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A COGNITIVE ASPECT OF PRAGMATICS

The article is an attempt to examine two linguistic trends that is pragmatics and cognitivism, the aim of which is to show complementarity of theses representing these two research directions. Taking as a starting point the phenomenon of cognition the author explains its implicit presence in chosen pragmatic theories and she discusses its primary role in cognitive theories.

1. Introduction

When it became obvious that cognitive linguistics was more than a temporary fad, that interest in the concepts defined in this paradigm was rising, and that ignoring or even objecting to the suggested language vision and research methods would not do any good, new ideas were carefully investigated in the light of developing trends, whose importance in the field of contemporary linguistics and a number of its proponents could not be questioned. First and foremost, I mean concepts in the fields of semantics and pragmatics.

The following article follows this trend and attempts to answer the question of the place of cognitive linguistics in the contemporary research on language, especially those representing widely understood pragmatics. It is a collection of reflections on whether cognitive linguistics stands in opposition to pragmatics or rather complements it, and whether we can, in general, talk about cognitive pragmatics, taking into account their different statuses within the frames of general linguistics or else perceive peculiar absorption of pragmatics by cognitive linguistics.

The problem is not new. It has been investigated by many pragmatists and cognitivists curious about new challenges, trying to define pre-cognitive concepts.

Many research papers (cf. Kubiński and Stanulewicz 2001, Miczka 2002) have been produced in which the research apparatus and concepts designed by cognitive linguists to describe pragmatic phenomena have been used. The conference in which we are participating also proves the fact that interest in this topic has not waned and

still arouses as much enthusiasm as questions. Let some of these reflections contribute at least a little to the explanation of the issues facing us as we attempt to unravel the complex paths of linguistics.

The first part of the presentation will deal with pragmatics and cognitive linguistics in outline. The second part concerns the role of cognition in the development of contemporary linguistics. In the third part, we will draw some conclusions on the pragmatic dimension of cognitive linguistics or otherwise, which may sound a bit perverse, bearing in mind the topic of the conference, a cognitive aspect of linguistics.

2. Pragmatics and cognitive linguistics – two trends but two visions of the language?

1. Language pragmatics is a long and established field. It stemmed from the need to look at the language through the prism of its users, who in any given moment and time and with the specific aim utter those and not other sentences. Language ceased to be perceived as a theoretical, objective and autonomous object of scientific analysis, and became a determinant of intentional act and expression.

The scope of research within pragmatics evolved gradually. When C.H. Morris in 'The Principles of Theory of Signs' (1938) mentioned three areas dealing with the description of language, very few realised the breakthrough that was going to take place. These areas are syntax, semantics and pragmatics being the one which is to explain language behaviours and habits i.e. the ways of interpreting the habits. Unfortunately, C.H. Morris did not have the methodological apparatus required although he wanted it to be formulated.

Pragmatics saw its breakthrough in J. Austin's theory of speech acts, a series of 12 lectures delivered in Oxford in 1952–1955 and published in 1962 in 'How To Do Things with Words'. (Although J. Austin himself did not use the term 'speech act' in his papers, he is said to have introduced the concept of speech act to the language research). J. Austin believed that every utterance is a manifestation of a specific language user's action, which is expressed through illocutionary force, which says that the conditions of truth are not important because what counts is the effectiveness or felicity of an utterance, i.e. whether it brought about a specific and expected response.

Austin's theory aroused a wave of critical interest in researchers representing both linguistics and philosophy, bearing in mind that originally it was supposed to be philosophical theory of natural language (cf. Searle 1969, 1979, Ross 1970, Habermas 1971, Sadock 1974, Fraser 1975, Wunderlich 1976, Boer and Lycan 1976, Katz 1977, Petöfi and Kayser 1978, Kalisz 1993, Bartmiński 2004a). It also gave rise to the revolutionary Grice's theory (1975).

P. Grice describes the rules between a receiver and sender on the basis that the receiver decodes the sender's intentions. These rules determine the so-called logic of conversation and allow us to understand the correct use of language. The main principle, i.e. the rule or cooperative principle, concerns every single intentional use of language (not only that) and is explained through conversational maxims. A conversa-

tional implicature, which is what a receiver can deduce on the basis of the heard conversation, started to play an important role in language description.

Grice's theory became a topic of discussion in the academic world. We should also mention D. Sperber and D. Wilson's Relevance Theory (1986), the works of R. Lakoff (1977), P. Brown and S. Levinson Face-saving theory (1978) and Politeness Maxims by G. Leech (1983).

Due to the research on implicature the interest in presupposition and implication grows. On the basis of Grice's views a new research topic emerged, that of text. What followed was text grammar and later text linguistics. Text is seen as a suprasentential unit with an informative structure which plays specific roles and functions. The most famous advocates of this thesis are W. Dressler (1970), R. Harweg (1968, 1977), J. Petöfi (1979), A.T. van Dijk (1973, 1977, 2001), M. Charolles (1978) and, in Poland, M. Mayenowa (1971, 1974).

At the same time, in France, E. Benveniste (1966, 1970) suggested a theory of utterance or discourse, which deals with the analysis of language marker relations that take place between the receiver and sender, time and place, that is a situation in which the act of utterance is executed and a function of a given utterance. The follow-up to such an approach to discourse can be found in Ducrot and Anscombre's Theory of Argumentation (1983) or Ducrot's Polyphonic Theory (1984). One should also mention the research on distance, transparency, tension and subjectivity.

The concept of text and discourse has caused many definition problems to date, hence the many differences in research approaches and formulated theories. E. Miczka (2002) thoroughly examines the development of text/discourse linguistics and its present status (cf. Bartmiński 2004b). The author stresses that researchers representing this trend very often refer to extra linguistic factors i.e. psychological, socio-cultural, which leads to the formulation of concepts of interdisciplinary character.

2. Interdisciplinarity is a basis for what is widely understood as cognitivism, thus cognitive linguistics. This approach to language description involves research from various fields of psychology, ethnology, neurology and computer science, because according to cognitivists, there is a connection between language use, cognition, brain activity and its nervous system and the culture in which language users live and are brought up.

All these aforementioned fields, according to the cognitive school of thought, have a common aim which is the examination of the human brain, thus access to the source of our thoughts. Since language is their reflection and most often we express ourselves by means of a language, it has become a central research topic in this area.

The beginnings of cognitive linguistics date back to the 1970s, more or less the same time as pragmatic theories, including text and discourse linguistics, started to develop rapidly. Two concepts representing the so-called representational approach seemed to gain a lot of publicity. It was Langacker's model of cognitive grammar (1987, 1995) and Lakoff and Johnson's theory of metaphor (1980). The representational approach defines language activity as a dynamic cognitive process which involves interpreting information on the basis of socio-cultural and individual experi-

ences of users as well as on the basis of models or schemes which correspond to knowl-
edge categories. The role of linguistics would then be to describe those schemes in
which the way of forming our knowledge is reflected and to record it in a language. In
this approach, among other things, one can include Lakoff's concept of idealised cog-
nitive models (1987).

A computative approach, in which knowledge structure is reduced to universal
rules and categories of the predicate-argument (genotype level) structures, are less
popular. One arrives at these rules and categories through the analysis of cognitive
archetypes, which are also universal (cognitive level). This approach is clearly illus-
trated by Desclés's proposition of cognitive and applicative grammar (1990).

There are many concepts describing cognition structures within the confines of
both approaches, and the meaning of such concepts as a frame, scheme, domain, graph
or mental space (cf. Schank and Abelson 1977, Sowa 1984, 2000, Fauconnier 1984,
Fillmore 1977, Johnson 1987, Langacker 1987, Jackendoff 1983) in linguistic research
is undeniable.

They are also used to develop models dealing with automatic translation. Although
the creators of these models often distance themselves from cognitive ideas, the mere
idea of disambiguity, i.e. operation consisting in maximum limitation of the possible
number of analyses of a given unit on the basis of context, inevitably introduces us
into the issues of difference reduction between languages, thus research on before men-
tioned genotype (cf. e.g. Banyś's objectively oriented concept (2005)).

The coexistence of these two trends gives some colour to cognitive linguistics,
which is associated, first of all, with the representational option. However, if we exam-
ine carefully these two methods of language description; figurative, which is based on
socio-cultural and individual experiences of language users, and formal, whose aim is
to describe what cognitively is common to all languages, it appears that the differences
resulting from the intention to systematise data fade, because both the research aim
and research principles are the same. It can be said that language description happens
in both cases on the basis of a three dimensional relation between perception i.e. holis-
tic experience of the world on the basis of preconceptual schemes (these schemes are
gestalts), cognition i.e. interpretation of the data and their record in a form of concep-
tual models, which form knowledge structure, and language i.e. ways of representation
i.e. recording knowledge into language structures.

Therefore, what is essential is the role of experimental and cognitive processes
in the description of language phenomena. The former determine understanding and
the latter lead to the definition of concepts. Experience, which has been divided into
direct i.e. physical (thought is materialised) and indirect i.e. metaphorical, happens on
the basis of above mentioned preconceptual schemes (or cognitive archetypes); e.g.
a scheme of force with such structures as compulsion, blockage, clash/collision, change,
possibility, attraction/gravity, a scheme of container, a scheme of path containing among
the other things a structure of purpose, a scheme of connection (e.g. similarity, cause-
effect, time order, integration), a scheme of cycle, a scheme of scale (e.g. up-down,
front-back, centre-periphery, near-far, part-whole) or a scheme of object. According to
M. Johnson (1987), 'the number or schemes is no sacredness' and obviously depend-

ing on the research done it is subject to change e.g. cited by M. Johnson, C. Alexander isolated 253 schemes. The interpretation of information, in turn, happens on the basis of cognitive processes such as the ability to analyse and synthesise, mataphorisation, metonimisation, schematisation, prototype categorisation, creating mental images i.e. imagery. Their effects are schemes or models corresponding to categories of our knowledge, which can take form of a sentence, image or metaphorical and metonimical extension (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1988).

An important aspect concerns language itself, which, despite being a structure, makes for a continuum, which implies that a description of language category takes place simultaneously in all possible dimensions, starting from phonological and concluding with pragmatic. As far as the aim is concerned, it goes beyond the limits of contemporary linguistics, because language is treated as a tool to find out thoughts.

I think that cognition is a key concept allowing us to understand the essence of cognitive linguistics and contemporary science in general. Does it manifest itself in pragmatics as well?

If so, is it possible to talk about cognitive pragmatics? I will address these questions in the following section.

3. It is believed that pragmatics and cognitive linguistics represent two distinct research trends. However, according to R. Kalisz (2001), they belong to so-called functional linguistics, which is defined as a trend indicating a functional basis towards language. R. Kalisz (2001: 25) says that 'a functional basis is connected with perceiving a language structure as dependent, determined (...) by contextual conditions, a conversational aim, lexical and sentential meaning.' This and other attempts to find a common denominator for pragmatics and cognitive linguistics are well founded in numerous academic papers, in which pragmatic phenomena are described by means of a research apparatus devised by cognitivists (cf. Kubiński and Stanulewicz 2001, Adam 1992, Miczka 2002).

Why does this need to examine already defined concepts and phenomena arise? The answer lies in the problems researchers representing so-called precognitive linguistic trends face. It turns out that language itself as a research point of reference and at the same time the aim is not enough and one has to make a step forward and see a language phenomenon from a different cognitive perspective.

Pragmatics was responsible for the need to go beyond the precise categorical limits that characterised the previous research trends. Not only language but also its participation in the description of extralinguistic events, have become the issues of linguistic reflection. When one talks about the context, first and foremost, about the participants of the act of communication, who have some aim, who respond to their interlocutor's utterance, one intuitively goes beyond the scope of linguistics (pragmatics' status itself gave rise to controversy from the very beginning – was it to be philosophical of linguistic domain or just an independent scholarly discipline).

However, in suggested pragmatic analyses one does not look for the sources whose consequence is an utterance or a speech act. And even if subconsciously there is

a question concerning the principles of how our utterances are constructed, the pragmatic aspect of research does not go beyond the problems of cognitive nature.

I would say that in the case of pragmatics we deal with a 'hidden' or implicit meaning i.e. the one that underlies the reliability of information captured in an utterance or speech act, and which is not given a linguistic analysis. Then language would be a pragmatic object of research allowing to discover the presence of interlocutors in utterances, however without asking an essential question characteristic of cognitive linguistic i.e. what happens in language users' brains in a given situation that they form such sentences and not the others.

In such a situation cognitive linguistics can be treated as a consequence, not to say a by-product, of rising cognitivism whose area of research is human's thought, or, to be more precise, cognitive processes and ways of organising and storing knowledge. Therefore, language has become a main tool to examine what is prelingual.

However, if we take a closer look at speech acts' theories and highlight indirect speech acts, we will see that their cognitive character lies among other things in an assumption of certain common world knowledge the interlocutors are aware of, in which intentions, i.e. illocutionary force and perlocutionary abilities based on correct reading of an announcement are embedded.

In the case of P. Grice's proposal and his followers, a cognitive aspect is even more visible. The concept of implicature itself presupposes certain mental processes allowing us to understand and adequately respond to a given utterance.

Sperber and Wilson's theory of relevance, in turn, belongs to the tradition of cognitive science, because its authors assume, on the one hand, the existence of a cognitive effort made to interpret the utterance as well as cognitive effects, i.e. conclusions drawn from inference, and, on the other hand, an intention to pass on information. Hence, according to D. Sperber and D. Wilson, every communication should be ostensive-inferencing.
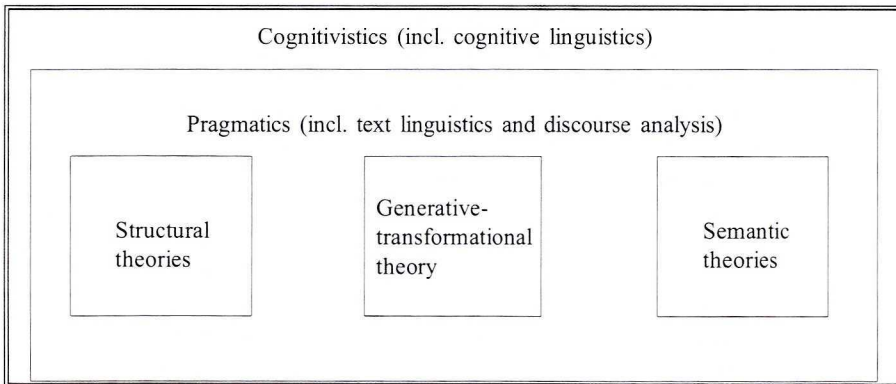
While talking about the studies on the politeness phenomenon, the role of culture and extralinguistic awareness in description e.g. activities aiming at saving face, is apparent.

When we investigate the issues concerning text or discourse theories, we cannot avoid the impression that both text and discourse are understood as 'the result of receiver's interpretative decisions, decisions that require the appeal to the sender and receiver's common knowledge.' (Miczka 2002 : 62).The analysis of relations between the receiver and sender, examining the rhetorical and stylistic means (endeavours), unless based on physical and socio-cultural experience or cognitive processes, which shape our knowledge about the world, allow us to describe the structures of text/discourse, but do not explain the causes, i.e. do not answer the question why text/discourse is built in such a way and not the other.

We are led to the conclusion that cognition is fundamental to contemporary linguistic research. In the case of pragmatics, its role has not been fully recognised. However, in the case of cognitive linguistics, it has become the focus of academic investigation.

I would like again to pay attention to the fact that within the frames of cognitive research the division of the ordered units according to the levels appearing in the structure of language is avoided. I believe that the problem lies in the deeply rooted traditional vision of language as well as research methods connected with that, and the problem with the description of holistic language phenomena would prove either imperfection of a human brain or a structural vision of a language and its pragmatic dimension. One can notice that one trend does not have to exclude the former although it is often said the following trends arise in opposition to the previous concepts of language. I would rather see in this evolutionary phenomenon an attempt to complete the already existing achievements through looking for more satisfying solutions.

Having looked from above, we will notice that the widely understood pragmatics was the completion of theories dealing with describing just a language. Cognitive linguistics, on the other hand, complements pragmatics, trying to explain what escaped pragmatic theories and the earlier ones and it could be illustrated by the following scheme:

Cognitivistics (incl. cognitive linguistics)

Pragmatics (incl. text linguistics and discourse analysis)

| Structural theories | Generative-transformational theory | Semantic theories |

It must be remembered that within the confines of particular trends appeared visionary postulates, going beyond established bounds of knowledge and methodological constraints. Let me mention Guillaume's structuralist's psychomechanics (1929) or Chomsky's psychological postulate (1957). It is also to be remembered about theories in which researchers referred to sociological or psychological research, which has been mentioned earlier in the article.

3. Time for conclusions

The first conclusion has already been drawn in the last part of the preceding section and concerns the complementary nature of theses.

In other words, cognitive linguistics absorbs pragmatics, as it absorbs research within semantics or other areas describing language structure and mechanism of its

functioning, bearing in mind that pragmatics would be understood as a special kind of bridge between objective, autonomous and more or less formal theories and cognitive linguistics, which does not reject algorithmic records (cf. Desclés 1990). However, it is cognition not language that cognitive linguistics has as a point of reference. It must also be stressed that through language description cognitive linguistics aims at mirroring the ways of conceptualising the world.

The second conclusion is connected with cognitive pragmatics. In the light of what has been said, we should not be talking about cognitive pragmatics, as we should not be talking about cognitive semantics. If cognition is the point of reference which determines our utterances, it simultaneously gives them semantic and pragmatic dimension. It happens so, because cognition takes place in concrete time and place, in the presence of interlocutors and what is more, the semantic aspect of the utterance depends on that, which, in turn, implicates the conscious aim (let us hope), using those and not the other language categories. If we, however, talk about the application of cognitive research apparatus to specific phenomena and described by means of methods devised within the frames of precognitive theories, then we can say that the before mentioned terms would provide their justification.

The third conclusion concerns the emphasis that is placed on the role of cognitive processes in constructing utterances and somehow ignoring or diminishing the importance of psycho-affective processes. The famous Descartes' 'I think, therefore I am' should be paraphrased into 'I feel (and think), therefore I am.' Do emotions and feelings not play a bigger role in shaping and verbalising our judgements about the world?

And the last question to consider is expressed in a question: Is cognitive linguistics able to satisfactorily explain all the language phenomena taking into consideration their systematisation, pragmatisation and first and foremost, the role of cognition in constructing utterances (cf. Kardela 1992)? If we assume that in language there are many so-called conventionalised forms and uses (e.g. Kardela's parasite gaps or Karolak's syntactic operators (1984)), we must state that cognitive linguistics' abilities finish here. How can we explain the presence of the preposition *de* in the French construction *oublier de téléphoner?*

Such attempts have already been made, but at the present time there is no satisfactory explanation.

For that reason, linguists must search further, examining and describing in detail what is exceptional and valuable in a human being – language. Language is like a 'buckle' fastening the world of thought with the real world, because it is the 'key' to knowledge about the world and ourselves, because it is the mirror in which human experiences and feelings are reflected.

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