What "from Chomsky on" means: reflections on language and lexicon

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Abstract— The aim of this research is exploring some insights connected to what has been discussed in previous articles concerning revisions of linguistic work and linguistic and cognitive depth. We expect to see what is really going on in the mind when it comes to phenomena related to syntax, lexicon, thought processes etc.

Index Terms— consciousness, lexicon, memory, prayer, reality, structure, syntax.

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1 INTRODUCTION

SINCE early generative grammar, linguistics has made a way to explain not only language but also thought processes, with a major contribution to cognitive science. When we say thought processes we mean that and beyond, with much effort devoted to what has (almost) not been said. We refer in this case to linguistic and cognitive phenomena beyond what we previously called "the surface", meaning that depth we have always been looking for.

In that sense, if we can find some kind of "depth" in ideas of non-conventional nature (like the concept of "prayer"), it will help us understand, in an indirect way, what the mystery of language consists of. The consequence in this case is leaving fundamental theory and (potentially) authors behind, with the hope and duty of exploring the mysteries of language, finally.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Lexicon

Lexicon is the set of "fixed" expressions in a language, meaning conventional expressions with the status of units (Geeraerts & Cuyckens, 2010). It is also a component of a natural language (Thelen, 2012).

From a connectionist view, it is thought to be organized in complex networks (Välimaa-Blum, 2011).

2.1.1 Lexical units

Lexical units are those having both a unitary meaning and a referential unit (Cifuentes *et. al.*, 2011). They are certainly deeper than research has thought to this point (Alvarez, 2018).

2.2 Syntactic structure

Syntactic structure is one of the essential properties of natural language (Gutt, 2014). It brings together words and constituents being apart on the surface, so they can combine appropiately (Kanazawa *et. al.*, 2011).

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3 DISCUSSION

3.1 Lexical memory

The word "prayer" is a sample showing we need a deeper conception of language (Alvarez, 2018). There is no doubt it has mysterious, unknown properties. In this sense the word "prayer" may have properties allowing us to understand how language works, how words are stored, and how these two things interact[1].

If we go beyond lexical analysis, we can say "prayer" is not only a lexical unit with lexical meaning. It may be the genesis of a new way of conceiving concepts, even theoretical ones.

All this has to tell us something about how words are stored in lexical memory, if it actually exists the way we conceive it. Based on the special word we have been discussing, what would a new conception of lexical memory look like? Maybe like a fuzzy system in which more possibilities of non-conventional communication can take place.

3.1 Lexical nature and conceptual ambiguity

If we have the formula $[x \neq "x"]$ and apply it to the word "prayer" vs its "reality", we will tell words have subtle meanings beyond denotation and connotation (take the case of $[words \neq "words"]$ for example).

Quotation marks have the potential not only to express the lexicalization of a concept but also to relativize in some way the validity of a word conceptually uttered. We do not need references for this because it is common sense.

In that sense we can talk about words or "words", meaning we refer to apparent words which are not that in the true sense of the "word".

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[1]It has to be noted the word "prayer" has different manifestations in many particular languages, for example Spanish ("oración"), French ("prière"), Italian, etc. This is a necessary clarification since we are not discussing English linguistics but linguistics in general. "Prayer" in that sense, is just an example appropriate to the conventions of scientific communication but it does not have properties other than could be found in its translation to different particular languages. We state the word "prayer" has special properties but considering the content of this footnote.

Likewise, we can talk of prayer, or "prayer" and then an ambiguous phenomenon occurs: we do not know for sure if we refer to the word "prayer" or a relativization of the concept. But if we do not know —we are the carriers of the information, who does?

And then another ambiguous phenomenon occurs: we do not know if there is a "competence" problem in the explanation or this is the beginning of a highly complex world of linguistic phenomena. We go for the most interesting option, the second.

Besides, "prayer" in the sense of a concept relativization, could mean a fake or superficial execution of the concept in the real world. We cannot take religious examples in this case because that would take us out the research realm but it is still worth mentioning.

Then, it still remains the question, what is "prayer"? After the very question has been raised, we realize the only way to answer it is tending to take it as a lexical unit, in the ways explained in previous paragraphs.

However, it is not advisable to isolate the unit "prayer" from the potential "reality" it may refer to. In this sense, language is not only "related" with communication but it IS communication under certain conditions.

3.2 Syntactic considerations

If p is prayer and "p" is the word "prayer", we have two statements we can work on. They can be shown as it follows:

i) p is prayer
ii) "p" is the word "prayer"

From this point on, there are two explanation lines to be taken. The first is prayer structure, and the second consequences for communication. Both of them will be explored.

3.2.1 On prayer structure

If we take the first example "p is prayer" and form a syntactic tree out of it, we can have the following syntactic diagram of the sentence:

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        S

     /     \

  NP        VP

   |       /   \

   p      V     NP
          |      |
          is    prayer
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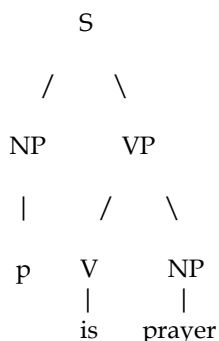
Rather than having a preconception of what is going on in this case, we will explore the analysis little by little . First, we have the word "prayer" in the final position in this case, NP.

Some computations could be established from now on. First, there is not much to do between the word "prayer" and letter

P in NP, the category the word "prayer" belongs to. We could initially think, though, there is actually something to do between them, since the word "prayer" begins with letter P[2].

Now, if we focus on the actual meaning of letter P in this syntactic tree —phrase, we can tell it potentially relates to the word "prayer", meaning we can refer to phrase structure but also to "prayer structure".

Now, if we want to explore what "prayer structure" should mean in this case, we have to go deep into the process of prayer itself, from a linguistic perspective through the word "pray". In this case, "pray" is part of a wider structure, expressed by Alvarez (2018):

Flavorless salty ideas pray unconsciously

"Flavorless salty ideas" is a meaningless noun phrase performing the process of prayer within layers of the mind beyond consciousness (Alvarez, 2018). To this point, despite some explanations, the notion of "prayer structure" is still without a meaning. That can be aimed at being solved by exploring the following example:

Prayer structures pray unconsciously

This example is even more puzzling than the one previously shown. It basically says the structure of a mysterious, non-standardized means of communication itself performs the act of that means.

We can see from this example we do not need a meaningless sentence for it to be highly puzzling, and we know this. We can say when the puzzle borders our cognition, we can still find some sentences with semantic content.

Maybe this has to do with semantics a little, in an indirect way. Maybe prayer structures, conceptually speaking, have a meaning beyond syntactic structures inasmuch as they process the mysterious means of communication we have been discussing.

3.2.2 Consequences for communication

If i) and ii) are true, we have the question of whether p generates "p" or "p" generates p. If we consider "p" generates p, which is the most interesting though provisional possibility[3], we can get into the mind to conclude this: words generate reality (if reality is "real" or can be conceived that way).

What does this tell us about the phenomenology of the world? At first glance, probably not much. We may even be tempted to conceive a world in which lexical units are the prime generators of objects outside linguistic realm, conceptually at least (Cifuentes *et. al.*, 2011).

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[2]Initially there could be no reason to make the connection between a word and its first letter but from an algebraic point of view, it makes perfect sense.

[3]It has to be pointed out the possibility explored here is analyzed within the linguistic realm, from which some deductions can be made.

It has been said communication, reflected in words like "prayer", has mysterious properties or ways of moving (Alvarez, 2018). However, if we take the speculation factor expressed by Alvarez (2018), which is the word "maybe", we can attempt to state this: maybe there is no mysterious connection, nothing is based on remote means of communication.

Even with a concept as deep as prayer, it looks like the mysterious connection that seemed to exist between humans, is just a conceptualization within a singular mind, in the sense of one cognitive system.

And still, within one cognitive system alone, the word "prayer" and the concept itself could, hopefully, regain or at least try to create a new connection, different from the one thought before.

And once this connection is made, hopefully outside the single cognitive system realm, we may be able to develop a new way of thinking and connecting to people, and most likely the basics for a new way of living, where mysterious connections play an important role in our lives.

4   CONCLUSION

In this article we explored in-depth what had been presented in recent research related, basically the duality prayer/"prayer" and linguistic-cognitive depth. It was found language can be communication under certain conditions. It was also found syntactic structure may not be ultimate, and that it probably hides semantic content.

It remains the question of how what we called "prayer structure" can be further developed and defined. Some considerations on the mysterious dynamics of language were also explored.

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