

Conceptualization of the Terms *Parole* and *Discours* in the Autograph Texts of Ferdinand de Saussure

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Abstract. This paper aims to analyze all textual uses of the terms *parole* and *discours* in non-canonical but authentic (as opposed to “Course of General Linguistics”) materials written by Ferdinand de Saussure in “Écrits de linguistique générale” [Saussure 2002] and edited by Simon Bouquet and Rudolf Engler. The publication includes the manuscript of the monograph “De l’essence double du langage”, drafts of lectures and articles, as well as several diary notes of Saussure. My task is to conceptually verify the terminology of the Swiss linguist in comparison with the traditional use of these terms and their translations into Ukrainian, Russian and Polish languages.

Differentiation of the concepts of *parole* and *discours*

The concept of speech as an actual processual being within language activity (*langage*), fundamentally separated from the concept of language as a static systemic form of being of semiological information in language activity (but not opposed to it), was mistakenly attributed to single volitional acts of oral speech –*parole*. This misunderstanding probably arose in the process of the compilation of “Course in General Linguistics” compiled by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, who ignored the whole group of conceptually significant terms that Saussure (as evidenced by his manuscripts) used to denote speech as a communicative act within the language activity. This includes the term *discours*, the derived adjective *discursif/discursive* and the noun *le discursif*, which originated as a result of the substantivization of the adjective.

In Saussure’s handwritten works, I found 25 uses of these terms (I ignored those cases where the form *discours* was part of the cliché *partie du discours* “part of speech”). This may seem to represent a small quantity compared to the frequently used terms *langue* and *langage* but it is quite significant if we compare it with the 33 cases of the use of the term *pa-*

role. Herewith, 11 uses of the terms *discours*, *discursif/discursive* and *le discursif* occur in the manuscript of the above-mentioned monograph and notes found in 1996. The term *parole* in these materials occurs 10 times, which indicates the parity interpretation of these terms by Saussure. Thus, researchers of the scholar's manuscript heritage have been able to note that Saussure himself, when discussing the problem of the use of language as a tool of interpersonal communication and expression of intentions by individuals, used not only *parole* but also *discours* and *le discursif* regularly. Therefore, it is difficult to explain why neither R. Godel in 1957 nor R. Engler in the critical "Course" paid due attention to this terminological peculiarity of Saussure's conception.

However, in one article, V. G. Kuznetsov noted that "the word *discours* occurs in the manuscript sources of the "Course". In the 2nd course of lectures, *discours* is defined as a 'speech chain' and opposed to one's 'internal thesaurus, memory' [Godel 1957: 259]. Preparing the "Course", its publishers replaced *discours* with *parole*. Saussure used the adjective *discursif* to mean 'syntagmatic' (2nd course), in the collocations 'discursive order' (1st course) and 'discursive units' (2nd course) [Кузнецов 2006: 114].

The very use of the terms *parole* and *discours (le discursif)* does not yet indicate their conceptual distinction. In some cases, the terms are used in one sequential line, which could indicate their categorical similarity (in which case one complements or specifies the other) or their synonymy (in which case such usage should be a simple rhetorical figure of strengthening, which is unlikely given Saussure's predisposition for subtle conceptualization). In addition, one should consider Saussure's skeptical attitude toward synonymy:

Si la linguistique était une science organisée comme elle pourrait l'être très facilement, mais comme elle n'est pas jusqu'à présent, une de ses affirmations les plus immédiates serait : **l'impossibilité de créer un synonyme**, comme étant la chose la plus absolue et la plus remarquable qui s'impose parmi toutes les questions relatives au signe [Saussure 2002: 265].

Thus, it is unlikely that Saussure, who put so much effort into clarifying the conceptual nuances that distinguish language activity from language, language from speech, sign from phonetic figure, states from events or semiological phenomena from physiological ones, would unconsciously use the terms *parole* and *discours (le discursif)*. Moreover, he considers these concepts separately – the concept of *parole* in Chapter 17 of the monograph "De l'essence double du langage" *Parole effective et parole potentielle* and in the note *Langage – Langue – Parole*, and *le discursif* – in the note *Le discursif, lieu des modifications – Divisions de ce livre*.

In the second note, we find the following passage (distinctions are mine – O.P.):

Toutes les modifications, soit phonétiques, soit grammaticales (analogiques) **se font exclusivement dans le discursif**. Il n’y a aucun moment où le sujet soumette à une révision le trésor mental de la langue qu’il a en lui, et crée à tête reposée des formes nouvelles (par ex. calmement [...]) qu’il **se propose, (promet) de «placer» dans son prochain discours. Toute innovation arrive par improvisation, en parlant**, et pénètre de là soit dans le trésor intime de l’auditeur ou celui de l’orateur, mais **se produit donc à propos du langage discursif** [ibid. 95].

In this fragment alone, we have several important conceptual aspects:

- 1) discursive sphere (*le discursif*) is a place of innovation,
- 2) it coincides temporally with the procedure of speaking (*en parlant*),
- 3) It is a source of input for new information into the mental repository of the language (*le trésor mental de la langue*),
- 4) Such input into the language system with speech innovations applies equally to the speaker (*l’orateur*) and the listener (*l’auditeur*),
- 5) discourse (*discours*) is the target field for the use of these innovations by participants in future communication; finally,
- 6) the sphere of discourse is directly related to the processual and action aspect of the language experience, i.e., to *langage discursif*.

It is easy to see that the described discursive sphere has, *first*, a processual character; *second*, an interactive character; *third*, a correlation with the language both in terms of cause-and-effect (as a source of innovation) and as a target (as a sphere of language realization).

Instead, if we read carefully the fragment of the monograph on *parole*:

Nous appelons syntagme la parole effective,
 – ou la combinaison d’éléments contenus dans une tranche de parole réelle,
 – ou le régime dans lequel les éléments se trouvent liés entre eux par leur suite et précédence.

Par opposition à la parallélie ou parole potentielle, ou collectivité d’éléments conçus et associés par l’esprit, ou régime dans lequel un élément mène une existence abstraite au milieu d’autres éléments possibles [ibid. 61],

we have to admit that this is not so much about the sphere of actual linguistic being (as was the case with *discours* or *le discursif*), but about a specific act of expression that actually takes place in the here and now (*parole réelle*) and is realized in the form of syntagms, i.e., linear structures (*parole effective*), built on principles of mutual sequences of elements (*par leur suite et précédence*). And this real act of expression is clearly set in opposition to the so-called

parallelism (abstract systemic relations) dominant in the language and so-called potential expressions (*parole potentielle*), also referred to as linguistic models of expressions.

Therefore, it seems rather strange that, developing the scheme of Godel-Slyusareva, O.S. Kubryakova proposed adding additional speech acts, not only as specific manifestations of speech as such (*discours*) but also as an independent element. In addition, in Kubryakova's proposal, language activity ceases to be the unifier of all forms of language experience but rather becomes a metaphysical entity opposed to speech acts based on the opposition between "what is not directly observed" and "what is directly observed" [Кубрякова 1986: 8]. The scheme proposed by the Russian scientist has a rather strange appearance:



It seems that the opposition "language-speech" (like social and individual) has an identical relation to both language activity and speech acts, and this leads to very significant consequences of a conceptual character:

- first, speech here can be interpreted as an individual form of language (i.e., as that very language, only an individual one, an idiolect);
- second, language understood as a purely social essence rather than a spoken one, acquires a metaphysical essence (and can exist outside a human being);
- third, if speech continues to be interpreted as a processual function, rather than an invariant system, it turns out that speech is something fundamentally different in its nature than speech acts (and Kubryakova herself notes that speech "consists of individual acts of communication");
- finally, in the same case, it will turn out that speech, along with and on par with language, is a factor in the emergence of speech acts, and, therefore, must be a substance that does not arise as a result of speech acts (contrary to the Saussure's concept).

Moreover, the opposition of language activity and speech acts removes the latter from *langage*, which is strikingly contrary to the views of Saussure himself. This interpretation turns Saussure into a Hegelian or Marxist-metaphysician because it equates unknowability with the inability

to observe in a sensory experience. According to Saussure's conception, it is impossible to observe the informational side of speech activity; it is only possible to directly observe physical signals. In this way, language becomes a substance that is completely hidden from observation but can be studied through its manifestations in speech (i.e., in expressions- *parole*). Language activity is a panchronic function both in time and space: the human experience of language communication, therefore, can neither be observed nor known in its entirety. This does not change the fact that this integral function is a full-fledged object of linguistic research: the inability to cognize language activity does not mean it cannot be studied. It must be studied through various methodologies, each of which provides its own picture of the object.

Paradoxically, after the introduction of such a tetratomic construction of human language experience, Kubryakova equates speech and language activity (*langage*, in traditional terminology-*речевая деятельность*), referring to the L.V. Scherba's understanding of this term, resulting in the following picture:

речевая деятельность is, in our opinion, such a set of speech actions and speech operations on the part of the speaker who creates speech (speech act) and the listener who perceives it, which is caused by certain needs, sets a specific goal and is carried out in specific conditions [ibid. 10].

Thus, speech acts are identified with speech, and speech, with speech activity, in the process of which (according to Kubryakova) "language is used." As a result, only speech and language, as its source, remain from the Saussurean scheme (since speech activity is "not so much the use of language as the appeal to language and its inexhaustible possibilities" [*ibid.*]). The problem of socialization or, moreover, historical development practically disappears and the problem of language as a factor in language activity, in general, is taken out of individual experience. In fact, this is a dualistic model of a metaphysical pattern, since, at its center, lies the permanent process of creation and perception of expressions (individual processualism), and the role of the background is performed by the metaphysical language system to which speakers, from time to time, "turn to" (social substantialism). One can only assume that individual (separated in time and space) speech acts are mechanically formed into a holistic speech activity due to this metaphysical nationwide source. However, such a picture has nothing to do with Saussure's understanding of language as a psychic function of the socialization of a specific human personality. This interpretation is most likely the result of unfamiliarity with Saussure's manuscript heritage.

Therefore, it is necessary to turn to the source and consider the contexts in which Saussure used these terms to understand what he called *parole*, and what he referred to as *discours (le discursif)*.

Conceptualization of the term *parole*

The most important characteristic of *parole* in the conception of F. de Saussure is the acoustic-articulatory nature of this function of human language experience. Let's consider several contextual uses of this term in Saussure's manuscripts. The following fragment is about the ability to pronounce, to articulate speech sounds:

À supposer même que **l'exercice de la parole constituât chez l'homme une fonction naturelle**, ce qui est le point de vue éminemment faux où se placent certaines écoles d'anthropologistes et de linguistes, il faudrait encore absolument soutenir que l'exercice de cette fonction n'est abordable pour la science que par le côté de la langue ou par le côté des langues existantes [Saussure 2002: 146].

The term *parole* is used here in the context of considering the natural obligatory nature of articulatory signaling (which Saussure denies), which provides for other possibilities (such as gestures), but these other methods are not *parole*. Therefore, the use of the Russian *речь*, Ukrainian *мовлення* or Polish *wypowiedź* as equivalents of *parole* is problematic because in these languages it is quite possible to use the constructions *письменная речь/письмовое мовлення/вypowiedź pisemna*, and for Saussure such combinations were impossible. He discusses the same problem by considering the linear nature of the sign as a form. Comparing the articulated sign with the written one, Saussure writes:

Difficile seulement parce que en revenons à la parole sans nous en douter, quand on offre un autre sémisme [ibid. 111],

that is, the linearity of the form is peculiar only to the articulatory-acoustic sign; the sign of *parole* as a specific oral expression. In Saussure's notes, there is a fragment in which, when discussing methodological differences from the school of comparative studies, Saussure clearly uses the term *parole* to emphasize acoustic-articulatory expression as opposed to written language. In his opinion, the transition (of neogrammarians) from *assemblages de lettres* and *papier* to *parole* and *sujet parlant* was the first step towards the emer-

gence of systemic linguistics, and, although it was not yet the linguistics of language activity, it was already the linguistics of speech as such [*ibid.* 130].

The clearly defined signaling nature of *parole* is also discussed in contexts where this concept is directly related to the semiology and psychophysiology of articulation. This demonstrates that for Saussure, *parole* meant primarily oral expression:

De même, si l'on avait pu non pas photographier mais **phonographier** au jour le jour dès l'origine tout ce qui a été **exprimé en parole** sur le globe...¹ [*ibid.* 157];

Il est de simple évidence que le mouvement ineffectif (non perçu) qui se **produit dans la parole** [*ibid.* 256].

It further emphasizes the processual function and active nature of *parole* as an expression that leaves behind products:

Le style dépend de la lettre, et la stylistique se place de préférence hors de la lettre, **dans la sphère de pure parole** [*ibid.* 272].

“Pure” (i.e., oral) expression here is opposed to the written form of communication.

Analyzing the problem of phonetic and morphological changes, Saussure draws attention to the fact that the first of these phenomena *représente le côté physiologique et physique de la parole* [*ibid.* 159], i.e., “belongs to the physiological and physical aspect of speech”, and this once again emphasizes acoustic-articulatory nature of *parole*.

When Saussure defines the subject field *la théorie de la chaîne sonore* (“sound sequence theory”), he writes about the sequence of elements in expression (*quelconque d'éléments dans la parole*) (*ibid.* 239). In Note 3305, he reproaches some English and Norwegian scholars for paying less and less attention to the sequence of speech sounds in a particular act of speech (*la juxtaposition des phonèmes dans la parole* [*ibid.* 245]); in other words, he recognizes the oral nature of *parole*.

These examples convincingly show that the term *parole* in Saussure's conception means **the act of oral speech** (expression) as a basic form of human speech signaling.

The second typological feature of *parole* is its specific individual character. The specificity of the phonetic units of *parole* (as an oral expression) is discussed in the fragment:

¹ The Russian translation emphasizes the phonetic nature of the concept of *parole*, where the word is translated as *говoreние* [Соссюр 1990: 140].

Les faits de parole, pris en eux-mêmes, qui seuls certainement sont concrets, se voient condamnés à ne signifier absolument rien que par leur identité ou leur non-identité [ibid. 32].

Also interesting is the word combination in which *langage* and *parole* are distinguished “in general” and “in particular” (while *langue* and *parole* are opposed rather as “in the system” and “in use”): *chaque élément du langage et de la parole* [ibid. 76].

Only in superficial reading does the phrasing seem illogical: from a formal-mathematical point of view, what is in *parole* should automatically be in *langage*). The general context shows that not only is each element of generalized language activity subject to different visions and interpretations, but each element of each individual speech act (expression) is also.

Parole as a volitional act of a particular individual is opposed to language as a passive accumulation of socialized information:

La langue est consacrée socialement et ne dépend pas de l'individu. Est de l'Individu, ou de la Parole : a) Tout ce qui est Phonation, b) tout ce qui est combinaison – tout ce qui est Volonté [ibid. 299].

We have previously considered the social status of language in the sense of sanction and its imposition on the individual (in society it appears through synergetic, passive convention, and in the individual through traditional sanctions imposed by the environment), but *parole* is a single act of a speech expression of will. In this note, we come across a dual distinction between language and the act of speech as *passivité sociale and volonté individuelle* [ibid.], i.e., as social passivity and individual expression of will but not as social and individual being.

Finally, it is worth quoting those passages equally well-known as the phrase about the need to study language “in itself and for itself”:

Dans le langage, la langue a été dégagée de la Parole, elle réside dans [...] l'âme d'une masse parlante, ce qui n'est pas le cas pour la parole [ibid. 333]

Quand on défalque du Langage tout ce qui n'est que Parole, le reste peut s'appeler proprement la Langue et se trouve ne comprendre que des termes psychiques [ibid. 334].

Here it is very important to correctly interpret the rhetorical figure used by Saussure for visualization of the difference between the socialized passive system of language and the multitude of individual acts of speech. Only inattentive reading (or ignoring) of Saussure's autograph texts can lead to the interpretation of these phrases as a statement that language activity structurally consists of two independent parts – *langue* and *parole* – which can be

separated from each other or attached to each other as things. The formulation about the purification of language or the subtraction of speech, in this case, cannot be interpreted in any way other than as an abstraction because it is not about homogeneous physical things. Instead, it refers to, *first*, two diverse information functions – system-static and processual, and, *second*, two ontological beings – psychic and psychophysiological (acoustic and articulatory). In this latter sense, the Saussurean pair *langue* and *parole* is very similar to the Baudouin pair of *cerebration* and *phonation* [Бодуэн де Куртене 1963, I: 144].

It is worth noting a certain problematic character of the concept of *parole*. It may seem that it lacks the function of perception (acts of listening – *auditioning*). However, in Note 3335 we find not only the expression *chaîne de parole acoustique* (“chain of acoustic expression”) but also the discussion of several problems related to the perception of oral expression. This is not the only place where the receptive side of the act of speech is considered. In his monograph and notes, Saussure describes the phonetic sphere (adjacent to semiological speech) as *le domaine de l'acoustique, ou de la physiologie* [Saussure 2002: 20; 26], *le terrain physiologico-acoustique* [ibid. 23], and among its units he distinguishes *acoustiquement l'impression* [ibid. 27], *impression acoustique* [ibid. 241; 244; 247–248; 325], *image acoustique*² [ibid. 248; 330], *sensation acoustique* [ibid. 248], *effet acoustique* [ibid. 140; 238–241; 326], *identité acoustique* [ibid. 32], *entité acoustique* [ibid. 32], *unité acoustique* [ibid. 142; 243; 249; 326], *série d'actions (physiologico-acoustiques)* [ibid. 197], *fait acoustique* [ibid. 238–239; 249; 253], *figures acoustiques* [ibid. 249; 256], *chaîne acoustique* [ibid. 325]. It functions not only in articulation procedures but also in *la transmission acoustique* [ibid. 112], and it must be considered within *de la physiologie et de l'acoustique* [ibid. 27], *discussion physiologico-acoustique* [ibid. 24], *au point de vue physiologique et acoustique* [ibid. 27], *d'après des caractères physiologiques et acoustiques* [ibid. 182], as well as within the auxiliary discipline of linguistics – phonology. All Note 3283, devoted to phonology, actually considers speech both in terms of its physiological and acoustic realization in the form of signals. Thus, although Saussure interprets this whole sphere as non-linguistic and non-semiotic, this is

² It should be emphasized that the term *image acoustique*, which due to its use in the „Course” has become one of the most popular terms in the so-called „Saussure’s theory of sign” (you can even say a conceptually basic one), is used by Saussure only as one of many terms and very rarely. In all published manuscripts we found only 3 cases of its use, which can not even be compared with much the more commonly used terms – *impression acoustique*, *effet acoustique*, *fait acoustique* or *unité acoustique* – not to mention the conceptually key term for Saussure’s theory – *figure vocale* – which combined both sides of phonation – acoustic and articulatory).

the necessary signal substrate in which speech is realized. For Saussure, both aspects of speech signaling – active (physiological) and receptive (acoustic) – were quite balanced, and both are directly related to acts of speech (expressions) – *parole*. In addition, in Note 3303, he clearly states that they must be obligatorily combined into a phonological whole (as none on its own is relevant to speech):

ni le fait mécanique ni le fait acoustique, situés chacun dans leur sphère, ne représentent le fait phonologique, dont nous sommes obligé de partir et auquel il faut revenir; mais que c'est la forme continue de leur corrélation que nous appelons fait phonologique [ibid. 238];
 Dans la conception qui nous guide constamment, ce qui est phonatoire s'oppose aussi bien à ce qui est simplement mécanique qu'à ce qui est simplement acoustique. C'est la correspondance [d'un mécanisme et d'un acoustème] [ibid. 250]³.

In Saussure's conception of speech acts (expression), unfortunately, there is no parallel to what in modern linguistics is referred to as internal speech; in other words, there are no processes of semantic coding and decoding. In any case, this is not explicitly stated. However, such a claim cannot be made unambiguously, as there is a fragment in the notes that clearly shows that Saussure considered the sentence to be a unit of both *discours* and *parole*: *la phrase n'existe que dans la parole, dans la langue discursive* [ibid. 117], and he interpreted a sentence as a grammatical (syntactic) and semiological unit. Thus, for an expression (*parole*) to contain a sentence, it must, *first*, be the product of grammatical language and semantic (and not just phonetic) coding, and, *second*, it must be of grammatical and semantic value (have a meaning).

Conceptualization of the term *discours*

In the context of Saussure's *parole*, it is difficult to speak of such an effective linguistic function as the text because expression is a single act of speech, and the text must be a coherent and meaningful set of such acts and their products important not only for the speaker but also for the recipients. This not only refers to written text but also to oral text (speech, story, longer remark in a conversation, etc.). It is unlikely that Saussure, who

³ Again, we can draw a parallel with the views of Baudouin de Courtenay, who saw in each phonetic fact two sides – *acousme* and *kineme* [Бодуэн де Куртенэ 1963, II: 199].

attached so much importance to the social aspect of *langage* and insisted on the empirical and social origins of language as a system, did not understand that a language system without grammatical-semantic interaction would not facilitate communication or that communication could not be reduced to the production and perception of single external oral expressions (*parole*). In my opinion, this gap should have been completely filled by the term *discours*, and it is this term and not *parole* that should be translated into Russian as *речь*, Ukrainian as *мовлення*, and Polish as *мова*.

In Saussure's works *le discursif/discours* (in isolated cases *langage discursif* and *langue discursive* are also used) is presented as a sphere of proposals and grammatical forms and opposed to the system where words exist in invariant integrity:

Tandis qu'il faut une analyse pour fixer les éléments du mot, le mot lui-même ne résulte pas de l'analyse de la phrase. Car la phrase n'existe que dans la parole, **dans la langue discursive**, tandis que le mot est une unité vivant en **dehors de tout discours** dans le trésor mental⁴ [Saussure 2002: 117];

Donc le mot n'a pas pour premier mode d'existence d'être un élément de phrase, il peut être considéré comme existant «avant» la phrase, c'est-à-dire indépendamment d'elle, ce qui n'est pas le cas pour les éléments du mot vis-à-vis de l'unité du mot. Au reste, même **dans le discursif**, il y a cent cas où on est amené à prononcer un mot, non une phrase (tous les vocatifs entre autres) [ibid.].

Le discursive is a sphere of human socialization and the internalization of language as a system. It is clear that we are speaking about communication and social interaction, that is, speech:

toute la langue entre d'abord dans notre esprit **par le discursif**, comme nous l'avons dit, et comme c'est forcé. Mais de même que le son d'un mot, qui est une chose entrée également dans notre for intérieur de cette façon, devient une impression complètement indépendante **du discursif**, de même notre esprit dégage tout **le temps du discursif** ce qu'il faut pour ne laisser que le mot [ibid. 118].

As we can see, in all these fragments *le discursif* is where both sentences and other semiologically meaningful units function, and therefore, this is the sphere in which grammatical and semantic functions are realized along

⁴ In the Russian translation [Сочиня 1990: 159] B. Narumov creates both redundant synonymy and homonymy of terms, using *дискурс* or *речь* as an analogue of *discours/discursif*, while in other places of the work he uses the term *речь* as an equivalent to *parole*. In this way, the translator introduces unnecessary terminological chaos into the text, while reinforcing the prevailing myth in linguistics that Saussure himself did not decide on his terms.

with phonetic functions. It is also not difficult to notice that here the sphere of speech (as a semiologically meaningful interaction) is separated from the language system (as a semiologically meaningful potential).

In Note 3327.2, Saussure speaks of the phenomenon of paronymy, which causes ambiguity in the understanding of units in discours:

Et il faut cette inélégance plantureuse, profonde, volontaire du terme pour que sois supprimée enfin toute voie à la paronymie perpétuelle faisant **dans le discours** l'équivoque [...] [ibid. 258].

In this case, *discours* is clearly understood as communicative interaction because it is difficult to imagine that the similarity of sound was problematic for the speaker because he knows what he means. The problem of paronymy can arise only because of the similarity of the form of semantically non-identical units in the recipient. In other words, *discours* is, first, speech as communication, and *second*, speech as the operation of semantically and grammatically meaningful units.

Discussing the problem of speech, as opposed to the language system, which includes reproducible lexical signs, Saussure asks:

À quel moment ou en vertu de quelle opération, de quel jeu qui s'établit entre eux, de quelles conditions, ces concepts formeront-ils le DISCOURS? [ibid. 277].

This shows that, *first*, he distinguishes the processual sphere of speech, which he calls *discours*, from the state of language, and *second*, he anticipates the participation of meaningful units of language in its creation. He concludes his reflections with an explicit distinction between speech (*discours*) and language (*langue*), given the principle of combining meaningful units into series in speech and the absence of such combinations in language (using modern terminology, it is about predicative and semi-predicative relations between lexical units in the text and their actual nominative properties in the language system):

C'est la même question que de savoir ce qu'est **le discours**, et à première vue la réponse est simple : le discours consiste, fût-ce rudimentairement, et par des voies que nous ignorons, à affirmer un lien entre deux des concepts qui se présentent revêtus de la forme linguistique, pendant que la langue ne fait préalablement que réaliser des concepts isolés, qui attendent d'être mis en rapport entre eux pour qu'il y ait signification de pensée [ibid. 277].

Of course, it would be an exaggeration to say that Saussure thought through absolutely every use of his terms. In manuscripts we occasionally

come across semantically irrelevant contexts in which both the term *parole* and the term *discours* could be used equally:

La difficulté qu'on éprouve à noter ce qui est général dans la langue, dans **les signes de parole** qui constituent le langage...⁵ [ibid. 265];
Notamment elle comporte deux parties: l'une qui est plus près de **la langue**, dépôt passif, l'autre qui est plus près de la **parole**, force active et origine véritable des phénomènes qui s'aperçoivent ensuite peu à peu dans l'autre moitié du langage [ibid. 273].

In these cases, we have the usual opposition of the system to the process of communication and expression of intention, thereby confirming that, from the ontological point of view, *parole* and *discours* are not two fundamentally different entities, but rather the same. They should not be divided on the principle of "phonetic – semantic" because, just as *parole* may include semiological units (forms of words and sentences), the speech sphere also includes actual phonetic units – *phonetic figures*, *aposemes*:

Je crois que **dans le discursif** on peut parler d'aposemes (de figure vocales)⁶[ibid. 105],

that is, the units that generally have nonlinguistic, nonsemiological character.

The difference between these concepts is only quantitative. If *parole* is a single act of speech, then *discours* is a speech act that connects such acts into the integral unity of actual language communication.

Thus, the term *parole* should be translated as *усне висловлення* or *мовленневий акт*, and *discours* as *мовлення* because the concept of speech must anticipate communicative-expressive interaction, and it is present in the meaning of the term *discours* as a conversation. *Parole* is only a one-sided and one-time act of will. For this reason, Saussure insisted that its nature

⁵ Compare the Russian translation «Трудность, возникающая при выделении общих особенностей языка, общих особенностей знаков речи, которые образуют язык (language) ...» [Соссюр 1990: 199]. It is necessary to emphasize the conceptual error of the Russian translator. In this case, the point is that both the specifics of language and the specifics of speech together constitute language activity. Here it is absolutely impossible to translate language as *язык* because the phrase becomes illogical.

⁶ In Russian translation «Я полагаю, что в дискурсивном ряду можно говорить об апосемах (фонетических фигурах)» [Соссюр 1990: 149] introduction of the term *дискурсивный ряд* is generally conceptually permissible but introduces additional meaning into the semantic field of the Saussurean text. In such cases, it is necessary to indicate the original term in parentheses so that readers understand that it is a speech space, i.e., *le discursif*.

is individual, which is not the case with *discours* as a clear social interaction; in this case, we always mean either influence or a response to influence, i.e., the bilateral nature of lingual contact is always anticipated. It is important to point out the difference in the regularity and multiplicity of procedures in *discours* and the singularity and detachment of *parole*. It can be assumed that the Russian translators of “Course in General Linguistics” made a mistake, but, paradoxically, correctly solved the problem of the global structure of *langage*. Why and how did it happen? Most likely, they were influenced by the fact that *langue* is a static system, *parole* is the dynamics of language use in communication, and together they should give a general empirical social activity – *langage*. If we understand *parole* in a purely Saussurean way, we actually lose communication, intercourse and interaction. Hence, translators could have hypothesized that conceptually the role of the second aspect of *langage* should not be separated from expressions (speech acts) or some completely non-communicative aspect, but rather the purely expressive speaking process, a certain holistic communicative phenomenon. That is why the usual Russian word *речь* appears in the translation. It not only carries the semantics of procedurality, but also sociality, i.e., communication, intercourse; it has integrity and regularity. So instead of the word *parole* in the Russian translation of the “Course” there is *речь* – wrong in terms of translation, but accurate in conceptual terms. Ironically, Russian translators were more far-sighted than Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye. They introduced into scientific circulation the idea according to which *langage* is structured into *langue* and *parole* – and it “stuck”. But, reading, for example, the note “Note sur le discours”, we can say with equal success that, according to Saussure’s theory, *langage* is a combination of *langue* and *discours*:

La langue n’est créée qu’en vue du discours, mais qu’est-ce qui sépare le discours de la langue, ou qu’est-ce qui, à un certain moment, permet de dire que la langue **entre en action comme discours**? [ibid. 277].

In his structuring of speech, Lev Scherba went one step further and divided the holistic essence “речь” into “речевая деятельность” (purposeful and regular activity) and “языковой материал” (text, expression as a resultant phenomenon) [Щерба 1974]. However, reading the “new” Saussure, it turns out that he understood the internal structure of speech (and language activity as such) differently than not only Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye but also Scherba. Distinguishing between individual and socio-holistic aspects of language use in the processes of semiological interaction, he used *parole* for individual acts of oral expression and *discours* for holistic interactive function, structured not only by individual procedures but also by texts

(speech structures) in their communicative interaction. Therefore, it is possible to assume that the first to introduce the word *discours* into French scientific circulation as a term to denote speech in its social dimension was not E. Benveniste, as it is sometimes suggested, but Ferdinand de Saussure himself. It is worth noting that Saussure used the term *parole* primarily to emphasize the acoustic-articulatory, phonological nature of speech acts, while to emphasize the semiological, and therefore grammatical and semantic integrity of communication, he used the terms *discours/le discursif*.

The last aspect to consider when examining the concepts of language (*langue*) and speech (both in the aspect of *discours/le discursif* and in the aspect of *parole*) is their temporal nature. Whenever Saussure emphasizes the temporal nature of language, he speaks of idiosynchronicity, systematicity, state or parallelism, but he always presents speech as an event, process, and its temporal status as diachrony or sequence/following (*identités transversales*). The reason for this distinction is the acoustic-articulatory nature of speech acts, in the process of which phonetic units follow each other in time, creating phonetic figures or acoustic chains, as well as larger syntagms – *parole effective*. Speech, even in its integral dimension – as *discours/le discursive* – cannot be removed of this property. As phonetic units must follow one another, so semiologically related signs (word forms) and their combinations (sentences) must, according to Saussure, be subject to the same principle. However, the grammatical and semantic aspects of *discours/le discursif* and *parole* can only be understood from the standpoint of idiosynchronic systemic relations prevailing in language. Thus, even when we want to study sentences or texts, we must do so from the perspective of language as such (*point de vue de l'état de langue en lui-même* [Saussure 2002: 21]). If we are interested in the purely phonetic (acoustic-articulatory) flow of speech, devoid of semantics (both lexical and grammatical), such research should take place from the diachronic (i.e., purely phonetic) side – *point de vue des identités transversales, non différent du point de vue diachronique, non différent du point de vue phonétique (...), non différent aussi du point de vue des éléments isolés* [ibid.]. And since all changes in language appear only in speech, diachronic research as a type of study of speech acts has been confused by the compilers of the “Course” with historical research. Unfortunately, due to the misinterpretation of Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, the differences in linguistics between the ideosynchronic nature of language (semiological systematicity) and the diachronic nature of speech (phonetic sequence) – which, according to Saussure, should be studied by a systematic or diachronic method – the stereotype of two types of language research has gained a foothold and we now refer to synchronic (study of the current state) or diachronic (study of historical change) research. It is difficult to

understand why none of the “Course” researchers noticed that there are two sections in the paper – one on diachronic linguistics (devoted to phonetics) and one on retrospective linguistics (devoted to the history of language)⁷.

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⁷ For more on the analysis of this and other aspects of Saussure’s concept, based on the handwritten of the scientist, [see: Просьяник 2018, Prosiannyk 2021], whereas for the problems of translation of the considered terms into Polish, [see: Лещак 2010а; Лещак 2010b].