Aspectuality of Language in an Epistemological Perspective

The focus of this paper concentrates on the aspectual nature of language, taken into account as the subject matter of the principal object of scientific study and as a relational property of the subject matter of adjacent objects examined from either disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives. Its objective is to stipulate the interdisciplinary awareness of scientists in the division of their academic labor in accordance with the existence modes of language and the ways how it can be autonomized as a means of individual signification and social communication from its heteronomous dependencies. This stipulation leads to a directive statement that practitioners of linguistic disciplines should be conscious when they observe the extrasystemic properties of languages and when they pay attention solely to systemic-structural properties of a particular language. By the reference to an autonomy–heteronomy opposition, the author of this paper emphasizes that language as a whole occurring both in perceptual and inferential reality is indivisible. However, the same cannot be said about the scope of the disciplines which depend on the choice of investigative viewpoints. Introduced in the title as a name of the investigative perspective, the notion of epistemology, dealing with a theory of knowledge and knowledge acquirement, pertains to two kinds of knowledge about the scientific object, to the knowledge how the things (and states of affair) exist and how they can be approached in scientific studies. The material basis for the article constitutes research achievements summarized in the author’s English monographs Epistemological Perspectives on Linguistic Semiotics (Author 2003), Lectures on the Epistemology of Semiotics (Author 2014) and From Grammar to Discourse: Towards a Solipsistic Paradigm of Semiotics (Author 2016).”

Since this article popularizes the idea of aspectualty of language, it is obvious that some of its formulations (albeit in revised versions) might have been fragmentarily published in earlier articles, or subsequent book chapters,, pertaining to semiotic aspects of language and the classification of linguistic disciplines according to academic principles, and, especially, “Conceptual levels in the understanding of language”.

The Notions of Aspects and Constituents as Abstractable Features

In order to exhibit the aspectual character of language, it is necessary to introduce a demarcation between aspects and constituents of abstractable features of perceived reality. A representative usage of the term abstracting may be found in The Language and Logic of Philosophy written by Hubert Griggs Alexander, who has quoted (1972/1967: 107), inter alia, the definition of Alfred North Whitehead from the book Science and the Modern World: “Each mode of abstracting is directing attention to something which is in nature; and thereby is isolating it for the purpose of contemplation” (1925: 173). To be more exact, what Alexander has emphasized is that “abstracting is not really removing anything at all”, but rather “focusing” the observers’ “attention on some part or aspect of what” they “experience while neglecting to pay attention to other parts or aspects” (1972: 107). With reference to one of the particular meanings of the Latin term abstrahere ‘to draw away’, abstracting a certain feature, namely a constituent or an aspect of a prominent or conspicuous part or characteristic of an object “implies the drawing away to a conceptual plane quite remote from the concrete level of experience… It is a process of (1) focusing attention upon some feature within experience; (2) holding this feature as the object of our immediate thought, and (3) possibly remembering it later” (Alexander 1972: 108, emphasis is ours: ZW).
In dependence whether something can be removed not only mentally but also physically from the cognized reality, there are two kinds of abstractions which appear to be useful for methodological purposes, namely constituents and aspects. Accordingly, constituents are those abstractions of features, which can also be physically removed as coexistent parts, or as separate elements totally isolated from the objects as wholes, and aspects are those abstractions of features which cannot be removed physically from the cognized reality, as far as they constitute only its inherent or relational properties. In consequence, one has to distinguish the following varieties of abstract features: firstly, constituents as abstractions of parts (segments, fragments, elements), and, secondly, aspects as abstractions of characteristic qualities of observable objects, which are divided into inherent properties (internal, or intrinsic, attributes), and relational properties (external, or extrinsic, attributes), such as, for example quantitative; functional, serviceable, co-relational, comparative, equality, relativity, similarity, difference, symmetrical; exclusion, inclusion, intersection, tolerance, co-existence, opposition, alternation, collocation, spatial, temporal, isotopic, allotopic, systematic, classificatory, typological, hierarchical, super- vs. sub-ordination, conditional, determinative, implicational, causative, and the like).
Aspects of Language as Oppositions between Its Inherent and Relational Properties

The discussion about the aspectual nature of language usually starts, as in the positions of Eric Lenneberg, *Biological Foundations of Language* (1967: 2), and Dwight Bolinger, *Aspects of Language* (1975/1968/, 1–8 and 14), with the emphasis on speech as a species-specific property of humans. Although Lenneberg’s and Bolinger’s assertions come from incommensurable theories, some combinations of dichotomous categories are still valid both for linguistics and its neighboring disciplines, as expounded by the author of this paper, in his sign- and meaning-related monographs, *Epistemological Perspectives on Linguistic Semiotics* (Author 2003: 62–74), *From Grammar to Discourse: Towards a Solipsistic Paradigm of Semiotics* (Author 2016: 98–124), ordered under the label of semiotic-linguistic facts among the aspects of speech, they will be subsequently applied to the evaluation of language and language-like objects from the viewpoints of: (1) physicality and logicality, (2) autonomy and heteronomy, (3) process and product, (4) form and substance, (5) expression and content, (6) collectivity and individuality, (7) competence and performance, (8) synchrony and diachrony, (8) syntagmaticity and paradigmaticity (10) deep structure and surface structure.

*On The Separation of the Physical Domain, Relaying on Empirically Tested Experimental Methods, from the Logical Domain, Basing on Rationally Concluded Associations between Two Interrelated Planes*
To answer the question regarding the accessibility versus non-accessibility of language to experimental observations, it is necessary to follow the terminological distinctions between the so-called physical domain of hard-sciences and logical domain of soft-sciences, i.e., between the domain of really existing facts and the domain of cognitively experienced facts, as one may deduce from the work of Victor Huse Yngve *From Grammar to Science. New Foundations for General Linguistics* (1996: 209–210). In applying Yngve’s way of reasoning, one has to emphasize that language, in its totality, does not belong to the physical domain, as one cannot describe its forms of manifestation in terms of objects which are sensorially perceivable. There are also some linguistic facts that can be only assumed on the basis of inferences. This inferential knowledge constitutes all mental activities which pertain to the intersubjective understanding of meanings, tasks, intentions or beliefs cannot be directly observable either by communication participants or researchers. Having in view the opposition between assumable and observable realities, one has to highlight that the physical domain comprises objects of observable reality, independently whether here and now, being remote in time and space, and the logical domain consists only of such mutually associated objects, which manifest themselves both in concrete and mental existence modes (inclusively and/or exclusively). Accordingly, only those linguistic facts, which are observable in the physical domain, can be investigated in a direct manner. An indirect way of revealing some aspects of language is probable in the case of interpersonal communication, when the observation of linguistic facts depends on the knowledge of external observers who make inferences about
intentions, tasks or purposes of individuals taking part in interpersonal communication.

On Heteronomous Nature of the Subject Matter of Linguistics and the Ways of Its Autonomization in Use and Cognition

The usage of the terms autonomy and heteronomy widely exploited in linguistics, comes from Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) Worth quoting is his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, where he says: “All my actions as only a member of the world of understanding would therefore conform perfectly with the principle of autonomy of the pure will; as only a part of the world of sense they would have to be taken to conform wholly to the natural law of desires and inclinations, hence to the heteronomy of nature.” (Kant 1997 [1785]: (4:53), 58).

In a slightly different meaning, the autonomy-heteronomy distinction has been applied to language as a system of verbal signs or as an investigative object. Seen in totality, language is said to be heteronomous by nature, but it can be made autonomous as a tool of communication through the acceptance of social norms, or as an object of scientific cognition through the choice of investigative perspectives.

When one says that a given language has autonomized itself by establishing a unified lexical and grammatical system, one should bear in mind the fact that it is only a relative autonomy. While acquiring the state of autonomy, a given language, or rather its standard variety, in accordance with
the statement of Max Hermann Jelinek (1868–1938), the author of *Geschichte der neuhochdeutschen Grammatik von den Anfängen bis auf Adelung* (1913: 260), becomes independent from its individual users, as a shared means of communication.

The autonomy of standard vs. heteronomy of dialects, has been exposed by William Downes, in *Language and Society* claiming that: “Standardization is a complex of belief and behavior towards language which evolves historically”, where “one linguistic variety, the standard, is raised above or is made superordinate to the dialects, which are subordinate to it. By saying that “the standard is autonomous”, linguists “are saying that it functions as a unique and independent linguistic system”. Moreover, as Downes adds: “a heteronomous linguistic system is one that functions in the linguistic community as a dependent variety of an autonomous system” (1998/1984: 33–35).

Recapitulating, on can say that what the speaking communities recognize as a normal state in a language is imposed upon its members by virtue of social sanctions. It is the pressure of society, expressed through rejection and acceptance, punishment and reward, or stigma and charisma, which decides that the individual language user adjusts himself to common rules, without being authorized to introduce any changes in the collective character of the semiotic system formed by respective conventions of linguistic communities.

The factor of relationalness explains the occurrence of multilingualism and the differentiation of language users into minorities and majorities, while indicating that a particular language is subjected, in its genesis and functioning, to customs and conventions.
An aspectual depiction of the properties of language has been expressed in the discussions between representatives, who argue about whether language is a process or a product. Well-known, in this respect, is the claim of Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) that language is energeia and not ergon, interpreted further as a generative activity of expression and an affective force, which repeats always in the same way and always in a new way. This claim has been formulated in the Introduction to his work Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaus und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts of 1836, well-known under the translated title On Language. On the Diversity of Human Language Construction and its Influence on the Mental Development of the Human Species, in the statement that language “in itself is no product (Ergon), but an activity (Energeia)” (“Die Sprache… ist kein Werk (Ergon), sondern eine Thätigkeit (Energeia)” (cf. Humboldt 1988: 49 [1836: LVII, § 8; cited and quoted Author 2014: 38)).

A characteristic feature, considered under a dynamic aspect, is the fact that the user of a language, by producing verbal signs from a finite number of means, has at her/his disposal, performs an infinite number of uses. Hereafter, Leo Weisgerber (1899–1985) proposed in Vom Weltbild der deutschen Sprache (1953) to interpret the statement “language is energeia” rather as “language is a
spiritual force‖ (Germ. *die geistige Kraft*) which transforms things and affairs in such a way that they become the property of human thought.

As *ergon*, following the Humboldtian observation, are to be regarded the outputs of language, i.e., what becomes a ready-made product, liberated from the process of speaking. Leo Weisgerber, in turn, explained *ergon*, in his article (1955): „Das Worten der Welt als sprachliche Aufgabe der Menschheit“ (The wording of the world as the task of humanity), as a result of “the ‘wording’ of the world which contributes to a crystallization of a world view in the consciousness of individuals, communities and nations, and consequently in the spoken and written texts of a language (Author 2003: 65–66; 2016: 103–104).

Among linguistically inclined psychologists, who have applied the factual and processual aspects both to the interpretation of language and text, a prominent place occupies Karl Ludwig Bühler (1879–1963), the founder of Gestalt psychology in Austria. While alluding to Wilhelm von Humboldt’s tenet of that language is not a ready-made product but an uninterrupted process, Bühler has exposed in his seminal work *Sprachtheorie: Die Darstellungstheorie der Sprache* (1990 [1934], 48–68]) specification the view that language is both a social activity and a social fact. What is more, against the usage reducing the linguistic object to the oppositions between system and text, the concurrence between dynamic and static aspects of language and its realization in texts, Bühler has presented on the basis of the so called four phases of speech formulated such as *Sprechhandlung* ‘speaking as an action’ and *Sprachwerk* ‘language as work’ against the background of *Sprechakt*.
‘speaking as an (accomplished) act’ and Sprachgebilde ‘language as a (created) structure’. In this confrontation of “speaking” vs. “language”, Handlung ‘activity’ and Akt ‘act’, as textual aspects of speech, have been opposed to Work ‘work’ and Gebilde ‘structure’, constituting ipso facto the systemic aspects of speech (cf. Author 2003: 70; 2016: 98).

Understanding the Notions of Form and Substance in Metaphorical Interpretations of the Nature of Language

When tackling upon systemic and textual aspects, it is unavoidable to consider the essence of language from its formal or a substantial point of view. In allusion to the lectures Cours de linguistique générale edited by the pupils of Ferdinand de Saussure (1916), the famous dictum that language is a form and not a substance should be interpreted that language itself is not a set of expressions, which can be physically measured, but rather a set of values of elements that mutually imply each other. In view of the fact that the elements of language are interchangeable, because they can be expressed in different substances, the form of language alone is understood as a system of pure values (Saussure 1922 /1916/: 156–157). The form constitutes the system of relations between pure values in abstractively conceived reality. One can say, therefore, in accordance with Saussurean tradition, that the form, as a systemic network of relations, superimposes itself upon the substance, as the textual realization in speech or writing. Hence, form in opposition to substance is language-specific, and substance is a property characteristic of parole. Metaphorically, the
relation between form and substance as viewed by Saussure can be illustrated by the analogy of the parallel between language and the game of chess. In chess, for example, the material shape of each piece, what they have been made of (of wood or of ivory, etc.), is not relevant in itself when those pieces are exchangeable in the case of when they are lost, even by the pieces of chalk or stone. However, a mutual relation between them and the role ascribed to each of the exchangeable chess pieces exists separately in the moment they are placed on a chessboard (cf. Saussure 1959 [1916]: 110, and 111–122, or 1983 [1972/1916]: 108, and 110–120; discussed in details by Author 2003: 70).

The Plane of Expression and the Plane of Content in Language and Linguistic Communication

Another somewhat related opposition between form and substance, although programmatically alluding to Ferdinand de Saussure, was developed by Louis Trolle Hjelmslev (1889–1965) in relation to the communicational realization of language, namely, in the plane of expression and the plane of content. What Saussure called signifié and signifiant (1922: 99), i.e., a psychical linkage between two sides of one sign: the mental image of the denoted thing and the acoustic image of the denoting name, Hjelmslev treated, in his Prolegomena to the Study of Language as two separate functives (1953 [1943]: 13, 52–58), which are united by a sign function, the content form, on the one side and, the expression form on the other side. In such an view, the sign function is depicted as a two-sided entity of two “functives”, which act, in
speech and thought, towards the substance of expression and toward the substance of content.

What constitutes an amorphous continuum in both planes of expression and content, united by a sign-function, can become shaped by form in each of the particular languages. In Hjelmslev’s reasoning, “matter” can become a “substance” only then, when it appears in the role of a functive connected by a sign-function with “form”. The substance is, in Hjelmslevian terms, this part of matter of content, or expression, which becomes a concrete product, organized by from for communicating purposes. To bring closer, in an illustrative way, the difference between matter, substance and form in a language, Hjelmslev used the metaphor of a piece of mud (or sand), a mold form and a mud pie formed by this mold. By the substance of mud (or sand) he understood mud, or sand, which is found within the form of mold. In the form he saw a shape given to that pie by a mold. The initial difference between mud, or sand, as matter, and mud, or sand, as substance depended mainly upon the act whether a given set has an ordered character, or whether it was given any kind of form. In Hjelmslev’s explanation, matter in the plane of expression should constitute all kinds of sounds emitted by people in different languages. The speech sounds, forming the constituents of the signs of a given language, in which human communities communicate, are to be determined as a substance of expression plane. However, phonemes by means of which those signs are distinguished from other signs in the system of language, should be considered as a shaping form of expression plane. As regards the plane of content, Hjelmslev exploited some examples from the segmenting and naming systems which characterize
the color spectrum in different languages of the world. Nevertheless, the scope of names, forming determined semantic fields, by which particular languages of the world differ from one another, should be treated as facts belonging to the form of the plane of content. Pursuing Hjelmslev’s explanations, one should add that languages contrast in the plane of content also with respect to the segmentation of matter not only by means of particular signs fulfilling a lexical function but also by means of categorial signs fulfilling a grammatical function. One can, therefore, agree that the languages of the world differ from one another typologically as to their formal aspects, although matter can be always the same (Author 2003: 70–71; for more details see Author 2016: 110–121).

Language as a Collective Property of Society and Individual Property of Communicating Individuals

Linguistic constituents and aspects of speech permeate, as a rule, two kinds of conditionings of human communication that govern the individual and social existence modes of its participants, manifested namely, in personal-subjective and interpersonal-intersubjective exchanges of related messages between them. What manifests itself in human acts of speaking and understanding constitute the properties of communicating individuals, as social facts appear, however, those collectively accepted tools of interindividua communication which crystallize themselves in individual acts of speech as a set of shared means of verbal signification. Thus, language, in its social
existence form, appears to an external observer as an ordered set of textual realizations that are acquired and realized for communicative purposes of individuals and requirements of speech communities, in accordance with their commonly accepted rules of usage and patterns of acceptability. In abstracting the properties of language from individual products and acts of speaking, called parole in Saussurean terms, practitioners of linguistic studies not only detach the social facts from the individual ones, but also distinguish the properties of linguistics texts as functionally relevant or irrelevant, in other words, the properties of the linguistic facts, which are essential, from the properties, which are less or more accidental in their substantial realization. One can, therefore, say that language is not a function of an individual speaker; but rather a ready-made product, which the society has created through, and for the purposes of, communication (cf. Author 2003: 67).

**Competence as Dispositional Property of Speakers/Listeners, and Performance as a Role-Oriented Realization of Their Communicative Tasks**

Language as a social property of speech, is relatively independent from the will of its individual users. One can thus say that someone possesses a language when s/he understands only the texts of language, while conceiving them as verbal, spoken or written signs. The social proprietorship of a given language is governed by the rules of the individual appropriation of verbal means for the purposes of signification and communication, under the normative pressures of speaking communities, or influential authorities. As
specified by Saussure (1959: 11, or 1983: 11), the so called “linguistic faculty proper”, refers to two kinds of abilities: to acquire language of a determined community during the formative years of an individual, or to create one’s own means of inter-individual communication. This kind of individual or social proprietorship related to knowledge of a certain language is usually understood as “linguistic competence” (Author 2003: 79–70).

The term competence has been introduced to the theory of language-in-use by Noam Avram Chomsky in his Aspects of the Theory of Syntax (1965: 3–15). Initially referred to grammatical and later to the semantic capability of speakers, it has slowly started to connote the totality of linguistic knowledge, aptitude and habit of an ideal language-user, who functions in a homogeneous linguistic community not polluted by any external influences. At the same time, sociologically inclined linguists, as, Muriel Saville-Troike, among the other scholars, postulated under the label The Ethnography of Communication (1982), to introduce a pragmatic component into a more general notion of “communicative competence” emphasizing that considerations of language use are often indispensable for the comprehension of much of linguistic form. Instead of assessing what can be said in a given language, practitioners of language sciences had rather to account for “what can be said when, where, by whom, to whom, in what manner, and under what particular circumstances” (Saville-Troike 1982: 8). Consequently, such competence comprises not only knowing the linguistic code, but also dealing with social and cultural experience, speakers are presumed to have, and enabling them to use and
interpret all linguist forms, in various communicative dimensions and social

When referring the notion of competence to dispositional properties of
communicating individuals, which enables them to effectively interact with
other individuals in performing their role-oriented tasks under the pressure of
collective sanctions, one has to take into account that some issues might be
related to the modeling of personality traits, which foster the development of
interdiscursive competence of communicating selves in cultural and
educational domains of communication, governed by the rules of
generationally transmitted traditions and socially construed norms (cf. Author
2016: 17, and 106–107). Such a normative model of intercultural
communicative competence, in the area of globalization for the tasks of the
world citizenship, has been proposed by Michael Byram (1997: 32–47), the
promoter of a belief that to draw appropriate conclusions from learning alien
cultures, the learners of a foreign language should first realize and understand
their own culture (cf. Author 2016: 106–107). Hence, teachers of foreign
languages, while preparing appropriate didactic materials for transmitting
culture-related knowledge and improving linguistic skills, are expected to
model the intercultural communicative competence of their pupils through
instilling into their minds between five kinds of respective knowledge,
experiential, existential, comprehensive, apprehensive, and operational,
marked, for example, by neutrality, curiosity, openness, interest, willingness,
etc.
On The Functional Stability of Language in Synchrony and Its Developmental Variability in Diachrony

In addition to an aspectual depiction of language as a form, which is realized substantially in individual acts and products of communicational processes, and to its aspectual definition as a system of pure relations, which are determined by nothing more than their arrangements in textual realizations, it seems to be worth stating that a given language exists not only at a given moment of time, but that it might have also taken place in the past, and may take place in the future as well. This statement means, in turn, that language should be considered either on “the axis of simultaneity” or on “the axis of succession” in accordance with proposal of Saussure (1959: 80, or 1983: 80). If language exists as a functional system with mutually interdependent text elements, then it may be internalized as an organized system through the consciousness of its individual users in the consciousness of a given communicative community. By virtue of this conscious knowledge, language may be also externalized in the individual acts of speaking and understanding only in a synchronic existence mode. Its individual user is not interested in the history of the constituents of her/his utterances, when s/he utilizes them as a tool for communicating her/his purposes, or intentions, in order to evoke the behavior and reactions of receivers, or to express her/his feelings and emotional states. If considered from a diachronic viewpoint, the changeability of language constituents and/or aspects is traced mostly by historians and to a lesser degree is known to be made familiar to those who use it for
communicating purposes (Saussure 1959: 79–100, or 1983: 79–98), since the evolution of language as a whole is a gradual process, which is hardly ever observable by its users. In fact, each of the dimensions of language, each structure, each of its constitutive elements, or aspects, can have its own separate history. Inquiries into their nature can, therefore, be never ultimately completed. If there are such studies, than they are rather partial and not systemic. When one takes into account the fact that the particular, simultaneously functioning, elements of the system of a given language, which exist also in the consciousness of different users, can be situated on different levels of the development. In explaining the difference between synchronic and diachronic description of language, Saussure took advantage of the analogy of the chess game. With reference to this metaphor of chess one can say that the chess player in a given moment of time, when s/he sees the situation of the various chess pieces on the chessboard, is not interested in the fact of what was earlier. Yet, s/he might simultaneously consider functional dependencies between chessboard elements to preview the consequences of her/his own move, which causes changes in a given situation. Synchronic linguistics, formed on Saussure’s principles, studies only a static aspect of language, while describing its relatively stable functioning in a taxonomical way, that means, it estimates the hitherto existing relations between text elements of the given language as a system from the viewpoint of functional interrelationships. What is more, when used in the context of comparative linguistics, synchronous linguistics may typologically characterize the systems of contrasted languages according to their structural properties. Diachronic linguistics, in turn, puts
emphasis on documenting the succession of historical and evolutionally changes occurring within systems of particular languages. It describes these changes in explanatory statements basing on philological-comparative methods. Having documented some convergent or divergent variations within a given system, practitioners of diachronic linguistics usually assess the causes and effects of transformations, occurring in the whole systems of languages, their subordinated and constitutive levels, into new qualitatively related systems, or into new forms of cognate languages, constituting the continuation of previous languages and their preceding states (Author 2003: 73–74).

**Syntagmatic Collocations of Text Elements in Communication and Their Paradigmatic Substitutability in the System of Language**

There are two kinds of relationships in text and system of language, which are studied by synchronic linguistics, namely, the relations of co-occurrence or mutual commutation of text elements within entities, units and constructions of higher order, called syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships. They refer, for instance, to the function or substitutability of phonemes within morphemes, morphemes within stems, stems within words, words within word groups, word groups within sentences, sentences within utterances, utterances within discourses and discourses within verbal means of human communication. Elements belonging to the same textual row based on collocation, mutual subordination or conditioning, in functional respect, enter into the syntagmatic relationships, because they are mutually collocated as elements of the same
syntagm. However, textual elements, which can occur in the same or in a similar context, i.e., which belong to the class of elements that mutually replace each other in the same textual environment, enter into the so-called paradigmatic relationships, as far as they take place within the system of language between members of a paradigm, among which only one can became a part of a given sequence of concatenated elements, and not all at the same time. Labels for these kinds of relations between text elements of language entered into linguistics thanks to Saussure, who exposed, while determining the essence of syntagmatic relationships (franc. rapports syntagmatiques), the linear character of linguistic signs succeeding each other in individual acts of speaking. However, Saussure specified paradigmatic relationships in a mentalist way, i.e., on the psychological basis, calling them the relations of association (franc. rapports associatifs). By calling these links as associative, he meant not only the intersubstitutability of signs in the same environment. He considered rather the fact that elements of a given language-system can be associated in the consciousness of users on the basis of certain common features, e.g., also in accordance with the fact that they are similarly constructed, or that they have a similar meaning (cf. Saussure 1959: 122–27 or 1983: 122–25). Louis Hjelmslev (1963: passim) replaced Saussurean term associative relationships with the term paradigmatic relationships while stressing their empiricalness. In other words, Hjelmslev’s exposition of syntagmatic relationships is based on the functional co-existence of text elements and the paradigmatic relationships on their contextual intersubstitutability. An important proposal of Hjelmslev for a linguistic theory
is the differentiation between the both-and functions (relations) and the either-or functions (correlations). What lies behind this terminology is the understanding of text as process and language as system. Accordingly, a both-and (a coexistence) relationship is present between the functives in the process (i.e., in the text), and an either-or (an alternation)—between the functives in the system (i.e., in the language). Thus, in Hjelmslev’s scheme, the synthesis of a linguistic system is to be seen in terms a “correlational either-or hierarchy”, and in turn, the analysis and synthesis of a text basing on interdependencies, codeterminations, constellations, correlations of its elements, and the like should be analyzed in terms of “both-and” as well as “either-or” relationships.

Deep Structure as a Grammatical and Lexical Scaffold of Language and Surface Structure as a Collocational Arrangement of Verbal Means for the Purpose of Communication

Along with the separations of the relations in absentia from relations in praesentia in the domain of text elements, linguists have also applied the notions of deep structure and the surface (the structure of the depth or surface) to the analysis of utterances. Following A Course in Modern Linguistics by Charles Francis Hockett (1958: 246–252), these syntactic terms have been referred to “deep grammar and surface grammar” meaning, the values of semantic and stylistic bonds, which connect the basic constituents of sentence independently of their order. In a similar understanding, the employment of the terms deep vs. surface grammar connotes structural concatenations between
the forms of the elements of utterances following each other in a determined linear order. A considerably different usage, however, characterizes the terms: *deep structure* and *surface structure* have been developed in the generative-transformational grammar by Chomsky (1965: 16–18, and 128–47). Principally, they have been related to the explanations of constructional ambiguity (syntactic or semantic homonyms, homophones, and homographs) appearing on the surface of utterances. In consequence, explorations in the deep structure of sentences are practically equated with a search for ultimate constituents as opposed to immediate ones, lexical and syntactic groups and simple basic sentences as well as for the kinds of transformations to which they may subjected. For the adherents of this procedure, not necessarily derived from a psychologist’s position, the notion of the surface structure of linguistic utterances appeared to be useful for phonological interpretations, where syntax and semantics are relegated to the domain of the deep structure analyses.

Summarizing the selected aspects of speech, one has to pay attention to their essential role in cognitive approaches to the subject matter of linguistics, independently of the more general and indeed deeper questions, which should be posed with reference to their place in the system of all epistemological perspectives.
Theoretical-Ontological Vs. Methodological-Gnoseological - Aspects of Linguistics

In linguistics, similarly as in its neighbouring disciplines as the sciences of language in general, one can distinguish, with reference to Rudolf Botha (1971: 14), its two aspects, namely theoretical-ontological (subject-matter-oriented) and methodological-gnoseological (tool- and strategy-oriented). The theoretical aspect of linguistics, constituting its subject-matter-oriented domain, makes up the set of all actual and potential propositions and concepts situated in the knowledge of language established by practitioners of this discipline, whereas the methodological aspect of linguistics, i.e., its methodological domain, constitute the set of all types of scientific hypotheses, empirical generalizations pertaining to linguistic laws, types of theories and models of language, its entities, units and constructions, sets of categories, terms and definitions.

Moreover, the methodological domain includes also all kinds of utterances formulated in a given language and expressed in other semiotic devices, or surrogates, as, e.g., diagrams, figures, schemes, charts, maps, graphs, tables, and the like, in the frames of which the totality of above mentioned knowledge about language as an object of investigation and description is ordered in a coherent, exhaustive, simple, consistent and legitimate way, as well as the set of all kinds of techniques, forms of reasoning and taxonomic and explanatory procedures, and the like, thanks to which this knowledge is established, and in the categories of which further research in linguistics is conducted.
Linguists may determine their object of cognition by specifying their subject matter and its various aspects, by stipulating its domain of occurrence, or by enumerating their tasks and methods on the investigative level, etc. In order to answer the question of what the formal object of linguistic studies is, one has to know the boundaries between systemic facts and non-systemic facts of language.

There are also other disciplines which are interested in the concrete manifestation forms of particular languages in their social environments but from non-linguistic viewpoints, as noticed by Franciszek Grucza 1983: 282), in Zagadnienia metalingwistyki. Lingwistyka – jej przedmiot, lingwistyka stosowana [Questions of metalinguistics. Linguistics – its subject matter, applied linguistics]. Since the separation of facts to be described as linguistic objects from the facts that belong to the domain of other sciences depends on the criteria employed in the delimitation of “extra”-linguistic facts from “intra”-linguistic facts, one has to decide which of the properties of language become autonomous as tools of interpersonal communication, and which possess a heteronomous character, being dependent on biological and psychological conditionings of individual users. That means, one should determine the boundaries between the subject matter of the so-called “external” linguistics and the subject matter of “internal” linguistics, following Saussure’s suggestion (discussed by Author 2003: 36–38).
In an attempt to define the subject matter of “internal” linguistics, one has to detach those properties which form the system of language from the properties which are to be subsumed under the non-systemic properties of language. The latter, encompassing the subject matter of the “external” linguistics, are studied within the domain of the non-linguistic sciences of language.

From the viewpoint of external conditionings, in which the languages of the world function as separate, major, and small or minor, systems of signification and communication, the specification of non-systemic properties of languages seems to be useful for typological purposes. To be mentioned here are, correspondingly, such variables as, for example, the history of a language, its users, territory, domains of use, relationships to other languages in contact situations, legal status and degrees of its standardization or codification, etc.

Aspects of Language Studied by Linguistics and the Non-Linguistic Sciences of Language

Owing to the multiaspectuality of language, one should delimit those properties that constitute the subject matter of linguistics from those which serve as criteria for defining the scope of the subject matter belonging to the other non-linguistic sciences of language, or to their neighboring disciplines. To separate the domains of linguistics and the neighboring sciences of
language, it is enough to respect the difference between language as “an
object” of study and language as “a relational property” of objects studied by
other disciplines.

As far as the object of anthropology is concerned, a scientist may be
curious to know what are the definitional attributes of the category of the
human being. For a psychologist, the performance of language abilities can be
treated as a clue as to how the mind (psyche), being the principal object of
her/his study, operates. Furthermore, in the sociology of language, the social
group (society) is a formal object of study and the language spoken by this
group serves as a criterion determining its scope. Thus, one can say that
language can be studied from the viewpoint of non-linguistic sciences of
language in the ecosystem of man, i.e., in the communicational settings of
individuals and collectivities.

Linguistics proper studies language as a principal object, but sometimes in
relation to its environmental settings, and sometimes in abstraction from the
environment in which it functions. In the first case, heteronomies of language –
studied by neighboring disciplines, such as, for instance, anthropology,
psychology, and sociology – are assigned as the properties of the formal object
of linguistic studies belonging to anthropolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and
sociolinguistics. In these hyphenated disciplines, language constitutes the main
object of study, and man, mind, or society are used as criteria embracing the
scope of objects studied in the domains of so-called heteronomous linguistics.
In the second case, the so-called autonomous linguistics claims to study
linguistic facts solely on the intrasystemic ground. Linguists try to make
generalizations about the systemic properties of language as a whole, or
describe and compare systems of particular languages of the world, while
abstracting them from their individual speakers, social groups, or ethnic,
national, or international communities.

Regarding the subject matter of autonomous linguistics, one has to take
into account that the language as a definitional model is not to be equated with
the properties characterizing all languages of the world, or a selected language
in particular. Correspondingly, systemic properties of languages determined by
their environments are studied in typological linguistics, in a search for
primariness and secondariness, universalness and exclusiveness, isomorphisms
and allomorphisms, and, in historical linguistics – in a search for origin and
evolution, separation and unification, continuity, or disappearance of structures
which realize respective communicative functions.

Apart from “pure” studies based on taxonomic or explanatory statements,
which evaluate the state of language as it is, or explain why so and so is as it is,
one conducts in the domain of linguistics also “applied” studies, based on
directive statements, which determine what should be done in order to reach
certain states of language to be avoided or achieved, as for example foreign
language teaching, lexicography, speech aphasia, speech pathology, speech
therapy, rhetoric and language standardization, and the like (cf Grucza 1983:
274–340, and 341–475; see also 390 and 436–438).

As a matter of fact, it is not only linguists who are able to autonimize their
object from a purely linguistic viewpoint; psychologists, sociologists,
logicians, or philosophers, for example may construe their own model of
language even though they do so from a perspective of its external
conditionings. Methodologically important for the linguists in question is when
their model is formulated according to a linguistic theory of a language system
delimited from its environmental conditionings, and when the gnoseological
subject matter of particular autonomous linguistics means also a relative
autonomy of a given natural language from its individual users in an
ontological sense.

Conceptual Levels in the Understanding of Language

For the reason that theories depend on certain authorized viewpoints, one
has to acknowledge the statement that language assumed as a theoretical
construct, does not exist really. Nor can it be abstracted from any concrete
hitherto existing language. Distinguishing an uncountable “language as a
theoretical construct” from a countable “language as a real object”, scientists
have to know that “language as a definitional model” is not to be equated with
the properties common to all languages of the world or with the properties
characteristic of one language in particular.

Therefore, at least three conceptual levels of language have to be
distinguished, (1) in general and in particular, (2) ex definitione, in abstracto
and in concreto, and (3) as a theoretical construct, as an inductive
generalization, as an autonomous sociolect, or as a heteronomous idiolect. As
one may notice, language in general can be understood either as language ex
definitione, i.e., a theoretical construct on a hypothetical-deductive basis, or as
language *in abstracto*, i.e., a generalization of inductively observed language properties in time and space. Furthermore, language in particular seen as synonymous with language *in concreto*, may be specified either as a shared means of verbal signification and communication, autonomized collectively by virtue of social sanctions, or as a linguistic idiosystem without interindividual norm principles (cf. Author 2016: 94–95).

**Aspects Language Detached From Set of Investigative Perspectives**

To begin with, the question how language as an investigative object exist and how it can be approached in cognition, can be answered within the framework of a metascientific discipline dealing the knowledge and knowing acquiring activities, namely epistemology which is divided into ontology and gnoseology. As such, epistemology defines knowledge as a set of investigative attitudes and/or investigative standpoints pertaining to the ways of how the investigated reality exists and what are the possibilities of its cognition (for details and relevant references see Author 2016: 56–58).

Irrespective of the divisions between autonomous linguistics and heteronomous linguistics, one must state that language in its entirety can be approached from various perspectives. Remembering the famous tenet «c’est le point de vue qui crée l’objet» expressed by Saussure in *Cours de linguistique générale* (1922: 23), one has to bear in mind that the subject matter of linguistics is created by investigative perspectives both of the disciplinary and
interdisciplinary provenance. It is worthwhile mentioning also the perspectives
derived from philosophical positions, and furthermore, doctrines and frames of
reference that are developed on metascientific premises (cf. Author 2003: 45).

It might be, therefore, appropriate to mention that the specification of the
subject matter construed by scientists for characterizing the nature of their
domain of study, or deduced from the observable features of their objects of
study, depends upon the choice of a given investigative perspective, or a set of
concatenated investigative perspectives.

The properties of the objects belonging to the domain of linguistics, which
are studied from linguistic and non-linguistic viewpoints, may also be revealed
by different ontological and gnoseological positions that provide a
metascientific basis for partial methodologies of individual types of sciences.
Thus, having stated, in this framework, that the epistemology of linguistics is
shaped by various scientific paradigms, it is assumed that the properties of its
objects may be studied, *inter alia*, through the set of meta-, hypo-, inter-,
intradisciplinary, and disciplinary perspectives, useful for distinguishing its
relevant categories and notions.

These perspectives are collected and defined in philosophical dictionaries
or books on the epistemology of sciences under the names referring to their
notional contents, disciplinary provenance, ways of presentation, authors
and/or followers, as in particular: absolutism, anthropocentrism,
associationism, behaviorism, biologist, causalism, cognitivism, collectivism,
comparativism, constructivism, creativism, descriptivism, determinism,
diffusionism, dynamism, emergentism, empiricism, essentialism, evolutionism,
existentialism, extrospectivism, functionalism, idealism, instrumentalism, integrationism, introspectivism, intuitionism, materialism, naturalism, nativism, normativism, objectivism, organismic, personalism, phenomenalism, pluralism, positivism, pragmatism, psychologism, rationalism, realism, relativism, sensualism, solipsism, spiritualism, structuralism, subjectivism, symbolism, teleologism, utilitarianism, vitalism, and the like.

Among the interdisciplinary perspectives borrowed from the neighboring disciplines of linguistics, to be mentioned are, among others, those which have played an important role in the creation of linguistic models, such as, biologism, historicism, psychologism, sociologism, and anthropologism. Parallel to them oscillate such peripheral investigative perspective, as, for example, comparativism, taxonomism, descriptivism, distributionism, formalism, functionalism, cognitivism, and others. Furthermore, one should also mention idealizationism, abstractionism, binarism, or semiotism, which are nonetheless relevant regarding the epistemological position of linguistics.

Groups of investigative perspectives may promote the acceptance of preferred patterns of “scientificity” characteristic for particular epochs, and imitated as the modeling ones. Worth comparing, are, for example, evolutionism against the background of history, archeology, botany, zoology, geology; structuralism – physics, chemistry, anatomy, logic, statistics, geography; functionalism – psychology, biology, anthropology, sociology; generativism – algebra, combinatorics, informatics, computer sciences, formal logic, cognitive psychology, and the like.
Searching for binary oppositions, one should mention that some epistemological positions, occupied by linguists or representatives of linguistics-related disciplines, have usually oscillated between two poles. Hereto belong such perspectives as: rationalism and empiricism, monism and dualism, mentalism and mechanism (the view that all biological processes may be described in physicochemical terms), finalism and causalism governed the views on the nature of the investigated object. Besides, to be mentioned are also: realism and idealism, formalism and substantialism, solipsism and collectivism related to manifestation forms. Similarly, methodological choices have been determined by the oppositions between: inductivism and deductivism, synchronism and diachronism, introspectivism and extrospectivism, subjectivism and objectivism, absolutism and relativism, particularism and holism, isolationism and integrationism, etc.

Numerous orientations, predominant in the history of linguistic thought, have provided examples of how linguists discover or perceive the importance of only one aspect of language. They usually deem this aspect as either exclusively scientific or decisive for the whole domain of studies, while rejecting the viewpoints of their immediate opponents, and holding defensively their positions when new prospective opponents appear on the stage proclaiming that their ideas are no longer valid. Hence, crossing the boundaries between isolationist and integrationist approaches, it might be important to specify which of the manifestation forms and the existence modes of language could be autonomized as the subject matter of linguistics, and which of the forms of its manifestation should be treated as belonging to heteronomous
conditionings of objects studied by its neighboring disciplines (cf. Author 2016: 79).

The ontological and gnoseological commitments of theoreticians of linguistics to the views on the nature of language and its approachability have alternated between extreme perspectives, based on assumed attitudes or experiential standpoints, such as, inter alia, inductivism or deductivism, individualism or collectivism, positivism or idealism, monolingualism or multilingualism, synchronism or diachronism, evolutionism or diffusionism, factualism or processualism, formalism or substantialism, taxonomism or explanationism, idiographism or nomologism, normativism or descriptivism, instrumentalism or generativism, isolationism or integrationism, etc. At times they had been influenced by the prevailing theories espoused in the philosophy of language, or being fashionable in the philosophy of science. As a rule, they had treated language as an autonomous object of study principally in abstraction from its external conditionings.

In approaches of isolationists, natural languages have been reduced to “stages” and stages are identified with “systems”. Integrationists, in turn, have exposed investigative problems relatable to actual speakers, as they cooperate communicatively and interactively within the frame of discourse practices with other members of social groupings, such as interindividual, public and mass aggregations of local or global, national or international communities connected by blood kinship or ethnic descent, common profession or confession, and shared means of signification or cognition.
Against the background of isolationist or integrationist positions in the division of disciplinary work, one should speak in favor of an assumption that the natural language is heteronomous by nature, but it may be autonomized as a separate object of study. As such, any language can be studied by itself, or in relation to its functional environments.

The question of how to detach the boundaries of linguistic and non-linguistic disciplines is connected with the answer of how to analyze the correspondence between the commitments of practitioners of science to the ontological views on their object of study and its investigative approachability. Hence, from a holistic point of view, it will be necessary to depict the functional nature of language taking into account all properties of communicating individuals with their biological and cultural endowments as representatives of living species, with their sensorial and intellectual faculties as persons, and with their linguistic and axiological capabilities as members of social collectivities.

The Existence Modes of Language Seen From the Aspectual Viewpoint

Aspectuality of language may be rendered, in the description of its concrete and mental, static and dynamic, substantial and relational manifestations, as species-specific extraorganismic and intraorganismic properties of individuals and society, which are generationally transmitted and genetically inherited. Thus, the object of linguistic study may be specified in terms of at least one of ten separate existence modes (cf. Author 2016: 79–80).
Thus, for detaching the domains of disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies, while dealing with the functions of language as a system in abstraction from the environment of its speakers, it is essential to enumerate all existence modes in which language as a set of collectively accepted meaning bearers realized in observable extraorganismic and inferable intraorganismic properties of its speakers and learners, manifests itself in: (1) externalized products of speech as patterns of concrete vocal sound waves, (2) internalized products of thought as in mental equivalents of vocal sound waves, (3) externalized processes of articulation and audition as concrete activity patterns of sending and receiving vocal sound waves, (4) internalized activities of creation and interpretation as mental faculties of conceptualizing and interpreting vocal sound waves, (5) relationships between vocal sound waves and their reference in use as a set their significative and communicational values, (6) mental associations between vocal sound waves and their reference in use as a set their memorized significative and communicational values, (7) externalized links between interpersonal collectivities of communicating individuals as concretely observable, dynamic interactions between people, (8) internalized links between intersubjective collectivities of communicating individuals, as logically assumable, relationships between the minds of individual communication participants who interpret vocal sound wave in a similar way while referring them to the commonly known referential reality, (9) physiological and intellectual endowments of homo animal loquens, as the inborn faculty localized in genetically specialized neuronal centers of human brains to communicate by using vocal systems of verbal means with a threefold
duality of pattern structure and sequential segmentation (10) generational transmission in the evolution of humankind as the genotype-phenotype interplay between physical and logical memes of vocal sound waves and their reference in the genetic memory of speaking organisms.

**Concluding Statements**

To summarize the whole discussion about the heteronomous existence modes of language and its autonomization in use and cognition, one has to observe the fact that for crossing the boundaries between isolationist and integrationist approaches to the aspectual character of language, it is important to specify which of the manifestation of language can be detached as the subject matter of linguistic studies against the background of the investigative domains of non-linguistic sciences of language among human sciences. However, it is seems to be relevant stressing that not only the linguists are able to autonomize their object of study. In the investigative practice, any heteronomy of language can be made autonomous from the viewpoint of any discipline or any interdisciplinary perspective.

Since individuals who speak and communicate are a basic heteronomy of language, it is thus the linguistic texts which constitute their “dispositional” properties, when being referred each time to extratextual reality during the process of understanding and interpretation. These properties can be inductively abstracted from all individual realizations of texts repeated by
communication participants in the same way in all typical communicational settings.

Hence, what the linguists autonomize are only stages in the variations of languages. At the same time they are able to detect invariance in the textual structures of a language. Nevertheless, by drawing conclusions from abstract features of all languages of the world, it is impossible to create a new system of verbal signs, which could be utilized as an overall means of communication.

In the same way, as it is impossible to abstract from all texts of hitherto existing languages of the world the properties of a general human language that might stand for current and for future languages as well, one cannot believe in the creation of a particular language on ethnic or national levels from the totality of its idiolects. It is particularly unrealizable when the language as a system of shared means of communication, which provides the rules for socially accepted norms, does not possess autonomy from its user as a knowing subject.

References


