuality of the speaker.