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Herausgegeben von Franz Hundsniischer und Edda Weigand

Methodologie der Dialoganalyse

Herausgegeben von
Sorin Stati und Edda Weigand

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VORWORT

Auf der ersten Mitgliederversammlung der Internationalen Gesellschaft für Dialogforschung (International Association for Dialogue Analysis I.A.D.A.) am 14. und 15. Dezember 1990 in Bologna wurden in den Beiträgen einer "Tavola rotonda" Fragen zur Methodologie der Dialoganalyse diskutiert (zur Gründung der Gesellschaft vgl. Zeitschrift für germanistische Linguistik 1991, 239-242). Die meisten dieser Beiträge werden - teils überarbeitet, teils in Vortragsform - im vorliegenden Band veröffentlicht. Aufgrund der lockeren Organisationsform der "Tavola rotonda", bei der keineswegs darauf Wert gelegt wurde, daß das Spektrum der heute verwendeten Methoden zur Dialoganalyse repräsentativ abgedeckt werde, kann der Band auch nicht beanspruchen, einen repräsentativen Überblick über die verschiedenen Ansätze zu geben. Er will vielmehr nur einige Lichter auf die Vielfalt der methodischen Zugänge werfen und dabei einige kontroverse Standpunkte näher beleuchten. Insgesamt beziehen sich die Beiträge im wesentlichen auf die Dialoganalyse in der Linguistik, so daß unter interdisziplinärem Gesichtspunkt eine weitere Einschränkung zu machen wäre.

Trotz dieser Einschränkungen in quantitativer und interdisziplinärer Hinsicht stecken die Beiträge inhaltlich die methodologische Problematik in ganzer Breite ab. Wie stehen die verschiedenen Methoden zueinander? Sind sie auswechselbar und führen im Grunde alle zum gleichen Ziel, regelhafte Strukturen aufzufinden, die den authentischen Dialogen zugrunde liegen? Oder folgt dialogische Kommunikation gar keinen Regeln und läßt sich nur empirisch nachzeichnen? Ist die Berücksichtigung des dialogischen Bezugs der Äußerungen ein methodologisches Moment, oder kommt ihm in der Sprachverwendung konstitutiver Charakter zu, so daß mit der prinzipiellen Dialoghaftigkeit von Sprache ein Paradigmenwechsel in der Sprachwissenschaft angezeigt wäre?

Der vorliegende Band möchte über die "Tavola rotonda" hinaus die Diskussion über grundlegende Fragen dieser Art anregen, die durch ihre

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Bündelung auf die zentrale Fragestellung des Dialogischen hin eigene Kontur und Stoßkraft gewinnen und innerhalb einer allgemeinen pragmatischen "Perspektive" richtungweisend sein können.

Trieste und Bologna,
im Oktober 1991

Edda Weigand
Sorin Stati

Franz Hundsnurscher

DOES A DIALOGICAL VIEW OF LANGUAGE AMOUNT TO A PARADIGM CHANGE IN LINGUISTICS: Language as dialogue

0. Preliminary remarks

1. Innovatory aspects of dialogue analysis
2. The place of dialogue analysis in linguistic research
3. The use of a dialogue analysis approach to syntax
4. Conclusion

Literature

0. Preliminary remarks

In this paper I shall deal with three questions:

1. What are the innovatory aspects of Dialogue Analysis (DA) as compared to other approaches in linguistic research?
2. What is the place of Dialogue Analysis in an overall system of research on verbal communication?
3. What insights in other fields of linguistic research can be gained by looking at language from a dialogical perspective?

1. Innovatory aspects of dialogue analysis

'Paradigm change' is perhaps nothing more than a spectacular and fashionable way of characterising the problem of scientific progress. I take the term 'paradigm' to refer to a specific concept of language that guides a linguistic methodology - Historical Grammar, Structuralism, Generative-Transformational Grammar (TG) and Speech Act Theory (SAT) might serve as different examples for 'paradigms in linguistics' in this sense. In using the term 'paradigm' one does of course allude to Thomas S. Kuhn's theory, but this can only apply in a figurative way, because the developments in the science of nature are different from that in the science of mind: Theories of language are in

general not exposed to exhaustive (experimental) research in the way theories of physical phenomena are, nor is there a tendency to isolate in a systematic way an inventory of unsolvable problems or to control and register an accumulation of new facts that will prove to be fatal for a specific paradigm in question. Nor is there always an overall change in methodology that goes along with a revolution in linguistics - on the contrary: Eclecticism reigns and the old theories coexist side by side; the community of linguists resembles more a grouping of entrenched fractions with zealous adherence to their respective dogmas than a homogenous team in quest of truth. Nevertheless, there is change and different concepts of language do emerge from time to time and gain recognition.

Looking at the various linguistic concepts, it can be seen that each of them derives its paradigm status from a number of intrinsic qualities of general validity:

1. They expose an essential feature of language that retrospectively seems to be commonplace enough but has proved itself to have far-reaching implications, e.g. in Structuralism: that language is considered to be a system of interrelated units on separate levels, in TG: that language is considered to be a generative system for the production of wellformed sentences, or in Speech Act Theory: that language is considered to be a system of specific types of human action, and so on.

2. The relations of one paradigm to another are characterized by inclusion, shifting domain preference and re-assessment of facts. Inclusion stands for the observation that Structuralism for instance is mainly concerned with 'smaller units' e.g. phonemes, morphemes, lexemes and so on; its favourite domains are phonology and morphology, whereas TG is also concerned with phonology and morphology, but concentrates on the 'higher unit' sentence and takes this as its favourite domain. In Speech Act Theory, however, utterance form is merely a constituent component of the speech act and the favourite domain is the singular speech act as a whole.

The re-assessment of facts means drawing attention to certain linguistic data or relations that in the old paradigm were more or less brushed aside as unimportant. Pragmatics for instance has discovered new aspects of modal particles as indicators of illocutionary force whereas in traditional grammar they were considered to be more or less marginal phenomena.

3. The new paradigm not only makes it possible to give new answers to old questions or to open up fresh discussion on issues deemed to be settled, it also establishes connections between hitherto separated domains, and more important still, leads to the formulation of new problems that will have to

be tackled with new concepts and new methods altogether.

4. In order to formulate the various aspects and to develop an adequate linguistic methodology within the framework of a new concept of language a new system of terminology and a new way of talking about the subject have to be created that bring out the salient features of the new picture in contrast to the former one.

There are, I am sure, more points that could be made in order to characterize paradigm change - a certain awareness of a crisis in the old system, parallel developments in other fields, the crumbling of central pillars, fresh demands from outer society, a scholar generation gap and so on. A selection of some of these aspects will perhaps do to illustrate the emergence of Dialogue Analysis as a potential new paradigm of linguistic research in certain respects.

To start with, the essential feature of language that is focused upon in Dialogue Analysis is reflected in the commonplace observation that people use language primarily in the presence of others; people don't just talk, they talk to each other. What does this simple observation mean as a starting point for a new outlook on language? I shall only mention two things: Firstly, if it is a fact that people are able to carry on lengthy discussions, conversations, negotiations and so on and fairly often and naturally do so, this faculty is bound to be part of their linguistic competence, perhaps the center of their communicative competence and this would have to be accounted for in any theory of language. But where in the traditional disciplines of linguistics can one find an account of that sort? What exactly is it that enables people to take part in a conversation, in an argument, in bargaining and so on? In talking about 'communicative competence' at our present state of knowledge we are more or less trying to veil our ignorance.

It will neither suffice to put forward a theory of the formation of correct sentences as in TG, nor will it be enough to have a theory for the performance of representative, directive, commissive, expressive and declarative speech acts as the only background to deal with a cumulation of such acts as 'connected discourse'. What are the principles that govern the sequencing of such speech acts in a conversation? What does one have to know in order to be able to carry on coherently when something has been said by another person? These I think are some of the important questions that turn up when one takes the dialogical nature of communication seriously.

Nothing short of a Theory of Dialogue as represented in Dialogue Analysis (in contrast to Discourse Analysis - cf. Frawley, 1987) will do to tackle problems like these.

To turn to another point: Standard Speech Act Theory is, as Searle himself admits, a very restricted subject matter. From the singular initial speech act there seems to be no direct way to link up to the sequencing of speech acts in discourse (cf. Searle 1986). The focus in SAT is almost exclusively on what the speaker does; so Speech Act Theory is in fact a speaker-act-theory. But what we are confronted with in normal discourse is a form of social collective action by at least two persons, not a singular action of an isolated individual; in communication - trivial enough but true - two or more speakers are involved. So what we need is a theory of the dialogical nature of discourse and some idea of the functional unit that accounts for this fact. This unit, I think, is the functional pairing or sequencing of a speaker 1-speech act and a speaker 2-speech act in the elementary or minimal dialogue pair (cf. Weigand 1989), not just linear pairing as is the case with the adjacency pairs of Conversational Analysis (cf. Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson 1974). In this respect Dialogue Theory is inclusive of Speech Act Theory - in short: the concept of verbal action should no longer be confined to speaker-action, it must be extended to all kinds of speaker-speaker interaction.

Just a few words as to what constitutes an elementary or minimal dialogue. The functional pairing or sequencing of individual speech acts is constituted by the communicative goal pursued by a speaker in performing a speech act; the speech acts performed by the other speaker can be evaluated according to their goal-relation - whether they are contributive or not to the initial goal put forward by speaker 1. Each initial speech act opens up its own dialogue domain: for instance a proposal can either be accepted or rejected by speaker 2 or submitted to a test battery of challenges aimed at modifying the proposal so as to make it acceptable or justify rejection by speaker 2; other instances of initial speech acts with a specific dialogue domain are statements, wishes, reproaches, offers, invitations etc. (cf. Montefiore (1989) on goal-directed behaviour).

2. The place of dialogue analysis in linguistic research

Starting from the concept of functional pairing or sequencing of speech acts the place of DA in linguistic research can be located. The following table might be regarded as a preliminary answer to the second question: How does DA fit into the field of verbal communication research?