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*Teorija F. de Sossjura v svete sovremennoj lingvistiki* [The theory of F. de Saussure in the light of contemporary linguistics]. By N(atal'ja) A(leksandrova) Sljusareva. Moscow: Institut jazykoznanija AN SSSR, Izdatel'stvo "Nauka", 1975. Pp. 112. Paper, 36 kop.

Reviewed by JAMES KILBURY, *Freie Universität Berlin*

In view of its author's experience with the subject, the present book must be taken as a major contribution to the study of Saussure's theory of language. In a series of publications stretching over more than fifteen years Professor N. A. Sljusareva has reported and reviewed most of the recent works in this field in addition to presenting the results of her own research. She thus is in a particularly favorable position to make a general exposition and analysis of Saussure's ideas.

Sljusareva indicates that her aim is to present "the fundamental propositions of F. de Saussure's theory, taking account of the newest publications

of his works and also of works devoted to their analysis" (2). As one would expect, the work of R. Godel (1957) and R. Engler (1967-68) figures prominently among these newer sources. In addition to the first goal she makes "an attempt at a contemporary interpretation of Saussure's theory" and seeks to resolve several questions of internal linguistics from the viewpoint of dialectical materialism, i.e., in relation to the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and contemporary Soviet philosophers (8).

The intended audience of the book includes "all persons interested in general linguistics and its history" (8), but in her detailed reporting of recent investigations by Western European scholars the author clearly adjusts to the needs of Soviet readers. A significantly different account undoubtedly would have resulted if S had primarily sought to present her own work on Saussure and that of other Soviet linguists to a non-Soviet audience. Aside from any difficulties in its language, the book may bring problems for persons who are not versed in dialectical materialism.

In the Preface (3-8) S discusses the recent attention directed toward the history of linguistics and considers the importance of philosophy for the development of linguistic theories. Saussure and J. Baudouin de Courtenay are presented as the main innovators leading to modern linguistics. The author stresses the importance of primary sources for the reconstruction of Saussure's views.

Chapter 1: "Language and speech" (9-29) consists of §1: "The first crossing on the linguist's path of research" (9-16), which treats the distinction *langue: parole* as the essence of Saussure's theory, and §2: "Three projections\* of definitions of language and speech" (16-29). S notes that "the dual character of the object of investigation, i.e. language, gives rise to a complex of problems which are formulated concisely as the opposition of language and speech" (29); eighteen dualisms (e.g., form and content, variant and invariant) are grouped under the categories of epistemological, ontological, and pragmatic definitions.

Chapter 2: "The theory of the linguistic sign" (30-45) comprises §1: "Semiology" (30-34), §2: "The model of the make-up [*stroenie*] of the linguistic sign" (34-40), and §3: "The two principles of the linguistic sign" (40-45). Here S presses the claim (discussed below) that Saussure was influenced by French theories of sociology. She agrees with other scholars that the principles of arbitrariness and linearity attributed by Saussure to the linguistic sign are unclear and problematic.

Chapter 3: "The main link in Saussure's theory - the value of linguistic units" (46-68) includes §1: "The formation of the theory of value in the con-

\* S actually uses the term *rakus* "foreshortening", which has been taken from the arts.

ception of F. de Saussure" (46-55), §2: "The value of units and the scheme of the linguistic sign" (55-64), and §3: "The problem of the interrelation of language and thought" (64-68). The first section presents the view (discussed below) that Saussure's ideas on value derive from theories of political economy, while the last examines the interrelation of language and thought from the perspective of dialectical materialism.

Chapter 4: "Language as a system and its method of analysis" (69-84) contains §1: "The special character of the system of language" (69-73) and §2: "The relations of units in the system of language" (73-79). In §3: "Methods of analyzing language" (80-84) S claims an anticipation of immediate constituent analysis but not of transformational analysis in Saussure's views (84).

Chapter 5: "The four [kinds of] linguistics (synchronic and diachronic, internal and external)" (85-98) consists of §1: "The duality of the science of language" (85-92) and §2: "Internal and external linguistics" (92-98). The work ends with a Conclusion, "The philosophy of language of F. de Saussure" (99-110), where S observes that the philosophical basis of Saussure's theory is difficult to reveal clearly because of its eclectic character (106).

The past few years have seen a flood of publications directly on or closely connected with Saussure's theory of language. S indicates in a footnote (110) that a number of these works appeared too recently to be discussed thoroughly in her account. It is most regrettable, however, that she was unable to deal extensively with Koerner's *Ferdinand de Saussure* (1973), since the latter work deals with many of the issues to which she addresses herself. In particular, the study under review and Koerner's book provide two markedly different pictures of the sources that influenced the development of Saussure's linguistic theory.

S views Saussure fundamentally as "a continuator of the French tendency of regarding language as a social phenomenon and as a sign [*znakovaja*] system" (5) and finds a source for his views on the distinction *langue: parole* and on the linguistic sign in the ideas of the sociologists E. Durkheim and G. Tarde. In postulating this link she relies heavily on the claims of W. Doroszewski (1933, 1958). Thus, having noted that the debate between the two sociologists captured the attention of French society at the end of the 19th century, S adds that Saussure "also followed the debate with interest; W. Doroszewski [1958:543] testifies to this" (107). Likewise, she cites Doroszewski (1933) when she writes, "it could be said that in his conception [Saussure] sought an original reconciliation of the theories of the French sociologists E. Durkheim and G. Tarde" (13). This last passage is unfortunate in that Koerner (1973:224-27) is also referred to without explana-

'value', we are quite safe in assuming that Saussure borrowed it from economics, but the special interpretation he *attaches* to his expression is definitely his own" (1973:68). Like S, K asserts that "there is not a single text form either Saussure himself or from lecture notes taken by his students which mentions the names of Durkheim, Tarde, or Walras" (69); he regards it not as a source of disappointment, however, but rather as a fundamental ground for his contention that S "was in no way *directly* influenced by any of the concepts, principles or theories outside of linguistics proper" (379) (i.e., from sociology or political economy), which is the primary thesis of his book. In particular, K goes to special pains to refute Doroszewski's testimony as to the alleged direct influence of Durkheim and Tarde on Saussure (226-27). Thus, the study by S is of great interest inasmuch as its portrayal of nonlinguistic influences on Saussure is diametrically opposed to the account provided by K.

One also sees disagreement over the influence of linguists on Saussure. S stresses the importance of Baudouin de Courtenay, and in discussing the dichotomy of synchrony: diachrony she asserts that "the idea of the duality of linguistics was introduced by Baudouin de Courtenay and taken from him by Saussure" (86). In a footnote on the same page S indicates that Koerner (1973:108, 265ff.) relates the idea to H. Paul and M. Kruszewski. K, on the other hand, claims that "any actual profound direct influence by Baudouin on Saussure has to be denied" (144). Whereas K views W. D. Whitney as Saussure's "principal source of inspiration" and his "forerunner *par excellence*" (92), S looks instead to the French sociologists.

In short, S and K differ almost totally in their assessment of the linguistic and nonlinguistic influences on Saussure's theory of language. Since K's major discussion appeared so shortly before her own book, S can in no way be held responsible for not having answered K's arguments. But now she will need to address herself to his position if the claims of the work reviewed here are to be maintained.

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tion, which could lead the reader to suppose that K supports the view.

The direct link between Saussure and the French sociologists is reasserted several times in the course of the book, each time with greater conviction and stronger claims, as though repetition had the power of proof. Thus, what was only suggested on page 13 is taken as an established fact when S concludes that Saussure "interpreted the Durkheim-Tarde controversy creatively and introduced his own point of view differing from much of what he derived from [*cerpal u*] the French sociologists" (42); Doroszewski is again cited to provide support. S goes further when she claims that Saussure's contention that the diffusion of language is subject to the same laws as any custom (for example, fashion) was "undoubtedly made under the influence of the teaching of G. Tarde on the laws of imitation which determine social development" (96-97), but a climax is reached when she flatly asserts that "Doroszewski [1933] was undoubtedly correct in supposing that the linguistic idea of *parole* was suggested [*navejana*] to Saussure by Tarde's views" (108). Moreover, S feels that Doroszewski's claim could be broadened and that several other Saussurean principles can be found in Tarde's work, among them the principles of (a) language as form and (b) oppositions as one of the characteristic features of linguistic systems (108).

Not only the French sociologists — and Tarde in particular — but also classical economists in general are seen by S as having exerted an important influence on Saussure. She finds that after his Indo-European investigations "the second factor that caused [*obuslovivsi*] the appearance of the theory of value was F. de Saussure's acquaintance with works in the area of political economy"; she states that Saussure "begins his explanation of the notion of the value of linguistic signs with a comparison of the notion of value in political economy, very closely following the theories of A. Smith and D. Ricardo and exactly following the teaching of K. Marx on surplus value" (48). Likewise, S indicates that the "impetus" for Saussure's "discovery that units of language possess relative properties in addition to absolute properties" consisted in his "acquaintance with classical works in the area of political economy" (102). However, in a footnote she observes (48): "Unfortunately, the works on political economy used by F. de Saussure are mentioned neither in the *Cours* nor in the published manuscript materials; nor are they in the inventory of his library. Koerner [1973:67-70] mentions the name of Léon Walras, however."

Again, the citation of Koerner is regrettable in that it may lead the uninformed reader to suppose that K supports the view that Saussure derived his notion of value directly from Walras or some other political economist. This situation is clarified by K's statement that "as for the term

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*Declinatio: A Study of the Linguistic Theory of Marcus Terentius Varro.* By Daniel J(enning)s Taylor. (= *Studies in the History of Linguistics*, 2.) Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1975 [c.1974]. Pp. xv, 131. Paper, Hfl. 24,—.

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It is a rare thing to read, let alone review, a book in which you can find so little to disagree with. The sub-field of Classical Linguistics, that is (a) the grammar of Ancient Greek, Latin, and closely related languages, and (b) the study of Greek and Roman grammarians (and such philosophers and rhetors as happen to treat linguistic matters), though it may seem to be a sizable field, is nevertheless occupied by a mere handful of scholars, especially in the United States, and the number of Ph.D. theses turned out in any given year scarcely ever needs more than the fingers of one hand, and often is zip. In view of this, it is amazing that there are as many good ones as there are. And this one is the best I've seen yet.

The book is divided into four chapters, of which the first is introductory, and the last a summing up. The other two are called "The nature of language" (9-64) and "The nature of grammatical inquiry" (65-109). The major points in chapter II are concerned with Varro's system of parts of speech and his distinction between *declinatio naturalis* and *declinatio voluntaria*, which also involves the distinction between *impositio* (Greek *thesis*) and *declinatio*. Varro's classification is clear and unambiguous; all words are either case-