

Interfaces between Lexicography, Semantics and Translation

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Abstract:

This article discusses possible connections between Lexicography, Semantics, and Translation. Through the experience of writing a bilingual dictionary in the Portuguese-Spanish direction, made for Brazilians, it was verified the need to reflect on the semantic load attributed to lexical units in its native language before it was registered in a dictionary. It was verified that Lexicography follows the assumptions of Formal Semantics, whereas Semantics of Enunciation suggests that all meanings of lexical units according to the utterance(s) must be registered, which becomes unfeasible in a dictionary. Nor would it be feasible to register all the meanings lexical units has for everyone, according to their subjectivity, if the dictionary were to follow the presuppositions of Cognitive Semantics. On the other hand, Translation could be benefited more freely from the contributions of these three models of semantic analysis, since, in both intralinguistic and interlinguistic translation, fidelity to the original utterance(s) is sought. Thus, integrated work among Lexicography, Semantics and Translation specialists could be beneficial to all these areas of knowledge and may result in a more complete register of the meaning(s) of lexical units in dictionaries.

Keywords:

Lexicography. Semantics. Translation.

Signum: Estudos da Linguagem, Londrina, v. 21, i. 3, p. 329-343, Dec. 2018

Received on: 06/24/2017

Accepted on: 11/12/2017

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INTRODUCTION

In the process of developing a bilingual Portuguese-Spanish dictionary, made for Brazilians, we faced the challenge of elaborating entries that contained sufficient information, not only according to the authors' criteria, but fundamentally to meet the needs of the potential users of this lexicographic work. For a bilingual dictionary to be elaborated, various sources are consulted, such as monolingual dictionaries, which help us in the selection and elaboration of the information contained in the entries of the dictionary. Based on reflections from the challenges encountered in our task, it was possible to realize that Lexicography, as an area of knowledge that guides the elaboration of dictionaries, could and should seek more resources in the studies of Semantics, also benefiting the area of Translation.

In this article, therefore, we are interested to find out how semantic information is elaborated, that is, how the semantic value is assigned to a dictionary entry or lexicographic article. We would also like to verify how the structure of a dictionary entry is supported by taking as reference the knowledge that Semantics gives you at the time of elaborating a definition and how this process could benefit the work of the translator. In this particular article, we refer to the intralinguistic translation first, that is, we speak of the translation of thought and its materialization through language and, on other occasions, to interlingual translation or from one language to another.

LEXICOGRAPHY AND SEMANTICS

Lexicography, according to Porto Dapena (2002, p. 23), is the discipline that deals with everything concerning the dictionary, both in terms of its scientific content (lexical study), its material elaboration and the techniques used in their realization or, finally, their analysis. Hartmann and James (1998, p. 92) and Porto Dapena (2002) themselves speak of the structure of a dictionary, which may be composed of 1) megastructure or set that includes the macrostructure or body of the dictionary and the external elements; 2) the macrostructure: set of entries or lemmas or, also, the way the dictionary body is organized; and 3) the microstructure or “set of ordered information of each entry after entry” (WELKER, 2004, p. 107). Another synonym for the word entry in dictionaries is the word lemma. Behind the choice of lemmas, there are criteria guiding this choice, such as the

frequency with which a particular word appears in the statements of members of a particular linguistic community. Although the frequency of words appears to be the most common criterion that guides lexicographers when designing a dictionary, they are faced with situations in which they must make some decisions regarding the registration or not of some lexical units.

When it comes to the development of a dictionary, it is necessary to point out that the lexicographic article corresponds to a basic and essential structure on which the work of the lexicographer articulates: entry - category - definition. This basic structure has been established, at least since the consolidation of Western monolingual Lexicography in the seventeenth century. The entry points to the existence of this unit of lexicographic treatment as a unit of the linguistic system indicates the form that the linguistic convention gave to it and its possible morphological and normative variants. The category indicates the belonging of the unit of treatment to a certain system of morphofunctional relations. And the definition presupposes the content, the semantic value of that unit of operation. From this basic structure we derive three types of information: (a) from the entry: general information, (b) from the category: grammatical information and (c) from the definition: semantic information (AHUMADA LARA, 1989, p. 18-19).

As Kernerman (2013, p. 1) has now stated that all users of a language and consultants of a dictionary have the possibility to participate in the creative process of constructing meanings for lexical units and this is due to the fact that assigning “meaning to a chain of noise implies adopting a point of view on the acquisition of knowledge” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 18). It is necessary to say that Semantics is the science that is dedicated to the study of “meaning”, although the semantists themselves do not agree on the exact definition of this concept: in the words “of the philosopher Putnam: ‘what disrupts Semantics is that it depends on a pre-theoretical concept of meaning’” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 18). Thus, it would not be possible to speak of Semantics, but of at least “the master lines of current semantic models: the formal model, the enunciative model and the cognitive model” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 42). Thus, in order to understand the issues involved in developing a definition in a dictionary through an intralinguistic translation, it is necessary to discuss the possibilities that the lexicographer has to materialize it, adopting a certain “point of view on the acquisition of knowledge “or an observation post that guides their work.

FORMAL SEMANTICS AND ITS RELATION WITH LEXICOGRAPHY AND TRANSLATION

The lexicographers began to systematize their procedures, starting from the studies of Linguistics and Saussure (2000, p. 79), which warned us that “for certain people, language is reduced to its principle essential, is a nomenclature, that is, a list of terms that correspond to other things”. Primitive Lexicography had its origin in these lists of terms that could correspond to certain meanings and served specific purposes such as the decoding of

classical texts derived, fundamentally, from languages such as Latin and Greek. For Saussure (2000, p. 79), “[t]he conception is open to criticism in many respects”, since “it supposes that the bond that unites a name to one thing is a very simple operation, which is far from the truth” (SAUSSURE, 2000, p. 79).

The ideas of the Genevan master served as the basis for the structuralists of Saussurian strand, who defined “meaning” from the contrast between lexical units. That is, “meaning is given in a structure of differences in relation to other meanings. Thus, the meaning of a word is defined as not being another meaning” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 18), and may imply in a relativistic posture of the lexicographer and the translator.

Until 1957, with the celebration of the VIII International Congress of Linguists, Lexicography and Linguistics were closely related disciplines, the first being dependent on the latter. The interest in Semantics and the opening of a space for lexicographical studies guided by it emerged from the mentioned event, in which structuralism starts to walk on the terrain of meaning, although it is a kind of first contact, as recorded by Ahumada Lara (1989, p. 83).

From this, Ahumada Lara (1989, p. 84) affirms that the lexicographical problems have a dual orientation: “1) Orientation to philosophy. 2) Orientation towards linguistics”. Thus, when Oliveira (2006, p. 42) cites the formal model within Semantics and speaks of Formal Semantics, it refers to the moment when meaning becomes seen as “a complex term that is composed of two parts, meaning and reference [...]. Thus, in the logical model, the relation of language to the world is fundamental.” This concept is derived from the Aristotelian distinction that language “is not an ‘*ergon*’ (Indo-European root ‘*werg*’, which we find in English ‘work’: ‘an accomplished work’), but a “*Energieia*” (an activity in the process of being done) “(OUSTINOFF, 2011, p. 22). Still on the “orientation towards Philosophy” that the Lexicography came to have, Oliveira (2006, p. 19) states that “Aristotle’s analysis (by logic) shows that there are relations of meaning that occur independently of the content of the expressions “. The point in this paragraph has its direct consequences on dictionaries, since, as Ahumada Lara (1989, p. 86) states, dictionaries have a social function and since the earliest repertories their only mission was to review the most varied meanings of the words, and there was, at that time, neither a methodology nor a uniformity that characterized a consecrated lexicographic technique. Even today, lexicographers face problems in offering the lexicist a definition for words, for this activity is the translation of thought by means of signs, building up what we call meaning. In the field of Translation, it is understood that:

there is no ‘neutral’ or ‘transparent’ translation through which the original text would appear ideally as in a mirror, identically. Therefore, here there is no room for ‘*decal*’, because of the actual work (‘*energeia*’) of the language, whether it is working inside the ‘*translating*’ language or that which occurs in the very heart of the original language (OUSTINOFF, 1989, p. 22).

This work that takes place in the original language is what we call intralinguistic translation or translation of thought into words, before interlingual translation or from one language to another occurs. After the intralinguistic translation, we can have two materializations of these contents that were previously only individual: oral expression and written expression. On writing, it is worth to comment on the reflections that Saussure's words (2000, p. 34, emphasis added) provoked and can provoke:

Language and writing are two different systems of signs; the only reason for being of the second is to represent the first; *the linguistic object is not defined by the combination of the written word and the spoken word; the latter, per se, constitutes such an object.* But the written word mingles so intimately with the spoken word, of which it is the image that it ends up usurping its principal role; we end up giving greater importance to the representation of the vocal sign than to the sign itself. It is as if we believe that in order to know a person, it is better to contemplate the photograph than the face.

We agree with Oustinoff (2011, p. 22) that writing and translation (both intralinguistic and interlinguistic) “must be situated exactly on the same level”, because they constitute the “photograph” and not the “face” of the language, according to the words of Saussure (2000). He was concerned with the consequences of giving more attention to “photography”, that is, to the representation of the language through writing, to the detriment of the object represented: “Language has an oral tradition independent of written and very diverse; nevertheless, the prestige of the written form prevents us from seeing it” (SAUSSURE, 2000 p. 35). And when one speaks of the translation, Oustinoff (2011, p. 77, emphasis added) states that:

There is nothing more difficult [...] and nothing rarer than an excellent translation, for nothing is more difficult or rarer than to strike the right balance *between the license of comment and the servitude of the letter. An excessively scrupulous attachment to the letter destroys the spirit, when it is the spirit that vivifies; excessive freedom destroys the characteristic traits of the original, an unfaithful copy of it is made.*

Both intralinguistic or thought translation and interlingual translation would be, according to the above quotation, unfaithful copies of the original, thought, and text to be translated into another language, respectively, if that fair balance between the orientation philosophical and linguistic orientation previously mentioned. Faced with this need for balance, it seems that “the possibility of fixing things relative to the language that makes a dictionary and a grammar can represent it faithfully, it being *the deposit of the acoustic images, and the writing the tangible form of these images?*” (SAUSSURE, 2000, p. 23, emphasis added). However, this complex task reaches the lexicographers with their limitations and criticisms, made by the Genevan master himself:

The literary language further enhances the undeserved importance of writing. It has its dictionaries, its grammars; *it is according to the book and the book taught in school; the language is regulated by a code; now, such a code is itself a written rule, subjected to a rigorous use:*

spelling, and this is what gives writing a primordial importance. We end up forgetting that we learn to speak before we learn to write, and we reverse the natural relation between them (SAUSSURE, 2000, p. 35, emphasis added).

Thus, Linguistics faces challenges by linking signifiers to meanings and Formal Semantics becomes (pre)occupied by associating sense and reference, since “the same reference can be ... retrieved through several meanings” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 21). In addition, Lexicography faces problems in registering words through dual orientation, philosophical and linguistic, making the conceptual content in Linguistic, as Ahumada Lara (1989, p. 84-85) points out. And the final intralinguistic translation, which has nothing ‘neutral’ or ‘transparent’, “is thus the emerging face of the iceberg. The immersed face, the most important one, is not the face of the ergon which is the translation, but the face of the processes of re-enunciation from which it results (*energeia*)” (OUSTINOFF, 2011, p. 76). And, in relation to the immersed phase of the translation in which the meaning is re-enunciated, Benveniste (2005, p. 319-320, emphasis added) states that:

Semantic notions are still so vague that, in order to deal with one aspect, it would be necessary to begin by proposing a body of rigorous definitions. However, these definitions would, in turn, require a discussion that dealt with the principles of signification [...] *In regard to meaning, however, we have as a guide only a certain verisimilitude, founded on “common sense”, on the personal appreciation of linguist, on the parallels he can cite.* The problem always consists - at all levels of analysis, within the same language or at different stages of a comparative reconstruction - in determining whether and how two formally identical or comparable morphemes can be identified by their meaning.

These ideas influenced authors such as Ducrot (1987) and, from the 1970s onwards, works that opposed the presuppositions of Formal Semantics appeared. Thus, another model of meaning analysis emerged: Semantics of Enunciation, influenced by the French School of Discourse Analysis (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 27).

SEMANTICS OF ENUNCIATION, LEXICOGRAPHY AND TRANSLATION

For proponents of the idea that meaning may be the result of the argumentative game created in and by language, the meaning of a word would come to exist through the various possibilities of argumentative threads that word could engage. For this reason, Benveniste (2005, p. 320, emphasis added) speaks of the “parallels” the linguist could make in relation to a word:

The only principle that we will use [...], taking it as admitted, is that the “meaning” of a linguistic form is defined *by the totality of their jobs, by their distribution and by the types of connections resulting [...]* The answer never comes beforehand. It can only be provided by a *careful study of the set of contexts in which the form is likely to appear.* One does not have the right to presume it, positive or negative, in the name of verisimilitude.

It is considered, therefore, that one should not offer ready meanings for a word since it would make sense in each of the contexts in which it was used. For lexicographers, the task of recording the possibilities of argumentative threads of a lexical unit or the “totality of their jobs” is presented as a Herculean task, since, as Rey-Debove (1984, p. 57) says, users of a language:

they never master the lexicon, they find unfamiliar words throughout their lives, and no lexicologist or lexicographer can expect to acquire optimal lexical competence. This is, of course, the quantitative order: the rules of grammar are restricted, but not the words they govern. In addition, it is the lexicon that changes faster in the language (in French, the renewal of units is in the order of 10% in 25 years to about 50.000 words). The fact that most people do not ‘understand’ a text is due to unknown words: this is a kind of permanent discomfort, of lexical anguish that frequently turns into disdainful remarks about the ‘jargon’ of others.

If the lack of registration of all words as entries is already an obstacle to achieving optimal lexical competence, the task of knowing their “distribution and types of resulting connections” seems even more challenging, not to mention the “set of contexts in which the form is likely to appear”, of which Benveniste (2005, p. 320) mentions when speaking of the meaning of the lexical units. On this “set of contexts” in which they may appear, according to the Semantics of Enunciation, it is possible to say that it is the institutional framework that refers to the discursive space in which the dialogue will develop and this is formed by the various enunciators that they are, finally, a statement (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 28).

Thus, if lexicographers strictly followed the guidelines of Semantics of Enunciation, the dictionary should record the range of different meanings that can be associated with a statement, without losing sight of the fact that these meanings, although different, are related. We use the conditional conjunction “if”, for as Ahumada Lara (1989, p. 101) recognizes, Lexicography, both theoretical and practical, must be oriented in a special way towards semantic theory, without forgetting the linguistic science of form general; moreover, he must know and share in the right measure the richness of his methods, his means of analysis, the rigor of his observations, and especially his conclusions; however, without giving up the clear, coherent and accessible presentation of its results. This has to do with the fact that the dictionary arises from the needs of potential users, that is, depending on the querent, there would be no need to register certain information in the microstructure of an entry. We now turn to see how the intralinguistic translation is affected, positively or negatively, by the presuppositions of Semantics of Enunciation, more specifically in relation to the range of different meanings that opens from a statement. Relating this to the concept proposed by Jakobson (1959, p. 114) for the intralinguistic translation, Oustinoff (2011, p. 73, emphasis added) cites that:

In 1813 Schleiermacher enunciated a similar conception in *Two different methods of translating*: Do we often have the need to translate the speech of another person, completely similar to us but whose sensibility and temperament are different? When we feel that the same words in our mouth would have a totally different *meaning* or at least a somewhat more fragile content, somewhat more vigorous than in it and that if we wanted to express exactly the same thing as it, we would serve ourselves, in our way, of absolutely different *terms and expressions*, it seems, when we want *to define* this impression more precisely, and make it an object of thought, which we translate.

Thus, when we want to communicate in a way that we think is most effective, we use “terms” or “expressions” that are the fruit of the translation of “an object of thought.” This operation happens, then, when a statement is constituted by more than one enunciator, forming, according to Oliveira (2006, p. 28), the “institutional framework that refers to the discursive space in which the dialogue will happen” and , thus “situates dialogue in the commitment that the listener accepts this presupposed voice (of the enunciator)”. In this dialogue, in the universe of “communication”, the translation:

is present everywhere [...] It is not necessary that the ‘source language’ and the ‘target language’ be different. We can go further. Actually, the translation does not only apply to texts: this would arbitrarily exclude oral translation or that which is effected in the inner forum, mentally. Therefore, we can substitute ‘text’ for ‘utterance’ (‘U’): SU-TU (OUSTINOFF, 2011, p. 74).

In this part, a relation between the Semantics of the Enunciation and the structuralism of Saussurian strand is perceived, since, for Saussure (2000, p. 35), “the language has an oral tradition independent of writing, “and” we learn to speak before learning to write, “so intralinguistic translation is indeed a translation of what the Genevan master understood by language, is to observe the” face “instead of looking at a” photograph”. It seems paradoxical that the written texts have received the most attention from translators and lexicographers over time, but perhaps we could make a simple analogy to understand the question: the “face” changes and “photography” remains. In this way, traditionally, one studies what is recorded, that is, what appears as a cut of the language and is written in grammars and dictionaries and not what is produced orally and which is lost after its enunciation.

Written texts have received more attention than oral ones from lexicographers and translators, and intralinguistic translation has been seen more as a ‘re-enunciation’, which, according to Oustinoff (2011, p. 74), is an operation that: “It is far from automatic, even within the same language”. At the same time as it is far from being automatic, the author himself notes that “transformations of this type are so little evident that for a long time they were considered (until the nineteenth century) as a pedagogical exercise of the highest importance” (OUSTINOFF, 2011, p. 75, emphasis added). This paragraph aims to emphasize that, although “proper” or interlinguistic translation has received the adjective “indispensable” by Oustinoff (2011, p. 75), it “can not neglect the intralingual translation, which appears both on the side of the ‘source statement’ and on the ‘target statement’ side. The ‘source

statement' can only be understood when we are able to reformulate it in 'source language' ('L1'): L1 - L1".

Considering the previous quotation, it is necessary to say that the fruits of the studies coming from the intralinguistic translation and the Semantics of the Enunciation can become the range of possibilities that opens when a dialogue or effective communication takes place. At this moment, thoughts are translated by words, and for lexicographers to record them in their entirety is a task impossible to complete, as Rey-Debove (1984, p. 57) states, because of the changes that occur in units lexicons over time and at every moment in which a linguistic exchange or an enunciation takes place. As the author quoted earlier points out, the rules of grammar are restricted, but the words they govern are not. In this way, the number of words in a language is unrestricted and, therefore, the possibilities of enunciation for the users of a language in the moment of communication are increased.

COGNITIVE SEMANTICS, LEXICOGRAPHY AND TRANSLATION

On the possibilities of enunciation, Davidoff (2001, p. 274) states that "language is an almost infinitely flexible form of intentional communication ruled by rules that dictate meanings" and if an enunciator wants to convey a message and communicate, it seems clear that the meaning of this statement is motivated, opening the way to studies based on the theoretical presuppositions of the cognitive model, in the area of Semantics, from the 1980s. When speaking of the cognitive model, Oliveira (2006, p. 34, emphasis added) highlights that

The meaning, as stated in Cognitive Semantics, has nothing to do with the relation between language and world. On the contrary, it emerges from the inside out, and for this reason, it is *motivated*. The linguistic significance emerges from our corporeal significations, from the movements of our bodies in interaction with the environment that surrounds us.

In order to better understand the 'meaning' of the quotation that precedes this paragraph, we will use a procedure of structuralism of Saussurian strand, that is, we will speak of what Formal Semantics means by 'meaning' as opposed to the cognitive model, defining this concept in a structure of differences, since, as Ahumada Lara (1989, p. 102) affirms, the linguistic system has a better structuring of the relations between opposites than of the relations between synonyms. Thus, it is convenient to present the ideas defended by Cognitive Semantics in contrast to the ideas of Formal Semantics, which precedes the former historically.

Oliveira (2006, p. 17-46) states that for Formal Semantics, meaning is a complex term that is composed of two parts: meaning and reference; already, for Cognitive Semantics, meaning is natural and experiential, built from our physical, bodily interactions with the environment in which we live. According to the logical model defended by Formal Semantics, the relation of language to the world is fundamental, in opposition to that advocated by

Cognitive Semantics, since, for those who defend this theoretical line, the meaning has nothing to do with the relationship between language and world. According to this statement of cognitivists, meaning emerges from the inside out, and so it is motivated, because the linguistic significance comes from our corporeal significations, from the movements of our bodies in interaction with the environment that surrounds us. This is opposed to what the formalists argue, which assert that the individual representation that each word can provoke is not taken into account, that is, the subjective experiences of the individual in relation to the world are not considered at the time of assigning meanings to the signifiers. In relation to language, the formalists argue that this is only an instrument that allows us to reach that which exists, affirming, further, that truth or falsity are not contained in language, but in the facts of the world. On the other hand, cognitivists claim that the central element to them is not the truth that is in the facts of the world, but it is the meaning that becomes the object of investigation, considering also that form derives from signification, because it is from the construction of meanings that we have learned, including logic and language.

Summarizing these ideas, we can affirm that for Cognitive Semantics, the linguistic meaning 1) is not arbitrary, because it derives from sensorimotor schemes; 2) is a question of cognition in general and not a pure or primarily linguistic phenomenon (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 34-35). It is important to note that in order for the proponents of Cognitive Semantics to affirm that linguistic meaning is not arbitrary, Saussure (2000, p. 81, emphasis added) had to postulate that the meaning had to do with the concept and that had to do with the acoustic image and that “The bond between the signifier and the meaning is arbitrary, or else, since we mean by sign the total resulting from the association of a signifier with a signified, we can say more simply: *the linguistic sign is arbitrary*”.

In order to understand how the linguistic sign can be arbitrary, and the linguistic meaning is not, it is necessary to say that the proponents of Cognitive Semantics start from an existing linguistic system, that is, they do not refer to the origin or the appearance of the signs but rather to the learning / acquisition of these, to the construction that each individual makes of the meanings, from their experiences or the apprehension of sensorimotor schemes that will give meaning to the linguistic expressions, provided that this individual is inserted in a community of speakers. Saussure (2000, p. 130-131) referred to the arbitrariness of the sign by explaining that “psychologically, an abstraction made by its expression through words, our thinking is nothing but an amorphous and indistinct mass [...]. There are no pre-established ideas, and nothing is different before the appearance of the language.” This description refers to a time when the idea still did not focus on a sound, though:

The characteristic role of language in relation to thought is not to create a material phonic medium for the expression of ideas but to serve as an intermediary between thought and sound under conditions such that a union necessarily leads to reciprocal delimitations of units. Thought, chaotic by nature, is forced to be precise as it decomposes. There is, therefore, neither materialization of thought nor spiritualization of sounds; it is rather the mysterious fact that “sound-thinking” involves divisions and that the language elaborates its units constituting itself between two amorphous masses (Saussure, 2000, p. 131).

The previous quotation coincides with Helen Keller's (1905, p. 35-37) experiments in describing her early perceptions of language. Let's review a little of his story, written in the book "The story of my life". Keller grew up unable to speak and communicated by simple gestures such as nods or pulling or pushing movements, since, due to an illness he had at the age of two, he had been completely blind and deaf. However, at the age of seven, a life-changing experience took place: a teacher began teaching sign language so that Keller could communicate. The author reports the difficulties that this process involved, since she had to learn the sign language only by the touch because she could see neither the object of which was spoken nor the signs that its teacher did with the hands. In this way, Keller lived in a world of sensations, feelings and perceptions, as described in this passage in which his teacher tries to make her learn the difference between "mug" (spelled according to Fingerspelled Alphabet, that is, the alphabet used in the United States of America for communication between hearing impaired) and "water" (according to Fingerspelled Alphabet):

I was *impatient* with his repeated attempts [...]. I was *happy* when I *felt* the pieces of the broken doll on my foot [...] and I felt a kind of *satisfaction* at having disappeared the cause of my *discomfort*. She brought me my hat and I *realized* we were going to walk outside in the warm sunshine. This *thought*, if I may call this *untranslatable sense of thought*, made me leap with pleasure (DAVIDOFF, 2001, p. 246, emphasis added).

Keller's description suggests that, in fact, "our thinking is nothing more than an amorphous and indistinct mass", as Saussure has defined (2000, p. 131), or an "untranslatable sensation" (DAVIDOFF, 2001, p. 246) that needs definition, precision, and this could happen through language. Let's look at the description of the moment when Keller's teacher exposes her to an experience of associating her perception of a jet of water with the signs that describe it in this language:

Someone was getting water and my teacher put my hand under the jet. As the fresh water gushed in one hand, she began to spell the word water in the other, first slowly, then quickly. I stood there, all my attention focused on the movements of her fingers. Suddenly I acquired a not very clear *consciousness*, as of something forgotten - an excitation of return of thought;¹ and somehow the *mystery of language* has revealed itself to me. I knew then that w-a-t-e-r meant that fresh and delicious thing that flowed through my hand. That

¹ Davidoff (2001, p. 269) speaks of the sensitive period for language as referring to "a brief period of time when experience has a particularly substantial impact, without similar before or after. To acquire the language Lenneberg (1967) presumed, the organization of the brain needs to be mature and flexible. If we are very young (2 years or less), the brain lacks the necessary maturity." Considering that Helen Keller was blind and deaf at the age of two, it seems plausible that in her first contact with sign language, the consciousness of the process was not very clear or was a consciousness of "something forgotten", considering the period in which was not exposed to new stimuli to acquire the language.

living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! (DAVIDOFF, 2001, p. 246, emphasis added).

Keller quotes words and expressions as “consciousness”, return to “thought”, revelation of the mystery of “language” to refer, therefore, to a second moment of the experience of relating thought and language, in which a “an “elaboration of linguistic units” in which “each linguistic term is a small member, an articulus, in which the idea is fixed in a sound and in which a sound becomes the sign of an idea” (SAUSSURE, 2000, p. 131). At this moment, for the followers of Cognitive Semantics, *the development of sensorimotor or imaging schemes takes place*. These can be defined as synesthetic organizations directly apprehended by the individual in contact with their environment and carrying a memory of movement or experience. Beyond them, there are the *mechanisms of abstraction*, more specifically, metaphor and metonymy. The metaphor gains a new conceptualization and becomes a cognitive process that allows us to map more concrete schemas in the experience of the individuals, in the conceptualization of domains of the experience that are more abstract, preserving the inferences of the source domain in the target domain. Pinker (2008, p. 374-380) discusses metaphor by saying that: “Location in space is one of the two fundamental metaphors in language, employed for thousands of meanings. The other is force, activity, and causation, “and further states that” space and force permeate language, being “[...] so basic to language that they are almost neither metaphors, at least not in the sense of literary resources employed in poetry and prose”.

Already the metonymy is conceptualized like the cognitive process that allows creating relations of hierarchies between concepts (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 36-41). For the followers of Cognitive Semantics, therefore, linguistic meaning is a matter of cognition in general, not arbitrary, and in contrast to formalists, the subjectivity of the experiences of members of a linguistic community is highlighted, since articulate language is seen as “one of the superficial manifestations of our cognitive structuring, which precedes and gives consistency” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 35). Pinker (2008, p. 379) corroborates this idea and states that:

The discovery of portions of vocabulary and syntax of the mental is a confirmation of Leibniz’s ‘remarkable thought’: that a kind of alphabet of human thoughts can be found and that everything can be discovered and judged in comparison with the letters of this alphabet and an analysis of words made with them’ [...] Educated understanding is a huge device of parts within parts. Each part is constructed with mental models or modes of knowing basic that are copied, have their original contents erased, are connected to other models and packaged in larger parts, which can be packed into even larger, unlimited parts (PINKER, 2008, p. 379).

Although cognitivists give greater prominence to the linguistic experiences of each individual, Saussure (2000, p. 132, emphasis added) warns us that:

the arbitrariness of the sign makes us better understand why social fact alone can create a linguistic system. Collectivity is necessary to establish values whose only *raison d'être* lies in the use and general consensus: the individual, by itself, is unable to fix one that is. In addition, [...] it is a great illusion to consider a term simply as the union of a certain sound with a certain concept. To define it would be to isolate it from the system of which it is a part; it would be to believe that it is possible to begin with the terms and to construct the system by making the sum of them, whereas, on the contrary, it is necessary to start from the totality of solidarity in order to obtain, by analysis, the elements which it contains.

Thus, although it is not overlooked that the meaning of signs “is in the living, moving body that is in various relations with the environment and not in the correspondence between words and things” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 43), it is necessary that the individual be part of a linguistic community so that he is able “to establish values” for the linguistic signs, that is, the community is needed so that there is a consensus between what is possible within the of a language, as a social fact. And to register these signs, as a result of the consensus among the members of a linguistic community, so that they can be consulted over time, it is possible to count on the dictionaries. For these, Cognitive Semantics did not bring clear paths on how to register the meaning of signs, since this meaning escapes logic and enunciation and sits in the domains of individuals' cognitive processes.

The first problem that Cognitive Semantics presents to lexicographers appears in relation to the categorization of the signs or to “those properties that define the semantic content of a generic term” and to which “Formal Semantics gives the name of intention. Intention allows us to reach a class of objects in the world. To this class we give the name extension”, thus, for Cognitive Semantics, there are no clear criteria of categorization of the signs and, therefore, the classical approach of the category has been denied (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 39). Besides that, “it was hypothesized that concepts are structured by prototypes. In other words, when we classify, we do not resort to the establishment of necessary and sufficient conditions, but we do so in cases that are exemplary, which are the most revealing of the category” (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 40).

At this point, it is necessary to establish some differences between the semantic analysis and the lexicographic definition. In speaking of semantic analysis, Ahumada Lara (1989, p. 100) states that it is a process made by the scholar of this area, which starts from the conceptual images that evoke the signifier, trying to find its full representation with signifiers provided by the language itself. For the lexicographer, it is important to “inform about the form, function, and content of linguistic signs” (AHUMADA LARA, 1989, p. 100) and this includes informing the categories or classes to which the sign that is registered in the dictionary belongs.

For the translator, on the other hand, consulting a dictionary and being able to find the classification of the signs is also relevant, for example, in re-enunciation operations. Oustinoff (2011, p. 82) talks about the possibility of passing: “of nominal forms for personal forms of the verb [...]”. The comparative syntax is for translation the same as grammar is for

language - in our case, a second-degree grammar, given that a noun can match not only a noun but also the other parts of the discourse”.

In this way, it is expected that the consultant of a dictionary and also a translator can know the categories of words that he searches for in the lexicographic work. Therefore, the contributions of Cognitive Semantics can be applied more widely and as a reference for the elaboration of the definitions, however, it would be necessary to supplement the information in the entries of the articles so that the structure of a dictionary could maintain an internal coherence in of the dictionaries consultant.

AS A WAY OF CONCLUSION

We end this article even without a defined methodology in relation to the way in which the Lexicography can take as a base the Semantics to elaborate the definitions of its entrances in that structure that we mentioned previously: entrance - category - definition (AHUMADA LARA, 1989, p. 18). However, we would like to cite the words of Oliveira (2006, p. 43), which may guide us in a certain way in relation to the possibilities that open up to the three models of semantic analysis we have talked about so far:

That heterogeneity can make things more complicated for those who want to do semantics is right, but it can also help to see that language is indeed a very complex object. So complex that only by allowing different approaches to coexist, only by spying the language through different keyhole holes, can one day come to understand it better (OLIVEIRA, 2006, p. 43).

The lexicographers will continue to elaborate dictionaries, dealing with this complex object mentioned in the previous citation, and we will continue to do so respecting the traditional structure of the entries that we talked about previously, however, we should not ignore the existence of models of semantic analysis that, if used consciously, we believe they can offer alternatives when it comes to developing a definition that more efficiently meets the needs of the consultants. On the other hand, translators, as customary consultants of lexicographical works, should have the necessary sensitivity and knowledge so that the letter does not kill the essence contained in a statement and can use the contributions of Enunciative Semantics and Cognitive Semantics with more freedom than lexicographers.

We believe that an integrated work between Semantics, whether Formal, Enunciative or Cognitive, lexicographers and translators could result in: 1) more comprehensive and complete definitions of dictionary entries; 2) more precise classifications of the categories of the minimum units of meaning or words; and, finally, in opposition to the order established by Ahumada Lara (1989, p. 18); 3) entries of dictionaries elaborated with the purpose of attending to the greater number of needs of the consultants, whose subjective elaborations of thought could be, registered.

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