

The Speech of Reality and the Speech of the Stage: Life, Science and Art

Slobodan Elezović

Croatian National Theatre, Marketing Department, Zagreb, Croatia

ABSTRACT

Word is the most frequent way of communication in the human experience. As a mean of communication it influences the sentence formulation, which ought to be the autochthonous expression of thoughts. The experience teaches us that it is necessary to be a sovereign master of our own thoughts and of sentiments of others. This is one of the fundamental postulates of the communication in the word category. To speak correctly means to think correctly and that, on the other hand, means in the grammatical, lexical and stylistic aspect to be able to create a sentence as a way of getting across the thoughts, ideas and contents of the spirit. The community mentality, the person's characteristics (the temper, the type and the intensity), the education level, the range of the knowledge and the volume of their potentially creative synthesis determine the lexical richness and the amplitude of the use and the application of the language with the aim of establishing a high quality communication with words as a basic mean of that process. Within this context a word has its impressive and expressive dimensions. Its impressive dimension is created by the common reliance on the frequency of the use of some lexical possibilities and their variations. It is an individual characteristic of the spoken and the written output of every person and it also determines the singularities of a person's style, to that extent that it helps to detect the author of a text with a high percentage of accuracy even in the cases where the author is unknown. The expressive value of a word denotes the author's level of thinking depending on the situation in which he uses the words to express his thoughts. In this sense the word is chosen with a different approach for the communication on a friendly or intimate level from an approach used in a communication on the official level or in a relation between the individual and the public. All this affirms the word as a mean that is individually chosen and used for the expression of the speaker's ideas, attitudes and points of view in the communication process, which reveals the characteristics and the speaker's level in all the named aspects of the word value assessment. In the case of »evaluation« of the word through the experience of the on-stage speech, that is, the words in the experience of the theatre art, the approach to the value assessment is contrary to the assessment carried out in an everyday, real experience. In the artistic language the words are already given, the sentences are formulated and all this is determined by the author's will and the act of creation. The actor is the interpreter of the author, his ideas along with the characters of the protagonists and the spirit of the action and, therefore, he must gradually master the word to the extent where it seems spontaneous from the point of view of the impressive and expressive categories. It also has to sound similar to the natural speech and its suggestive influence. With this counter-natural direction of the treatment of the given word it is important to reach the level of spontaneity of the expression to an almost documentary form in the overall verbal-scenic-mimic articulation. In this process the life and the art mesh and the art illustrates and defends the life.

Key words: linguistic anthropology, speech, art, stage

Anthropology as a science about man approaches the subject of its research focus with the largest possible scope and the longest possible radius, creating a platform for a scientific-creative synthesis of cognitions ranging from the results of natural science investigation to social and liberal disciplines; in the summa of their discoveries they dynamically promote and elevate the

potential of anthropology's influence on the present-day scientific thought, on the creation of theoretical-pragmatic »grids« by means of which the modern man (through a qualitatively innovated perceptive-cognitive process) discovers himself in order to be able – through subtle, sharpened optics – to observe, study and define the »other«.

Present-day anthropological study of the *other* enriches the existing treasury of social and liberal arts, which are traditionally directed towards the *self*-study. The *other* is defined as anyone who is considered to be different from *oneself* and who contributes to defining one's own identity.

The dynamics of contemporary development, the technical-technological standard of modernity, which is at the basis of the quality and scope of present-day communication, brings about fast changes. That *other* gets changed, therefore the present-day anthropologist is encouraged by the need to study the history of anthropology, the hypotheses of the anthropologists past and present, the reactions of the anthropologists past and present, discovering ever more systematically whether anthropology (more particularly social and cultural) speaks more about *self* than about the *other*. To observe phenomena through empirical evaluation, with the support of methodological values of induction and deduction, means also to affirm the contributions of ethnographic discoveries and cognitions, often for the benefit of the evolution of the national society which has been persistently developing in the course of the last three centuries on behalf of shaping the national traditions of anthropology in the present.

Present-day determinants of standard owed to the level of technological possibilities and the volume of communication forms and types, supports the experience of diffusion as a process of transfer of objects and phenomena from culture to culture, from one place to place, from people to people, from country to country. Linguistic anthropology^{1,2} emphasizes the creative permeation of the linguistic concept in the experience of anthropologists which use linguistic models in approaching the cognition of cultural and social behavior (by cognitive social anthropologists) and regard the society as communication systems treating the language as a basis for the manner of thinking revealed by speech.

It is not possible to think about speech outside speech. And this is irrespective of whether one thinks of speech as an acoustical phenomenon or as a visual symbol. In an attempt to define speech it is difficult to avoid a double concept of speech. As though the *object* and the *subject* continuously interweave and never let the other have its turn and carry on an organized dialogue.

The classic definition of speech dating from late 19th century according to which *speech is an expression of human thought by means of words* is no longer sufficient nowadays, because the view of the psychologist (»What is thought?«) or the view of the linguist (»What is word?«) are always reflected in it. The study of the phenomenon of speech and all the questions accompanying that phenomenon is interesting for the physicist, the acoustic expert, the phonetician, the logician, the statistician, the politician, the sociologist, the philosopher...

In order to successfully emerge from the »thicket«, it is necessary first of all to exclude from consideration the »written speech«. Out of 4.000 different languages used by the humans nowadays, only 5% can be expressed in

writing. A distinction between the substantive »speech« and »language« ought to be made taking into account the low percentage of languages that can be visually coded.

Excluding from our attention the script as a document which appeared at the time of Sumerian and Egyptian civilizations (which means that it is young compared to speech) we will focus on speech as an acoustic phenomenon. Let us compare speech with other means of communication at our disposal. Even the oldest and the most primitive tribes, from the Amazon rain forests to Australian plains, have well developed languages which are fruit of thousands of years of linguistic evolution. Each of these various languages is featured by its authentic, complex convention in terms of sound, meaning and structure i.e. its phonology, lexis and grammar.

If language is considered as Sapir^{3,4} stated, the idea that there are no reasons to give priority to any particular language in terms of its beauty becomes acceptable. An aesthetic evaluation is indeed applied to the language phenomenon only later. The evolution of mankind shows a tendency towards a reduction of the number of languages and dialects, and not towards an increase. With that in view, searching for a unique pre-language would be a scientific-romantic misconception.

Out of numerous theories about the origin of the language, it is worth quoting a few statements proving that it is impossible to speak about *speech* without implicating the speaker's viewpoint. It is evident that the issue of speech is inseparable from the man as a whole. Herder in his study on speech mentions that the Arabs for example have fifty words to denote the *lion*, or two hundred to denote a snake, eighty for the notion of *honey* and over a thousand for the *sword*. Language abounds with examples of magical lack of discipline, of twists, irregularities and puns. Images were presented as images wherever it was possible. This resulted in great deal of metaphorical expressions and sensual nouns.² Primitive language is rich because it is – poor, because its inventors did not work according to a plan, because they did not bother about economy, as Humbolt noticed.⁵ This quotation introduces us into the domain of philosophy. Darwin's statements about speech would prove us to be in the domain of anthropology, and those by Pavlov, who claimed that the word is a conditioned reflex, would state that we are in the domain of psychology.

The afore-mentioned examples merely illustrate that there are always two speech functions: speech is a means of communication and speech is the expression of the aim we intend to achieve by the act of speaking. Regardless of the ever-existing dualism of speech, of the afore-mentioned distinction, regardless of the latent »state of war« in the area of speech, the cognition that both these facets (i.e. speech as expression and speech as communication) constitute a whole is comforting.

Speech must be acquired, it is not inherited, lies outside the area of the instinctive. This realization should stop all those who employ the language as a basic means

or even »tool« in their professional life. Animal sounds are innate and they stay the same within a species, in all latitudes. Crows caw in the same way in America and in Europe. They understand one another. Humans speak different languages and each community has to learn its own sounds; the relationship between the sound and the meaning is arbitrary. In order to learn that system, the child has to start pretty early. Humans are the only members of the living world that possess imagination.

Human speech uses a much more limited number of sounds than human ear can distinguish and human speech organs can produce. Human speech is economical in its use of phonemes: it is limitless in terms of vibration frequency and it is endowed with immeasurable ability for abstraction. However, without an effort, without experience in using the »tool«, man would not be in the position to develop the language either as imitation of nature or as a sign system representing the activities and objects as abstractions. Man has created articulated, differentiated words not only because he is a creature capable of suffering, rejoicing, being surprised, but first of all because he is a creature capable of *working*. Man – action.

Speech and communication are categories that are so much interconnected that it is appropriate to insert the sign for equality between them. Man = communication. Speech as a means of communication on the stage assumes a particular value. Speech harnessed to theatrical artistic expression becomes *artistic speech*. When speech is connected with the phenomenon of communication, it is, in a way, in a »subordinate« position. It is a means serving something out of its scope, something which is not itself. That kind of speech is a mediator with a specific function. As if it were adapted to what it creates and executes, depending on communication type. Speech as a means of communication is – depending on the type and meaning of the function – »costumed«. Depending on the kind of role i.e. on the type of communication, it is either flamboyant or colorless, mottled or monochromatic, serious, whimsical Never revealing its »true face«, never appearing without »make-up and costume«. As if it were constantly playing, not letting us peek into the particulars of that costume design.

Theatrical speech, artistic speech in no mediator, it does not serve as a means, it is therefore completely »naked« and everyone can easily notice its deficiency and its shortcomings. It does not hide anything. If it tried to do so, it would be frightened by its »naked truth« and it would stop being what it is i.e. what it ought to be. It would desert itself and put on a »costume«.

Speech as a means of communication is expected to be informative, to provide as much information in as few words as possible, to be economical, whereas the artistic speech is expected to be picturesque, metaphorical, ample. One could say that speech as a means of communication is not »costumed« and that artistic speech is »richly costumed«. The work »costume« is a metaphor here, by no means relating to theatre wardrobe.

How does a stage actor feel? At first sight he could appear to be more at ease than other people striving for the right and convincing word, trying hard to arrange words in a desirable whole, to verbally shape the subject matter he is dealing with.

The actor on stage seems to be more comfortable, the main task having been executed by the author of the play that is being performed. The writer has already chosen the words, but in doing so he has deprived the actor of the freedom to choose. The actor is, so to say, »imprisoned« by the author. But he still has to speak. An actor has got to speak and through this process he will win his freedom of speech, freedom of uttering imposed words, words acquired and offered as his own. The emergence of actor's speech takes place in conditions different from all the situations occurring away from the stage. In order to unearth the motives, the situations from which speech arises spontaneously, the actor must »play back« the tape. He must reverse the way speech comes about in everyday situations.

In real life we say something the way we do because we are a *well-defined person*. We already are in a situation we are trying to express by speech. And that is why in real life every man – in whatever situation he might find himself and whatever he might say – speaks naturally; he cannot be unnatural because the situation and the person are always connected. They are connected by the very life which is real. Only an actor can learn theatrical speech, because it differs from the speech away from stage, from speech in real life, by the very manner it is created.

Nevertheless, the ideal of any actor is to speak as naturally as possible. This is apparently paradoxical. We can wonder why it is necessary to learn theatrical speech, if its ideal is to be natural, and every civilized person learnt it in early childhood, long before he/she decided to become an actor/actress. For a person who behaves and speaks unnaturally in real life, for whatever reason, we say that he/she is *acting*. As if that person were making an unnecessary effort.

In whatever light we regarded that issue, we will notice that there are two kinds of speech. The attributes: unnatural, pompous, artificial, relate to theatrical speech and imply that such speech lacks a situation or a character to support it. What emerges here is the issue of a whole psychophysical process accompanying speech. Poor theatrical speech either tends to become extreme or to turn into too natural and too casual; or else to become overemphasized. Due to such attitude theatrical speech remains outside the situation and outside the character, in which case its intention and meaning rapidly evaporate. It loses its value.

In contrast to speech as means of communication in real life, in theatrical speech the actor addresses another person, and both address the public, the »third person«; this is a peculiarity of theatrical situation and speech. The actor supported by his partner on stage is constantly trying to connect to the public which he is addressing although it is invisible. Both the theatrical sit-

uation and the meaning of theatrical speech are featured by this play for a third party.

»Good morning« pronounced on stage and in real life has by no means the same aim, although every actor will try to utter his theatrical »Good morning« as naturally as possible. This theatrical »natural artistic quality« is much more significant than the empirical one. Artistic speech is many-layered, the communication being only the first layer. The primary gesture of an actor is uttering words. *Dramatis persona* does not exist *a priori*, it comes into existence owing to words. To act means

to speak on stage, which implies that attention is paid to elocution, clear articulation, to whatever we expect from every interlocutor in civilized human relations. This is a matter of decency, and not an aesthetic matter, although that is valued too.

On behalf of *oneself* and the *other*, the actor and the character he/she is impersonating, on behalf of speech and speech on stage, the methodology of present-day anthropology is precious both in the experience of theatrical art and in that of schools that train future actors.

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S. Elezović

Croatian National Theatre, Marketing Department, Trg maršala Tita 15, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia
e-mail: selezovic@inantro.hr

GOVOR U STVARNOSTI I GOVOR NA POZORNICI: ŽIVOT, ZNANOST I UMJETNOST

SAŽETAK

Riječ je najfrekventniji izraz komunikacije u čovjekovu iskustvu. Riječ kao komunikacijsko sredstvo utječe na formulaciju rečenice, koja bi trebala biti autohtoni iskaz misli. Iskustvena pouka da je potrebno biti suveren gospodar svojih misli i čuvstava drugih, je jedno od temeljnih postulata komunikacije u kategoriji riječi. Ispravno govoriti znači ispravno misliti, a to pak znači ispravno, u gramatičkom, leksičkom i stilističkom aspektu, tvoriti rečenicu kao prijenosnicu misli, ideja, sadržaja duha. Mentalitet sredine i svojstva pojedinca (temperament, vrsta i intenzitet) stupanj obrazovanja, opsezi znanja i volumen njihove potencijalno kreativne sinteze, određuju leksička obilja i širinu područja uporabe i primjene jezika u svrhu visokokvalitetne komunikacije riječju, kao temeljnim sredstvom toga procesa. U kontekstu rečenog, riječ ima svoju impresivnu i ekspresivnu dimenziju. Impresivna dimenzija riječi nastaje uvriježenim osloncem na učestalost u rabljenju nekih leksičkih mogućnosti i njihovih varijacija, što je individualna značajka govora i pisanja svakog pojedinca, a određuje i značajke stilskog obilježja svakoga pojedinca, u mjeri koja pomaže da se, s visokim postotkom točnosti, detektira autorstvo teksta i u slučajevima u kojima je autorstvo nepoznato. Ekspresivna vrijednost riječi obilježava razinu razmišljanja autora, ovisno i situaciji u kojoj rabi riječi za iskaz misli. U tom smislu, riječ se, različitim pristupom, bira za komunikaciju na razini prijateljskog, intimnog susreta, od prigode u kojoj se rabi na službenoj razini ili pak u odnosu pojedinac – javnost. Sve naznačeno afirmira riječ kao sredstvo koje se individualno bira i koristi za iskaz ideje, odnosa i stava govornika, u procesu komunikacije, koja otkriva značajke i razinu govornika u svim naznačenim aspektima vrednovanja riječi. U slučaju »mjerenja« riječi kroz iskustva scenskog govora tj. Riječi u iskustvu kazališne umjetnosti, pristup vrednovanju je suprotan od vrednovanja koje se provodi u svakodnevnom, realnom iskustvu. U umjetničkom govoru, riječi su zadane, rečenice formirane, to je sve zadano autorovom voljom i stvaralačkim činom; glumac kao tumač autora i njegovih ideja, karaktera protagonista i duha zbivanja, mora postupno savladavati riječ, do stupnja u kojemu ona mora djelovati spontano sa stajališta impresivne i ekspresivne kategorije, slično prirodnom govoru i njegovu sugestivnom utjecaju. Tim protuprirodnim smjerom tretmana zadane riječi, treba dosegnuti stupanj prirodnosti izričaja i iskaza, do gotovo dokumentiranog oblika u cjelokupnoj verbalno-scensko-mimičkoj artikulaciji. U tom procesu se dodiruju život i umjetnost, koja pokazuje i brani život.