

guided by the fictional communication implicated in the text (Moeschler and Reboul, 1994). There is also a formal correspondence between the fictional author and the fictional addressee. When the writer explicitly introduces herself or himself as author, as in first-person narrative, she or he can also address the reader explicitly and thereby specify a preferred role. The reader's communicative attitudes required for optimal literary communication are usually kept constant in a given text. This is why specific effects can be produced when a writer changes them from one paragraph to the next.

In the study of literature, there have been many attempts to define what characterizes literary discourse in general. The introjection of the roles of sender and addressees into the text seems to be one of the few invariants among them. This introjection enables the interpreter to set up fictional referents in the reading process and enables the addressee to convert any given text into a means of literary reception. Such an approach to the pragmatics of literature is currently also influencing musicology and art history. Charles Morris himself did not study fully these intricacies of aesthetic discourse, but they can be analyzed adequately within a suitably extended framework based on his work.

[See also Conversation; Meaning; Reception and Reader-Response Theories; Signal; and Speech Act Theory.]

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—ROLAND POSNER

PRAGUE SCHOOL. A group of linguists and literary scholars who between the mid-1920s and the mid-1940s developed some of the most influential concepts in functional structuralism and modern semiotics, the Prague School originated in the Prague Linguistic Circle (Cercle linguistique de Prague). The Circle was founded on 6 October 1926, when two anglicists (Bohumil Trnka and Vilém Mathesius), two slavists (Roman Jakobson and Bohuslav Havránek), one orientalist (Jan Rypka), and one general linguist (Henrik Becker, a visiting scholar from Leipzig) met in Mathesius's faculty office to discuss a paper delivered earlier that day by Becker. This paper was critical of contemporary linguistic theory, more particularly the neogrammarian approach. In addition to this general dissatisfaction, all participants shared an interest in language as a functional system, shaped

not only by intrinsic laws but also by external, social factors. This meeting ended with the decision to meet regularly.

Nine meetings were held the following year including ones led by Jakobson on the concept of phonological laws and the teleological principle, Sergej Karcevskij on the relationship between language and thought, and Jan Mukařovský on motor processes in poetry. In 1928, more than half of the papers were given by Russian formalists. Nikolaj Trubetzkoy spoke twice: once on the relationship between alphabet and sound system, then on a comparison of vowel systems. Boris Tomaševskij spoke on literary history; Pëtr G. Bogatyřev on ethnological ethnography; Grigorij Vinokur on linguistics and philology; and Jurij Tynjanov on literary evolution. This range of papers underlines the conceptual interface between late formalism and early structuralism.

Only a week after Trubetzkoy's visit to Prague, Jakobson presented to the Circle a draft of the "Phonological Theses for the First International Congress of Linguists" to be held in The Hague. The final version, which was signed by Jakobson, Mathesius, and Trubetzkoy, was distributed at the congress in April 1928 and was published in the *Proceedings* together with a "Program of Linguistic Analysis," jointly formulated and signed by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye as members of the Geneva School and by Jakobson, Mathesius, and Trubetzkoy as members of the Prague School.

Trubetzkoy's impact on Jakobson is symptomatic of the general influence late Russian formalism had on the Prague School. In his paper on literary evolution, Tynjanov defined literature as a system interrelated with other cultural and social systems, and he emphasized the evolutionary interplay between particular forms and functions. In his and Jakobson's seminal program on "Problems in the Study of Literature and Language" (1928), they claimed Saussure's radical antinomy between diachrony and synchrony was an illusion, since "every synchronic system necessarily exists as an evolution, whereas, on the other hand, evolution is inescapably of a systematic nature."

The "Theses Presented to the First Congress of Slavic Philologists in Prague 1929" represent the switching point from late formalism to early structuralism. These theses, published as the introduction to the first volume of the *Travaux du cercle Linguis-*

tique, marked the beginning of what might be called the classical period of the Prague School (1929-1939).

Particular emphasis was laid on the fact that languages are systems performing communicative functions, to the point that the notion of "function" became the trademark of the Prague School. This term was not used in its mathematical sense (denoting the dependence of the changes of x upon the changes of y); rather, it was used in order to refer to the idea that any item of language serves some purpose, fulfills some communicative need: language was not considered as a self-contained whole, and it was not separated from extralinguistic factors.

The most significant achievements were made in the field of phonology, which they defined explicitly as "that part of linguistics which deals with phonic phenomena from the viewpoint of their function in language." This definition was first presented to the 1930 International Phonological Conference in Prague. In 1932, when the First International Congress of Phonetic Sciences was held in Amsterdam, the term *L'école de Prague* (Prague School) was used officially for the first time to refer to the Prague linguists.

For Prague School linguists, mainly Trubetzkoy and Jakobson, the delimitation of phonology as a linguistic discipline distinct from phonetics (understood as a natural science and, thus, as an auxiliary discipline) was most important. The concept of the phoneme was central, of course, and the history of its definition is interesting. In the very first attempts of the late 1920s, psychological approaches (such as those by Russian scholars Jan Baudouin de Courtenay and L. V. Ščerba) to the phoneme still dominated. The theses presented to the International Phonological Conference in 1930 defined the phoneme more linguistically as "a phonological unit not dissociable into smaller and simpler units." Based on the concept of "phonological opposition" (understood as "a phonic difference able to serve, in a given language, for the differentiation of intellectual meanings"), a "phonological unit" was defined as the member of such a phonological opposition. Later, the assumption of the phoneme's indivisibility into smaller units was corrected: In his seminal *Grundzüge der Phonologie* (Foundations of Phonology 1939), Trubetzkoy first defined a phoneme as "the smallest phonological unit of a given language" then defined it as "the sum of the phonologically relevant properties of a sound." This latter definition clearly implies the division of

the phoneme into even smaller units, which were later termed *distinctive features*, a notion that became a precious methodological commodity in modern semiotics.

Mathesius concentrated on what he called "functional onomatology," "functional syntax," and "functional analysis of the utterance." Instead of analyzing language only into its formal elements, he emphasized its functional elements and communicative function(s). In this context, the distinction between "theme" and "rheme" (later termed "topic" and "comment"), received central importance: whereas the theme is the informative basis of a statement, derived from the accompanying or preceding situational or verbal context, the rheme is the actual new information communicated about the theme. According to Mathesius, in the normal sequence the theme precedes the rheme (T-R). Expectedly, the concrete realization of this principle differs in various

languages. In Russian (which employs a relatively free word order), for example, the sentence "Papa priněs ělku" (Daddy brought the Christmas tree) may be transformed easily into "Ělku priněs papa" or "Ělku papa priněs" in order to arrive at different semantic functions. Whereas in the first sentence, *papa* clearly is the theme and the rest of the sentence is the rheme, the new information (and thus emphasis) is contained either in the fact that it was papa who brought the Christmas tree or in the fact that he brought the tree (and did not send it, for example). The functional differences expressed here by means of word order can be conveyed in other languages by other means, such as periphrasis ("It was *Daddy* who brought the Christmas tree"), sentence stress ("Daddy has *brought* the Christmas tree"), or passive voice ("The *tree* was brought by Daddy").

The distinction between practical language and poetic language, which was crucial for Russian formalism, was expressed in a corresponding definition: language has either a predominant communicative function (when it is directed toward the signified) or predominant poetic function (when it is directed toward the sign itself). The functions are seen as a hierarchically organized system, and the dominance of one function does not exclude the cooccurrence of other functions. This principle was applied later by Bogatyřev to ethnological studies through his concept of polyfunctionality.

This explicitly semiotic orientation requires a clear departure from formalist approaches, both in lan-

guage and art. In the mid-1930s, many formerly structuralist tenets were reformulated in semiotic terms and concepts. This can be clearly seen in the introduction to the newly founded periodical *Slovo a slovesnost* (Word and verbal art, 1935), in which Havránek, Jakobson, Mathesius, Mukařovský, and Trnka say explicitly that "the problem of the sign is one of the most urgent philosophical problems in the cultural rebirth of our time."

The structural-semiotic shift in orientation and the overcoming of both formalism and functional structuralism is best documented in Jan Mukařovský's review of the Czech translation of Viktor Šklovskij's *Theory of Prose* in 1934. For Mukařovský, the main significance of the Russian formalists' work in general and of Šklovskij's writings in particular was their polemical negation of preceding theories. Mukařovský interprets the formalist concentration on form as the antithesis of the unqualified emphasis on content, forming a polemic that, according to him, paved the way for structuralism as a synthesis of the two. Mukařovský's rejection of Šklovskij's "weaving metaphor" clearly shows his new orientation. According to Šklovskij, literary scholarship should concentrate on the internal laws of literature, much as in the analysis of weaving techniques (cf. the metaphor of the "textual" and the "textile"), in which solely the count of yarn and the weaving techniques are important, not the condition of the world market and the politics of the trusts. Mukařovský objects that it is impossible to separate the problem of weaving techniques from the economic situation on the world market, since the market mechanism of supply and demand has a direct impact on the development of weaving techniques. Based on these ruminations, Mukařovský draws two important conclusions: first, he polemically replaces Šklovskij's formula that "everything in the work of art is form" with the equivalent formula that "everything in the work of art is content"; second, he claims that external factors must also be considered in the analysis of art, although, of course, the internal laws still represent a major interest of structuralism. As a result, structuralism emerges as a method synthesizing intrinsic (formalist) and extrinsic (sociological) approaches.

The semiotic shift is best documented in two of Mukařovský's papers: "Art as a Semiological Fact" (1934) and "Poetic Denomination and the Esthetic Function of Language" (1936). The former was presented at the Eighth International Congress of

Philosophy in Paris in 1934, in which Charles Morris, whose "Esthetics and the Theory of Signs" appeared in 1939, took part. In the 1934 paper, Mukařovský defined a work of art, explicitly referring to Ferdinand de Saussure and the Viennese linguist and psychologist Karl Bühler and implicitly relating their concepts to Edmund Husserl's phenomenological ideas, as an autonomous sign consisting of three components: (1) the "material artifact," the workthing (*dílo-věc*), conceived as an external (sensory) symbol; (2) the correlated "esthetic object" (a term taken from German philosopher of art Broder Christiansen), defined as a meaning represented in the collective consciousness; and (3) a relation to the thing signified. The term *collective consciousness* is here an obvious reference to Émile Durkheim's sociology; according to Mukařovský, it should not be understood as a psychological reality or as a summarizing concept of individual states of consciousness but as the "social fact" of the realm of the individual systems of cultural phenomenon, such as language, religion, science, politics, and so on. And it is to this "total context of social phenomena" (later explicitly called "culture"), that art as an autonomous sign refers, unlike communicative signs, which refer directly to a specific reality.

Mukařovský's 1936 paper is a systematic elaboration of Bühler's concept of language functions. (Bühler, who cooperated closely with Trubetzkoy, repeatedly visited the Prague Linguistic Circle.) Mukařovský summarizes Bühler's three basic functions of language—the expressive function with respect to the sender, the appealing function with respect to the receiver, and the informational function with regard to the objects and states of affairs—as its three practical functions. He then added a fourth, aesthetic function that tears language out of its direct practical context and directs the sign user's attention toward the sign itself. Mukařovský thus arrives at a description of language function that integrates the early formalist dichotomy of practical language and poetic language in a systematic way; this typology was complemented only much later by Jakobson. Mukařovský himself later interpreted the aesthetic function as a basic type of human relation to reality. He also interpreted the aesthetic function in its interrelation to the aesthetic value (as a social and dynamic phenomenon) and the aesthetic norm (a historical fact regulating the aesthetic function).

Mukařovský's concept of the collective represen-

tation of the aesthetic object was later modified, mainly by Felix Vodička (1909–1974) and by Miroslav Červenka. Vodička particularly emphasized the individual recipient's role in the process of "concretization" (*konkretizace*)—in constituting the aesthetic object on the basis of the material artifact. The term *concretization* was taken from the Polish phenomenologist Roman Ingarden, but it was reframed within a structuralist concept in order to concern not only the internal structure of the artifact but the artifact's structure as compared to the structure of the contemporary tradition. In this sense, concretization not only replaced the earlier (formalist) juxtaposition of automatization (*automatizace*) and actualization (*aktualizace*; often termed "foregrounding" in English) but also paved the way for a structuralist theory of literary history and literary evolution.

After the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia and the outbreak of World War II, the activities of the Prague School became sporadic. In 1939, Trubetzkoy, one of the most active members, died; Jakobson and René Wellek emigrated; Bogatyřev returned to the Soviet Union; and all universities were closed by the Nazis. *Slovo a slovesnost* was suspended in 1943 and reappeared in 1947, only to disappear again with volume 10 in 1948; Mathesius died in 1945. Immediately after the war, the Circle resumed its activities in its former manner, presenting, among others, a number of foreign guest lecturers, such as Louis Hjelmslev from Copenhagen, Maria Renata Mayenowa from Warsaw, and A. Belič from Belgrade. Still, 1948 saw the end of the Prague School, when I. I. Meščaninov imported Marxist doctrine from the Soviet Union, followed two years later by Stalinist linguistics. Only after de-Stalinization in the USSR was the tradition of the Prague School revived, when a number of scholars (among them Trnka and Havránek) took active parts in a discussion of structuralism, mainly in linguistics. This development resulted in the rise of the so-called Prague School of the 1960s. One indication of this renewed activity was the publication of the *Travaux linguistiques de Prague* (1964–1971). This "new" Prague School became active in various fields, such as linguistic stylistics, information theory, verse theory, literary scholarship, literary evolution, philosophy, and aesthetics. After the demise of the Prague Spring in 1968, many of these scholars emigrated and continued their work abroad. Within the country itself, the heritage of both the early ("classical") and the renewed structuralist

movements were officially continued until the very end of the 1980s.

[See also Art; Articulation; Distinctive Features; Jakobson; Mukařovský; Phoneme; and Trubetzkoy.]

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—PETER GRZYBEK

PUNCTUATION. Conventional graphic signs designed to supplement writing systems by providing visual cues concerning the vocal organization of language productions, punctuation uses encoded intonation and pauses to clarify the syntactic patterning of a text and prompts the reader to conform to the intended form of its verbal delivery. Through the centuries, a variety of graphic devices have been invented in order to create visual equivalents of the complex temporal patterning conveyed by the triple structure of speech: what is said (linguistic information), how it is said (paralinguistic information), and how it is gestured (kinesic information). Punctuation can also evoke silence and stillness and convey indirectly some purely visible features, mainly facial expressions. In computer-mediated script, abstract facial icons are used to express the moods of the writer or his or her attitudes toward a statement.

Written language has always been alienated in some degree from the living, psychosomatic, organized reality of speech; written language, in any script system, is reductive relative to the live, organized reality of speech. Despite the profusion of written communications, a totally arbitrary and very limited system of punctuation symbols has been developed to encode graphically the nonliteral parameters of speech and enunciation. Early Greek and Roman texts used only capital letters; Greek inscriptions do not separate words or sentences, but in some [·] or [:] separate clauses. Greek literary texts indicated a change of topic with a dash (*paragraphos*) under the beginning of a line. In the third century BCE, Greek used [·] (*komma*) after a short clause, [·] (*kolon*) after a longer clause, and ['] (*periodos*) after the longest sentence. In reading, [·] separates words, ['] indicates elision, and [] under two letters marks the separation of compound words. In Roman texts, words are separated by points, and new topics are signaled by projecting the first letters into the margin, but Latin scripts are mostly written continuously, at most with spaces between sentences or an occasional period. Around 600 or 700 CE, there is a transition from majuscule to minuscule handwriting; words, sentences, and paragraphs are then separated, with high or low points still used for sentences. In the following century, Gregorian chants prompt the inflectional *punctus elevatus* [✓] and the *punctus interrogativus* slanted to the right [?]. In the ninth century, word separation is more common, particularly in Latin; in Greek, [·] replaces [·], and [·] symbolizes interrogation in Latin manuscripts. In the following centuries, a variety of signs appear with new values: for instance, [-] divides words at end of line, *punctus circumflexus* [·>] raises inflection at end of subordinate clause, a virgule [/], later replaced by [·], marks a light pause (before *punctus elevatus*)—sunk to the bottom of the line, it became a comma [·] (reading aloud in churches and refectories contributed much to establishing a consistent system in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In 1455, the Vulgate printed by Gutenberg has [·], [·], and [·] as commas; words are separated, and phrases begin with capital letters. At the end of the fourteenth century, William Caxton of Westminster uses punctuation irregularly ([·], a lozenge-shaped period, and sometimes [||] instead of virgule). Around 1490, Aldus Manutius (Venice's Aldine Press) uses italic and Roman types in the reverse of our present practice and replaces the Greek system with a new

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SEMIOTICS

Paul Bouissac

Editor in Chief

99-1782

**Institut für Slawistik
Universität Graz**

Merangasse 70
A-8010 Graz

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

New York 1998 Oxford