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- A Descriptive Comparative Study -

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Linguistics and Ancient Western Linguistic Thought

The Dialectic of Discontinuity and Continuity -

- A Descriptive Comparative Study -

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Abstract:

Modern linguistics is an independent field of study, with its own principles, methodologies, and epistemological and philosophical backgrounds that emerged in the early 19th century. There is an ongoing debate about whether this science is a continuation of ancient Western linguistic thought or a complete break from it, despite its significant linguistic contributions to the field. This study confirms that modern linguistics represents both a discontinuity and a continuity simultaneously. It is a discontinuity in terms of its methodologies and a continuity in terms of its subject matter, which is language. As such, the significance and status of this science in the field of linguistics are highlighted through its study, adoption, interest, and branching out.

Keywords:

Modern linguistics, historical, Indians, Greeks, comparative, discontinuity, continuity.

Introduction

Modern linguistics, as a contemporary scientific discipline, has revolutionized the field of linguistic research. It is an independent science with its methodologies, principles, subject matter, and prominent figures. It brought about fundamental changes in the field of linguistic studies that were prevalent at the time, along with all their constants, principles, and methodologies. However, despite all these advantages, this science did not emerge out of nowhere. There was a foundation and an initial basis for this science, grounded in ancient epistemological backgrounds of Western linguistic thought, which spurred its emergence as a novel and innovative science. It is important to emphasize that most sciences are viewed as accumulative knowledge resulting in a theory that establishes a new science. Therefore, linguistics did not emerge from a void but rather has roots in pre-existing thought that laid the groundwork for its development. This paper will address this issue, posing the following problem: Is linguistics both a discontinuity and a continuation of ancient Western linguistic thought? This problem branches into several questions that represent the research stages and its main elements:

1. What are the specific characteristics of linguistics as an independent science?

2. Is modern and contemporary linguistics a continuation of Western linguistic thought?

3. Is linguistics a discontinuity or does it have connections to pre-existing linguistic thought?

4. What is the link if it is a continuation, and what is the separation point if linguistics is a discontinuity from pre-existing linguistic thought?

Modern Linguistics:

1. Definition of Linguistics:

Linguistics is defined as "the scientific and objective study of linguistic phenomena, both universal and particular, through the specific languages of various peoples." **(Hadj salah, 1974, p. 09)**

This means that it is a science that studies general and specific phenomena based on the principle of uncovering the structure of language at its various levels (phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic) in an objective manner that emphasizes scientific rigor, free from subjectivity, or what is known as "researcher subjectivity."

Linguistics focuses on the study of "language," hence the name linguistics. This focus stems from the subject matter it investigates, following a national principle, akin to what Ibn Jinni described in his discussion on the theories of language origin as "convention and agreement."

Ferdinand de Saussure posits that "linguistics is a branch of semiology (Sémiologie), the general science of signs, which studies various systems of norms inherent in human activities to make sense of them, thereby categorizing them as signs. According to de Saussure, linguistics can serve as a living model for semiology because the arbitrary and conventional nature of signs in language is exceedingly clear and unambiguous**." (Taleb El-Ibrahimi, 2000, p. 09)**

Ferdinand de Saussure is regarded as the legitimate founder of this science with its foundational principles, which served as the starting point for subsequent linguistic studies that are considered advancements in this field. He is also referred to by specialists as the "Father of Modern Linguistics" because the theories, ideas, and insights that emerged were based on his contributions, notably through his book "Course in General Linguistics," which is considered the true foundation of this science, published in 1916, three years after his death in 1913.

In his perspective, he situates linguistics as a science by affirming that it is a branch of semiology, a field that has been of great interest to researchers and specialists in language, as it deals with signs and symbols in general.

Linguistics focuses on linguistic signs and symbols because language, in most of its definitions, is recognized as a system of symbols and signs. Consequently, linguistics inherently concentrates on these linguistic signs and symbols, making it a subset of semiology.

This field is significant due to its subject matter—language—in its semiotic dimension, serving as the best model and representative structure for the science of signs. Language signs possess an inherent existence for humans and are utilized in practical contexts.

Linguistic signs are characterized by their clarity, avoiding the ambiguity and obscurity that often afflict non-linguistic signs, which may not effectively convey meaning or support practical principles. Thus, linguistics is a specialized branch within the broader discipline of general semiology.

1.2 Subject Matter:

The primary subject of this science, unlike others, is human language, which intersects with other terms and is often conflated with language and speech. These terms are part of the dichotomies introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure in defining and establishing the principles of this field.

André Martinet posits that the subject is "language," which is "a communication tool analyzed through the spectrum of everything humans understand about the world, varying between communities. This analysis breaks down into units with semantic content and articulated sound, known as morphemes (Monème). This articulated sound further divides into distinctive and sequential units, known as phonemes (Phonème), whose quantity is pivotal in every language and varies in nature and relationships across different languages." **(Martinet, p. 20)**

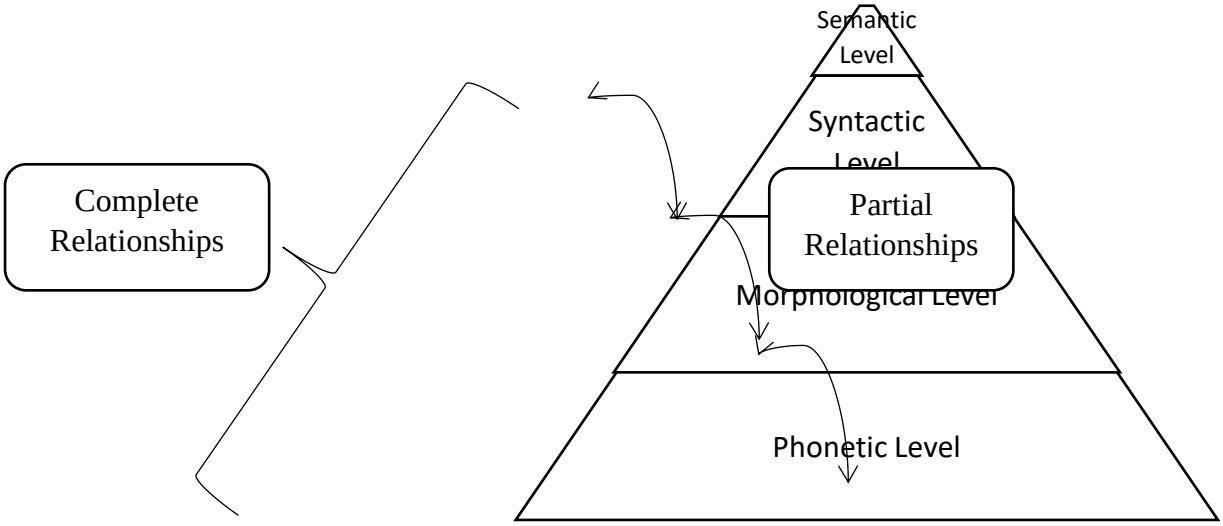
Language is considered a means of communication and the ultimate goal of language historically. André Martinet aligns with Ibn Jinni in one of his points in "Al-Khasais," where he defines language as the endpoint reached by

sound through a conventional national principle aimed at expressing purposes and needs that stir the soul according to a communicative principle. Ibn Jinni states: "Language is composed of sounds with which each community expresses their intentions." **(Ibn Jinni, p. 33)**

Additionally, the systematic nature of language is its most significant characteristic, becoming more evident and reinforced through analysis. This reveals the levels and units that constitute it, from smaller units to larger ones. The principle of systematization is present in all areas of life surrounding humans.

The results of this analysis yield meaningful and non-meaningful units (morphemes and phonemes), characterized by sequential relationships. The smallest units are limited within each national language, differing in number, nature, and partial and overall relationships among languages. For example, Arabic has 28 sounds, represented by letters, which are the smallest non-meaningful units. Following these are the words, which are the smallest meaningful units, known as morphemes (Monème) and phonemes (Phonème). Furthermore, phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic relationships vary across languages.

Language can be represented according to the following structure based on the principle that it is a system:



KhaoulaTaleb El Ibrahimi views linguistics as "a scientific study of human language, specifically the general and common phenomenon among humans that is worthy of attention and study regardless of other circumstances that are not of interest to linguists. It deals with the secondary aspects of language governed by a complex and intricate phenomenon that can be approached from various perspectives: social, psychological, physiological, and physical. These aspects are studied by other sciences such as sociology, psychology, physiology, and acoustics." **(Taleb El-Ibrahimi, 2000, p. 09**)

The subject of linguistics is human language or what is known as "tongue," which is a common human phenomenon distinguishing humanity from other creatures. The primary and ultimate concern of this science, from the perspective of linguists, is the study of language for its own sake, separate from its surroundings. However, language is a complex system influenced by several surrounding factors, and it includes secondary aspects that receive significant attention from linguists. Among these aspects are:

- Social aspect.

- Psychological aspect.

- Physical aspect.

- Physiological aspect.

Each of these aspects has its own science dedicated to its study and concern. Therefore, they are considered auxiliary branches to linguistics and are not within its primary concerns because they have sciences specializing in and studying them. However, these sciences have made effective contributions to linguistics.

1. The Relationship of Linguistics with Sociology:

Linguistics is a social product and a social practice, with sociology being of paramount importance to this phenomenon. Therefore, it has a branch called "Sociolinguistics," which provides linguistics with everything related to language, dialects, and their relationship with the social environment based on the principle of community. Language, as it is known, is a social phenomenon rather than an individual one, and it is built upon social humility.

2. The Relationship of Linguistics with Psychology:

Language, being the primary subject, expresses what is stirring within the psyche, and it is essential for behavior according to behaviorists. It is a psychological phenomenon. Behaviorist psychologists like Watson supported the idea manifested in the duality of mind/language. This idea was further solidified with Chomsky's generative-transformational theory, which introduced the concept of "linguistic competence," where language is seen as a natural ability that can be utilized to produce speech sequences reflecting psychological inclinations, thus being part of psychology.

3. Anthropology:

Language is associated with culture in anthropology, where it is considered a manifestation of peoples' cultures. Through their language, their popular culture is revealed. Historically, there have been languages that have unveiled truths about peoples. It serves as a means of transmitting culture, conveying the traditions of those peoples, and expressing their intellectual situation.

4. Physics:

There is an intersection between linguistics and physics in the study of sounds from a physical perspective, revealing their properties, transmission, and embodiment in the known linguistic form.

2. Ancient Western Linguistic Thought:

Linguistic studies, which center on language as their subject, have roots in ancient times. There were serious attempts to explain, analyze, and determine the various origins of linguistic phenomena. Many peoples engaged in these studies long before the advent of modern linguistics. Ferdinand de Saussure acknowledged the seriousness of these ancient studies in several sections of his book and appreciated the efforts for the results they achieved, which later researchers and linguists considered significant.

2.1 Linguistic Thought among the Indians:

Indian intellectual tradition, across various productions, often combined research with myth and fantasy, influenced by their mythical perspective. This is evident in the explanation and interpretation of their linguistic research. Ahmad Omar Al-Mukhtar notes, "The philosophical trends and the diversity of methodologies in India, along with the abundance of religious sects and the dominance of metaphysical aspects, and the attempt to explain hidden forces that make the world comprehensible to the limited human mind, tying scientific truths to these forces, all seem to have played a role in shaping the mythical aspect of Indian research and giving the Indian intellect a legendary tint. India is still seen as a land of charms and enchantments, closely associated with fantasy and magic. It was such during the era in question but also a beacon of knowledge and a field of profound and meticulous research." **(Al-Mukhtar, 1972, p. 13)**

Despite the dominant mythological tint in Indian linguistic research, their studies were marked by precision and originality. One researcher noted, "The discussion of ancient Indian efforts in linguistic research and their contribution to the Sanskrit language system impressed contemporaries with the Indian linguistic achievements. Some even try to validate subsequent studies by relying on the Indian model." **(Naamani, 2009, p. 33)**

Indian linguistic research, in its various aspects—phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and lexical—was highly advanced for its time. Even contemporary linguistic researchers in the early 19th century modeled their work on the Indian research paradigm due to its advanced results and procedural mechanisms. These studies focused on their language, especially since their sacred text, the Vedas, was written in it.

Particularly, their phonological research reached an elevated level of theoretical and practical sophistication, unlike other grammatical and lexical studies, which also achieved a high degree of quality but did not match the phonological focus. This focus was on performance, considered sacred in the recitation of the Vedas.

2.2 Linguistic Thought among the Greeks:

The Greeks addressed significant linguistic issues that reflected their main interests and orientations in linguistic research. These included the nature of language and its progression into dialects, its construction across different human races and societies, and the concept of language as a national principle established and agreed upon for communication and comprehension. Unlike the Indians, Greek linguistic research was predominantly philosophical since most researchers in language were philosophers. The inquiry into the nature and origins of language was a prominent focus, alongside syntactic studies influenced by the Sophists, who emphasized the quality of composition in speech.

Ancient linguistic research, particularly among the Greeks and Indians, was distinguished by its religious and philosophical aspects, irrespective of the achievements in Arabic linguistic studies that Western linguists later examined. The linguistic thought of the Indians and Greeks attracted the attention of modern linguists, creating a continuum between modern and ancient knowledge through cumulative intellectual progress. The advanced nature of Greek and Indian linguistic research is noted by many linguistic scholars, such as Abd al-Rahman al-Haj Saleh in his book "Research in Linguistics," and Ahmad Moumen in "Origins and Development," as well as Ahmad Omar al-Mukhtar, who explored the influence and impact between linguistic research in ancient civilizations and the Arab civilization. He noted the significant influence of Western linguistic research by the linguistic inquiries of other civilizations, notably the Indians and Greeks, which were admired and subsequently impacted modern research.

The ancient linguistic research of the Greeks and Indians had a forward-looking perspective, evident in contemporary and modern linguistic research. This period, well-represented by the Greeks and Indians in terms of linguistic thought and advancement, laid an important foundation for subsequent intellectual phases, starting with the Sumerians, Akkadians, and Egyptians, and extending to later intellectual phases. Mustafa Ghaflan terms this period the "harmonious phase." **(Ghulfan, 2010, p. 109)** He states, "The harmonious phase is temporally defined as the period extending from the 10th century BCE to the mid-18th century. According to available documents and excavations, it encompasses all linguistic contributions known to the earliest human civilizations, starting with the Sumerians, Akkadians, Egyptians, Indians, through to the Greeks, Arabs, the Middle Ages, and the modern European Renaissance." **(Ghulfan, 2010, p. 109**)

This phase achieved a balance between linguistic research and various other objectives, including religious, philosophical, and philological goals.

3. Western Linguistic Thought in the Pre-Modern Linguistics Era

This phase is referred to by various names, including "Historical Linguistics," "Comparative Linguistics," "Comparative Philology," or the "Phase of Comparative Grammar." Some scholars divide it into two distinct phases: "Comparative Grammar" and "Historical Grammar." Chronologically, this period is situated in the 19th century.

A key feature of this era, and a significant linguistic milestone, was the discovery of Sanskrit and its relationship with European languages, particularly Latin and Greek. This discovery was a result of the Renaissance and Europe's openness to non-European cultures, spurred by its commercial and political expansion.

In this paper, we will divide this phase into "Comparative Linguistics" and "Historical Linguistics," based on the characteristics prevalent in each period. This organization will provide a clearer framework by splitting the era into two phases:

3.1 Comparative Linguistics

As previously mentioned, this phase was marked by the discovery of Sanskrit, the sacred language of the Indians, in which the Vedas were written. The Vedas are sacred texts that rely on specific phonetic, morphological, and syntactic performances.

The phase began with a hypothesis that was later confirmed: Sanskrit shares a common origin with Latin and Greek. This discovery was articulated by **William Jones** in 1786, who applied scientific principles through comparative analysis of languages. Scholars in this phase focused on classifying languages into groups and families, identifying the Indo-European language family, which encompasses languages from India to Europe.

This period represents a turning point in linguistic thought, particularly regarding the ancient Indian language, which belongs to one of the oldest human civilizations and is the language of their sacred texts, the Vedas. Sanskrit itself branches into "Old Sanskrit" and "Classical Sanskrit." The importance of this language is heightened by its close relationship with Latin and Greek in various linguistic aspects: phonetics, morphology, and syntax.

From this point, comparative study began to take its course in linguistic thought under what is called "comparative criticism," or what later became known as philology, by verifying ancient texts with a primary focus on the written form rather than the spoken form.

In this context, **Jones** asserts, "However ancient Sanskrit may be, it has a structure that is more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either. The affinity of Sanskrit with both Greek and Latin is so strong that it could not possibly be the result of chance; indeed, it is so strong that it suggests a common source that no longer exists. To a lesser extent, one could also add Gothic and Celtic languages to this family." **(Robbins, 1998, p. 224)**

This research perspective or intellectual framework served as the foundation and starting point for subsequent comparative linguistic research, carried out over different historical periods, to prove linguistic kinship and classify languages into families through in-depth studies of various linguistic forms in both the Indo-Latin and Indo-Greek families.

Jones's work, built on the hypothesis of common origins, laid the groundwork for the more significant later phase in terms of both subject matter and methodology. This stage was generally characterized by a focus on the written word, particularly the sacred texts such as the Vedas, while neglecting the spoken aspect, which was seen as performance-based and not governed by the same rules as written language. Yet, it is the spoken form of language that holds primary importance.

Among the prominent figures in the comparative approach to linguistic studies is Friedrich **Schlegel** (1772-1829), who was the first to use and emphasize comparative grammar. One of his notable works embodying this approach is his essay on the language and philosophy of the Indians.

In it, **Schlegel** states, "I am satisfied to point out the principles on which comparative grammar or a historical genealogical tree is based; that is, a true history of the formation of languages." **(Sghlegel, p. 146)**

This highlights the essence of comparative linguistics, which involves comparing languages to identify differences and similarities, and this study is viewed with satisfaction given its focus. It seeks to uncover the foundational elements of these languages, thereby revealing their linguistic bases and groupings.

Significant contributions to the comparative approach in linguistic research include the work of Franz Bopp (1791-1869). In 1816, Bopp published his seminal work, "On the Conjugation System of Sanskrit in Comparison with those of Greek, Latin, Persian, and Germanic Languages."

This work arose from the observation of similarities among various languages, leading Bopp to examine their grammatical systems with a focus on Greek, Latin, Persian, and Germanic languages in relation to Sanskrit.

Bopp's analysis elucidated the systematic relationships among these languages, thereby contributing to the concept of linguistic families. His rigorous methodology established a scientific basis for demonstrating the kinship among ancient languages and comparing them with targeted languages through analysis and inference.

This comparative phase paved the way for the subsequent historical linguistics phase.

3-2: Historical Linguistics

Language is historically linked to human existence and has been present since humans first appeared. While language has always existed, the scientific study of it is relatively recent. Language embodies societies as a social phenomenon and is inherently human, distinguishing humans from other beings and creatures. Linguistics, as a discipline, represents a significant focus on language, taking into account its historical development and the changes in its various systems: phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic.

From this perspective, language grows and evolves like humans, undergoing changes and developments influenced by various circumstances and factors. Historical linguistics examines a single language through its evolution across different periods, from its origins to the present, to understand its history from the earliest times and the causes of its phonetic, lexical, grammatical, and semantic changes. Ferdinand de Saussure referred to this type of study as "diachronic linguistics," derived from Latin: "dia" means "through" and "chroni" means "time," hence the complete meaning of studying language through time. **(Momen, 2005, p. 63)**

This phase represents a shift from the philosophical and speculative approach to a historical perspective, placing language in its appropriate context for study and thorough analysis.

This phase is historically marked around 1875 or slightly earlier and is often referred to as "historical linguistics." It primarily employs a historical methodology, relying on historical analysis, interpretation, and inference based on field observations and the derivation of general laws through a historical lens. This historical perspective focuses on analyzing and interpreting phonetic changes, extracting both general and specific laws. Despite the distinctions between linguistic phases, a close relationship exists, particularly between the historical linguistics phase and the comparative linguistics phase.

Nevertheless, this does not imply a complete separation, as the historical dimension was also present in comparative linguistics. Many pioneers of comparative linguistics emphasized the historical aspect in their work, such as **Bopp, Schlegel, and Schleicher.**

Often, they are collectively referred to as "historical comparative linguistics" because of their shared methodological features, despite the primary focus of comparative linguistics on comparison and historical linguistics on the historical dimension based on comparative results.

This phase differed with the transition from the comparative phase to the historical phase, encompassing several key features:

- Influence of **Darwinian** Theory: This phase was influenced by Darwin's theory, reflected in the study of linguistic samples and their evolutionary developments.

- Emphasis on Time and Evolution: The phase highlighted the principle of time and the staged evolution of language, noting changes in each specific and defined time period, and recording various developments across successive periods.

- Impact of Physics and Mechanics: The study was influenced by physics and mechanics, driven by the fascination of some linguists with mechanical physics, which posits that all natural changes and living organisms result from physical forces and their effects. Consequently, all general phenomena, including language, can only be explained through the deterministic laws of force and motion" **(Momen, 2005, p. 67)**. This direct influence is evident in linguistic analyses across different time periods.

- Comparative Methodology: The comparative method was employed due to its connections and methods of internal reconstruction and philology.

-Building a Detailed Historical Record: There was a focus on constructing a detailed scientific history for each language through successive stages, with each stage representing a language profile, highlighting the influencing factors and aiding in creating this profile based on known scientific characteristics.

This phase can be categorized within the pre-19th-century framework, encompassing linguistic thought from the Indians, Greeks, and comparative linguistics. This period is significant and belongs to the broad era preceding modern linguistics introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure, which revolutionized linguistic studies. It is based on "tracing linguistic phenomena across different eras and various locations to understand their development and uncover the different laws governing this evolution." **(Talimat, p. 112)**

From this context, it is evident that the beginning of this study follows a historical trajectory within a specific geographical area where the language prevails. It involves diagnosing the changes that have affected this language over the specified historical periods and identifying the causes and factors that led to these changes, establishing the governing laws based on the achieved results.

This research seeks to uncover the origins of the language, study its history, lineage, and affiliations, and explain the developments that occur through additions, deletions, or changes in phonetic, morphological, syntactic, and semantic contents. The historical methodology not only delves into these aspects but also explores the language's evolution, its life in societies, how it spreads, and the conditions influencing these processes.

Among the pioneers who embedded these concepts in their studies, we find **Rasmus Rask** (1787-1832) in his work "The Affinities Between the Northern and Southern European Languages," where he examined the origins of Old Scandinavian or Icelandic. Other notable figures include **Friedrich Schlegel, August Schleicher, August Fick, and Ferdinand de Saussure,** who presented his historical studies titled "Memoir on the Primitive System of Vowels in Indo-European Languages" in 1878 and "Genitive Absolute in Sanskrit" in 1881. Additionally, **Hermann Paul** significantly advanced historical linguistics, asserting that "the only scientific method for studying language is the historical method." **(monan, 1972, p. 13)**

The historical approach to linguistic reality became evident through subsequent works that emphasized the importance of historical studies in elucidating the history and significance of language. Among these, we find **Antoine Meillet's** "Comparative Method in Historical Linguistics." Alongside him, during the same period, was the American linguist **WilliamDwight Whitney**, who was keenly interested in Sanskrit and living languages. He maintained that, in many of his explanations regarding the origin and original group of languages, linguistics is not a natural science but a historical one. **(monan, 1972, p. 17)**

These studies continued to carve their path amidst the burgeoning field of modern linguistics, with works dedicated to investigating the lifespan and history of languages across different eras according to their contexts. Among the prominent figures in this endeavor was Horace Hayman Wilson.

Thus, the study bore fruit through the historical practice of language, yielding results from the research conducted by the aforementioned Western pioneers and others not mentioned here. These studies unveiled the history and evolution of languages over various ages. The focus of these studies was language itself, utilizing the historical

method in all its aspects and features. This method aims to comprehensively understand the language's structure, historical nature, the geographical environment in which it prevailed, and the conditions influencing its manifestations in various forms and types observed in reality.

4- Modern Linguistics and Ancient Western Linguistic Thought: The Discontinuity and Continuity

Modern linguistics, also known as descriptive linguistics, is regarded as an independent discipline with its own foundations, methodological principles, concepts, and terminology. However, it is judged by both its discontinuity and continuity with pre-19th century linguistic thought. The initial stirrings of modern linguistics are as old as the linguistic studies of certain ancient civilizations. As previously mentioned, linguistic studies by the Indians and Greeks serve as prime examples, given that the pioneers of modern linguistics, notably Ferdinand de Saussure (1858-1913), were nurtured within this intellectual tradition, influenced by it.

Therefore, the linguistic intellectual accumulation preceding the 19th century serves as the foundational groundwork for the theory established by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. Consequently, this theory is built on the knowledge contributions of its predecessors, both ancient, such as Indian and Greek linguistic thought, and relatively recent, such as comparative and historical linguistics. This embodies the idea of continuity.

On the other hand, the concept of discontinuity manifests in the emergence of a new science with its own methods, principles, terminology, and scientific focus, studying language for its own sake. We will clarify the concepts of discontinuity and continuity as follows:

4-1 Modern Linguistics as a Break from Ancient Linguistic Thought:

Modern linguistics is characterized by its rigorous, practical approach and its focus on the study of language in its temporal and spatial stability.

This methodological shift emerged with the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, giving rise to what is known as descriptive linguistics, named after the descriptive method it employs. This marks a significant break from previous methodologies that dominated linguistic studies before the 19th century, such as historical, comparative, and philosophico-religious studies.

Modern linguistics introduced a new method for studying language in itself, a method that became more scientifically mature due to the advancements in the human sciences during the 19th century, thus granting this new approach scientific legitimacy. This methodological break is evident through the introduction of new terms and concepts that were previously absent in the old Western linguistic thought, as discussed earlier.

De Saussure's methodological approach to language study was influenced by contemporary ideas, contrasting sharply with the foundations laid by earlier Western linguistic thinkers. Specifically, De Saussure was influenced by:

-The Social Thought of **Émile Durkheim**: This influence is evident in De Saussure's view of language as a social phenomenon or "social institution." **(Ferdinand, 1985, p. 37)**

The foundational role of sociology in modern linguistics is underscored here, highlighting how De Saussure's perception of language as a social phenomenon is rooted in Durkheimian social theory.

Another significant influence is the psychological orientation, where De Saussure, drawing upon psychological data, constructed his conception that language is a psychological phenomenon and an expression of human needs and purposes that stir the human psyche. This perspective is articulated in his work "**Course in General Linguistics**. **(Ferdinand, 1985, p.** 28)" The relationship between this linguistic orientation and the fields of psychology and sociology is pivotal at the forefront of other sciences that have contributed to this new development.

This methodology served as the foundation for subsequent linguistic orientations, serving as the origin and cornerstone. The other directions that followed were branches and linguistic orientations distinguished by their added value. However, the descriptive approach of this new linguistic theory remains the reference point.

- Another milestone where the divergence manifested was through the conceptual differentiation drawn by Ferdinand de Saussure between old Western linguistic thought and his new linguistic theory, which was characterized by the adoption of new terms and concepts. **Saussure**, along with his followers, particularly emphasized the principle of binary oppositions, which became the hallmark of this descriptive linguistic theory. This principle endowed linguistics with a sense of seriousness and novelty, as articulated by Saussure himself in his seminal work "**Course in General Linguistics" in 1916**. Central to Saussure's framework was the principle of contrast, whereby each concept is defined in terms of its opposite, thus giving linguistic units their semantic value. This relationship is not one of contradiction, as some might interpret it, but rather one of complementary integration.

These pairs of oppositions, systematically formulated by Saussure, served as the foundational concepts for modern linguistics. These binary concepts received considerable attention in research and were embraced by subsequent linguistic schools, which followed in the footsteps of Saussure, adopting his concepts and basic terminology.

In this context, Saussure perceives linguistic phenomena as perpetually dual-faced, mutually corresponding entities, where neither side holds value without the other. **(Ferdinand, 1985, p. 23)**

From this, the true value of each terminological concept is understood to exist only in relation to its counterpart. These opposing terms formed the axes of linguistic theory. These dualities were structured as follows:

1- Langue / Parole / Langage:

Ferdinand de Saussure distinguished these general terms, which had caused burdens and chaos in linguistic studies due to the previous belief that they referred to a single concept.

In this approach, he distinguished between "langue," which is a renewed mental system through which individuals and groups communicate, "parole," which is the individual physical manifestation of language, and "langage," which is the general capacity to use any language.

Here, the hierarchical relationship between "langue," "parole," and "langage" becomes apparent, where "langage" contains a variety of languages, which branch into various manifestations, namely "parole."

2- Signifier and Signified (Sign and Signified):

This principle represents an important breakthrough due to its associational relationship between two terms, also known as the auditory image and the mental image. The "sign" or "signifier" is defined as "a linguistic unit consisting of an auditory image and a concept," **(Hassani, 1999, p. 58)** meaning that they are two sides of the same coin. One side cannot hold value without the other, as they complement each other's value, akin to the relationship between the physical and mental images. The term "associational" implies a relationship without justification, and it humbly attributes the material image to the mental image. There is absolute association, which dominates, and relative association, as indicated by Saussure in many of his research stations.

3- Synchronic and Diachronic:

This binary represents a division between two significant temporal stages in linguistic studies, namely the ancient historical stage and the synchronic descriptive stage of linguistic study.

The true distinction between the synchronic and diachronic was established within Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic theory. Despite the shortcomings of the historical method, there was a call for precise scientific study of

language, also known as synchronic linguistic study, which examines language within a specific time period. This includes studying language variations over time, focusing on changes, known as synchronic and diachronic studies. Saussure deliberately prioritized synchronic over diachronic analysis as a reaction to the historical dominance in linguistic studies for a long period. This acknowledgment is evident in its inclusion within the "binaries" framework, signifying its importance in studies. Synchronic analysis goes beyond examining external factors influencing language, instead opting for a more superficial sequential approach.

4- Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic Axis:

Saussure believed that language units connect and combine with each other along two axes: horizontal and vertical. These binaries serve as the visible and foundational evidence for a new linguistic orientation that delineates a clear boundary between present synchronic study and pre-existing intellectual effort.

Another important point distinguishing linguistic theory in its applied dimension is its equal focus on spoken and written language, emphasizing maximum importance and priority on spoken language. Traditional linguistic studies, such as comparative linguistics, neglected spoken language and focused primarily on written language.

Through the features of the adopted methodology, which is descriptive, with all its concepts and terms in a procedural study of language itself and for itself, in dimensions that encompass everything external according to a systematic principle based on linguistic levels and according to scientific precision and methodological rigor, subject to comprehensive and partial relationships, the departure from the old Western linguistic thought is evident. This thought ranged between comparison, historical analysis, and evolution, and what was acknowledged by studies older than this, represented in linguistic thought based on philosophical and logical contemplation, sometimes tainted by religious tendencies, in submission to the text containing the studied language, referring to languages of sacred texts such as Indian and Sanskrit.

This study divorced itself from the dichotomy of right and wrong or acceptance and rejection, instead describing the language through which peoples communicate.

This study was distinguished by its depth and branching out from its principles and constants into several streams, distinguished by addition or deviation in some tasks. This methodology did not remain on a single path but branched out into schools with their own principles and constants, and figures. Each school did not discard the descriptive approach as a whole, but each drew its own boundaries to give itself a new space. This is in contrast to ancient Western intellectual currents.

4-2- Modern linguistics as an extension of ancient Western linguistic though: Linguistics are considered an independent science with its own principles and methodology. However, it did not arise from nothingness; there were ancient antecedents that laid the groundwork for linguistic studies.

Mario Pei, commenting on the emergence of linguistics and the seriousness of this newly established modern science, suggests that its interest in the nature of language and its problems might have its roots in philosophical contemplations that were of concern to Greek philosophers. He also notes that on the other side of the research aspect, similar efforts were made by Chinese, Indian, and Greek grammarians. **(Mario, 1998, p. 163)**

This indicates that linguistic studies were influenced by Indian, Greek, and even Chinese intellectual traditions, which is evident in the intellectual content of this science.

A concrete example is seen in the principle of binary oppositions, which was prevalent in Greek thought and was influenced by Aristotelian doctrine. While the term was used similarly, the underlying concept, content, and purpose were different to some extent.

Aristotle, for instance, was concerned with the duality of form and matter, positing that one cannot exist without the other. It appears that the development of linguistics, with its principles based on connections to antiquity and the history of linguistics, confirms that its early stages are interconnected. Thus, linguistics as a distinct science

was built on accumulated knowledge, and its emergence was not sudden. The continuity of efforts is evident through these mediums mentioned. In this regard, **George Monane** states, "If de Saussure was obsessed, he was fully conscious of this obsession, as he wrote: 'The division of language into five or six pairs of issues.'" (**monan, 1972, p. 49**)

When we examine the extension of descriptive linguistics to the Indian circle, we find that **Ferdinand de Saussure** and his followers drew heavily from Indian linguistic studies: phonetics, morphology, and syntax. This is because these studies were precursors to their time and highly developed both in form and content. De Saussure himself expressed on numerous occasions his familiarity with and admiration for the Indian linguistic heritage, underscoring the continuity rather than rupture.

The extension between modern and historical linguistics, particularly considering Saussure's upbringing in the arms of historical comparative linguistics, cannot be denied. When Saussure acknowledged the synchronic principle, he contrasted it with the diachronic principle, prompting some researchers or linguists to seek a synthesis between synchronic descriptive and historical perspectives. They argued that the latter had occupied a long time span in linguistic study, and thus, could not suddenly be displaced by this new approach.

De Saussure acknowledged the historical study in contrast to synchrony, recognizing its importance and its relationship with synchronic description. He prioritized it over historical linguistics, considering that the contents of the historical method described language throughout each historical period, and this relationship denies complete rupture. Similarly, the relationship between comparative and historical linguistics demonstrates an extension, as historical linguistics built upon some ideas of comparative linguistics, particularly what was known as traditional grammar and normative rules.

The modern linguistic tasks included within them tasks of ancient linguistic thought, such as historical linguistics and comparison, evident in the tasks established for this science, including: **(Ferdinand, 1985, p. 24)**

- Providing a description of all languages and their history, with the establishment of linguistic families and the reconstruction of proto-languages.

- Researching the underlying forces in all languages, constantly operating within them, and extracting general laws governing all historical linguistic phenomena.

- Defining the subject of linguistics and defining its nature.

Within these tasks, the presence of the historical principle and classification in descriptive study is secondary and cannot be ignored. This represents a connection, not a separation, and an extension, not a rupture, as evidenced.

Moreover, when we discuss the connection between comparative and synchronic linguistic studies, the former paved the way for the latter, particularly concerning interest. For instance, the Indian Sanskrit language became a central focus in studies initiated by Ferdinand de Saussure in the early 19th century.

Modern linguistics emerged with the assistance and support of Western linguistic thought in the form of dichotomy and extension. Regarding dichotomy, it delineated and defined the scope of this science with its principles, orientations, and results, diverging from the old thought in methodology with clear scientific accuracy, goals focusing on the language system, and revealing its truth. As for the extension, linguistics did not arise out of nothingness but emerged from the accumulation of ancient Western intellectual and linguistic thought, with its sequence and important scientific and linguistic values. Therefore, Ferdinand de Saussure, the pioneer of modern linguistics, was familiar with and admired the efforts of intellectual luminaries in the same subject, namely language, while diverging from them in approach by invoking synchronic descriptiveness according to the desired goals and based on the structure of language as both a starting point and an objective simultaneously.

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