

ON LANGUAGE

Roman Jakobson

EDITED BY

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Preface

Roman Jakobson was one of the great thinkers of our time; the effects of his genius have been felt in linguistics, as well as in many fields where linguistic considerations are influential. Despite the impact that his ideas have had, those interested in reading a selection of his writings in order to grasp the fundamentals of Jakobson's linguistic thought have been faced on the one hand with the eight massive volumes of *Selected Writings* and on the other hand with narrowly specialized collections. There has been no single volume that was at the same time representative, relatively concise, and accessible to the general reader.

This book is meant to fill that gap. It gives an overall view of Jakobson's general linguistic theory. It includes those texts that are best suited to introduce readers to the general lines of Jakobson's approach to language. It is meant for those whose interests lie in fields that Jakobson's own work touched: linguistics, psycholinguistics, ethnolinguistics, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, poetics and literary theory, semiotics, anthropology, and philosophy of language.

Although it is difficult to separate Jakobson's interest in language from his equal passion for poetic, literary, and semiotic studies, works of his concerning these questions have not been included here. They can be found in the companion volume, Roman Jakobson, *Language in Literature*, edited by Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy (1987).

Jakobson's texts have been grouped in seven parts ranging from the most general questions of language to more specific topics to larger interdisciplinary issues. Part I is intended as an introduction to his work as a whole. It contains basic theoretical statements that define his general point of view. Part II brings together texts concerned with some of the fundamental concepts that provide the backbone of his approach: speech event, functions of language, code and message, parts and wholes (hierarchical structure), similarity/contiguity, selection/combination, and

opposition and markedness. Parts III, IV, V, and VI each focus on a particular theme: language in relation to time and space, including typology and universals, the relation of synchrony and diachrony, language change, sociolinguistics, and linguistic affinities; phonology in the widest sense (phoneme, distinctive feature, redundancy, other features, child language acquisition); grammatical morphology and semantics; and the direct connection between sound and meaning: iconicity and nonarbitrariness. Part VII provides a wider perspective on Jakobson's view of language in the context of interdisciplinary questions, considering linguistics and semiotics, linguistics and biology, linguistics and communication theory, and neurolinguistics.

Jakobson's work, like the subject matter he writes about, is a complex whole in which everything is related in some way or other to everything else. A theme that is the focus of one article thus may also be developed elsewhere. And even when treating a particular subject, Jakobson tends to bring in central concepts or fundamental properties of language that he considers to be inseparable from the matter under consideration. Hence, there are numerous overlappings across texts and across sections, and some of the associations he makes may seem surprising to the uninitiated. The reader should be aware, therefore, that the title of a chapter is not necessarily indicative of all of its contents. A particularly striking example is Chapter 7, "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances," which has been included less for its classification of aphasic disorders (although that is important) than for its theoretical discussion of two fundamental properties of language, similarity/contiguity and selection/combination.

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Introduction: The Life, Work, and Influence of Roman Jakobson

Linda R. Waugh and Monique Monville-Burston

The texts in Part I introduce Roman Jakobson's view of language. The reader might also profit from a discussion here of the foundations of his approach, since many themes are developed even in those easier chapters. Several studies explicating his point of view have recently appeared and are for the most part still available.¹ Rather than recapitulate them, we explore here Jakobson's ideas in the context of his intellectual development, asking as he once did (1977c:248) in an article on Charles Sanders Peirce, What are the roots of his thought? How did his ideas grow?² The reader should be warned that no single discussion, especially a schematic one like ours, can do justice to all facets of Jakobson's contributions to general and theoretical linguistics. We agree with Edward Stankiewicz (1983a:21): "Like the great works of the classics, [Jakobson's work] has a richness of texture and a multiplicity of angles that will forever intrigue the attentive reader."

Intellectual Biography

Linguista sum; linguistici nihil a me alienum puto.³
(I am a linguist and I consider nothing having to do
with language as foreign to me.)

Moscow Period

Born in Moscow on October 11, 1896, to a chemical engineer and prominent industrialist, Roman Osipovič Jakobson was fortunate enough

to grow up in the intellectually lively milieu of the Russian intelligentsia just before the Revolution. From the beginning, he was interested in poetry and language, or to put the latter more precisely, language and languages, since he was always to study the one in light of the other. Bilingual in Russian and French, Jakobson learned many other languages throughout his life. He himself (1980d) pointed to the importance that his early command of two languages had for his intellectual development as well as for his interest in language itself. As a youngster, he was fascinated by children's counting-out rhymes, proverbs, idiomatic phrases, riddles, magical incantations, and graffiti; as a boy of ten, he compiled long lists illustrating the different meanings and uses of the cases of Russian (RJ 1980d:19–26; see Chapter 22); and as a high-school student, he had already begun serious analysis of contemporary verse (for example, that of the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé).

Jakobson received his high-school education at the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages, Moscow, from which he graduated cum laude in 1914, and his university training in the Slavic section of the historico-philological faculty at Moscow University. He was awarded the Buslaev Prize in 1916 for his work on North Russian folk epics,⁴ which was accepted in lieu of a master's thesis; the degree was awarded in 1918. He wrote his first scholarly article as a nineteen-year-old on the phonetics of a Northern Great Russian dialect (published as RJ 1927).

The dominant linguistic school at Moscow University was that of the followers of F. F. Fortunatov, whose approach was essentially that of the neogrammarian tradition. The Neogrammarians (see Malmberg 1964, Robins 1968) declared that the only scientific study of language possible was historical and genetic: for example, the way to understand the sounds of a given language was to trace each sound in turn to its manifestation in an earlier stage of the language. Moreover, they thought that languages could vary without order and without limit, and they ignored the function of language for communication. Already as a student Jakobson reacted against this way of thinking. As he himself put it:

Though the linguistic textbooks of our college years used to define language as an instrument of communication, chief attention in these manuals was paid to the pedigree of its *disiecta membra* [scattered parts]. No answer appeared to the crucial questions: how do the diverse components of this tool operate? (RJ 1962c:631)

Despite this orientation, Jakobson found kindred elements in Fortunatov's views. He was attracted by the notion that language is not merely the expression of ready-made ideas but first and foremost is a tool that has its own independent existence. Hence, it can be used for thinking. Jakobson also praised his teachers for "their uncommon open-minded-

ness" (1971b:vi), their promotion of rigor of thought, their concern for the discovery of general laws as the primary object of linguistics, and their conviction that the study of language should be closely tied to that of literature (RJ 1980d).

While neogrammarian conceptions were dominant among his teachers, in those formative years Jakobson became acquainted with the work of linguists who had developed the basis for structural linguistics. As a first-year student, he read the work of Lev V. Ščerba (1912), which was in the tradition of the Kazan' School (Jan Baudouin de Courtenay and Mikolaj Kruszewski); these two Polish linguists of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries had laid the foundation of modern phonology by their discussion of the notion of the phoneme.⁵ And in 1917 Sergej Karcevskij returned to Moscow from Geneva, bringing with him the ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure, one of the founders of modern linguistics.⁶ Here Jakobson found affinities with his own views, in particular the overarching notion of language as a system of signs. The sign (*signum*, in the Latin terminology that Jakobson favored) is composed of a signifier (sound form, *signans*) and a signified (meaning, *signatum*). The signifier is perceptible ("sensuous" or "sensible"); the signified is conceptual (see Chapter 1). "Every linguistic sign is a unity of sound and meaning" (RJ 1976d:23) and is normally diagramed as in Figure I.1. Linguistic signs can be exemplified by grammatical morphemes, lexical items, syntactic constructions, whole discourses, and the like.

In those years, too, the students of linguistics at Moscow University were discussing the newest developments in the phenomenology of language. They learned, in particular, to distinguish between linguistic meaning (*signatum*) and extralinguistic reference (*denotatum*; RJ 1962c:631); they absorbed the strong Russian tradition of Hegelian and post-Hegelian dialectics, which stressed the importance of antinomies (dichotomies). Jakobson added the ideas of Edmund Husserl (1913) and Anton Marty (1908) on universal grammar as the only firm theoretical basis for linguistic work (Holenstein 1976a, 1987). Jakobson then correlated this basis with the work on Gestalt psychology, which insisted on

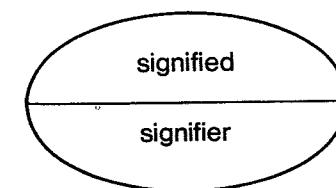


Figure I.1 The linguistic sign

relations (especially part-whole relations), on their constitutive character, and on the importance of contextualization (Chapter 6).

Strong antipositivist and antimechanistic views in Russian thought of the time left their imprint on Jakobson (RJ 1929e). He did not favor formalistic abstractions, however, or dismiss the physical aspect of phenomena. As Elmar Holenstein puts it (1987:17), Jakobson was “an empirical scientist and philosophical theories served him only as heuristic guides which must be both theoretically specified and empirically underpinned.” He strove for rigor and precision in all his work (he disliked causerie in work and in life), without sacrificing the complexity and integrity of his object of study. Characterizing himself as a realist, Jakobson nonetheless fought against a naive realism in art and science (RJ 1921a). He championed the reality of linguistic phenomena, as well as the point of view of language users (speakers and addressees) rather than that of the observer who is outside of the system and thus least able to understand its reality.

It is very dangerous to operate with the term “reality.” A physical signal is real for the physical instruments that pick up the sign, but not for the listeners. For them the psycho-acoustic sign that they perceive is real, and that does not at all necessarily correspond to the physical facts. (RJ1973c:39)

He thus favored the participant-observer over the “cryptanalyst” (Chapter 28; RJ 1956a:475–476, 1962c:658, 1979b).

The strongest influence on Jakobson’s thinking was “the turbulent artistic movement of the early twentieth century” (RJ 1962c:631). Himself a friend of nonrepresentational painters and poets, Jakobson participated in the renewal in the arts and sciences that took place in Europe (including Russia) in the 1910s. He observed with interest the artistic experiments of the avant-garde (for example, Picasso, Braque, Stravinsky, Joyce, Xlebnikov, Le Corbusier); he followed enthusiastically the Futurists and Cubists (RJ 1919, Rudy 1983, 1987) and wrote Futurist (transrational) poems himself under the pseudonym Aljagrov (Rudy 1987, Vallier 1987). What particularly struck him about these new artistic trends was “their unique feeling for the dialectical tension between parts and the uniting whole, and between the conjugated parts, primarily between the two aspects of any artistic sign, its *signans* and its *signatum*” (RJ 1962c:632).

What provided an even greater impetus for these ideas and inspired Jakobson with a conviction that he never lost—namely, the inseparability of Science and Art—was the development of modern physics (RJ 1962c:632), in particular the theory of relativity. In his historical studies he took inspiration from Einstein’s discovery that time is not an absolute

but a force in its own right and that time and motion must be understood in relation to each other. Jakobson was drawn to the fact that for Einsteinian physics, as for Cubism, everything is based on relationship (RJ 1972a, 1980c). The artist’s credo “I do not believe in things, I believe in their relationship” (Georges Braque) thus joined the mathematician’s motto “It is not things that matter, but the relations between them” (Bell 1945). Or as Jakobson himself put it much later, “Attention must be paid not to the material units themselves but to their relations” (RJ 1973c:27). Later still, Edward Sapir’s dictum (1924:159) “What fetters the mind and benumbs the spirit is ever the dogged acceptance of absolutes” served as the epigraph for *The Sound Shape of Language* (RJ 1979b).

The other side of relativity, as Jakobson was fond of pointing out, is invariance—in particular, invariance in relationship (equivalence). This notion arose simultaneously in physics, mathematics, and linguistics and is concerned with the defining characteristics of a given phenomenon: (1) they are constantly associated with it, and (2) they relate it to and differentiate it from other entities in the same system. In its turn, invariance is associated with the complementary notion of variation: an entity may, as it occurs in different contexts or situations, be altered and influenced in various ways. Yet certain constant, invariant characteristics remain. Jakobson untiringly claimed that the question of equivalence in difference, of invariance in the midst of variation, is “the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics” (RJ 1959b; see also Chapter 3).

In 1915, together with other students (in particular, Bogatyrëv), Jakobson founded the Moscow Linguistic Circle, dedicated to “the study of linguistics, poetics, metrics, and folklore” (RJ 1965c; see also 1981b, 1985b), and served as its president until 1920. In the same period he cofounded the Society for the Study of Poetic Language (OPOJAZ) in Saint Petersburg and was coauthor with Jurij Tynjanov of its programmatic statement (RJ 1928c). These two groups, which today go under the name of Russian Formalism, consisted of linguists, literary scholars, and writers (especially aestheticians and poets). They insisted on the autonomy of literary studies and called for an immanent analysis of literary works, with a focus on the properties that distinguish literary material from any other kind.⁷ This interest implied a focus on the text and on its relational properties, in particular those based on linguistic structure (for instance, accent and vowel length, which underlie meter in verse; see RJ 1921b, 1923). Jakobson’s first linguistic studies, then, were centered on poetry: “It’s by dint of analyzing poems that I began to work on phonology” (RJ 1975b:125). Poetry became, as it were, a testing ground for, and a catalyst of, his own emerging theory of language structure.

Prague Period

In 1920 Jakobson went to Prague and subsequently decided to remain there, disturbed by the political events in the Soviet Union. He received his doctorate in 1930 from Prague University; in 1933 he began teaching at the T. G. Masaryk University at Brno, and in 1937 assumed the chair of Russian philology and Old Czech literature at that university. Prague was a congenial environment for him. Situated at the crossroads of western and eastern European culture, it was a melting pot, an area where diverse ideas of modern thought, including those of the artistic avant-garde, formed a new synthesis. He found, too, that he had much in common with the linguists working there, and in 1926 he helped to found the Prague Linguistic Circle,⁸ dedicated to studies in general linguistics, poetics, and the history of the Slavic languages, literatures, and cultures. He served as its vice-president until his departure from Czechoslovakia in 1939.

The Prague Circle, which is known as the cradle of the structuralist movement in modern linguistics, became a major force in twentieth-century linguistics. It stood for both a functional and a structural view of language. Language serves for communication; from this fact, Praguians claimed, comes the fundamental "need to analyze all the instrumentalities of language from the standpoint of the tasks they perform" (Chapter 2). Language is a system with an internal *structure* suited to these communicative tasks. Indeed, it was Jakobson who first coined the term "structuralism" in 1929 (republished as RJ 1971c:711), as a cover term for this viewpoint.

Were we to comprise the leading idea of present-day science in its most various manifestations, we could hardly find a more appropriate designation than *structuralism*. Any set of phenomena examined by contemporary science is treated not as a mechanical agglomeration but as a structural whole, and the basic task is to reveal the inner, whether static or developmental, laws of this system. What appears to be the focus of scientific preoccupations is no longer the outer stimulus but the internal premises of the development; now the mechanical conception of processes yields to the question of their functions.⁹

The basic unit of this structural-functional whole is the linguistic sign.

The Prague Circle (like the Moscow Circle before it) provided Jakobson with an intellectually stimulating milieu in which to develop his new ideas. Indeed, those years saw the maturing of his scientific genius. He wrote major works on many of the themes that were to remain central to his thought: the theory of both synchronic and diachronic phonology,

the comparative historical phonology of the Slavic languages, linguistic geography, questions of prosodic phonology, and sound and meaning in morphology.¹⁰

One of the topics that occupied Jakobson's attention throughout his life was the structural theory of phonology (the function of sound in language); in particular he focused on the sound properties that are the ultimate constituents of language, the building blocks of linguistic structure. His experience with poetry led him to start with these characteristics; subsequently, other levels of language structure (for example, grammatical morphology) were examined in the light of their similarities with, differences from, and interrelation with phonological structure.

We can trace four stages of Jakobson's work in phonology (for stages 1–3, see also P. Ivić 1965):

1. Phonological systems and relations (1920s and 1930s),
2. Distinctive features and child language (late 1930s and 1940s),
3. Acoustic definitions of the features (1950s and 1960s),
4. The sound shape as a whole (1970s).

The first stage was developed in close collaboration with Trubetzkoy, one of the leading Praguians. Basing themselves in part on the work of Baudouin de Courtenay, Kruszewski, Ščerba, and Saussure as well as Jakobson's own early writings in poetics (RJ 1921b, 1923), Jakobson and Trubetzkoy endeavored to establish the notions of phoneme and phonological system as fundamental concepts for linguistics.¹¹ Together they developed a set of principles, all of which are based on the fact that a phonological system is a structural whole (rather than a mere agglomeration of disparate elements).

Jakobson's and Trubetzkoy's point of departure was that sound is not to be treated as a thing in itself but as a functional element in language. The task of the linguist is thus not simply to inventory all the phonetic minutiae in a language but rather to explore the functions of sound differences. The phoneme is the element of sound that is capable of differentiating between words: for example, the English phonemes /p/ versus /b/ in *pin* versus *bin*. As such, a phoneme is not the same as the elements of sound that are not capable of such a function: for example, the nonphonemic difference between the aspirated [pʰ] of *pin*, the unaspirated [p] of *spin*, and the unreleased [p̚] of *tip*.¹² The latter are contextual, or combinatory, variants (sometimes called allophones) of the invariant phoneme /p/. Furthermore, these variants are not equal in status: some are more basic ([pʰ]), and others more marginal ([p̚]).

Phonemes are relationally invariant: their nature is determined by the other phonemes in the system of which they are a part. Vowels, for

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example, are often aligned in characteristic patterns; in particular, there are both triangular and quadrangular vowel systems, built on the relations high-low (sometimes called close-open) and front-back (see Figure I.2). The difference is whether or not there is a front-back distinction in the low vowels to match the one in the high vowels. On this basis, the nature of /a/ in the triangular system is seen to be different from that of /a/ in the quadrangular one.

Several types of correlations were defined, of which the most important is what was later called markedness relations. Phonemes often come in pairs—for example, the front-back pairs *i-u* and *æ-a* in Figure I.2, or the nasal-oral pairs typical of consonantal systems: *m-b*, *n-d*. Furthermore, in such oppositions there is always an asymmetry: one of the terms differs from the other in possessing a special “mark” that the other lacks. In the nasal-oral opposition, nasal is the marked term, while nonnasal (oral) is unmarked (Chapter 8).

Close comparison of different types of languages, different combinations of features, and markedness relations led Jakobson to adumbrate the important structural concept of implicational laws (rules): *X* and *Y* may be copresent in the same system (mutual solidarity); either *X* or *Y* may occur but not both (mutual exclusion); the presence of *X* may imply the copresence of *Y*, but *Y* can occur without *X* (asymmetric implication, irreversible solidarity). An early application of these phonological principles can be found in Jakobson’s article on Slovak (1931d); some of his best-known ideas in this area pertain to the relations between prosodic (that is, suprasegmental) elements such as stress, length, and word tone.¹³

Prosodic elements also provided evidence for a further function of sound: they often serve to divide the spoken chain into words. In Czech, for example, stress is fixed on the first syllable of the word and thus serves to delimit the beginning of words. In such languages sound has what Jakobson and Trubetzkoy called a demarcative or delimitative function, in addition to its phonemic/phonological function (Chapter 16).

Jakobson also began to apply the new structural techniques to the history of languages, thus breaking with the neogrammarian tradition in historical (diachronic) linguistics. In 1928 he finished a monograph on the evolution of the phonological systems of various Slavic languages (RJ

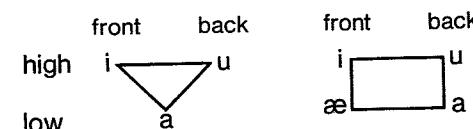


Figure I.2 Triangular and quadrangular vowel systems

1929a) and in 1931 wrote a theoretical, systematic study of types of phonological change (RJ 1931f; see Chapter 13). In these works he showed that change must be understood in terms of the structural principles that had been worked out in synchronic phonology. In particular he demonstrated that implicational laws have predictive power: in the case of asymmetric implication, for example, no language can develop *X* without either already having *Y* or acquiring *Y* concurrently with *X*.

Jakobson also became convinced that “linguistic changes are systematic and goal directed, and . . . the evolution of languages shares its purposefulness with the development of other socio-cultural systems” (Chapter 11; see Galan 1985, Liberman 1987). A teleological approach to language change is thus essential.

The Prague years also saw the elaboration of Jakobson’s theory of language structure in contrast with the most-accepted views in Europe at that time, those of Saussure. Saussure indeed served as a reference whom Jakobson praised for his innovative steps over the previous generation, but against whom he defined, in dialectical fashion, his differences.¹⁴ Jakobson found the picture of language propounded by Saussure to be at the same time too abstract, too static, and too simplified. This view was evidenced in particular through the Saussurian antinomies (dichotomies) such as synchrony-diachrony, langue-parole, and paradigmatic-syntagmatic. Saussure saw a conflict between the opposite ends of any dichotomy and tended to exclude one of them from linguistics altogether. For him, linguistics was about langue (the system of language) and could not include parole (the usage of language). Or he established absolute fusions between various dichotomies: synchrony (the system of language at any one time) is always static; diachrony (language over time), always dynamic. Jakobson, however, regarded the two sides of a dichotomy as complementary and all dichotomies as independent of one another. He argued that linguistics must study parole, and his work on the roots of sound change in synchrony led him to claim that synchrony can be both static and dynamic. Any state of language thus presents a dynamic synchrony. Changes in progress are manifested as stylistically and socially marked variants (sometimes called functional dialects) in the system of a language at a given time: for example, old-fashioned versus newfangled, more careful versus more sloppy, “allegro” versus “largo” speech.

In this way Jakobson insisted on the inclusion of time as an element of synchronic structure—in particular of phonological structure (Chapter 11). And, he added, space can also be a structural element of language (Chapter 12). He and Trubetzkoy elaborated a theory of linguistic alliances (*Sprachbundtheorie*): the phonological or grammatical traits of a given language may expand beyond its borders, and a set of geographi-

cally contiguous languages may form alliances because they share certain properties.¹⁵ They thereby proposed a second approach to language groupings—a spatial (areal) one—in addition to the historical (genetic) one, both of which are based on the fundamental notion of linguistic affinities (Chapter 14), in which resemblances arise from a genetic link or convergence of development.

Phonology became “the methodological model for all other areas of linguistic analysis” (RJ 1960b:428). Using this model as a basis, Jakobson developed a theory of form and meaning in morphology and elaborated fundamental principles for semantic analysis (see Chapter 20). He argued, in particular, that all grammatical categories contain an inseparable union of form and meaning, that grammar in itself is always meaningful, and that meaning is to be differentiated from reference. He further demonstrated that grammatical meanings exhibit the same properties as phonological units, namely, the relation between invariance and contextual variation, the separation of basic and marginal contextual variants, and the opposition between marked and unmarked elements.¹⁶ For example, a given case exhibits a semantic invariant, even though its specific meanings (contextual variants) differ according to the sentences in which it is used. By incorporating both invariance (context-independent meaning) and variation (context-specific meaning), he gave the basis for the interrelation of what later were to be considered two disciplines, semantics and pragmatics.

Jakobson also showed that the forms of grammatical categories are intricately tied with their meanings. For example, the falling together (“syncretism”) of two or more categories—such as the accusative and genitive case for animate nouns in Russian—is semantically motivated (see Chapter 22). He demonstrated that the seemingly random variations in form manifested by many grammatical categories are not totally arbitrary, as had been surmised by others. During this period he thus focused on sound, meaning, and their interrelation (note the titles of Parts IV, V, and VI of this volume).

Jakobson’s analysis of the close relationship between form and meaning brought him to further theoretical work on the nature of the linguistic sign—in particular, the “zero sign”: the absence of a linguistic form can be meaningful only if it is in relation to a corresponding overt form (RJ 1939c, 1940). Such zero signs can occur at all levels of language: phonology (the absence of nasality in /t/ versus its presence in /n/), morphology (a zero ending in a grammatical paradigm, such as *cat* or *cat-Ø* versus *cat-s*, where Ø is used for a morphological zero), syntax (elliptical constructions such as the answer *John* to the question *Who came?*), and so forth.

In the late 1930s, the second stage in Jakobson’s views on phonology began when he presented his first drafts for a full theory of the distinctive feature and of the child acquisition of language. Developing further the insight that phonemes often come in pairs and are related by various properties (for example, front-back, high-low in the vowels), it became clear to him that phonemes are decomposable into distinctive features.¹⁷ Indeed, he argued that the phoneme is a combination (bundle) of distinctive features; it is composed of diverse primitive signaling units and can itself be incorporated into larger units such as syllables and words. It is simultaneously a whole composed of parts and is itself a part that is included in larger wholes (see Chapter 6). Hierarchy, then, is the fundamental structural principle (see Caton 1987:230).

Jakobson also argued that the distinctive features are all binary in nature (Chapter 15). The particularly difficult problem was that of the linear pattern that seems to exist between the front-to-back points of articulation of the consonants (*p-t-k* in English). He showed that this pattern is underlain by two binary relations: *p*, *t* versus *k* on the one hand, and *p* versus *t* on the other hand. Through refining the definition of the features and by working out his analyses on various languages,¹⁸ he came to the conclusion that these same two relations also recur in the vowels in the sets *u*, *i* versus *a* and *u* versus *i* respectively.¹⁹ The vocalic triangle thus has a corresponding consonantal one (see Figure I.3).

Jakobson made a further step in his definition of the phoneme and the distinctive feature: they are signs.²⁰ Their signified is “(mere) otherness,” or pure differentiation: they serve merely to distinguish words. Since words are also signs, phonemes and features are pure “signs of signs,” unlike all other types of signs, which have some content. By using such definitions, he placed these phonological elements in a much broader context. He claimed that language is a completely semiotic system, a system of signs from the largest components (discourses) to the smallest ones (the distinctive features). “An important structural particularity of language is that at no stage of resolving higher units into their component parts does one encounter informationally pointless fragments” (Chapter 6).

During this same time Jakobson also turned his attention to child language, in particular, to stages in the acquisition of phonology.

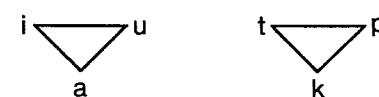


Figure I.3 Vocalic and consonantal triangles

His earlier work with Trubetzkoy on the comparison of different languages led to important cross-linguistic conclusions about phonological structure, in particular to the fact that some phonemes and phoneme relations are more fundamental than others. Languages may thus be grouped in accordance with the type of structure they evidence: not only may some conform to the triangular type and others to the quadrangular type in their vocalic systems, but in both types there may be only two degrees of height (high and low, as above), or there may be three degrees (high, mid, and low). On the basis of such observations, a third kind of relation between languages (grouping) was defined: the typological, based solely on structural similarities. Moreover, certain traits occur in all or nearly all of the languages of the world and thus are more basic (for example, the vowel /a/ and the consonants /p/ and /t/), while others are found in a smaller number of languages and are thus less central (the vowels /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ and the consonants /c/ and /č/). In both the triangular and quadrangular language types, therefore, the presence of mid vowels is an extra complexity imposed on the simpler high-low distinction.

The hierarchical relations within and among phonemes and features that were revealed by questions of typology and universals had not only a static and synchronic side for Jakobson but also a dynamic one. They were useful for predicting certain aspects of language change and for explaining the order of acquisition in children: universal relations come before nonuniversal ones; unmarked elements before marked; simple structures (such as two heights in the vowels) before more complex ones (three heights). More elaborate structures are thus a later expansion of an elementary base (see Chapter 17). In general, Jakobson saw this pattern as a balance between optimality (perceptually more distinct sounds) and greater number and complexity of systemic elements (which reduce the perceptual distinctions). Perhaps the most striking finding was his determination of how the implicational laws that underlie sound systems apply. Jakobson demonstrated the dynamic aspect of irreversible solidarity: in order for *Y* to appear in child language acquisition, *X* must also appear or must have appeared before; in other words, implicational laws have a predictive power not only in the synchronic and diachronic structure of languages but also in language acquisition. He showed in addition that the structures that are the first to appear in children are the last to disappear in aphasics; that is, the order of loss of phonological elements in aphasics is a mirror image of their acquisition by children.

Preliminary versions of this research were formulated in the late 1930s (RJ 1939e), but the best known is that of his classic text *Child Language, Aphasia, and Phonological Universals* (RJ 1941a).²¹ This monograph is interesting from a methodological point of view. Jakobson did not personally work at length with children or aphasics but consulted numerous

writings on the topic. From them he retained specific facts that, with remarkable insight, he related to observations he had made on language. These facts thus confirmed general hypotheses he formulated about language structure and relations. His task was not to give more examples of the details of child language acquisition (or aphasic dissolution) but rather to provide a universal schema by which any given case could be understood. Much later he widened his concern in these matters to questions of grammar as well as phonology: besides numerous writings on aphasia (Chapters 7 and 19; RJ 1955a, 1964b, 1966c, 1975c), he produced further theoretical work on typology and universals (Chapters 9 and 10), in which he outlined again the importance of (near) universals and implicational relations for language structure and language change.

American Period

In 1939 Jakobson fled the Nazi invasion of Czechoslovakia and went to Scandinavia. He was visiting lecturer in Copenhagen and Oslo until 1940 and then in Uppsala until 1941, when he decided to make his home in the United States.²² His ideas gave rise to suspicion and unfavorable reactions from some American structuralists, mainly occupied at the time with a mechanistic description of language. He did find friends however—Franz Boas, Benjamin Lee Whorf, and Leonard Bloomfield (see Halle 1988)—and he quickly became part of the international community that formed in New York during the war. He was professor of general linguistics and of Czechoslovak studies at the Franco-Belgian “University in Exile,” the Ecole Libre des Hautes Etudes in New York City (under the auspices of the New School for Social Research), from 1942 to 1946. (For a discussion of the école, see Rutkoff and Scott 1986.) In 1943 he was cofounder of the Linguistic Circle of New York and was its vice-president until 1949. From 1943 to 1946 he was visiting professor of general linguistics at Columbia University, where he became, in 1946, T. G. Masaryk Professor of Czechoslovak Studies.

In 1949 Jakobson moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he was named the Samuel Hazzard Cross Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Harvard University, and later (1960) professor of general linguistics. In 1956 he was president of the Linguistic Society of America. In 1957 he became the first scientist to be jointly named, along with his chair at Harvard, Institute Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. While there he co-organized and headed the Center of Communication Science, establishing a nucleus of scholars working on linguistic and mathematical linguistic problems. From 1966 to 1969 he was also attached to the Salk Institute for Biological Studies (La Jolla, California) and the Center for Cognitive Studies at Harvard.

The months that Jakobson spent wandering from one country to another, far from hindering his scholarly activities, gave new impetus to his intellectual development: “The succession of scientific environments, each with its own particular interests and local watchwords, allowed me to reformulate my own questions and to enlarge their scope” (RJ 1980d:35). In the midst of the terrible international situation and despite his own personal danger, Jakobson pursued his work in Scandinavia in 1939 and 1940 on the phonic laws of child language and on aphasia and its manifestations (this effort resulted in RJ 1941a).

His settling in America coincided with a broadening of both his vision and the bases of his linguistic research.²³ It was, in Holenstein’s terms (1976a:11), a “phase of interdisciplinary consolidation.” Jakobson started to look at language more in relation to other human activities. The history of linguistic figures and concepts became a favorite topic with him, whereas it had been little represented in his previous works. He also gave theoretical issues (in both linguistics and poetics) their most thorough treatment at this time.²⁴ The only exception—an important one—seems to be in phonology, where as we have seen, Jakobson wrote quite a few theoretical articles before 1942.²⁵ Above all, the American period saw the emergence of deeper questions having to do with the function of language.

For the Prague Circle, functionalism and structuralism were inseparable. Jakobson himself described his theory of language as one in which function (language as a tool for communication) and structure (language as a lawful governed whole) are combined (Chapter 2): language is structured so as to be suitable for communication. During his Prague period the structural aspect chiefly concerned him. But during the mature phase of his intellectual career, especially the 1950s and 1960s in the United States, there was a shift of emphasis: he devoted more attention to a “means-ends” approach and began to build a model of “language in operation” (RJ 1964e).

With renewed insistence, Jakobson stated that language is an interpersonal (intersubjective) means of communication; that is, it operates between speakers and addressees. It is learned and maintained through dialogue, through the exchange of linguistic messages (instances of parole). Language is not an abstract object but is constituted through and related to the act of communication. Jakobson thus brought parole to the fore and indeed, at this time, endeavored to emphasize the mutual dependence of langue and parole (Chapter 5). Many years before, as mentioned above, he had begun rethinking this antinomy, reacting against Saussure’s definition of these terms as contradictory: while langue for Saussure was social, homogeneous, and static, parole was individual, heterogeneous, and subject to change. Jakobson contended that these

two equally necessary aspects of language should not be conceived of as absolutely separated. Rather they must be seen as functionally and structurally linked: langue exists for the construction of instances of parole, and instances of parole depend on langue for their successful functioning. Furthermore, the equation of langue with what is social in language and parole with what is individual must not be absolutized: on the one hand, there exist different personal styles of langue; on the other hand, instances of parole are interpersonal and thus social.

Jakobson received another impetus for this repudiation of Saussurian doctrine from a very different source: communication theory (Chapter 28; RJ 1961a). Intrigued by work in the mathematical theory of communication, information theory, and cybernetics, he reflected on the dynamics and the complexity of the communication process in society (RJ 1974d). He was particularly drawn by the “modern, less ambiguous terminology” afforded by this trend (RJ 1971c:718), so much so that he championed the new terminology wholeheartedly: langue and parole were henceforth “code” and “message”; speaker and addressee, “encoder” and “decoder”; production and comprehension, “encoding” and “decoding”; stylistically marked variants, “stylistic subcodes”; and so on (Chapter 25; RJ 1953c). Recognizing the theoretical richness of communication theory, he also placed it in the broader context of a theory of pragmatics, that is, his theory of the “functions of language.”

For most linguists and philosophers at the time, the purpose of communication was referential. But for Jakobson and the Prague School, “Reference is not the only, nor even the primary goal of communication” (Caton 1987:231). Language is rather a system of systems suited to various communicative goals. These goals in turn are correlated with the act of communication in which language is used. Jakobson had inherited from the psychologist Karl Bühler (1934) the tripartite schema of the speech event as necessarily encompassing the following three factors: (1) a speaker (an encoder), (2) an addressee (a decoder), and (3) a thing referred to, which Jakobson generalized to the notion of context. Through his work on poetry, he had already added a fourth factor, namely, (4) the message, the particular instance of parole being communicated by the speaker to the addressee. Jakobson’s initial insight was to define four functions of language and to show that, within the message, each function is related to one of the four factors: (1) the emotive (expressive) function corresponds to focus on the speaker; (2) the conative function, focus on the addressee; (3) the referential (cognitive) function, focus on the context; and (4) the poetic (aesthetic) function, focus on the message.

At this time Jakobson added two more factors in speech communication: (5) the code that is common to speaker and addressee, and (6) the contact between them, the medium by which they communicate. The

two additional functions, then, are (5) the metalingual (metalinguistic) function, corresponding to focus on the code, and (6) the phatic function, focus on the contact. In his presidential address at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America in 1956, he presented for the first time his sixfold typology of the speech event and the corresponding functions (published as RJ 1976c; see also Chapters 3 and 4, and RJ 1960c). This schema appears in Table I.1.

With this integrated view of the act of communication, Jakobson was able to avoid the abstractness of other approaches to language (such as American structuralism and generative grammar). For example, he situated his discussion of metalanguage (the use of language to speak about language itself) and its role in our acquisition and use of language within a more comprehensive theoretical environment, where its relation to the other functions of language is overtly specified (RJ 1976c).

Also in 1956 Jakobson published "Two Aspects of Language" (Chapter 7), in which he analyzed the relation between communicative processes and properties of linguistic structure. On the one hand, he distinguished the two operations used for production and comprehension: selection (substitution) and combination (also called contexture). In order to produce utterances, speakers have to select linguistic items from sets and combine them into larger wholes, thereby creating contexts; in their turn, addressees have to comprehend the combinations and discern which items were originally selected. On the other hand, Jakobson contrasted two types of relations in language structure, similarity (all types of equivalence) and contiguity (temporal and spatial neighborhood):²⁶ linguistic items belong to classes or types that share properties, and they always appear in a context. Jakobson had already been extensively using similarity versus contiguity and the corresponding tropes, metaphor (based on similarity) versus metonymy (founded on contiguity), in his work on poetics and semiotics (especially cinema).²⁷ In Chapter 7 he shows that the tension between contiguity and similarity permeates the whole of language and that, in particular, the two structural relations underlie the two operations: that is, the elements in a selection set are normally

Table I.1 The speech event and the corresponding functions

Components of the speech event		Corresponding functions			
context			referential		
message			poetic		
speaker	addressee		emotive	conative	
contact			phatic		
code			metalinguistic		

associated by similarity, and those in combination by contiguity. Thus, the operations by which speakers and addressees encode or decode messages are linked to the means by which the elements of the message are related to each other (see Table I.2).

Moreover, the two operations/relations are the basis of the division in aphasic disturbances between similarity disorders and contiguity disorders.²⁸ The similarity versus contiguity dichotomy was also used by Jakobson to classify types of discourse. In poetry, for example, in which focus on the message is dominant, equivalence (similarity) relations are used to build the combinations rather than only to underpin the elements of the selection set. "In the poetic function, the relation of equivalence is projected from the axis of selection to the axis of combination" (Chapter 4). According to this projection principle, parallelisms between equivalent units help to structure the poetic text; tropes built on similarity, such as metaphor, are more likely to be found in poetry, whereas metonymy is more characteristic of prose. In the latter, focus is on some other facet of the speech event, and contiguity is the essential constructional principle. Jakobson also used similarity versus contiguity to characterize various artistic schools (for example, Symbolism versus Realism), the structure of dreams, the principles underlying magic rites, personality types, and so forth. With one stroke he defined a fundamental polarity of language, culture, and human thought in general (Chapter 7).

The close relation between code and message, which is evident both in the nature and in the operation of language, led as well to a reevaluation of the nature of shifters (first put forth in RJ 1950a; see Chapters 3 and 23). Shifters are elements in the code whose general meaning can be specified only by taking into account their use in messages, because this meaning incorporates a conceptualization having to do with particular elements of the speech event. For example, pronouns designate speaker, addressee, and context; tenses, the time of the speech event; adverbs like *here* and *now*, the place and time of the speech event. By exploring

Table I.2 Selection-combination and similarity-contiguity

2 operations (encoding-decoding)		
selection (substitution)	and	combination (contexture)
similarity (equivalence)	and	contiguity (temporal and spatial neighborhood)
(basis of metaphor)		(basis of metonymy)
2 structural relations in code and message		

how language encodes factors of the context of utterance, by taking a fresh look at the grammatical categories of the Russian verb (already studied in RJ 1932b), and by opposing shifters to nonshifters, Jakobson provided a “calculus of possibilities” (Mel’čuk 1985), a basis upon which all possible verbal grammatical categories can be predicted.²⁹ Moreover, in his discussion of these categories he put forward concepts that are essential for any analysis of meaning. In particular, he called attention to the distinction between the narrated event (the event spoken about) and the speech event (the act of communication), both of which are necessary to the understanding of any message and thus crucial to the structure of any semantic category in the code.

Grammar also became a renewed focus of investigation. Jakobson gave it a more theoretical and pragmatic basis: following Boas, he defined grammatical categories (both morphological and syntactic) as those that are obligatorily present in the construction of acceptable messages (Chapter 21). They are thus an important factor in the shaping of messages, even though speakers may not be aware of their workings, whereas particular lexical categories (derivation, vocabulary, phraseology) are optional. Through this view of grammar Jakobson provided a semantic and operational approach to well-formedness (grammaticality) as well as to the relation between language and cognition: grammatical categorizations provide the necessary patterns for thought. In addition to his work on shifters, he returned to grammatical questions several times during these years, concentrating in particular on the Slavic languages.³⁰ In all of these writings he carefully distinguished between morphological and syntactic questions and applied the principles already worked out in phonology—binary features, which produce intersecting classifications and define markedness relations between pairs of categories—to morphological data. A famous application of this concept of binarism is the “case cube” (RJ 1958b, see the introductory note and Appendix to Chapter 22).

Taking the operational definition of grammar specified above as his point of departure, Jakobson directed his attention to the analysis of texts and in particular to his favorite testing ground: poetry. Thus emerged his interest in how grammar plays a pivotal role in the equivalence relations and parallelisms by which the poetic text is constructed: “Grammatical categories, whether reiterative or contrasting, [have] a compositional function” (RJ 1980d:112). Elements that remain latent in nonpoetic speech are pushed to the fore in poetic language and become salient, palpable. Armed with his work on sound and meaning, Jakobson devoted a good deal of his intellectual energy in the 1960s and 1970s to a detailed analysis of the grammar of some forty poems in over a dozen languages (SW III).³¹

Jakobson’s coordinate concern with function and structure can also be linked with his discovery in the early 1950s of the work of Charles Sanders Peirce. He characterized Peirce as “the most inventive and the most universal of American thinkers” (Chapter 25), who “in this country has been for me the most powerful source of inspiration” (RJ 1971b:v). Indeed, a glance at Jakobson’s whole oeuvre shows that since his arrival in the United States, he referred more to Peirce than to any other American thinker. The Peircian ideas that recur the most often and that have had the most wide-ranging theoretical influence are those concerning the three sign types: icon, index, and symbol. The notion of the icon (based on a similarity relation between *signans* and *signatum*) was particularly influential and impelled Jakobson to a recognition of iconic elements in language; this insight led to a more profound analysis of the nonarbitrariness of the linguistic sign (Chapter 25; RJ 1949j). As for the index, it underlies his discussion of shifters.

For Peirce, any semiotic behavior is to be seen not as the outcome of a static system but rather as a dynamic process in which the essence of a sign is its interpretation, that is, its translation, by some further sign. Jakobson henceforth defined the *signatum* as that which is “interpretable” or “translatable” (RJ 1959b, c). He characterized the Peircian approach as “the only sound basis for a strictly linguistic semantics” (RJ 1976c:118) and stipulated that this widened definition of translation was an essential aspect of language and thus a crucial question of linguistic theory (RJ 1959b, cf. 1930b).

The discovery of Peirce’s work along with the emergence of communication theory also prompted Jakobson to develop a fully articulated theory of semiotics (Eco 1977): language as a tool of communication and a system of signs is to be seen as the human semiotic system par excellence, the phylogenetic and ontogenetic basis for all other semiotic systems and thus the starting point for any valid semiotic analysis. It is important, moreover, to confront language with other sign systems in order to discover what the specific properties of language are. As schematized in Figure I.4 (inspired by a similar diagram in Holenstein 1976a:187), linguistics (the study of communication by any verbal messages whatever) incorporates poetics (the study of poetic verbal messages) and is itself included in semiotics (the study of communication by any messages), which in its turn is part of a larger study of communication, involving social anthropology, sociology, and economics (Chapter 27).

Jakobson’s interdisciplinary studies did not stop there. Since language is our central and defining activity, he extended his vision to all sciences that touch on humans. Biology became a special object of his attention: particularities of structure and function allowed him to differentiate lan-

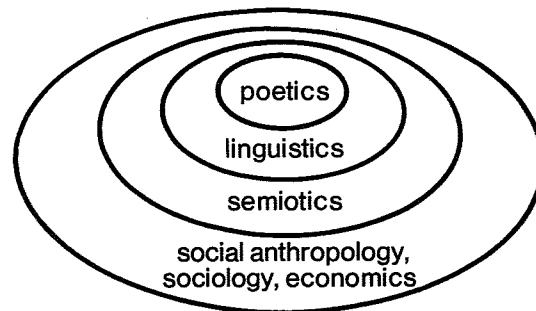


Figure I.4 The relation between the various communication sciences

guage from animal communication in a rigorous way; and the adoption of teleology as a central concern enabled him to relate biology and linguistics, since both deal with goal-directed phenomena. The confrontation of culture (learning) and biology (innateness) led him to examine their respective roles in language acquisition and confirmed his belief that learning was more crucial than the inherited biological base, and thus he questioned the importance sometimes given to innateness.

During this period Jakobson not only was concerned with larger theoretical and interdisciplinary questions, he returned as well to one of his favorite topics, phonology. The 1950s saw the beginning of the third stage in his phonological research. In keeping with his growing interest in functional questions, he realized that the distinctive features must ultimately be defined in acoustic terms, or more accurately, acoustico-perceptual terms, since acoustic means are used for the perceptual differentiation of words. Jakobson, the acoustician C. Gunnar Fant, and the linguist Morris Halle were able to use the newly developing results in acoustic analysis (see Fant 1960) to confirm his earlier, intuitive conclusions. In addition, they incorporated the insights gained from his studies of child language acquisition and universals. They provided acoustic definitions for the features, accompanied by a description of the articulatory means by which the acoustic ends could be met (RJ 1952c). These definitions were refined in later publications by Jakobson (several in conjunction with Halle) in accordance with advances in acoustic phonetics and in response to criticisms.³²

Communication theory also gave Jakobson, the information theorist E. Colin Cherry, and Halle a much stricter mathematical definition of the rhetorical concept of redundancy (RJ 1953a). They used it to clarify the notion of contextual variation: while the invariants (phonemes) are bundles of distinctive features, the additional properties of contextual var-

iants are characterized by redundant features. The latter are aspects of sound that are nondistinctive but relevant for perception because they serve to support and enhance the distinctive features (Chapters 16 and 28; also RJ 1966a). The aspiration of /p/ in English (as in [p^h]), for example, is a redundant feature that enhances its differentiation from nonaspirated /b/.

Jakobson, Fant, and Halle applied the principle of economy and especially Occam's maxim ("entities should not be multiplied beyond what is necessary") to the distinctive features and reached conclusions that were to have far-reaching theoretical consequences. Vowels and consonants share the same features, especially if one defines them in acoustico-perceptual terms: thus, front-back in the vowels is the same as labial versus dental or velar versus palatal in the consonants; and high-low in the vowels is the same as labiodental versus palatovalvelar in the consonants. There is thus a limited, universal set of (twelve) distinctive features; this set underlies the phonological patterns of all the languages of the world (see the introductory material to Chapter 17 for a list of the distinctive features and a table of the features for English consonants).

In this connection the notion of invariance versus variation was further developed: two or more distinctions were regarded as members of one feature if and only if they possess common acoustic properties and never oppose one another in any language. For example, rounding, labialization, velarization, and pharyngealization—all of which cause a lowering of the pitch—were unified in the feature of flatness (RJ 1952c, 1956a, 1957a). Invariance similarly received a new, relational basis: it is not the absolute values that count, but rather the identity of relation. For example, higher versus lower in the vowels is not an absolute but is established in a particular system. Therefore, what may seem to be different acoustically may be the same structurally. The vowel system often schematized as in Figure I.5 with a ternary high-mid-low relation is actually structured by a binary relation of higher versus lower in addition to front-back and rounded-unrounded,³³ as shown in Table I.3. Thus, /ə/ is relationally more similar to /i/ and /u/ than to /e/ and /o/.

front	back	
i	u	high
e	o	mid
a		low

Figure I.5 Traditional ternary vowel-height system

Table I.3 Jakobson's binary solution for a "ternary" system

		Nonfront		
		Front	Central Unrounded	Back Rounded
Higher	i	e	ə	u
	Lower		a	o

In like fashion, what seems to be the same acoustically may be different structurally. For example, the Danish [d] is weaker (lax) in relation to [t] in word-initial position and stronger (tense) in relation to [ð] in word-medial position, as in Figure I.6. Thus, the word-initial [d] and word-medial [d] are structurally different from each other.

The fourth stage in Jakobsonian phonology culminated in his last major work, *The Sound Shape of Language* (1979b), written with Linda R. Waugh. In general, this stage could be characterized as a further widening of functional concerns. For example, Jakobson and Waugh concentrated on the multifunctionality of the speech sound. They developed the idea that speech sounds are totally defined by a variety of feature types, not only the distinctive, redundant, and configurative (demarcative) features defined earlier, but also expressive (stylistic) and physiognomic features (see also Chapter 16; RJ 1966a, Waugh 1987a). Since all of these features together represent the entire make-up of a sound (its "shape"), there is nothing that is "pure" sound, nothing that does not combine function and sound essence. Jakobson had earlier said that since the universal distinctive features are defined in acoustico-perceptual (material) terms and since they are relationally invariant, the Saussurian distinction between form and substance is invalid: one cannot differentiate

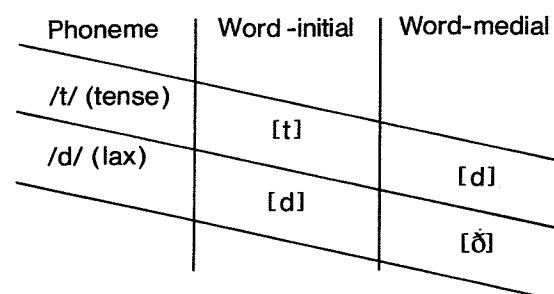


Figure I.6 The Danish dental consonants

between structure and the concrete material that manifests that structure. Moreover, "since the sound matter of language is a matter organized and formed to serve as a semiotic instrument, not only the significative function of the distinctive features but even their phonic essence is a cultural artifact" (RJ 1949d:423). The sound shape *as a whole*, then, is a cultural artifact. The oppositions traditionally made between linguistic and non-linguistic, abstract and concrete, functional and nonfunctional, (phon)emic and (phon)etic are consequently inappropriate (see also Lévi-Strauss 1972).

The sound-shape stage is also characterized by further refinements in the acoustic definition of the distinctive features and by a relational application of the notion of markedness:³⁴ either pole of an opposition can be marked, depending on the context in which the feature is found. In triangular systems, the tip (*k*) is marked in the consonants, whereas the base (*i*, *u*) is marked in the vowels.³⁵ (See Figure I.7.) Evidence for this difference is provided by the order of acquisition in children and by language typology and universals, especially implicational rules.

Another concern at this stage is the question of arbitrariness. As mentioned above, Jakobson had been able to put his argument against arbitrariness on a different footing after his discovery of Peirce (Chapter 25). In *Sound Shape*, a new dichotomy was defined, namely, mediacy versus immediacy: an indirect relation between sound and meaning (double articulation) versus a direct relation between sound and meaning (see also Waugh 1987a). Immediacy is exemplified by phenomena ranging from sound symbolism and synesthesia (Chapter 26) to mythic and poetic uses of sound. This dichotomy was also related to the hemispheres of the brain (left versus right respectively), the topic of one of Jakobson's last theoretical texts (Chapter 29).

Sound Shape was also an answer to what Jakobson and Waugh saw as excesses in generative phonology. In particular, the collapsing of two sharply delineated functions of the distinctive features and phonemes was rejected on the grounds that they serve different pragmatic ends (RJ 1979b:53–59). The first function is that of keeping apart words that are different in meaning (*pin* versus *bin*); this is distinctiveness proper (sense-discrimination) and is primary. On these grounds the concept of phoneme



Figure I.7 Markedness relations in consonants and vowels (marked sounds are underlined)

should not be abandoned, since sense-discrimination is carried out by both the distinctive features and their combinations, the phonemes (see the Appendix to Chapter 16; RJ 1966a, 1979b). The second function, which Jakobson and Trubetzkoy originally called morphonological (morphophonemic), was later renamed sense-determination; its domain encompasses the phonological structure of morphemes, the alternations of words and morphemes (for example, *wife* and *wives*, *take* and *took*), and, in a given word, the arrangement of features that may supply information about its derivational and inflectional structure and grammatical meaning.³⁶ These two functions are different not only operationally but also cross-linguistically: for example, universal laws operate much more widely and rigorously in sense-discrimination than in sense-determination, whose scope and structure differ radically from one language to another.

Jakobson's interest in the sense-determinative function of sound is manifested in works in which he examined in detail the phonological shapes of morphemes. "Russian Conjugation" (RJ 1948) provided a maximally economical description of a complex grammatical paradigm. In a strictly formal analysis he was able to predict the variant forms of the Russian verb, given (1) one basic form of the stem (not two, as in traditional analyses) and (2) a small set of rules that state the changes the stem undergoes before different types of endings (for example, truncation of a vowel-final stem before a vowel-initial suffix).

Jakobson was even more interested in the close relationship between sound and meaning. Already in his earliest works he had expressed the conviction that since language communicates meanings through sounds (as manifested in the concept of the linguistic sign), both sound and meaning should be analyzed in their interrelations (Chapter 24). In his studies of the 1950s and 1960s, he discussed further the problem of the formal expression ("grammatical processes") of grammatical categories: in particular, he worked out a rigorous typology of declensional and conjugational syncretisms in Russian (see Chapter 22 and RJ 1958b, cf. 1957b,c; 1965b). He also established a set of close parallels between various morphological and syntactic categories and their formal expression, thus showing the limits of arbitrariness.³⁷ For example, a grammatical category such as "plural" is typically iconic in the sense that it has a form that is longer or more complex than the form of the category "singular," because of its meaning.

The topic that binds together Jakobson's general linguistic and interdisciplinary studies and his more specific concerns, especially in phonology, is the history of linguistics, which attracted his attention in the 1960s and 1970s.³⁸ His interests were far from antiquarian: he studied the past insofar as it was of relevance to the present and to the future. In

keeping with his approach in the history of languages, his point of view was always a prospective one. He constantly searched in his predecessors for the germs of various ideas of modern linguistics, especially his own (see Stankiewicz 1977). Perhaps the most famous of the trophies of this hunt are his (re)discovery and (re)appraisal of the work of the forerunners of modern linguistics.

In conformity with this historical interest, in the last twenty years of his life, Jakobson focused more on his own thought (Pomorska 1987). Beginning with his "Retrospect" to volume I of his *Selected Writings*, continuing through the "Retrospects" to the next five volumes,³⁹ and culminating in the *Dialogues* (1980d, written with Krystyna Pomorska) and in his "meta"-retrospects (Chapter 3; 1984a), Jakobson traced his own development,⁴⁰ at the same time answering his critics. Going beyond a bare summing up, Jakobson used these articles to lay down new paths for himself (and his readers) to travel. It is characteristic that time and space do not exist as themes in either Holenstein 1976a or Waugh 1976c (even though Jakobson read and commented on both books when they were still in manuscript), but they are a major focal point in the *Dialogues* (1980d), where they illuminate new correspondences between various properties of language (Chapters 11 and 12). The relation between language and the brain, which was attached to questions of aphasia in earlier work, likewise became a major focus near the end of his life (Chapter 29). In *Dialogues* and in private talks, Jakobson confessed that if he were a young linguist today, he would follow closely work in neurolinguistics, pursuing questions of child language acquisition of grammar and of schizophrenia as a disorder of language and delving further into the relation between language and the genetic code, language and the unconscious, distinctive features and the brain.⁴¹ He was excited by the work on hemispheric specialization and on the localization of various functions within the hemispheres—and by the fact that these discoveries correlated with findings in linguistics.⁴²

His fascination with time as a structural factor was combined with Peirce's reflections on time as related to icon, index, and symbol (Chapter 29). Icons are "the accomplished image of an experience that is already past; while the index is linked to an ongoing experience in the present. The symbol, however, always possesses a general meaning and is based on a general law; everything that is truly general is related to the indefinite future . . . It is a potentiality whose mode is *esse in futuro*" (RJ 1980d:91–92). Thus, the Futurist Jakobson of the 1910s joined the futurist Jakobson of the 1980s. For him, all words are symbols; thus, "the *word* and the *future* are indissolubly linked" (RJ 1980d:92, emphasis added). This view meant, in particular, that his work—words about words—was a legacy to the future (Ivanov 1983), a vast program of work in progress.

Roman Jakobson died in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on July 18, 1982, at the age of eighty-five.

Jakobson's Work as a Dialogue

When speaking of language as a communicative tool, one must remember that its primary role, interpersonal communication, is supplemented by a no less important function which may be characterized as intrapersonal communication . . . While interpersonal communication bridges space, intrapersonal communication proves to be the chief vehicle for bridging time.

(RJ 1974d:98)

Explaining in the preface to *Dialogues* why he had enthusiastically accepted the invitation to relate his intellectual experiences in the framework of a conversation with Krystyna Pomorska, Jakobson wrote (1980d:xiii), "In language and in the science of language, the presence of an interlocutor is of fundamental importance." Conversing not only dominates linguistic activity but also presides over scholarship. Jakobson saw a definite kinship between the subject matter and its study, between the fundamentally dialogic nature of language and the communicative aspects of scientific work; both language and creativity are fostered by interchange and debate. His work and his professional life are eloquent testimonies of this attitude toward scientific research.

The first function of dialogue, Jakobson said, is to bridge temporal and spatial discontinuity: "Language is [the] overcoming of isolation in space and time" (RJ 1967c:101). He engaged in a dialogue with the past and present of linguistics and with scholars from a number of different traditions. He was particularly fond of reading his predecessors and loved to find in them ideas that had already occurred to him. In his pursuit of a temporal, diachronic dialogue, his favorite interlocutors were undeniably the first structuralists: the "trailblazers" Baudouin de Courtenay and Kruszewski (RJ 1929b, 1943, 1960b, 1967b); the "brilliant pioneer" Sapir, who after Saussure is the linguist most quoted and discussed in Jakobson's entire work; and of course Saussure. Jakobson devoted innumerable comments, words of praise, and criticism to Saussure as well as three specific articles (Chapter 5, RJ 1971a, 1971f; see also 1975e). Frequent tribute is also paid to Peirce, whose "drafts of epochal significance" (Chapter 25) opened for Jakobson new horizons in semiotics. In three important articles (Chapter 25, RJ 1975e, 1977c) he shows that the American philosopher "must be regarded as a genuine and bold forerunner of structural linguistics" (RJ 1953c:565).

One should not forget, however, all the other grammarians, linguists, philosophers, scientists, and many others who are discussed in the articles gathered in the sections entitled "Toward a Nomothetic Science of Language" in *Selected Writings* or who are referred to, favorably or critically, in the rest of Jakobson's writings.⁴³ Some important names have even been rescued from oblivion by Jakobson's attention. This citation of so many other thinkers is the result not only of an enormous erudition (see, for example, RJ 1975d, on the medieval grammarians) but also of Jakobson's receptiveness to the ideas of his predecessors and openness to others in general.

Jakobson's interest in others shows itself in his vivid curiosity about their intellectual development. One can often find, in the midst of theoretical considerations, extensive biographical notes on the scholar he is discussing—see, for instance, his articles on Peirce (Chapter 25, RJ 1975e, 1977c), Einstein (1980c), and the Kazan' School (1960b). Jakobson does not provide a typical historical account of these other linguists but is selective, preferring to gloss over weaknesses, ignore errors, and consider in detail only what corroborates his point. There is no global analysis of their thought, and his focus is on original, fruitful ideas that contributed, in his opinion, to the advancement of linguistics.

In the history of linguistics, as in language, everything is related to everything else (*tout se tient*). All are engaged in collective research in which everybody can benefit from the insights of others. On the one hand, then, attention must be paid to the voice of predecessors, and Jakobson often deplores the "fancy kind of antitraditionalism" that is "a traditional feature in the history of linguistic science" (RJ 1975d:186). On the other hand, contemporaries should be partners in the enterprise of establishing linguistics as a modern science. Jakobson (1971c:712) contends that an unbiased examination of the astonishing variety of viewpoints in current linguistics reveals, behind the disputes and controversies, a remarkable unity of purpose (Chapter 2).

Such unity demands a dialogue between the participants. Indeed, many of Jakobson's writings appear as dialogues: they answer his contemporaries and at the same time call for further exchange of ideas. In some cases, the addressee is named. Jakobson reacted explicitly, for example, to the proposal of American structuralists and of early transformational grammarians to study grammar without reference to meaning (Chapters 1, 20, 21, 22, and RJ 1953c) and to the tendency of logicians to reduce meaning to reference or to take the question of reference out of linguistics (Chapters 20 and 23, and RJ 1959b). Many of his judgments of contemporaries are indirect, however, and thus his texts are addressed to unnamed interlocutors. One of the aims of "Russian Conjugation" (RJ 1948), for example, was to critique the description of Russian conjugation

by a representative of American structuralism (see Matejka 1975:105–107).

Jakobson never discussed generative grammar at length but occasionally did air favorable and unfavorable opinions. Beginning in the late 1960s, he reserved his most indirect and implicit criticism for the work of Halle (his former student and coauthor) and Chomsky, both of whom were his friends. He viewed their work generally as a chapter in the history of structuralism,⁴⁴ and he was disturbed by their tendency to absolutization and their disregard for the functional, pragmatic, social, and communicative basis of language.⁴⁵ Many of his phonological studies are answers to arguments against his ideas by generative phonologists (and by acoustic and articulatory phoneticians). As noted above, *The Sound Shape of Language* (RJ 1979b) is typical⁴⁶ and can be seen in part as a reply to Chomsky and Halle's *Sound Pattern of English* (1968), especially with respect to the relevance of the phoneme, the importance of invariance, markedness, and the function of the distinctive features and their acoustic definitions. Jakobson and Waugh even avoided using the words "phonology" and "phonological"—terms that Jakobson himself had helped to launch decades earlier with Trubetzkoy—because they considered that their meaning had been deformed in generative phonology. For the latter, the term "phonology" covers two different domains according to Jakobson: phonology proper (sense-discrimination) and mor(pho)phonology (sense-determination).

Many other texts also contain at least implicit subtexts against generative work. The title of Chapter 29, for example, is dialogic. Jakobson's "Brain and Language" contrasts with *Language and Mind* (Chomsky 1968); he stresses empirical research on the brain in opposition to untestable assertions about an abstract mind. In Chapter 27 Jakobson emphasizes the greater importance of learning and the lesser importance of innateness for language acquisition, against strong hypotheses about innate ideas. RJ 1972a underscores the usefulness of a widened and redefined notion of transformation in all areas of linguistics versus its limited application in syntax. We could cite many similar examples.

The dialogue was not just a written one. Jakobson's friends often mention his relish for discussion, argumentation, and talks with colleagues, students, fellow linguists, and scholars scattered all over the world (*A Tribute to Roman Jakobson* 1983). He was constantly looking for intellectual empathy with others. For him, a necessary condition for successful communication was a certain sense of fellowship. "What is needed in order to grasp the language of another? One must have a keen feeling of intelligibility, an intuition of solidarity between the speaker and the listener" (RJ 1967c:101).

The most obvious manifestation of this sense of fellowship was his

constant attraction to scholarly cooperation. In this regard he remembered fondly the Prague Circle. "Recollecting their passionate, impetuous discussion which tested, egged on, and whetted our scientific thought, I must confess that never since and nowhere else have I witnessed learned debates of similar creative force" (RJ 1971b:vi). During his time in Prague, he and his colleagues drew up collective statements for the first international congresses⁴⁷ and attended those meetings with the almost missionary zeal of claiming new converts to their point of view. Many did join them in spirit (see Chapter 2 and RJ 1979d, 1980d). And the scholarly exchange never stopped throughout his life. While at MIT, for example, where his interest in interdisciplinary matters became manifest, he talked with, and gave seminars with, mathematicians, physicists, biologists, neurologists, physiologists, psychologists, and information theorists.⁴⁸

From the beginning of his career, his initiative and energy helped to create circles meant to promote intellectual exchange in Moscow, Prague, and New York.⁴⁹ And not only did he contribute to their general program directed at a drastic revision of accepted views, he was also their leading participant. Forced by political events to move from one country to another, he had an uncanny ability to survive devastating uprooting again and again (as Michael Silverstein once commented). He quickly bridged the discontinuities in space by being receptive to the ideas of the new milieu and by reformulating his own views in the light of each new stimulus. He thus fostered a fertile ambience for discussion and debate.

He just as enthusiastically associated himself with collaborators. His favorite interlocutor was undoubtedly Trubetzkoy, the "penetrating, wise, inquisitive" linguist with whom the dialogue lasted more than fifteen years, especially in the form of a regular correspondence (see RJ 1939d, 1949i, 1975f, g, Liberman 1980). Jakobson and Trubetzkoy had planned to write together a phonology of Russian, but after various problems near the end of Trubetzkoy's life, the project collapsed.⁵⁰ Three of Jakobson's most original studies on phonology, however (Chapters 13, 14, and 18), were appended to the French translation of Trubetzkoy's *Principles of Phonology*, which was dedicated to Jakobson (Trubetzkoy 1949). There they are intercalated in dialogic fashion with two of Trubetzkoy's own works on morphonology (1931b) and linguistic geography (1931c).

Jakobson wrote some of his most original studies with others: for example, with Tynjanov, Bogatyrëv, Lotz, Fant, Cherry, Halle, Lévi-Strauss, Rudy, Waugh, and Pómorska.⁵¹ Although he was usually first author in these works, the importance of the coworker both for Jakobson and for the ideas themselves should not be underestimated. Progress in scholarship implies intellectual exchange and mutual creative energy.

In addition to exchange of ideas in interpersonal communication, a

dialogue at the intrapersonal level takes place in Jakobson's work: his areas of research are not islands but benefit from each other. What he learns from his environment and what he knows from another field (whether scientific or artistic) give inspiration to the particular subject he is treating (and vice versa). Metrics cannot be dissociated from phonology; markedness in morphology parallels markedness in phonology; binarism, communication theory, and genetics illuminate each other; aphasia in its development is linked to child language acquisition and is connected to the study of tropes; and so forth. Theoretical advances and empirical observations feed on each other. A great sense of integration, therefore, one of relatedness and also of continuity, emanates from Jakobson's oeuvre. It is structurally of a piece. Questions that have been abandoned for a while are reexamined, and their answers are reformulated. The themes for which Jakobson had lasting attachment (Chapter 3) recur like threads unifying all his thought.⁵² They are constantly reconsidered and reappraised, and their importance restated, even though certain technical terms (such as "phoneme," "feature," and "markedness") remain deceptively the same.

This fidelity to the conceptual foundations of his work (and to tradition) did not entail conservatism or stagnation. There was no resistance to change in Jakobson; he believed in modernity and was associated with avant-garde art from his earliest years. Adherence to the principles that govern language and its science simply guarantees sound bases for enrichment and innovations and protects scholarship from shallowness. "A renewal is fruitful only when it goes hand in hand with tradition," Jakobson wrote (1975d:186), quoting Stravinsky. "Living dialectic wills that renewal and tradition shall develop and abet each other in a simultaneous process." This principle is amply verified in Jakobson's career. The idea of the linguistic sign, for instance, formulated as far back as Stoic philosophy, revived by Saussure, and repeatedly pondered by Jakobson and enriched by his reading of Peirce, led to his recognition of the profoundly semiotic essence of language. The conviction that the distinctive features should be defined perceptually and not articulatorily and should all be based on binary oppositions preoccupied him for many years before the availability of modern instruments for acoustic analysis confirmed his earlier intuitions.

For Jakobson, there are no pure revolutions: "No revolution, however radical, discards the evolutionary continuity" (Chapter 27; cf. Kuhn 1962). The evolution of linguistics evidences the same phenomena as does the history of languages. Convergences and divergences between individuals and groups, dynamics and statics (both at a given time period and over time), and continuity and change are characteristic. Science in

general is a dialogue, not a series of monologues (RJ 1933a:539); creativity results from the concurrence of tradition, interdisciplinary outlooks, scholarly fellowship, and fidelity to one's own pursuits.

The Jakobson Legacy in Linguistics and Related Fields

His works were translated, paraphrased, genuflected to, attacked . . . They form part of the intellectual history of our time.

(Adapted from McLean 1983:18)

It is not surprising that Jakobson, with his breadth and depth of knowledge, his brilliant imagination, the originality of his accomplishments, and his internationalism, has had a considerable impact in linguistics and other fields the world over. Jakobson's contributions have now become a permanent part of American and European views on language. One of the leading participants in the renewal of linguistics that began in the 1870s, he has broadened the perspective of linguistics while giving it new directions and specifying its domain (Stankiewicz 1987a). As Paul Kiparsky has noted (1983:27), "One measure of Roman Jakobson's towering role in linguistics is that his work has defined the field itself."

Jakobson's influence is both direct and indirect. It is direct in that scholars explicitly acknowledge it or clearly work with Jakobsonian theoretical concepts or more generally consider themselves to share in the Prague School viewpoint.⁵³ For example, many adherents of structuralism recognize the role Jakobson played in not only inventing the term but also defining some of its major principles.⁵⁴ Characteristically, even linguists today who reject, just as Jakobson did, a narrow structuralist perspective (such as sociolinguists, functionalists, and generative grammarians) have integrated many of his ideas. In many cases, however, the repercussions of Jakobson's work are less immediate and therefore more difficult to trace. Certain of Jakobson's concepts and discoveries are now so deeply ingrained in the theoretical bases of modern linguistics that they are thought to be commonplace or self-evident. The widely used concepts of feature, binary opposition, markedness, redundancy, and universal, for example, have become the intellectual property of beginners in linguistics, often without the acknowledgment that they originated in or were fostered by Jakobson's work.

We consider first the more straightforward aspects of Jakobson's impact, particularly on American linguistics in the last quarter-century, and later offer some brief notes on other disciplines.⁵⁵ We group the

approaches, concerns, and ideas in linguistics that are Jakobsonian in inspiration under three general headings: (1) functional view of language, (2) search for universals, and (3) analysis into ultimate constituents.⁵⁶

Functional View of Language

Viewing language as a relational whole and a communicative tool with many functions, Jakobson emphatically objected to any reductionism in its study and opposed any “rigid confinement of research” (1971c:712). For him, linguists should therefore not abstain from synchronic investigation (as did the Neogrammarians); they should not dispense with the study of semantics (contra the American structuralists) or eliminate it from the domain of syntax (as early transformational grammarians did). Langue should not be overemphasized to the detriment of parole (as for Saussure), nor competence to the detriment of performance (as for Chomsky). Furthermore, one should not concentrate on the cognitive or referential function of language to the prejudice of the other, primordial functions (a weakness of many current linguistic approaches).

This holistic and goal-oriented view of language, characteristic of Jakobson and the Prague Circle, opened the door to functionalist approaches (for example, those of André Martinet, himself a Pragian, or Michael Halliday).⁵⁷ More generally, it abetted the development of types of linguistic studies that take as their object of investigation an utterance larger than a single sentence and that consider its wider linguistic and “real-world” environment. Pragmatics thus takes into account all the components of the speech event and diverse types of contextual parameters.⁵⁸ Discourse analysis (text linguistics) studies whole texts from the point of view of their construction, style, and purpose. Introductory manuals to these new disciplines declare that linguistic elements cannot be described independently from their environment at large or from the purposes they serve in human communication (Kinneavy 1971, Beaugrande and Dressler 1981, Brown and Yule 1983). “Linguistics and Poetics” (RJ 1960c; see Chapter 4) is often quoted by these textbooks and by more specialized works (for example, van Dijk 1972, Taylor 1980); Jakobson’s analyses of poetic texts (such as RJ 1970f) are also mentioned to illustrate the use of linguistic methods in text analysis.

Jakobson’s epochal work on shifters (Chapter 23) showed that grammar is context dependent, that code (*langue*) and message (*parole*) are interrelated, and thus that semantics and pragmatics are but complementary sides of the same phenomenon. The category of shifter and the complementary concept of deixis continue to be used in verbal and nonverbal morphology, and their implications reflected upon and explored.⁵⁹ The

dichotomy of speech event and narrated event has also been taken up by others (for example, Friedrich 1974, Waugh 1976a, b, d, van Schooneveld 1977a). Finally, Jakobson’s insistence that grammatical categories (Chapter 21; see also 1960c) necessarily underlie all language usage—not only ordinary everyday discourse but also and more importantly poetry—has led modern theoreticians to explore the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis with regard to poetic signification (Friedrich 1975, 1979b, Lucy and Schweder 1979, Kay and Kempton 1984).

Jakobson’s work on grammatical meaning illustrating the interdependence of invariance and variation has also had repercussions. The concept of invariance (general meaning) has proven to be particularly productive for the study of grammatical and lexical semantics. For recent examples, see Birnbaum 1986, Andrews 1990, García 1990, Newfield and Waugh 1990, Tobin 1990, and Waugh 1990b. All of these items are from the conference “New Vistas in Grammar: Invariance and Variation,” held at New York University and dedicated to Jakobson (see Waugh and Rudy 1990). Jakobson’s articles on morphology (RJ 1984b) have inspired other studies in this area. Chapter 22 (including the Appendix) in particular has motivated further illustrations, discussions, and development of his case theory,⁶⁰ and his delineation of tense and aspect in Chapter 23 has laid the groundwork for research on the interrelation of tense and aspect with syntax, discourse, and the lexicon.⁶¹

Work in pragmatics has led linguists to explore the boundaries of their discipline with the neighboring fields of anthropology, sociology, mythology, philology, and philosophy, in a truly Jakobsonian interdisciplinary spirit (Levinson 1983:374–378). Michael Silverstein, for example, by considering the use of speech indexicals (gender pronouns, kinship terms, and so forth) to mark social distinctions and other nonreferential notions, shows that a “‘pragmatic’ analysis of speech behavior—in the tradition extending from Peirce to Jakobson” can explain the “linkage of language to culture” (1976b:11–12).⁶² Work in “metapragmatics” (“reports of the use of language forms”—Caton 1987:249) too has been inspired by Jakobson’s differentiation of shifters and nonshifters (Chapter 23) and his distinction between the metalingual and the referential function of language (Chapter 4).⁶³ His insistence (RJ 1976c, written in 1956) on the importance of metalanguage (especially paraphrases, definitions, translations) has inspired research in this area of semantics (see Dixon 1971, Silverstein 1976b).

Present-day pragmatics exhibits a Peircian current, and it was through Jakobson that linguists first discovered Peirce and have been prompted to use his ideas in their research. In addition to indexicality, iconicity and questions about the limitations of arbitrariness (Part VI) have become an important contemporary theme, leading to new work in syntax, mor-

phology, and phonology.⁶⁴ Some linguistic (and poetic) descriptions have taken a fully semiotic point of view.⁶⁵

For Jakobson, imagining linguistic structure as a cellular (modular) construction with neatly partitioned components (phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics) is too simplistic and threatens the wholeness of linguistics. Similarly, focusing research on just one part of dichotomies such as code versus message, diachrony versus synchrony, similarity versus contiguity, or substitution versus combination destroys the fundamental complementarity of both members (RJ 1971c:717). Jakobson was famous for coining seemingly oxymoronic formulas—"poetry of grammar and grammar of poetry," "dynamic synchrony," "autonymy and integration"—in order to emphasize the necessity of reconciling opposites, of synthesizing the inner dualities of language (Pitkin 1977:360).

Jakobson in particular fought the supremacy granted to the first member in Saussure's *langue-parole* dichotomy. He showed the fallacy of considering the "ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community" (Chomsky 1965:3), as the essential concern of linguistic theory. He made it clear that a language actually offers to its speakers a variety of subcodes (speech styles), all having equal right to be described (Chapters 11 and 12).⁶⁶ By doing so, he helped to pave the way for the advent of sociolinguistics.⁶⁷ Uriel Weinreich, an early socio-linguist, had a Pragian training,⁶⁸ and William Labov studied under Weinreich. Weinreich, Labov, and Herzog (1968:100) argue that "the generative model for the description of language as a homogeneous object is itself needlessly unrealistic and represents a backward step from structural theories capable of accommodating the facts of orderly heterogeneity." The paradoxical Jakobsonian combination "dynamic synchrony" insists on the fact that historical changes are yielded by spatial and social variations and that investigating social dialects may shed light on linguistic evolution. The work of Labov (1972a, b) and his followers is based precisely on these premises. As Joseph Errington (1985b:20) has said, "Jakobson (1966d [Chapter 25]) has shown more clearly than anyone, perhaps, how synchronic analysis need not and in fact should not be conceived of as 'static.'"

The ethnography of communication (see Hymes 1962, 1964a, b, 1972, 1975, Gumperz and Hymes 1964, 1972, Bauman and Sherzer 1974) has also taken its inspiration from Jakobson's multifunctional perspective on communication (Caton 1987:251). The two schemas of his 1960c article (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2) have been more or less taken for granted and elaborated on by scholars in this field. It remains central in the investigation of speech in interaction (Beeman 1986:21). Dell Hymes (1964a:42), referring to Jakobson 1962c, stipulates that the starting point of analysis in an ethnolinguistic theory should be "the totality of communicative

habits" in a community and the realization that the linguistic resources of any fluent speaker constitute an "articulated system" of subcodes. Hymes notes (p. 6) that the ethnography of communication is inspired by "the continuing trend in linguistics toward the study of the full complexity of language in terms of what the Prague Circle . . . called 'functional and structural analysis,' and which Jakobson now designates as a 'means-ends model.'" In fact, Hymes's (1962) influential paper on the ethnography of speaking builds upon Jakobson's work (Chapter 4) and was dedicated to him (Hymes 1975). Everyone who has used Hymes's schema for the speech event and its attendant functions, or its successive amplifications in Hymes's later papers,⁶⁹ is thus indebted to Jakobson (Hymes 1983 and personal communication).

Anthropological linguists—who adopt a functional and pragmatic perspective with an interest in folklore, poetics (oral traditions), and discourse analysis—draw on and develop the ideas of the Prague School. Paul Friedrich (1975, see also 1979a), for example, acknowledges the seminal influence of the work of Jakobson; Richard Bauman (1977:3, 1986:2, 112) praises Jakobson for his integrated vision of the social and the poetic in the study of oral literature and cites in particular Chapters 4 and 23, and RJ 1966f, 1968c. Jakobson has also been credited with showing the need for an immanent analysis of oral texts, true to the "genius" of the local tradition. This type of analysis relates directly to current concerns in fields such as ethnopoetics (Hymes 1981). Most critical is Jakobson's notion of the architecture—the hierarchical and parallelistic structure—of the poetic text.

Recent interest in the study of parallelism (RJ 1966f, 1970e) in various types of discourse is attributable to Jakobson. Adele Berlin (1985:ix, 7) credits Jakobson's approach with having more potential and being more influential than any other for providing a comprehensive and integrated view of parallelism. This concept has been shown to be valid in research on biblical texts as well as on oral narrative, first of American Indians and now more generally (Hymes 1981). In fact, it has just begun to generate interest in anthropological analysis of native discourse (see Caton 1987).⁷⁰ Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the principle of equivalence may be fundamental to oral, everyday narrative in any society (Hymes 1981, personal communication).

As Jakobson indicates in a "Retrospect" (1971c:719), the extraordinary progress of applied linguistics in recent years should also be seen as a "natural and predictable offshoot" of a goal-directed conception of language. Better human communication is the *raison d'être* of language planning, language policies, communication engineering, and language teaching. With respect to the teaching of languages, we should note the growing success of the communicative approach, which adopts a holistic

view of language learning and considers second-language acquisition as a unified development involving linguistic, cognitive, and social knowledge (see the notion “communicative competence” in Hymes 1972). Scholars now believe that the learner not only should be taught the code of the target language but also should be made aware of the practical importance of the emotive, conative, and phatic functions and of pragmatic and social factors (Lewis and Cherry 1977, Brown and Levinson 1978, Widdowson 1979:89–100, 252–261, Hatch 1983:235–238, Levinson 1983:376).

Although Jakobson never wrote an article in the area of applied linguistics proper, his theoretical articles on Russian morphology have been used in Russian textbooks.⁷¹ In the concluding remarks to RJ 1948, he explicitly stated that the rules he formulated for Russian conjugation “could be presented in a popular form for teaching purposes.” He was also interested in orthographic questions. His 1963a article discusses the inadequacies of Russian orthography and makes some suggestions for improving it (P. Ivić 1965:75), and his 1965e proposes various schemata for the transcription of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet in Latin characters.

In another domain of applied linguistics, the theory of translation, Jakobson’s 1956b article defines the activity of translating as interpreting one sign by another and not just as finding cross-language equivalents. Following Jakobson, Eugene Nida (1964:3) divides the general field of translation into three parts: intralingual (paraphrasing), interlingual (translation proper), and intersemiotic (transmutation from one semiotic system to another).

Search for Universals

Jakobson directed a fundamental, often-repeated criticism against theories of language that are content with mechanical itemization (such as the neogrammarian doctrine, in reaction to which structuralism was born) or that restrict themselves to mere observation, inventories, and classifications of patterns in particular languages (for example, American structuralism). When he arrived in America, there was little interest in abstractions or generalizations about language. They were deemed to be outside the scope of linguistics or were branded as vague and unscientific and even as wrong; note Martin Joos’s (1957:96) often-quoted claim that “languages could differ from each other without limit and in unpredictable ways.”

On the contrary, Jakobson emphatically stressed the need to make clear the “internal logic” of linguistic structures and to “search for verbal laws governing all systems” (RJ 1971c:713). His thought exhibits a constant movement from the empirical to the general, from the particular to

the universal, from the accidental to the permanent, and back again (see Muljačić 1977:312). This movement is accomplished through the pivotal principles of invariance and relativity. According to Jakobson, his own interest in the inherent and universal properties of language is shared by contemporary linguistics, whatever the doctrines, varieties, or creeds. He sees a definite equivalence, for example, between the search for “explanatory adequacy” in generative grammar and the “elicitation and interpretation of the entire network” aimed at by Praguian structuralism (RJ 1971c:713).⁷² Chomsky (1983:82) suggests that there is a fundamental convergence between his own linguistic program and Jakobson’s generalistic views. For Jakobson, Chomsky says, “Linguistics was a science that sought to discover something fundamental, something real and invariant, in the real world—something analogous, let’s say, to the laws of physics . . . Linguistics had the task of discovering explanatory principles.” (See also Lyons 1970:126, Fischer-Jørgensen 1975:49.)

This point of view appears in particular in *Child Language, Aphasia, and Phonological Universals* (RJ 1941a), generally regarded as one of Jakobson’s most original and most influential works. This monograph was revolutionary because it incorporated a change of perspective in linguistic analysis, a shift from the particular and specific to the general and the universal. It thus was the “point of departure of a new era in linguistics” (Malmberg 1973:368, 370). It stressed the importance of language universals attested in both the acquisition of language and the comparative typology of languages.

The widespread movement that presently investigates universal properties of language, both “universal grammar” and “language universals,” is thus deeply indebted to Jakobson. McCawley (1977:280) remarks that it was not until Chomsky came in contact with Jakobson and worked with Jakobson’s student and coauthor Halle that he fully realized the explanatory power of universals and their relation to language acquisition; thereafter he set out to determine universal constraints on the forms of grammars. The other stream of research in universals, practiced by Greenberg and his associates,⁷³ examines concrete materials from a great variety of languages in order to establish typological classifications and discover the laws that underlie the general structure of human language. For Greenberg, the structuralist assumption that language is a relational whole led to a generalizing approach to typology: linguistic properties are connected in an orderly fashion, and groupings of properties define types. “In this way, developments in the Prague School contributed in no small measure to the contemporary linkage of typology with the study of universals” (Greenberg 1974:42–43).

Jakobson’s most original idea in this area was undoubtedly the concept of implicational laws. An impetus was thus created to look for implica-

tional relationships and universals in all areas of language: word order, order of acquisition of linguistic structures by children, the applicability of certain transformations, hierarchy of features, marking conventions in phonology, and conventions in redundancy rules.⁷⁴ Because of Jakobson's role in discovering the general principle by which a simple core structure (for example, the primary vocalic triangle) expands in a predictable way into larger systems (for example, the diverse vocalic systems of languages), Malmberg identifies it as "Jakobson's Law" (Malmberg 1963, 1972, 1977; see also Stankiewicz 1983b, 1987b). With respect to the overall code, this law could be illustrated in generative grammar by the notions of kernel sentences versus transforms (in Chomsky 1957), or by universal grammar versus core grammars versus particular languages (in Chomsky 1981). It is also relevant across subcodes, in the relationship, for example, between spoken and written language or between elliptic and explicit speech.

Many scholars have recognized the importance of typology for the study of language change (Chapter 11).⁷⁵ Jakobson's insistence on the relevance of typological questions for historical reconstruction has sparked new analyses of the Indo-European phonological system (for the most recent, see Gamkrelidze, Elizarenkova, and Ivanov 1977 and Gamkrelidze and Ivanov 1984). More generally, modern approaches to historical and geographical linguistics owe much to Jakobson,⁷⁶ and his work in this area continues to be reprinted in readers: Keiler 1972 has Chapters 9, 13, and 14; Baldi and Werth 1978 contains Chapter 13. The seminal idea that changes must always be treated in view of the system that undergoes them (Chapter 11) is one that many linguists now share, so much so that it is the essential premise for textbooks in historical linguistics.⁷⁷ The teleological basis for language change has been instrumental in inspiring further work; for a general discussion, see Galan 1985, Liberman 1987, and Holenstein 1987. Watkins (1973:104) sees in the notion "conspiracy" used by generative phonologists in historical linguistics (see Kiparsky 1982:88–89, 106–115) a manifestation of Jakobson's teleological principle: unrelated rules in a grammar bring about the same change.

Typological questions have also influenced research on areal linguistics. Joel Sherzer, for example, begins his areal-typological work with Jakobson's statement in Chapter 10 that "a systematic world-wide mapping of linguistic properties" is urgently needed (1973:749, 1976:xiii) and notes later the importance of markedness and implicational rules for such study (1976:13, 256–263). (See also Emeneau 1956, Sommerfelt 1962, Silverstein 1974.) In Chambers and Trudgill (1980:204), Chapter 14 and Trubetzkoy 1931c are cited as "the most influential writings on the subject of linguistic areas."

By revealing the close relationship between developmental studies and vital questions of linguistic theory, *Child Language* (RJ 1941a) also launched psycholinguistics.⁷⁸ Although Jakobson's work in this domain is limited in quantity, it has had an extraordinarily stimulating effect. Werner Leopold (1956), reviewing the literature on child language before 1941, showed that the results of existing individual case studies needed to be coordinated and looked at in a more general perspective, which is precisely what Jakobson's monograph did. Many psycholinguists now recognize that current explanations of the child's acquisition of speech sounds are still greatly dependent on Jakobson's work.⁷⁹ "It is a considerable tribute to this insight that, if the ensuing forty years of research have revised many points in detail,⁸⁰ the broad outlines of his bold synthesis continue to be confirmed" (Anderson 1985:129; see also Halle 1979:338).

Following Jakobson's example, scholars interested in language pathology have studied aphasia from a linguistic point of view. According to Henry Hécaen, the appearance of Chapter 7 "marked the point of departure of pluri-disciplinary studies of aphasia; neurologists, linguists, and psycholinguists have worked together since then, and linguistic models have been applied to the study of language disorder" (1972:591; see also Lesser 1978). The aphasiologist Alexander Luria states that Jakobson's distinction between similarity disorders and contiguity disorders can be regarded as fundamental: "It is firmly supported by contemporary ideas of the functional organization of the human brain" (Luria 1977:243; see also 1974:12, 1976) and opens the way for a "new branch of science . . . NEUROLINGUISTICS" (1973:57, see also Caplan 1987).

Analysis into Ultimate Constituents

The occurrence of signs in sequence is an easily recognizable property of language. For Jakobson, however, the linear dimension of the sign cannot be considered independently of its second dimension, its less evident simultaneous character. He was the first to investigate in depth the concurrent constituents of linguistic elements, starting with the phoneme, which he decomposed into distinctive features (Chapters 15–17), and going on to the meaning of morphemes, which he dissociated into semantic minima (Chapters 21–23).

Many contemporary linguists consider these discoveries, especially in phonology, to be Jakobson's greatest contribution to linguistics (Robins 1977:400).⁸¹ The concept of the distinctive feature has been described as his most important insight and, after the notion of the phoneme, the most significant step forward in the development of modern phonology (P. Ivić 1965, Halle 1983b).

Generative phonology recognizes Jakobson as one of its founding fathers,⁸² in particular through Jakobson's student Halle; "much of the conceptual capital of generative phonology is inherited from Jakobson's work" (Anderson 1985:139). According to Halle (1983b:78), "Jakobson's first contribution to [generative] theory was the insight that the repertory of sounds of a given language is not just a random assembly of speech sounds, but that it is rather a highly structured collection of entities and that the structure determines to some extent what types of sounds can belong to the repertory of a given language." The very notion of feature, including its binary nature, also comes directly from Jakobson. In Chomsky and Halle's *Sound Pattern of English* (1968), which is dedicated to Jakobson, the features are not distinctive in the Jakobsonian sense.⁸³ Rather, they help to account for alternations within words and morphemes by specifying phonological segments in abstract underlying representations. The notion of underlying representation itself has its roots in the "basic forms" that Jakobson used in "Russian Conjugation."⁸⁴ "His 1948 account of the Russian Conjugation," writes Halle (1979:339), "with its explicit recognition of the distinction between surface and underlying forms of words that are related to each other by means of a set of synchronic sound laws, provided an essential model for much subsequent work."⁸⁵ This comment applies in particular to Halle's own *Sound Pattern of Russian* (1959), which was the starting point for generative phonology.

In addition to inspiring generative phonology, "Russian Conjugation" (1948) served as a model for the morphophonological description of verbal morphology in other Slavic languages.⁸⁶ Later studies of morphophonology (morphophonemics) are also clearly Pragian in character and show as well the influence of Peircian notions such as the iconicity and indexicality of morphological relations.⁸⁷

Jakobson's differentiation of distinctive versus redundant features (Chapters 16 and 17) has paved the way for more rigorous consideration of redundancy in language systems. This concept has been incorporated into generative phonology and has been discussed in various textbooks as well as in more theoretical studies,⁸⁸ although the insight that redundant features serve to enhance the distinctive features has not always been retained.

Markedness and the correlated notion of binary opposition, which are closely linked to that of distinctive features in Pragian thought, have also been integrated into the generative model (through *The Sound Pattern of English*) as well as into other linguistic approaches (see, for example, van Schooneveld 1959b, 1977a, b, Greenberg 1966, 1990). The concept of markedness is now widely used, sometimes in senses that are close to Jakobson's view.⁸⁹ In other works, however, its meaning does

not conform to the original definition. Instead of possession versus non-possession of a specific fixed property by one of the two members of an opposition (Chapter 8), markedness is for some a statement about the naturalness of a linguistic element (cf. Jakobson's notion of optimality, in Chapters 18 and 19, RJ 1941a, 1979b);⁹⁰ it is also frequently associated with ideas of normality, regularity, predictability, and frequency of occurrence,⁹¹ all of which are present in Jakobson, but secondary.

Componential analysis—analyzing an item into ultimate or primitive constituent properties and representing it as a combination of these—was quickly generalized as a methodological model from phonology and grammatical meaning to other areas of study. Van Schooneveld, for example, has expanded Jakobson's three-feature system for Russian cases (RJ 1958b; see the Appendix to Chapter 22) and constructed a semantic theory in which the concepts of feature, markedness, deixis, and hierarchy are central and account for both grammatical and lexical meanings.⁹² Componential analysis also provides the organizational structure of lexical representations in generative grammar (Chomsky 1965:83, Katz 1972) and has been adopted in other approaches as a means of describing the structure of semantic fields: for example, shapes, cooking terms, vocabulary related to flora, objects such as containers, and the perception of color arrangements.⁹³ Although, as Greenberg (1967:215) points out, feature analysis outside phonology has a long history as a scientific tool, its use in semantics in recent years has been greatly fostered by the phonological model that is ultimately due to Jakobson.

The notion of zero as a meaningful unit has also proven to be fruitful with regard to both morphology and syntax (Haas 1957, Greenberg 1966, Sebeok 1974a, Mel'čuk 1979, 1985). According to Mel'čuk (1985:196), "Jakobson was the first to propose a general picture of all those phenomena to which we apply the term 'zero.' In this picture, he provided a reliable basis for the elaboration of a formalized theory of zero in language."

Influences on Other Disciplines

The evaluation of Jakobson's influence on contemporary thought would be inaccurate and unfaithful to the spirit of his work if we omitted reference to some of the adjacent disciplines that also attracted his interest, especially literature, poetics, semiotics and social anthropology, mythology, and folklore. As we have noted, he always sought to erase the putative boundaries between linguistics and the other sciences also involved in the study of social communication.⁹⁴

For Jakobson, a linguistic theory must be comprehensive to be sound. Contrary to the received idea, therefore, literary language is not at all

peripheral to linguistics; it represents language in its aesthetic usage and thus deserves as much attention as language in its other uses. This position leads to the study of the properties that characterize literature, especially poetry, and contributes as well to the development of structural poetics (see Rudy 1976). Jakobson's most original and influential contributions in this area include his conception of the work of art as a system, the notion of poetic function as related to other uses of language, the highlighting of the role of tropes (more specifically, his insightful treatment of metaphor and metonymy; see Chapter 7), the study of parallelism as a poetic device (RJ 1966f, 1970e), and the focus on grammar as a means of structuring poems.

Jakobson's theoretical papers "Linguistics and Poetics" (see Chapter 4) and "Poetry of Grammar and Grammar of Poetry" (RJ 1961c, 1968c) and his analytical studies of Charles Baudelaire's "Les chats" (1962g, with Lévi-Strauss) and Shakespeare's "Th' Expence of Spirit" (1970f, with Lawrence Jones) have established him as an important theoretician of literature.⁹⁵ These four works have been translated, discussed, quoted, and selected for various anthologies on structuralism.⁹⁶ His approach to literary analysis was enthusiastically accepted and developed in France,⁹⁷ from where it gained international recognition.⁹⁸ In addition, "he was responsible for reintroducing to the Russians some of the Russian figures like Propp, Bakhtin, and Vygotsky—who are at the center of much contemporary literary theory" (Sussex 1986; see Clark and Holquist 1984:331–332). One can thus say that he is the source of not only structuralist but other contemporary trends in literary theory. Rhetorics and stylistics also bear the evidence of Jakobson's influence (Guiraud 1974). His theory of functions (Chapter 4) "has become the touchstone of structural stylistics" (Taylor 1980:43), and a new rhetoric has been developed in France that is strongly inspired by Chapter 7 (Groupe μ 1981).

Jakobson has also helped to develop semiotics as a discipline in its own right and has been called the "major 'catalyst' in the contemporary 'semiotic reaction'" (Eco 1977:141; see also Pomorska 1985a:208). His two programmatic statements (Chapter 27 and RJ 1970d) and two of his more specific articles included in this volume (Chapters 7 and 25) are important for semiotic research, since they discuss aspects of all systems of signs and propose basic assumptions that serve as the foundation for semiotics (Eco 1977).⁹⁹ The latter became firmly established in the sixties and seventies in America, where it has also been influenced by the work of Peirce, mainly through the agency of Jakobson (Sebeok 1974a). Jakobson also helped to launch semiotics in Europe, in France and in Italy in particular, where it was aided by the interest in his literary work, the fact that many semioticians were also literary theorists (Roland Barthes, Jean-Claude Coquet, A. J. Greimas, Julia Kristeva, Umberto Eco), and his association with Lévi-Strauss. Jakobson's work has also

been influential in the emergence of semiotics as a scientific discipline in the Soviet Union (see Rudy 1986). Jakobson's ideas have inspired semiotic analyses in many domains of human activity, including fashion, food, architecture, furniture, cinema, and painting.¹⁰⁰ Jakobson's work in semiotics has also had repercussions in the areas of economics (Rossi-Landi 1975); mathematics, especially catastrophe theory (Thom 1974, 1975, and Petitot-Cocorda 1985, which is dedicated to Jakobson) and communication theory (Cherry 1957); and philosophy, in particular, phenomenology (Holenstein 1974, 1976b, 1977, Liszka 1982).

Jakobson's influence on anthropology is considerable. In American anthropology in general three convergent Jakobsonian ideas have proven to be particularly fruitful: the structure of the poetic text, the closeness of ties between poetry and mythology, and the relationship between discourse and cultural context (see in particular Fox 1974, 1977, Hymes 1981). His work on the relationship of Slavic languages and cultures has proven to be a source of inspiration to some cultural anthropologists and folklorists (Sebeok 1956, 1959a, 1960b, Hendricks 1974, Toporov 1974, Caton 1987:249).

Jakobson's greatest impact, however, has been on structural anthropology, a field that is associated with the name of Claude Lévi-Strauss.¹⁰¹ Lévi-Strauss considers himself a disciple of Jakobson and has repeatedly acknowledged his indebtedness to him, since the days when he attended Jakobson's lectures at the Ecole Libre des Hautes Etudes in 1942 (see Lévi-Strauss 1976, 1983, 1985; also Chapter 15 and RJ 1976d). There, he said, he "received . . . the revelation of structural linguistics" (Lévi-Strauss 1976:xi; see also 1945) and discovered the rich possibilities it offered for the study of society. Linguistics, he wrote (1945:32), "will certainly play the same renovating role with respect to the social sciences that nuclear physics, for example, has played for the physical sciences." Lévi-Strauss's work on kinship reveals various Jakobsonian themes: the notion of system and relational structure, laws of compatibility and incompatibility, typology, teleology, relational invariance, the unconscious nature of social structure, the use of mathematics in structural analysis, and componential analysis (Lévi-Strauss 1945; see also 1951, 1952, 1953).¹⁰² Prague structuralism sought to bring to light a coherence among facts that seemed *prima facie* disorganized, and linguistic and cultural phenomena seemed to have a common inner nature that encouraged the use of similar methods and concepts in their study. (There are major differences too; concepts such as function, heterogeneity, and subsystem play much less of a role in Lévi-Strauss's work than in Jakobson's.)

Just as phonemes and distinctive features are members of a relational system, so are the components of social behavior (Lévi-Strauss 1955, 1958a, 1964a, 1968:34, 46).

Lévi-Strauss's analysis of modes of preparing food (1965, 1966) is an exemplary case of the application of Jakobson's method to anthropology, as he maintains that cooking, like language, is also based on an underlying system of distinctive features and signifying oppositions, and he places different cooking procedures and types of end product on the two intersecting axes of nature versus culture and normal versus transformed to arrive at his "culinary triangle" which is analogous to Jakobson's "triangle of phonemes."¹⁰³ (Glucksmann 1974:63)

Binarism and distinctive features have been incorporated into Lévi-Strauss's structuralism, with explicit references to Jakobson. The universe of the tale is "progressively defined, analyzable in pairs of oppositions, diversely combined within each character who—far from constituting a single unity is a bundle of differential elements, in the manner of the phoneme as conceived by Roman Jakobson" (Lévi-Strauss 1968:135; see also 1945, 1949; for a discussion of Lévi-Strauss and the phoneme, see Ardener 1971).

Jakobson's ideas have also been seminal in the study of myths and primitive thought. Lévi-Strauss (1963:206–231, 1968:115–145) applied the notion of invariance in the search for universals in mythology and claimed that the great variety of myths in world cultures can be reduced to a small number of basic, significant recurrent elements, called mythemes. He also used the Jakobsonian dichotomy of similarity-contiguity: a myth, on the one hand, can be decomposed into linearly connected segments (metonymy); on the other hand, it is an analogical representation (metaphor).¹⁰⁴ Indeed, metaphor has recently become a "key with which to elucidate culture" (Caton 1987:252).¹⁰⁵

Anthropological theory and social-cultural and linguistic anthropology, as well as other fields that structural anthropology has influenced, have been heavily affected by Lévi-Strauss's work in one way or another. Given Jakobson's impact on Lévi-Strauss, many linguistic anthropologists and social anthropologists are, as Edmund Leach has said (1983:10), "deeply indebted to Roman Jakobson . . . even though the filiation is somewhat indirect." It is indirect in the same way in structural sociology, some of whose practitioners also acknowledge the influence of Lévi-Strauss.¹⁰⁶ Hayden White in his work on metahistory (1978) discusses the ideas of Jakobson—in particular as found in Chapters 4 and 7—partly in connection with Lévi-Strauss.

Conclusion

Jakobson, his ideas, and his achievements have generated an enormous amount of scholarly work and from the 1950s onward have been

widely honored. Several festschriften have been published in his honor: *For Roman Jakobson: Essays on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday*, 1956; *To Honor Roman Jakobson: Essays on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, 1967; *Studies Presented to Roman Jakobson by His Students*, 1968; *Roman Jakobson: Echoes of His Scholarship*, 1977. Special issues of periodicals have been dedicated to an appraisal of his work, including *Poétique* (1971), *Critique* (1974), *L'Arc* (1975), *Poetics Today* (1980), *American Journal of Semiotics* (1983), and *International Journal of Slavic Linguistics and Poetics* (1983). There have been numerous books and articles about him. His works have been translated into sixteen languages, and collections of his major articles have been published in nearly as many.

Jakobson was interviewed repeatedly.¹⁰⁷ He received twenty-six honorary degrees and was an honorary member of some thirty learned societies. He was visiting professor at numerous institutions. Between 1967 and 1974, for example, he taught at the Collège de France and at Yale, Princeton, Brown, Brandeis, Leuven, and New York universities. In 1980 he received the International Prize for Philology and Linguistics of the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome, and in 1982 the Hegel Prize of the city of Stuttgart. After his death in 1982, memorial tributes were held in his honor at various institutions, most notably Harvard University and MIT (see *A Tribute to Roman Jakobson, 1896–1982*, 1983),¹⁰⁸ and several conferences were dedicated to his memory.¹⁰⁹

Hugh McLean has fittingly concluded that Jakobson became "recognized worldwide as not just a great Slavic scholar or a great linguist or a great theoretician of literature, though he was all of these things, but as one of the major creative minds of our century" (1983:19).