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The role of language in the formation and movement of human consciousness

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Abstract

The article studies the relationship and mutual influence of two concepts – “language” and “consciousness”. Language plays a key role in the formation and movement of human consciousness. The text of culture is multi-faceted and multi-structured, and it is formed by the languages of human spiritual activity, the languages of his consciousness. Thanks to consciousness, a person becomes a person. Consciousness is a phenomenon that exists, but about which it is difficult to build a theory, neither in the form of an ultimate philosophical concept nor in the form of a real phenomenon. The main characteristic of consciousness as a result of the development and activity of highly organized matter is not materiality, but ideality. Being ideal, it exists in the material form of its expression - language. In the culture of any society as an active form of human being, the following forms of consciousness are clearly defined: 1) forms of ordinary consciousness; 2) forms of theoretical consciousness; 3) art and imaginative forms of consciousness; 4) religious forms of consciousness. The author reveals the languages of all forms of consciousness: sacred, language of art or art language, language of science, ordinary or natural language. Understanding the specifics of each language opens the way to learn not only a certain form of consciousness, but also the world of man, society and culture.

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Keywords

Consciousness, language, forms of consciousness, sacred language, art language, language of science, natural language.

Introduction

Consciousness is the concept of philosophy, whether it is the philosophy of nature, society, law, science, man, etc. The main prerequisite of the analysis here will be an understandable consciousness that opens the possibility of personal realization expressed in the text and thus exists in culture not just in the form of the achieved knowledge, but in the form of a realized thought and a way of being. Another fact that makes this problem particularly complicated is that “consciousness is a very strange phenomenon that exists and at the same time cannot be grasped or imagined as a thing. In principle, it is impossible to build a theory about it. Neither in the form of an ultimate philosophical concept, nor in the form of a real phenomenon described by psychological and other means, consciousness cannot be theorized, objectified” [Mamardashvili, 1990, 3]. Any attempt in this direction fails. As you get closer to it the consciousness like a shadow slips away from the researcher. Only people have consciousness, animals don't, they have instincts.

Consciousness can be defined as the highest function of the brain, peculiar only to people and related to speech, which includes the generalized and purposeful reflection of reality, the preliminary mental construction of actions and the anticipation of their results, the reasonable regulation and self-control of human behavior.

Consciousness can be represented as an active process that occurs during the interaction of the subject and object in the process of activity. This is a subjective image of the world that corresponds to the nature and content of the subject's activity.

Consciousness is a dynamic semantic system that represents the unity of affective and intellectual processes. It is formed as the subject masters the ways of using signs and symbols by replacing external practical substantive actions with speech actions with their subsequent interiorization. Words (signs) replace the subject characteristics of phenomena and events, fixing and keeping their meaning, which allows to perform actions on the meanings inside the consciousness.

Consciousness and language

Human consciousness develops not in the conditions of robinsonade, within a cultural whole, which historically reflects experience, communication and worldview, which the individual must not only learn; he must build his own experience [Zinchenko, 1991, 23].

The main characteristic of consciousness as a result of the development and activity of highly organized matter is not materiality, but ideality. The most important condition of an ideal image of the material world is the physiological material processes that take place in the human brain and body. The existence of the ideal has a functional character and acts as an image of the subject and value estimation, as a purpose and plan of activity, as the construction of images, etc.

Consciousness, being ideal, exists only in the material form of its expression - language. Conscious forms appear when various signs and symbols – languages – are developed between the subjective and objective reality.

Consciousness acts as a unity of knowledge and language. There is no language without thinking, just as there is no thinking without language. Koshevoy states that “there is no language without thought and, on the contrary, thought without language” [Serebrennikov, Kubryakova, Postovalova, 1988, 70].

Thinking and language are not in mechanical interaction, but in a continuous organic connection. They cannot be separated from each other without destroying both. Language does not exist outside of thinking, but thoughts and ideas do not exist outside of language.

Consciousness and language are a dialectical unity that does not exclude differences. The structure of thinking and the structure of language do not coincide: the laws and forms of thinking are the same for all people, and the language is national. The connection between language and thinking is a connection that has emerged in the course of social and labor practice.

Man is an active being producing the objective world and through it himself. His whole life is possible only as a joint social activity. Language is required for this. It arises as a means of human activity, communication, behavior control. It becomes an instrument of knowledge and self-awareness. In the unity of consciousness and language, the creative side is still consciousness. Reflecting reality, it creates forms and dictates the laws of speech existence.

Language is the original form that hides and reveals being in thought. It shows not only the text of thought, but, first of all, the text of being, so through the language we reveal being, and therefore consciousness [Heidegger, 2006].

Language plays an essential role in the formation and movement of human consciousness. It represents the “practical consciousness” of people. Like consciousness, language is also a product of human activity, a product of the collective and its “self-speaking being”, so it exists for the individual [Leontiev, 2007].

The forms of consciousness and their languages

In the culture of any society as an active form of human being, the following forms of consciousness are clearly defined: 1) forms of ordinary consciousness; 2) forms of theoretical consciousness; 3) art and imaginative forms of consciousness; 4) religious forms of consciousness [Rostovtseva, 1996, 29]. All these forms of consciousness create the sign-value world of culture, its text.

Each form of consciousness has its own language: religious – sacred language, art and imaginative – language of art or art language, theoretical – language of science, ordinary – ordinary or natural language. Understanding the specifics of each language opens the way to learn not only a certain form of consciousness, but also the world of man, society and culture.

Ordinary consciousness is knowledge that contains assertion about the spiritual and practical life of society. This assertion forms a system of stereotypes and ideas about how to live. Ordinary consciousness is practical knowledge. It is based on the mechanism of belief. Ordinary consciousness is individual and social only as a form of spiritual activity and communication. There is almost no transcendence or reflexivity in it. This is the simplest cultural form of consciousness, which is a universal form of activity and communication.

Ordinary consciousness provides a person with an effective adaptation to reality and a successful solution to life problems. It combines the features of pre-conscious and mythological, children's and mass consciousness with elements of scientific knowledge. It has a social nature and is shared by a large group of people. Ordinary consciousness is closely related to the language picture of the world, based on the relevant discourse.

Theoretical consciousness is a systemically structured form of knowledge. It is possible to distinguish the main principles inherent in theoretical consciousness:

1. Unlike the ordinary consciousness, it is based on knowledge and requires validity and evidence.
2. It has special theoretical forms of expression.
3. This is the knowledge of things' essence in the world, expressed in laws.
4. It is aimed at searching for true knowledge.
5. It is based on the principle of doubt, that is, not to take anything for granted.

6. The formation of theoretical knowledge requires serious professional training and mastering the methods of theoretical knowledge at the empirical and theoretical level.
7. It is systemic.
8. It is based on the rules and laws of logic.

Ordinary consciousness is doubtless, but the initial situation of theoretical knowledge is a contradiction that is reproduced in the dialectic of objective and subjective, abstract and concrete, content and form. The ideal of scientific knowledge is objectivity (knowledge without empirically sensual and value utilitarian “impurities”). On the one hand, science does not make a person happy, but, on the other hand, it is aimed at creating conditions for human freedom, since scientific thought: 1) is always aimed at searching for truth; 2) finds ways and means of true knowledge being; 3) provides a person and society with knowledge to explore the world.

Ordinary consciousness “speaks” natural language. Natural language is the main and historical first means of communication. This is the national language that people use to communicate. The advantages of natural language have made it a universal means of transmitting and storing information necessary for social groups, suitable for all types of human activity: art, everyday life, politics, etc.

Theoretical consciousness “speaks” a special symbolic language, so it requires special training in mastering the laws and methods of science. Scientific speech is “an intermediary link between a specialized language” and “a living, growing, and changing language” [Gadamer, 1991, 51]. Languages of all forms of consciousness are closely interrelated and influence each other. For example, if we don't know the natural language, we can't understand the language of science.

However, languages differ from each other. Scientific language differs from ordinary (natural) language in the following way:

- the logical way of presentation is characterized by the presence of interrelated arguments aimed at revealing the scientific truth;
- semantic completeness means building arguments and facts in such a sequence to reveal the idea that is the basis of any scientific work;
- integrity – the language and style of the scientific work must correspond to the structure and content of the work.

Man and society express themselves fully in art, in the embodiment of art and imaginative consciousness. Art images of the world, as well as scientific ones, also cover the world only in some aspects, and not the world as a whole, which has an infinite variety. The world opened to the musician, and the world opened to the scientist, is not a separate autonomous world, but only an aspect of the real infinite unified world, which is viewed from their positions by the poet, mathematician and person engaged in subject-practical activities [B. A. Serebrennikov, E. S. Kubryakova, V. I. Postovalova, 1988, 39].

Art is the most important cultural phenomenon, because it is a pole of attraction of all free human forces. This is one of the main components of the emotional and creative side of culture [Sokolov, 1989, 11]. Art is reflected in art and imaginative form of consciousness, which structure of the content consists of such concepts as: beauty, image, ideal, empathy, form and content.

The individual voice of the Creator is his art language, which usually has a symbolic form. An art language is not a set of ready signs, but certain standard forms, which the author uses creating his own language, consisting of new original elements (if there aren't such elements, the artist's work is completely banal in language and does not have an independent value) [Makhlina, 2003, 268].

The originality of the art language is represented in the form of “spiritual and practical world exploration and creative activity”, connected “with the implementation of a completely specific human

need and ability". To identify this need and ability, the position of Karl Marx "about a rich man who needs the fullness of life manifestations, which expresses the universal and fundamental need for human being" is of great importance [Tolstykh, 1986, 213].

The main component of the art language is an artistic text, which can be in different forms: a painting subject, a musical composition, a story, etc. Each of these forms is a work of art that is a "projection of spiritual aspiration, search for feelings and desires", since it arises from the need of people to do better, "humanize" their sensory perception of reality in accordance with social practice, which provides this need with all the necessary material [Tolstykh, 1986, 220].

The true essence of the artistic text develops "at the border of two consciousnesses, two subjects". A transcript of humanitarian thinking is "a transcript of a special dialogue: a complex relationship between the text (the subject of study and reflection) and the created context (questioning, understanding, commenting, objecting, etc.), in which the scientist's cognitive and evaluating thought is realized" [Bakhtin, 2000, 303].

Religious consciousness is a complex, multi-faceted and contradictory phenomenon. According to A. A. Voroshilova, "religious consciousness acts as the basis of the spiritual unity of the people, as a guiding star that determines the possibility of maintaining its identity, self-identification and national interaction". [Voroshilova, 2002, 12].

The language of religious consciousness is the sacred language. It is the form and structure of a special cultural space – its horizon, connection with the world of God, because the religion has been the spiritual core of culture throughout the history of mankind. Understanding the specifics of the sacred language opens the way to understand the spiritual world of man and society.

Like other languages, the sacred language is a structure of the culture's organization, i.e. a certain regulating, arrangement of borders in space and time, and world order. Having a common space-time means being able to orientate and create a common rhythm of life. And this requires a common reference point, which in this case is the language.

An important component of the language of religion is religious vocabulary, the part of the natural language vocabulary that expresses religious meanings. In the language of religion, words are often used in a figurative meaning, texts are full of metaphors, analogies, allegories, historicisms, archaisms, etc. Thanks to the language, religious consciousness becomes effective and practical [Voroshilova, 2002, 25].

Sacred language has the following characteristics: 1) transcendence; 2) mysticism; 3) symbolism; 4) mythical forms of sacred texts; 5) the language of revelation.

The transcendence of the sacred language is the symbolic representation of the ideal (other) Divine world. The sacred language is a language having the supernatural essence of being.

Mysticism is a special state of consciousness connected with supernatural forces. The mystical Union can be the result of the clear and conscious advancement of the prayer, or it can take a more passive form when God "takes over" the prayer.

Religious symbols inform us about the meanings of the sacred world, help us to hear and see the special space of religious culture. Any sacred language has the symbolism of holiness and supernaturalism. The symbolism of the cross is very popular in various cultures and religions. The symbol of the cross of different religions and cultures is similar in its philosophical content and execution. All images of the cross are alike, since the deep processes of the human psyche are closely related to the processes taking place in the surrounding world [Roshal, 2005].

In the sacred language, there are three major forms: pray (a form of religious sacralization of the narrative), myth, and ritual. In the language, myths are used at various levels to create symbolic, and

sometimes pseudo – historical expression of comprehended or accepted religious truth. The development of religious consciousness has always been carried out in myths from the ancient primitive forms to the developed forms of monoreligion.

The main functions of the sacred language include: 1) the function of the sacralization of reality (a person finds in God the absolute truth of his life and therefore strives for a real likeness to God); 2) the function of the Epiphany in culture. When a person prays, he does not hear what the Sky answers. However, different religious teachings and cults are connected with a mystical experience. This is the so-called Epiphany, good news, or other sign from Above.

Conclusions

The overall picture of the world of culture is based on the synthesis of individual ideas. Thus, the sacred forms of language are in many cases the forms of art language. Along with verbal and written forms, the sacred language has iconic, sculptural and symbolic, musical and dance-ritual forms. Signs can be words, gestures, sounds, and images. Art language in its turn takes elements from the sacred language: for example, sacred symbols are often used in painting, music, and literature. Taking as a basis the forms of art language, the sacred language is characterized by transcendence (all signs of the sacred language are intended for service and understanding of the Divine). In Hinduism, some temples have halls for sacred dances. The sacred language of dance gives a sense of another being and immerses the dancer and those who perceive it in a special world of Divine space.

Various ancient teachings on space structure can be an example of the synthesis of theoretical and art worldview. Homer combined mythopoetic and art teachings in his vision of the world.

The article shows the complex nature of consciousness. The relationship between language and consciousness allows us to see that each form of consciousness has its own language: religious – sacred language, art and imaginative – language of art or art language, theoretical – language of science, ordinary – ordinary or natural language. It is also important to note the relationship and interaction of languages of all forms of consciousness. Understanding the essence of the languages of consciousness opens the way not only to study the forms of consciousness themselves, but also the human world.

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Роль языка в формировании и движении человеческого сознания

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Аннотация

В статье исследуется взаимосвязь и взаимовлияние двух понятий – «языка» и «сознания». Язык играет ключевую роль в формировании и движении человеческого сознания. Текст культуры многолик и многоструктурен, и формируется он языками духовной деятельности человека, языками его сознания. Именно благодаря сознанию человек становится человеком. Сознание – это явление, которое есть, но о котором сложно построить теорию, ни в виде предельного философского понятия, ни в виде реального явления. Сознание как результат развития и деятельности высокоорганизованной материи, центральной характеристикой своей сущности имеет не материальность, а идеальность. Являясь идеальным, оно существует в материальной форме своего выражения – языке. В культуре любого общества как деятельной формы бытия человека четко выделяются следующие формы сознания: 1) формы обыденного сознания; 2) формы теоретического сознания; 3) художественно-образные формы сознания; 4) религиозные формы сознания. Автор раскрывает языки всех форм сознания: сакральный, язык искусства или художественный язык, язык науки, обыденный или естественный язык. Понимание специфики каждого языка открывает нам дорогу к познанию не только какой-то определенной формы сознания, но и мира человека, общества и культуры.

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Ключевые слова

Сознание, язык, формы сознания, сакральный язык, художественный язык, язык науки, естественный язык.

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