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Linguïculture: Thomas A. Sebeok as a revolutionary ethnographer

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Abstract: Sebeok started his career as an ethnographer, focusing on the verbal art of anthropology to describe the cultures associated with then-called “primitive” languages. He followed Bloomfield’s linguistics to study Boas’ anthropology of primitive art to investigate man as a civilized member of a native indigenous community with art-like speech habits. Sebeok’s earliest articles were ethnographic descriptions of non-Western folktales from the Cheremis people, which he reformulated into Saussure’s phonetic system to involve literal but culturally free translations. Later, Sebeok developed Peirce’s ethnosemiotics by explaining Sapir-Whorf’s two-way differentiation of linguistic-and-cultural texts. The coded interplay of anthroposemiotics moved Sebeok from language-and-culture to language-with-culture, thence to build up the merged compound of linguïculture.

Keywords: culture; ethnography; ethnosemiotics; language; linguïculture; speech

1 Language and speech

The interrelations between language and culture bring in an enormous range of diversity in both linguistics and anthropology, and of course semiotics as well. Linguïculture was, in Thomas Sebeok’s early oeuvre, still a missing term in the “so-called ‘semiotics of culture’ (using this entrenched cliché broadly and loosely)” (1984a: 2). Language was for Sebeok concerned with the “non-verbal and verbal commerce” of the “doctrine of messages,” but was embraced by a “reasoned and versant account of the laws of Nature [...] exhibited in the human animal par excellence, Culture” (Sebeok 1984a: 2). Culture prefigured as artistic activity in all living systems (Sebeok 1979). The transfer between sender and receiver is not simply transmitting many ideas of neutral or arbitrary thoughts, but it reflects, if not constitutes, the social intercourse of human life together with the deeper cognitive processes of the complex human brain.

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In the written form of language, the coded network connects the graphic signs in a collective alphabet or set of ideograms in the natural (that is, native) language, as also is found in lexical innovations of argots of criminals and the mannerisms of legal and administrative language, but also hieroglyphs and runes. Languages such as Morse, Braille, Lincos, Kabala-X, and Polari are represented by codes, but these are in themselves not human but artificial languages. Cryptographical codes inspire the symbolic use of coded language, but all codes must be learned and deciphered to be fully comprehended, or they may be invented *sui generis* by individuals for private use (Gortée 2015: 220–228, 2020; Heller-Roazen 2013).

Formal written language can freeze informal (or less-formal) speech, or gesture in the case of acoustic languages designed to aid the blind. Spontaneous vocal speech drawing from not-articulated language is the key to the communication from sender to receiver and possibly to other hearers, whether intentional listeners or not. Such social intercourse of speech uses the human voice to speak about cultural events in the context of ordinary conversations as well as with premeditated discourse. Human speech is the direct and ordinary form of vocal experience using the common dialect, idiolect, or perhaps a local jargon to constitute the collective social experience of making, giving, and sharing cultural meaning from human to human. Language in a deeper structure is the abstract and source form, while “the concrete form of speech and gesture modernizes the verbal diversity of verbal messages into nonverbal communication accompanying language” (Sebeok ([1974, 1977]1985: 307–310) as exemplified with the sign language of the American Indians (Sebeok and Umiker-Sebeok [1977]1979). The meanings of speech are investigated during the ethnographer’s fieldwork, while the informal context of speech is transcribed into formal language.

The first task of this article is focused on language and culture for the work of ethnography (MacCannell 1979; Sebeok 1984a). As described, ethnographical reports connect the multiple features of language and culture to the multi-channeled forms of human information. The second and third tasks are the spatiotemporal and material contexts of the processes connecting human language and culture in the human environment. “Modern man” *Homo sapiens* later spread out of Africa to the other continents in swirling waves, such that today ethnic groups around the globe speak a multiplicity of cultural languages, perhaps 7,000, though decreasing each year (Heller-Roazen 2008). These languages are derived from more ancestral languages and cultures, mixed in the slow emergence of cultural awareness. *Homo sapiens* had a creative potential but lived in a physical world to transmit signals rapidly and survive in close communities. The creative potential for art, as in cave paintings, came later than the economic life to gain a livelihood. The artistic life gave rise to a new dimension of the human brain (Ambrose 1982: 157–159).

The last and final task is the symbiosis of two different qualities of exhibiting language and culture. The semiosis of verbal and nonverbal messages allows anthropology to reveal the social layers of language-and-culture that shape human ideas into pronouncing words and then into the togetherness of language-with-culture. These two faculties emerged separately in evolution, their fusion only accompanying the evolution of man some hundreds of thousand years ago. In the double vision of linguïculture, human thought, shared ideas, and socioculture further diversified, to the point that today we can rely on linguïculture to study anthropology as ethnosemiotics (MacCannell 1979).

Linguistic anthropology stems from the foundational works of Franz Boas (1858–1942) and was greatly enhanced by the contributions of my mentor and friend Thomas Sebeok (1920–2001). In December 2001, he left us with a profound sense of loss and longing for his inspiring comments, conversations, and research (Gorlée 2011). Part of the excitement of being in Sebeok’s audience came from the coherence throughout the voluminous bibliography of his writings (Deely 1995). Considering the treasure of his firsthand materials, the current task of semioticians is to progress the Sebeokian heritage. Our leap of faith in reconsidering language and culture follows Sebeok’s announcement of “communication-by-verbal-means to supplement man’s already vast and complex multi-channel nonverbal repertoire” (1995). While human communication follows the linear manifestations of written language, anthropology uses mainly spoken words. Speech is accompanied by bodily signs directly accompanied by vocal speech.

As an epitaph, Thomas Sebeok was a “good” messenger (*angelos*) heralding the linguistic-and-cultural message of semiotics by widening language and speech into biology. Sebeok’s messages were intellectually ambitious moments of pure magic. His impassioned oratory agitated young scholars to become semioticians of language and communication, but he was eager to give back to them his publications celebrating the natural beauty of human, plant, animal, and cellular lives. Sebeok anticipated the double vision of “linguïculture” presented here to him as gift for his special manner of teaching with the suggestive, allusive, and imaginative persuasion to encourage the curiosity of hearers and listeners.

2 Language-and-culture

Human social use of language refers to a verbal vocal or nonvocal, or written or otherwise expressed, system of words, phrases, and sentences in linguistic messages. Language through voice or sign is the default universal mode for communication and expression, while writing and other media are historically derivative and contextually particular and specialized forms of art. Written texts obey the

collective system of the language's deeper grammar, while spoken language allows for practical, idiosyncratic messages tied to the social and physical environment, as well as motivated expressions of feeling, emotion, and affect. Translated into semiotics, the technical glossary views the use of language as a coded structure of signs and strings of signs with a graph-theoretical representation of semantics, where the syntax of written language would mean, in Sebeok's glossary of technical terms, the same things as oral speech (1984b: 29–30, 1984c). In theory, language and speech have an equivalent meaning, but the practical emergence of, and two-way differences between, language and speech remain the mystery to be explored.

The terms “language” and “culture” are particularly fuzzy words, since their various meanings arise in the process of the historization of human discourse. Until the arrival of missionaries, travelers, and explorers in the 19th century, most populations around the Earth had no written language, so knowledge of their language and culture, other than experiential and augmenting oral traditions, came from the observation of Western explorers. Native speech was in the habitual, unreflexive dialects of spoken communication, only partially reflecting the formal, inferable, underlying grammar of the language. A formalized (or semiformalized) structure in writing could integrate the historical and conceptual interpretation of linguists and anthropologists to guide further the definitions residing in two qualities – language and culture – to represent a “definitive” yet resilient point of view in the term of *linguiculture*.

Native language-with-culture is the basis for the temporal and spatial identity of any human group and its territory. The thoughts, ideas, and feelings of the individual speakers can be uniquely communicated and expressed most adequately in the native language of the group. Languages within and across language groups will vary at every level, from phonology and grammar to semantics and pragmatics. While for contemporary linguists, language is the foundation for human thought, anthropologists exploring in non-literate linguistic communities have as their base only oral speech, and other behavior, as evidence of thought and cultural meanings in non-literate societies, interpreted during ethnography and documented in written languages. Even in literate communities, the anthropologist relies mainly on oral language, not written texts. The scientific documentation of those other languages is based on the reconversion of linguistic units by native informants (not linguists) of non-literate linguistic communities.

While language and speech are species-specific faculties of all humans, the varieties of meanings of messages are saturated with the habits of the native culture. Culture remains secondary; it does not directly link the cognitive or formal surface of the linguistic grammar or any writing system, but underlies the psychological, emotive, and metaphorical essence of any cultural group. Cultural

messages have meaningful forms to shape various languages (or better, dialects or idiolects) with a number of distinct interpretations. Final meaning has no uniformity across the semiotic approach of linguistic anthropology. Uniform final meaning has no place in semiotic approaches of linguistics with anthropology.

A major early moment in symbiosis between science and language came from the scientific voyages of groups of scholars and explorers around the world. The German explorer Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859) first traveled through Europe to adventure beyond the narrow horizons of Prussia to new countries. Then, in the perilous Napoleonic times, he prepared to set out on a scientific trip from Prussia to South America (1799–1804). In his voyages, Alexander von Humboldt investigated the physical geology, biogeography, and ecology of “exotic” regions. His works influenced Charles Darwin’s voyages on the *Beagle* which were so crucial to the development of his theory of natural selection in biological evolution (Seymour 2019). Alexander’s brother, Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) had a rare gift for foreign languages. Both brothers became friends with the transdisciplinary humanist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe to broaden their enthusiasm for the literary and scientific uses of foreign languages – building the multidisciplinary version of the German ideal of *Kultur* (Penn 1972: 19–22).

Wilhelm von Humboldt authored the study *Über die Kawisprache* (1836, published after his death). In this three-volume treatise, Humboldt discussed the evolution of the ancient non-Indo-European Kawi language spoken in the central and eastern parts of the island of Java, since the Indonesian island was more than a thousand years ago under the political and religious influence of Indian civilization. According to Humboldt’s Romantic idealism, the old grammar of the Kawi language evolved naturally from the Javanese epic poem *Bharat Yuddha*, having Indian roots. Indeed, Kawi language was multilingual, permeated with remnants of Sanskrit language into the ethno-cultural history of their own language to develop a fresh language in Humboldt’s Kawi language – not only in dramatic and pantomimic theater, but also in building, on central Java, the expressive architecture of the Buddhist shrine, *Borobudur*, where the religious images incarnate the patterns of local culture. The religious and political expression of colonialism was strange to Humboldt’s own cultural thought. For Humboldt, the evolution of societies was a conjectural fact of military history, which was regarded as historical accident transpiring on the island of Java. Humboldt found that the culturally alien people of Java had adopted Sanskrit forms and shapes from the new ruling class – in this case, the cultural achievements of India. Sanskrit language had colonized the thought of Javanese local language into a pidginized version of language, which descended from Indian traders and travelers (see Todd [1974]1990) to enrich the Kawi language. In Humboldt’s view, the Javanese pidgin highlighted how non-native uses of language seemed to become the native culture. Seen from the

Indo-European hypothesis of *Kultur*, the strange elements of society had become transformed into standard signs of Javanese national culture. General language was synonymized with “thought, and thought [was] language” (Penn 1972: 20). For Humboldt, the generic “thought” of language was the direct source of the Javanese “spirit” to create the “force” to choose the form of language.

Old Javanese linguistics was a neglected area of science until the modern linguistics of the 20th century, contemporary with the independence of Indonesia from Dutch colonialism (Uhlenbeck 1983) to become one Indonesian nation (Keane 2003). At the end of the 18th century, Humboldt’s double meaning seemed to view the “force” of language from the “spirit” of the grammatical rules without considering the human speech of the Javanese speakers (Uhlenbeck 1983). Humboldt’s historical sense of language was merely “a romantic desire,” but in the eyes of the theoretical science of the emerging doctrine of general linguistics “a very unromantic mistake” (Reichling 1947–1948: 11).

Humboldt interweaved the ethnic activities of linguistic words, including the colonial migration of India, as a “natural” fact of the development of Javanese language, yet the official countersign of language did not represent the local, not cultural, speech of Humboldt’s Javanese informants¹ in his ethnographies (Uhlenbeck 1983). The society of colonists and settlers seemed to build, as it seemed automatically and mechanically, the spider’s web of Humboldt’s worldview (*Weltanschauung*), thus organizing (or better, re-organizing) Javanese culture, including the political facts of colonial history. The countersign of language and speech did not represent Humboldt’s understanding of language as having “infinite ends (qua utterances) with finite means (qua grammar and vocabulary)” (Kockelman 2007: 380). However, Humboldt’s ethnographies enabled later ethnographers to get to know the real faith and knowledge of language and speech with reference to so-called “mixed” populations.

3 Acculturation of language into culture

From the Romantic 19th century to the 20th century “modernized” symbolism of words, phrases, and sentences, *The meaning of meaning* (Ogden and Richards

¹ As happened to Humboldt (and later ethnographers), the informant is a native speaker informing the ethnographer’s fieldwork. The informant is not a linguistically trained linguist but a practical interpreter guiding the research as a naïve intermediary. The typical informant can assist in giving the lexical meaning of words or sentences or interpreting a gesture used in the local group. As a native member of the group, the informant mediates between the non-native anthropologist, who has not yet learned the foreign language, and the native members of the other society.

[1923]1946) gave a cryptic meaning for the usage of language. Ogden and Richards spoke about the symbolic types of “Verbomania” and “Graphomania” ([1923]1946: 40, 45). When he read their book, young Sebeok was inspired by the revolutionary study, as he later recalled in his autobiography (1991: 89, 123). It even motivated him to write a general theory of signs. Sebeok’s attention, however, focused on the Supplementary sections, mainly Bronislaw Malinowski (1884–1942) (Ogden and Richards [1923]1946: 296–336), accompanied by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) (Ogden and Richards [1923]1946: 279–290), who was, prior to the publications of his work, a still unknown scholar in science and philosophy.

The anthropological linguist Malinowski wanted to solve the problem of linguistic meaning by studying through ethnography a then-called “primitive” language. The term “culture” was used by Malinowski to subsume the study of the “savage utterance” of the living speech in the Trobriand Islands located off New Guinea. Language here was not a logical grammar but a reflected one, for Malinowski, the native spoken language that fused the psychological, even magical, sense of “speech-situation[s] among savages” ([1923]1946: 296). The speech-situation constituted the functional dynamics of culture not coming from the analytical thinking of the anthropologist but from the native culture itself (Gorlée 2012: 36–37, 244–246). Malinowski followed Humboldt’s psychological “spirit” in structuring the thought of language into culture, and *vice versa*. Malinowski went on to posit a set of linguistic functions to construct a cultural whole.

Anthropological fieldwork transformed the assumptions around a highly structured grammar for language into the realization that all aspects of language blended with culture. From the 1930s, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis challenged the calculus of one language with a plurality of meanings strongly deviating from previous anthropology. Edward Sapir (1884–1939) wrote about the cultural beliefs of the “habits of speech,” while Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897–1941) pondered the mental software that contrasts the English lexicon with those of some Amerindian languages, mainly Hopi (Penn 1972: 23–28, 28–32). The result of the new science of linguistic anthropology integrated natural speech with culture to honor the diversity in language-and-culture. Sapir’s anthropological argument started with the group’s collective language of human speech related to society and culture. In his book *Language*, Sapir connected language to “culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives” ([1921]1970: 207).

In following years, Sapir’s “The status of linguistics as a science” (written in 1929, published [1949]1957: 65–77)² stated that the drift of human speech and

2 Sapir wrote a number of separate essays during the years from 1924 to his death in 1939. These essays were assembled together in the posthumous book *Culture, language, and personality* ([1949]

writing (in anthropology, linguistics, and other human sciences) consists in the growing flow of “language habits” ([1949]1957: 69). The use of language was not specific with respect to relying on any single meaning of words, but meaning fluctuated away from the common trends of the group to accommodate personal utterances and opinions with the potential to change the collective culture. Sapir argued that the collective meanings in a group can impact both language and culture. Sapir’s principle followed the theory of “linguistic determinism” stating that language determines the way we think and speak, although determinism is too strong a word. He wrote that humans are

at the mercy of the particular language that has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the ‘real world’ is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. (Sapir [1949]1957: 69; Sapir’s emphasis)

Sapir’s personal habits of speech are not regarded as isolated signs (as in Saussure’s method of language). Previewing Peirce’s illusion of the dynamic flow of signs into habits, the habits of speech stay alive, so that the emotional and energetic signs are psychologically inferable and socially assimilated to the new language-and-culture (Goriée 2016). Sapir’s metaphors of the “straight,” “crooked,” “curved,” “zigzag” senses of culture ([1929]1959: 69) depict different styles of language habits. Those habits of speech guide a loose consensus of cultural structure. They are not Peirce’s final types of a single culture but rather take on alternative tokens of subcultures interpreted by various tones of diverse interpreters. In Sapir’s outlook, language requires emotional interpretation to put the words together into cultural messages.

In Sapir’s article “Culture, genuine and spurious” (written in 1929, [1949]1957: 78–119), the importance of culture is prioritized in anthropology. Sapir wrote that culture has three complex types of communication. Firstly, culture depends on subsistence activities (such as hunting, fishing, and gathering) resulting in feelings of “tradition” and “social inheritance” (Sapir [1949]1957: 79–80). Anthropology called the economic organization the “civilization” attending to the survival of the group. Secondly, culture is used as the conventional idea of refinement and fashion. A “cultured person” has good manners, but this cultured

1957). Sapir developed his ideas for this book in a course of lectures he presented at Yale University in the 1930s. After his death, his lectures were reconstructed from Sapir’s manuscript notes and from student notes to appear in *The psychology of culture: A course of lectures* ([1993]2002).

taste is the token oriented to the past – as in the old English, Chinese, Japanese (and other) models of hierarchical societies (see Veblen [1925]1970). Sapir wrote that the old-fashioned model is the historical replica of past ages with a doubtful non-semiotic future ([1949]1957: 80–82). Thirdly, culture may combine the social inheritance with the cultural (that is, aesthetic, religious, moral, and historical) reality to highlight the psychological “spirit” of human feelings. For example, nationality could be worshipped with emotional, almost-religious, patriotism (Sapir [1949]1957: 83–84) accompanied by hostile feelings of “identity, resistance, gender-, party- and ideology-criticism” (Garton Ash 2017: 6; Ryan 2020) to the stranger. The *völkisch* forms of human emotionality allow for cultural and linguistic variations of feelings (and misfeelings) to cultivate a compelling unifying symbolism experienced by the inner group. Such malpractice was, it seemed, the “normal” habit of the “civilized” and “cultural” mind of humans (Sapir [1949]1957: 82–86). Decades later, the overview of Williams’ *Keywords: A vocabulary of culture and society* ([1976]1983) captured the trends of meanings behind “culture” and other key concepts with a contemporary framework.

Sapir’s anthropological definition of “genuine culture” in cultivation and refinement is not high or low (seen from outside, from the anthropologist), but represents a particular cultural variation of emotional harmony felt by the members of the indigenous group (from inside). For Sapir, culture is the general situation of the

richly varied and yet somehow unified and consistent attitude towards life, an attitude which sees the significance of any other element of civilization in its relation to all others. It is, ideally speaking, a culture in which nothing is spiritually meaningless, in which no important part of the general functioning brings with it a sense of frustration, of misdirected or unsympathetic effort. It is not a spiritual hybrid of contradictory patches, of water-tight compartments of consciousness that avoid participation in a harmonious synthesis. (Sapir [1949] 1957: 90)

Most cultures are under the pressure of the “easily conceivable conditions of general enlightenment as in those of relative ignorance and squalor” (Sapir [1949] 1957: 90). Sapir’s example was that the “telephone girl who lends her capacities [...] to the manipulation of a technical routine that has an eventually high efficiency value but that answers to no spiritual needs of her own is an appalling sacrifice to civilization” ([1949]1957: 92). This example was contrasted with that of the “American-Indian who solves the problem with salmon-spear and rabbit-snare operat[ing] on a relatively low level of civilization, but [...] represents an incomparably higher solution” to the level of culture (Sapir [1949]1957: 90).

Sapir realized in 1949, after the horrors of World War II, that life has somehow an obligation to cultivate language-with-culture. He expected that the creative

emotions of the individual would disappear from sight while realizing the technical “progress” of the mixed forms and transitional non-forms of language-and-culture. Sapir expected with a sense of social and political irony that “Civilization, as a whole, moves on” while “culture comes and goes” (Sapir [1949]1957: 95). At a later date, however, “civilization” would be regarded as a developmental process and with a lifespan, while “culture” would stand for the evolutionary and never static process.

4 Toward language-with-culture

Benjamin Lee Whorf, disciple of Sapir and co-partner in the construction of the Sapir-Whorf conjecture, was trained for chemical engineering before dedicating himself to the new science of linguistic anthropology. Whorf was a multilingual scholar, who studied English, French, German, Russian, and Greek and had also learned Chinese, Japanese, Maya, and other languages. He specialized in the Native American languages, mainly of the Hopi language spoken in the US state of Arizona. The Hopi population number had been reduced to some 6,000 speakers, so that their language was already then in danger of extinction. Whorf’s investigations brought together a different flow of structure and meaning to the Hopi language, intimately aligning it with their culture, which was in those days internally suffering from disputes. The Hopi groups wandered away to settle in temporary locations, losing the indigenous sense of tribal permanence (Brandon ([1961]1987: 109–110, 119, 123, 398). Whorf wrote in an unpublished note (written in 1927) that “When we attempt to apply the configurative principle to the understanding of human life, we immediately strike the cultural and the linguistic (part of the cultural), especially the latter, as the great field par excellence of the configurative of the human mind” (Whorf [1956]1970: 41)³

In Whorf’s publications, written in 1936–1940 ([1956]1970: 51–206), he proposed that the Hopi language is, for outsiders, a cultural set of unambiguous and mysterious rules to obey in their conversations and rituals. Since the Hopi language incorporates distinctly different structures for time, space, and content, Whorf demonstrated in writing and imagery that Hopi language-with-culture was not familiar with or influenced by Western categories. The division of time into past, present, and future are so essential to Indo-European ideology, where time flows from the past to the present and into the future. Yet the Hopi people seem to live in an enduring present, their language being rich in verbs projecting a world of

³ After Whorf’s death (1941), a number of unpublished monographs, commentaries, notes, and letters were published in *Language, thought and reality* ([1956]1970).

movement and changing relationships in time and space, contrasted with the English language, itself noun-rich and verb-poor, rooted in a fixed space with many tenses allowing different causes and reasons of reality. Whorf (like Sapir) did not subscribe to the stereotyped notion of “primitive” languages: all languages and cultures reflect unique cosmologies that must be respected, which is the prescription to this day.

In his later writings (1940–1942) – “Science and linguistics,” “Linguistics as an exact science,” “Language and logic,” and finally “Language, mind, and reality” ([1965]1970: 207–219, 220–232, 233–245, 246–270) – Whorf propounded the “linguistic relativity principle.” The concept of relativity meant a softer correlation of language with culture, and cognition and cosmologies than Sapir’s stronger principle of “linguistic determinism.” Whorf’s relativity meant informally that “users of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars toward different types of observation and different evaluations of externally similar acts of observation, and hence are not equivalent as observers but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world” ([1965]1970: 221). In Whorf’s formal code theory, language is an experimental technique to discover and describe cultural phenomena. Culture cannot “cause” (as in Boas’ works) but will “color” the “segmentation and construction” of the speech of its native speakers ([1965]1970: 221, 241). Linguistic units pattern the exact configuration of cultural formulas to become meaningful segments of the language.

Linguistic units are encoded as variable units structured in one modeling system. Whorf’s “structural formulas” build the code theory of Hopi language (and for other languages, with different code processes). In theory, the codes of all languages are imperative agreements, but in practice they work as redundant codes, so that one rule can signify the same thing or artifact in reality but can become invisible and unknown in another language – that is, the code can appear or, in another language, disappear into the unknown and become unthought and unanalyzed. Linguist and anthropologist Whorf was a syntacticist, but also a semanticist of language. His exact “laboratory of linguistics” ([1965]1970: 232) strived to identify clean divisions of culture as a mathematical syntacticist and physical semanticist of language.

Whorf concluded that the English “temporal” codification of English and the “timeless” codification of Hopi language were reached by native speakers in their role of language-makers for their collective societies. The words and strings of words had the cultural consistency of social (and political) codification to their use in language. As followers of Whorf have further elaborated (as the “elaborated” code and “restricted” code of Bernstein [1973]1977), cultural transformation recodifies the social code from the formal “elaborated” code into the less-formal speech forms in English. The resulting default expression is the “restricted” code of

any language's speech messages. The frame of speech is not the simultaneous frame of the code theory like Whorf's mathematics or physics; instead, the speech-act follows the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis to draw on the social and emotional background of the native speakers, which is stripped of any grammatical authority to produce ordinary messages of daily speech. The sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic speech-act can encode and decode any language to be represented in any other cultural language.

Whorf loosened Sapir's principle of "linguistic determinism" (which was over-interpreted by his antagonists) into "linguistic relativity." Sapir's perhaps misunderstood principle of determinism has become amply quoted and popular with many colleagues in anthropology, though less popular in linguistics; meanwhile Whorf's more moderate hypothesis has become more acceptable across all scientific circles (Penn 1972: 28–32). However, to label either rendering of the "Sapir-Whorf" observation a "hypothesis" is misleading, as the "hidden" argumentation cannot be tested: the units of analysis are both vague and complex. A better label would be "conjecture" or "proposition."

In the research on the life of Native Americans, Whorf argued that there are "logical" connections between English and Hopi languages, but importantly the "non-logical" data are the unreliable interactions of separate patterns of language. The equivalences and differences reflect the habitual thought of totally different things and events to construe Whorf's distinct phenomena and images of language-with-culture. The followers of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis incline toward Sapir's simultaneity of language-and-culture in some harmony toward Whorf's technical sequentiality of disharmony, privileging the syntagmatic diachrony (see contributions in Kinkade et al. 1975). Perhaps there was a motion of no confidence to negotiate between the alternatives of language-and-culture to embrace language-with-culture?

The adoption of culture into language is derived from A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn's *Culture*, subtitled *A critical review of concepts and definitions* ([1952] 1963). Culture combined with language forms is a significant part of this lengthy treatise in anthropology (Kroeber and Kluckhohn [1952]1963: 224–277, including "Some statements" and "Addenda"). The scientific content of this almost encyclopedic work gave as raw material many quotations of "known" language inter-related with "unknown" culture to extend the scholarly statements to the notes, remarks, and commentaries from Kroeber and Kluckhohn. Overall, the Kroeber and Kluckhohn treatise tended to be a synthetic and critical survey, so that the "Summary and conclusions" ([1952]1963: 280–376) offered a provisional, not definitive, assessment of the cultural phenomena relating to the human behavior in language. Their central idea of culture in anthropology was formulated in their "Summary":

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as constituting elements of further action. (Kroeber and Kluckhohn [1952]1963: 357, their emphasis)

The mainly historical outlines of the consolidated structure of language-and-culture seem to be in the process of rethinking or reconstructing to forge new paths to “define” under reconsideration the contemporary research in linguistics, anthropology, and cognitive sciences. Contemporary research in linguistics, anthropology, cognitive sciences, and of course semiotics are addressing, in several paradigms and models, the empirical relations of language-and-in-culture and of culture-and-in-language.

For Kroeber and Kluckhohn, Sapir’s sociolinguistic writings were highly lauded as the foundation of cultural anthropology, whereas Whorf was more appealing for psycholinguistics ([1952]1963: 336). Anthropology’s creation myth has Boas as the direct founder of US anthropology who pointed out that “linguistic phenomena are unconscious and automatic, but cultural phenomena more conscious” (Kroeber and Kluckhohn [1952]1963: 242). The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis put forward Sapir’s first argument. He suggested that “with time the interaction of culture and language became lessened because their rates of change were different” (Kroeber and Kluckhohn [1952]1963: 243). Later, Sapir resolved the issues around relativity and determinism by observing that “Cultural elements serve immediate needs, and cultural forms reshape themselves, but linguistic elements do not easily regroup themselves because their classification is subconscious” (Kroeber and Kluckhohn [1952]1963: 243). Sapir determined that languages have their “submerged formal systems” with their psychology to form conscious thought, as studied by Whorf’s “types of cultural patterning” (Kroeber and Kluckhohn [1952]1963: 243).

The “social cultivation, improvement, refinement” (Kroeber and Kluckhohn [1952]1963: 283) of civilization has moved on to studying the manifold of customs and ideologies found on the planet. The embarrassingly ethnocentric judgments correlated technologies, first those for subsistence, with enhanced pseudo-culture reflected in the order of social organizations. Or else, the choice may be the configuration of sociolinguistic or psychological thinking in cultural behavior. Culture remained an elaborated caricature of “varying and overlapping sub-cultures” (Kroeber and Kluckhohn [1952]1963: 309), merely viewed from the outside, in most cases from a Western perspective.

Contemporary communication – radio and television, cinema, newspapers, and social media – globalized the anthropological concept of culture through a

proliferation of cultural and subcultural meanings. The cognitive and emotive dimensions of language and speech have rediscovered the changing myths of a complexity of cultural states of all kinds. A society's original platform of a single native language has today transformed into a plethora of artificial media of mass communications oriented toward specific personal and creative, as well as political and ideological functions and justifications. In anthropology, the message of culture remained a puzzle (Williams [1976]1983: 38–40, 87–93) until Sebeok's semiotic anthropology that solved Peirce's "Man's Glassy Essence" (Singer 1984) and opened up ethnography to deeper study.

5 Sebeok's ethnography

Thomas Sebeok initially studied the emerging science of linguistics (Bloomfield [1933]1967) to emphasize the constitution and prospects of indigenous and minority languages. The hegemonic context of the technical and artistic modernity of "old" art (Boas ([1927]1955) was transcribed into "new" art. New art experiences the parallels with modern forms and cultural conventions in poetics to assimilate the narrative stories to the other arts – architecture, music, and dance. Sebeok started his career as an ethnographer: in his early publications, he followed Boas' mandate for anthropology. After his war service in World War II, when he directed a training program in languages at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, Sebeok threw himself into academic life, pursuing the principles of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. His first subject of research was the study of his own native language, Hungarian, with its links to the Finno-Ugric language family. Secondly, he studied the indigenous languages and cultures of the Amerindians, in the steps of Sapir and Whorf. Thirdly, from 1947, he concentrated on the Uralic language called Cheremis (or Mari), spoken in Central Russia (capital Yoshkar-Ola, formerly Tsvetkovskhaisk until 1918). The Cheremis lived between the Volga and Vyatka Rivers in the vicinity of the town of Birsk. The structured texts of "early literature" was transcribed into contemporary English to explain the narrative material to the reading of future generations.

Sebeok's style of documentation and analysis followed Boas' technical, emotional, and historical elements to integrate the verbal art of literature with the music and dance of indigenous populations (Boas [1927]1955: 299–348; see Portis-Winner 1994: 49–67). The narrative poetry of folksongs links the rhythms of music with the fixed form of the poetic words. The movement of the body in dance is therefore a bodily expression of the emotional experience of the dancer, drawing originally on animal gestures involving the mind/body activity of the dancers through the time and space of the dance. Significant movements of ethno-

aesthetics were translated into the art forms of folk poetry, folksong, and folk dance that undergirded different forms of cultural life in close-knit communities. Sebeok transcribed the ethno-cultural meanings by pointing away from the traditional structure of science to posit the critical texture of semiotic, ethnic, and political questions of the environment in small-scale societies. This further research of ethnology, or cross-cultural studies, was Sebeok's new perspective of interscience to fully observe the cultural pursuits of human life.

Sebeok's ethnography started with the example of the Winnebago tribe living west of Lake Michigan, one of the great lakes in the northeast of North America. Their language had 1,000 or more native speakers. Sebeok used a Winnebago informant to translate their texts into an English version. The *verbatim* transcription was presented as "free translation," but the variant readings of the translated text in writing were, from the modern Winnebago point of view, a mistranslation with "archaic" and "awkward" forms of language (Sebeok 1947: 167 fn1). In Boas' fashion of research, the published material of authentic oral narrative can sometimes be regarded in writing as "bald and dry owing to the difficulties of expression that the interpreter [informant] cannot overcome," while the rendering can be "elaborated in a superimposed literary style that does not belong to the original" ([1927]1955: 308).

Sebeok's "vision quest" provided us with understandable textual material of the Winnebago winter story when angling for fish beneath the ice (1947: 168–169). Sebeok fully described the surface text according to the phonetic and phonemic syntax of Ferdinand de Saussure's structural handling of linguistic signs (Lipkind's *Winnebago grammar* had been recently published in 1945). The original version ended with the written form of the ritual "prophesy" (Sebeok 1947: 169–170), in which the shaman (the Winnebago medicine man) lamented, rejoiced, and admonished a spiritual message to shield the Winnebago warriors against the attacks of the white men. Sebeok's ethnosemantic approach involved the syntactic transcription of the text to predict the semantic ambiguity of the warpath speech against the "people who wear hats" (1967: 169). In the textural myth, Sebeok found reference to the wider investigation of the Winnebago's poetic aspects, linguistic and cultural, to perform and strengthen the natural situation of the religious behavior of the Winnebago (see further Paul Radin's *Primitive Religion* [1937]1957). The Winnebago saw their final times coming and drew on their strength to help them in the ritual sacrifice (Henderson [1964]1979: 112–114).

Note that Sebeok's technical plan of 1947 was merely a literary transcription of the authentic texts in the Winnebago language, but the emotional, religious, and magical details of the Winnebago tribe and the mystery cults of their shamanism (Henderson [1964]1979: 149–151) would in principle require more than a linguistic approach. But at that time there was no detailed and systematic work in that

direction. The many forms of persuasion, expression, and symbolic forms of wordplay connected language-with-culture, but were, in those days, not designated to constitute reasonable authority for writing scientific communication (Gray 1969: 7–19; Hesse ([1967]1972). Sebeok's ethnography investigated positively the Winnebago speech, but the term culture was not (yet) used. Ordinarily, cultural behavior was mentioned derogatively suggesting ethnic inferiority versus the superiority of native North American art and artifacts. Cultural behavior was generally described in ethnic stereotypes by describing particular symbols of the native society.

This prejudice against the situation of indigenous tribes with their own cultures had been criticized in anthropologist Franz Boas' *Race, language, and culture* (1940). According to missionaries, travelers, and explorers in the 19th century, the "primitive" groups of Native Americans, including Eskimo or Inuit societies, as well as the immigration of Italians and Mexicans, were due to form part of the "alien" intermixture of the population of the United States of America. Were they different from the Italian, French, or Scandinavian immigrants? The perceived difference in the physical types, mental habits, languages, and the customs of various ethnic groups could "justify" harsh colonization and political oppression (Boas 1940: 3–17).

The concept of race was bound up with the Nazis' racism as the popular basis of identity, but Boas' psychology washed the apocalyptic claim clean from ideology to the common knowledge of multiracism. All groups spoke English to be alike, but it seemed that some groups were placed in a lower classification rather than in a higher group of population. Boas attacked all prejudice by demonstrating how the "in-between" cultures have scientific and linguistic differences to counter-argue the controversy between northern and western Europeans and other types. It seemed that Sapir was more optimistic about building a coherent unity in a country (Landar 1966: 139). Migration has been noted to produce harshness and oppression to suppress any condensation of alien *Kultur* of multicultural populations then and today (Garton Ash 2017).

6 Sebeok's ethnosemiotics

Sebeok was, as a linguist and ethnographer, and later as a biologist, inclined to subscribe to Sapir's stronger form, leaning against, as most social scientists, the weaker form of Whorf's linguistic relativity. Sebeok modernized the old living speech of the indigenous Amerindian speech to be transcribed into relatively comprehensible text in writing. To pursue this project, Sebeok traveled to the frontier between European Russia and Asian Siberia for ethnographic fieldwork

with the Cheremis. Sebeok's 12 articles (written from 1950 to 1960) about Cheremis (Mari) verbal art were later assembled in *Structure and texture: Essays in Cheremis verbal art* (Sebeok 1974). As a linguist, Sebeok "read" the grammar of the texts and artifacts, but as an ethnographer he brought the alternative meaning of Finno-Ugric language together with the indigenous context for ethology and folklore.

The cultural context followed later (Sebeok 1974: 96 fn1, see 96–105), when the statistical method of content analysis had been replaced by the implicit content of the magic in folklore and religious life to prove the special organization of Cheremis culture. Sebeok structured a bridge between verbal behavior and other folk beliefs in his book *Studies in Cheremis: The supernatural* (Sebeok and Ingemann 1956). This cultural "experiment" included the political context with the Soviet Union, when politics was involved in the Cold War with tensions between East and West. Sebeok's Cheremis articles explained the magico-religious folktale motifs in charms, folksongs, and prayers as they structured the local environment of the mostly non-literate Cheremis people. The Cheremis (Mari) country had fallen into political alignment with the Soviet Union and had to adopt the Russian Communist regime to govern the recent Mari Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. For the Soviet authorities, the Cheremis region became an outpost operated by Soviet Communist Party to carry out military and administrative personnel.

According to a non-political bulletin of the Soviet Press (1930, published in Paris), the Red Army and the Leninist Trade Unions ordered special campaigns from the Communist Party to carry out "antireligious propaganda" against the counterrevolutionary character of "priests, preachers and deacons," as well as workmen of the "coal mining districts" and laborers "in the building trade, cutting of wood" – these political campaigns were called the "Union of Militant Godless" (Klepinin 1930: 8–14). Following the expansion of Russian communism, the Cheremis people had to learn the Russian language in "collective schooling" (Klepinin 1930: 11). If they were unwilling, the Party sent a "visiting brother" to the membership to strengthen the fighting spirit of laborers and peasants (Klepinin 1930: 7). The Russian re-education meant that the native language of the Cheremis people became a mixture of spoken forms, encoded first in native Cheremis speech and then, for formal speech, altered into Russian language. Religious sign behavior was forbidden for the Marxist–Leninist revolution, and the Cheremis moved from surface activity to focus around the underground practices of solitary shamans, who sought to revive the native spirit of Cheremis people. The mother tongue of the Cheremis population grew obsolete within half a century.

From Sebeok's linguistic viewpoint, the Cheremis' historical culture was implanted into a set of old habits concerning the mere "echo" (Heller-Roazen 2008: 176, see 12, 190) of native speech. Sebeok followed the varied pioneering approaches of Franz Boas, Gregory Bateson, Vladimir Propp, and other thinkers who

were precursors of cultural semiotics in anthropology. He also included Roman Jakobson's argument for the heart of research to embrace a study of literary poetics. Poetics as such was not confined to verbal art but introduced different cultural behaviors into the semiotic principles of Saussure's method of phonology – now reversed into the more dynamic doctrine of Peirce. Peirce's logical semiotics could interpret the religious charms, folksongs, and prayers relying on the imaginative process of abduction of the Cheremis people. Peirce's "search for meaning in differentiation, movements, ambiguity, and tension" (MacCannell 1979: 152) of verbal and nonverbal signs started the process of semiosis in the broadest sense – including the interaction of tone and token to type. In the Introduction of the Cheremis articles, Sebeok reminded himself that, in that time, "These raw materials now incidentally provided me with a sterling opportunity to reconsider problems of poetic language in the widest sense, indeed, to experiment freely with some of the ideas that had simmered since my student days, then were catalyzed for me by Jakobson and my subsequent readings" (1974: VIII).

In the late 1950s, Sebeok's bold attempt at re-organizing cultural research led to interdisciplinary studies that brought techniques from "structural anthropology, folklore, and philology to bear, to explain the origin of a myth" (1974: X). Sebeok's "real" mythology was the solution to the struggle of differences and divergences in ethnosemiotics. His first purpose as a practical ethnographer was to reveal to the Western world the sacred or divinely inspired (that is, locally cultural) speech-texts of the Cheremis people. This project decoded and recorded the historical, functional, and formal dimensions of the indigenous knowledge of the Cheremis, through the narrativity of one of its members. As a polemicist of semiotics, Sebeok's second intention was to state that Cheremis communication and conversation were the coded psycho-cultural forms of their native culture. Sebeok's methodological inspiration to write a general theory of signs aimed for anthropology and linguistics culminated in his dedicated work that created the *Research Center for Language and Semiotic Studies* at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, a special niche in the multidisciplinary style of semiotics.

In his *Style in language* (1960), Sebeok collaborated with anthropologists Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson, Mary Catherine Bateson, Weston La Barre, Charles F. Voegelin, and other scholars to publish somewhat later the unified volume *Approaches to semiotics* ([1964]1972). In his later work, Sebeok's propositions promoted the cultural argument of anthropology-within-ethnosemiotics, drawing on the weaker version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Sebeok also supported research on the authenticity of the gestural sign languages of Native American and other indigenous languages (Sebeok and Umiker-Sebeok 1979). In his biological approach, Sebeok demonstrated how the origin of human speech

was the communicative gesture behavior reproduced from animal vocalization to the paralinguistic replication of human speech.

Sebeok's third project was an unreal dream in the 1950s. When he realized 14 of the 22 vol of the series "Current Trends in Linguistics" (1963–1976; Deely 1995: 85–87) in the early 1960s, Sebeok's vision became reality. The international introduction of Peirce's doctrine would broaden the horizons of science at a later date, but Sebeok implanted semiotic insights, enabling anthropologists, folklorists, linguists, philosophers, and psychologists to move away from the symbolically oriented view of anthropology (Ogden and Richards 1946) into indigenous semiotics. Their efforts to update the old symbolics with more general approaches renewed ethnographic interest in native studies. Anthroposemiotics inserted a metaphorical "filter" into the "genetic code" between the organism and its environment (Sebeok [1974, 1977]1985: 302–304). Sebeok reproduced the linguistic and cultural knowledge of all groups in his combinations of anthroposemiotics with zoosemiotics.

In this venture, Sebeok was immensely aided by the publication of the eight volumes of Peirce's *Collected papers* from 1931 to 1958, which greatly enhanced Sebeok's exposure to semiotics. Through his publications, both Sebeokian and Peircean semiotics became better known to contemporary scholars across a wide swath of disciplines. Peirce's doctrine of semiotics made Sebeok's publications known to contemporary scholars. The "semiotic" view went beyond Saussure's final limit of "symbolic" signs to include the tokens and tones of zoosemiotic forms in biosemiotics. In his view, sign behavior must also include the varieties of iconic and indexical signs to personalize the human conditions of feeling, action, and thought, and coloring the variety of speech habits of every natural species in our animal and human society. Sebeok's legacy to semiotics was Sapir's social and Whorf's psychological language encompassing native as well as cultural habits of speech and language.

7 Linguiculture

This remembrance of Thomas Sebeok's jewels of semiotic wisdom is the commemorative story of linguiculture. To preserve his memory, this article offers the epiphany of linguiculture as the legacy to Sebeok. The history of language-and-culture was first described as local parochialism of language and culture, ignoring the geographical, social, and emotional details of both terms; but those questions have been preoccupying language speakers, on and off, for a long time, so it is time to give a fresh reply. The perspective of those questions ended in the innovative

semiosis of anthropology in language-with-culture – in other words, linguiculture (modified from Anderson and Gortée 2011).

Semiotically, the term linguiculture joins Peirce's two semiotic forces – passive sign, active object – for words and sentences to give a future interpretant with a cultural background. In this process of reception and interpretation of linguistic messages, Peirce's three categories of tone, token, and type reached the close unity of semiosis. This allows a marriage of “rational” syntax together with “irrational,” nonlinear patterns of semantics inclusive of cultural phenomena. The structuring of the term linguiculture points to how the transmitter of the message can communicate (interpret, translate) the alien words, sentences, or discourse spoken by a sender in the culturally strange environment of the ethnographer's fieldwork. Linguiculture constructs a true and more faithful sense to weigh and balance up the values of language-with-culture than the passive combination of language-and-culture.

The term “linguiculture” may be coined from language and culture to suggest the language-with-culture with direct connection at a cognitive-intentional-intuitive level beyond that of the relative openness of language. Linguiculture delves from the surface to the deeper status of the background information of culture. This term aligns with the weak version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, but the analogy must not be pressed too far. The term linguiculture signifies language-with-culture. Linguiculture modifies Whorf's relative patternings of code theory into Sapir's concept of culture. Michael Agar's original phrase “languaculture” (1994a, 1994b) was derived from the emerging anthropologist Friedrich's brief introduction of the term (1989: 306–307.) (Risager 2006: 110–114), so that this seldom-used earlier term meant language-in-culture despite being labeled language-and-culture, as scientific jargon without offering any clear precision for scientific ideas. This unwelcome aspect of Agar's epigram “languaculture” masks a number of conditions, such as the background of the lexical item, the complexities of the grammar, and the sound–meaning relations of the dual formation of the compound.

Agar used “languaculture” in analyzing data assembled during his anthropological fieldwork. He discussed the patterns of linguo-cultural expressions, happening in personal (low-content) or collectivistic (high-content) messages. The variety of examples mediate between “good” and “bad” qualities of intercultural communication going on between Americans with Mexican and Austrian German interlocutors crowded in public transport, to signal to each other compelled by circumstances. Agar's book *Language shock* (1994a) is full of stories from his fieldwork, composed as conversational anecdotes taken from the speakers' “biography, the nature of the situation they're in, history, politics” (Agar 2006). Agar's narrative stories are meant to enrich the goings-on of the conversation, but the

cultural narrativity lacks an underlying methodology to give strength to the flow of thought. Positive points were how Agar, in his ethnographical conversations, encountered a number of puzzling but enlightening “rich points” (1994a, 1994b) to build a barrier. In his late lecture “Culture: Can you take it anywhere” (Agar 2006), he singled out words with cultural differences between both languages, exposing the intersubjective relation of cultural sides in the linguistic message. From the misunderstandings may arise the total meaning in language-with-culture.

Agar’s less-formal catalogue of “rich points” is a vague phrase with unclear boundaries, but through the formal development of mathematics and statistics, he featured pure abstract algorithms used to accomplish new choices. Appearing in random invariants of narrative stories, Agar’s informal narrative forms could be re-doubled from elementary sequences of words (signs) to experimental rules with logical movements or velocities triggering a reaction on the part of the receiver (signals). From high to low probability (as in traffic lights, see Voigt 1995), the “rich points” reorganize the information by adding alternative experiments to embellish and intrigue the storytelling. Agar’s popular name of “rich points” can be replaced by a “stochastic process” in which the total information is not a literary and typical target, but depends on all kinds of probabilities, producing a random message (Shannon and Weaver [1949]1978: 10–12, 40–43). The parlous meaning must be guessed at, since Agar’s stories extended the meaning in two layers. These were using the storylines as linguistic rule, but also adding atypical, intuitive comments mentioned within one culture but not understandable by other cultures (Sebeok ([1994]1999: 22–24).

Agar’s “linguaculture” enfolds domains such as political economy, ideology, and language, where speech interacts with variant patterns taken from cultural forms and categories (Friedrich 1989: 309 fn.). For Friedrich, culture ruled aesthetic, physical, religious, and ethical life, including political life – thereby influencing human behaviors. He openly states that his method, Marxist–Leninist semiotics, is not to everyone’s taste, since it is often emphasized as a manipulative formalism with institutionalized power, agreeing with the political ideology, prejudice, dogma, or belief of communism (as in Friedrich 1989). The metaphorical support of Marxism was widely used in early years, but political implications are not used in Agar’s early writings (see Williams ([1976]1983: 73–75). The relevant term of linguaculture, introduced at the end of Friedrich’s article (1989) is entangled in a labyrinth of Marxist problems, but does not receive the fully deserved attention of groups of scholars it would need to become useful.

Within anthropology, “linguaculture” is, despite the two recognizable terms (language and culture), an “awkward” term for the author himself (Agar 1994a: 60). The hardly pronounceable formation of two words, taken together in one compound, as well as its derivation from Friedrich’s political term “linguaculture,”

presents a challenge to the resources of science, and the term is difficult to pronounce as well. Not surprisingly, both “languaculture” and “linguaculture” have remained unfamiliar terms, perhaps handicapped by the struggles of their linguistic etymology. It seems that the first unit, language, must be affixed to the second, culture: the word order of the two nouns is crucial for the compound, since the main stress is on the first element while the second one falls into non-stress. “Culture” remains untouched and can easily be pronounced, although the first element must change to modify the lexical category into a connective or quasi-connective link of both speech units joining with the attached cultural clues. The connection between both units preserves a sense of a strange diphthong.

Agar’s construction of “languaculture” exposes constructive and destructive criteria to form one word. The rules for the combination of the single compound is a free form acting positively for two separate nouns as summarized by Kenneth L. Pike’s *Phonemics*: (1) special arrangements of stress patterns, (2) special phonological changes, (3) special orders in which the morphemes occur, and (4) morphological inflection of the total combination ([1947]1964: 167). However, the negative criteria of joining two words to the symmetrical compound are plentiful and, for Pike, difficult to solve in a practical way. Pike gave the chief points in: (5) the impossibility of modifying some elements by a normal phrase, (6) the affix between the two words might be unknown, and other reasons to consider the compound a rare form difficult to use ([1947]1964: 167 including fn. 1).

Agar’s compound “linguaculture” has a conflicting phonemic system. First, the loan words recognize the origin of the two words. The adoption of two terms involves an abbreviation of “language,” reducing it to the stem, “*lingua-*,” to bind together with “culture”; or else it may be “languaculture” deriving etymologically from the Latin root “*lingua*” (English: tongue), half-translated into French, to make “*langue*.” Second, the compound must be accompanied by some added symbol which indicates that it is unassimilated, making the connection clearer and easy to pronounce. Third, the affix “a” contrasts the more definite first element with stress with the non-stressed second element “u.” The long and tense vowel combination “ua” causes confusion, as the diphthong sounds in English like an ominous derivative in French or Italian style (Malmberg 1963: 38–39). As a creative tongue-twister, the stress pronounces the rhyme (or better, off-rhyme or pseudo-rhyme) of two words spreading too strongly over the repeated sounds “a” and “u.” Fourth, in terms of meanings, the two-syllable words go upwards sounding as an ironic and poetic compound of a two-part codification. Friedrich’s “linguaculture” delivers the same oddness of an unfamiliar combination, but the Latin root stays intact to suggest the intended meaning of the compound.

Alternatively, the proposal of “linguiculture” contrasts the more definite first element with the second element, so that the connection between both speech

units is clearer and easier to pronounce. Yet the proposal remains a creative combination. The Latin root “*lingua*” is the first stressed element, while the centering diphthong “ui” changes the timbre: from the lax vowel with minor stress, it goes upward to the second element with stress (Malmberg 1963: 38–39). The diphthong adds the “normal” affix “i” to focus on the normal inflection of “linguism,” “linguist,” and combining forms “linguistic,” “linguistics,” “linguistician,” and other familiar forms. In this one special word, thanks to the crosswise alliteration in “Linguiculture,” is reorganized the fact that linguistic culture and cultural language are not of native origin but created in such a way that they are logically created and phonemically modified, so that both parts of the consonant “l” and the vowels “i” and “u” fuse into one compound noun. In addition, the first primary stress of “Linguiculture” is weakened (less stressed) to give the second stress the coordination of higher and lower pitch making it more easily pronounceable. In direct opposition to the trend in mainstream culture toward greater specializations, shifting away from the old fragments and patterns of linguistic reality to a more organic view, linguiculture makes direct links across different disciplines – connecting, in Thomas Sebeok’s case, linguistics with anthropology.

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Bionote

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