

Moving language

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Individual Presentation

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"One day I realized that it was difficult not to enter into linguistics from the moment the unconscious had been discovered,"¹ says Lacan in his class dedicated to Jakobson.

The development of linguistic theory was his guide, taken to read - or reread - the laws of the unconscious discovered by Freud under a logic that otherwise would have remained in the dark, taking up Freud's conceptualization of unconscious formations as a formed and articulated thought, read under the key of a logic equivalent to syntax.

However, the way words and expressions are combined and ordered within a discourse changes from one language to another depending on their laws, which each inhabitant of their language knows through eminently practical knowledge that is transmitted within their community, rather than solely from theoretical knowledge

In the words of Derrida: "When one is born into a language, one inherits it because it was there before us, its law precedes us. We begin by recognizing its law, that is to say, a lexicon, a grammar, all that is almost ageless. But inheriting here is not just passively receiving (...) Inheriting is reaffirming by transforming, changing, displacing."²

Linguistics also teaches us that, unlike classical languages, which are not transmitted in the practical speech of a community and do not experience any linguistic change, but are learned in an academic setting, reproducing a pre-existing standardized form, the language that we inherit from our parents and pass on to our children can only be a living language, potentially subject to a process of transformation linked to the march of the era.

¹ Lacan Jacques SEMINAR XX Publisher: PAIDOS Edition: 1998

² <https://redaprenderycambiar.com.ar/derrida/textos/celan.htm> Évelyne Grossman. Interview published in the edition of the monthly Europe dedicated to Paul Celan (year 79, n° 861-862/January-February 2001). Translation by Ricardo Ibarlucía published in Diario de Poesía

That is, we think, dream and get entangled in the language that was inherited, and in that inheritance, the history of each people roots itself in each speaker, determining the expression of the conception of the world, which speaks through it.

Similarly, the way of saying things is linked to the historical time, which is linked to words in each era. We can see this in certain signifiers, which are not words that go, float, and pass, but which begin to receive in a certain culture and context, a certain status, these being the signifiers that run through the sayings of our analysands, through which the impasses of the social filter into our consulting rooms.

Remember that if Freud maintained that "from the very beginning individual psychology is simultaneously social psychology,"³ Lacan, for his part, will say that culture as something distinct from society, does not exist, designating the social bond with the term discourse because - I quote - "there is no other way to designate it from the moment one realizes that the social bond is not established except by anchoring itself in the way language is situated and imprinted, situated in what is boiling, namely, in the being that speaks."⁴

Now, if we are sensitive to what is boiling in our era, we can see that we are facing a time that imposes some challenges on us:

We live in a very different world from the one Lacan and even more so Freud knew. The categories with which we move, think, and speak, as well as the demands of hyperconnection we face, are linked to a time that revolves around a technologically and biopolitically configured planet.

The internet, virtual reality, genetic biotechnology, artificial intelligence, among so many other issues that are updated from one moment to another, precipitate a displacement towards another way of conceiving the distinctions between the organism and the machine, while links with things, people or places are replaced by temporary access to networks and

³ Freud Sigmund, Psychology of the masses and analysis of the self Volume XVIII (1921) Amorrortu publishers

⁴ Lacan Jacques SEMINARIO XX Editorial: PAIDOS Edición:1998

platforms. Under the vertigo produced by these coordinates, we can ask ourselves, what place is left for the organic movement of language, that is, to keep it alive? What place for the significant dimension in the exercise of speech, in an era that precipitates towards universal language, towards transparency, towards the erasure of the differences of each time, each people, and each speaker? The impulse to consumption and speed, the alienation to screens, is there not a relationship with new forms of presentation of subjective structure?

Likewise, in recent years, psychoanalysis has been accused of sectarianism, having problems in asserting its transmission, while it has been questioned from different feminist movements, as well as from the queer and trans community.

Within these coordinates, and in the face of the historical challenge and paradigm shift we are experiencing, we have the commitment to rethink our own categories. Because we not only have the responsibility to promote the dimension of belonging to language in each analysand, questioning the alienation to the demands of the era, but we also have to rethink the way in which analysts enter into conversation with the subjectivity of our time.

In this way, studying the language of our time, not only in its expressive value or formal transformations, but in the ways of valuing and appropriating the way things are said, will give us, in my opinion, a clue to be able to approach what will be the impact on our practice.

“Let it be renounced, then, by whoever cannot rejoin at its horizon the subjectivity of his epoch”⁵. Very well, but how should we interpret this sentence?

I don't think it's about updating our theories based on what we hear from our analysands, or a conciliatory *aggiornamento* in response to the questions facing psychoanalysis today. Because, perhaps, aren't these ways of covering up with false fullness the void around which our practice is based?

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If our goal is to be sensitive to the signifiers of the times, perhaps it is best to read this sentence in the light of a return to our foundation, that of a practice that develops around a fundamental void that implies that there is no universe of discourse.

It is from this return to the fundamental void that I understand we can situate ourselves to keep our theory alive, being able to listen to our analysands, not only to what their words say, but to what is said through their words, in the space, in the distance that separates them, listening between the lines to what, although not said, is still exposed. It may be that in this way we can rise to the level of the transformations of the languages of our time, knowing well the spiral to which our time drags us in the continued work of Babel, and understand our function as interpreters in the discord of languages.⁶

In the words of Enrique Tenenbaum: "It is not only a matter of being able to read the master signifiers of the time, but of being sensitive to them, of being attentive to how they return in the effective discourse of the analysands, and of being aware of their possible impact on the theoretical body of psychoanalysis. It is better to resign who is to be unwilling to shake the dust off the comfort of established knowledge when confronted with the political signifiers of the time".⁷

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Lacan Jaques - Function and field of the word and language in psychoanalysis – Writings I – Siglo XXI Editores
⁷ Tenenbaum, Enrique: Lacan American Meeting of Psychoanalysis Recife 2022 - Is the unconscious political? recalculating...