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TRACING THE ROOTS OF COGNITIVE LINGUISTICS IN HERMANN PAUL'S *PRINCIPLES OF THE HISTORY OF LANGUAGE*

The paper examines the impact of Hermann Paul's ideas on the development of anthropocentric cognitive linguistics in Russia and Europe. The anthropocentric and pragmatic approaches to the study of language, related, in particular, to the consideration of language as "the language of the individual" and a product of personal experience, were formulated by the German linguist Hermann Paul (1846-1921) in his "Principles of the History of Language" (1920). In this important work, Paul argues that language development is driven by subjective, psychological factors, acknowledging the Man's central role in the learning process (anthropocentrism). Viewing Paul's position from the vantage point of modern linguistics, the article seeks to establish the rightness of the cognitive school in linguistics, provides a brief overview of Paul's key ideas and concludes that he anticipated and formulated the main principles of the cognitive approach to language, namely: language as a product of individual experience, the role of individual notions in forming a word's meaning, analogy as a mechanism of language acquisition, metaphor as a mechanism of learning and the connection of language with other mental processes.

KEY WORDS: anthropocentrism, notion, understanding, cognitive linguistics, language of an individual.

In the words of the Russian linguist Ирина В. Арнольд (Irina V. Arnold): "the essence of any humanitarian discipline lies in its history… A close analysis of works by Alexander A. Potebnja [a Ukrainian philosopher and linguist, active in the Russian Empire] will propel our understanding of the nature of language much further than… a very new book by [George] Lakoff. Sciences and humanities differ in their attitude towards the past. Scientists and technicians always want to come up with something new. Scholars and humanists always want to unearth something forgotten. Philology, 'the love of language,' studies things that have already been said, but this does not mean that it lacks scientific rigor" (Арнольд 2007: 29). Cognitive linguistics presupposes understanding and analysing language as a means for shaping and expressing thought, for keeping and systematizing knowledge in the human mind and for exchanging that knowledge (Кубрякова 2004; Болдырев 2000), which presupposes a new way of looking at the relationship between the language and mentality. A cognitive approach to language as well necessarily takes into account and systematizes the knowledge from the other academic disciplines and

areas of research (something that Hermann Paul gets criticized for in preface to the 1960 Soviet edition of his *Principles of the History of Language* by Соломон Д. Кацнельсон (Solomon D. Katznelson)), such as psychology, logic, psycholinguistics, information theory, anthropology, medical science, etc., which is connected to the acknowledging of man's central role in learning (anthropocentrism) and the principal, explanatory function of science: namely, its ambition to explain how language works and what its role is in representing the world (instead of observing, describing and stating language facts within the paradigm of structural linguistics). Language is seen as a cognitive ability, as one of the elements of consciousness. Consequently, the main goal of linguistics is declared to be the study of knowledge systems represented in language: in what language forms they are conveyed, how they are organized, stored and recalled from memory and what effect they have.

The cognitive paradigm of linguistics has its own history. Many modern ideas were first conceived a long time ago and were either taken up and developed by scholars or remained obscure and half-forgotten. As the result of the development of various schools of thought in linguistics, the image of language has become fairly fluid by the 21st century. Despite the fruitfulness of using many different approaches to studying language, the contemporary goals of linguistics are mainly connected to the anthropocentric aspect of tackling language, putting into focus not the language in itself and for itself, but the language carrier and the speaker, man's language and values and national language mentality. According to the key principle of anthropocentrism, man does not only conveys ready-made meanings, but actually forms meanings by consciously choosing specific language means.

Anthropocentric linguistics relates to the cognitive (pragmatic, educational, explanatory) and culturological approaches to studying language. Their origin can be traced from looking at the language as the language of an individual, a product of a person's individual experience. Modern psycholinguistic elements of the anthropocentric paradigm in linguistics focus on seeing language as a mental phenomenon, as a natural human ability which cannot be isolated from the memory, imagination, sensual perception. This approach was formulated by the German linguist Hermann Paul (1846–1921), who wrote in 1920: "We must acknowledge that there are as many languages in the world as there are people" (Пауль 1960: 17).

In its time, the Neogrammarian school, with which Hermann Paul is classed, put serious competitive pressure on the anthropocentric school of European linguistics. Hermann Paul's approach and methodology of studying language are expounded in his main work *Principles of the History of Language*, where he lays down the theoretical foundations of the Neogrammarian position and argues that language development is driven by the subjective psychological causes. The Neogrammarian school, which dominated European linguistics in the late 19th – early 20th century[1], originally developed in Germany in the 1870s (Leskien, Osthoff, Brugmann, Delbrück, Braune). At a later point, their views were taken up by the French linguists (for instance, Michel Bréal), and,

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[1] Paul's *Principles of the History of Language* was first published in 1880; its last edition came out after Paul's death, in 1937.

to an extent, Ferdinand de Saussure; in Russia, they were developed by Фили́пп Ф. Фортуна́тов (Filip F. Fortunatov) and, less obviously, Jan Baudouin de Courtenay. For German Neogrammarians, the object of linguistic investigation was not the philosophical study of the language system as a whole, but the empirical analysis of historical changes in specific languages and language groups. For instance, they rejected what, in their view, was the "abstract" theory of Wilhem von Humbold's, "according to which the specificity of each language, its 'inner form,' is shaped by 'the national spirit' that does not change throughout the entire history of this particular language" (Пауль 1960: 7). "All psychical processes come to their fulfilment in individual minds, and nowhere else. Neither the popular mind nor the elements of it, such as art, religion, etc., have any concrete existence, and therefore nothing can come to pass in them and between them. Away, then, with these abstractions! For 'away with all abstractions!' must be our watch word if we ever wish to attempt to define" (Paul 1891: xxxv). It must be noted that Paul's own position is not nearly as categorical, thus, a lot less contradictory, and by viewing it from the vantage point of modern scholarship proves the correctness of the cognitive school in linguistics and shows that the scientific revolutions do not destroy all the previous paradigms but move beyond their limitations ensuring continuity of the thought and scholarship.

In order to analyse the influence of H. Paul's thought on the development of anthropocentric cognitive linguistics in Russia and Europe, first, the key ideas of his main work should be briefly recalled. Without insisting on denouncing a prop-

erly philosophical approach to language,[2] yet, Paul writes: "There can exist only an individual psychology, to which no 'popular psychology,' or whatever else it may be called, can properly be opposed" (Пауль 1960: 36). This opinion cannot be ignored completely. It is well known that the modern cognitive linguistics is interested in empirical analysis of primary cognitive processes, conceptualization and categorization (**including their constituting mental processes**) as opposed to the traditional (structural) linguistics, which sees language as independent from the experience and presupposes *a priori* insights into the nature of mind and language. In cognitive linguistics, the investigation of language involves psychical processes connected with speech, such as associations, perception, memory, and imagination. Cognition includes not only the purposeful acquisition of theoretical knowledge, but also simple, mundane, often unconscious cognizance of the world in everyday life, the acquisition of the most basic: bodily, tactile, visual, sensorimotor experience in a person's daily interaction with the surroundings and taking into account **individual** as well as collective knowledge (Болдырев 2000).

A few times in his book H. Paul expresses a personal point of view that clashes with the prevalent position of his contemporaries. The uniqueness of Paul's position, which, incidentally, brings him very close to the modern anthropocentric approach of studying the nature of lan-

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2 "Misteli… curiously enough, so misapprehended me as to suppose that I would hear of no abstractions at all being made. Of course I mean merely that no abstractions must be allowed to interpose an obstruction between the eye of the observer and the actual things, so as to prevent him from grasping the connection of cause and effect among the latter" (Пауль 1960: 34–35).

guage, lies in that his **primary** focus remains on the individual aspects of speech. Paul tends to explain language phenomena and development from the perspective of individual psychology. For instance, he differentiates between a sound and a sound image, between acoustic characteristics and sensations they evoke, etc.

In her study of the history and development of key scientific metaphors, Александра А. Залевская (Aleksandra A. Zalevskaya) (2007) notes the significance of the live knowledge metaphor in the modern science by explaining the shift from inter-psychical (social) aspects of cognition to its intra-psychical (individual) aspects. The primary focus has shifted to natural language as a product of individual cognition, of personal incorporation and processing of new experiences in learning and communication. If you look at language as a psychical process, then your investigation of language must rely on experimentation and empirical evidence (Залевская 2007). All this goes to prove the correctness of Paul's linguistic predictions.

Following the traditions of psychologism, Paul describes the relations between the language units as relations of association. It must be noted, that the idea of associative verbal connections (network), which is now widely used and developed in psycholinguistics and cognitive studies, has been known and utilized by the linguists, including the Russian linguists, for a long time (although not in connection with the relations between language units). For instance, one can point to the work of Николáй В. Крушéвский (Nikolay V. Krushevsky): "…the word is so inseparably fused with the idea of the object that it becomes… its complete sign and ac-

quires an ability… **to evoke the image** of this object with all of its properties" (Крушевский 1999: 37).

Arguing in this vein, Paul arrives at a fairly "cognitive" conclusion: "With the transference of a connexion converted from an indirect one into a direct, it does not follow that the movement of ideas which has originally conduced to the origin of this connexion is transferred as well… In the course of this important process, seeing that the starting and final points of a series of ideas are transmitted in direct connexion, the connecting links which originally aided in setting up this connexion must, often to a large extent, be lost for the following generation" (Пауль 1960: 39). One should keep in mind that "the meaning of a language sign as a cognitive phenomenon can only be defined as certain associative potential, which is, in essence, the individual's memory of how this language sign was previously used" (Кравченко 2013: 59). Looking at language as a purely psychological phenomenon and, to an extent, ignoring its social nature, H. Paul comes to an important conclusion: "We have, strictly speaking, to differentiate as many languages as there are individuals" (Пауль 1960: 58; Paul 1891: 21). At the same time it would be unfair to say that Paul ignores the social mechanisms of language's origins and development, as he writes: "It is by intercourse, and nothing else, that the language of the individual is generated" (Пауль 1960: 60; Paul 1891: 23), and later describes creation of the common-language (or contact vernacular) as practical realization of a felt social necessity (Пауль 1960: 492; Paul 1891: 495). Examining the functioning of language, Paul contrasts the individual and the common (social), the individual speech and the commonly accepted usage

(prototypes of F. de Saussure's "parole" and "langue"), identifying individual speech as the primary driving force of the language's evolution (see the works of Lev Scherba) (Щерба 1974). Despite seeing the language as a psychical phenomenon; however, H. Paul has never opposed either language and speech or language as a social phenomenon and speech as an individual phenomenon; he rather sees them as a unity, as two sides of one whole[3]. The focus on psychical processes in investigating language and language capacity is a characteristic tendency of the modern cognitive approach to language[4]. A non-linear reading of Paul's text makes it clear that for him language is a part of the culture, and its history goes hand in hand with the history of culture: "The characteristic mark of culture lies in the cooperation of psychical with other factors" (Пауль 1960: 29; Paul 1891: xxxviii). Thus, a culturological approach forms an integral part of the cognitive approach to language.

Modern linguistics acknowledges that "language is a social phenomenon for which humans have an innate biological capacity; this capacity is utilized by each individual in accordance to her personal psychical makeup" (Глинских, Петрова 1998: 24). Анатолий В. Кравченко (Anatolij V. Kravchenko) writes in his article "The Biological Reality of Language": "The definition of language as a system of abstract symbols to be examined and studied as an isolated and autonomous system (as in linguistic semiotics) is incomplete from the start and prevents us from seeing the essence of **language as a special type of activity with a biological function**… Science depends on knowledge as a product of human activity where a human being is a biological system, and knowledge itself has a bio-social function, rooted in relational dynamics (dynamics of interaction between biological systems). Until we define and describe the nature and features of this dynamics, we cannot begin to reach the goals, set for us by linguistics" (Кравченко 2013: 56–57).

H. Paul's observations as well seem have an associative connection with the following statements by A. Kravchenko: "Experience of linguistic interactions forms a part of the structure of the concept, which contains perceptive, sensomotor, proprioceptive, emotional, and linguistic elements. …As components of first-order consensual domains, linguistic signs contextualize the cognitive structure of an organism, providing references to common experience, shared by interacting organisms. Thus, operations, performed on linguistic signs in the process of linguistic interactions, presuppose interaction with other components of complex representations, making the linguistics sign 'a window' into the hidden world of mental processes" (Кравченко 2013: 59). The author makes a logical conclusion: "It is time we departed from the old dualistic view of the relationship between mind and language and defined a new conceptual and theoretical approach to cognitive language sciences. This new theory must be able to explain language as a biological, social, and ecological interactional behaviour that produces intellect. Language sciences must focus on *the biological reality of the*

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[3] Consider, for instance, a later theory by Алексей А. Леонтьев (Alexei A. Leontiev), which postulates that "words' meanings 'lead a double life'": in the system of collective consciousness and in personal activity of individuals (Леонтьев 1997: 287).

[4] Remember W. v. Humboldt's famous words about language "language steps in between him and the nature that operates, both inwardly and outwardly, upon him" (Гумбольдт 2000: 57).

language; the biology of cognition and language will take cognitive sciences out of the methodological impasse and lead them to new horizons of knowledge and understanding" (Кравченко 2013: 61).

From the perspective of cognitive semantics, the meanings are seen as cognitive structures included in the models of knowledge, as specific conceptualizations; the meanings are interpreted in the context of the whole conceptual system[5]. In his preface to *Principles of the History of Language*, S. Katznelson outlines H. Paul's position on how the meanings of linguistic signs are created: "In the chapter on change in word-signification, H. Paul bases his entire argument on the distinction between usual (independent of context) and occasional (specified in a given speech act) word meanings. He gives a detailed description of how a word is 'individualized' (i.e. how usual signification becomes occasional signification in a specific utterance), thus anticipating Charles Bally's ideas about actualization of words in a sentence" (Пауль 1960: 9). Without actually using the term "concept," Paul touches upon relationships between concepts and notions, concepts and meanings, images and notions: "The entire store of ideas in the human mind strives to attach itself to the vocabulary of language. But the circle of the ideas of single individuals in any society differs widely from that of culture of others in the same society, and what is more, the circle of the ideas of each individual is always liable to expansion or contraction. Hence it follows that a quantity of individual peculiarities must necessarily be found in the ideas attached to the vocabulary; – peculiarities which pass without recognition in the common definitions of meaning in the case of single words, and groups of words" (e.g. "horse," "father") (Пауль 1960: 126; Paul 1891: 89–90).

Paul comes close to describing the cognitive mechanism of metaphorization: "That which is unfamiliar or far from the individual's interests becomes clearer and more accessible through the more familiar" (Пауль 1960: 114; Paul 1891: 76). He examines various mechanisms of using one object's name for another: a part vs. the whole, the functional transfer of meaning, orientational metahor (where concepts are spatially related to each other), metaphors, based on temporal and causal connections, etc. (Пауль 1960: 114–120; Paul 1891: 77–91) and lays special emphasis on how metaphoric language reflects the worldview of the speakers: "The combination of metaphors that became 'usual' in the language enables us to deduce what interests were predominant among the people" (Пауль 1960: 115; Paul 1891: 78).

Discussing the nature of mental representations connected with words, Paul gives an example, which was later correlated to "the focus of colour (E. Rosch, B. Berlin, P. Kay)": "Each colour may, of course, be mixed with each other colour at will; and thus there arises an infinite number of transition stages which cannot possibly each receive a definite name. And the result is that we are content to leave unimportant admixtures without any name, so that the

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[5]   Cf. Ray Jackendoff's theory of conceptual semantics, the multi-level theory of meaning (cognitive semantics): a) crossing the boundary of linguistic knowledge into the domain of encyclopedic knowledge; b) taking into account cognitive processes – conceptualization and categorization in creating meaning; c) taking into account cognitive contexts in creating meaning; d) the role of the conceptual domain (definition) (R. W. Langacker's *profile* and *base*; L. Talmy's *Figure* and *Ground*; G. Fauconnier's *mental spaces* and *conceptual domains*) (Глинских, Петрова 1998: 34–38).

limit within which a name expressive of colour is applicable remains uncertain and shifting. But a much wider room for inadequate application is given us by words whose signification consists in a complex assembly of ideas" (Пауль 1960: 102; Paul 1891: 75–76) (cf. the prototype theory/approach to categorization by Eleanor Rosch, Brent Berlin, and Paul Kay).

Even though Paul states that we cannot ignore psychical processes in the study of speech, at the same time he insists on differentiating between logical, mental and linguistic categories. In Paul's view, it is as well "of great importance… that linguistic formations are created without preconceived intention": "Just as no artificial grafting or breeding can neutralize the operation of the factors which determine the natural development, so no intentional regulation can produce this effect in the department of language. These factors, interfere as we may, work constantly and consistently, and everything which is formed artificially and adopted into language is subject to the play of their forces" (Пауль 1960: 41; Paul 1891: xliv–xlv).

Some of Paul's conclusions have clear parallels with Glinz's theory of cognitive processes in reading and writing[6] (Филиппов 2003), according to which graphic word images are related to the word meanings not directly but indirectly through the sound word images. A reader first reconstructs sound images that form the basis for graphic images and then recalls the word meaning through the sound word

image (Филиппов 2003: 38). Paul's take on this is as follows: "Ideas are introduced in groups into consciousness, and hence as groups remain in **unconsciousness**. Ideas awakened by sequences of sound associate themselves into a series; and ideas called up by the movements of the organs of language associate themselves into a sequence. A series of sounds associate themselves with a series of movements of the organs of speech. The ideas for which they serve as symbols associate themselves with both alike; not merely the ideas of meanings of words, but likewise those of syntactical relations. And not merely do single words, but larger sequences of sound – nay, entire sentences, associate themselves immediately with the constituent parts of the thought which they clothe" (Пауль 1960: 48; Paul 1891: 4–5).

All this is verified by the data of cognitive linguistics, which sees understanding as belonging, to a large extent, to the sphere of the unconscious.[7] As the result, it can be said that Hermann Paul anticipated and formulated the main principles of the cognitive approach to language, namely: language as a product of individual experience, the role of individual notions in forming a word's meaning, analogy as a mechanism of language acquisition, metaphor as a mechanism of learning and the connection of language with other mental processes. The influence of the anthropocentric philosophy brought about new theories of word meaning including networks of meaning

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[6] Words' graphic images are connected with their meanings not directly but indirectly through their sound images. The reader first reconstructs the sound image that forms the basis for the written word and then, through the sound image of the word, "recalls" its meaning (Филиппов 2003: 38).

[7] See, for instance: ЗАРЕЦКАЯ, Е. Н., 2012. Идентификация смысла в личной и социальной сферах и использование этого феномена в медиатекстах. *Вторая международная научная конференция «Стилистика сегодня и завтра: медиатекст в прагматическом, риторическом и лингвокультурном аспектах».* Пленарные доклады. Москва: Медиа-Мир, 47–58.

(Hardy 1998), semantics of experience and inferential knowledge (Violi 2001), and the biocultural theory of meaning (Златев 2006).

These observations make it possible to define some of the new features that "the image of language" acquired by the beginning of the 21st century and prove that Hermann Paul's work remains a viable and important subject of study for the modern linguists. The results of any research with time can be included into a larger, more fundamental theory. Now, when linguistics has arrived at a new level of generalization, it is becoming increasingly clear that practically all of its theoretical and factual data will come in handy on the next stage of its development. As part of the science's overarching project of studying Man, modern cognitive linguistics is only possible thanks to the solid foundations laid by the scholars that preceded us.

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