VERSITA

INTRODUCTION

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At the beginning of the 20th century, philosophy was influenced by the linguistic turn and many philosophers turned to the analytical method. Analytic philosophy of language almost immediately became the dominant field of philosophical inquiry. Some philosophers and philosophical logicians (e.g. Frege, Russell, Montague) attempted to reveal the logical forms that are coded and possibly camouflaged by natural language. A significant effort was made to explain linguistic concepts as ontological entities (e.g. Russell, Wittgenstein,Kripke); however, there were also those who questioned such efforts (e.g. Quine, Putnam, Davidson). Of course, the century of the analytic philosophy of language brought with it many other topics. This special issue of the journal *Human Affairs* offers a particular attempt— incomplete, of course—to review the impact of the century of analytic and postanalytic philosophy of language.

The paper "What is Wrong with Unarticulated Constituents?" by Marián Zouhar focuses on one of the most recent semantic doctrines. According to this rather popular doctrine, theory on the philosophy of language includes various kinds of unarticulated constituents that have essential bearing on the truth conditions of the utterances postulated; the general aim of this proposal is to capture the contextual anchorage of meaning. A special version of the theory has been formulated by F. Recanati who distinguished between two kinds of unarticulated constituents. He also elaborated the theory of the so-called variadic functions required for the incorporation of unarticulated constituents into propositions expressed by suitable utterances. Zouhar's paper shows that if variadic functions are admitted, then the constituents that are unarticulated in a strong sense are explanatorily redundant. In addition to the discussion, a particular theory of sentences and their identity is outlined.

"Semantic Concept of Existential Presupposition" by Jiří Raclavský offers a rigorous explication of the notion of existential presupposition. This notion is central to the debate between Russell and Strawson, and even Quine. This is because attempts at an elegant and simple explication of meanings within the framework of first-order logic (defended by Quine in particular) fail, since it violates several important intuitions that language users have. Raclavský invokes a higher-order logic developed by P. Tichý in order to capture not only the core features of those intuitions but also their subtleties. Indeed, the philosophy of language

which suggests the explication of language meanings often relies on the tools of formal logic.

The "linguistic turn" significantly affected various traditional branches of philosophy, including ethics. In his paper "The Is-Ought Problem, the Open Question Argument, and the New Science of Morality", Radim Bělohrad deals with one of the most influential challenges in analytic ethics of the past century, namely the Open Question Argument by G. E. Moore. If successful, the argument would show that the good cannot be defined, thus it admits no analysis, and the corresponding property of goodness resists being reduced to more elementary properties. Moore's ideas about the meaning of the predicate "good" are closely related to David Hume's famous statement that one cannot derive an ought-statement from an is-statement, the Is-Ought Problem. After discussing the historically most important challenges to the claims, Bělohrad focuses on the recent attack on Hume and Moore by the neuroscientist S. Harris who claimed that the challenge they pose is merely a "verbal trap". He assesses his ideas relating to the two arguments and claims that Harris fails to meet their challenges.

Another area in contemporary philosophy of language concerns questions about language of a much more general nature. Among the most influential philosophers attempting to solve these questions is R. Rorty. In his paper "Is Rorty a Linguistic Idealist?", Tomáš Marvan asks whether Rorty is really a "linguistic idealist", i.e., whether he believes that language is all the reality there is. He argues that Rorty is not a linguistic idealist in this strong sense and that he acknowledges the non-linguistic forces that guide our cognitive processes. Rorty is a pragmatically-minded social constructivist: on the level of whole "vocabularies" or "language games", we are autonomous designers and are not guided by "Nature's Own Language". At the level of individual fact-stating claims, however, we are constrained by external reality as to their truth or falsity. Marvan uses Putnam's notion of Internal Realism to elucidate the details of Rorty's conception. Finally, he critically assesses Rorty's arguments against the idea of the inherent structure of reality.

Continuing along these lines, the final contribution in our symposium by Shane J. Ralston, "The Linguistic – Pragmatic Turn in the History of Philosophy", discusses the relationship between the "linguistic" and "pragmatic turns". Ralston argues against the traditional opposition in this relationship and attempts to show how they can be viewed in terms of mutuality rather than exclusion. Quine's ground-breaking paper "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" may be taken as evidence of this. Ralston also shows that the issue of language was not alien to classical pragmatists.