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INTROSPECTIVE AND TRADITIONAL VIEWS OF LANGUAGE

Abstract. The present-day traditional view of language has an essentially pedagogical background inherited from antiquity. Certain features of this heritage have passed through the centuries, reached our days and continue to be a sort of implicit postulates penetrating almost into every scientific conception of language. This causes specific divergences between the scientific view of language and its introspective view, i.e., the way it is actually conceived by an individual during ordinary communication. Studying those divergences is important for a better grasping the nature of natural language and for a more adequate approaching to certain problems.

Keywords: introspection, ordinary communication, proposition, truth value, natural language.

1. Introductory remarks

What do we really conceive when we conceive the content of some text during our ordinary communication? Do we generally conceive the senses of separate words? Do we in fact comprehend a proposition as some well-defined part of content separated from its pragmatic constituents? Do we really distinguish truth and falsity as some external characteristics of a proposition?

We consider these questions in sections 3, 4; this allows us to see the core of the divergences between introspective and traditional (pedagogically-based) views of language and to depict the essential principles of the introspective framework. The outline of certain introspective theories and considerations is given in Section 5. The whole reasoning about this approach is summarized in Section 6.



2. Traditional view of language

It should be noted that a person learning a foreign language for communicative purposes generally gets to know only the introductory part of scientific linguistic knowledge. That is why the corresponding pedagogical activity should be called propaedeutic. It has also been propaedeutic in historical perspective: it was this very activity that marked the beginning of the science about language, linguistics.

The present-day scientific view of language originated in antiquity when the sciences concerning human languages (primarily logic and linguistics) arose as normative ones. In ancient Greece linguistic investigations were driven by the aim of teaching and included two lines of pedagogic activity.

First, it was necessary to teach foreigners Greek and Latin thereby assuring mutual understanding essential for successful trade relations. The first prominent ancient center of such practices was in Greek Alexandria. Led by the above pedagogical and substantially propaedeutic purpose, ancient linguists—grammarians, as they were called at that time—elaborated the normative rules *governing the processes of building grammatically correct texts*. By what sort of rules were ancient grammarians constrained? They sought to represent a language *as a whole*, for the pupils were to acquire a complete mechanism of producing and understanding *correct* texts. The number of intelligible sentences which can be potentially produced by people is infinite. But the pedagogically-aimed representation of those sentences should be finite. That is why those representations inevitably took the shape of a certain calculus-like (albeit informal) system including (1) classes of basic entities, features, relations (words, parts of speech, syntactic functions, etc.) and (2) (syntactic, semantic, pragmatic) rules governing the processes of constructing complex texts from those basic objects. Moreover, for the same reason (i.e. finiteness of representation) ancient scientists were compelled to posit the shared intelligibility of senses associated with the above basic objects and with complex texts. It is this presumed shared intelligibility that can allow different people to understand each other during ordinary communication.

Second, at about the same time Greek philosophers paid their attention to the contents of the texts and tried to understand the laws of valid reasoning (as logicians did) or the means of deceptive reasoning (as logicians and especially sophists did) in order to teach people the art of (valid or misleading) argumentation. The ancient logicians worked out the systems of rules *governing the processes of arranging senses*.



On the whole, ancient logicians and linguists elaborated the principles of speaking and reasoning *which were suitable for teaching people to speak and to reason*. In the subsequent centuries the theories of language were developed in many important aspects but at the same time their pedagogical bent was largely retained. This was strongly stimulated by the fact that during those centuries the pedagogically-based framework was in good accordance with the predominant areas of its application—teaching contemporary languages; conserving the intelligibility of ancient texts for posterity; historical, comparative, logical and structural studying of languages. As a matter of fact those applications were based on viewing language data through a conceptual scheme based on the pedagogical view. This way of treating languages is still taken as traditional.

Thus, the nowadays traditional (pedagogically-based) approach consists in representing a language *as a whole*, as a certain system or mechanism which somehow underlies or governs a process of language activity.

Another guiding line of traditional framework stems from the fact that natural language is seen as some non-individual object with *shared accessibility*. For viewing a language as an impersonal shared thing the following concepts are substantial:

1. Propositions, their structure (logical form), their constituents (words/phrases and their senses);
2. Judgments about truth (falsity) of a proposition;
3. Presuppositions;
4. Associated ideas.

The basic features of the notion of *proposition* (see, e.g., [1]) have been investigated by G. Frege, K. Ajdukiewicz, B. Russell and other authors. The proposition is traditionally considered as a thought explicitly expressed by a sentence. It is a proposition, rather than a sentence that can be true or false. The proposition is an abstraction, an element of scientific framework, especially of logic and linguistics (this matter is discussed in detail by J. Peregrin [8]). The proposition is not considered as a subjective (and hence unique) content conceived by an individual mind; instead, it is posited as a shared entity accessible for different minds.

The proposition can have a structure, or a “logical form”. The structured proposition can have constituents—senses of words and/or phrases.

The truth value is traditionally thought of as a certain *external* feature of a proposition, it *adds* to a proposition the information about its relation to a certain state of affairs.



The proposition cannot be meaningful (either true or false) unless its presuppositions are true. The presupposition is also a certain thought, i.e., it can be represented by another proposition.

There is one particular condition a statement must fulfill to be meaningful: it is necessary to conceive a question which the statement answers, to see what the utterance has been made for; this allows one to assess whether the utterance suits the purpose and the circumstances of its usage. As R.G. Collingwood [2] puts it, a statement is not meaningful unless it is clear what question it is due to answer. Let us call this question the *hidden question* for the sentence. It seems natural to consider the hidden question as a sort of presupposition.

The proposition and its constituents can have some associated ideas (also representable by propositions). Presuppositions can be thought of as special cases of associations but we would treat them as a separate class. Among the ideas associated with a certain proposition there can also be some consequences inferable from this proposition.

Thus the concepts mentioned in (1)–(4) are considered by science as certain abstractions. Their denotata are traditionally thought of as *commonly accessible* “pieces of sense” *equally intelligible* for different people. However everyone knows from his own experience that each language is available only for an individual mind and is thereby subjective (and only on this basis it can exist as a social institution). This contradiction was explicitly formulated in the 19th c. by Wilhelm von Humboldt as the antinomy of objectivity and subjectivity in language. *Really* we do not conceive those “pieces of sense” during our ordinary communication; no one can find in his mind any direct evidence for their accessibility: an individual mind has only subjective contents, available to this very individual; and some of those contents are *postulated* (explicitly or implicitly) as representatives of certain commonly accessible or objective entities.

Each of us associates with a text a certain but a unique content. A commonly accessible content or identity of individual contents (or their parts) for different people can only be hypothetical; nobody can fix this by introspection, nobody can be absolutely sure about such hypotheses (one can easily learn this from misunderstandings occurring in ordinary communication).

3. Introspective view of language

Let us consider a text U uttered (or heard) by a person N at a moment t during an ordinary communication; and let C be a content of U conceived

by N at a moment τ . Let us label the above abstract “pieces of sense” (1)–(4)—i.e., the proposition expressed by U , judgment about its truth value, its presuppositions, its associative ideas—as P , V , PP , A , respectively. Thus, C , as well as P , V , PP , A , are understood as *temporal* (not timeless) entities.

Here C is thought of as radically different from P : the former is *individual*, while the latter is *commonly accessible*; C includes *all* the contents connected with U by N at τ : thoughts, assessments, perceptions, feelings, volitions, images—everything that is conceived by N as constituting the understanding of U . All the so-called material objects mentioned within U are first of all the objects of N 's perception, i.e., the constituents of N 's mind, since the real world is given to us only through our perception. Thus, within the introspective stance (i.e., phenomenologically), the so-called “external” (or “material”) and “internal” worlds are—for each individual—first of all the contents of his mind; and the utterance U , since it is *perceived* by the individual, is also first of all the content of his mind.

Besides, within introspective perspective we do not speak about meanings and senses, we do not even make any distinctions between those two kinds of things. In ordinary communication we conceive the content of an utterance as a single whole; we do not conceive separately any senses for connecting them with meanings. This wholeness also forces us not to rely on the principle of compositionality: we do not conceive contents as somehow constructed from simpler senses. *Introspectively*, it is not clear, how the contents of words/phrases participate in the creation of contents ascribed to the sentences containing those words/phrases. We have no introspective reasons to insist that a content of some word (e.g. “tree”) coincides with a certain part of the content ascribed to a sentence containing this word (e.g. “It is a tree”).

Within the traditional view the proposition P may be considered as structured (e.g. constructed from the senses of the words) but this doesn't mean that C is also structured, or (if it is) that its structure is somehow similar (e.g. isomorphic) to the structure of P . It may happen that P is a structured proposition, most adequately representable in first-order logic by a certain predicate formula, while C is a non-structured integral content, most adequately representable by a term. As one can find out by his own introspection and by studying other people we do not conceive (during ordinary communication) the senses of single words nor do we consciously combine them in more complex senses. We do not even conceive any clear boundaries between the mentioned “pieces of sense”. Only as logicians or linguists we can judge to which of them it would be better to ascribe one or another part of C .



It would be too much to insist that a given speaker does *perceive* the content C in the same way as we do, say, colors, sounds or other qualitative (phenomenal) experiences, so-called *qualia*. Although some philosophers (e.g. G. Strawson) believe that to grasp the content C means to grasp certain *qualia*, i.e., that the nature of C is qualitative, a large number of other scholars (e.g. M. Tye) do not think so: they suppose that this content can include some phenomenal components but they are constituted only by the present and/or past perceptions, feelings, emotions and, in sum, never amount to the whole content as such [13]. Although there may be other arguments in favor of both positions, there is no indubitable fact that could give us an unambiguous evidence to make us prefer one of them. Besides, it is generally accepted in psychology that no one can directly observe his own thoughts (and therefore the content C) at the very moment of their presence in his mind. But in any case, it is doubtless that we *do* somehow *conceive* the contents of texts. Otherwise what do we point at by asking “Do you really think *so*?” (or “Have you really meant *this*?”, or “*That* is what you have told me an hour before!”, or “But in fact you have not told me *that*!”) if not to the content of some previously uttered text? If there were no such contents those sentences would be senseless. The previously uttered text is a sort of a (temporal) *name*, indicating certain content and thereby allowing one to point at this content by different means, e.g. by the above sentences.

It is possible to state the introspective principles of dividing C into parts which can be considered as introspective counterparts or *prototypes* of P , V , PP , A . Let us label those parts C^P , C^V , C^{PP} , and C^A and call them *prototypical proposition*, *prototypical judgment about its truth value*, *prototypical presuppositions*, and *prototypical associated ideas*, respectively. (Those parts are not considered as self-dependent, they exist only within C .)

Prototypes of a proposition and its presuppositions should be thought of as obligatory parts of C : their presence cannot be disregarded by those who have understood the utterance. We cannot make sense of a prototypical proposition unless its prototypical presuppositions are true: every content is understandable only due to some presupposed data. That is, if N conceives C^P , he inevitably conceives also C^{PP} too; C^{PP} penetrates into C , so to speak, “automatically”. However, disregarding other prototypes may be compatible with a successful understanding of U . For example, some thinkable ideas, which might be associated with P , can pass unnoticed and not conceived by N at the moment τ ; thereby C^A would not include the corresponding prototypes.

We do not really conceive P , V , PP , A and can only claim to conceive their prototypes. Studying those prototypes constitutes the introspective view, to which we shall now switch our attention.

Within the introspective framework we are not bound by the traditions intrinsic to the pedagogically-based stance and are to divide C in a way plausible from the point view of our introspection. It is reasonable to think that the division comes along the lines separating

- I. the ideas expressed by U *explicitly* from those which are not expressed explicitly but can enter into C only *implicitly*: the prototypical proposition is expressed explicitly, the other parts of C are only implicit;
- II. the *necessary* and *accidental* parts of C : the prototypes of the proposition and the corresponding presuppositions are necessary, while the prototypes of associations are accidental;
- III. the ideas, making it possible to *assess* U as (in)adequate for the circumstances of its usage, from the other constituents of C : it seems natural to qualify the former as the prototypical judgment about the truth value.

For example let the text U be the sentence:

It has stopped raining now. (1)

In the subsequent examples we shall use English sentences for referring to the parts of C . In those cases a sentence will be enclosed in “corners” (‘⟨’, ‘⟩’) in order to distinguish it from an ordinary usage of the sentence during communication. It should be once more stressed that in such a case we do not consider the sense of the sentence in “corners” to be constructed from simpler senses (e.g. from the senses of words), we treat it as a single whole. Nor is the sense of such a sentence considered to be self-contained, it is an inseparable part of C ; it is not even thought (within C) to be well articulated and may be conceived only vaguely.

What does N precisely conceive when he conceives the content C of the utterance (1)?

At this moment N can conceive prototypical ideas like ⟨It has been raining recently⟩ (presupposition), ⟨The speaker reports about the observable world and is not a subject to hypnosis now⟩ (the reason for assessment), ⟨It isn’t necessary to put on the raincoat⟩ (consequence), ⟨This summer is rather rainy⟩ (another associated idea). All those ideas are not expressed by



the utterance in question, but they can be conceived at the time of comprehending U as parts of the content C . While conceiving C , the person N does not conceive those groups of ideas as separate ones, i.e., he does not really conceive in C the boundaries between the above-mentioned prototypes, he conceives C as a single whole. But he can—due to his introspection—divide the content C along the lines (I)–(III).

We shall use (I)–(III) for determining C^P , C^V , C^{PP} , and C^A . Those principles of dividing C seem to be in accordance with the most abstract features of a proposition, judgment about its truth value, presuppositions, and associated ideas.

Now it will be useful to compare the traditional approach with the introspective one.

In fact switching from the pedagogically-based view to the introspective one means changing the way of conceptualizing and choosing the language data. Therefore it will be helpful to compare the way used within the traditional approach with that suitable for the introspective one. We shall state the difference by appealing to the framework of first-order logic. If we are to use first-order logic for describing those two approaches, the crucial point is: how to determine the intended universes and standard interpretations. The two ways of conceptualization differ in their answer to this question. Within the traditional framework we use the universe which is constituted by the entities thought of as commonly accessible for many people (propositions, their truth values, etc.); within the introspective framework—by individualized entities thought of as unique for each human (contents of a certain individual mind). Thus, the basic differences between the traditional view and the introspective one can be summarized as follows:

1. the former's universe is thought to be a set of hypothetical commonly accessible (usually timeless) senses, while the latter's is thought to be a set of directly observable but fundamentally individual temporal contents;
2. the former's universe includes the whole arsenal of those potentially possible (for a language in question) senses which are basic for representing the language in its entirety as a certain autonomous system (of entities, rules, relations, etc.); the latter's includes only those contents which correspond to separate acts of understanding/producing the utterances and are not supposed to constitute a whole system;
3. in other words, the former interprets terms as abstract constituents of a certain total system, the latter—as contents of a certain individual mind;

4. in the former a *predicate formula* can be interpreted as rendering a sense of a sentence; in the latter (i.e., within an introspectively plausible description of a language) only a *term* can be interpreted as a content of a sentence (a predicate formula can be interpreted here only as denoting a (meta)relation between a given content and some other contents of an individual mind, e.g. some decisions or contents of some other sentences).

Those are the most essential features of the introspective view. For more detailed reasoning about this approach see [12].

4. Truth and falsity as internal features of content

We have distinguished in C the nonintersecting parts C^P , C^{PP} , C^A . Which of them includes C^V ?

First of all we should draw distinctions between “truth” or “falsity” as logical notions and their prototypes in C . The former concepts do exist within the framework of symbolic logic and are applied to propositions; the latter (i.e., perceiving something as true) exist in an individual mind. We shall speak about the latter. Among the most well-known theories of truth (see, e.g., [9]) none of them corresponds to this kind of truth/falsity and thereby suits the introspective theory of ordinary communication.

In an ordinary dialogue we do not necessarily conceive two separate things:

- (a) the prototype of a proposition and (b) its evaluation as true or false.

According to our introspection truth (or falsity) is not something *applied* to a proposition. How could we reconcile this vision with the tradition of formalizing truth and falsity as external characteristics of propositions? Where is the prototype of truth/falsity located?

Let us consider another variant of the utterance U :

It has really stopped raining now. (2)

Here (2) can be understood as informing about the truthfulness of (1). What is the difference between (1) and (2)? (Or, in more general form, between “Q” and “Q is true”?)

Usually, during an ordinary communication, we do not actually express nor conceive our judging about truth in a form similar to Tarskian T-sentence [11], i.e., when we utter (1), we don’t evaluate the truthfulness of this sentence according to the rule



‘It has stopped raining now’ is true if and only if
it has stopped raining now

and therefore we do not conceive the content of this utterance as a kind of syllogism

The sentence ‘It has stopped raining now’ is true if and only if
it has stopped raining now.

But it has stopped raining now.

Then the sentence ‘It has stopped raining now’ is true.

In this case the difference between (1) and (2) would be unclear.

The T-sentence constitutes one of the ways of formalizing our ordinary notion of truth but not the way in which we conceive it in C . It seems that within the introspective framework the difference between the utterances (1) and (2) lies in the difference between the location of C^V : in the first case it is located in the prototypical *presupposition* C^{PP} , in the second case—in the prototypical *proposition* C^P .

Let us now return to (1). Here C^{PP} includes the information which is necessary for understanding C^P . This presupposed information tells us (among other things) that the utterance reports a *real (observable) fact*. Thus C^{PP} includes the idea which can be indicated by the sentence

⟨*The utterance reports a real (observable) fact*⟩. (3)

Such an idea is included neither in P , nor in C^P . The very fact which C^P reports (the absence of rain) is not “visible” from (3), this prototypical presupposition states only the mode of its existence (as a real, not imagined fact).

During our everyday communication we are usually interested not in the truth per se but in that very fact which we suppose a true sentence reports. And the utterance informs us about this very fact, not about its own truth. Therefore here truthfulness is tantamount to conceiving some kind of “presupposed existence”.

Thus, for those who consider whether truth is a substantive or a relational notion (see, e.g., [10]) the introspective approach gives reasons in favor of the former: here truth is thought of as a certain idea, as a content of one’s mind (or, ultimately, a state of one’s mind), i.e., as a certain substance, not a relation.

Actually, if we remove (3) from the content of the sentence (1) the remainder would not yield the understanding of this sentence because it will not be clear what kind of facts it is supposed to be about.

Thereby, the prototypical propositions expressed by (1) and (2) are not equal, and thus nothing gives us any right to think that ⟨it has stopped raining now⟩ from (1) is interchangeable with ⟨it has stopped raining now⟩ from (2). In fact it is not the invariant common part of the contents ascribed to (1), (2). In the first case the speaker is interested in the very situation; strictly speaking, it is the answer to the question like ‘*What* is being observed now?’, it is not the question about ‘is’. In the second case the speaker is interested in the reality of this situation; it is the answer to the question ‘*Is* this situation really being observed now?’. Thus these two texts have different contents; their contents have different prototypical propositions and are thought of as the answers to different questions.

When we utter (1) the assertion about the location (in one’s mind, in the observable world, in an imagined world, etc.) lies in the area of C^{PP} , when we utter (2) it lies in the area of C^P . And this appears to be the only substantial difference between (1) and (2). In ordinary communication we do not usually *discover* the truthfulness (by comparing the prototypical proposition with some state of affairs), but *presuppose* it.

Now let us suppose that U is false. In what case would N , for example, conceive the sentence ‘It is raining now’ as false? It happens when the adequate prototypical presupposition appears to be absent and C contains a prototypical presupposition about some other—wrong—location (if N is mistaken or lies). It is impossible to find the rain (or Q) ‘now’ due to its incompatibility with the presupposed wrong location. There appears to be no situation which can be indicated by uttering this sentence; this fact makes it false. And really, in such a case the reaction will often be: ‘You are wrong, *where* did you *seen* the rain?’. It is important that *introspectively* the non-existence of a situation compatible with this sentence is seen *directly*, it is not yielded by any conscious inference. The failure of designation constitutes the corresponding truth value, and this failure is seen directly.

Truth/falsity does not characterize the content of an utterance from outside (relative to some state of affairs), it is a constituent of this very content, its internal feature.

To elucidate the introspective perspective let us look at a well-known problem connected with the notions of truth/falsity, namely, at that of interchangeability. The following reasoning should be considered *not* as *solving* this problem (in the form of its usual definition within the traditional frame-



work) but as *depicting* the situations *prototypical for this problem* within the introspective framework. The point is that this problem does exist within the traditional approach but it does not generally arise within ordinary communication: we usually have no difficulties with interchangeability. How does the difference between introspective and traditional views explain this discrepancy?

Suppose that *N* utters the following sentence:

Cervantes and Shakespeare are contemporaries. (4)

Since we know that Cervantes is the author of “Don Quixote”, we can form the sentence:

The author of “Don Quixote” and Shakespeare are contemporaries. (5)

Is it possible to conclude that it does not matter which utterance was ascribed to *N*: (4) or (5); that (4) can be equally replaced by (5)? Within the traditional approach it is usually thought that we cannot do so (if this sentence is considered *de dicto*) because *N* may be fully ignorant of the authorship of “Don Quixote”. However, both expressions indicate the same person and thus should be interchangeable. This fact is treated (by G. Frege, S. Kripke, W.V. Quine and other authors) as puzzling. But let us look at the situation from the introspective standpoint and compare the two cases: in the first *N* utters (4), in second (5).

Generally we cannot speak about substituting *Y* for *X* unless we are sure that this operation is applied within some unaltered context, i.e., the context of *X* will not be changed after replacing *X* by *Y*. But it does not seem to be the case. Let us take *X* to be ⟨Cervantes⟩ and *Y* to be ⟨the author of “Don Quixote”⟩. After replacing, the rest of *C* should remain the same. But in (4) *X* is included in the prototypical proposition while *Y* only *may be* among the prototypical associative ideas (i.e., *X* is the necessary part of *C*, while *Y* only *may be* its accidental part); in the second case it is vice versa: *Y* is contained in the prototypical proposition, *X*—(may be) among the prototypical associated ideas. How could it be possible to substitute the prototypical proposition for the prototypical associated idea or vice versa? This operation doesn’t meet the above-mentioned condition and hence it cannot be thought of as warranted.

5. The proponents of the introspective view

The introspective and traditional views are complementary, each of them serves its own purposes. At the same time the former should not be seen as opposite counterpart to the latter: the latter is so deep-rooted that it is difficult to notice its disagreement with introspective observations. Still, there are proponents of the introspective view both in logic and in philosophy. Andrzej Grzegorzcyk proposes to interpret certain antinomies in a distinctly introspective spirit. Robin G. Collingwood has developed a rather detailed introspective theory of language. Even some ideas of Gottlob Frege—who is often ranked among the founders of antipsychologism in logic—are consonant with the introspective stance. As for Ludwig Wittgenstein, I doubt whether he could be placed among the adherents of the introspective view although some parts of his reasoning can seem similar to it.

A. Grzegorzcyk [4] claims that paradoxes can be caused by inadequacy of the conceptual apparatus. He discusses self-referential sentences and illustrates his ideas by two well-known examples: the Liar paradox and the Grelling-Nelson Heterological paradox.

Let us, for instance, consider a situation of lying. Suppose somebody says: ‘The sentence I said yesterday is false’. Such refutation of the idea formulated earlier is quite normal. But in the Liar paradox we have another situation. Here a speaker rejects a sentence which has not been formed yet. That is why this utterance is not a judgment; it is only an intention to judge, a declaration about a certain future action. But an intention is not equal to an action: only some intentions become actions. Similarly, only some declarations are realizable. For example, the declarations proposed in the Crocodile paradox or in the Barber paradox appear to be unrealizable.

Why have logicians been so long uneasy about the Liar paradox? Grzegorzcyk thinks that there are two reasons for that. First: it is very hard to analyze mental processes; this task requires a refined skill of introspection. Second: senses and meanings of linguistic expressions are traditionally regarded as ideal entities that exist independently of speakers and their feelings. This statement is misleading: those entities, just as truth or falsity, are only relative; they depend on the circumstances of their usage. A word can also refer to a certain thing only relatively. Thus, we should say

A person X uttering a word Y refers it to a thing Z

instead of the traditional

A word Y refers to a thing Z.



Surely we do not think about this relativity every time, at every moment of an ordinary dialogue. But we should keep it in mind.

In his summary Grzegorzczuk challenges antipsychologism:

Semantic antinomies seem to be consequences of antipsychologistic paradigm adopted by logicians at the beginning of 20 Century. We shall loose more radically from troubles caused by antinomies if we discard antipsychologism which is, in effect, a huge simplification of the description of semantic situations. [4, p. 126]

Introspective view is a sort of psychologism (if we mean by this word all the appeals to the psychological reality), and, as we have seen earlier, a shift from antipsychologism towards psychologism can give us a renewed vision of certain language problems.

G. Frege is traditionally considered to be a proponent of antipsychologism, but his own thoughts are not so one-sided. Let us consider some of his ideas without going too deep into the heart of the confrontation between psychologism and antipsychologism.

In connection with the sign Frege speaks about the reference, the idea, and the sense. The reference is “an object perceivable by the senses”. (We can note here that the act of perception can be only individual, that is why one can have only individualized subjective information about the object of reference.)

The idea is subjective: my idea is an internal image, arising from my memories of sense impressions which I have had and acts, both internal and external, which I have performed. Such an idea is often saturated with feeling; the clarity of its separate parts varies and oscillates. The same sense is not always connected, even in the same man, with the same idea. [5, pp. 25–26]

Thus, feelings, impressions, all aspects of individual experience may enter into the content of a text. This part of Frege’s reasoning is compatible with the introspective view.

Still, one should distinguish the sense of a sign from the associated idea. When Frege says that a sense “may be common property of many and therefore not a part or a mode of the individual mind” [5], that it is “not the subjective performance of thinking but its objective content” [5, p. 28], he moves away from the introspective view.

Hence, Frege does not wholly deny the subjective nature of the content of a text, but he implicitly postulates the existence of the objective constituent of this content and is interested in investigating this very constituent. Grzegorzczuk thinks that postulating such objective entities is risky.

Reflections about the psychological aspects of content can be found in other works by Frege, for example, in his *Logic*.

As a matter of fact, Frege constructs a metalanguage suitable for the purpose of his investigations. But, as Grzegorzczuk shows, this may give rise to antinomies caused precisely by the metalanguage, not by the object language (i.e., not by the ordinary language of human communication).

Hence, two statements can be used for characterizing the content of a text:

- (a) the content of a text is conceived by an individual as subjective,
- (b) within a successful communication a text has some objective sense.

It is not easy to co-ordinate those statements with each other. Hence a researcher should give preference to one of them. The crucial question is: are we interested in investigating individual understanding or mutual communication? For exploring the former we should accentuate (a) and consider the content as subjective, for exploring a latter we should accentuate (b) and postulate the existence of objective senses. Frege chooses the latter.

At the same time, it is not necessary to do so and there are researchers who give preference to the former. Among them is R.G. Collingwood. We can never be completely sure that within a certain communication both of its participants conceive one and the same content of a text or of a store of texts. Thus, we are not obliged to postulate the existence of common senses. As Collingwood puts it, there can

never be any absolute assurance, either for the hearer or for the speaker, that the one has understood the other. [...] The only assurance we possess is an empirical and relative assurance, becoming progressively stronger as conversation proceeds, and based on the fact that neither party seems to the other to be talking nonsense. [3, p. 251]

Frege's reasoning is partly based on considerations consonant with the introspective stance, but he is interested in mutual communication and deducibility, therefore he accentuates (b) at the expense of (a). He explicitly states it, for example, in his *Logic*. Of course, this interest and this decision make his theory different from the introspective perspective. For instance, he considers truth (falsity) as something added to a proposition. In [6] he introduces the notations $-A$ and $\vdash A$: the content of A and the assertion of this content respectively. Thus, for instance, when A is "Opposite magnetic poles attract each other", " $-A$ will not express this judgment, but should simply evoke in the reader the idea of the reciprocal attraction of opposite magnetic poles" [6, p. 112], perhaps for deriving some conclusions from it.

The horizontal stroke, which is part of the symbol \vdash , ties the symbols which follow it *into a whole*; “and the assertion, which is expressed by means of the vertical stroke at the left end of the horizontal one, relates to this whole” [6]. Here Frege also raises an objection against the traditional notions of subject and predicate. He believes that the subject contains the whole content, and the predicate serves only to present this as a judgement. There is only one predicate common for all judgements (namely, “is a fact”) and there are no subject and predicate in the usual sense. This single predicate is expressed by the symbol \vdash . Thus, Frege postulates the abstraction “the common predicate for all judgements” and thereby disjoins the truth value from the content of a text. This disagrees with the introspective perspective described above, in sections 3 and 4.

Thus, in contrast to the introspective view, Frege postulates not only senses as common entities but also the separations of assertion (and thereby truth and falsity) from the content of a text. Those two decisions refer to metalanguage which he uses for describing human language. Appealing to Grzegorzcyk we can repeat that such a metalanguage only relatively corresponds to the nature of human language and although we need not think about this relativity all the time we should keep it in mind.

But how can we articulate or assess this relativity? For this purpose we should develop the introspective view and investigate the language of ordinary human communication viewed from the introspective perspective.

Rather a detailed analysis of the introspective perspective can be found in the works by Robin G. Collingwood, especially in his *Autobiography* [2] and in *The Principles of Art* (Book II, Ch. XI. Language) [3]. Collingwood’s introspective view of language is well articulated and detailed; he considers the whole subjective process of acquiring and using a language.

Before adverting to the ideas of Collingwood we should also mention the name of Benedetto Croce who was rather influential in the first half of the 20th century. Among his followers were Robin G. Collingwood and Karl Vossler. All of them are adherents of the introspective stance.

Characterizing the linguistic conception of Collingwood it is first of all necessary to say that he treats the content of a text as a whole which includes individual impressions, feelings, etc. and which is not divided into senses of words, phrases or any other entities; truth (falsity) can also be part of this content, it is not considered as something added to the content (as it was considered by Frege).

Collingwood treats words, phrases and other well-known linguistic notions as metaphysical fictions; he does not assume that the science about

such entities investigates the nature of human language. I think that the large quotation below clearly expressing his position is appropriate here:

The grammatical manipulation of language is so familiar to ourselves, who have learnt it from the Greeks as an essential part of those transmitted and developing customs which make up our civilization, that we take it for granted and forget to inquire into its motives. We vaguely suppose it to be a science; we think that the grammarian, when he takes a discourse and divides it into parts, is finding out the truth about it, and that when he lays down rules for the relations between these parts he is telling us how people's minds work when they speak. This is very far from being the truth. A grammarian is not a kind of scientist studying the actual structure of language; he is a kind of butcher, converting it from organic tissue into marketable and edible joints. Language as it lives and grows no more consists of verbs, nouns, and so forth than animals as they live and grow consist of forehands, gammons, rump-steaks, and other joints. The grammarian's real function (I do not call it purpose, because he does not propose it to himself as a conscious aim) is not to understand language, but to alter it [...].
 [3, p. 257]

“And to teach it”, as we would add.

For Collingwood language is a sort of activity but a grammarian does not analyze this very activity. He analyses its product, and this product is not real: it is a metaphysical fiction, a “thing”. When this “thing” is “scientifically studied” it is cut up into parts, first of all into words; then the scientist elaborates the scheme of relations between those parts. This division and those relations are not discovered, they are devised. The traditional investigation presupposes that such a grammatical analysis has already been made, i.e., that language has already been transformed into the “thing” which is made up of parts joined by relations and attached to senses.

Now what about truth and falsity? Collingwood treats those notions in the introspective spirit and sees their origins in certain primitive decisions of one's consciousness, in the “the corruption of consciousness”. Such corruption appears at the level of perception where we have two alternatives. According to them we may accept a certain feeling or deny it, i.e., we may implicitly choose between the statements like: *This is how I feel* or (the opposite) *This is not how I feel*. To assert one means to deny the other.

A true consciousness is the confession to ourselves of our feelings; a false consciousness would be disowning them, i.e., thinking about one of them ‘That feeling is not mine’.
 [3, p. 216]



[...] whenever some element in experience is disowned by consciousness, that other element upon which attention is fixed, and which consciousness claims as its own, becomes a sham. [...] The picture which consciousness has painted of its own experience is not only a selected picture (that is, a true one so far as it goes), it is a bowdlerized picture, or one whose omissions are falsifications. [3, p. 218]

How does Collingwood explain the nature of the content of a text?

He treats our ordinary language primarily as the means of expressing our emotions and ideas, not as the way of their transmission, and thinks that “the expression of any given thought is effected through the expression of the emotion accompanying it” [3, p. 225].

The emotions which are expressed by a human are always temporal and individual. Thus each text is tied with its content also only temporally and relatively to the person. We cannot transmit anything by a text because we can never be sure of reaching its equal understanding; we can only hope that this is so:

emotions cannot be shared like food or drink, or handed over like clothes. [...] Understanding what some one says to you is thus attributing to him the idea which his words arouse in yourself; and this implies treating them as words of your own. [3, p. 249–250]

And this does not presuppose community of language between the speaker and hearer. Instead Collingwood presupposes the existence of some primary “natural” (non-verbal) language natively assigned for expressing the emotions and qualifies the traditional understanding of sign as inversed.

According to this tradition we speak about symbols that conventionally correspond to some contents or senses. But there should be some basis for such a convention, some other language out of which the agreement is arrived at. Collingwood imputes this role to the primary language.

A similar idea about the necessity of a basic primary language can also be found in the works by L. Wittgenstein and T. Reid (Reid called the latter the “natural language”, Wittgenstein used the term “natural expression”); R. Harré and D.N. Robinson [7] draw a comparison between their thoughts on this subject.

According to the theory of such a primary language one initially has some feeling and expresses it in a “natural” (non-verbal, e.g. physiological) way, only then does s(he) learn the other, verbal, way of expressing the same feeling. Thus, one becomes aware of words for feelings as alternatives to natural ways of expressing feelings. It is precisely in this way that one

replaces, say, groaning by speaking. A groan or a smile is but a physical corollary of the feeling until the time when it is realized and obtains the capability to replace the feeling. After this the physical corollary begins to signify something. “The verbal expression of pain replaces crying and doesn’t describe it” [14, §244]. The subsequent reasoning of Wittgenstein differs from that of Collingwood because the latter considers the expressive function of language to be the basic one while the former primarily discusses the denotational and regulative aspects of language, the learnable rules of its usage.

As Collingwood reasons, at first, the primary acts of non-verbal expression are completely uncontrollable, but at the level of awareness they are controllable and due to this fact become part of our conscious experience. In this way the primary language develops from physical level to verbal. By combining and accumulating such processes lead to the possibility of expressing more and more complicated emotions. Nevertheless, in the traditional theory of language those relations are reversed,

with disastrous results. Language as such is identified with symbolism; and if its expressive function is not altogether overlooked an attempt is made to explain it as a secondary function somehow arrived at by modifying the symbolic function. [...] To-day it is almost an orthodoxy that language as such is symbolic in the above sense of the word
[3, p. 226–27]

i.e., symbols are considered as conventionally corresponding to some contents or senses.

As opposed to Collingwood who has designed the introspective prospects for studying human language, Ludwig Wittgenstein should not be considered as an adherent of such views. Beginning with the question “What do the words of this language signify?” [16, §10], he speaks about the process of learning the language and arrives at the conclusion that for “a large class of cases—though not for all—in which we employ the word ‘meaning’ it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language” (§43). In his reasoning he tests the possibility of explicating the meaning of a sign (particularly that of a “private language”) with the aid of some rules or language games. Thus, his vision can also be considered as reversed (in Collingwood’s terms): he is interested in the *lasting* meanings (corresponding to a series of utterances) rather than in expressed contents (which are always individual and *momentary*).

Wittgenstein does not consider language as a belonging of a person; he discusses and tries to find some general rules substantial for communication.



He remarks that logic does not treat of language—or of thought—in the sense in which a natural science treats of a natural phenomenon, and the most that can be said is that we construct ideal languages (§ 81); he specially stipulates that we are analyzing not a phenomenon (e.g. thought) but a concept (e.g. that of thinking) (§ 383). Whereas the introspective view can just be equated with that of natural sciences; and it considers a language as a phenomenon.

At the same time, some of Wittgenstein's ideas express the introspective view. Indeed, the confusions which occupy us arise when language, like an engine, is idling, not when it is doing work (§ 132) and philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday (§ 38). Indeed, we understand the meaning of a word when we hear or say it; we grasp it in a flash, and what we grasp in this way is surely something different from the 'use' which is extended in time! (§ 138) Nevertheless, his ideas of this kind do not form any explicit introspective conception.

6. Concluding remarks

Scientific theories deal only with abstractions but those abstractions can be of different kinds. Prototypes of a proposition, judgment about its truth value, presupposition, and associated idea are abstractions, but—in contrast to the traditional view—they do not posit the unobservable commonly accessible entities, instead, they posit certain introspective (i.e., observable for a certain individual) principles. Making difference between introspective and traditional views is important because it helps avoid ascribing objectivity to the traditional abstractions (e.g. to propositions): we do not see those entities by introspection; we use them only because of their convenience and usefulness in a *certain type* of our reasoning. But there are still other types of reasoning, in which it is more adequate to posit different ideas—those which correspond to the introspective view.

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