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AN OVERVIEW OF INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES IN LINGUISTICS

Interdisciplinarity, especially in recent years, has been a widely used approach in linguistic research. It is seen as an efficient way of answering the ever-growing linguistic questions that span out of the core linguistic fields. Those core fields include phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics (HUANG 2015: 208). Firstly, the aim is to explain what disciplinarity is and to compare and contrast interdisciplinarity with multidisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. Additionally, an insight into the importance of interdisciplinarity within linguistics is given. Section 2 is based on an overview of approaches in linguistics that have existed for a very long time. Thirdly, more recent developments in interdisciplinary linguistic research are presented. This section is concerned not only with the interface linguistics establishes with other humanities, but also with natural and technological sciences, such as mathematics, computer sciences, and even medicine. Finally, the paper presents the current state of affairs concerning interdisciplinarity in linguistics. It can be concluded that, although interdisciplinary approaches may have been properly defined only recently, the tradition of combining knowledge and methods from distinctive disciplines has, for a long time, been present in the examination of the most burning linguistic questions.

Keywords: interdisciplinarity, approach, field, linguistics

1. Introduction

Interdisciplinary research offers a format for connection and conversation leading to new knowledge. As such, it provides a sustainable environment, new discoveries and technologies, healthier and more prosperous lives, as well as a better understanding of our place in space and time (INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE 2005: 1). By turning to interdisciplinarity, an array of objectives can be accomplished, such as answering complex questions, addressing broad issues, exploring disciplinary relations, solving problems that go beyond the borders of a single discipline, and achieving knowledge unity (KLEIN 1990: 11). Linguistics has not been immune to collaboration with other disciplines. As Childs (2021: 9) points out, there is a long history of linguistics integrating different theoretical and methodological frameworks to address the question of the role language has in the world. Throughout the integration process, linguistics moved on from strict disciplinary explorations towards interdisciplinarity, thus widening its scope, boundaries, and,

subsequently, its audience (CHILDS 2021: 9). Considering the types of collaborations linguistics is involved in, as it can be seen in this paper, linguistics does not only interface with other humanities and social sciences, but it even interacts with natural and technical sciences, which allows for the development of approaches, such as clinical, mathematical or computational linguistics.

This paper addresses the importance of the interdisciplinary approach to linguistic research. After defining the term interdisciplinarity and comparing it to disciplinarity, multidisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity, an insight into how interdisciplinarity functions within the realm of linguistics is provided. The main aim of this paper is to give an overview of the interdisciplinary approaches in linguistics often mentioned in the literature on this topic. The listed approaches by no means present an exhaustive list of all the collaborations linguistics is a part of, but the paper may serve as a starting point for more detailed research of a wider scope on the topic of linguistic interdisciplinarity. The paper presents the approaches that developed long before the 20th century, those that came into being after the beginning of the 20th century, as well as the current state of affairs in linguistic interdisciplinarity.

Within section 2 terms disciplinarity, multidisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity are defined and contrasted with one another. Section 3 deals with the interdisciplinary approaches in linguistics that developed before the 20th century, such as philosophy of language or historical linguistics. Section 4 is concerned with the fields of the linguistic interface that appeared in more recent times, that is, from the 20th century onwards. This section is divided into subsections according to the type of disciplines linguistics interacts with, be it discourse or social studies, cognitive sciences, translation, or even technical fields. Section 5 is devoted to the current developments in linguistic interdisciplinarity.

2. Disciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, multidisciplinarity, and transdisciplinarity

Scientific disciplines, as the root of disciplinarity, are intellectual structures that shape modern society's image of the world and help it frame its experiences, through which the society learns. Additionally, disciplines allow for knowledge transfer through generations, thus shaping the entire educational system (WEINGART and STEHR 2000: xi). The term *discipline*, as defined by Kockelmans (1979: 17), refers to "the educational process associated with one of the branches of scientific knowledge." Sugimoto and Weingart (2015: 775) simply define disciplines as "the stuff of knowledge, people, and the things with which they interact." Once these individual branches of knowledge start cooperating, interdisciplinary research comes into play. *Online Cambridge dictionary* defines interdisciplinarity in the broadest sense as "the fact of involving two or more different subjects or areas of knowledge."[3] More precisely, interdisciplinarity deals with problems and issues independent disciplines cannot find the solutions to, therefore, the need for dialogues and interaction between two or more disciplines arises (NEUMANN 2009: 491). An exhaustive definition of interdisciplinarity is suggested by the Institute of Medicine (2005: 2), according to which interdisciplinarity is:

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3 Information retrieved from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/interdisciplinarity. Accessed on November 28, 2023.

"a mode of research by teams or individuals that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialised knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve problems whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice."

According to Klein (1990: 11), during the twentieth century, a subtle restructuring of knowledge took place. It was based on new divisions of intellectual labour, team teaching, collaborative research, comparative studies and even increased borrowing across disciplines. All of these intellectual doings have been, sooner or later, dubbed 'interdisciplinary.' Thus, Klein (1990: 11) suggests that "This label appears across a remarkably broad plane, giving the underlying concept of interdisciplinarity a universality and complexity that seem to defy definition." Nonetheless, instead of trying to come up with a precise definition, "more elucidating insights are to be gained from taking a more distanced view from above" (WEINGART and STEHR 2000: xiv).

Before continuing the story of interdisciplinarity, it should first be differentiated from the notions of multidisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. Childs (2021: 8–9) claims that within multidisciplinary research, research questions are designed so that each of the researchers contributes to a designated part of the question without their disciplinary boundaries being pushed or crossed. In that sense, multidisciplinary research is characterised by investigators from each discipline making separate contributions. For example, within archaeological research, the help of a geologist is needed, who, in this case, would have a primarily supportive role, without stepping outside of the borders of their discipline (INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE 2005: 27). Interdisciplinarity, unlike multidisciplinarity, combines knowledge and methods from different disciplines, without necessarily staying within strict disciplinary borders (KLEIN 1990: ch. 3; CHILDS 2021: 9). On the other hand, transdisciplinary research is also based on a collaborative framework and functions very similarly to interdisciplinarity, but it goes beyond the boundaries of the academic sphere. The predominant characteristic that makes transdisciplinarity different from all the other approaches is that it insists on collaboration with communities (CHILDS 2021: 9). Since the problems of society are getting more complex and interdependent, transdisciplinarity found its way into the fields of human interaction with natural systems, such as agriculture or industry, and in the fields of major technical developments, most notably genetics, nuclear- and biotechnologies, or even the fields where social, economic and technical developments interface with elements of value and culture (KLEIN 2004: 517).

Linguistics, as a vital part of the humanities, has not been immune to interface with other approaches. Thus, Childs (2021: 7) describes linguistics as a discipline that, through the connection with the humanities, education, social, biological, and mathematical sciences, has always "embraced, utilised, and integrated multiple fields of studies." Childs (2021: 7) further suggests that multidisciplinary approaches started slowly moving towards interdisciplinarity, and, thus, new partnerships were created, with the broadening of research applications and methodological approaches. In this way, boundaries of individual disciplines are slowly disappearing as language researchers work with scholars from different disciplines to give the best answers possible to burning questions about language (CHILDS 2021: 7).

Norman and Mukhin (2021: 33) point out that linguistic interdisciplinarity started actively developing in the 20th century. The most common interactions were usually with other humanities, such as sociology, psychology, philosophy, etc. As for modern interdisciplinary trends in linguistics, the previously mentioned interfaces are still relevant. However, other areas, such as computational or corpus linguistics have emerged due to the newly found relations with informatics and technology. Norman and Mukhin (2021: 34) also claim that nowadays "interdisciplinary linguistics can explore synthetic material (both textual and multimedia), correlate linguistic and art graphics, and study interaction between various semiotic systems and transformation of information while transferring from one system to another."

3. Linguistic approaches before the 20th century

This section deals with fundamental interdisciplinary fields. The term *fundamental* is, in this paper, used to refer to those interdisciplinary approaches in linguistics that emerged long before the beginning of the 20th century. In that sense, the interdisciplinary approaches mentioned in this section are in no way more important than any other fields based on interdisciplinarity. These approaches, here dubbed fundamental, have only been present in the extensive history of language research for a longer time than some other approaches.

In addition to its task to describe language, linguistics can be divided into two more branches, that is, historical and comparative linguistics (ANTTILA 1989: 20). These two branches had appeared within linguistic research long before it was established as an independent discipline. *Historical linguistics*, as defined by Campbell (1998: 1) is "the study of the language change." Besides studying language change to gain a better understanding of language, historical linguistics is used for the solutions to historical problems of society. These problems call for the interface of linguistics and other disciplines.

The historical study of language change influenced the development of *comparative linguistics*. This approach is based on a comparison of languages, especially related languages, those that have a common ancestor, an original language (CAMPBELL 1998: 4). Comparative linguistics is often dubbed *comparative philology* since older Indo-European languages were compared through philological screenings. These philological screenings also account for the cultural settings and do not only study language for its own sake (ANTTILA 1989: 21–22). As for the interdisciplinary nature of comparative linguistics, it can assume and combine different approaches to arrive at similarities between related languages (ANTTILA 1989: 22).

One of the approaches to the study of language that lies within the realms of philological enquiry is *theolinguistics*. Crystal (2008: 484) defines it as "a study of the relationship between language and religious thought and practice," which can be seen throughout rituals, sacred text and other religious practices. Theolinguistic research is considered philological since much of the religious language studies come from old texts and practices (CRYSTAL 2008: 484). This approach can be divided into general and private theolinguistics. General theolinguistics is concerned with manifestations in any language and any religion. Private theolinguistics, on the other hand, is limited to a particular language within a particular religion (KOT 2023: 21).

Another approach interested in studying texts, not only religious texts but texts in general, is the domain of *stylistics*. This field of linguistic study, also dubbed *literary linguistics* is interested in the study and analysis of texts, mostly literary ones (BURKE 2014: 1). Additionally, Burke (2014: 3) claims that the usage of stylistics allows for literary criticism that is not only rooted in opinions. Even though modern stylistics emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century, it can be certainly seen as one of the fundamental interdisciplinary approaches in linguistics, as it stems from the poetics and the rhetoric of the ancient world (BURKE 2014: 2). When it comes to contemporary stylistics, it is no longer only rooted in poetics, rhetoric, formalism, structuralism and functionalism. It now also encompasses various other approaches, such as cognitive, pragmatic, corpus, multimodal, neuroscientific approaches, etc. (BURKE 2014: 2).

The *philosophy of language* is also important for early linguistic interdisciplinarity. The first attempt to utilise philosophy and especially logical principles in language studies stems from ancient Greece. Nonetheless, the philosophy of language as a single branch was developed only after World War II. Up until that period, the philosophers of language were interested in linguistic analysis. From then on, the interest has shifted to the systemic study of natural language as it is (LAMARQUE 1997: 1). Nowadays, the work of language philosophers is rooted in the notions of linguistic understanding, meaning and knowledge (MILLER 2007: xi). These notions can be studied in two ways. The first is an informal theory of meaning, which analyses the ordinary pre-historic notion of meaning. The other is a formal theory of meaning, which has the aim of finding a theorem that, in a certain way, states the meaning of each sentence of a particular language (MILLER 2007: xi–xii).

Another important approach to language study is lexicographic research. *Lexicography* as a "4,000-year-old discipline" (TARP 2018: 30) has a very long history starting with the creation of the first dictionaries. Lexicography is a discipline or a professional activity concerned with dictionaries and other reference works consulted for retrieving information. Nowadays, it has two recognisable divisions: 'practical lexicography' and 'lexicography theory' (TARP 2018: 19, JACKSON 2022: 1). Practical lexicology refers to the compilation of dictionaries, while lexicography theory, also known as 'metalexicography', is the study or research of dictionaries (JACKSON 2022: 1). Tarp (2018: 21) suggests that lexicography is not a mere sub-discipline of linguistics. Firstly, the author suggests that there are thousands of dictionaries where linguistic knowledge is not required. Secondly, the disciplines lexicography interacts with are not relevant to all dictionaries. Thirdly, lexicography is rooted in extensive interdisciplinary collaboration.

4. More recent developments

Due to the ever-growing interest in language research, linguistics, in recent times, has enhanced collaboration with other disciplines to answer the questions that reach out of its scope. Linguistic interaction with other disciplines is not limited to humanities, but it also includes disciplines ranging from sociology, psychology, and medicine, to even mathematics. Therefore, this section of the paper is concerned with interdisciplinary approaches within linguistics that developed considerably and were properly defined in the 20th and 21st centuries. Nonetheless, it should be kept in mind that language research has been around for a very long time. It must be pointed out that the classification of ap-

proaches in this paper is not necessarily in line with the way other authors classify inter-disciplinary approaches within linguistics. Therefore, some of the approaches given here might be categorised differently in other authors' works.

4.1. Pragmatics, communication studies and discourse analysis

Although pragmatics may not be referred to as an interdisciplinary approach per se, it can be regarded as a type of interdisciplinary study that gave rise to language research from different aspects. Namely, both philosophers and linguists were involved in the development of this approach that studies language as a human action rather than a closed system (NERLICH 2009: 328). Verschueren (1999: 6–7) also points to the inter-disciplinary nature of pragmatics referring to it as the link between language and human life in general. *Pragmatics* is defined as the study of language use in context (BROWN and MILLER 2008: 352). Even though it has its roots in classical stylistics and rhetoric, pragmatics was officially defined as a linguistic field in the 1930s thanks to C. Morris, R. Carnap and C. S. Peirce. It became a part of modern linguistics in the 1960s with the influence of J. L Austin, J. R. Searle and H. P. Grice (BUBLITZ and NORRICK 2011: 1–2). As suggested by Mey (2009), pragmatics covers some of the following topics, including understanding and misunderstanding, situations, contexts, speech acts, indexing, inferring, cooperating, implying, pragmatic acts, etc. The early works in pragmatics were related to the notion of signs, and subsequently semiotics.

Even though linguistics is only a part of the semiotic enquiry, semiotics can indeed be seen as an interdisciplinary linguistic approach. In the widest sense, it is "the study of signs" (CHANDLER 2007: 1). More precisely, it is not only the study of what is referred to by a sign but rather of anything that represents something else. In this sense, signs can assume forms of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects (CHANDLER 2007: 2) As suggested by C. S. Peirce, there are three types of signs. Those are icons, where the signifier resembles the signified, indices/indexes, where the signifier and signified are related, and symbols, where the relation between the signifier and signified is arbitrary (CHANDLER 2007: 36–37).

As linguistic research is rooted in communication, it is important to reflect on communication studies. Their interest lies in communication as a "social interaction through messages" (FISKE 1990: 2). The evidence for their interdisciplinary nature is found in Fiske's (1990: 1–2) assumptions about communication, which include the following: 1) it is based on multiple disciplinary approaches to be studied exhaustively; 2) communication involves signs and codes; 3) transmission and receiving of signs and codes is the social relationship practice; 4) communication is the core of our culture. Furthermore, Fiske (1990: 2) claims that there are two main schools in the study of communication. The first one is concerned with the transmission of messages. The second school sees communication as the production and exchange of meaning.

Closely related to communication studies is *discourse analysis*, defined by Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 1) as an analysis of patterns followed by people's utterances when being a part of different domains of social life. According to Brown and Yule (1983: ix), in linguistic terms, discourse analysis is concerned with how addressers produce linguistic messages and how addressees work on those messages to interpret them. Both Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 1) and Brown and Yule (1983: viii) suggest that this

is indeed an interdisciplinary field. Additionally, Jørgensen and Phillips (2002: 1) present three approaches to discourse analysis. Those are Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, critical discourse analysis and discursive psychology.[4] It should be noted that each of these approaches is not a mere method, but "a theoretical and methodological whole" (JØRGENSEN and PHILLIPS 2002: 3–4).

Besides the traditional approach to discourse analysis, nowadays, one can talk about *digital discourse analysis*. This contemporary area of study is interested in digital genres, which include websites, blog posts, videos, social media, podcasts, memes, etc. Belcher (2023: 33) states that it is important to understand these genres as they can be important for theorising and analysing genres, engaging in genre-informed teaching and production and interacting with genre-mediated information.

Multimodality in language can also be seen as an interdisciplinary approach, as its very name points to such a nature. More precisely, multimodality is based on the use of two or more senses for information exchange (GRANSTRÖM, HOUSE et al. 2002: 1). The two most important terms for this field of study are medium, as the information representation in the physical sense, and modalities, as different modes or ways for the exchange of information. The use of different channels for information exchange not only provides better communicative outcomes but also aids people with sensory impairments (GRANSTRÖM, HOUSE et al. 2002: 1). Some of the areas of interest for multimodality are suggested by Granström, House et al. (2002: 2), and are concerned with human-to-human communication along with bodily communication, speech and gesture, as well as audio-visual speech perception. Finally, recent technological developments led to more extensive multimedia and multimodal information system applications (GRANSTRÖM, HOUSE et al 2002: 1).

Thus, one can also talk about *media linguistics*, interested in the media's influence on language. It presents an interface among linguistics, media studies and cultural studies (SKOWRONEK 2014: 16). Therefore, media linguistics utilises multiple methodologies and a variety of approaches, but they must always be functional and relevant. The main aim of this linguistic area is concerned with the structure and use of language in a media context. Namely, it is interested in describing and analysing language and media subsystems regarding their text creation mechanism, pragmatic aims, contextual environment and how the two areas influence each other (SKOWRONEK 2014: 16). Further on, one should see media discourse as a communication event, followed by cultural, social and political circumstances. It can, additionally, be a tool for social and cultural practices and exercising one's power. In this way, media discourse involves both knowledge and ideology in line with the medium and the senders (SKOWRONEK 2014: 21).

4.2. Applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics

The next linguistic interdisciplinary approach is *applied linguistics*. Many have tried to define this field of study. For example, Schmitt and Celce-Murcia (2020: 1) suggest that "'Applied linguistics' is using what we know about (a) language, (b) how it is learned and (c) how it is used, in order to achieve some purpose or solve some problem in the real world." The defining characteristic of applied linguistics is that it is no longer concerned only with linguistics, as a separate discipline. It also has to include other disci-

4 For more on each of the approaches, refer to Chapters 2, 3 and 4 in Jørgensen and Phillips (2002).

plines to be able to give answers to the questions in the real world (WIDDOWSON 2019: 34). Thus, this approach can be defined as interdisciplinary. The predominant interest of applied linguistics has always been second or foreign language teaching and learning, with a focus on second language acquisition theory (SLA), pedagogy and the interface of the two (SCHMITT and CELCE-MURCIA 2020: 2). Besides L2 learning and teaching, applied linguistics is a much more comprehensive field, interested in many different areas. Some of those are mentioned by Schmitt and Celce-Murcia (2020) and include literacy, speech pathology, interpreting and translating, lexicography, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics etc.[5] It must be noted that some of the areas often considered as a part of applied linguistics, are, in this paper, treated as separate fields, for example, sociolinguistics or psycholinguistics. Similarly, Crystal (2008: 31) points out that there might appear an unclear boundary between applied linguistics and various interdisciplinary approaches to linguistics.

The ever-growing interest in how language functions in a society led to the development of *sociolinguistics*. Coupland and Jaworski (1997: 1) define it as "the study of language in its social contexts and the study of social life through linguistics." They (COUPLAND and JAWORSKI 1997: 1) continue by describing sociolinguistics as an interdisciplinary field that combines the methods and priorities of different disciplines, with modern sociolinguistics blurring boundaries between those disciplines even further. Therefore, as with the majority of interdisciplinary fields, the overlap in research is persistent. Sociolinguistics, besides being based on the interface of linguistics, sociology and social theory, also delves into social psychology, human communication studies, and even discourse analysis and pragmatics. Thanks to these constant interactions, sociolinguistics has probably become the most active and diverse field of modern-day language research (COUPLAND and JAWORSKI 1997: 1). Dialectology is one of the predominant areas of study in sociolinguistics. Childs (2021: 10) suggests that it is this area, among others, that has led to the development of an interdisciplinary approach in linguistics. Namely, dialectology uses methodologies from multiple disciplines to answer social and perceptual questions about dialects.

Anthropological linguistics, also known as linguistic anthropology and anthropolinguistics, is a field of study closely related to sociolinguistics. As defined by Duranti (1997: 2), it is interested in the "study of language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice." More precisely, anthropological linguistics studies language as a set of cultural practices, which allows for interpsychological (among individuals) and intrapsychological (within an individual) representations of the social order, used for constitutive social acts (DURANTI 1997: 3). Enfield, Kockelman et al. (2014: 1–2) point out the challenges of linguistic anthropology. Those include defining language, showing how it is related to the human mind, to society and social life, and, finally, to knowledge, values, technologies and practices that make up culture. The major theoretical concerns of linguistics anthropology are performance, indexicality and participation (DURANTI 1997: 14).[6]

5 For a more exhaustive list of areas in applied linguistics, refer to Chapelle's (2013) *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*.
6 For an extensive description of each of the theoretical concerns of anthropolinguistics, refer to Duranti (1997: 14–21).

It must be noted that anthropological linguistics and to a certain degree sociolinguistics overlap with the term *ethnolinguistics*. Crystal (2008: 174) defines it as the study of language as related to ethnic types and behaviours. According to Duranti (1997: 2), European scholars prefer the term *ethnolinguistics* to *anthropological linguistics*.

According to Filipović (2022: 117), interdisciplinarity that occurs between language and the law is of great importance since it reflects how law, law enforcement, language professionals and the general public can contribute to legal and judicial processes, as studied within the fields of forensic and legal linguistics. *Legal linguistics* is concerned with "the use of language in the area of law" (GALDIA 2017: 23). Nonetheless, this can be interpreted in different ways, especially due to the interdisciplinary nature of the approach. Thus, an extensive number of matters and theoretical problems are discussed, with the field constantly expanding (GALDIA 2017: 24). Legal linguistics deals with two main questions. Those are: how law is created and how it is applied with linguistic means (GALDIA 2017: 24). The question of whether legal linguistics is a new discipline arises. On one hand, it can be considered old, as legal-linguistic questions have been around for ages. On the other hand, it can be seen as new since it has only recently emerged as an independent branch of linguistics and legal science (GALDIA 2017: 72). Some of the main interests of legal linguistics are rooted in pragmatics and semantics (GALDIA 2017: 44–60).

Forensic linguistics is concerned with the study of language applied to forensic purposes and contexts (MCMENAMIN 2002: 67), that is, investigating crimes where language data serves as evidence (CRYSTAL 2008: 194). The primary importance of forensic linguistics is its connection with scientific theories and methods created within the realms of general and applied linguistics (MCMENAMIN 2002: 67). Forensic linguistics, even though it has only recently been better structured and defined, is by no means a new field (MCMENAMIN 2002: xi). This field of study is interested in some of the following questions: phonetics, semantics, pragmatics, stylistics, discourse analysis and trademarks. It should be pointed out that McMenamin (2002) throughout his book sees forensic linguistics as a discipline within applied linguistics.

4.3. Psycholinguistics, cognitive linguistics and neurolinguistics

Psycholinguistics is a scientific field that focuses on "the use of language and speech as a window to the nature and structure of the human mind" (SCOVEL 1998: 4). Aitchison (2008: 1), on the other hand, suggests that psycholinguistics is "the study of language and the mind." The interface between linguistics and psychology is very convenient because both of the disciplines are considered social sciences, or rather situated somewhere between social sciences and humanities, and, thus, share similar approaches. In this case, the two disciplines, just like all the other social sciences, base their work on forming and testing hypotheses (AITCHISON 2008: 1). Scovel (1998: 5) suggests four sub-fields psycholinguistics is interested in. Those are (1) how language and speech are acquired, (2) how they are produced, (3) comprehended, and finally, (4) lost. These sub-fields are considered from different research aspects, which can be seen in the matrix represented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Sub-fields of psycholinguistics (SCOVEL 1998: 5)*

	Diachronic	Synchronic
Synthesis	acquisition	production
Analysis	dissolution	comprehension

As seen within the matrix, acquisition and dissolution are viewed through time, that is diachronically, and represent the beginning and end of the human speech story respectively. Despite being viewed from different aspects, the two processes are not so different, as the former refers to the formation of language, whereas the latter is an unintentional falling apart of language. The other two processes, production and comprehension, are considered synchronic, as they are concerned with a particular point in time. There are certain similarities here as well, since the first process involves the synthesis of language structures, while the second is their analysis (SCOVEL 1998: 5–6).

Cognitive linguistics is another linguistic interdisciplinary field, and it is closely related to psycholinguistics. This approach is focused "on language as an instrument for organising, processing, and conveying information" (GEERAERTS and CUYCKENS 2007: 3). More precisely, it is the study of language based on the cognitive function, with *cognitive* being the role of intermediate informational structures in the human interaction with the world (GEERAERTS and CUYCKENS 2007: 5). According to Evans and Green (2006: 5), cognitive linguistics is different from all the other current language sciences in that it gives an insight into the basic properties and design of the human mind. It should also be pointed out that cognitive linguistics is not a single specific theory, but rather a 'movement' or 'enterprise', which lies on a common set of guiding principles, assumptions and perspectives. Therefore, the overlap of multiple theories takes place, which might be seen as a starting point for the interdisciplinary nature of this approach to the study of language (EVANS and GREEN 2006: 3). Language within cognitive linguistics is seen as rooted in the cognitive capacities of humans (GEERAERTS and CUYCKENS 2007: 4). Some of the cognitive linguistics' areas of interest are: the structural characteristics of natural language categorisation (polysemy, mental imagery, metaphor etc.); the functional principles of linguistic organization (iconicity and naturalness); the conceptual relation between syntax and semantics; the experiential and pragmatic base of language-in-use; and the language-thought relationship (GEERAERTS and CUYCKENS 2007: 4).

Neurolinguistics, as an interdisciplinary field in close relation to cognitive linguistics, is an approach interested in the relation of language and communication to various brain functions to get a grasp of how the brain is involved in the language acquisition, understanding and production (AHLSÉN 2006: 3). Neurolinguistics most commonly studies language and communication after brain damage. It also includes different language research based on experiments, model construction, computer simulations, and neuroimaging studies (AHLSÉN 2006: 3). The interdisciplinary nature of neurolinguistics lies in the humanities, medical, natural and social sciences, as well as technology being intertwined (AHLSÉN 2006: 4–5). Some of the central questions of neurolinguistics are: what happens to language and communication following brain damage; how language ability has been developing with the species evolving; how children learn to communicate; how to make computer simulations of language functions; how to develop experiments that test language processing, etc. (AHLSÉN 2006: 5).

Another field of study based on the interaction of linguistics and medical sciences is *clinical linguistics*. In the broadest sense, clinical linguistics studies how the capacity of language, as a unique human capacity, can be disordered. This includes not only language disorders, but also the disorders of vegetative functions (e.g. eating, breathing and swallowing) which allowed for the development of language ability (CUMMINGS 2008: 1). It is important to point out that this approach is not only limited to the academic setting, but it also includes clinical practice. Such is the case because the individuals affected by the disorders limiting their communicative capacities can easily become distressed and frustrated, and, thus, help from the clinical setting is needed (CUMMINGS 2008: 2). What is essential for clinical linguistics is the recognition that language greatly depends on the early evolutional human developments, especially those that have to do with neuromuscular mechanisms that allow feeding, swallowing and breathing (CUMMINGS 2008: 2).

4.4. Translation studies

Besides being focused on a single language, linguistics is oftentimes interested in multiple languages simultaneously. One such linguistic field is found in *translation studies*, which is defined as an academic discipline that lies in the study of the theory and phenomenon of translation (MUNDAY 2001: 1). Although translation as a practice has been around for centuries, translation studies as an independent approach developed only in the mid-twentieth century (MUNDAY 2001: 5). Pointing to the interdisciplinary nature of translation, Munday (2001: 183) states that it collaborates with disciplines such as linguistics (especially semantics and pragmatics), applied and contrastive linguistics, modern languages and language studies, comparative literature, cultural studies and philosophy. Additionally, it should be noted that the relationships translation studies establish with other disciplines are by no means fixed. Those collaborations actually shifted from a significant relationship with contrastive linguistics to the essential importance of cultural studies in the present time (MUNDAY: 2001: 183).

4.5. Mathematical linguistics, computational linguistics and corpus linguistics

Brown and Miller (2013: 279) define *mathematical linguistics* as "the study of the formal properties of grammatical theories, formalised in logical or mathematical terms." Linguistics not often using statistics in its research is what made it a part of the humanities since it was mainly interested in similar languages. However, linguistics encountered difficulties when the interest in languages of completely different structures arose, and, thus, mathematical postulates and principles came into play (DIAMOND 1993: 19). Despite being present within the main linguistic branches (phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics), mathematical linguistics found its way into the research of other previously mentioned interdisciplinary approaches, such as cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, and even applied linguistics (KORNAI 2008: vii–x). According to Kornai (2008: viii), the earliest attempts at computational linguistics were greatly overlapping with mathematical linguistics.

Computational linguistics, as defined by Brown and Miller (2013: 94), represents "the use of computers in linguistics and the development of software which can perform linguistic tasks." Its main objective is to work on the development of language models uti-

lised in computers and applications for computer tasks involving human language, such as Natural Language Processing (NLP) applications, software for grammar correction, word sense disambiguation, dictionary compilation, automatic translation, etc. (LEDENEVA and SIDOROV 2010: 3). Some of the most popular areas of application of computational linguistics include:

- Information Retrieval (IR), which is based on finding documents that will provide sufficient information in large collections of documents;
- Question Answering (QA) as a complex task combining NLP, IR and machine learning;
- Text summarisation, which allows the reduction of text size with limited content loss;
- Text generation, based on coherent text generation from raw data (LEDENEVA and SIDOROV 2010: 3).

Computational linguistics is closely related to all the levels of traditional linguistics. Those include phonetics/phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and discourse (LEDENEVA and SIDOROV 2010: 4).

Corpus linguistics is at the core of modern-day linguistic research, as many researchers rely on corpora of different kinds when looking at a particular phenomenon. Lüdeling and Kytö (2008: v), in their definition, point out the interdisciplinary aspect of this field of study. Namely, it is the study of the "real life" language use with the aid of computers and electronic corpora. Lüdeling and Kytö (2008: v) also ponder on the term *corpus*, which used to stand only for a collection of written or spoken texts, but nowadays has a wide variety of connotations. Some of them include machine-readable forms, sampling and representativeness, finite size and a corpus that contains a standard reference for the variety of language it represents (LÜDELING and KYTÖ 2008: v).[7] The introduction of computers in language research brought about three ways in which corpus linguistics is related to computational linguistics. In both areas, the techniques are used for structuring, annotating and searching large amounts of texts; the techniques are used for both qualitative and quantitative research; and, finally, in computational linguistics, corpus data is used for the development of NLP applications (LÜDELING and KYTÖ 2008: x).

4.6. Sign language linguistics

Finally, the importance of the *sign language linguistics* should be noted. Before the development of this linguistic approach, sign language was seen as a primitive universal way of communication achieved through gestures. However, with the contemporary development of sign language linguistics, there is interest in the similarities and differences not only between different sign languages but also between sign languages and spoken languages (PFAU, STEINBACH et al. 2012: 1). These authors (PFAU, STEINBACH et al. 2012), in their handbook on sign language, study this form of communication through the fundamental linguistic areas, starting with phonetics and phonology all the way to semantics and pragmatics. Additionally, there is a collaboration with other interdisciplinary approaches to linguistics, such as psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics or multimodality, as

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7 Lüdeling and Kytö (2008) also state that corpus linguistics is essential for research in other interdisciplinary branches of linguistics, such as sociolinguistics or psycholinguistics.

exemplified throughout the handbook.

5. Some current issues in linguistic interdisciplinarity

Due to scientific and technological developments, the current linguistic research has never been this widespread and is trying to answer newly emerged questions about language. Even though interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinarity have been present in linguistics for a while, this new way of accessing linguistic science calls for more elaborative and intertwined collaborations of multiple interdisciplinary fields.

One of the areas that is often involved in further collaborations nowadays is neurolinguistics. For example, because of the close vicinity of the two areas, a new approach, *cognitive neurolinguistics* emerged, interested in how speech functions in the brain are related to the question of knowledge in the brain (SHUHRATOVNA 2022). Furthermore, *neurolinguistics* is also interested in how *sign language* can be helpful in decoding language capacity in the brain (MALAIA and WILBUR 2010).

Currently, the most prolific application of interdisciplinary approaches, and, thus, *neurolinguistics*, is *in language acquisition, learning and teaching processes*. In that way, Khramchenko (2023) is interested in how neurolinguistic methods can reshape language education and professional communication. Similarly, Rastelli (2018) delves into how different L2 instruction affect the anatomy and the functioning of an adult learner's brain.

Currently, the domain of language learning and teaching also interacts in great measure with *psycholinguistics*. Both Purba (2018) and Dey and Sawalmeh (2021) point out the importance of psycholinguistics for the explanation of intrinsic and extrinsic problems in the four language skills,[8] the errors students make while learning a language, and possible language impairments. This collaboration is helpful as teachers can understand which methods are the most useful for the best learning results.

Another linguistic area that seeks a lot of collaboration is translation studies. For instance, House (2019) suggests a *cognitive approach to translation studies* through intro- and retrospection, behavioural experiments and neuroimaging. On the other hand, Alfuraih (2019) analyses the importance *of learner translator corpora* for the benefit of translation studies, as well as for computational linguistics. Similarly, Nguyen, Doğruöz et al. (2016) work in the field of *computational sociolinguistics*, more precisely, how computational linguistics researches the most dominant sociolinguistic themes. As regards natural-scientific approaches to linguistics, it is worth mentioning that Ogiela, Ogiela et al. (2009) claim that *mathematical linguistics* can be useful *in cognitive medical imaging* to define the semantic content of visual data.

6. Conclusion

This overview demonstrates how the interface of different disciplines is utilised in the study of language. Firstly, the definition of interdisciplinarity is given, along with the ways of how it is used within the discipline of linguistics. Even though there are certain limitations when it comes to defining interdisciplinarity, it indeed can be differentiated from the notions of disciplinarity, multidisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. Some interdisciplinary approaches to linguistics emerged long before the beginning of

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8 The four skills referred to are reading, listening, writing and speaking.

the twentieth century. Those were closely related to the way language was researched in the past, mostly through literature, and involved approaches such as historical linguistics, philosophy of language, stylistics and lexicography. The beginning of the twentieth century and onwards brought about a substantial increase in interdisciplinarity in language study, because new approaches were defined and became independent scientific fields. This period saw the collaboration of linguistics not only with other humanities but also with many other scientific fields, which gave rise to mathematical, corpus, computational, neurolinguistics, clinical linguistics, etc. The current situation is such that even independent interdisciplinary approaches interact to answer language problems and questions that have never been around before.

This paper by no means offers an exhaustive overview of interdisciplinary approaches in linguistics. However, it shows that, even though the majority of linguistic interfaces have been properly defined in the last century, collaboration between different disciplines has been around for a very long time. To conclude, this paper does not only present a brief introduction to the topic of linguistic interdisciplinarity, but it is also suitable as a starting point for those researchers who, for the first time, come into contact with interdisciplinarity. Finally, this paper might be useful for obtaining some of the sources for further, more in-depth research in this area.

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PREGLED INTERDISCIPLINARNIH PRISTUPA U LINGVISTICI

Rezime

Interdisciplinarnost, posebno poslednjih godina, predstavlja pristup koji se veoma često primenjuje u lingvističkim istraživanjima. To je efikasan način da se odgovori na sve veći broj pitanja koja prevazilaze osnovne lingvističke oblasti, počev od fonetike i fonologije pa sve do semantike. Prvi cilj ovog rada je objasniti šta je interdisciplinarnosti i uporediti je sa pojmovima multidisciplinarnosti i transdisciplinarnosti. Takođe, se stiče uvid u to koliko je interdisciplinarnost važna za lingvistiku. Drugi deo ovog rada pruža pregled lingvističkih pristupa koji već dugo postoje. U okviru trećeg dela, predstavljene su oblasti lingvističkih istraživanja koje su se razvile u skorije vreme. Ove oblasti se ne zasnivaju samo na saradnji sa drugim humanističkim naukama, već i prirodnim i tehničkim naukama poput matematike, informatike, pa čak i medicine. Poslednji deo ovog rada zasniva se na trenutnom stanju saradnje lingvistike sa drugim naukama. Na osnovu ovog pregleda može se zaključiti da, iako su interdisciplinarni pristupi definisani u skorije vreme, tradicija kombinovanja znanja i metoda iz različitih disciplina za ispitivanje gorućih jezičkih pitanja postoji već veoma dugo.

Ključne reči: interdisciplinarnost, pristup, oblast, lingvistika