

PROVERBS IN CONTEXT

SUMMARY

Commencing from the discourse as the whole in which sense and the referential function of symbols is realised, models of formulative expression are analysed in ethnographic, literary (prose), and newspaper discourses. The syntagm of models of formulative expression in its terminological scope includes various types and aspects of formulative expressions, from permanent epithets as the smallest unit, through proverbs, and on to major compositional structures such as stories and fairy tales.

Poetic, newspaper, scientific and conversational discourses create their contextual milieu. In numerous types of newspaper and literary (particularly prose) discourses, one encounters jokes, anecdotes, proverbs and sayings, as well as entire stories. Here, the meaning of the joke or proverb is transferred to the text of which it is a part, while, on the other hand, the meaning of the entire text is also absorbed by the joke or proverb. Analysis has shown the many ways in which they are incorporated into broader discourse units, along with the necessity that the symbol be analysed within the discourse as its meaning is achieved in full only within the contextual milieu.

In addition, analysis has shown that models of formulative expression, as is the case with all other symbols, possess a relatively firm semantic potential. However, this is not complete, as its denotative dimension is revealed only in the discourse unit of which it is a part (the literary text, newspaper text or oral discussion).

The author relies on Benveniste's theory of the sentence-discourse, the main characteristic of which is predication, and on Ricoeur's application of those theories in analysis of metaphors. Ricoeur allows metaphors the character of the utterance and creates the theory of "metaphor-discourse" as against the traditional theory of the "metaphor-name". The metaphor as a discourse is based on predication. The copula of the verb to be is the axis which analogously links language and its referent, which means that metaphors establish the relation of similarity, and not that of identity between language models and the reality which they designate.

(Translated by Nina H. Antoljak)