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自由的追尋：閱讀雅克慎閱讀索緒爾

The Pursuit of Freedom: Reading Jakobson Reading

Saussure

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摘要

　　本論文奠基於二十世紀八零年代以降所盛行的文本閱讀，重新檢視索緒爾〔Ferdinand de Saussure〕的語言學理論。和先前相關文獻不同的是，本論文以比較的角度出發，探討雅克慎〔Roman Jakobson〕對索緒爾理論的創造性誤讀和再現。從很多方面看來，雅克慎的理論都是索緒爾的延伸或修正：他的隱喻和換喻〔metaphor and metonymy〕取代了索緒爾的聚合關係和組合關係〔syntagmatic and associative relations〕，他的傳達模式〔scheme of communication〕取代了索緒爾的言語交流圖〔speaking-circuit〕。本論文主張，雅克慎的這兩個取代顯示了某種理論的轉向；他意圖達成對索緒爾語言學理論和規範的超越，從而得到論述的自由。在本文中，作者爬梳雅克慎對索緒爾的挪用，整理出兩項論述的方向：一、雅克慎將索氏的理論重心從較缺乏可動性的聚合系統移到較富創造力的隱喻模型。二、雅克慎打破了索氏以語言系統〔langue〕為主，言語〔parole〕為輔的架構，將語言符號系統收編在溝通理論之下。本論文試圖以兩者理論的和解做結，強調雖然雅克慎似乎沒有真正進入過索緒爾及其支持者的論述當中，但是他的語言學理論無可避免地必須從對索緒爾的閱讀出發。也就是說，索緒爾的《普通語言學概論》〔Course in General Linguistics〕是雅克慎創造性誤讀的基礎，而非應當被揚棄的過時理論。

關鍵詞：索緒爾，雅克慎，語言學，符號學，自由

Abstract

    With the rise of "reading" as a textual practice in the early 80s, reading Saussure

has gained much popularity. This thesis intends to join the fray and reread Saussure

from a special angle: it aims at examining Roman Jakobson's creative (mis)reading of

the *Course* and his "development" of Saussure's models. Jakobsonian theory can be

seen in many ways as the revision of certain Saussurean ideas: his

metaphor-metonymy pair replaces the associative and syntagmatic relations; and his

six-factor scheme of communication substitutes the speaking-circuit. This thesis

argues that the two theoretical refinements demonstrate a shift of critical attention that

strives to make possible a transcendence—a liberalization of the Saussurean rule of

game. With the goal of pursuing freedom at heart, the thesis scrutinizes the two

Jakobsonian refinements respectively. The first refinement reorients the discussion

from an old focus, i.e. the fixed syntagmatic system, towards a new one, i.e. the more

creative metaphoric pole. The second reorganizes the relationship between *langue* and

parole, a relationship first proposed by Saussure. It places code (*langue*) in a model of

communication (*parole*) rather than the other way around, as Saussure's

speaking-circuit once does. These findings show that a certain pattern emerges out of

Jakobson's theoretical project: a certain intention to break free from the *Course* seen

as the authorial text of modern linguistics. This thesis ends, however, with the

reconciliation between Saussure and Jakobson, suggesting that although Jakobson

misreads Saussure in places, that although Jakobson seems to remain on the outside of

Saussure, his theory must depart from the Geneva master. In other words, it is

Saussure's works that enables Jakobson's creative misreading.

Keywords: Saussure, Jakobson, linguistics, semiotics, freedom

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Introduction: Readings of Saussure

Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (*Cours de linguistique générale*) has

become, since its publication in 1916, a highly honored masterpiece of modern

linguistics, and in many senses the very first one of that founded discipline. Modern

linguistics, as opposed to previous practices which study language change, opts for

the structure of not just one particular language, but human language in general. To be

more precise, the major purpose of a "course in general linguistics" is to uncover a

universal linguistic apparatus shared by language users from different language

communities. This universal linguistic apparatus, however, should not be confused

with Chomskian Universal Grammar: whereas Universal Grammar hypothesizes the

commonalities regarding the manner of syntactic formation, the universal linguistic

apparatus deals with the operative aspects of language seen as "a system of signs"

(Saussure, *Course* 16).

If language is a system of signs as Saussure proposes, its composing

elements—phonemes, morphemes, semes, words, phrases, sentences, etc.—must then

abide by the interactive rules laid out by the system itself. Those rules are the rule of

game: they discipline the participants of the game and ensure the stability of the

system. Between the intentions of the participants and the demands of the system, a

certain tension appears: how free can the participants be without threatening the

integrity of the system? Greimas explains such tension in terms of the tension

between "choice" and "constraints" (61). The participants are offered a set of choices

for them to freely choose from, yet they are at the same time bound by a set of

constraints. So long as the participants are within the game-field, they must follow the

rules which limit choices and pose constraints. The pursuit of freedom in the aforesaid

situation becomes a pursuit of limited freedom, a freedom that can only realize itself

within the given boundaries.

The limitedness of freedom in the part of participants guarantees the functionality of the whole system; nevertheless, it is not the only take on the issue at hand. For many participants, rules are made to be broken. They detest hegemony, abhor control, and abominate the lack of activity, creativity, and possibility. These are the people who do not play by the rules. So there are basically two kinds of participants. One indulges themselves in the game, choosing from a limited number of choices and deeming the constraints necessary for the continuation of the game. The other remains detached in relation to the game-field, observing the rules and craving for creative violence that would disregard, counteract, or even demolish the whole system. The former group of participants analyzes the structure of the game to the most thorough degree; they dissect it again and again until further division becomes unthinkable, and they make sure that all bits and pieces fit into the system and that the system functions smoothly. By contrast, the latter group of participants awaits the fissures and cracks of the system; they look for bypasses, inner contradictions, and total eradication.

The two kinds of game participants, the traditional and the rebellious, correspond to the two trends in Saussurean criticism. The traditional trend holds Saussure's teachings dearly: it has tried to fight back critiques along the year so that a certain theoretical integrity can be maintained. The rebellious trend starts from reading Saussure and ends with some other discourses of its own. More often than not, the traditional preserves the system, whereas the rebellious makes use of it for unorthodox, and often innovational, purposes. This thesis is caught between the two trends of Saussurean criticism. On the one hand, it reads Saussure, at least parts of Saussure, as faithfully as possible. On the other hand, it sees Saussure through Roman Jakobson's glasses, and this biased reading leads to the betrayal of the original

Saussure. How can one thesis be loyal and disloyal to one theorist simultaneously? This is where the ambiguity of the subtitle—Reading Jakobson Reading Saussure—comes in handy. Not only is the present thesis a reading of Jakobson's reading of Saussure, it is also the reading of both Jakobson and Saussure. When the situation requires that the thesis provide an account of Saussure's concepts in a certain context, the thesis strives to represent them as closely as it can by making reference to Saussure's writings, students' notes, etc. When it is time to pursue the non-limited freedom, the thesis becomes critical and reads Saussure from outside of the Saussurean game.

Seen from the inside or the outside, Saussure's influence has been tremendous, and commentaries upon him have proliferated. With the rise of "reading" as a textual practice in the early 80s, reading Saussure has gained much popularity. This trend of reading Saussure started with Roy Harris's book (1987) bearing the title, and was carried on by Paul Thibault's *Re-reading Saussure* (1997) and by French scholarly writings such as Michel Arrivé's "*Le* Cours de linguistique générale*: modeste essai de relecture* [The *Course in General Linguistics*: A Modest Essay of Rereading]" (2007). This thesis intends to join the fray and reread Saussure from a special angle: it aims at examining Roman Jakobson's creative (mis)reading of the *Course* and his "development" of Saussure's models, notably the two relations in the language system and the speaking-circuit.

Describing the relationship between Saussure and Jakobson as continuous, or as a development, is an act that demands much clarification. Some may raise the question concerning the term "development" itself: it is haunted by the progressive view of history and the Darwinian idea of evolution prevalent in the nineteenth century. Therefore, it must be explained beforehand that the thesis adopts the term "development" without any of these denotations: I present my argument in a linear

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fashion for the purpose of suggesting the possibility of a comparative reading between certain ideas formulated by Saussure and Jakobson. The thesis is not intended to be a typological study of language theories; it is more like a discursive exercise that seeks to find the similarities and differences between the two theorists. Saussure's precedence over or anticipation of Jakobson does not matter much in the thesis—what lies at the center of my argument is that Jakobson's way of presentation and his formulation of certain ideas appear more free, in the aforesaid sense, than the counterparts in the Saussurean theory. This statement about freedom, then, should not be regarded as a holistic judgment of either Saussure's or Jakobson's work. The second concern is related to the false but necessary assumption of a unified Saussurean or Jakobsonian theory. Both theorists grew and continue to grow even to this day. They are caught in a network of interpretations and re-interpretations that renders a sealed verdict of their contributions and limitations impossible. To complicate this relationship, student notes were compiled in 1968/1974 and some of Saussure's manuscripts were discovered in 1996. The emergence of new materials—first the student notes and then the Orangery manuscripts—challenges Jakobson's, as well as other critics', reception of Saussure. A re-evaluation of both the critiqued and the critique becomes inevitable. However, this thesis will not focus on revising Jakobson's criticism of Saussure; instead, it will stick to the perhaps outdated consensus of the Saussurean theory, i.e. the Saussure in *Course*, and will only offer a glimpse of the Saussure in *Writings* when necessary. Such deliberate arrangement does not seek to victimize Saussure, condemning his writings to be idealist, static, and asocial by ignoring all the evidence in *Course* and elsewhere that will clear him of the three charges. The blame actually falls more on Jakobson than on Saussure. The injustice done to Saussure comes from the fact that Jakobson develops Saussure's ideas by "pick[ing] out particular statements in which he is interested" without giving

a comprehensive analysis of Saussure's thoughts (Harris 96). Therefore, the only legitimate way to study the relationship between Saussure and Jakobson must be one based on this fragmentary (mis)reading of Jakobson's.

This thesis contains four chapters. The first chapter examines Saussure's idea of sign. The Saussurean structure of the sign makes the criticism of Saussure's idealist tendency an inevitable result: the semiological system imagined by Saussure can be nothing but highly abstract. The second chapter argues that Jakobson's pair, metaphor and metonymy, refines Saussure's syntagmatic and associative relations. The pair not only draws attention to the two functions of language—combination and selection—but also enlightens on how a sign becomes an utterance, i.e. how a purely linguistic, mechanical device becomes a communicative, social phenomenon. The third chapter proceeds to include what is termed "*parole*," [1] focusing mainly on Saussure's speaking-circuit. I will try to show that it is possible to find the time factor in the speaking-circuit. What happens in the process of communication takes not only real time but also discursive time; however, the speaking-circuit remains idealist, in that it neglects the real world, and asocial, in that the individual speaking subject's importance is never wholly recognized. The fourth chapter serves to remedy the idealist, static, and asocial aspect of Saussure's speaking-circuit by providing a link between Jakobson's communication scheme and the former. Although Jakobson's six-factor diagram still belongs to the structuralist camp, it leaves much more open space for unpredictable events to take place than the old, closed system of signs does. What's more, with the six factors identified, the communication scheme becomes applicable to other semiotic fields, and thus making border-crossings possible.

Before we plunge into a detailed analysis, let us briefly define the idea of freedom used throughout the thesis. Technically speaking, the idea of freedom serves as the antithesis of the idealist, static, and asocial aspects of the Saussurean theory. A

free theoretical construction, thus defined, is one that is not idealist, not static, and not asocial. This binary way of grouping aligns idealism, stasis, and a-sociality with restriction and limitation and henceforth, non-freedom. Such negative definition of freedom requires further explanation of the three terms involved—"idealist," "static," and "asocial"—and each one of them comes from a certain type of Saussure criticism. To begin with, Derrida categorizes Saussurean semiology as idealist:

> The notion of the sign always implies within itself the distinction between signifier and signified, even if, as Saussure argues, they are distinguished simply as the two faces of one and the same leaf. This notion remains therefore within the heritage of that logocentrism which is also a phonocentrism: absolute proximity of voice and being, of voice and the meaning of being, of voice and the ideality of meaning. (11)

Perhaps the preliminary question one might ask is what the three pairs of "absolute proximity" really mean and how the concept of idealism relates to the idea of logocentrism. For me, the three pairs—"voice and being," "voice and the meaning of being," and "voice and the ideality of being"—can be seen as depicting three manifestations of voice: its materiality, its worldly referent, and its ideality. It is the last pair that is of much relevance to our discussion. Derrida seems to suggest that all meanings must possess an ideal dimension. To avoid over-complication, it suffices to know that some philosophers before Derrida equate the establishment of human knowledge with the idealization of the real world; during the process of acquiring knowledge, the human subject subsumes the world under his or her intellectual regime. In this sense, logocentrism—or "the self-presence of full self-consciousness," as Spivak explains—becomes the synonym of idealism (lxviii).

The Saussurean theory of language is logocentric not so much because of its focus on the sign but because of its participation in a tradition of metaphysics. The

tradition "always assigned the origin of truth in general to the logos" and excluded forms other than speech (*phonos*) from the scene (Derrida 3). What has dominated metaphysics for centuries, i.e. logos, obtained its right to reign precisely because it was deemed to hold the key to truth. Indeed, the history of philosophy from Plato to Hegel manifests such problematic emphasis; logocentric discourses may have some truth in them, yet they definitely are not the whole story. Derrida strives to prove logocentrism inappropriate, and his postulation about absence carries out the usurpation quite successfully. It is true that various modes of being—*eidos*, cogito, consciousness, or the existence of sign—require presence; however, every presence must entail an absence. Culler illustrates this inevitable absence with an old paradox: the flying arrow. The arrow is said to be in motion, yet at any given moment during the flight it stays still as if its tendency to move forward suddenly disappears. "Motion is present," Culler concludes, "only if the present instant is not something given but a product of the relations between past and future," i.e. between components in a differential system (*On Deconstruction* 94).

In other words, there is no such thing as a "transcendental signified" which stands on its own without referring to a bigger structure of difference. Spivak summarizes this point in the preface to *Of Grammatology*:

> Derrida suggests that what opens the possibility of thought is not merely the question of being, but also the never-annulled difference from "the completely other." Such is the strange "being" of the sign: half of it always "not there" and the other half always "not that." The structure of the sign is determined by the trace or track of that other which is forever absent. (xvii)

By pointing out the existence of a "completely other" that always shadows the presence, and by arguing for the importance of the trace in the formation of a "structure of the sign," Derrida dethrones the dominant logocentric tradition in

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Western metaphysics and democratizes the field of discourse. Center de-centered, structure demolished, free play becomes possible.

From the above analysis, it is reasonable to say that, placed in the context of Western metaphysics, the Saussurean theory of sign falls into the idealist/logocentric tradition. If we consider Saussure's position in the development of linguistics, we will find that his essential formulations, such as the structure of sign and the system of values, lack temporal aspects when compared with Saussure's predecessor, i.e. the neogrammarians.[2] This could be a strategic move. Saussure was born at the time when nineteenth-century linguistics was encountering a methodological lack (*manque*) which Jakobson describes as paradoxical. Jakobson's logic derives from the premise that the science of language, in the eyes of neogrammarians, must be strictly historical; as a result, all linguistic theories before the appearance of neogrammarians, i.e. before the nineteenth century, are not considered acceptable science. Such syllogism leads to the paradoxical conclusion that the historical approach of linguistic study is a science without history:

> *Quand la linguistique du XIXème siècle avec son orientation*
> *rigoureusement historique refuse aux recherches antérieures leur place*
> *dans l'*histoire *de la science proprement dite, elle manifeste ainsi un*
> manque *de sens* historique *véritablement paradoxal.*
> [When the linguistics of the nineteenth century, with its rigorously historical
> orientation, denounces precedent researches in the *history* of the science of
> language itself, it manifests a really paradoxical *lack* in the *historical* sense.]
> ("*La théorie saussurienne*" 394; translation mine)

Instead of following in the former generation's footsteps and working on developing a general theory of language change, which he did brilliantly in his earlier study *Mémoire sur le système primitif des voyelles dans les langues indo-européennes*,

Saussure imagined other possibilities of conducting linguistic studies. He is thus grouped by Jakobson as a member of the "eminent scholars" who "plead for the necessity of a synchronic, static, or descriptive linguistic [approach] in addition to the diachronic, historic, etymologic, or genetic one" ("*La théorie saussurienne*" 395; translation mine).

Jakobson's formulation reveals to us two distinct paths of linguistic inquiry: a theory is either synchronic or diachronic, or both, but often with a detectible inclination. The *Cours* has long been considered purely synchronic, since it openly claims to take language-state (*état de langue*), rather than language change, as its subject matter. However, recent discoveries have suggested that the authentic Saussure never loses sight of the diachronic aspect of language. Studying the remaining manuscripts, Carol Sanders observes that Saussure's original focus was on the historical approach, and this focus was somehow redirected to the other direction, resulting perhaps from the editors' deliberate arrangement of the materials. In fact, the adjective "static" (*statique*) that Jakobson so readily attributed to Saussurean linguistics finds its origin not in "stasis" but in "status." Sanders believes that "'*statique*' here means 'pertaining to state—or *état de langue*' rather than 'immobile'" and maintains that proofs abound in the *Writings* (xxi). How do we reconcile this discrepancy between the two camps, here represented by Jakobson and Sanders respectively, with the former viewing *état de langue* as immobile whereas the latter, as manifesting the potential to freedom? We will leave this debate for now and will resume it in later chapters while bearing in mind that, even though Saussurean linguistics must make a clear cut with its predecessor the historical approach, it might have gone too far as to over-synchronize itself and thus deprived itself of the freedom to transform in time.

The last accusation targets the asocial characteristics of the Saussurean language

system (*langue*). Saussure does provide a social/individual dichotomy, attributing the social aspect of language to *langue* and the individual aspect of language to *parole*. If so, why is he criticized for the asocial characteristics of *langue*? Does it mean that the Saussurean formulation of *langue* also touches upon the issue of individuality and thus nullifies the social/individual dichotomy? Not really. To clarify, this type of criticism does not urge one to see *langue* as an individual act; rather, it highlights the fact that such emphasis on system might leave "verbal utterances [(*parole*)] as social interaction" unattended by theoretical attention (Matejka and Titunik, Preface viii). In other words, the society where the language users live and where the language system perpetuates is ignored. Moreover, Voloshinov argues that the distinction between *langue* and *parole*, and therefore the social and the individual, does not give language system its social significance. It is only from an enlarged view, from the perspective of history, that one can recognize the importance of "individuality and randomness" (Voloshinov 61). His argument follows a typical Marxist pattern: the overemphasis on the stabilized, centralized language system will cause one to lose sight of the creative, emergent force that takes place in the peripheral. Individual creativity of *parole* thus suffers from this "abstract objectivist" tendency apparent in Saussure (Stewart 42).[3]

Chapter One: Saussure's Idea of Sign

The theory of sign entertains a long history, and Saussure is definitely not the first one to propose a model of what constitutes the sign and how the sign functions. This chapter first gives a general survey of the meaning of the term "sign" as understood by ordinary English and French speakers. After that, a brief summary of Saussurean semiology—that a sign consists of a signifier and its signified—is provided. The next step involves a more detailed analysis of Saussurean semiology, in which the search for the time factor appears futile. Finally, a tentative comparison between Saussure and Augustine, whose theoretical projects comprise what Eco calls "general semiotics," is conducted ("Latratus Canis" 65). Because of its care for the real/material world, Augustine's triadic formation of sign, when juxtaposed with Saussure's, appears more ethical and less idealist—for the reason that Augustine manages to address the relationship between ideal existence and physical existence while Saussure fails to maintain the balance between the two.

I

To better understand the word "sign," it is preferable that we start with dictionary and encyclopedic entries. Let me begin by listing some of the related definitions of the word sign: in OED it is "a gesture or motion" of body parts to "convey an intimation or to communicate some idea" (def. I. 1. a), it is "a conventional mark, device, or symbol, used technically [. . .] in place of words" (def. I. 2. c), and it is also the traces of "wild animals" (def. II. 7. e), "diseases" (def. II. 7. f) or "some coming event" (def. II. 9). In French the word bears almost the same signification, but is defined in more technical—and almost Saussurean—ways: it is "something perceived that permits us to decide an existence or a reality (*chose perçue qui permet de*

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conclure à l'exsistence ou à la vérité) or "the element or characteristic of [something] that permits us to distinguish it from others and to recognize it (*élément ou caractère [. . .] qui permet de distinquer, de reconnaître*)" (*Le Robert Micro*, "*signe*" def. I. 1; I. 2; translation mine).

Now, these definitions summarize the most common perception and conception of the word "sign." Three observations can be drawn from the cluster. Firstly, a sign originates, at least in the English culture, in the society and takes up a vital role in interpersonal relationships: "intimation" and "communication," for example. The French definition also dictates the necessity for a sign to form a certain relation with—or to conclude (*conclure à)*—the real world. Secondly, a sign always refers to something outside of itself, to an "existence" like traces of animals or symptoms of illnesses. These traces, symptoms, or, more intriguingly, the "coming" events all manifest an emphasis on the future, on the possibility of an action's completion. A sign, following this thread of reasoning, does not recount history; instead, it seeks to justify itself as a legitimate premonition: the traces should lead a hunter to his preys, and the symptoms should guarantee the confirmation of an illness. These observations amply testify that everyday usage of the word "sign" does not have the slightest connection with the negative criticisms that have been firing at Saussurean semiology.

Beside dictionary entries, encyclopedias seem to portray the term "sign" in the same manner: it is physical, temporal, and social. The following quote from Bouissac's *Encyclopedia of Semiotics* proves this conclusion:

> In scholarly writing, the term *sign* might include, for example, words, sentences, marks on paper that represent words or sentences, computer programs (hard-wired, electronically recorded, or written out), pictures, diagrams, graphs, chemical and physical formulas, fingerprints, ideas, concepts, mental images, sensations, money, postures and gestures, manners

and customs, costumes, rules and values, the orienting dance of the

honeybee, avian display, fishing lures, DNA, objects made of other signs

(including poetry and fiction, even if not considered to "stand for something

else"), and also nonrepresentational objects (perhaps in music or

mathematics) that have types of structure characteristic of other signs.

(Lidov, "Sign" 572)

Although items like "ideas," "concepts," and "mental images" belong to the idealist

tradition, honeybee dance and avian display are doubtlessly far from it. Furthermore,

inanimate objects like pictures, poems, and fictions can generate different

interpretation through the ages. They bear the trace of time. Even those considered as

unalterable truths, say, chemical and physical formulas, are still vulnerable to the

potential revolution in our understanding of the world. Last but not least, sensations,

postures and gestures, manners and customs, and rules and values all have been

shown to be specific in a certain community. This set of examples may not

approximate the social aspect that Marxist critics propose; nevertheless, it does not

structurally hinder one to make a Marxist revision.

II

If the everyday and the semiotic understandings of the term "sign" do not

commit much offense, why, then, is the Saussurean theory of sign criticized as idealist,

static, and asocial? It seems that, from the very beginning of the *Course*, Saussure

excludes any material elements, i.e. the material existence of the object referred in the

real world, and sets out to create a synchronic framework:

The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a

sound-image. The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing,

but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on

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our senses. (*Course* 66)

Saussure soon replaces "concept" with "signified" and "sound-image" with "signifier" to reduce ambiguity, as we are told. The special relationship that signifier and signified form constitutes what Saussure calls "the arbitrary nature of the sign" (*Course* 67). The synchronicity of this theoretical construction becomes more inevitable when Saussure explains the mythological moment of unification between the signifier and the signified:

> The linguistic fact can therefore be pictured in its totality—i.e.
> language—as a series of contiguous subdivisions marked off on both the
> indefinite plane of jumbled ideas *(A)* and the equally vague plane of sounds
> *(B)*.
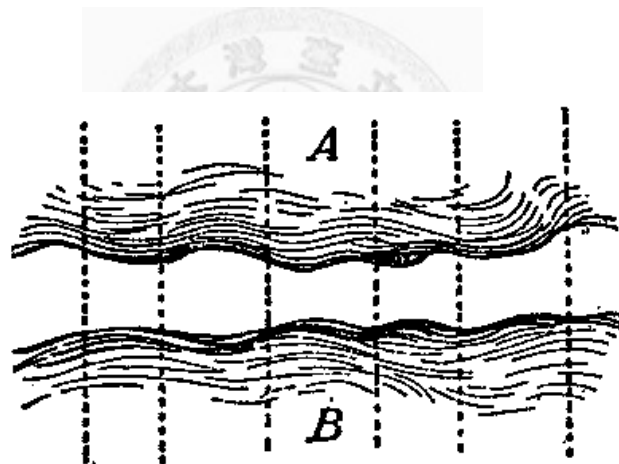
> The characteristic role of language with respect to thought is not to create a
> material phonic means for expressing ideas but to serve as link between
> thought and sound, under conditions that of necessity bring about the
> reciprocal delimitations of units. (*Course* 112)

The quoted passage amply testifies the status of language as a hazardous combination. Signifieds and signifiers from both planes, though seemingly dynamic, end up delimiting each other to form a stable—and somehow inactive—unit. Once the two elements merge into one sign, activity ceases and stability takes over.

Several comments are made specifically on this primordial principle and several

extensions are developed from it; some echo the "static" criticism (Choi's) that we just observe while others reveal the arbitrary principle's idealist inclination (Benevniste's and Arrivé's), and still others claim that more attention should be devoted to the formation of the speaking subject (Jakobson's). To begin with, Choi draws the diagram below to illustrate the idea of arbitrariness in relation to time (78; translation mine):

Outside of the discussion of time	Inside of the discussion of time
Arbitrary nature of the sign, Thus freedom (free choice)	1. Non-freedom (immutability) 2. Alterity (mutability in a certain way)

Choi's diagram integrates several pairs of dichotomy: freedom and non-freedom, outside and inside of time, mutability and immutability, and, one must not forget, the fundamental link between arbitrariness and (non-)freedom. When pictured outside of the framework of time, i.e. when conceived synchronically, the signifier slides freely on the plane of sounds and the signified, the plane of jumbled ideas. The action of sliding takes place only under the circumstance that the time factor is neglected. Once the dimension of time is reintroduced into the system, the mutual delimitation of the signifier and the signified starts to function, and the unification of the two results in immutability and non-freedom. However, Choi does not totally deny the possibility of freedom after mutual delimitation takes place. This partial freedom/mutability he calls "alterity"; we shall see what he means in the following discussion in which not only time, but also space (or linguistic communities), is taken into consideration.

The second group of commentaries, and perhaps the most vigorous of all, concerns the idealist/materialist debate of Saussurean semiology. The first critic to bring this issue to light is probably Benveniste, and with him come Strozier, Holdcroft,

and Arrivé. What appears to be the focus of debate is the following passage in *Course*:

> The idea of "sister" is not linked by any inner relationship to the
> succession of sounds *s-ö-r* which serves as its signifier in French; that it
> could be represented equally by just any other sequence is proved by
> differences among languages and by the very existence of different
> languages: the signified "ox" has as its signifier *b-ö-f* on one side of the
> border and *o-k-s* (Ochs) on the other. (Saussure 67-68)

One of the later versions of *Course*, edited by Tullio de Mauro, provides a lengthy
note that traces epistemologically why this confusing passage can pose a problem to
the overall theoretical project of Saussure. The note reads:

> [Saussure's proposition] is inexact compared with the ultimate development
> of the Saussurean theory, insofar as the signified being uniquely the
> counterpart of the signifier, we cannot speak of a general signified "ox" that
> opposes the signifiers "*b-ö-f*" and "*o-k-s*" but only of a signified "ox" and a
> signifier "*o-k-s.*" (443; translation mine)

The incoherence happens because a Saussurean signified only takes one, never two,
signifier. Saussure's example thus falls into the nomenclaturist tradition from "Plato
and Aristotle" all the way to "Boole and P. Valéry," an idealist tradition that dictates
the antecedence of the material existence over the form of expression, of signified
over signifier (de Mauro 442).

The criticism of the anomaly in Saussurean semiology cannot be dismissed easily,
not without a twist on the original conception. Benveniste, for instance, reconfigures
the structure of the sign and maintains that the connection between the signifier and
the signified is not arbitrary but necessary (45). His argument seems to rest on this:
for the same reality, "*b-ö-f*" and "*o-k-s*" have equal value; neither holds the right to
the denomination of the animal; nevertheless, the mutual delimitation of the signifier

and the signified still remains functional in a given language community. Thus

redressed, the principle of arbitrariness is replaced by the principle of necessity, and

this idea of necessity derives from nowhere else other than the language community.[4]

The signified "ox" can only be connected to the signifier "*b-ö-f*" in French not

because their relationship is arbitrary but because the French community has

entertained an etymological history that finally settles on the "ox"/"*b-ö-f*" pair.[5]

Compartmentalized and historicized, Saussurean semiology is rendered more

relativist. Speaking otherwise, Saussurean semiology becomes less absolutist, thanks

to the time and social factor that are introduced into it.

Even if Benveniste's redress does bring Saussurean semiology closer to freedom

in that it envisions the possibility of the vertical (temporal) and the cross-sectional

(spatial), Benveniste's reasoning paradoxically highlights Saussure's idealist tendency.

We are two steps away from such conclusion. First, Strozier, Holdcroft, and Arrivé all

discern that Benveniste consciously or unconsciously recourses to a third term, i.e. the

thing itself. Second, it is only by borrowing the third term that one can dismiss the

criticism of the anomaly in Saussurean semiology—a curious double edge that, while

ventilating the closed system of sign, reinforces the idealist tradition that Saussure

takes part in. Commenting on a specific passage where Benveniste interprets

arbitrariness into necessity, Strozier writes:

> We must note here the Saussure says there is no natural bond between the
>
> signifier and the signified. But Benveniste is actually in the process of
>
> shifting to the double denomination of the linguistic unit as signified/sign,
>
> which is all that is necessary in the new model. (27; emphasis original)

Strozier calls Benveniste's reading of Saussure an incorrect one, but he also claims

that Saussure would never deny the existence of the real world:

> [Saussure] would readily admit that there is some relation between that

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four-legged beast "out there" and the concept within consciousness; he is

certainly no sceptic, for all of his oppositions. But the concept is both the

initial and final reality, not the external stimulus to the concept. This is

precisely what it means to work within a consciousness model: the contents

and structure of consciousness are assumed to be the fundamental reality.

(27; emphasis original)

Although the reality "out there" appears undeniable, what Saussure cares about,

Strozier maintains, is the reality of consciousness. To be more specific, Saussure does

not consider "external stimulus to the concept," i.e. objects in the physical world, the

true reality: only the "contents and structure of consciousness" matter to him. Such

emphasis on consciousness is undoubtedly a typical characteristic of idealism.

All these been said, we now arrive at the third and the final critique of the

arbitrary nature of sign: Jakobson's. To begin with, Jakobson observes that the

principle of arbitrariness is widely discussed, some for it while others against it:

Meillet, Vendryes, and Bloomfield echo the Saussurean formulation; Jespersen,

Damourette, Pichon, and Bolinger, by constrast, suggest that the question of the

relationship between sound and meaning has never been successfully answered

("Quest" 348). After the literature review, Jakobson singles out Benveniste's

argument:

E. Benveniste in his timely essay "Nature du signe linguistique" (1939)

brought out the crucial fact that only for a detached, alien onlooker is the

bond between the *signans* and *signatum* a mere contingence, whereas for

the naïve user of the same language this relation is a necessity. ("Quest"

348)

Benveniste's argument already taints Saussurean semiology with the third term, as is

discussed earlier; unfortunately, Jakobson's summary quoted above brings in the

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viewpoint of a "detached, alien onlooker," another element not mentioned in Saussure and is only bypassed in Benveniste. What Jakobson does is a shift of perspective: both Saussure and Benveniste embark on their career with a special attempt at systemization, but Jakobson sees the principle of arbitrariness from the perspective of an individual.

Certainly incapable of changing the whole system of language, the individual language user nevertheless is more aware of the existence of the bond between the *signans* and *signatum* in real life than Saussure could possibly imagine. As Jakobson maintains, a Swiss-German peasant woman who expresses her doubt about why the object cheese is called "*fromage*" in French "display[s] a much more Saussurean attitude than those who assert that every word is an arbitrary sign instead of which any other could be used for the same purpose" ("Quest" 349). That is, in a given language community, the "ox"/"*b-ö-f*" pair is no more legitimate than the "ox"/"*s-ö-f*" pair (Holdcroft 53; see note 4 for more information).

The example of Swiss-German peasant woman recalls a specific kind of *signans*/*signatum*, or word/meaning, bond—it is an interlingual scenario:

> Against those who assign meaning (*signatum*) not to the sign, but to the
> thing itself, the simplest and truest argument would be that nobody has ever
> smelled or tasted the meaning of *cheese* or of *apple*. There is no *signatum*
> without *signum*. The meaning of the word "cheese" cannot be inferred from
> a nonlinguistic acquaintance with cheddar or with camembert without the
> assistance of the verbal code. An array of linguistic signs is needed to
> introduce an unfamiliar word. ("On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" 260)

Meaning, according to Jakobson, is a word's "translation into some further, alternative sign"—a process ("On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" 261). To learn a new word, an individual links the word to something his or her language community already has

(intralingual translation) or to some other language (interlingual translation). In the example, the German-speaking woman is comparing her mother tongue "*Käse*" with the French "*fromage.*" Her exclamation "*Käse ist doch viel natürlicher* [*Käse* is much more natural]" points out that, for every language community, the *signatum* has its own *signans* to represent it (whereas the pair signifier/signified is deemed universal). The woman's preference of German over French is actually a declaration of her own identity as a German speaker.

The last point to be made about the principle of arbitrariness is a possible revision of it and of its representation, i.e. the diagram of two planes. As Culler intends to show, the arbitrary nature does not simply describe the very act of combination between signifier and signified; rather, all three elements involved are influenced by it—the act of combination, the plane of jumbled ideas, and the plane of sounds. Culler explains in detail why the traditional interpretation of the arbitrary nature becomes "limited" (*Ferdinand de Saussure* 30). One main reason of such limitedness is attested in acts of translation:

> The French "*aimer*" does not go directly into English; one must choose between "to like" or "to love." . . . English "to know" covers the area of two French signifieds, "connaître" and "savoir." The English concepts of a "wicked" man and of a "pet" have no real counterparts in French. (*Ferdinand de Saussure* 31)

Arrivé reiterates this point:

> Le signifier *bœuf* dans *Ça fait un effet bœuf* ne se traduit pas en allemand par *Ochs*, non plus que le signifier *Ochs* dans *Er steht wie der Ochs am Berge* ne se traduit par *bœuf*.
>
> [The signifier *bœuf* in *Ça fait un effet bœuf* cannot be translated into German by *Ochs,* nor can the signifier *Ochs* in *Er steht wie der Ochs am*

Berge be translated by *bœuf.*] (50; translation mine)

In addition to the interlingual aspects, Culler also writes on how the passage of time can cause a change in the signifier-signified relationship:

> The English word cattle, for example, at one point meant property in general, then gradually came to be restricted to four-footed property (a new category), and finally attained its modern sense of domesticated bovines.
>
> (*Ferdinand de Saussure* 32)

This asymmetry between two languages/language-states not only proves Saussure to be a non-nomenoclaturist, it also indicates that the Saussurean conception of the two planes is not universal but is dependent on both the language community and the flow of time. Therefore, it is possible to have a three-dimensional model with plural planes of jumbled ideas *(A)* and planes of sounds *(B)*. Such model becomes more socialized and temporalized, and thus more free.

The analysis of Saussurean semiology reaching to an end, it is time to find out if Saussure's newly discovered manuscript will help neutralize criticisms. It appears that his "On the Dual Essence of Language," especially the concept of semantics in it, would clear up some myths and would give a more liberal version of Saussurean semiology. For Saussure, a sign acquires its meaning when it enters into a system of difference:

> *Sun*, then, may appear to represent a perfectly positive, clear-cut, and specific idea, and so too may *moon*. However, when Diogenes says to Alexander "Get thee from my sun!," nothing of *sun* remains in *sun* save in opposition to the idea of *shadow*; and this idea of *shadow* itself is nothing more than the cumulate negation of the ideas of *light*, *darkest night*, *half-light*, etc., associated with the negation of what is lit up compared to an area of darkness, etc. (*Writings* 49)

This passage not only describes the negativity of a sign's value, it also suggests a way for a creative interpretation of Saussurean semiology all together. As one notices, Saussure starts from a single word "sun," and claims that it is negatively defined by ideas of the same category. However, all Saussure can do is to enumerate examples of those ideas; the two cases of "etc." are in fact the tell-tale sign of a possible theoretical getaway. It is true that a sign cannot stand on its own; when a second sign, be it the opposite of or in relation to the first one, appears, the semantic field is divided by two; when the third sign appears, the semantic field is further segmented. The same mechanism can repeat over and over to the degree that the territories of the later signs are a lot smaller than the earlier signs, i.e. the earlier signs are more meaningful, in a particular sense of the adjective, than the later signs. This difference in the "square measure" of a given semantic field can lead to the discussion of metaphor, of how a meaning expands or shrinks. We will leave this to the next chapter.
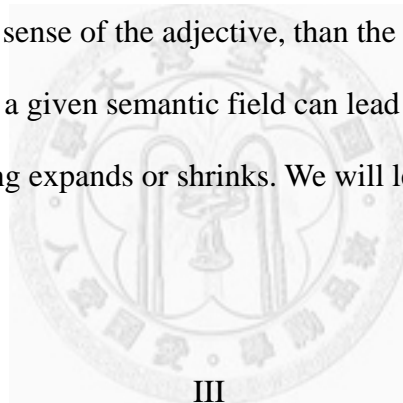
<div align="center">III</div>

After the (re-)construction of Saussurean semiology, one arrives at the point where the unit of sign should be explored, and such task is best to be done by comparing Saussure with Louis Hjelmslev. Hjelmslev writes about the structure of language as "a system of *signs*" which consists of two main categories "expression units" and "content, or meaning" (*Language* 32). The wordings vaguely echo Saussure's formulation of signifier/signified, yet the two sets are not quite equivalent. One of the differences is the difference between "units" and signifier. The signifier is always a word for Saussure,[6] while the "unit" may indicate something other than a word. Before launching into the concept of unit, I deem it crucial to explain Hjelmslev's exposition of the two categories: expression and content. According to

Hjelmslev, there are three expression elements, instead of three expression units, in the word "pat"—p, a, and t, respectively. This chain of three elements, ordered as such, has a content element "attached" to it (*Language* 32). By replacing any one of the expression elements, a new meaning emerges:

p a t

s a t

r a t

t a t

p e t

. . .

The above list can go on for quite long, with numerous possible combinations—17,576 alphabetical chains in fact, if English phonological rules are disregarded. Some of the chains like p-i-d or p-g-t, as Hjelmslev discusses, may not possess a corresponding meaning.[7] In those cases, we can only affirm the existence of expression elements and recognize the absence of the content elements. Yet *pid* and *pgt* differ significantly from each other in that the former is phonologically legitimate while the latter is not. Because the expression elements of the second example "are combined incorrectly," "the sign is impossible" (*Language* 33). Here a deeper layer of Hjelmslev's theoretical construction is revealed: a sign must have an adequate amount of expression elements and the potentiality of indicating a content element. I am using the word "potentiality" in a particular manner, suggesting that the content element will one day come into present and the sign-that-has-no-meaning-yet will one day become an ordinary sign should linguistic change occur.[8] Hjelmslev's formulation of sign thus manifests a temporal quality in its own construction.

Let us resume the question of the "unit" and its difference from Saussure's signifier. Hjelmslev's idea of "expression unit" can be seen in a declarative statement:

"Every language appears to us first of all as a system of *signs*, that is to say, a system of expression units that have contents, or meaning, attached to them" (*Language* 32). From the earlier analysis, one can figure that Hjelmslev is talking about the ordinary sign, not the sign-that-has-no-meaning-yet, which is phonologically possible, or the non-sign, which is ruled out by English phonology. These ordinary signs, however, should not be confounded with words. An ordinary sign can be a word as Saussure conceives it, i.e. consisting of a signifier and its signified, but a word is not necessarily an ordinary sign. For instance, a word like *in-act-iv-ate-s*, as Hjelmslev discusses, "is a sign consisting of five different smaller signs" (*Language* 32). Even though one of the smaller signs *act* can exist independently, the word *inactivates* as a whole is no longer an ordinary sign; it becomes a compound sign of five "smaller signs."

It is reasonable now to make a hypothesis that the two terms "(ordinary) signs" and "expression units" are closely related. This can be further attested by juxtaposing the example of *inactivates* with Hjelmslev's elaboration of syllables in the word *cat-e-go-ry*. To present the conception accurately, I quote Hjelmslev at length:

> A syllable is not a sign (the word *category*, for example, consists of four syllables, but not four signs). A syllable may quite accidentally coincide with a sign, since a sign may consist of one and only one syllable (as in the case of *pat*), but even then syllable and sign are not the same. The first part of *category* is the same syllable as *cat*, but not the same sign. A syllable is something different: it is a *unit of elements* resulting from the fact that certain elements contract relation with one another. (*Language* 35)

This contracted relation follows the combinational rules of vowels and consonants. It is note-worthy that Hjelmslev uses the phrase "a *unit of elements*" in the definition—could this "unit" be the same as the "unit" in "expression unit?" For most

parts, the answer is yes. The syllable *cat* in *category* not only follows English combinational rules, it is also a unit of three expression elements. Thus understood, an expression unit must be a limited set of expression elements, a set which we call syllable and which we know serves as the *signans* of not the compound sign but the ordinary sign.[9] Whether this set coincides with a sign, i.e. whether or not this set of elements can be counted as a sign and subsumes under it a content element, is another matter. To sum up, Saussure's comparatively vague term "signifier" can be further divided by Hjelmslev into two categories: expression units of word-length (e.g. *pat* and *category*, but not *inactivates*) and expression units of syllable-length (e.g. *act* in the word *inactivates*).

Various lengths of expression units imply a different conception of time. A meaning, or a content element, is attached to and deciphered from the expression unit. Sometimes it takes only one syllable to get the meaning crossed (*pat*), other times it takes more than one (*category*), and still other times the process of meaning transmission can be a lot more complex (*inactivates*). In the first case, the intended meaning arrives to the reception end as soon as the syllable finishes. In the second, the meaning does not realize itself until all four syllables are uttered, or until the whole signifier is transmitted. It is the third case that we must devote our attention to. As I have stated, the word *inactivates* is a compound sign—i.e. not a one-syllable sign—which has four syllables but five content elements:

Expression:	in	act	ive	ate	s
Content:	"in, into, towards, inside"	"act"	"adjective"	"verb"	"third person singular present"

This example shows again that syllables are not signs; it also sheds light on a more thorough definition of the idea "expression units." Earlier I have listed two kinds of expression units, or morphemes, derived from a quotation: those of word length and those of syllable length. Here a new kind must be added, i.e. the inflectives. Hjelmslev is not unaware of this aspect of grammar. He points out that "[a] sign may consist of one expression element with one content element attached to it, like the English sign –s in *Jack's father*, which consists of the expression element *s* with its attached content element 'genitive'" (*Language* 32). Although the inflective *s* is portrayed as an expression "element," it is still reasonable to claim that such is also an expression "unit" judging from the fact that the inflective has a meaning and that a meaning must imply, or form an interdependent relationship with, an expression unit.

The question of the difference between signifiers and expression units solved, we can now return to the disquieting statement which I made earlier. A statement suggesting that Saussure's conception of signifiers remains on the word-level may be risky,[10] and is best avoided until the idea of syllables is discussed in details. Similar to Hjelmslev, who repeatedly refers to the word *inactivates*, Saussure uses *painful*. He writes:

> A unit like *painful* decomposes into two subunits (*pain-ful*), but these
> subunits are not two independent parts that are simply lumped together
> (*pain + ful*). The unit is a product, a combination of two independent
> elements that acquire value only through their reciprocal action in a higher
> unit (*pain* X *ful*). The suffix is nonexistent when considered independently;
> what gives it a place in the language is a series of common terms like
> *delight-ful*, *fright-ful*, etc. . . . [W]e do not communicate through isolated
> signs but rather through groups of signs, through organized masses that are
> themselves signs. (*Course* 128; emphasis added)[11]

The words based on which we communicate are "themselves signs"; not only that, they are also "organized masses." Applying what is observed to the word *painful*, one will find that it, being a word sign, contains within itself an organized mass of two morphemes *pain* and *ful*, both on the expression plane and the content plane. These two subunits are not "lumped together" but are inter-dependent. How does this mutual dependence, this Saussurean "syntagmatic solidarity," affect Saussure's mindset?

The pivotal difference lies in the fact that Hjelmslev's *inactivates* is considered as five expression units lining up in a sequential manner while Saussure's *painful* can be conceived as two overlapping morphemes because the latter involves "a higher unit," i.e. the word, or the signifier itself. Thus portrayed, the "organized mass" becomes inevitably synchronic: it is not *pain-ful* but *pain* X *ful*. Such portrayal implies that the word *painful* entails a proper meaning only when considered as a whole of two synchronic, not consecutive, subunits. Simply put, the *pain-* in *pain-ful* is not the same as the word *pain*, a sign *propre* which stands by itself. Emile Constantin's class notes concerning the relativity of arbitrariness are particularly helpful here. When explaining the concept of relative arbitrariness, Saussure proposes two sets of words:

<div align="center">

poirier ["pear tree"]   poire ["pear"]

désireux ["desirous"]   désir ["desire"]

</div>

He then focuses on the second set—coincidentally the one included in the section of syntagmatic solidarity—and makes the following reasoning:

> It seems as though <I have> one quantity [*quantité*] which is *désir* and
> another which is *eux*, and it suffices to invoke the coexisting word [*mot*]
> *désir.*

> In reality all I have done <there> is evoke the external form, the
> auditory image [the sound-image].

There is no possible connection <proximity> between these two words if in reality it is not the concept "désir" and the image *désir* that are both involved <and on the other hand the image *désireux* and the concept "désireux">

We could <never> conceive the relation between one word and the other without conceiving the <internal> relation for each word between the concept and the acoustic image. (*Saussure's Third Course* 90a)

One may notice how carefully Saussure names each entity. There are two words meaning "desire" and "desirous," and each can be divided into two parts, concept and acoustic/auditory image. The first of the quoted passages, referring to the word meaning "desirous," avoids the common designations of concept and sound image and replaces them with a comparatively vaguer term "quantity." This replacement conveys the message that the two subunits *désir* and *eux* should not be treated like those which are made up of signifiers and signifieds. The remaining passages then explain the reason why the two words are related: it is required that both the concept and sound image of the two words take part. Furthermore, in the third paragraph, Saussure switches back to recurrent terms of concept and sound image because this time they are features of two word-signs.

Interestingly, the tree diagram of the conception "*pain X ful*" bears a striking similarity with Saussure's famous example of *enseignement*, which also serves to show that signifiers are of no smaller units than words:
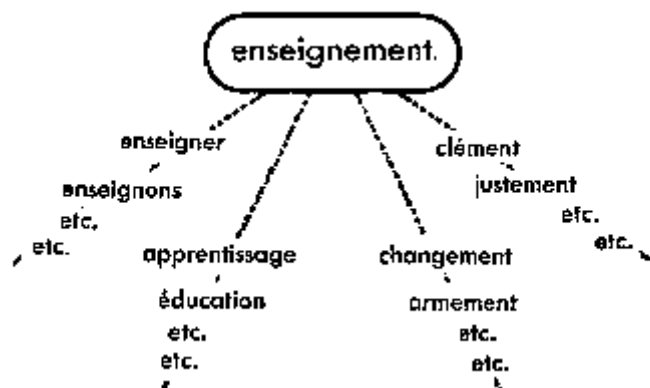
What Saussure intends to argue with the example of *enseignement* is the existence of associative/paradigmatic relations. The first chain on the left shows conjugational/morphological relationships,[12] the second chain conceptual/lexical relationships. The third chain and the fourth one are listed for the mere reason of their common suffix –*ment*; however, whereas words like *enseignement* and *changement* are nouns, *clément* and *justement* are adverbs. It is true that the suffix –*ment* is singled out and highlighted, yet Saussure never elaborates upon its nature. He seems to bypass the question of whether or not this segment can have a meaning attached to it. Summing up the analysis of the four associative chains, Saussure writes that "there is at times a double similarity of meaning and form, at times similarity only of form [e.g. *justement*] or of meaning [e.g. *apprentissage*]" (*Course* 126). Readers are made to see the end products of replacement without being informed about the characteristics of the word's building blocks or the mechanisms underlying the replacement. Saussure's idea of associative relations, viewed from this angle, appears to exclude elements smaller than a word.

The same happens in Saussure's discussion of syntagmatic relations, or "co-ordinations formed [. . .] inside discourse" (*Course* 123). To begin the section, he comes up with an introductory statement, saying that "the notion of syntagm applies not only to words but to groups of words, to complex units of all lengths and types (compounds, derivatives, phrases, whole sentences)" (*Course* 124).

| Words	*re-lire*	re-read
Groups of words	*contre tous*	against everyone
Compounds	*dix-neuf*	nineteen
Phrases	*avoir mal à la tête*	have a headache
Whole sentences	*Dieu est bon.*	God is good.

Although words are considered as the minimum unit capable of demonstrating a syntagm, it remains to be seen if the two subunits *re* and *read* can function like proper signs. As has been argued, the two consist of a synchronic whole *re* X *read* rather than *re* + *read*; they cannot be divided without reducing the meaning of the signifier seen as one. They are therefore two inter-dependent quantities, not two independent signs. Groups of words like *countre tous* have similar situations, yet compounds like *dix-neuf* demand more investigation. In the discussion of absolute and relative arbitrariness, Saussure claims that, when compared with *vingt* "twenty," *dix-neuf* "nineteen" appears more motivated, for it "suggests its own terms and other terms [*dix* "ten" and *neuf* "nine"] associated with it" (*Course* 131). However, compounds can never be so motivated as to break into completely free parts: "Not only are the elements of a motivated sign themselves unmotivated (cf. *dix* and *neuf* in *dix-neuf*), but the value of the whole term is never equal to the sum of the value of the parts" (*Course* 132). Speaking otherwise, *dix* and *neuf* are two signs—and thus two sets of the signifier-signified pair—of two different values, and they beckon two sound images in the interpreter's mind. Some phrases like *avoir mal à la tête*, literally "to have discomfort in the head," manifest probably the same degree of motivation as compounds, but certainly less motivated than ordinary phrases like *la vie humaine* "human life" and even lesser than sentences like "*Dieu est bon.*"

The order of appearance in the discussion of syntagmatic relations, i.e. the progress from words to groups of words and finally to whole sentences, implies a directionality that cannot be reversed. Accompanying the directionality are varying amounts of time spent in each utterance. For instance, to get one significance crossed, it takes at least one word for Saussure and one expression unit for Hjelmslev because the former deems the composition of sign a synchronic whole while the latter, an accumulative process. Despite their inherent differences, both theorists are likely to

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agree that it takes time to complete meaning-transmission.

<div align="center">IV</div>

In order to understand how Augustine's triadic formation of sign, when

juxtaposed with Saussure's, appears more ethical and less idealist, one needs to dig

into the original writings. Augustine distinguishes three elements in a sign—*sonus*,

dicibile, and *res*, which, according to Manetti, can be thus drafted:

<div align="center">

dicibile

△

sonus   res

</div>
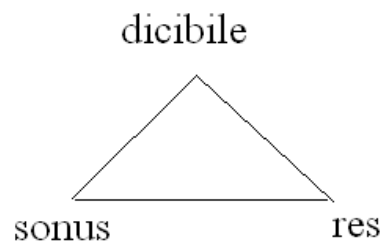
Sonus, as Manetti maintains, is "what is heard by the ear when the word is

pronounced"; *dicibile* is "what is apprehended by and contained in the mind" (158).

Relocated into the Saussurean framework, *sonus* seems to be the precise synonym of

"sound" while *dicibile*'s role is more pending. One arrives at the equality between

sonus and sound when one observes Augustine's use of *sonus* [sound] and *voces*

[utterance, expression]:

> Every word is a sound [*Omne verbum sonat*], for when it is written it is not
>
> a word but the sign of a word. When we read, the letters we see suggest to
>
> the mind the sounds of the utterance [*voce*]. For written letters indicate
>
> [*prorumpat*] to the mind utterances [*voces*] beyond themselves. (88-89)[13]

The most curious part of the quote is the mentioning of the mind and its relation to the

"sounds of the utterance." Earlier we have seen that signifiers, together with signifieds,

are part of the human consciousness. Here the letters "suggest [*prorumpat* 'rush forth']

to the mind" something that is outside it, i.e. the *voce*. It seems that the perfect

Saussurean translation for *voce* is *parole*. For the convenience of reasoning, let us

imagine that this *parole* is the sound of one single vocabulary, such as "cat." When

one reads "cat" in print, the physical sound "cat" is suggested to the mind and

consequently becomes a signifier which conveys the image of the real animal. The

relationship between this denotative image and the signifier conforms to Augustine's

definition that "[a] word is a sign [*signum*] of any sort of thing" (86-87). Given the

combined facts that "[a] sign is something which is itself sensed and which indicates

to the mind something beyond the sign itself" and that "[t]o speak is to give a sign by

means of an articulate utterance [*articulate voce*]," it becomes clear that Augustan

"*signum*" is physical sound, or *sonus* (Augustine 86-87), something that becomes the
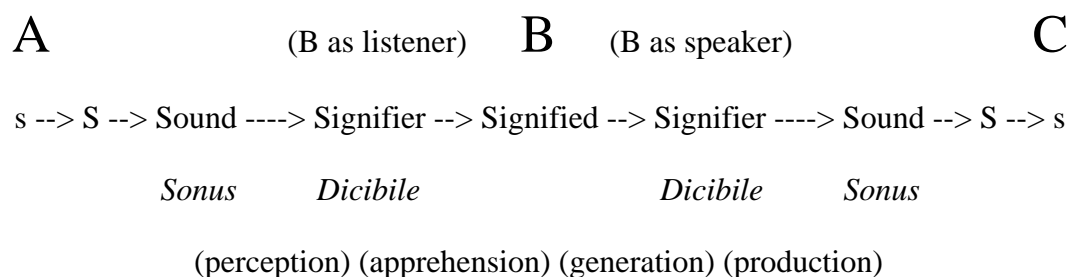
signifier as soon as it is suggested to the mind.

Regarding the ambiguous role that *dicibile* plays, it must be said beforehand that

Augustine puts *dicibile* and *res* on the same level together with two other terms,

verbum and *dictio*:

> "*Verbum*" both is a word and signifies a word. "*Dicibile*" is a word;
>
> however, it does not signify a word but what is understood in the word and
>
> contained in the mind. "*Dictio*" is also a word, but it signifies both the first
>
> two, that is, the word itself and what is brought about in the mind by means
>
> of the word. "*Res*" is a word which signifies whatever remains beyond the
>
> three that have been mentioned. (90-91)

Augustine discerns the complexity of this cluster of terms and immediately offers

examples. First up, *verbum*. A question like "What part of speech is '*arma*'?"

highlights the fact of the word *arma* being a linguistic entity in that very sentence. A

Jakobsonian rendering of *verbum* would be a metalinguistic one. Here is his classic

dialogue: "'The sophomore was plucked.' 'But what is *plucked*?' '*Plucked* means the

same as *flunked*'" ("Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics" 356). In the dialogue,

the curious inquirer demands further explanation of a word by referring to the word

itself, and the patient interlocutor answers by way of the same linguistic mechanism. This scenario is also called the "antonymous mode of speech" because the messages I quoted earlier are "referring to the code" by way of circumlocutions and synonyms ("Shifters, Verbal Categories, and the Russian Verb" 131).

The term *Dicibile*, on the other hand, does not emphasize the word-state of a word, but focuses on the possibility of its being "apprehended by and contained in the mind," as Manetti summarizes. However, one discovers that apprehension and containment belong to different theoretical categories: diachrony and synchrony. The fact that the mind contains concepts or signifieds is relatively straightforward in Saussure. What, then, is the nature of apprehension? How are *dicibiles* apprehended? Augustine's own explanation—"when we consider words as perceived [*sensa*] in the mind, prior to utterance they are *dicibilia*"—provides certain clues. It indicates that *dicibiles* can be found right before the act of utterance/*parole* and it implies that apprehension involves senses. Judging from the locale, these words "prior to utterance," these *dicibiles*, are without doubt signifiers in the Saussurean speaking-circuit, yet they bring about another dimension to it. Augustine's explanation of the *dicibile* is portrayed in a different sequential order from that of Saussure's: it begins with perception and ends with production.

A (B as listener) B (B as speaker) C

s --> S --> Sound ----> Signifier --> Signified --> Signifier ----> Sound --> S --> s

Sonus   *Dicibile*   *Dicibile*   *Sonus*

(perception) (apprehension) (generation) (production)

For the above diagram, s means signified and S, signifier. One immediately notices

the shift of interlocutory roles happening to B; this role-transition promises propagation of dialogues and the formation of linguistic communities.

Finally, the term "*res*" forms the third angle of Manetti's triangle; this is the most drastic difference between Augustan's formulation and Saussure's semiology. Putting *res* in the triangular diagram may not be an act out of nowhere, since Augustine maintains that "[t]he thing itself which is neither a word [*verbum*] nor the conception of a word in the mind [*dicibile*], whether or not it has a word by which it can be signified, is called nothing but a *res* in the proper sense of the name" (89). The definition is apparently a negative one: a *res* is not a *verbum*, nor is it a *dicibile*. More importantly, it does not matter if the *res* has no word to signify it. That is, there exist some forms of *res* which are beyond significance, which escapes from logocentric devices like language. We can find two kinds of such transcendental *res*: one in arts and the other in the physical world.

How can words signify, for instance, a music note or a dance movement? How can words describe an idea that is "essentially vague or indefinite" (Peirce, "Excerpts from Letters" 479) without losing aspects of it? No wonder Jakobson maintains that the efforts made in translating different semiotic fields may sometimes amount to nothing because the target text can be "un langue qui se signifie soi-même [a language that signifies itself]" and thus does not rely on verbal language to be heard or seen (Ruwet, qtd. in Jakobson "Language in Relation to Other Communication Systems" 704). Lotman, Uspenskij, and others even attest the fundamental difference between discrete and indiscrete texts, subtly implying the impossibility of translation. Language belongs to the first case because each verbal expression consists of "a chain of discrete symbols"; other semiotic systems—such as the cinema, television, painting, sculpture, the dance, and ballet—are by contrast "segmented not into separate signs but into distinctive features" (Uspenskij et al. 298). Saussure's semiology—one that

dictates the bond between the signifier and the signified—fails to address this issue.

Another kind of transcendental *res* is found in the physical world: they are natural objects like rock, tree, wind, water, and so on and so forth. However, a simple recourse to these objects' verbal representation helps little in acquiring a certain form of knowledge about them. Jakobson illuminates on the impossibility of a functional denomination between a thing and a name:

> Mere pointing will not teach us whether cheese is the name of the given specimen, or of any box of camembert, or of camembert in general, or of any cheese, any milk product, any food, any refreshment, or perhaps any box irrespective of contents. ("On linguistic Aspects of Translation" 260)

Similarly, the name given to the object can never fully represent it: Does the word "rock" encompass the sense of its being hard, cold, and rough, of its feeling under our feet or its smell when put next to our nose? The above analysis tries to hint at the fact that *res* should have obtained much more weight in a science that deals with the intricate relationship between the name and the thing. But due to my limited knowledge of this philosophical topic, I will simply say that, by excluding the natural *res* from the discussion, Saussure's semiology can never wholly relate to the real world and is therefore prone to be called idealist and asocial.

Chapter Two: Jakobson's Metaphor and Metonymy

The Russian linguist Roman Jakobson was born in 1896, five years after Saussure returned to Geneva and ten years before Saussure started giving lectures on general linguistics. At the time when the Russian linguistic scene was dominated by neogrammarian approaches, Jakobson was fascinated by the works of Saussure during his school days at the University of Moscow. According to Sangster, Jakobson came into touch with theories of sign "through the intermediary of Baudouin de Courtenay and Ferdinand de Saussure" (3). The former lays a particular emphasis on phonemes, suggesting the necessity of the invariants if one intends to "operate scientifically with variation" (Jakobson, "Pattern in Linguistics" 224). The latter's legacy, by comparison, is far more influential and more "frequently mentioned" (Jakobson, "Sign and System of Language" 33).[14] Jakobson devotes two articles specifically to the Genevan master: "*La théorie saussurienne en rétrospection*" and "Sign and System of Language: A Reassessment of Saussure's Doctrine."

Jakobson approves of Saussure's contribution; nevertheless, two Saussurian principles need much revision and exploration: the arbitrary nature of the sign [*l'arbitraire du signe*] and the immutability of the language system [*l'immutabilité de la langue*]. The first objection has been elaborated in the previous chapter. What is left for now before we can move on to the discussion of metaphor and metonymy is the fact that, according to Saussure's formulation, language as "a system of signs" is immutable (Saussure, *Course* 16). However, the immutability of the language system does not mean that language system stays still once it is constructed; conversely, it suggests that the "contract signed by the members of a communication" cannot be broken easily.

Saussure maintains that the linguistic system itself does not change: what

changes is the individual actualization of language (*parole*), never the system (*langue*).

His argument rests on four simple reasons: "the arbitrary nature of the sign" makes it impossible to grasp the relationship between the signifier and the signified, let alone to consciously modify it; "the multiplicity of signs necessary to form any language" intimidates anyone to alter it; "collective inertia toward innovation" demonstrates that language, unlike other sign systems, is a basic part of our everyday life which refuses to undergo change; "the over-complexity of the system" mentions the lack of special knowledge of ordinary people, arguing that those who are not aware of the mechanism of language, i.e. most of us, are incapable of modification: "l*es sujets sont, dans une large mesure, inconscient des lois de la langue; et s'ils ne s'en rendent pas compte, comment pourraient-ils les modifier*? [the speaking subjects are, for the most part, unconscious of the laws of the language system; and if they are not aware of the laws, how do they modify them?]" (qtd. in Jakobson, "*La théorie saussurienne*" 423; translation mine). Jakobson questions this reasoning by asking "*comment cela se fait que les sujets 'ignorant profondément,' en fassent tout de même un usage journalier et la manient sans faute, et comment, inconscients qu'ils sont de ses lois, parviennent-ils néanmoins, à les observer et à les garder scrupuleusement* [how is it possible that the fundamentally ignorant speaking subjects can utilize all the same everyday language and carry out such acts without a mistake, and how is it possible that, though they are unconscious of the laws of language, they can nevertheless manage to observe and guard them scrupulously.]" ("*La théorie saussurienne*" 424; translation mine). This rebuttal centers on the unaware-and-therefore-incapable logic that Saussure provides, protesting it by suggesting that as long as the speaking subject uses language he or she would be capable of revolutionizing it.

Now, what exactly is language? Saussure claims in *Course* that language "is the social side of speech, outside the individual who can never create nor modify it by

himself" (14); on the other hand, he also maintains that language "is a system of signs in which the only essential thing is the union of meanings and sound-images, and in which both parts if the sign are psychological" (15). Thus formulated, language becomes an institution that exists both inside and outside of its users. This double face of language implies not self-contradiction in the Saussurean theory viewed as a whole but a process, a growth if you may, in Saussure's theoretical development. In the first chapter, when the idea of "language" has not been introduced, the inner structure of the sign appears static, idealist, and asocial. However, as soon as the discussion moves on to language, to language's components and governing rules, the asocial and the static criticisms immediately lose ground because language is and must be a social phenomenon. Is Saussurean semiology a purely synchronic one? Has Saussure rejected completely the concept of time? Not really. He deliberates in one of the lengthy notes the dichotomy synchrony/diachrony:

> Given the exact situation of language among human affairs, it is very dubious and risky to maintain either that language is essentially a historical object, or that it is essentially something else, but as things stand, there is no danger in highlighting the non-historical side.

> That language is, at every moment of its existence, a historical product, is obvious. [. . .] In fact the way the mind uses a symbol—given firstly that the symbol does not change—is a science in itself, which has nothing to do with historical considerations. Moreover, if the symbol changes, this immediately gives rise to a new state, requiring a new application of universal laws. (*Writings* 145)

The quote shows that Saussure deliberately sacrifices the diachronic aspect of language in order to pursue other goals. He even admits, at the beginning of the second paragraph, that the linguistic system cannot isolate itself from the passage of

time. However, by calling the immutability of a symbol "a science" in opposition to "historical considerations," and by emphasizing the importance of "universal laws," Saussure aligns himself against historical linguists. This alignment serves again hard evidence of Saussure's tendency towards synchronic theoretical constructions.

We have seen that on the semiological level, the Saussurean theory fails to shun away from criticism; we have also witnessed a possible redemption when Saussure momentarily steps out of his synchronic project and simply focuses on describing linguistic phenomena happening around the world and within different language communities and historical timeframes. It is now necessary to examine the intermediary between the enquiry of semiology and the study of languages. Such intermediary, I believe, must bridge the gap between theory and practice, static and dynamic, ideal and real, asocial and individual, etc.—a position that can only be filled in by Jakobson's metaphor and metonymy. In section one of this chapter, I will list all the major articles that Jakobson wrote on the pair metaphor and metonymy and try to reconstruct the typology of Jakobson's ideas of the two. Then, the arguable prototype of the pair, i.e. Saussure's syntagmatic and associative relations, will be explained, followed by a comparison between the two models. Hopefully, the discussion will help demonstrate why Jakobson's metaphor/metonymy formulation is one step closer to freedom than the Saussurean original.

I

Jakobson has written tens of essays on metaphor and metonymy, and the most systematic discussion of the two terms first takes place in "Aphasia as a Linguistic Topic" presented at the Clark University Conference on Expressive Language Behavior in 1953. Three years later, an often quoted masterpiece "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances" is published as the second part of

the *Fundamentals of Language*. In 1958, Jakobson mentioned an interesting research

on the metaphoric use of Russian nouns in "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation."

Then we have "Toward a Nomothetic Science of Language" in 1960. A more

comprehensive version of the 1956 article appeared in 1963, titled "Toward a

Linguistic Classification of Aphasic Impairments." Two years later came "Quest for

the Essence of Language." More theoretical writings on metaphor and metonymy

appear years later, in 1969's "Characteristics of Human Language," 1976's

"Metalanguage as a Linguistic Problem," 1975's " A Glance at the Development of

Semiotics," and finally 1980's "My Favorite Topics."

The above mentioned titles can roughly be grouped into three categories: one

focuses on the pair metaphor/metonymy viewed as constitutional rules of language,

another on how the pair participates in communication, and still another on the pair's

relationship with rhetoric and with literature. Jakobson might agree with me on my

way of grouping, since he clearly states that the pair "is of importance not only for the

study of aphasia but for the general science of language, especially for the analysis of

verbal structure, verbal behavior, and verbal art" ("Aphasia as a Linguistic Topic" 232;

emphasis mine). In what follows we will try to examine metaphor and metonymy on

the three levels respectively.

Passages belonging to the first level analysis are scanty, and the two rare

occasions happen to be Jakobson's early essays: "Aphasia as a Linguistic Topic" and

"Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances." Jakobson has a

pretty straightforward view on the issue of how language becomes a system, or, to

borrow Saussure's famous dictum, of how language is a system of signs. According to

him, two axes map out the internal structure of the language—one is metaphoric, and

the other, metonymic. To define the pair, Jakobson writes:

> The two opposite tropes, metaphor and metonymy, present the most

condensed expression of two basic modes of relation: the internal relation of

similarity (and contrast) underlies the metaphor; the external relation of

contiguity (and remoteness) determines the metonymy. ("Aphasia as a

Linguistic Topic" 232)

Such definition differs little from our general understanding of the Jakobsonian

metaphor and metonymy. As Bradford explains, substituting "His car moved along the

road" with "The man's motor vehicle progressed along the street" is a clear

manifestation of how metaphor works (9). And the similar syntactic order of both

sentences shows the function of metonymy (10).

In "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances," the

discussions on metaphor and metonymy are linked with two types of aphasia, i.e.

similarity disorder (selection deficiency) and contiguity disorder (combination

deficiency). Patients suffering from the first kind of aphasia are able to produce a

sentence if all the necessary words are provided for, but he or she would be frustrated

when asked to "name an object pointed to" (247) and to "switch from a word to its

synonymy or circumlocutions" (248). By contrast, patients of the contiguity disorder

exhibit the precisely opposite traits, and their verbal production regresses to "infantile

one-sentences utterances and one-word sentences" (251). Jakobson's studies on

aphasia help show how the language is constructed on both the metaphoric and

metonymic poles.

The line between the first level, verbal structure, and the second level, verbal

behavior, may not be easily drawn, perhaps due to the fact that the language structure

can only be grasped through real data that is everyday conversation. On the second,

conversational level, three aspects of the metaphor-metonymy pair can be spotted.

Two lines down of the definition of metaphor and metonymy, for example, Jakobson

abandons a purely theoretical stance and applies the term "contiguity" to a situation
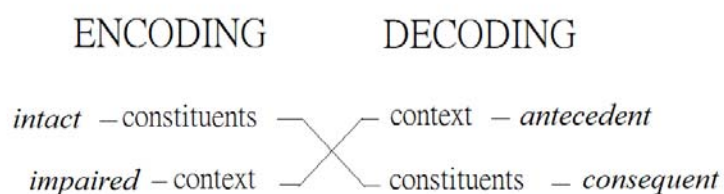
not commonly known to us by saying:

> Whether messages are exchanged or communication proceeds unilaterally
> from the addresser to the addressee, there must be some kind of contiguity
> between the participants of any speech event to assure the transmission of
> the message. The separation in space, and often in time, between two
> individuals, the addresser and the addressee, is bridged by an internal
> relation: there must be a certain equivalence between the symbols used by
> the addresser and those known and interpreted by the addressee. (232)

The term "contiguity" adopted here by Jakobson does not designate syntactic closeness or remoteness, but "a certain equivalence between the symbols" of the addresser and the addressee, i.e. a conversational, social-linguistic property that is termed "code." It seems that on the level of verbal behavior, one usage of the pair metaphor and metonymy, or more appropriately, similarity and contiguity, is to describe the addresser-addressee relationship that often involves the innate difference of space and time. As we have seen in the first chapter—especially in the discussions about cheese and the segmentation of signs, both the time factor and the space factor liberalize a theory, making it less subject to the two criticisms specific to each.

In a more comprehensive essay, "Toward a Linguistic Classification of Aphasic Impairments," the mechanisms of speech production and reception are analyzed meticulously to explain "motor" and "sensory" aphasias. According to Jakobson, motor aphasia, generally known as Broca's aphasia, denotes the impairments of encoding in the addresser's end; sensory aphasia, also called Wernicke's aphasia, concerns the addressee's inability of decoding. Examining the process of encoding and decoding, possibly with the Saussurean speaking-circuit in mind, Jakobson arrives at the conclusion that the addresser first selects and then combines, whereas the addressee is first confronted with combination, and then with selection. For

aphasic patients, it is always the second phase that goes wrong: the addresser has combinative, contiguity disorder that paralyzes the metonymic pole of language, and the addressee, selective, similarity disorder, the metaphoric pole.

ENCODING   DECODING

intact — constituents   — context — *antecedent*

impaired — context   — constituents — *consequent*

Besides the addresser-addressee's prelinguistic and interlocutory relationship, there is another dimension of the metaphor/metonymy pair that is worth exploring before we proceed into the third level, and it has a lot to do with how people talk. Jakobson observes that human speech is stuck together either by the metaphoric or the metonymic relations:

> The development of a discourse may take place along two different semantic lines: one topic may lead to another either through their similarity or through their contiguity. The metaphoric way would be the most appropriate term for the first term and the metonymic way for the second, since they find their most condensed expression in metaphor and metonymy respectively. ("Two Aspects of Language" 254)

Though vague and undeveloped, this passage foresees a psychological study of mind. How exactly does a topic lead to another based on the similarity/contiguity principle? Why, when asked "to utter the first verbal response that comes into their heads," some children would link "hut" to "burnt out" while others to "cabin," "hovel," "palace," "den," "burrow," "thatch," "litter," or "poverty" ("Two Aspects of Language" 254-55)? These responses are not purely lexical, i.e. being the synonym/antonym of the word given, nor are they simply the products of education or nurture. This is where psychologists, and psychoanalysts in particular, step in.

The last level of the metaphor/metonymy discussion pertains to the domain of rhetoric and literary studies, and the top priority is to figure out the pair's traditional applications. Eco lists several dictionary entries of the term "metaphor" and claims them to "fall into the classical definitions"—there are three of them: "the transfer of the name of one object to another object through a relation of analogy," "the substitution of an appropriate term with one that is figurative," and "an abbreviated simile" (*Semiotics* 89-90). As for metonymy, Greimas and Courtés summarize its traditional usages, suggesting that it "designates the linguistic phenomenon in which a given sentential unit is substituted for another unit to which it is 'linked' (in a relation of container to contained, of cause to effect, of part to whole, etc.)" (193). Eco reorganizes the formulation and renders it semiotically to become "*the substitution of a sememe with one of its semes* (for example, /Drink a bottle/ for « drink wine» . . .) or *of a seme with the sememe to which it belongs* (for example, /Weep thou, O Jerusalem/ for « May the tribe of Israel weep»)," that is, either whole to part or part to whole (*Semiotics* 114).

How, then, does Jakobson define metaphor and metonymy with an eye on the tradition of rhetoric? His view involves a primariness and a secondariness:

> A hierarchy of to meanings—one primary, proper, central, context-free; and the other secondary, marginal, figurative, transferred, contextual—is a characteristic feature of such asymmetrical couples. The metaphor (or metonymy) is an assignment of a *signans* to a secondary *signatum* associated by similarity (or contiguity) with the primary *signatum*. ("Quest" 355)

Or again, in discussing children's language apprehension, Jakobson writes:

> Children's freedom to diversify the context of one and the same word creates a difference between the proper, nuclear meaning of this word and

its marginal, figurative (metaphoric or metonymic) meanings; two

interlinked properties of human language, its context sensitivity and its

creativeness, become apparent. ("Characteristics of Human Language" 95)

The quoted passages demonstrate that meanings are hierarchical; some are more

central while others marginal. The word "star," for example, elicits two significations:

it is either a celestial body or a person of fame, the former being the primary *signatum*

and the latter, the secondary *signatum*. Jakobson caps the shifting from primary

meaning to secondary meaning a freedom, a creativeness. We will compare this with

what I have imagined in Chapter One, i.e. the implication of Saussure's discussion on

sun, later.

    The conception of hierarchical meanings is not idiosyncratic; Kurylowicz,

Chomsky, and Bloomfield all have proposed similar ideas under different

terminologies ("Toward a Nomothetic Science of Language" 578). Nevertheless,

somewhere along the road, metonymy is dropped and metaphor remains, as evidenced

in the same essay by Jakobson's vigorous defense against the statement that

metaphoric creations are deviations. An investigation of the application of both

metaphor and metonymy might contribute to our understanding of why such biased

emphasis is laid upon the pair. As Jakobson suggests, lyrics are metaphoric and

epics/prose metonymic. He elaborates:

> In poetry there are various motives which determine the choice between
>
> these alternants. The primacy of the metaphoric process in the literary
>
> schools of romanticism and symbolism has been repeated acknowledged,
>
> but it is still insufficiently realized that it is the predominance of metonymy
>
> which underlies and actually predetermines the so-called "realistic" trend,
>
> which belongs to an intermediary stage between the decline of romanticism
>
> and the rise of symbolism and is opposed to both. Following the path of

contiguous relationships, the realist author metonymically digresses from

the plot to the atmosphere and from the characters to the setting in space

and time. ("Two Aspects of Language" 255)

Now, it is retrospectively correct that Jakobson was interested in studying the poetic

function of language; his preference for poetry over epic/prose goes without doubt.

However, the above discussion about metonymic digression piques much curiosity.

The peculiar arrangement of Tolstoj in writing about dying Anna Karenina's handbag

appears ingenious, for it brings the readers' attention to the significance of time and

space. Such ingenuity should have attracted more comments, and metonymy should

have figured a more important role, or at least a role as important as metaphor, in

Jakobson's and others' critical projects. What went wrong? My answer to the question

is inspired by the passage quoted above. Realist authors, like Tolstoj, "metonymically

digresses" from "the characters to the setting in space and time." The focus is

transferred from subjects to objects; Jakobson wouldn't have agreed on such tendency.

For him, the characters are more important than the settings. Bradford may have

discovered the same care for subjectivity in Jakobson, and one should note that in the

following quote such care is placed on the metaphoric, rather than the metonymic,

pole:

From this [the analysis of "The tree wanders"] we might surmise that the

syntagmatic, combinative pole is that which anchors language to the

prelinguistic world of events and impressions, while its paradigmatic,

selective counterpart is that which effects a more subjective and perhaps

bizarre relationship between the mind of the addresser and the code of

linguistic sign. (13)

II

Jakobson openly acknowledges his intellectual debt to Saussure. As far as the metaphor/metonymy pair is concerned, Saussurean syntagmatic and associative relations are its inspiration. We have, in fact, seen the two relations earlier, in the diagram of "*Dieu est bon*" (syntagmatic) and the picture of *enseignment* (associative). Saussure makes a distinction between the two orders of relations based on the fact that one is inside discourse while the other is outside it. To push the distinction further, we can assert that one describes verbal production and the other, verbal structure; one is "supported by linearity" and the other's "seat is in the brain"; one is *in praesentia* and the other, *in absentia* (*Course* 123); one is *parole* and the other, *langue*.

However, aligning syntagmatic relations with verbal production, or *parole,* proves to be disconcerting. For one thing, the two orders, syntagmatic and associative, are put under the title "synchronic linguistics" in *Course*; quite contrarily, *parole* is diachronic because it "supposes a dynamic force through which an effect is produced, a thing executed" (*Course* 93). For another, in Constantin's notes, the distinction between syntagmatic and associative relations does not depend much on their being inside or outside of the discourse; the reference to discourse appears supplementary. What Saussure stressed in the lecture was simply "two ways of connecting words with one another" (128a), a purely functional/theoretical description. De Mauro also suggests that the editors of *Course* substitute what appears in the student notes, i.e. "structure," for a problematic "chain of *parole* [or 'chain of speaking' in *Course*, on page 123]" (468-69).

Holdcroft discovers the ambivalence of the syntagmatic relations and proposes a revision, claiming that such relations must reside in the domain of *langue*. He achieves this revision by a reasoning of two steps. First, he quotes a clear statement about syntagm from a student's note, demonstrating that the "sub-units in a word"

47

manifest a parallel characteristic to "words in the sentence" (100). As a result, "*re-lire*

[re-read]" and "*Dieu est bon* [God is good]" both belong to either *parole* or *langue*.

This conformity being established, we only have to prove if the underlying

mechanism of "*re-lire*" shows the features of the language system. Analyzing "*re-*"

and "*lire*"—two subunits in a syntagmatic relation, Holdcroft finds out that "*re-*" has

its own set of associates and so does "*lire*"; he thus comes to the conclusion that

syntagmatic relations and associative relations are mutually dependent and are

supposed to be on the same domain of either *parole* or *langue*. Judging from the fact

that, if both orders are *parole*, Saussure would have a *langue* in which no constitutive

rules exist. Therefore, syntagmatic relations are part of the language system, along

with associative relations; together they form what can be termed the two axes of the

language system.

     One can thus argue that, quite contrary to popular understanding, Saussure

conceives syntagmatic relations to be freer than associative ones. On the one hand, the

former sits across *parole* and *langue*, ephemeral speech production and immutable

language norm. Holenstein, for instance, maps out the syntagmatic and the associative

poles and attributes dynamics to syntagmatic relations and stasis to associative

relations (141)*.* On the other hand, the former is said to have a space while the latter

does not. In Constantin's notes, syntagmatic elements are "spatially" opposed to and

connected with one another. This space is, Constantin records, "a space in time [*un

espace de temps*]" (129; 129a). The editors of *Course* must have replaced this with

"the linear nature of language" that "chained" two consecutive morphemes/phonemes

together (123). Unfortunately, the French word "*espace*" bears the notion not only of

"space", but also of unchained freedom. As the dictionary *Le Robert Micro* defines,

"*l'espace*" is "a free space that does not produce obstacles for movement [*étendu qui

ne fait pas obstacle au mouvement*]."

Jakobson refines Saussure's syntagmatic and associative relations by a more neat pair, combination and selection, before he merges it with the final pair, metaphor and metonymy. One peculiar difference between Jakobson's intermediary pair and Saussure's original is the fact that the terms "combination" and "selection" bear the strong implication of an agent who combines and selects. Furthermore, Jakobson is also gesturing a theoretical turn in his combination/selection pair. Much to our surprise, the function usually associated with the language system, i.e. selection, appears to be most active in Jakobsonian formulation:

> 2) Selection. A selection between alternatives implies that <u>possibility</u> of <u>substituting</u> one for the other, equivalent to the former in one respect and different from it in another. Actually, selection and substitution are two faces of the same operation. ("Two Aspects of Language" 243; emphasis mine)

The tense is set in the future, in the "possibility of substituting," and the action of substituting is forever being carried out. As for combination, which once almost resembled the quality of *parole* in Saussure, is rendered motionless:

> 1) Combination. Any sign is made up of constituent signs and/or occurs only in combination with other signs. This means that any linguistic unit <u>at one and the same time</u> serves as a context for simpler units and/or finds its own context in a more complex linguistic unit. Hence any actual grouping of linguistic units <u>binds</u> them into a superior unit: combination and contexture are two faces of the same operation. ("Two Aspects of Language" 243; emphasis mine)

Rather than being portrayed as having a possibility and a future, combination is imagined as manifesting simultaneity, and its function is to "bind" and to consolidate.

It is thus of little doubt that Jakobson plays an important part in shifting the focus

of the transforming dichotomy: from syntagmatic/associative, to combination/selection, and ultimately to metonymy/metaphor.

One last problem before we move on to the next section: the similarities and differences between metaphor, with its primary and secondary meanings, and the Saussurean example of "sun," imagined as the gateway to the otherwise restricted semiological system. In "On the Dual Essence of Language," Saussure offers the example of "sun" and states that when Diogenes shouts at Alexander "Get thee from my sun!" the word no longer signifies a celestial body. One can profit from a more detailed recount of the story.[15] After the Greeks joined Macedonian army in the war against Persians, all the important Greek figures came to visit and compliment the greatness of Alexander except Diogenes. When Diogenes was found bathing under the sun, all he said was "I would have you [i.e. Alexander] stand from between me and my sun." Foucault includes the story in his discussion of the truth teller, or *parrhesiates*, and points out the intricate signification the context provides:

> Diogenes orders Alexander to step out of his light so that he can bask in the
>
> sun. Ordering Alexander to step aside so that the sun's light can reach
>
> Diogenes is an affirmation of the direct and natural relation the philosopher
>
> has to the sun in contrast to the mythical genealogy whereby the king, as
>
> descended from a god, was supposed to personify the sun.

Here the word "sun" denotes meanings of different layers: it seems to suggest the real celestial body, knowledge, and the Macedonian royal line. In the literal sense, Diogenes was asking Alexander to step aside. However, in the figurative/metaphoric sense, Diogenes was emphasizing the fact that he, as a philosopher, held the key to the ultimate truth, i.e. knowledge, while challenging the king's authority. The left-side diagram below drafts the relation: the inner circle represents primary meaning and the bigger circle, secondary meaning.
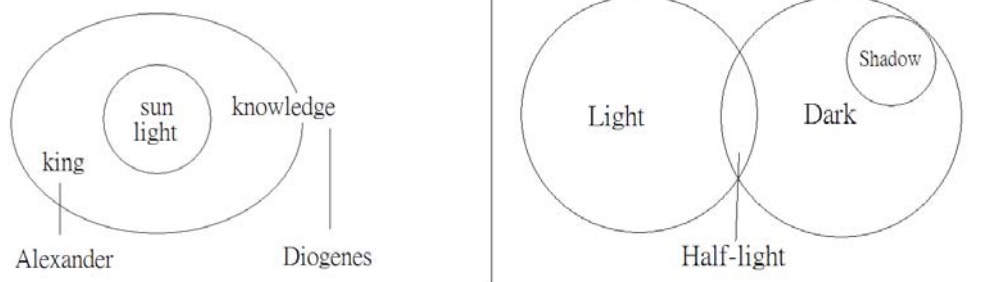
What appears above on the right hand side is a diagram of luminance based on the principle of negativity. If we compare both diagrams, it becomes obvious that metaphoric/associative relations and the compartmentalization of the semantic field are of different nature. The example of "sun" demonstrates that all the relative ideas, such as "shadow," "darkest night," and "half-light," must be contained in the semantic field of luminance. By contrast, the mechanism of metaphor enables itself to extend to almost irrelevant semantic fields; "king" and "knowledge" are two of the examples.

The difference between metaphor and Saussure's example of "sun" again shows that, in metaphoric/associative relations, the crossing of semantic boundaries—or the free play of sign in Derridean terminology—is possible, whereas in Saussure's example of "sun" such freedom can be unattainable. Furthermore, although both metaphoric and associative relations are said to be boundary-crossing, it is argued earlier that metaphor is more active than association after Jakobson's critical turn. All in all, Jakobson departs from Saussure's syntagmatic and associative relations and endows his new pair, metaphor and metonymy, with a freedom in the particular sense that the metaphor-metonymy pair is less conditioned by the structure and more dependent on the language user's creative expansion of the semantic field.[16]

Chapter Three: Saussure's Speaking-Circuit

I have tried to restrict our previous discussions to the domain of language system or sign science so that the criticisms against Saussure's idealist, static, and asocial tendency can be highlighted. However, it would be illegitimate to evaluate Saussure from merely the synchronic part of his theory, i.e. *langue* or semiology. I believe that a more comprehensive analysis can be conducted by probing into the idea of speaking-circuit. This chapter will thus focus on *parole* and its possibility of incorporating the time factor. In what follows, we will first examine the distinction between *langue* and *parole* and the investment of freedom in both domains. After that, we will discuss in detail the formulation and mechanism of the speaking-circuit, with special attention to real time and discursive time involved in the process of communication. The third section attempts at reading the idealist/asocial criticisms within Saussurean speaking-circuit and suggests that the substitution of signifier/signified for sound-image/concept is idealist in nature. What's more, the whole semiological system subsequent to the substitution also appears idealist and, at the same time, asocial, compared with other sign systems.

I

As soon as Saussure makes the distinction between *langue* and *parole*, his theory is split accordingly. Such distinction appears first in the title "Linguistics of Language and Linguistics of Speaking [*Linguistique de la langue et linguistique de la parole*]" (*Course* 17; *Cours* 36). Saussure then elaborates on their inherent differences:

> The study of speech [*langage*] is then twofold: its basic part—having as its object language [*langue*], which is purely social and independent of the individual—is exclusively psychological; its secondary part—which has as

its object the individual side of speech, i.e. speaking [*parole*], including

phonation, is psychophysical. (*Course* 18; *Cours* 37)

Aside from the presentational order of *langue* and *parole*, which may have revealed

Saussure's theoretical project, one striking fact about the quoted passage is that it

mentions two pivotal concepts of Saussurean criticism: the social/individual

dichotomy and the presence of psychology in both domains.

As has been pointed out in the introduction of the thesis, the idealist tendency of

The Saussurean theory appears inevitable due to its participation in a long tradition.

Therefore, the formulation of *langue* being psychological and *parole* psychophysical

does not offer much chance to overturn Derridean criticism. The situation differs

slightly in the case of the Marxist criticism: Saussure does mention both sides of the

dichotomy; what he fails to achieve is recognize the freedom of the speaking subject.

Volonshinov attacks The Saussurean theory of language not for its ignorance of the

society, since *langue* itself is social; rather, his take on the issue of a-sociality derives

from the fact that individuals are incapable of influencing the norm and are only

passively exercising the power of speech endowed by the center. Frederic Jameson

agrees with Volonshinov on the irrelevance of "individual difference, of individual

personality and style" for Saussure (25).

From the analysis above, we observe that both idealist and asocial criticisms are

still applicable to *parole*; however, the static criticism may partially collapse.

Holenstein's diagram of the contrastive nature of *langue* and *parole* clearly shows

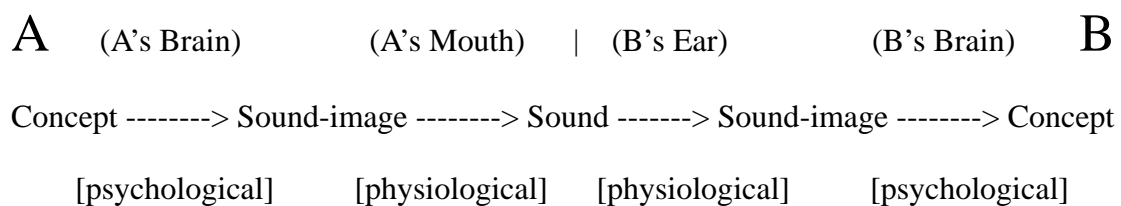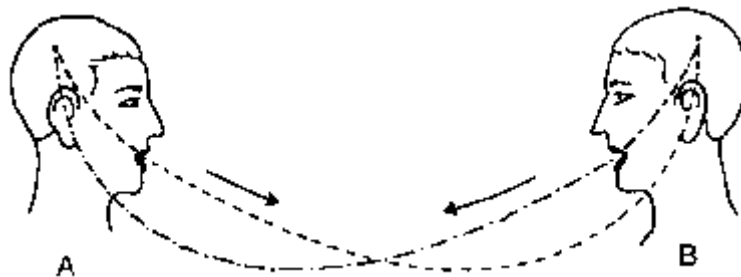how the former is freer than the latter, with a special emphasis on dynamicity (20-21):

Langue	*Parole*
Social	Individual
Essential	Contingent
No active individual role	Active role
Not designed	Designed

Conventional	Not conventional
Furnishes a homogeneous subject matter for a branch of psychology	Furnishes a heterogeneous subject matter studies by different disciplines

Langue, as the essential, natural property to a language community that is accumulated through time, refuses mutation. *Parole*, on the contrary, is contingent, designed, and unconventional. Because *parole* is set apart from *langue*, it attains whatever characteristics not attributed to *langue*. It becomes, most significantly, diachronic, and we shall see this in the following section.

II

Saussure theorizes an act of verbal interaction in his speaking-circuit. The model consists of two interlocutors (A and B) and a channel for information exchange. The following diagram depicts the passageway of such exchange:

A   (A's Brain)   (A's Mouth) | (B's Ear)   (B's Brain)   B

Concept --------> Sound-image --------> Sound -------> Sound-image --------> Concept

  [psychological]   [physiological]   [physiological]   [psychological]

Because *parole* can only exist in the practice of speaking, it is likely that one can find a place for diachrony in Saussure's formulation of the speaking-circuit. What follows are two excerpts, one from Saussure and the other from Jakobson, both of which deal with similar conversational situations. Hopefully, through the comparison between the

two, one will be able to identify the time factor in the speaking-circuit.

Let us begin with Saussure's explanation of the mechanism involved in conversation:

> Suppose that the opening of the circuit is in A's brain, where mental facts (concepts) are associated with representations of the linguistic sounds (sound-images) that are used for their expression. A given concept unlocks a corresponding sound-image in the brain; this purely *psychological* phenomenon is followed in turn by a *physiological* process: the brain transmits an impulse corresponding to the image to the organs used in producing sounds. Then the sound waves travel from the mouth of A to the ear of B: a purely *physical* process. Next, the circuit continues in B, but the order is reversed. (*Course* 11-12)
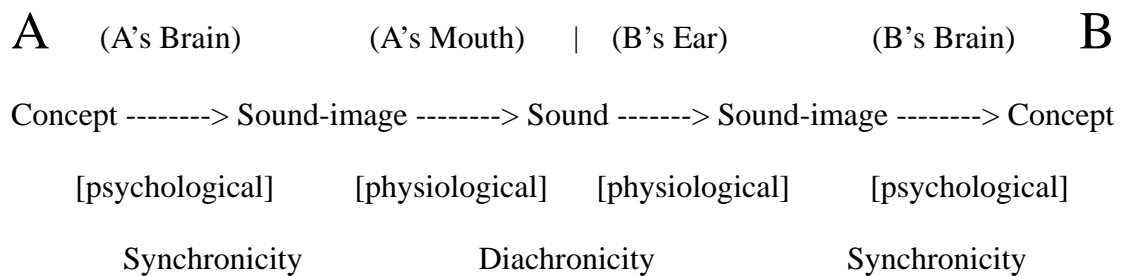
The Saussurean model reveals that, in a verbal communication, what is heard is the sound, not the sound-image. The key difference between the two, one may claim, lies in the fact that the former is sound-image charged with idiosyncrasies such as environmental noise, dialectical variation, and idiolectical characteristics. The same classification can be found in Old Indic writings on language, if not more detailed. As Jakobson and Waugh summarize, there are three layers of sound in a speech event: "nonspeech sound," "speech sound" and "the sense-discriminative constituent in speech sounds" (33). Adopting this classification, one sees that nonspeech sounds are environmental noises or physiological qualities pertaining to the speaker, such as a husky voice or an overemphasis of nasals. Speech sounds are produced in language operations and are expected to differ from one speech community to another—the dialectical variation *per se*. The "sense-discriminative constituent," i.e. the sound-image, becomes obviously the word that falls out [of the mass/chain of physical sounds] because of its significance and meaning: "*Si vous émettez plusieurs*

55

sons à une vitesse accélérée, ceux-ci s'agripperont les uns aux autres

automatiquement, constituant ainsi des syllabes, des mots, à la rigueur des phrases. . .

qui [sont] capables de se maintenir sans danger à une altitude élevée dans les airs.

Seuls, tombent les mots chargés de signification, alourdis par leur sens . . . [If you

emit several sounds at an accelerated speed, these sounds will cling to one another

automatically, therefore constituting syllables, words, to the rigor of sentences . . .

which are capable of maintaining themselves without danger at an elevated altitude in

the air. The only ones, the words charged with signification, fall, weighted down by

their meanings]" (Ionesco 121-22).

Jakobson's summary of an ancient language theory happens to complement

Saussure because it describes the same mechanism, i.e. that of verbal communication,

with specific attention to the time factor:

The interrelation of successivity and simultaneity [diachrony and synchrony]

in speech and language has been vividly discussed by linguists of our

century, but certain paramount aspects of the same problem were

sagaciously approached already in the old Indic science of language. In the

fifth century Bhartrhari, the great master of Indic linguistic theory,

distinguished three stages in the speech event. The first is the

conceptualization by the speaker which implies no time sequence; the

message as a whole may be simultaneously present in the mind of the

speaker. What follows is the performance itself which, according to this

scholar's treatise, has two faces—production and audition. Both of these

activities are naturally sequential. This stage yields to the third one, namely

the stage of comprehension, where the sequence appears to be changed into

a concurrence. The sequence must be seized and experienced by the

interpreter at one and the same time. (Jakobson, "On the Relation" 343)

The speech event thus analyzed, it is easy to see that the "conceptualization" of the speaker and the "comprehension" of the interpreter are both synchronic, relating to Saussure's idea of *langue*. The middle stage, i.e. the stage of production and audition, resembles the physical aspect of language. Combining Saussure with Jakobson, one obtains the following diagram:

A   (A's Brain)   (A's Mouth) | (B's Ear)   (B's Brain)   B

Concept --------> Sound-image --------> Sound -------> Sound-image --------> Concept

[psychological]   [physiological]   [physiological]   [psychological]

Synchronicity   Diachronicity   Synchronicity

The fact that parole displays diachronic traits is indisputable: it takes time to pronounce even the shortest word or to produce the slightest sound. Nevertheless, saying that the stage of production and reception involves no passage of time provokes much uneasiness. For one thing, cognitive scientists or psychoanalysts would protest against such simplification of mental activities which reduces brain/conscious function to mere intuitive responses. For another, it is impossible to compress every word of a sentence into one simultaneous whole—even if modern technology permits it, humans are unlikely to decipher the conglomeration.[17] The so-called process of reception must be, at least in most cases, a process. We recognize, segment by segment, the voice that is addressing us until a meaning can be generated at a certain point of time.[18]

We have explained that the production and reception of signifiers or expression units are diachronic; the link from sound-image to sound to sound-image, is up till now carefully examined. Yet one part still remains mystic in the whole picture of the

speaking-circuit: How does signifier summon signified and vice versa. This certainly

does not come from nowhere. Recalling the part where Jakobson quotes Bhartrhari,

one finds that the theorization of two stages unsatisfactory: first is the simultaneous

"conceptualization by the speaker" and second, "the stage of comprehension." The

key to understand both stages lies in the mental link between concept and

sound-image within the speaking subject, a link giving rise to the questions of how

the individual language user learns *langue*. In section one of this chapter we have

argued that *langue* is conventional; in Chapter One, it is viewed as a social

contract—both center on the social aspect of *langue* and both imply the necessity of

the time factor (historical time) in the consolidation of *langue*.

Different from the real time interlocutors must undergo in the act of

communication, the acquisition of *langue* involves a discursive time. When discussing

children's language, for example, Jakobson and Waugh make the following statement,

trying to explain how an infant develops the ability of linking a sound-image to its

concept:

> The child's spontaneously selected system of distinctive features [i.e. what
>
> the child recognizes and intends others to recognize] ensures close tie
>
> between the acoustic stimuli and the articulatory responses as a necessary
>
> prerequisite for his activities as an interlocutor in nuclear family dialogues.
>
> (66)

It seems that, in the primary phase of language learning, a child must find a way to

communicate in order to get what he/she needs and survive. Even though he/she can

produce a variety of sounds "which not only are lacking in adults but which adults are

sometimes even unable to produce," the most efficient communicative tool is still

sounds recognized by parents (Jakobson and Waugh 66). By learning to delimit

segments in parental speech and to copy them, and through a series of tests to make

sure that parents respond exactly to what is needed, the child consolidates the bond between sound-image and concept. Jakobson states elsewhere that language acquisition accompanies "the metalingual function, which enables the child to delimit the verbal signs he masters and to elucidate for himself their semantic applicability" ("On the Linguistic Approach" 157). A real-life example would be that, if the child wants to urinate, he/she has to say words like "peepee" or "toilet" to relieve bladder pressure.

<p style="text-align:center">III</p>

This section can be roughly divided into two parts: the first discusses the substitution of signifier/signified for sound-image/concept; the second deals with a comparison between Saussurean *langue* and other sign systems, notably Peirce's, since the Peircian theory of sign not only cares about the real world, thus not idealist, but also about the individual speaking subject, thus not asocial. An analysis of sign systems may seem to overlap the content of Chapter One; however, this *langue* is no longer restricted in the synchronic perspective: it is more like an integral part of communication, i.e. "code" (Huglo 30; Thibault 131-33).

The most confusing term in Saussure's explanation of the speaking-circuit is probably the word "sound-image." The original term adopted here is arguably "*image acoustique*" in de Mauro's edition (*Cours* 28) or "*image verbale*" in Constantin's (67). Translated the two into English, they become "acoustic image" and "verbal image," not "sound-image." In fact, Baskin's English version, with its rendering of the idea as "sound-image," could approximate a misreading of Saussure. For Saussure, sounds are acoustic, but acoustics, being a field, does not include sound in its entirety: "A series of vocal sounds, such as *mer* (*m* + *e* + *r*) ['sea'], may be a phenomenon in the field of acoustics or physiology" (*Writings* 5). That is, the idea of "sound" involves

<p style="text-align:center">59</p>

both the vocal and the physical part of verbal production. Such translation like "sound-image" thus risks confusion with "muscular image" before phonation (*Saussure's Third Course* 68a).

The idea of *image acoustique* therefore does not refer to the physical sound, but "the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses," i.e. a purely idealist entity that Saussure defines fifty pages later (*Course* 66). What strikes as peculiar concerning the organization of the *Course* is the fact that the original lecture of the speaking-circuit was given on 25 April, 1911, and that of the nature of the linguistic sign as consisting both concept and acoustic image, on 2 May, 1911. My point of bringing up this issue of time is to suggest that the link between the two lectures, between speaking-circuit and the composition of the linguistic sign, is far more strong than portrayed in Sechehaye and Bally's *Course*. Saussure even commented on the mind's power to associate. "[T]he linguistic sign," Constantin records, "is based on <u>an association made by the mind</u> between two very different things, but which are both mental and in the subject: an acoustic image is associated with a concept" (74a; emphasis mine). The linguistic sign thus attains its autonomy in the human brain, appearing as an independent entity.

On 19 May, 1911, while reviewing past lectures, Saussure proposed another set of contrastive terms, signifier and signified, to describe the nature of the linguistic sign. This time, however, the pretext of language being fundamentally an act of communication is undetectable. The explanation of the replacement goes as follows:

> When we consider a system of signs from the inside, it is advisable to set up (in contrast) the signifying and signified elements, which place them opposite each other (leaving aside opposition of image and concept).
>
> The signifying (auditory [*auditif*]) and the signified (conceptual) elements are the two elements that make up the sign. (*Saussure's Third*

Course 92a-93a)

From the quote, one notices that the bipolar relationship between signifier and signified entails a dimension not seen in the previous dichotomy; the signifier plays the active role while the signified, the passive role. Furthermore, "*acoustique*" is changed for "*auditive*." *Le Robert Micro* defines the former as "relating to the perception of sounds [*qui sert à la perception des sons*]" and the latter as "relating to the senses of hearing [*qui appartient à l'organe de l'ouïe*]." One emphasizes the ultimate external reference of physical sound while the other, the subject's intentional act of hearing. To sum up, situating the system of linguistic signs in the brain, shunning away from the actual practice of *parole*, and cutting any reference to physical sounds all fit the characteristics of an idealist theory.

Unlike Saussure, who imagines the sign to be composed of a signifier and a signified, Peirce believes that a sign is triadic:

> A sign, or *representamen*, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. The sign which it creates I call *interpretant* of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its *object*. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea which I have sometimes called the *ground* of the representamen. ("Logic as Semiotic" 5)

Compared with Saussure, who shies away before venturing into the discussion of the physical world, Peirce intends to create an exhaustive system that describes all semiotic existences and activities. To begin with, let us ask the question of whether the representamen is the same as Saussurean signifier. A quick glance shows that they both function as the medium for communication. However, they are conceived differently. Representamen appears more like Augustine's *sonus* than Saussure's

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signifier, and the Saussurean conception of signifier resembles that of the interpretant.

Saussure	Sound	Signifier/Sound-image	Signified/Concept	N/A
Peirce	Sign	Interpretant	Object	Object
Augustine	*Sonus*	*Dicibile*	*Res*	*Res*

Object and *res*, compared with Saussure's signified, are more comprehensive. They

denote both the mental image (or concept) and the external (or physical) reality,

whereas the idea of signified is limited within the human brain.

Another layer to this Saussure-Peirce-Augustine conundrum is Hjelmslev's idea

of the purport:

> Saussure's distinction between form and substance [. . .] lead[s] us to
>
> recognize that language is a form and that form, with function to it, is
>
> present a non-linguistic stuff, Saussure's 'substance'—the purport.
>
> (*Prolegomena* 77)

Roughly speaking, the binary opposition between form and substance corresponds to

that between language and purport. In this sense, the purport is equal to the

signified/concept. This is why Hjelmslev puts the word "substance" in the phrase

"Saussure's 'substance'" in quotation marks. But Hjelmslev does not stop here. He

maintains that every item in the expression plane manifests two qualities—form and

substance. But is it so straightforward? Is purport synonymous with substance? In

Hjelmslev's view, the purport seems to be less sophisticated than the opposite entity

opposed to language. That is, purport is unprocessed raw material; on the contrary,

language requires something more specific to complete the binary opposition. The

explanation below focuses on the first appearance of purport when Hjelmslev lists

five translations of the same message "I do not know":

jeg véd det ikke (Danish)

I do not know   (English)

je ne sais pas   (French)

en tiedä   (Finnish)

naluvara   (Eskimo)

As Hjelmslev points out, the common factor, or "the thought itself," exists in the form

of an "amorphous mass, an unanalyzed entity" which transforms from one language

to another (*Prolegomena* 50). It seems to imply that there must be a "purport"

underlying all the above linguistic representations. This implication, however, differs

from the Saussurean "concept" or "signified" because Saussure is not a

nomenclaturist, as we have argued earlier.

   Peirce has his own version of the communication scheme which highlights not

the predominance of sounds but the existence of communicating "Subjects":

> In order that a Form [emitter's intended meaning; Object] may be extended
>
> or communicated, it is necessary that it should have been really embodied in
>
> a Subject independently of the communication; and it is necessary that there
>
> should be another Subject in which the same Form is embodied only in
>
> consequence of the communication. ("Excerpts from Letters" 477)

Besides the amount of attention put on interlocutors, from the above passage one can

infer another difference between Peirce and Saussure, the difference of theoretical

imagination. Saussure's signifier, together with signified, is stored in the speakers'

brain. For Peirce, however, the representamen can stand by itself and can occur

outside of a speech event. This relative independence of the sign/representamen is

observed by scholars like Silverman (15). The environment in which an icon appears

seldom involves natural language: "a lead-pencil streak as representing a geometrical

line" in painting ("Sign" 239) and "an algebraic formula" as representing the

"commutation, association, and distribution" of figures ("Logic as Semiotic" 12) illustrate this point. Furthermore, examples of the index can even be found in the physical world: "a low barometer with a moist air" is an index of rain, so is "[a] weathercock" the direction of wind ("Logic as Semiotic" 14). Last but not least, symbols. It is true that symbols are closely related to speech; nevertheless, there are still instances where a symbol can be of a non-linguistic nature. In fact, all "conventional signs are Symbols," thus the red light is the symbol for drivers to stop and the ringing of the bell is the symbol of the beginning or the end of a class period ("Logic as Semiotic" 16).

　　Although indices, icons, and non-linguistic symbols do not require the participation of the speaking subject, a consciousness or an interpreter is always necessary for the representamen to realize itself. The impact of the interpreter's absence is best exemplified when one applies the classic philosophical question—If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?—to the Peircian process which goes from "fact" to "perception" and finally to "statement." The incident of the tree falling down is a fact, yet due to the absence of a perceiver, no perception is possible, and as a result no sound (statement or representamen) comes out of this incident. No statement, no existence. Not only that an unperceived event is meaningless, Peirce even vaguely hints that meaning or significance depends on something larger than an individual consciousness:

> If, an interpretant idea having been determined in an individual
> consciousness, it determines no outward sign, but that consciousness
> becomes annihilated, or otherwise loses all memory or other significant
> effect of the sign, it becomes absolutely undiscoverable that there ever was
> such an idea in that consciousness; and in that case it is difficult to see how
> it could have any meaning to say that that consciousness ever had that idea,

since the saying so would be an interpretant of that idea. ("Sign" 239)

The quoted passage carefully describes a situation in which the single consciousness forgets, say, that he/she once witnessed a tree falling in the forest. Such amnesia results in the lost of an event which belongs not only to the individual but also to humanity. To prevent this kind of irreversible tragedy, Peirce is likely to support the conception of a semiotic field free of boundary and compartmentalization so that every trace of significance will not disappear and that every sign will be able to drift from one consciousness to another, within the process transforming and evolving.

The process of sign drifting involves the Peircian idea of "the reference *ad infinitum*." In order to understand this idea, one must go back to the interrelations between the three elements: sign/representamen, interpretant, and object. The sign determines its interpretant and is at the same time determined by its object. The visualization of this relation becomes the following diagram:

Sign

Object   Interpretant
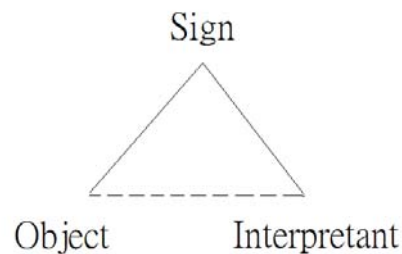
The two solid lines stand for direct relationships while the dotted line, indirect relationship. The sign directly signifies the interpretant (the sound of a tree falling down becomes a sign when and only when it is perceived by a consciousness), and the interpretant, i.e. the impression of the sound of a tree falling down, in turn gives rise to another set of signification to infinity.

Sign

Object   Interpretant —— Sign

Object   Interpretant
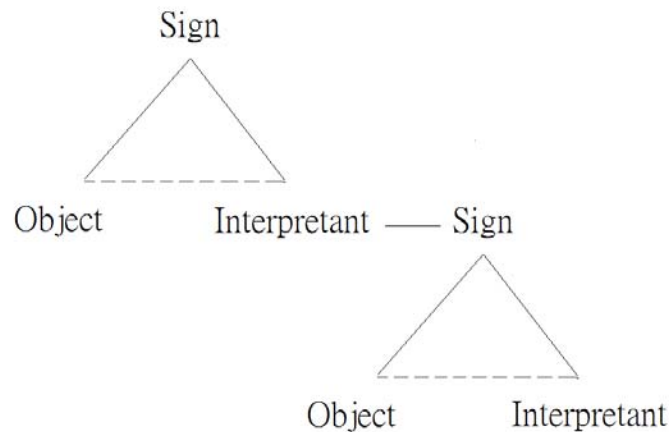
From the analysis of Augustine's and Peirce's systems of sign, one can sense the importance of language users. The *res*-object demands the presence of an interpreter so that its existence can enter into human societies and civilizations. It is obvious, *a posteriori*, that those who make the same interpretations are likely to be drawn together. In other words, the production of knowledge always comes with an act of grouping, and the act of grouping always creates new communities. Therefore, at the mythic moment when a *res*-object is recognized, when its *ground* is defined and grasped by a consciousness—individual or collective—a sign is borne. Like a living organism, the community thrives and evolves, along with its inherent semiotic properties, language included. The Augustinian idea of *dicto*, the Peircian conception of propagation *ad infinitum*, and even the Jakobsonian formulation of the metaphor all highlight the significance of the human agency, of the vital role played by the speaking subjects.

Chapter Four: Jakobson's Scheme of Communication

Saussure's speaking-circuit can be deemed as limited because it only manifests a certain degree of freedom in the temporal dimension; it still cannot stand up against idealist or asocial criticisms. I believe that Jakobson's scheme of communication is a refined model of the speaking-circuit, and he does so with a twist. We have seen how Jakobson shifts the theoretical attention from syntagmatic relations to metaphoric functions earlier, in the first half of this thesis on *langue*. Now, we arrive at the point where, according to Jakobson, the *langue*/*parole* division appears problematic. If such division is proved flawed, the concept of the speaking-circuit loses its ground, because speaking-circuit, as a vital part of *parole*—perhaps the only structural account of that, is endowed by Saussure with all the attributes not belonging to *langue*.

In "*La théorie saussurienne en rétrospection*," Jakobson first of all denounces the sociality and individuality assigned to *langue* and *parole* respectively. To begin with, *langue* can indicate both the collective and the idiosyncratic, for language users may slightly modify their version of the *langue*:

> *Ce qui est nécessaire pour rendre possible l'exercise du langage chez les individus, est non seulement un ensemble de conventions collectives qui permettent à un sujet de comprendre et de se faire comprendre et qui reflètent et soutiennent l'unité du corps social donné, mais aussi un ensemble d'habitudes individuelles qui reflètent et soutiennent l'unité, c'est-à-dire la continuité de la personnalité.*
>
> [What is necessary for individuals to make it possible the exercise of language is not only an ensemble of collective conventions that permit a subject to comprehend and to make himself/herself comprehended and that

reflect and sustain the unity of a given social body, but is also an ensemble

of individual habits that reflect and sustain the unity, the continuity of the

personality.] (405; translation mine)

More often than not, the individual language user, according to Jakobson, avoids or

prefers certain usages out of "individual habits." This is the individual part of *langue*.

Saussure's followers may argue that the original conception of *langue* already

includes two layers: the social and the individual, evidenced by the formulations that

the "language [*langue*] is not complete in any speaker; it exists perfectly only within a

collectivity [*masse*]" (*Course* 14; *Cours* 30) and that "the language [*langue*] [. . .] is

that social product whose existence allows the individual to use the language faculty"

(*Saussure's Third Course* 66a). The only difference between Saussure's and

Jakobson's renderings, if any, is probably the latter's awareness of both the collective

langue and the idiosyncratic *langue*.

Even though Jakobson's criticism of *langue* does not sound totally revolutionary,

his observation on *parole*'s social quality appears unprecedented. The reinterpretation

involves three steps. Firstly, Jakobson points out that, for Saussure, the act of

communication requires two persons—the active speaker and the passive listener. He

then quotes Sechehaye's essay to argue against the passivity of the listener. Sechehaye

suggests that the act of the listener is not "passive, but receptive," and "his or her role

is no less important than the other" because "the interpretation, like the active speech

[*parole active*], can be banal, constructive or destructive" (qtd. in Jakobson, "*La

théorie saussurienne*" 406; translation mine). Furthermore, it is common to witness

the speaker adjusting his or her utterances for the sake of the listener, the rising tone

of a question and the falling tone of its responses, for example. Communication

always proceeds with questions and responses, remarks [*propos*] and repetitions

[*répliques*].[19] A single incident of the speaker speaking does not make the situation a
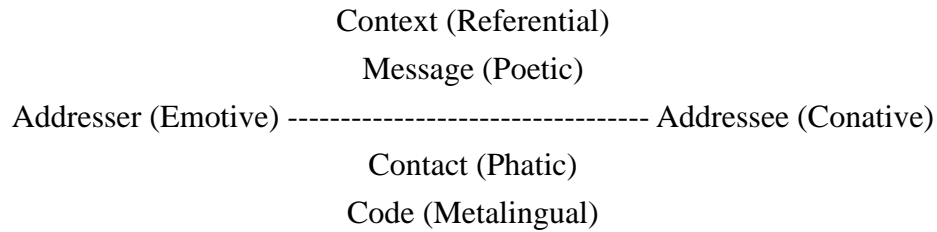
communication; it also needs the listener to respond, to comment, and to repeat—that is, to take the role as the speaker. I quote Jakobson:

> Saussure remarked that "[e]xecution is always individual, and the individual is always its master." It is clear that Saussure is only thinking about parts, about the isolated interlocutory turns, and not about the whole, in his analysis of communication. ("*La théorie saussurienne*" 406; translation mine)

Such restricted point of view leads Saussure to forget the fact that "*parole* is not a purely individual act"; instead, it is "an intersubjective, and therefore social, phenomenon" ("*La théorie saussurienne*" 407; translation mine).

The blurry boundary between *langue* and *parole* provides a chance for revolutionary revision of the communication model. In the Saussurean version, *langue* is the whole point of bringing up the concept of speaking-circuit. We can see the discursive attempt by simply reading the title of the section in which finds the speaking-circuit: "Place of Language in the Facts of Speech [*Place de la langue dans les faits de langage*]." *Langue*, in a way, presupposes *parole*. However, Jakobson's scheme of communication seems to be of the exact opposite nature: *parole* presupposes *langue*.

In the 1959 essay "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics," Roman Jakobson proposes the model of communication as comprising six elements: Addresser, Addressee, Context, Message, Contact, and Code, each of which takes its proper function as suggested below.

<pre>
                        Context (Referential)
                         Message (Poetic)
Addresser (Emotive) -------------------------------- Addressee (Conative)
                         Contact (Phatic)
                        Code (Metalingual)
</pre>

Arguably a revised version of Saussure's speaking-circuit, Jakobson's scheme of communication embodies a freedom unimaginable to the former. For one thing, the new model, like Saussure's old one, is not static; moreover, it is neither idealist nor asocial. For another, this model has been widely employed to address various issues and concerns—its eclectic applications suggest the possibility of boundary-crossing. In this chapter, we will first explain the six factors with the help of our previous discussions on Saussure. Then, a communication scheme for visual arts will be attempted at to give the idea of how Jakobson's model can step out of its genetic confinement and emerged as a free theoretical construction that is readily applicable to other fields of study.
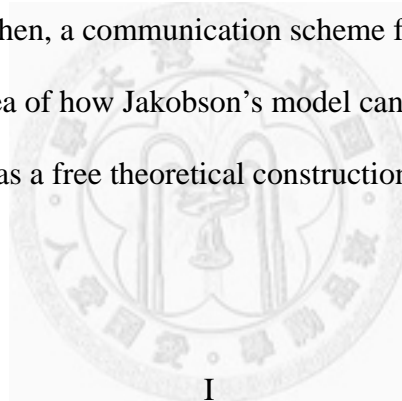
I

Let us begin with Jakobson's own description of communication:

> The ADDRESSER sends a MESSAGE to the ADDRESSEE. To be operative the message requires a CONTEXT referred to (referent in another, somewhat ambiguous, nomenclature), seizable by the addressee, and either verbal or capable of being verbalized; a CODE fully, or at least partially, common to the addresser and the addressee (or in other words, to the encoder and decoder of the message); and finally, a CONTACT, a physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and the addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication.
>
> ("Closing Statement" 353)

The addresser takes the emotive function which "centers on the personal attitude, status, and emotional state of the speaker" (Holenstein 154). The emotive function is not part of Saussure's speaking-circuit, yet its importance goes without question: it "flavors to some extent all our utterances, on their phonic, grammatical, and lexical level" (Jakobson, "Closing Statement" 354). Jakobson points out that the most prominent example highlighting the emotive function is interjections. Interjections are briefly mentioned by Saussure as a weak rebuttal against the principle of arbitrariness: he states that "for most interjections we can show that there is no fixed bond between their signified and their signifier," e.g. the French word "*aïe*" for the English "ouch" (*Course* 69). We have discussed a similar issue, the one with a peasant woman and the expression "cheese," in chapter one, and has quoted Jakobson, who believes that Saussure is right about the wide applicability of the principle of arbitrariness. Judging from the context in which Saussure uses the term, interjections are treated as a grammatical category, i.e. an integral part of the language system. Jakobson, however, introduces interjections into the communicative scene and makes a distinction between them and the linguistic aspect of communication: "Speech devoid of any cognitive function and <u>reduced</u> to mere emotive, interjectional exclamations remains out of this survey [on aphasic impairments]" ("Toward a Linguistic Classification" 301; emphasis mine). Such distinction intimates a hierarchical order that views the emotive function as the basis of the cognitive function. The act of communication starts in the first place not because the speaker has something to say but because he or she wishes to express, in a somewhat psychoanalytic sense.

To the other end of communication we find the addressee, a role that manifests the conative function. Unlike the emotive function which stresses the addresser's ability to express himself or herself—and therefore his or her subjectivity, the conative function puts the addressee into passivity. The best embodiment of this

function can be found in orders, such as God commanding the sun and the moon to stand still. This passivity of the addressee, however, contradicts with Jakobson's later critique of Saussure in "*La théorie saussurienne*," where the interpretive part of the communication is said to be "receptive" rather than "passive," as we have examined earlier. It is possible to argue that the Jakobsonian conception of the addressee undergoes a process of transformation. The 1956 essay "Shifters, Verbal Categories, and the Russian Verb," taking a stance similar to "Closing Statement," portrays the act of communication not as a model of mutual construction but as a model of meaning transmission:

> A message sent by its addresser must be adequately perceived by its receiver. Any message is encoded by its sender and is to be decoded by its addressee. The more closely addressee approximates the code used by the addresser, the higher is the amount of information obtained. (130)

It is not until the late seventies did Jakobson adopt the more liberal idea and endow the addressee with the right to take a creative part in communication. The transformation of the role played by the addressee seems to suggest that the Jakobsonian scheme of communication, though being theorized to a certain degree, does not remain in a synchronic state; instead, such scheme is invested with dynamics and with freedom that invites "a continual rectification of inaccurate theories and the positing of new theories" (Falk 108). The constant renewal of theoretical models—or the diachronization of synchrony—becomes a marked feature of Jakobsonian system.

The third factor to be explored is "context," which takes the referential function. "Context," "addresser," and "addressee" are borrowed and developed from Bühler: "the first person of the addresser, the second person of the addressee, and the 'third person,' properly—someone or something spoken of" ("Closing Statement" 355). Here, Jakobson breaks the idealist tradition of Saussurean linguistics and reaches out

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to the real world, to a person or a thing of determinable materiality. Pushed a step further, the idea of context designates not merely the congregation of linguistic elements but a "closed universe of signs":

> This context need not itself be linguistic in nature. But it is always semiotic in nature and basically capable of being verbalized. . . . Every substitution of an object through a sign (signification) implies the substitution of a sign by another sign (commutation, transformation), and in this respect we can speak of a "closed universe of signs." (Holenstein 158-59)

The introduction of the "universe of signs" provides a background and playground for non-linguistic semiotic systems to present themselves.

Jakobsonian "contact" is similar to the channel for information exchange, which, under the circumstance of speech event or oral communication, has its space and time limitations. How much can the channel of information exchange be stretched? There are two kinds of verbal communication: one addressing specific listener(s) and the other, non-specific listener(s). Face-to-face dialogues, answering the door, telephone/skype conversations, etc. are examples of the first kind. In these incidents, the addresser and the addressee share a link, whether imaginary of realistic. This linkage may explain why this linguistic function is called "contact." To deliver a speech, on the other hand, is to address non-specific audience. The speaker and the audience situate in close physical proximity; they also entertain psychological closeness with each other.[20] Communication with specific listener(s) is interpersonal, and therefore social; communication with non-specific listener(s) highlights the psychological bond and thus offers more information about the speaker/listener as possessing subjectivity. Either way, the "contact" factor appears to prove that Jakobson's model is no longer asocial.

The fifth factor in the scheme of communication is "code." Jakobson's "code"

refers principally to linguistic code, or *langue*, in Saussurean terminology.[21] Both

models notice its existence, yet one openly names it and the other only hints at it.

More to the distinction is the dynamics involved. Jakobson successfully establishes

the concept of code as more free than the Saussurean *langue* by recognizing the fact

that code is not monolithic, or consisted of one piece:

> Centrifugal and centripetal forces displayed by territorial and social dialects
>
> have been already for many decades a favorite subject in world linguistics.
>
> The recent application of structural analysis to the field work in social
>
> dialectology once more disproves the myth of homogenous speech
>
> communities, discloses the speakers' awareness of variations, distinctions,
>
> and changes in the verbal pattern, and, thus, brings new illustrations to our
>
> view of metalanguage as a crucial intralinguistic factor. ("Linguistics in
>
> Relation to Other Sciences" 668)

The centripetal force of linguistic norm and the centrifugal force of individual practice

diversify the field of code. Moreover, with the "variations, distinctions, and changes

in verbal pattern," Jakobson's "code" attains what he calls "dynamic

synchrony"—constantly emerging and evolving ("Retrospect" 721). According to

Jakobson, the dynamics of code lies not in the border of contact between linguistic

communities but in the innate spatial-temporal complexity of the code system itself:

> [T]he code used by any representative of a given language or dialect is
>
> convertible: it involves different subcodes compliant with the extant
>
> variations in the radius of communication. It becomes ever clearer that the
>
> code as well as the circuit of messages exhibits a perpetual interplay of
>
> conformism and nonconformism (or, in Saussure's terms, *force unifiante*
>
> and *force particulariste*) both in the spatial and in the temporal aspects of
>
> language. The tendency of the *Cours* to isolate each of these two aspects has

been abandoned in the further development of linguistics; thus the alleged

unlikeness between the sources (*foyers*) of innovation and the areas of

contagion and expansion proved to be deceptive, since any innovation arises

necessarily and solely through its multiplication in time and space.

("Retrospect" 722)

Thus understood, the system of code, with Saussure's *langue* as its prototype, must

manifest both synchronicity and dynamics. It will be impossible for one to pin down

the precise locus of innovation because it is no longer configured like a

center-periphery model.

We have treated "contact," "code," and "context" attentively, and have touched

upon the two obvious denominations "addresser" and "addressee." The case of

"message," compared with other functions of language, appears much more complex.

The word "message" can mean both "[senses] relating to the carrying, or a carrier, of

a communication" and "[senses] relating to the communication itself" ("Message,"

def. I; II). For example, if understood as the information flow, "message" that "passes

between [the addresser and the addressee]" clearly belongs to the second definition.

Focusing more on the idea of carrying, the act of communication (from the addresser

to the addressee) can properly be called "message" according to the first definition.

Because of the ambiguity, it is worth our while to try to find its counterpart in

Saussure's more straightforward model. It is neither the signifier nor the signified,

because "context," being a closed universe of signs, already encompasses the two.

The only item left in the speaking-circuit is "sound." Since signifier and signified are

in charge of meaning-generation, "message" would not appeal to man's reason.

Aesthetic, or poetic, quality becomes its sole function.

II

Jakobson's scheme of communication has been widely employed to address various issues and concerns. Peter Newmark acknowledges Jakobson's influence on his theory of translation (39). Itamar Even-Zohar borrows the scheme and transforms it so as to accommodate the discussion of the "literary (poly)system" (31). Yuri Lotman even extends the communication scheme to cultural spheres. However, applications always entail incongruence. In an essay on advertising, Barbara B. Stern admits that the "model fails to capture the interactivity of communicative intercourse between advertisers and consumers" (5). While applying the model to web design, Lisbeth Thorlacius discovers problems and mismatches (85). Given the two examples, one can reasonably conjecture that Jakobson's design must have its innate limitations which prevent a wholesale transference among different "contacts."

To design a communication model for visual arts is both easy and difficult. On the one hand, visual arts "[are] understood as a constellation of signifiers, whose function is understood in terms of the structuralist description of language" (Readings 143). A close kinship is established, with the intermediate of such analogy, between visual arts and oral communication. On the other hand, visual arts, or all non-lingual "cultural phenomena," are "defined as secondary modeling systems, a term which [indicates] their derivational nature in relation to natural language" (Lotman and Uspensky 212). The gap between visual arts and oral communication becomes almost unbridgeable. To resolve the ambiguity, one must first give visual arts a clear definition.

In "The Essence of the Visual Arts" Jan Mukarovsky compares and contrasts visual art works with a natural object, with an object of practical creation, and then with other artistic forms. The underlying logic is simple. All existence can be divided into two groups: one that is governed by a unifying intention and the other that is not. "[A] work of art does not differ from a natural object in the fact that it has an

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originator who made it but in the fact that it appears as made and in such a way that its organization reveals a specific unified intention" (Mukarovsky, "The Essence" 231). That is, although what appears as natural can sometimes manifest tremendous beauty, it can never be considered as a work of art because of its lack of a unified intention. All existence of an intention can be further divided into two smaller groups: one that serves a practical purpose and the other that does not. To be more precise, a work of art, unlike a practical creation, is designated "to be an aim in [itself]" (Mukarovsky, "The Essence" 234). Thus defined, an art work can be understood as an autonomous whole whose reason of being lies exactly in its existence. Mukarovsky then ventures on to differentiate visual arts from other art forms: "The tangibility of the material of the visual arts becomes readily apparent in comparison, for example, with music, its inorganic nature in comparison with dance, its unchangeability in comparison with poetry . . ." ("The Essence" 241). Through this process of negative definition, the essence of visual arts emerges, with a focus on its tangible, inorganic, and unchangeable materiality.

Mukarovsky's formulation of the essence of visual arts stops short at the three ambiguous attributes. Stripped of external affiliations such as the painter's intention or the market's mechanism, a work of art manifests to us its "tangibility," "inorganic nature," and "unchangeability." The first attribute, "tangibility," is not difficult to observe. Any form of visual art—be it painting, sculpture, or even architecture—must inhabit a material object to complete its worldly existence.[22] In other words, the canvas, the alabaster, and other materials that the artist utilizes record and convey the aesthetic quality. Thus understood, art works of these categories contrast drastically with, say, music because the latter's components, i.e. notes, are not concrete. The only way to *possess* a piece of music is to store it in our memory, yet such memory is not readily tangible. Or, one can buy a recording, a CD, for example; however, it is the

plastic disk that we have a claim on, never the volatile musical notes *per se*. From the analysis, music belongs to the intangibles while visual arts tangibles.

Visual art works are then compared with a dance performance, whose materiality, according to Mukarovsky, stands out because of its organic nature. There are two ways to approach this statement: either the dance "[has] the characteristics of a living organism," or it is "relating to, or derived from a living organism or organisms" ("organic"). Unlike a painting that exhibits a frozen eternality, a dance performance occupies a specific amount of time and progresses within it. It is due to this characteristic that a piece of choreography resembles a living organism, which grows and dies and fulfills the meaning of its existence. As for the second definition, we may compare the components of a dance with that of the music to illustrate the differences between the two. The vehicle that carries the choreographic intention is most significantly the dancer's body. Every movement, every pause, every gesture and expression of the body renders the whole performance organic, whereas in music, the notes are simply "a constant number of vibrations in a given time" (Benveniste 13).

Similar to a dance performance is literary works: both manifest a progress in time. However, the former happens only once and is not repeatable, unlike a poem or a novel that can be read over and over again. Nevertheless, contrasting with visual arts, the components of dance and those of literature are mobile—mobile in the sense that the dancer's movement changes from performance to performance and that the material of literary works, i.e. the words, "not only changes relatively quickly through development but can also be subject to subtle semantic shifts in passing from perceiver to perceiver" (Mukarovsky, "The Essence" 241). It seems that visual art works do not suffer from much transformation; the canvas may be tarnished and the sculpture weathered, yet the materiality of these remains the same. The above analysis

explains how the material that visual artists utilize differs from other art forms. How, then, does this characteristic relate to other factors of the aesthetic creation?

In another essay by Mukarovsky, "Art as Semiotic Fact," the materiality of a work of art is highlighted when the problem of the "artifact" is given special weight. "A work of art is not identifiable," he claims, "as psychological aesthetics would like to think it is, with the state of mind and spirit of its creator or with any of the possible states of mind and spirit induced in its perceiver" (Mukarovsky, "Art" 3). In other words, a work of art has its own autonomy which works against a complete alignment with the two ends. Avoiding the one-sided emphasis on either the artist's intention or the perceiver's reaction, Mukarovsky maintains that any product of artistic creation must take the form of an "artifact" that elicits an act of signification within a given time or community ("Art" 3). Thus coded, the artifact becomes an "aesthetic object" salient to members of that community (Mukarovsky, "Art" 4). This process can be understood as one of imposition: cultural codes are imposed on a neutral, material artifact, creating various outcomes on the perceiver's end. The signified of the artifact is later identified as "the total context of all phenomena that may be called *social*, for example, philosophy, politics, religion, economics, and so on" (Mukarovsky, "Art" 5).[23]

Identifying the signified with social conditions is not the idiosyncratic design of Mukarovsky. Various critics consciously or unconsciously have echoed the view. Kristeva, for instance, analyzes the frescoes of Giotto (1267-1337) and states in the parenthesis that "[he] lived at a time when the die had not yet been cast, when it was far from sure that all lines would lead toward the unifying, fixed center of perspective" (210). This "pivotal historical moment" foresees not merely the later development of perspective, but also the interaction of form and narration, signifier and signified (Kristeva 211):

In Giotto's work, color and form "in themselves" are never liberated. But

beginning with Giotto, with the emergence of the great Christian paintings

of the Renaissance, the independence of color and form appears *in relation*

to the signified (to theological norm): with respect to *narrative* and

representation. (Kristeva 215)

What we see in Giotto, then, is the bounded structure of sign: the artistic form as

signifier must signify the religious norm, a bound which will not be let loose until the

Renaissance period.

One problem arises in Mukarovsky's formulation: if he believes that a work of

art is "an aim in [itself]," why does he designate social conditions as the end of

signification? Wouldn't such designation amount to what Giotto's example has shown,

i.e. artistic creation in the service of religion? To better understand the mechanism of

creation and the artistic creation's state-of-being, one must refer back to Peirce.

The structure of Peircian sign is translatable to Mukarovsky's formulation based

on their many similarities. The following diagram shows the relation between their

(and Saussure's) major terminology:

Saussure	Sound	Signifier/Sound-image	Signified/Concept	N/A
Peirce	Represetamen	Interpretant	Object	Object
Mukarovsky	Artifact	Aesthetic object	Social signified	N/A

To begin with, the concept of the interpretant resembles that of the "aesthetic object,"

i.e. the coded version of an artifact after it undergoes the interpretation of a

community. Also, representamen appropriated into the study of visual arts is equal to

Mukarovsky's artifact, i.e. the specific organization and arrangement of smaller

material elements—sound waves in the case of linguistic representamens while

"stone," "metal," "marble," and "wood" for sculptural ones (Mukarovsky 243). Last

but not least, Peircian "object" and Mukarovsky's social signified. This section has

raised the question, after quoting Kristeva, of whether or not the signified of an art work resides solely in ideological structures. It seems that both "social signified" and "object" are exterior to human consciousness, yet Peirce's "object" appears more inclusive in scope. Allow me now to assume the viewpoint of an individual perceiver to illustrate this.

I am looking at a painting, a work of visual arts, Edvard Munch's *The Scream*, for example. The artist uses egg tempera and cardboard; these are tangible materials. The first thing I notice is the distorted figure that appears on the bridge, with his two hands covering his ears and mouth wide open. I learn from the critic Sabrina Laurent that "*The Scream* is seen as the expressionist manifesto of pain and despair." Such feelings prescribe the fin-de-siècle ambiance in general. The act of signification in *The Scream* leads to two destinations. On the one hand, thematic narrative that I provided just now depicts the content of the picture, the story or scenery that Munch intents to portray. The combination of a bridge, a river, and several figures creates an integral worldly representation of the artist's mental image. On the other hand, the representation is influenced by the milieu of the society. The social and political power "seizes, catches hold of, expropriates and deflects the channel of perception that runs from painter to viewer" (Bryson 64). Penetrating into the boundaries of painting, such power does not reveal itself unless identified by trained art critics. The two signifieds can thus be distinguished in respect to its abstruseness. A painting's thematic content is apparent; it only requires the basic cognitive effort to recognize a bridge as a bridge, a river as a river, and so on and so forth. The implied/imbedded social structure, unlike the narrative signified, awaits someone aware of the particular milieu and capable of deciphering it.

The two destinations of signification correspond to Jackson Barry's Meaning 2 and Meaning 3 respectively in his appropriation of Louis Hjelmslev's "scheme of sign

production." Like Saussure's fluvial portrayal of "the indefinite plan of jumbled

ideas" (signifieds) and "the equally vague plane of sounds" (signifiers), Barry's

(re)configuration comprises of two planes—Expression and Content:

EXPRESSION PLANE

Matter

Form

CONTENT PLANE

MEANING 1: Meaning of FORM and MATTER of EXPRESSION PLANE

MEANING 2: Connotational and denotational meaning of the EXPRESSION PLANE

MEANING 3: Meaning of the Form of MEANING 2

Barry's scheme of sign production[24]

The denotation of Munch's *The Scream*, i.e. the narrative of a distorted figure

standing on a bridge, falls into the category of Meaning 2. Meaning 3, according to

Barry, describes "relationships among the qualities, events, and things *represented* by

the signifier but not themselves present in the matter and form of the signifier" (19).

The absent nature of Meaning 3 makes its own appearance rare; only through the act

of interpretation can it be discovered. In the case of *The Scream*, the cryptographer is

Sabrina Laurent the art critic.

These two Meanings, however, are not the main interest of Barry. His special

exploration of Roman Jakobson's famous "/I like Ike/" example draws our attention to

Meaning 1. Following Jakobson's practice of "figure of sound" ("Closing Statement"

359), Barry states that "the meaning of the form (Meaning 1)" of the signifier /I like

Ike/ would be "{simplicity}, {concision}, and {inclusiveness}" (18). This is because

the simple three-syllable sentence manifests a coherent subject-verb-object structure

which is held together by the reiterated "eye" sound. Here we see that the essence of

linguistic art, Jakobson's poetic "message," lies in the quality of sound organized as

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such. The artifact, by analogy, must incorporate a particular organization which will arouse within the viewer a sense of estrangement. The act of "making strange" reminds us of the precious characteristics that a visual art work possesses—its tangible, inorganic, unchangeable materiality (Eco, qtd. in Barry 4). In extreme cases of installation, the material aspect becomes most conspicuous. Marcel Duchamp removes a urinal from its original place and raises it to the height of art. Though installed differently (its back facing downward), the urinal remains the same. Its materiality remains the same. When looking at Duchamp's *Fountain*, the viewer undergoes the experience of estrangement and begins to appreciate the tangibility, the beautiful curving lines for example, which are innate to the material.

Generally speaking, painters tagged as modern more or less exploit the possibility of ordinary materials: "the picture surface and field, its texture, size . . ." (Veltrusky 248). Kazimir Malevich's *Black Square* and *White on White*, for instance, bring the beholder's attention to the relationship between art field and frame. *Black Square* shows a huge square, painted black, with the rest of the canvas untouched. The whiteness of the boundaries surrounds the square, forming a visual impression that it is the frame of the picture, i.e. not part of the painting. However, it is Malevich's own design in the sense that the *frame* cannot be mounted otherwise. The beholder is then bound to notice and consider the often-neglected material aspect. In *White on White*, the materiality stands out; or, one can even say that it is materiality at its apex. On the blank canvas, Malevich paints a tilted white square, an artistic investment almost unnoticeable to the beholder. A quick glance at the painting, the perceiver sees nothing other than the canvas itself. The materiality of an art work is thus highlighted.[25]

Let us now return to the project of reconfiguring the scheme of communication. Undoubtedly, Jakobson's "addresser" and "addressee" can be replaced by "artist" and

"beholder." We have also dealt with the essence of visual arts, i.e. the "artifact," whose materiality is capable of manifesting aesthetic qualities in the same way Jakobson's "message" does. The primary scheme can be drawn as the following:

Artist ---- Artifact as the material representation of a visual art work ---- Beholder

Jakobson calls the "physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and the address" the "contact" ("Closing Statement" 353). Even-Zohar adopts the idea and changes "contact" for "market" in his "scheme of the literary system. He maintains that the idea of physical link no longer applies to the indirect sending-receiving model of literary production. What Even-Zohar proposes is an open "socio-cultural space where any aspect of the literary activities can gain any ground" (39). This conception, though politically motivated, narrates the only possible environment where the emit end and the receive end interact with each other through the medium of the art work.

"Addresser," "addressee," "message," and "contact" reconfigured, it is time to consider the other two factors of communication. From my exploration of Jakobson's original scheme, "context" is basically the synonym of Saussure's signified. However, the word "context" not only denotes the elements referred to but also connotes the sense of "[a] whole structure" ("Context"). Jakobson seems to emphasize the denotation but ignores the connotation when he says that "[to] be operative the message requires a CONTEXT referred to . . . , seizable by the addressee, and either verbal or capable of being verbalized" ("Closing Statement" 353). I feel it necessary to extend the use of the term to mean a specific space-time and all the organic and inorganic activities within it. Only through the nexus of this space-time can the signified of the message/artifact be located. Therefore, the term "community" might better describe the mechanism involved than the old one.

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Closely related to the concept of community is "code." "Whenever the

addresser and/or the addressee need to check up whether they use the same code,"

Jakobson suggests, "speech is focused on the CODE: it performs a METALINGUAL

(i.e., glossing) function" ("Closing Statement" 356). "Code" is thus understood as the

protocol, a set of rules, based on which the two ends of the channel communicate.

Saussure presents the same concept but under the terminology of "*langue*." He

defines:

> [*Langue*] is both a social product of the faculty of speech and a collection of
>
> necessary convictions that have been adopted by a social body to permit
>
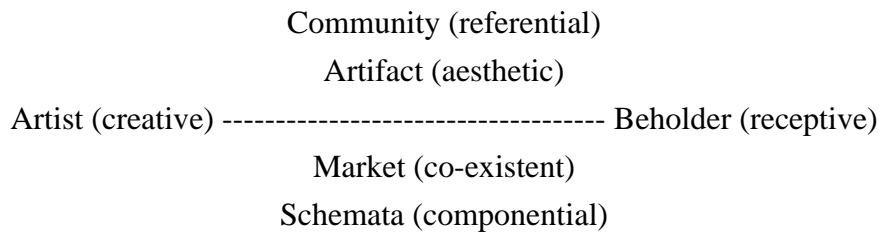> individuals to exercise that faculty. . . .
>
> [It] . . . is a self-contained whole and a principle of classification. (*Course* 9)

Let me compare "code" in oral communication to the Morse code. The sender must

encode what he/she has in mind according to the fixed rules. The coded message than

is transmitted through the wire to the receiver, where he/she relies on the same rules

to decode the message. Our grammar is such "code," as Jakobson and Saussure

contend.

In the discipline of art criticism, the idea of code is also involved. E. H.

Gombrich states in his influential *Art and Illusion* that "[the] message from the visible

world must be coded [with a set of schemas] by the artist" (181). We as beholders

"expect to be presented with a certain notation, a certain sign situation, and make

ready to cope with it" when we approach an art work (59-60). The code that both the

artist and the beholder resort to is the pattern book of lines, colors, shapes, which

Gombrich calls the "pattern book of schemata" (182-83). It is true that a community

has its own pattern book, but these two notions should not be confused. Munch's

painting *The Scream* presents us a figure composed of a light-bulb-shaped head, a

curving rectangular body, and two linear hands. The painter utilizes the patterns so

that the viewer can recognize individual body parts and mentally put them together. This cognitive mechanism is far from producing a thematic narrative of the painting (Meaning 2), let alone the social signified (Meaning 3).

All the elements in Jakobson's scheme of communication carefully examined, the reconfigured communication model for visual arts looks like this:

<div align="center">

Community (referential)

Artifact (aesthetic)

Artist (creative) ----------------------------------- Beholder (receptive)

Market (co-existent)

Schemata (componential)

</div>

The six factors are "artist," "beholder," "artifact," "market," "community," and "schemata," each of which takes one function: the artist the "creative," the beholder the "receptive," the artifact the "aesthetic," the community the "referential," the market the "co-existent" and the schemata the "componential."

Conclusion

Jakobsonian theory can be seen in many ways as the revision of certain Saussurean ideas: his pair metaphor and metonymy replaces the associative and syntagmatic relations; and his six-factor scheme of communication substitutes the speaking-circuit. The two theoretical refinements demonstrate a shift of critical attention. The first reorients the discussion from a fixed syntagmatic system towards a more creative metaphoric pole. The second reorganizes the relationship between *langue* and *parole*; it places code (*langue*) in a model of communication (*parole*). What happens in this reorganization is that the ultimate discursive goal in Saussure, i.e. *langue*, is replaced by the intent to map out a model of *parole*.

When the two sets of metatextuality—(1) the associative/syntagmatic relations and metaphor/metonymy and (2) the speaking-circuit and the scheme of communication—are juxtaposed as is done in this thesis, one will have the sense that the "development" from Saussure to Jakobson manifests a tendency, a personal attempt of the thesis writer, to remedy the idealist, static, and asocial aspects of the linguistic theory in *Course*. Jakobson did open up new possibilities and cast away old inadequacies, but his relationship with Saussure remains tense and obscure. For one thing, the interwoven textuality of their theories discourages a topological study: Jakobson comments on the *Course*, but the *Course* and other newfound manuscripts haunt back. For another, although Jakobson's pair of metaphor/metonymy and his scheme of communication appear freer than the Saussurean counterparts (the thesis writer makes no value judgment of Jakobsonian theory and Saussurean theory as a whole), they are strongly influenced by Saussure. In a way, The Saussurean theory makes Jakobsonian freedom possible.

Saussure has so often been misread and misrepresented not only because he

seems to vacillate on certain proposals but also because he has been judged, for a long time, according to what appears in the *Course*. The publication of notes from Saussure's students as well as from the Geneva master himself has made some post-Saussurean linguistic and philosophical writings problematic, yet not necessarily invalid. There are two kinds of Saussure's critics: one examines Saussure's theory from the perspective of the critic's ideology and points out the conflicts between the two very different worlds—the Marxist criticism of Saussure belongs to this category; the other spends too much time studying, criticizing, and developing upon Saussure that the critic's writings and Saussure's become inseparable—Derrida and Jakobson belong to this category. Indeed, it would be vain to denounce the legitimacy of deconstruction theory by citing a few passages where Saussure talks about how writing, instead of serving to record verbal sounds, can generate linguistic facts.[26]

Similarly, Jakobson may have made some mistakes in failing to understand the whole of the Saussurean theory; nevertheless, such mistakes do not make Jakobson's development on The Saussurean theory futile—on the contrary, they make it possible and yielding. In what follows, I will briefly list some examples of Jakobson's misreading of Saussure and see what comes out of those cases. To begin with, the concept of syntagmatic relations was misunderstood by Jakobson to be concatenate:

> Yet of two varieties of combination—concurrence and concatenation—it was only the latter, the temporal sequence, which was recognized by the Geneva linguist. Despite his own insight into the phonemes as a set of concurrent distinctive features (*éléments différentiels des phonèmes*), the scholar succumbed to the traditional belief in the linear character of language "*qui exclut la possibilité de prononcer deux éléments à la fois* [that excludes the possibility of pronouncing two elements at the same time]." ("Two Aspects of Language" 243)

Jakobson believes that he has proved Saussure wrong by showing Saussure's self-contradiction: Saussure on the one hand suggests the impossibility "to pronounce two elements at the same time" while maintaining that phonemes are "a set of distinctive concurrent features." Jakobson's critique of Saussure can only be true under the condition that the term "elements" used here is located on the same theoretical level with phonemes; this assumption is obviously incorrect. What Jakobson seems to ignore is the fact that Saussure's concept of linearity applies to signs—words in this context—only; such concept does not apply to constitutive elements of the sign, let alone the more atomic phonemes or phonemic features. It is impossible to pronounce two words at the same time, yet it is possible to pronounce two distinctive features of the phoneme simultaneously. Harris illuminates the difference between the two: "Saussure never claimed that a speaker has to articulate a voiced stop [e.g. /b/] by producing the voicing and the stop *in sequence*" (96). It appears that Saussure cares more about signs than about constitutive elements of the signs, even though Saussure does mention something about the constitutive elements of the sign:

> The linguistic sign (image used as sign) is extended and this extension has one dimension only. From this principle various applications follow. It is obvious. If we can segment phrases into words, it is a consequence of this principle. . . .
>
> It follows from the fact that it is acoustic (it unfolds in time, which has only a linear dimension, a single dimension). In contrast with some kinds of sign (visual signs, for example), which can present complexities in several dimensions, the acoustic sign can present complexities only in the space which can be represented by a line. All the elements of the sign must follow one another, form a chain [*Il faut que tous les éléments du signe se*

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succèdent, fassent une chaîne]. Sometimes it seems that this could be denied: if a syllable is stressed, for example. (*Saussure's Third Course* 77-78; 77a-78a)

The above quoted passage shows a more carefully formulated version of the linear nature of sign. Saussure does not ignore constitutive elements of the sign, and his discussion of the stressed syllable seems quite close, at first glance, to rejecting the hierarchical distinction between words and phonemes. Should such blurring of boundaries between words and phonemes happen, Jakobson would be correct in claiming Saussure's self-contradiction. However, it is never the case because, firstly, syllables or stressed sounds are not phonemes, and, secondly, the act of stressing does not break the principle of linearity—it is just a "phonatory [*phonatoire*, or, 'phonological' in a more current usage]" act. After all, the function of this principle makes it clear that Saussure, though touching upon elements more fundamental in hierarchy than words, still focuses on sign itself: "If we can segment phrases into words [words only and nothing smaller], it is a consequence of this principle."

Jakobson's treatment of the syntagmatic relations may indeed be a misreading, but it nonetheless is a creative misreading. As has been argued in chapter two, the two poles of language, metaphor and metonymy, derive from Saussure's idea of the syntagmatic and associative relations. It does not really matter if Jakobson misinterprets Saussure; spotting such misinterpretation will not cancel out the contributions Jakobson has made by putting out the essay "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances."

Another aspect of the intensity and obscurity of the relationship between Jakobson and Saussure can be demonstrated by exploring their views on synchrony and diachrony. We have seen in the introduction that Jakobson's major criticism of Saussure lies in the latter's distinction between the synchronic approach and the

diachronic one as well as the overemphasis on language system (*langue*) in *Course*. However, such criticism finds no justification owing to three reasons, all of which are related to the discussion of phonology in some way or another. For a start, Jakobson believes that a study of phonology must incorporate both the synchronic and the diachronic dimensions: on the one hand, it should "formulate the general laws" through the comparative analysis of a given phonological system ("Proposition au premier congrès" 3); on the other hand, the "history of the phonemic system" should also be taken into consideration ("The Concept of the Sound Law" 2). It is Saussure's definition of *langue* as a system of relative values that contributes to the unfortunate discipline of synchronic phonology and the consequent recourse to the third term, i.e. the real object itself. To amend this flaw, the diachronic approach must be introduced, and this approach cannot be the traditional historical phonetics because it focuses only on individual cases, "mechanic sum" or *Und-Verbindung*, and fails to address the system as a whole, the "formal unity" or *Gestalteinheit* ("Principes de phonologie historique" 202). By shifting from historical phonetics to historical phonology, the balance between synchrony and diachrony can be achieved.

Jakobson's proposal, with its initial critique of Saussure's overemphasis on synchrony, meets the latter's ghost when Jakobson came into touch with Saussure's Harvard manuscripts in the 1960s: he found that Saussure had already suggested a solution similar to his own—the discipline of "semiological phonetics" and the study of "semiological values" of phonemes ("Saussure's Unpublished Reflections" 750). The contents of this manuscript is indeed a thrill to Saussure's proponents, and Jakobson seems to acknowledge this "new light" ("Saussure's Unpublished Reflections" 750). His attitude to the Geneva master has changed, as can be detected from his quotes of Saussure's personal letters expressing doubts and hesitations about the establishment of a new doctrine, i.e. the general theory of linguistics:

[T]he vacillation of his [Saussure's] terms and concepts, the outspoken

doubts, open questions, divergences and contradictions between his diverse

writings and lectures and even within any single draft or course appear to be

a vital constituent of an anxious seeking and restless striving as well as of

his essentially multilateral view of language. ("Saussure's Unpublished

Reflections" 745)

Such compassion, I believe, may be the sign of reconciliation of not only the

synchronic and the diachronic approaches, but also that of Jakobson and Saussure.

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Notes

[1] According to Saussure, there are three levels of language: human speech (*langage*),
language (*langue*), and utterance (*parole*). Jakobson compares *langue* with *parole* and
comments that, if *langue* are virtual values, *parole* will be their actualization; if
langue is power, *parole* is act ("La théorie saussurienne" 403).

[2] There are, as Choi compiles, three dimensions of time in Saussure: historical
(*historique*), discursive (*discursif*), and phenomenological (*phénoménologique*) (*Le
problème du temps* 55). The historical time is the real, diachronic time that can be
experienced; the discursive time is the literary, synchronic time that a theory
constructs; the phenomenological time is ambivalent (*ambiant*) because Saussurean
linguistics seems to border on the first two dimensions. Choi's classification of time
somewhat differs from mine. I ignore the phenomenological time and subdivide the
historical time into two minor categories: the real time as in the saying "It took me an
hour to get here" and the historical time that witnesses the mutation of a system.

[3] Stewart mistakenly attributes the targeted book *Marxism and the Philosophy of
Language* to Bakhtin, but in fact the book is written by Voloshinov. However, I bring
up this issue of authorship only for the purpose of documenting; readers today no
longer make the distinction, and they designate the Bakhtin/ Voloshinov/Medvedev
complex as simply the Bakhtin Circle.

[4] Holdcroft provides a choice between intralinguistic necessity and intralinguistic
arbitrariness, and he believes that Saussure would still hold on to his original
conception because in a given language community, the "ox"/"*b-ö-f*" pair is no more
legitimate than the "ox"/"*s-ö-f*" pair (53). Arrivé also terms this intralinguistic
relationship between the signifier and the signified a arbitrary one:

> [P]asser d'une langue à une autre pour prouver, dans l'une d'elles,
>
> l'arbitraire du signe, c'est supposer que le signifié de « bœuf » est
>
> exactement identique à celui de « Ochs ».
>
> [Passing from one language to another to prove, in one of them, the
>
> arbitrariness of sign is to suppose that the signified of "bœuf" is exactly
>
> identical to that of "Ochs."] (49; translation mine)

[5] Culler cites two cases of etymological evolution to rebut the criticism of Saussure's nomenoclaturism. If the signified precedes the signifier, as nomenoclaturists believe, it would not change over time. However, words like "cattle" and "silly" both show that their original meanings are not similar to their meanings nowadays (*Ferdinand de Saussure* 32).

[6] It may be risky to argue that Saussure's conception of signifiers remains on the word-level, nevertheless I will try to explain this by quoting two passages from Saussure.

[7] Jakobson points out that the impossible combination of pid or pgt is the result of the code of English: "The code sets limitations on the possible combinations of the phoneme /p/ with other following or preceding phonemes; and only part of the permissible phoneme-sequences are actually utilized in the lexical stock of a given language" ("Two Aspects of Language" 242). These permissible phoneme-sequences in Hjelmslevian terminology become possible signs, as opposed to sign-that-has-no-meaning-yet and impossible signs.

[8] The idea of every (linguistic) sign as possessing a potentiality recalls Peirce's statement that "[a]ll words, sentences, books, and other conventional signs are Symbols" whose "representative character consists precisely in its being a rule that will determine its Interpretant" ("Logic as Semiotic" 16). The Peircian system of sign

aside, it is obvious that language is for both Hjelmslev and Peirce a system of symbols, of "potentiality; and its mode of being is *esse in futuro*" (Peirce, qtd. in Jakobson, "A Few Remarks" 1032; *Dialogues* 92).

[9] Signans, rather than the word signifier, is used because of the latter's Saussurean origin. As Saussure expostulates, a signifier is always of word length—it can be mono-syllable or multi-syllable.

[10] Saussure acknowledges the difficulties of delimiting concrete units, and it seems that at one point he even regards suffixes, prefixes and radicals as signs: "Derivatives like *pain-ful* [*désir-eux*] and *delight-ful* [*malheur-eux*] can be divided into distinct parts, each having an obvious meaning and function [*un sens et un rôle évidents*]" (*Course* 106; *Cours* 148). Nevertheless, the ideas of meaning and function possessing by one single unit appear incongruous with the rest of his work. It is therefore imperative that a reexamination of Saussure's conception of signifiers is conducted.

[11] The original French edition records "*désir-eux*," which is then ingeniously translated into "*pain-ful*" (*Cours* 176). Saussure's formulation that the word *pain-ful* consists of not two but one sole signifier echoes Augustine. Augustine argues in *De Dialectica* that a word like "disputat" is "classified as simple although it is composed of two elements" (82). As the translator's note suggests, this may result from the fact that "'*disputare*' is composed of the <u>inseparable</u> prefix '*dis*' and the verb '*putare*'" (122-23; emphasis mine).

[12] One peculiar thing about this chain *enseignement – enseigner – enseignons* is its order. When a language user is asked to do free association (and we have plenty of reasons to believe that the chain presented here is Saussure's own free association), he or she will unconsciously follow a certain kind of rules. The word *enseignement* reminds one of its verb form *enseigner* and than the verb's conjugational form of first

person plural, *enseignons*. It is very unlikely that the chain should go from the other direction *enseignement – enseignons – enseigner*.

[13] The book I use is a Latin-English version: on the left page is the Latin original and on the right page, the English translation.

[14] Also, in "La théorie saussurienne en réteospection," Jakobson praises Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* for its profound influence:

> Aucun livre de notre siècle n'a exercé une influence si large et si profonde sur la linguistique internationale. Ses notions, ses définitions, et ses termes ont pénétré directement ou indirectement les travaux les plus divers. Ses thèses programmatiques ont servi de tremplin à maintes discussions de principe. [No other book of our century has exercised such a wide and profound influence on international linguistics. [Saussure's] notions, his definitions, and his terms have penetrated directly or indirectly the most diverse works. His programmatic theses have served as the springboard for many a theoretical discussion.] (397-98; translation mine)

[15] The story that follows is summarized from *Life of Alexander* written by a Greek author, Plutarch of Chaeronea.

[16] Professor Juipi Angelina Chien helped point out that Saussure also discusses the word "moon," and has put it in different, if not layered, contexts. Since Saussure's formulation here appears intricate, I quote him at length:

> Taking *moon*, we can say *the moon rises*, *the moon waxes*, *wanes*, *the moon returns*, we shall sow at *the new moon*, many *moons* will pass before that comes about, and without realizing it we can see that (1) everything we put into moon is perfectly negative, is borne only of the absence of another term, since—point (2)—countless idioms will use terms quite different from our

own to express these very facts for which we utilize the term *moon*,

expressing for instance the monthly phases of the moon in one word, in a

second the moon as a heavenly body unlike the sun, in a third the moon as

opposed to the stars, in a fourth the moon as a guiding lantern in the night,

in a fifth the moonlight as opposed to the moon itself, and so forth.

(*Writings* 49)

It is possible to interpret the above quote as demonstrating metaphoric relationships

between the five instances listed and the primary meaning of the word "moon." The

fourth instance, "the moon as a guiding lantern in the night," seems especially akin to

a metaphor. However, the operating rules underlying these five instances must be

carefully examined to judge whether this fourth instance can be seen as a metaphor.

The thesis writer acknowledges the possibility of such interpretation and hopes to deal

with this problem in the future.

[17] Saussure calls the fact that, in oral speech, the uttering of words takes time "the

linear nature of the signifier." He also compares linguistic signs and visual signs by

suggesting that the latter "can offer simultaneous groupings in several dimensions"

(*Course* 70). It seems that visual signs are static and "simultaneous" while auditory

signs disclose themselves in a linear fashion. However, Jakobson also cautions against

the simplistic reading of linearity. According to him, speech "is a successive chain of

phonemes, but phonemes are simultaneous bundles of concurrent distinctive features,

and language exhibits also other structural properties which prohibit regarding speech

as mere linearity" ("On the Relation" 340). Therefore, the distinction between

diachrony and synchrony may not be so easily made. In the next chapter, we will try

to examine the differences and similarities between the two.

[18] Hjelmslev states the involvement of time and succession as follows: "[W]hen we

hear a spoken text, we find that it consists of signs and that these, in turn, consists of elements proceeding in time—some come earlier and some later" (*Language* 32).

[19] The French word is often translated today as "retort" or "response," but it can also mean "replica," which is then rendered as "repetition."

[20] Freud offers a detailed discussion of this phenomenon in his *Group Psychology*. According to him, each individual in the group would form an intimate relationship with the leader (here, the speaker). The collective bond between the speaker and his audience retains the basic structure of one-to-one oral communication.

[21] Of course there are other forms of code—historical code or cultural code, for instance. Nevertheless, the term "linguistic code" must suffice because linguistics is a discipline that already encompasses the historical and the cultural aspects, especially in its subfield "semantics."

[22] Here Mukarovsky is talking about traditional visual art works, not the avant-garde art works such as digital art or action art. For the convenience of discussion, the thesis writer follows Mukarovsky's path and leaves the question of the materiality of digital art or action art for future studies.

[23] Mukarovsky suggests that a work of art indicating the social condition of its creation belongs to the category of an autonomous sign. If the purpose of the work is to record or to imitate a reality, as a portrait or an occasional poem does, such art belongs to the category of an informational sign. His formulation makes it clear that the relationship between an informational sign and its signified "is different from the one that connects art, in its capacity as autonomous sign, with the total context of social phenomena, since art as informational sign refers to some distinct reality, for example, a particular event, a certain person, and so forth" ("Art" 7).

[24] Meaning 1, 2, and 3 differ from Saussure's meaning, which describes the relative

value of sign. Barry's usage of the word is closer to the idea of signified.

[25] Malevich does not, however, leave the canvas completely untouched.

[26] For example, the name of the artisan Lefebvre becomes Lefebure due to the confusion caused by the likeliness of "v" and "u" in writing (Saussure, *Saussure's Third Course* 49).