

Selected Papers in Structural Linguistics

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Bohumil Trnka

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Linguistics written in the years 1928-1978

Afterword by Roman Jakobson

Vilém Fried (Editor)

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Preface

The idea of publishing a volume of Professor Bohumil Trnka's linguistic papers was brought up many years ago. From the mid-sixties we, i.e. some of his former students and later close collaborators, began to urge him to consider a re-publication of his contributions to numerous fields of linguistic research, written over a span of many years, in view of the revival of interest in Prague School Linguistics in countries both East and West. This interest was supported not only by the re-publication of many contributions published by the members of the Cercle Linguistique de Prague in its classical pre-war period, and by numerous accounts of the linguistic doctrine of the 'Prague School', but also by the active and permanent interest taken in the advancement of Prague School functional and structural theory, as it has become manifest in the large number of linguistic publications by the follow-up generation of Czech and Slovak linguists, both in Czechoslovakia and abroad, in the past three decades. In our view Bohumil Trnka was not only one of the founders of the Prague Circle and thus a very important representative of its classical period, but in his later writings he also presented himself as the most consistent and unswerving pursuer and developer of its basic theoretical tenets. Professor Trnka at first dismissed the idea of re-publication of his papers saying that he intended to write a separate linguistic monograph in which he wanted to explain specifically his linguistic theory. At the turn of the nineteen-seventies, however, he began to realise that there was little chance of such a monograph being accepted for publication in Prague. In the same period it so happened that several of Trnka's students had taken up positions outside Czechoslovakia. Eventually, soon after his eightieth birthday, Professor Trnka agreed to my suggestion that he consider the preparation of a publication of his selected papers. He prepared the first draft and I was privileged to submit the proposal to the publisher. I would most gratefully like to acknowledge the immediate, almost enthusiastic response in favour of the proposed volume that we received from Professor C. H. van Schooneveld (Indiana University) and the late Professor Robert Auty (Oxford University), the great life-long admirer of Czech and Slovak scholarship, literature and art. In particular I should like to express my gratitude to

Professor Roman Jakobson (Harvard) not only for expressing approval of the Trnka volume, but also for his readiness to write an afterword for it.

It so happened that the final arrangement is made up of papers that were written over a period of exactly fifty years, I believe that they are a significant testimony to the history of linguistic thought in this century. The organisation of the volume, as it stands, as well as my translation of the articles originally written in Czech, have been fully endorsed by the author himself. I would like to emphasise Professor Trnka's most active, alert and attentive co-operation in the course of my editing; this co-operation was in no way handicapped by the necessary lack of direct personal contacts nor by the often rather capricious postal services. For the final arrangement of the volume I received valuable advice from Professor Miroslav Renský (City University of New York) who also belonged to Bohumil Trnka's 'inner circle'.

My editorship would not have been possible without the help I received from many sides. In the first place I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the generous financial aid for the preparation of the manuscript of this volume given by the "Gesellschaft der Freunde der Niederrheinischen Universität, Duisburg". Further I would like to thank my colleagues in the Department of English of Duisburg University Dr. Jürgen Esser and Dr. Axel Hübler for their help in checking bibliographical references, and Ms Christine Klein-Braley for her valuable advice about the adequate use of English. I thank Professor Takahashi and Ms. J.K. Glasser of Hiroshima University for their help in finding bibliographical data of Trnka's work in Japan. Finally I would like to thank Ms Gisela Görtz, Ms Ute Intveen-Theuerkauf and Ms Barbara Hoffmann for their devoted and often exhausting secretarial assistance. All responsibility, however, for mistakes and omissions that may be found in this volume is my own.

Duisburg, Federal Germany,
January, 1980

Vilém Fried

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Brno Studies in English, published by the J.E. Purkyně University of Brno, for "Conversion in English";

Studii și Cercetări Lingvistice, published by Academia Republicii Populare Române, Bucharest, for "A Theory of Proper Names", "Autonomous and Syntagmatic Words", "The Old English Vowel System and the Problem of Monophonemes";

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Poetica, published by Shubun International Co., Tokyo, Japan, for “A Few Remarks on Homonymy and Neutralisation”.

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List of Abbreviations

- ČMF *Časopis pro moderní filologii* [Journal of Modern Philology], Prague, (Founded 1911. From vol. 54 (1972) Supplement to *PP*)
- PBB *Paul Brauns Beiträge z. Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*
- PP *Philologica Pragensia*. Prague
- PSRL *Prague School Reader in Linguistics*, edited by Josef Vachek. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1964
- SaS *Slovo a Slovesnost* [Word and Verbal Art], Prague. (Founded 1935)
- SW *Selected Writings* of Roman Jakobson. Vol. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The Hague, Mouton (1971, 1971, 1981, 1966, 1980.)
- TCLP *Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague*, Prague. (Vols. 1–VIII, 1929–1939)
- TLP *Travaux Linguistiques de Prague*, Prague. (Vols. 1–4, 1964–1971)

Introduction: A Brief Survey of the Life and Work of Bohumil Trnka

The impact of Prague School Linguistics on the twentieth century development of linguistic theory has been generally acknowledged. In all the many accounts of the activities of the *Cercle Linguistique de Prague* the name of Bohumil Trnka is given prominence. He was one of the founding members of the Circle in 1926, a member of its steering committee and its honorary secretary practically right to the end of the Circle's formal existence at the beginning of the 1950's. Some of Trnka's earlier contributions have been included in the numerous anthologies and readers of modern linguistics that have been published in many countries.¹ The Prague School Reader² contains three articles by Trnka from the classical period of the Prague Circle and the joint article 'Prague School Structural Linguistics' of 1956, whose chief author was Trnka.³ However, this due attention to Trnka's early scholarly work does not do justice to his continuous and extensive linguistic research from the early twenties up to the present.⁴ Trnka's oeuvre must be looked upon as a significant and highly representative component of what is often referred to as "Prague School Linguistics", a term which extends to Czech and Slovak linguistic contributions published in the period after the Circle had formally ceased to exist and which is meant to reflect a continuous scholarly tradition initiated in the foundation year of the Circle.⁵ Not only the above mentioned accounts of the Prague School theory and the numerous anthologies have contributed to the widespread information about Prague School linguistics. Mention should also be made of the various volumes of selected papers by former members of the Prague Circle or by younger Czech linguists published so far.⁶ It appears to be justified that a volume of papers by Bohumil Trnka should be added to this list, the more so as this linguist has adhered to the basic tenets of Prague structural and functional linguistics most consistently in his publications over more than half a century. He has, in my view, applied Prague School linguistic theory to a wide range of linguistic topics in which he brought forward ever new empirical evidence in support of his fundamental linguistic principles.

Bohumil Trnka was born June 3, 1895 in the vicinity of a small town in Southern Bohemia. His studies in the secondary school (a classical 'gymnasium') brought him to Prague. In 1913 he began his studies at the philosophical faculty of the Czech University of Prague, called the Caroline University of Prague. He took an early interest in languages, already in the upper forms of the secondary school. He was, as he has told me,⁷ fascinated by questions of why certain Czech expressions and grammatical forms had evidently changed in the course of their history when he compared them with the forms he had learned in other languages, like Latin, Greek, French, Serbocroatian, Russian, German. So also in his undergraduate years his linguistic interests were chiefly and almost solely geared towards comparative language history as this was then the time-honoured tradition in the philologies. His synchronistic interests in language concentrated solely on learning modern languages. As he wanted to pursue his philological studies 'ad fontes', he eagerly studied the older stages of English, German and of the Slavic languages. But he also sought for the psychological and sociological explanations that accounted for the differences existing among genetically non-related languages. He therefore studied thoroughly the works of H. Steinthal, A. Schleicher, H. Paul, W. Wundt, O. Jespersen, and many others. In his university years, which were almost entirely overshadowed by the hardships of the First World War, at the end of which the Czechs and Slovaks regained their national independence in the new republic of Czechoslovakia, Trnka was chiefly attracted by the personalities of Professor Vilém Mathesius, the first holder of the chair of English studies at Prague University, of Josef Janko, professor of Germanic philology, by the comparative philologist Oldřich Hujer, and in particular by Josef Zubatý, Professor of Indoeuropean philology and Sanskrit and a scholar of world-wide reputation.⁸ Trnka attended Zubatý's lectures on syntax and felt as impressed by him as by Mathesius, because Zubatý, too, was a militant modernist in linguistic thinking who tried to break the fetters of the traditional positivist methods of Neogrammarian linguistics. Another scholar to whom Trnka felt very indebted was Karel Skála, who published under the pseudonym of Ch. Rocher. He was not attached to the University, but seems to have exercised great influence especially on the younger generation of Czech Romance scholars. Rocher was well-known because of his textbooks of modern Romance languages, which were systematically based on Latin. Trnka assisted Skála in his Romance and general linguistic research. Under his guidance Trnka studied 'exotic' living languages, like Malay, Swahili, Turkish, Hungarian, Arabic and others. In 1918 Trnka sat for his final state examinations in Czech and German (English was then not a 'school subject'). In 1920 he was awarded the Ph. D. degree in Germanic philology and English philology on account of his doctoral thesis *The origin of the Germanic weak verb conjugations*, written in German and presented in 1919. From this follows

that he had by then narrowed his scholarly interests to the domains of Czech, English and Germanic philology.

Although Trnka had studied a considerable number of modern and dead languages, although he had acquired a thorough knowledge of the historical development of the European languages, and though he read widely about the history of European linguistics and also studied works in the sciences adjoining with linguistics, he felt that all these studies lacked some unifying principle aiming at a specific goal in linguistic research. From 1922 Trnka established close personal contacts with Vilém Mathesius, who introduced him to his functional principle in linguistic analysis, which opened up entirely new ways in linguistic methodology. Almost from the beginning of his scientific career, i.e., already before 1914, Mathesius had discarded the established and more or less generally accepted doctrines of the Junggrammatiker that were pre-occupied with historical phonology and morphology. Mathesius focussed his research on the problems of synchronic syntax. In his linguistic analysis he was mainly interested in the grammatical and semantic functions of words and utterances, observing a concrete language as a functional system which differed from that of another language, related or not (let us say Modern Czech from Modern English) because of certain functional features or because it was similar to it in the domain of other features. It was under the influence of Mathesius that Trnka directed his research towards syntactic problems, while still concentrating on earlier stages of the history of English. He wrote the monograph *'The Syntactic Characteristics of the Language of Anglosaxon Poetry'* (Trnka 1925); it was accepted as his 'habilitatio' by the Caroline University and led to his appointment as professor of English philology and older English literature in 1925. Trnka held this position until 1970, in which year he officially retired, but he continued lecturing almost up to his eightieth birthday. The treatise mentioned, together with an extensive article (Trnka 1924) and a second monograph on the syntax of the verb brought him international repute (Trnka 1930).⁹ Trnka analysed OE syntactic phenomena from the point of view of the functional and semantic use of the morphologically determined parts of speech (nouns, adjectives, pronouns, etc.), and from that of the syntactic relations like subject and predicate, adnominal modification, the syntax of cases, and especially the syntactic relations of the verb such as the sequence of tenses, mood, etc., in constant confrontation with the older Germanic languages. These early syntactic treatises already revealed Trnka's method of approach. He followed Mathesius's unifying concept of language as a system of language phenomena and of their function in the system; but Mathesius did not investigate the laws to which these phenomena conform, he was merely interested in their individual communicative functions in the act of communication. Mathesius was already thoroughly acquainted with the principles of Saussurean structuralist concepts

from the early nineteen-twenties, and also later he always had an open mind for new trends in linguistic thinking, e.g., for Russian structural linguistics, which he quickly adapted to the needs of his own linguistic research. Contrary to Mathesius, Trnka's point of departure was the rigorous application of the idea of the systemacity of all language phenomena; he saw the main goal of linguistic science in the discovery of the historical development of the laws operating in the system of language as a whole and prone to changes in space and time. These scientific tendencies are already apparent in Trnka's early treatises although his linguistic concepts had not yet fully matured. In his approach syntactic analysis, which he later preferred to call morphological syntax, remained one of the ultimate goals of his linguistic research in accordance with the theory of the taxonomy of hierarchical linguistic levels, from the lower level to the higher ones. Trnka was convinced that he could not tackle syntactic problems fully before he had solved all outstanding problems arising from his structural and functional analysis of the units of the lower level of the language system. He accepted in principle one of the Saussurean dichotomies, i.e. the distinction of the synchronistic and diachronistic (historical) analysis of a given language as opposed to the traditional concepts of the Junggrammatiker who, in the words of H. Paul, recognised only historical research as the valid and only legitimate scientific endeavour in linguistic science, and fully subscribed to Mathesius's view that the scientific status of the linguistic investigation of contemporary (living) languages was at least equal to that of historical linguistics. He nevertheless refused to draw a strict line of separation between the two approaches in the study of language. He has always adhered to the view that not only synchronic analysis enables us to discover the language system and its underlying laws, but that also the diachronic approach fully contributes to this goal as long as it is based on structuralist principles (Trnka 1933): language never ceases to be a system of structures of its signs (phonemes, words, sentences) and of the relations existing between them, as well as of the relations existing between the units on the various linguistic levels (phonology, morphology, syntax, etc.). Time constantly affects all levels and all components of language. The language historian should not merely amass detailed linguistic data as the pre-structuralists did, but he must, on the basis of these data (even if they are undocumented or only poorly documented), conceive the linguistic system of a given period in the history of a language as a coherently functioning whole. Trnka's later contributions to historical linguistics, many of which are included in this volume, are evident proof of one of the characteristic features of Prague School structural and functional linguistics, i.e. the claim that language must be necessarily studied synchronically as well as diachronically if we endeavour to grasp fully its systemic and structural build-up. The language system, in fact, is never static, therefore the researcher must never lose sight

of its basically dynamic character. Trnka often and repeatedly argued against the atomising positivist methodological concepts of pre-structuralist language historians. Vachek's statement that the 'actual dividing line separating the functionalist and structuralist approach from the traditional Neogrammarian has never been one distinguishing between the synchronistic and the diachronistic study of the language but rather one drawing a distinct line between the systematising and functionalist analysis on the one hand and the atomising approach on the other'¹⁰ applies to Trnka's linguistic theory more than to the work of any other member of the Prague School. While Trnka's method of analysis of the syntax of earlier stages in the history of English in the above mentioned monographs may still bear many marks of traditional historical philology, his later structural and functional reappraisals of important events in the history of the Germanic languages such as the development of the Germanic vowel system, the consonant changes (reflected in Grimm's Law and in Verner's Law), the Modern English great vowelshift of phonological and morphological analogy, and many others cannot be separated from Trnka's overall view of language as a functional system of structures.

We have already mentioned Trnka's very active participation in the work of the Prague Linguistic Circle; it brought him into close personal contacts with Roman Jakobson and N.S. Trubetzkoy as well as with other internationally renowned linguists. He had a significant share in the preparation of the various collective theses presented by the *l'école de Prague* at several international linguistic gatherings in the decade preceding the Second World War.¹¹ Trnka took part in the International Congresses of Linguists in the Hague (1928), Geneva (1930), Rome (1933), and Copenhagen (1936). He took, of course, an active share in the first International Phonological Conference, held in Prague in 1930, and in the preparation of its Proceedings (cf. volume IV of *TCLP*). This collective venture was very much the work of the committee of the Prague Circle, in preparation of the second International Congress of Linguists in Geneva. Trnka was also among those that represented the Prague School concepts at the International Congresses of Phonetic Sciences held in London in 1935, and in Ghent in 1938 as well as at the First International Congress of Slavists in Prague in 1929, for which the Prague Circle had prepared its well-known collective *Theses* which were published in the first volume of *TCLP* (1929). Trnka's international contacts came to a sudden standstill because of the outbreak of the Second World War which he spent more or less unmolested in his Nazi-occupied native country. He was able to pursue his research in the course of which his structuralist linguistic theory matured further. After 1945 Trnka no longer participated in international linguistic gatherings directly. He was appointed rapporteur of the Section for Morphology and prepared in writing his "answer" for the 6th International

Congress of Linguists in Paris, but did not attend in person (Trnka 1948). At the same congress, he was appointed secretary of the committee for linguistic statistics (Trnka 1950).¹²

Mathesius (1936) declared that of all the linguistic explorations of the Prague School, phonology was “our main *cri de guerre*” in international linguistic circles in the 1930’s. So it was, indeed. The pioneering work and progress in phonological research before the Second World War has generally been ascribed to Prague School Linguistics, with special reference, of course, to the contributions made by N.S. Trubetzkoy and R. Jakobson. However, one of the most significant contributions to phonological research at that time came from B. Trnka. In 1935 he published his monograph *A Phonological Analysis of Present-Day Standard English* (Trnka 1935) which immediately brought him international recognition; it was the first attempt of an almost complete systematic description of the phonology of a living language based on minute statistical research. The work appeared four years before N.S. Trubetzkoy’s “*Grundzüge der Phonologie*” and it stood at the beginning of the intensive study of phonology and its enormous expansion both in Europe and in America in the following decades. Proof of its long-lasting value is its re-edition in a considerably revised version in Japan in 1966.

It can well be said that phonology was the linguistic domain in which Trnka was able to elaborate, refine and advance his linguistic concepts and methodology within a consistent linguistic theory. The logic of his arguments, supported by an impressive knowledge of extensive linguistic data, was so convincing that he was soon looked upon as one of the most outstanding Czech linguists both at home and abroad. In phonological analysis he developed and applied his outstanding faculty of sober and coherent reasoning and abstraction. After 1945 he extrapolated his linguistic concepts equally consistently to the analysis of the linguistic levels of morphology and also partly of syntax, as numerous articles included in this volume demonstrate. For many years Trnka was planning to write a similar monograph of a systematic description of Present-day English morphology. The three volumes of his university textbook, written in Czech, of a synchronistic description of Present-day Standard English may be thought of as the first attempt at realising this plan (especially the second volume).¹³ However, even his first papers on structural morphology published before 1938 already clearly indicate his line of approach in this domain. In the years after the Second World War he also often returned to problems of phonological theory attempting to define anew some of his concepts (e.g., that of phonemic contrast).

Trnka, as he has often stated himself, was very much indebted for his theoretical concepts about language to his teacher Vilém Mathesius, especially for the concepts of linguistic function, system and structure. But while

Mathesius (like, e.g., Ch. Bally) seemed to prefer to observe language experience and spoke merely of linguistic trends or tendencies, did not believe in linguistic laws that permit no exceptions and was more interested in finding increasingly well-defined functional and semantic distinctions of linguistic forms, Trnka introduced more methodological rigour into the theoretical concept of the language system. "The aim of linguistic research is the discovery of the laws which can be conceived by the logically irrefutable analysis of the general interrelationship and completeness of facts without evasion and concessions. Even if a correction of our formulations appears necessary, I think – in agreement with M. Grammont and R. Jakobson – that a law that needs complementation is more useful than no law" (Trnka 1965). These words, I believe, reflect the basic tenet of Trnka's scientific view. Linguistic research has to be based on a well-defined unified theory, or better, must be an edifice of well-defined theoretical concepts which must be constantly verified or modified in the light of our new linguistic knowledge of empirical data. This rigour of scientific method in a structuralist and functional linguistic theory was already manifest in Trnka's pre-war work and further matured in the course of the following years. Instead of trying to trace the stages in the development of this theory based on an account of Trnka's successive writing, I shall attempt to present a coherent picture of this theory and his concept of linguistic science.¹⁴

Trnka's approach to language and linguistics is based on the principles of a functional theory of language as a semiotic system within the theoretical framework of structuralist linguistics.

Structural linguistics presupposes that any entity only exists in relation to other entities and that there is no relation that does not entail this existence of entities. Nor is there an absolute disjunction of entities.

Language is a system and structure of binary relations of the type '*A stat pro B*', in which the entity *A* is in sign relation to the entity *B*; they appear on hierarchically graded planes (levels), it is their co-operation that makes intersubjective communication about any matter possible. *A* is the sign (signifier, signifiant, realiser) of the signified entity *B*, the entity *B* is the sign of the entity *C*, *C* is the sign of the entity *D*. In a language system: the phoneme /*P*/ is the sign of the word /*W*/, the *W* is the sign of the sentence /*S*/, and the *S* is the sign of the utterance /*U*/.

The hierarchical system of linguistic signs is manifest in the multilevel organisation of language of at least four hierarchically arranged and co-existent planes (levels): phonology, morphology, syntax, super-syntax (utterance level).¹⁵ These levels are to a certain degree autonomous within the overall system of language. Their hierarchy is not constituted by the higher order of complexity: each 'lower' level realises by means of its own entities (units) a 'higher' level so that the levels are both 'réalisé' and 'réalisant'. The co-

operation of the four co-existent levels of linguistic relationships is indispensable for the normal, non-pathological human communication by means of speech. No single plane makes sense (has a communicative function) without the others. The incorporation of the utterance level among the four basic levels of analysis (involving a particular speaker/hearer and a particular extralinguistic situation) which obeys its own functional systemic and structural laws, makes the Saussurean dichotomy of 'langue'/'parole' superfluous; the utterance constitutes a complex linguistic sign by means of its whole semantic and relational content.¹⁶

The sign relations have the following logical features: (a) *P* and *W* cannot exchange places: it cannot be said that, if it is true that the phoneme is the sign of the word, the word is the sign of the phoneme. In the relation of the identity '*A* is identical with *B*', the two entities can be exchanged and we can say that '*B* is identical with *A*'; (b) the sign relations are both asymmetrical and transitive, as e.g. the relation 'part *versus* whole': if it is true that the phonemes determine the word and the words determine the sentence, it is also true that the phonemes determine the sentence (syntactic phonology; cf. Trubetzkoy's notion 'morphonology'); and if it is true that the sentence determines the utterance, it is also true that the phonemes determine the utterance. As the language levels constitute a firmly linked hierarchical system, this transitivity is called the realisation; thus the phonemes realise words, indirectly the sentence (via the level of morphology) and indirectly also the utterance (by means of the two lower levels). The levels of the linguistic system are not serial components which succeed one after the other, but are in indirect relation to the whole system, and by the way of it, also its components. The basic unit (or chief entity) of the morphological level is the 'word' which signifies the sentence. It is not the morpheme which we are able to determine only on the ground of the secondary morphemic segmentation of the word into smaller semantic components. The morpheme is the smallest meaningful component of the word, but — like the phoneme — it is bound to the entity of the word and is not displaceable in the word. The morpheme is, therefore, an ancillary semantic component on the morphological level, it has lower status than the word, which realises the sentence directly. The analysis of this sublevel which may be called 'morphemology' or 'morphemics' is a component of morphological analysis, especially in relation to the description of the word stems. A similar parallel existence to that between morphemology and morphology can be observed in the structural interpretation of the functional distinctive features by which phonemes are realised and which as entities of the phonological level are also void of meaning.

The functional co-operation of the units of every linguistic level (and their sublevels) results from the systemic oppositions of their units and their linear contrastivity according to the logical differentiation 'either/or' and 'this and

that'. In linguistics we speak of the co-operation of units along two axes: the paradigmatic (or opposition) axis and the syntagmatic (or contrasting) axis. Along the paradigmatic axis the units of the linguistic plane form a system of oppositions, whereas on the syntagmatic axis the units simultaneously form structures by means of actually existing contrasts and confrontations within such structures. The laws of contrasts differ from the systemic laws of oppositions on each plane. Both axes exist in the systems of all natural languages and are of equal importance. The syntagmatic axis is not only the distributor of the paradigmatic factors, but its laws also affect the functions of these factors (cf. the neutralisation which restricts the phonological oppositions). The planes of the linguistic signs are mutually correspondent. Each plane has its autonomy, which results from the fact that even the mutual relationship between its own units, and not only their relationship to other levels, is meaningful. E.g. the phonemes, as units of the phonological plane, realise words and morphemes and through them they also realise higher planes, but simultaneously each phoneme partakes in oppositions and contrasts with other phonemes in accordance with the phonemic laws of the analysed language. Similarly, words as units of the morphological plane, which realise the sentence and through it the utterance, take part in oppositions and contrasts with other words in a given language. The basic word-classes (parts of speech) in different languages are constituted by different totals of morphological oppositions in which the word of a particular language can participate. The syntactic plane, the unit of which is the sentence, is characterised by oppositions and contrasts among the constituent relationships of the sentence, such as subject — predicate, predicate — attribute, subject — object, etc. The autonomy of the linguistic levels can also be observed in the course of the historical development of a language, evidence of which *inter alia* seems to be the varying tempo of changes (e.g. on the phonological plane when compared with the morphological plane). The autonomy of the levels cannot be interfered with by the impact of the higher plane on the immediately preceding lower one; e.g. morphological analogy cannot change, decrease or increase the number of phonemes, nor cancel their neutralisation in a given language.

The search for a universe governed by laws in the diversity of phenomena is a legitimate objective of any science, but it must be borne in mind that the results of our discoveries cannot be projected into the world of phenomena and create a false dichotomy of a body of phenomena *versus* its law discovered (or, to be discovered) by investigators. Whereas natural laws are nomothetic and do not presuppose the concept of systematic arrangement, the normothetic laws operating in language imply varying degrees of validity, some of them extending to all or most languages, others applying only to a limited number of them. Every language is a complex organisation of signs of different

degrees of validity, totally distinct from the mechanical interplay of natural laws in complex physical phenomena (Trnka 1964). Linguistic laws are not only the result of logical reasoning but also emanate from the teleological function, in the light of which language appears as a system of means aiming at a specific goal, namely that of communication, in space and time. This functional goal (means-ends model of language description in a functional theory of language) is decisive for the choice of language means. It conceives language as a dynamic system and humanizes it.

The search for abstract models of artificial or natural languages is the concern of mathematical linguistics employing algebraic methods in abstracting entities from the concepts of a language system and its teleology; it relinquishes the tenets of structuralist linguistics, it may, however, exploit some of its findings. Linguistics, the science of languages which serve the goal of intersubjective communication, also fundamentally differs from logic, the laws of which are of universal validity aiming at the determination of whether true or false without constraints by space and time.

For its own goals of research structural linguistics is indebted to the findings of numerous sciences whose objectives of research is Man, his organism, his social relations, ecological conditions, and his psychology, as well as to the knowledge of logic and mathematics; however, in acknowledging this debt linguistics must not allow itself to be dominated by the objectives, methods and procedures of these disciplines. Linguistic science is a homogeneous science having its own methodology of research, and its own specific object: the analysis of linguistic signs.

Trnka's seemingly highly abstract edifice of a uniform structural and functional linguistic theory has never led him to deductions which were not simultaneously firmly grounded on empirical data collected from natural languages. Trnka has investigated in depth the language material collected from Modern Czech, Modern English, the old Germanic languages, Old English, Middle English and Early New English. In the course of this research work Trnka has contributed specifically to the progress of English language studies, both diachronic and synchronic, of Germanic philology and of Czech language studies. One of the most convincing proofs for the significance of empirical data in Trnka's method of linguistic research is the fact that he was instrumental in the advancement of quantitative linguistics the findings of which he considered highly significant for new qualitative conclusions about the systemic and structural features of concrete languages. That is why a special section in this volume has been reserved for this linguistic topic.

As the articles included in this section chiefly interpret Czech language data, we easily detect in them the Czech linguist who always considered it to be one of his specific research tasks to contribute to a better knowledge and also more efficient functioning of his native tongue. In this respect Trnka

has always been the typical Czech intellectual to whom the cultivation of the national tongue was always an integral part of nationhood and of the competitive maturity of the national culture. After the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, Trnka took an active part in several projects designed to aid the standardisation of Present-day Czech and its development as an efficient, sensitive and diversified tool of cultural and scientific communication. These efforts of the Prague Linguistic Circle and of Czech and Slovak linguistics in general are by now quite renowned.

This brings us to a further important trait in Trnka's scholarly work. In spite of his constant pre-occupation with the conceptual perfection of linguistic theory, he did not neglect or underestimate the importance of the possible practical applications of the findings of structural linguistic research. In fact he first recognised the validity of phonemic concepts when he elaborated his own system of Czech shorthand. He has never ceased to be interested in the further exploitation of linguistic knowledge in this domain (Trnka 1937a). He actively participated in the discussions about Czech spelling reform which in the post-war years bore practical results (spelling manuals, school textbooks, etc.). He was also always interested in the practical problems of foreign language teaching and contemplated the importance of structural linguistics for foreign language teaching methodics (Trnka 1937b).¹⁷ Trnka is the author of several language textbooks for Czech learners of English (Trnka 1926, 1927, 1928, 1937e), of Danish (Trnka 1937c), of Dutch (Trnka 1939), of Swedish (Trnka 1953a), of Norwegian (Trnka 1958b); he also published a textbook of Czech for foreign students (Trnka 1937d). Finally brief mention should be made of the fact that Trnka is the author of numerous university textbooks on Old and Middle English, on Modern English, on the history of English literature from Beowulf to Shakespeare, and many more.

His permanent interest in linguistic theory and thus in general linguistics is manifest from the large number of his writings which were intended as contributions to the problems of language universals, to linguistic typology (especially to morphological typology and to analysis and synthesis in language structure). In these papers Trnka made abundant use of data drawn from many European and non-European languages. However, even in the articles that were not directly intended as contributions to general linguistics Trnka also discussed issues of general linguistic import. To name just a few recurrent topics: analogy, neutralisation of oppositions, homonymy, classification of words, languages in contact (this refers to one of his favourite themes: the structural impact of language foreignisms on the receiving language), etc. For the same reason Trnka was also almost permanently pre-occupied with the history of linguistics in pre-structuralist times and in the philosophical implications of language theory. He was widely read in the treatises of nineteenth century philology and in language philosophy, as well as in the history

of ideas in general. In arguing against the views and concepts of the Junggrammatiker, especially those expressed by H. Paul, Trnka elaborated the theoretical and philosophical principles for which modern structural and functional linguistics appeared to him to be scientifically more rewarding. Trnka also has an intimate knowledge of the work of Otto Jespersen, but he was always critical of Jespersen's theoretical views as they did not seem to him to be sufficiently grounded on a systemic approach. Among nineteenth-century linguists he was particularly attracted by A. Schleicher because of his rather unconventional linguistic concepts. Most of Trnka's contributions to language typology, language universals and to the development of linguistic thinking have been included in this volume.

While loyal to the tenets of the Prague Linguistic Circle and consistent in their application, Trnka never hesitated to be critical of some of the tenets and to seek for re-formulations of established concepts. Holding his own positions, based on a rigorous, highly logical edifice of a functional theory of language, he never admitted that this theory should reflect the system of language as a means in itself. He was rather sceptical about the concept of the immanency of the language system, which disregarded the relevance of the socio-communicative context; in Trnka's writings we hardly find any mention of the necessity to apply the notion of the therapeutic character of phonological and other changes to the diachronic study of language. Trnka was very appreciative of the strictly logical edifice of Hjelmslevian glossematics, but he refuted its deductive method of the algebraic calculus because it has been brought into language analysis from without, being independent of any linguistic reality and divorced from it (Trnka et al. 1958a, Trnka 1967). While agreeing to many tenets of American descriptivism, Trnka remained rather critical of some of them because the methodological approach appeared to him too mechanistic and far too much divorced from any attempt at semantic analysis which was of course inherent in Trnka's basic concept of the communicative function of language. In some private discussions Trnka showed a remarkably reserved attitude towards more recent developments in structural linguistics, in particular towards transformational and generative grammar. This is understandable: Trnka has always adhered to a taxonomic approach in language description and language analysis, moreover he has always upheld the primacy of the functional concept of language in the light of which language never ceases to be a social phenomenon answering to the needs of human communication, hence the inclusion of the suprasyntactic level (the level of utterance) *on par* within the basic network with the other levels, systems and structures and their underlying laws.¹⁸ His linguistic theory was never focussed on innate language competence. He is, however, aware of the importance of language internalisation. Language cannot be judged only from the standpoint of intellectual values and relations. For a

language system to be a language it must be internalised. Only to the extent to which it is internalised, and thus also becomes an efficient means of expressiveness and therefore of part of Man himself, does it become a dynamic system capable of change in time and space (Trnka 1943). Trnka conceives language primarily as a semiotic system that is an overt one and which is open to direct observation and analysis. As a structural linguist adhering to the functional principles of the Prague School he has always regarded the concept of the linguistic sign as a reliable basis in modern linguistic research (Trnka 1961).

On the foregoing pages I have tried to outline how Trnka's concepts of language and linguistics are representative of the tenets of Prague School structuralism and how consistently, over a period of many years, he further developed the basic theoretical linguistic notions first formulated collectively in the nineteen-thirties by the *Cercle Linguistique de Prague*. Although a young scholar then, he had already achieved national and international renown. He was elected a regular member of the Royal Bohemian Society of Sciences (1930), he became a member of the Czech Academy of Sciences and Arts (1940), he became a member of the Philological Society in London in 1934 (in 1973 he was elected its honorary member), etc. Trnka has always been open-minded to the views of others and he dislikes any kind of dogmatism, be it political or ideological. When, in 1950, under political pressure, the decision was made to disband the Prague Linguistic Circle, Trnka opposed this move as it seemed to him in disagreement with the ideas for which the Prague Circle was internationally respected and by which its members had established a progressive tradition in linguistic science. A few years later new scientific societies were founded under the auspices of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, founded in 1950; among them the *Linguistic Association* (Jazykovědné sdružení) and the *Circle of Modern Philologists* (Kruh moderních filologů). The former claimed to be the successor of the Prague Circle because several former members of the Prague Circle had joined this organisation, although some of them had publically renounced the structuralist linguistic ideas a few years before. Trnka disapproved of this kind of disloyalty. But he accepted the membership and later on the chairmanship of the Circle of Modern Philologists in 1955 and was for many years its inspiring organiser. He is now honorary president of the Circle. One of Trnka's first moves was the foundation of a *Work Group for Functional Linguistics*, in whose meetings Professor Trnka still participates. His idea was to organise regular discussions in which the basic tenets of the Prague Linguistic Circle should be elaborated further. It is a relatively small group of younger Czech linguists (Anglicists, Romanists, Slavicists, etc., lecturers as well as research workers in the institutes of the Academy of Sciences and students) who present their papers for discussion, or to whom Professor Trnka expounds the

results of his latest linguistic reflections. The Group for Functional Linguistics was one of the means by which he wanted to keep the Prague School tradition alive.¹⁹ The most striking traits of Professor Trnka's character, i.e., scholarly tenacity and consistency, strict rationality of arguments and loyalty both in matters of science and in his stand as a citizen, could not have been better phrased than Professor Jakobson did in his afterword written for this volume.

In conclusion, a few editorial remarks. The selection of papers to be included in this volume was first proposed by the editor, alternatives were then suggested by the author, and after some discussion the arrangement, as it stands, has found the author's approval. The papers in this volume embrace a period of fifty years. The earliest article appeared in 1928, the most recent one was written in 1978. The volume should thus bear testimony of a significant era in the development of structural linguistics represented by the work of one of its protagonists, and contribute to a better knowledge of the history of modern linguistics. For the same reason the articles in each of the five sections, into which the volume has been divided, follow in historical sequence; with one exception, the last article in section 5 on stylistics, as its topic holds rather an exceptional position among the linguistic themes that form the core of Trnka's research. The division of the fifty papers into five sections is a reflection of the author's diversity of scholarly interests. The titles of the sections speak for themselves and require no further explanation.

The papers written originally in English, French and German as well as the Czech articles translated before by various hands were taken over practically unchanged. Only absolutely necessary linguistic improvements were carried out. The English translations of the articles published originally in Czech try to accommodate as much as possible to the terminological uses and habitual ways of stylistic encodings which Trnka employed in his English-written publications. A conscious adaptation to the style of more recent linguistic publications written in English has not been attempted. The reader of this volume will therefore encounter a considerable variation in the use of terminology (e.g., phonology, phonemic, phonological, phonemic; plane, level, dimension; morphology, morphemics, morphological, morphemic; morphological basis or base, superbasis, exponent; and many more). In accordance with the above-mentioned historical principle in the editorial conception of this volume, the included papers were not shortened in order to avoid repetition. The editor is quite aware that there are many overlappings and that rather frequent repetitions occur in a number of articles that have been selected for inclusion in this volume. Where cuts or changes and revisions, as they have been indicated in the footnotes informing about the publication history of each article, were made, they took place on the direct suggestion of Professor Trnka himself or were approved by him. This also applies to the variations in terminological use.

The bibliographical references throughout the volume have been verified, if necessary corrected and complemented as far as it has been possible.

IPA symbols were used in the phonetic transcriptions except in Czech or Slovak words, in which the original spellings with diacritics have been retained.

[Duisburg, January 1980]

NOTES

1. Cf. the bibliographical references *inter alia* in Vachek (1966), Fried (1972), Fried (1978).
2. Vachek (1964).
3. Cf. its reprint in this volume in section 1, p. 70.
4. Cf. the bibliographies of Trnka's writings compiled by J. Nosek in the years 1965a, 1971a, 1975a, 1980a. I would have liked to include a bibliography of Trnka's writings in this volume. But for reasons beyond our control and very much to my regret I could not approach my friend and former colleague Professor Nosek of Prague University for permission to reprint his bibliographies of Trnka's work in this volume. I should like to mention one omission:
'Vilém Mathesius'. English translation of the obituary, originally published in ČMF 29, 1946, by V. Honza in T.A. Sebeok ed., (1966). 2: 474–489.
J. Nosek was also so far the only linguist to publish a critical appraisal of Professor Trnka's oeuvre on the occasion of his birthday jubilees (Nosek 1965b, 1970, 1971b, 1975b, 1975c, 1980b).
A *Festschrift* including a *tabula gratulatoria* was presented to Professor Trnka on the occasion of his seventieth birthday with contributions by scholars from many countries: 'Professor Bohumil Trnka Septuagenarian', PP 8 (ČMF 47), 1965, (2) and (3): 113–380. The papers of volume 11 of *Prague Studies in English*, Caroline University Prague (1965), were also published in his honour on the same occasion.
5. Cf. a discussion of the concept 'Prague School Linguistics' in Fried (1978), Vachek (1979).
6. Cf. V. Mathesius (1947); V. Mathesius (1975); R. Jakobson (1966, 1971); B. Havránek (1963); J. Mukařovský (1966, 1971) [mention is here only made of the English editions (1977)]; J. Vachek (1976); J. Krámský (1976); V. Skalička (1979). The list is not complete.
7. My observations are based on personal notes which professor Trnka has kindly mailed to me as a source of information for this introduction.
8. Cf. Mathesius (1931).
9. S. Potter (1965) "In some way this essay was one of the best Trnka ever wrote. It was praised by Otto Jespersen, Wilhelm van der Gaaf, Karl Jost, Fritz Karpf and other scholars of international repute". There are two editions of the Japanese translation of this book.
The editor and translator, Professor Shizuka Saito (Fukui University) relates in his preface to the book edition the following story: "I visited Professor Edward Sapir at the University of Chicago on the 28th of April, 1931. I asked him about recent

trends in the development of linguistics and about what he thought to be the most notable recent book in the field of English philology. The very book which he promptly mentioned was 'On the Syntax of the English Verb from Caxton to Dryden' by the Czech scholar Professor Bohumil Trnka". Professor Sapir seemed to be very impressed with this book. "As there has been no book so far which describes the process and phenomena of the development of English precisely and concisely as this one", Professor Saito decided to translate it into Japanese. This translation 'A Survey of the History of the Verb Syntax' was published for the first time in *English Studies* (1934–35). [This reference could not be further verified. – V.F.] "In response to the readers' enthusiastic demands" he decided to re-edit his translation in book form in Tokyo in 1956.

10. Cf. Vachek (1966), Vachek (1977), Vachek (1979). Vachek (1979) quotes in support of this view two very early papers by R. Jakobson and B. Trnka, both published in 1929. I find it unfortunate that in the many admirable and deserving contributions published by Professor Vachek about Prague School Linguistics so far a more fully documented acknowledgement of Trnka's contributions is as yet missing, in particular of those pertaining to linguistic theory and methodology as well as those on historical linguistics, etc. which Trnka published after 1950.
11. Cf. Vachek (1966), chp. 1.
12. After the political changes in Czechoslovakia in 1948 Professor Trnka was no longer permitted to travel freely abroad in order to attend international gatherings in linguistics. However, in the 1960's he was able to accept invitations for lectures in London, Erlangen, Berlin (GDR). He was also able to keep up an extensive international correspondence with scholars in numerous countries and to publish articles in many countries.
13. Cf. Trnka (1953b), Trnka (1954), Trnka (1956).
14. These observations draw on the personal notes I received from Professor Trnka in the course of 1979.
15. Trnka does not exclude the possible recognition of a larger number of linguistic levels. He occasionally spoke of a 'stylistic level' as the highest level in linguistic description which must account for all facts that play a role in the organisation of the verbal utterance. He admits the possibility of a level of lexicology, but as long as the structural features of linguistic meaning have not been satisfactorily dealt with, a structural analysis of the lexicon does not seem to him feasible. Trnka's concept of at least four basic levels in linguistic analysis (he often refers to the existence of sublevels) seems to me to be merely a methodological restriction because of the present state of functional linguistic research as Trnka perceives it. The concept of morphology (the 'word' level) holds a central position in Trnka's linguistic theory.
16. Professor Trnka informs me that his later logical arguments, especially in support of the concept of the 'sign planes', which was one of the basic tenets of the Prague Linguistic Circle, was a reflection of B. Russell's notion of 'classes'.
17. Cf. Fried (1965).
18. More recently J. Lyons (1977) re-emphasised the significance of the functional concept of Prague School Linguistics: "One of the most important characteristics of the Prague School which, in the heyday of structuralism distinguished it most strikingly from other schools of structural linguistics, was its emphasis on functionalism . . . their concern with the way language-systems are designed, as it were, to perform their communicative functions". (p.506) (Cf. also p. 249).
19. Trnka's loyal adherence to the heritage of the Prague Linguistic Circle has not met

with general public approval. In spite of several and repeated efforts which Trnka's friends and junior colleagues made in the years after 1955 proposing him for membership in the new Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences for which he seemed to have every claim as a widely internationally and nationally recognised scholar, the proposal has never been acceded to by the Czechoslovak government. The only official award bestowed upon him was the 'Golden Plaque of Josef Dobrovský' "for the advancement of the social sciences" presented to him by the president of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday.

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SECTION ONE

General Linguistics

Méthode de Comparaison Analytique et Grammaire Comparée Historique

Dans la conception de la linguistique qui est celle des néogrammairiens, et que l'on peut considérer comme codifiée par H. Paul,¹ on n'admet l'emploi, pour les recherches linguistiques, que de la seule méthode historique, qui étudie les conditions chronologiques des faits de langue. Car on est sur le terrain historique dès qu'on va au-delà de la simple constatation des faits de langue, et que l'on vise à en déterminer l'enchaînement interne, autre nom pour l'enchaînement historique. La linguistique doit tâcher de fixer la succession des faits de langue non seulement dans l'examen des textes appartenant aux divers stades d'évolution d'une même langue, mais aussi dans la comparaison des langues et dialectes apparentés: il s'agit non pas tant de relever des ressemblances que de reconstruire le fonds commun initial d'où les dits dialectes et langues seraient sortis par l'effet de "lois".

Cette conception, qui triompha entre 1870 et 1880 et fut d'abord appliquée dans la grammaire comparée des langues indo-européennes, apporta à la linguistique des résultats inattendus, et elle s'implanta aussi dans l'étude scientifique d'autres familles de langues telles que les familles sémitique, ougro-finnoise et bantoue. Seule était considérée comme étude scientifique, même dans le domaine des langues non indo-européennes, une comparaison génétique limitée principalement à la phonétique (et à la morphologie comme phonétique appliquée), alors que la description exacte des langues et dialectes contemporains sans appareil historique était tenue pour une simple besogne préparatoire ou pour un travail imparfaitement historique. Les néogrammairiens condamnaient la comparaison analytique de langues non apparentées entre elles.

Actuellement, après la publication du "Cours de Linguistique Générale" de Saussure,² il est facile d'apercevoir les faiblesses du raisonnement des néogrammairiens. En face de la méthode historique, ou, selon la terminologie de Saussure, diachronique, on a la méthode de comparaison analytique ou synchronique. En regard de la surestimation faite par les néogrammairiens

de la méthode historico-génétique, on pourrait, aussi légitimement et aussi partialement, dresser l'affirmation suivante, à savoir qu'expliquer un fait de langue à la lumière de la tradition comme un équivalent successif d'une forme plus ancienne n'en constitue pas encore la pleine explication, et que toute étude historique, dès qu'elle ne se borne pas à simplement constater la régularité des changements linguistiques et qu'elle passe à leur explication profonde, se trouve déjà sur le terrain de la grammaire synchronique, car les changements d'éléments linguistiques donnés dans une phase d'évolution donnée doivent être expliqués par l'action d'autres faits synchroniques. C'est la recherche diachronique, et non l'étude synchronique, qui constitue une simple étude préparatoire, un classement chronologique des faits servant d'introduction à l'examen profond, et synchronique, des systèmes d'expression qu'étaient les phases d'évolution antérieures de la langue. La grammaire analytique admet en outre la possibilité de la comparaison d'états de langue entre langues apparentées de loin seulement ou pas du tout apparentées, et permet ainsi de constater des tendances linguistiques et des catégories grammaticales plus générales, constatations que l'on n'aurait pu faire par la grammaire historique des langues d'un même groupe.

Bien que la linguistique actuelle penche dans l'ensemble vers la méthode de comparaison analytique notamment dans les recherches de syntaxe et de sémasiologie, il y a lieu d'insister sur ce point que les deux méthodes se complètent l'une l'autre pour l'étude des phases de développement des langues apparentées. Si, pour le passé, la méthode diachronique passe avant la méthode synchronique, elle passe après pour l'étude de la langue contemporaine. La méthode diachronique bâtit les formes d'expression surtout sur les faits successifs, et s'occupe des changements différenciant l'expression linguistique à des époques diverses. La méthode synchronique, qui n'a pas besoin de se limiter à des langues apparentées, mais peut comparer entre eux n'importe quels systèmes d'expression, peut aller non seulement de la forme à la signification, mais aussi de la signification (fonction) à la forme, en s'occupant surtout d'analyser finement les aspects fonctionnels de la langue, et en fournissant ainsi de nouveaux matériaux à la méthode diachronique. L'une et l'autre méthodes sont comparatives, recherchent les différences et les ressemblances existant entre des faits de langue; seul les résultats diffèrent, même lorsqu'on opère sur les mêmes matériaux. Différentes, tout en étant complémentaires, sont aussi les lois auxquelles on arrive de l'une et l'autre façons.

Les deux méthodes doivent être distinguées avec précision, et leurs résultats ne sauraient être confondus. Par exemple, la comparaison analytique de langues slaves ou germaniques ne saurait aboutir à une reconstruction de formes antérieures initiales, de même que la grammaire historique de ces langues ne saurait aboutir à dresser le tableau synchronique des formes

primitives et reconstruire le système d'expression primitif proto-germanique ou protoslave.³

Quelle est la différence principale entre les deux méthodes? Ce n'est pas, comme le croit de Saussure, le fondateur de l'école de Genève, le temps, éliminé dans l'étude synchronique à l'encontre de l'étude diachronique; le point décisif est le but de l'étude. On emploie la méthode synchronique quand on compare des systèmes linguistiques, que ceux-ci représentent des stades successifs d'une même langue ou des stades de langues apparentées ou non. Ce faisant, on se comporte comme quand on compare deux ou plusieurs tableaux: on note les couleurs, les dessins, les rapports des parties au tout, on relève les ressemblances et les différences, et l'on tend à voir dans les détails qui se reproduisent la manifestation de tendances déterminées. Quand on emploie la méthode historique, la comparaison poursuit un but tout autre: il ne s'agit pas de comparer des systèmes, ou des particularités à l'intérieur de ces systèmes, mais de reconstruire l'image primitive dont procèdent les copies examinées, ou de mettre en parallèle les traits fonctionnellement équivalents de l'original et des copies. La linguistique qui emploie la méthode comparative analytique vise à déterminer les relations réciproques des différents éléments d'un système d'expression donné, c'est-à-dire à constater des relations mutuelles cycliques. Au contraire, la grammaire historique vise à déterminer l'ordre de succession des faits, qu'elle suit dans leur développement linéaire, et elle s'échappe ainsi perpétuellement des cercles en lesquels les faits sont groupés à une époque donnée de l'évolution de la langue. Le temps ne saurait être un caractère distinctif essentiel des deux méthodes puisque la conscience des changements chronologiques (cf. archaïsmes et néologismes) est un facteur psychologique à tout moment de l'évolution de chaque langue. En comparant, par exemple, le latin avec une langue romane, on aurait à peine le droit de parler de comparaison synchronique. Il vaut mieux parler de comparaison analytique en regard de la comparaison historico-génétique.

La grammaire historique actuelle ne fait qu'établir, grâce aux documents écrits, la simple succession des faits de langue à partir des stades les plus anciens de la langue jusqu'au stade le plus récent. La substitution à d'anciens faits linguistiques de faits différents ayant les mêmes fonctions ne peut se comprendre au point de vue psychologique que si l'on admet comme loi générale le fait qu'il ne saurait exister dans la subconscience linguistique des sujets parlants d'homonymes absolus, autrement dit deux formes diverses pour la même fonction. Deux formes en vieux tchèque comme *řeka* et *řeka*, qui expriment la même chose [la rivière] ne peuvent se maintenir l'une à côté de l'autre, et l'une des deux disparaît. Lorsqu'une idée ou un rapport avec un même contenu intellectuel et affectif est rendu, pour des raisons de phonétique ou d'emprunt dialectal par deux variantes, on voit apparaître une

tendance à employer chacune des variantes avec une nuance de sens différente ou à en supprimer une.

Lorsqu'il en est ainsi, la variante la plus ancienne, ayant cessée de constituer un élément du système de la langue de concert avec les autres éléments, devient un fait de la grammaire historique. Ces faits successifs, qu'ils soient de caractère phonétique, morphologique ou syntaxique, qui expriment, au moins en apparence, la même fonction, forment l'objet de la grammaire diachronique, qui n'est au fond rien d'autre qu'une grammaire de différenciation, puisqu'elle examine les changements linguistiques sur la base du stade d'évolution le plus ancien qui soit accessible.

Bien que les lois phonétiques actuelles ne constituent que des indications dans la complexité des phénomènes que comporte le mot comme terme de phrase et placé au premier plan de l'intérêt du linguiste, elles sont en somme, dans leur secteur, indépendantes des autres faits linguistiques, car les sons constituent des relations directes de la forme à la signification, en d'autres termes ils ont leurs fonctions spécifiques propres, ce sont des phonèmes chargés d'une fonction différente de celle du mot comme unité de la phrase.⁴

Il est curieux de constater que la linguistique ait aperçu si tardivement le rapport des éléments phonétiques à leur fonction à l'intérieur d'un système linguistique, alors que les exceptions aux lois phonétiques, dites changements analogiques, étaient expliquées visiblement par l'action de facteurs significatifs de la phrase sur les sons qui le constituent. La tâche de la nouvelle linguistique est donc de suivre les changements phonétiques non seulement au point de vue de la phonétique pure, mais aussi dans leurs rapports avec les fonctions qui forment une unité d'expression. Si la grammaire historique suivait les changements phonétiques dans leur mouvement linéaire sans égard au système, la nouvelle grammaire historique fonctionnelle doit suivre le déplacement des habitudes articulatoires en tenant compte des fonctions des autres sons groupés en cercle, et du mouvement linéaire de certains éléments qui réagit perpétuellement et se déplace en conséquence perpétuellement.

Les linguistes russes, tels que MM. Troubetzkoy et Jakobson, soulignent le postulat scientifique de la linguistique fonctionnelle, à savoir que tous les faits phonétiques doivent être expliqués comme la manifestation de certaines tendances fondamentales, qu'il y a lieu de constater pour le système d'une langue ou d'un groupe de langues. Sans nier la légitimité de ce point de vue, qui marque un progrès important sur la conception de simples lois des changements phonétiques isolés dans l'esprit des néo-grammairiens et un pas fait vers la conception de lois plus larges, je suis loin de penser que l'on puisse rendre compte de tous les changements phonétiques, unilatéralement, par la réaction de tout le système phonologique. Outre les changements phonétiques qui sont produits par cette réaction de tout ou partie du système phonétique fonctionnel sur une modification déterminée, il y a lieu de reconnaître, pour

une période donnée d'évolution, des changements phonétiques, où les facteurs fonctionnels ne jouent qu'un rôle de second plan, ou même qu'un rôle tout passif.

L'appréciation de la valeur relative des deux méthodes complémentaires, l'analytique et l'historique, tient à l'objectif final poursuivi par l'étude linguistique. S'il s'agit d'établir le caractère propre d'une langue donnée, de rendre compte de la langue dans sa particularité concrète comme système de moyens d'expression et de communication propre à une période donnée de son développement dont il s'agit de rendre compte, la méthode essentielle doit être nécessairement celle qui est orientée statiquement et qui conçoit l'histoire de la langue comme un total de périodes particulières d'évolution à comparer en qualité de périodes indépendantes. Mais si le linguiste est orienté historiquement, s'il se propose de rendre compte de la succession des faits de langue par où les différentes périodes d'évolution se distinguent les unes des autres plutôt que de comparer des systèmes dans leur intégralité concrète, il relie les faits linguistiques se succédant sans interruption en un système reposant sur "l'axe du temps", système dans lequel les faits sont classés suivant des lois abstraites et qui est aussi abstrait que les schémas des biologistes représentant par exemple le développement de la circulation du sang chez les divers animaux sans tenir aucun compte des fonctions des autres organes de l'animal. Suivant la valeur relative accordée à l'une ou l'autre méthode, on aurait une esquisse toute différente de l'histoire par exemple des langues germaniques du point de vue analytique et du point de vue historico-génétique; l'appréciation de la valeur des résultats des deux modes de comparaison dépend des dispositions psychologiques de tel ou tel peuple. Mais, dans une étude partielle de la langue, il faut employer les deux méthodes complémentaires: plus on a de coupes transversales et longitudinales, plus on se rapproche de la compréhension d'une langue donnée et de ses phases évolutives. Le réseau le plus serré de coupes transversales est fourni par l'étude des langues des générations successives, le réseau le plus serré de coupes longitudinales est fourni par celle du plus grand nombre possible de faits linguistiques depuis les stades les plus reculés jusqu'au stade contemporain. Attachée à l'analyse des langues contemporaines, l'école de Genève renonce, du fait de son attitude d'indifférence à l'égard de l'analyse des phénomènes synchroniques des phases antérieures, aux possibilités linguistiques de la comparaison analytique de plusieurs systèmes linguistiques possédant un ensemble de faits déterminés communs et parlés par les générations successives, sans lequel la compréhension de la langue contemporaine elle-même est sommaire et non définitive.

NOTES

1. Paul, H. (^s1920). *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*. Halle.
2. Saussure, F. de (^s1923). *Cours de Linguistique Générale*. Genève.
3. C'est la langue contemporaine qui est le plus accessible à l'étude linguistique, puisqu'on peut la connaître directement, c.-à-d. par l'oreille. Les états de langue passés ne nous sont accessibles que par l'oeil, par l'intermédiaire de l'écriture, qui conserve par la force de la tradition une orthographe ancienne voilant les changements phonétiques ou morphologiques, alors que la langue vivante pouvait avoir déjà les nouvelles formes. C'est presque une loi que le fait suivant, qui se produit dans l'étude de l'évolution d'une langue: lorsque les documents écrits font défaut pour une certaine époque, on en est réduit aux résultats que l'on peut obtenir par la comparaison des phases chronologiquement voisines. Lorsqu'il s'est conservé de nombreux monuments écrits, témoins d'une forte tradition littéraire, c'est à son tour celle-ci – qui ne peut être interrompue que par une révolution – qui s'interpose entre les faits et nous, sous forme soit d'une orthographe fixée (comme en français et en anglais), soit d'une morphologie et d'un vocabulaire fixés (comme en sanscrit).

La connaissance d'un stade de développement d'une langue donnée dans toute la plénitude des faits est d'autant plus fragile qu'on a moins de documents et qu'il faut plus de constructions hypothétiques. Je pense aux tessons de poteries antiques: plus ceux-ci sont volumineux ou nombreux, plus la reconstruction du vase entier est sûre. De même, dans l'analyse de la langue d'un monument isolé, il faut compléter les traits conservés par des traits reconstruits, à distinguer scrupuleusement des faits atteints directement par l'analyse.

C'est seulement par l'union complémentaire des résultats des études de comparaison analytique avec les résultats reconstruits par les recherches historico-génétiques que l'on peut approcher la réalité linguistique de la langue primitive reconstruite.

4. Je suis arrivé à la notion de phonologie dans mes réflexions relatives aux problèmes de linguistique générale avant d'avoir eu entendu parler des recherches phonologiques des savants russes, et ce par une double voie: d'une part, j'y ai été conduit par une tentative de constitution d'un système de sténographie tchèque plus parfait, système devant reposer sur un examen précis de la fonction des sons du tchèque (itérations et combinaisons), d'autre part j'y ai été amené en cherchant à l'étude phonétique un pendant dans l'étude du contenu de ces sons.

About Analogy in Structural Linguistics

Analogy is often discussed by the Neogrammarians as a psychological factor responsible for the creation of new morphological signs following a certain pattern or representing a deviation from a certain form which is phonologically expected; the latter then constitute formations which strive for the general use against the synonymic “regularly developed” forms in the speech community. Both of the rivaling forms may co-exist in the historical development of languages for some time, but very often the new analogical formations become prevalent and wholly obliterate the latter, if they do not happen to be protected by spelling or by associations of sociolinguistic character.

When dealing with the diachronic substitution of one phoneme by another by way of analogy we must be aware of the fact that such a change is not perpetrated by an element of the phonological level of language, but by a synonymous morpheme realised by one phoneme or a combination of two or more phonemes; hence analogy is a morphological factor which operates on the morphological plane that functions between the phonological and syntactic plane. Whereas the diachronic change of, e.g., Old Czech *a* > *ě* and later > *e* (cf. *duša* → *dušě*, later on → *duše* [soul]) was purely phonemic, as it took place only if preceded by a “soft” consonant, the analogical change of *i* > *u* in Modern Czech (cf. *píši* → *píšu* [I write, am writing], *váži* → *vážu* [I bind, am binding], *piji* → *piju* [I drink, am drinking]) consists in the substitution of the older morpheme *-i* by the synonymous morpheme *-u*. Morphological (or, better, morphemic) analogy must be regarded therefore as a factor whose function is to simplify the phonemic realisation of morphemic oppositions. It cannot interfere either with morphological or phonological structural rules of any linguistic system and even if it may result in the substitution of several phonemes in a morpheme (cf. *mohu* → *můžu*