

Three epistemic problems in the study on evolution of language.

Tres problemas epistémicos en el estudio de la evolución del lenguaje.

Juan Carlos Zavala Olalde¹

Universidad nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), México

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Abstract

This work is a critique to the studies on the evolution of language by means of the identification of three epistemic problems. The epistemic critics starts with the definition of language and the unit of evolution. The result is to refer us from the question about the origin of language to the question about the origin of the human being which are the other two epistemic problems. The up-per limit in the study on language evolution is how to know what is to be human. In this way, we understand that the studies on the evolution of language are about the process of how we recognize ourselves as humans. The lack of the definition of language to have the unit of evolution, with the confusion about the origin of language and humans points that the evolution of language is still at the level of a taxonomy, far to be a systematic explanation of language or evolution.

Keywords: Language; Evolution; Origin; Human Being; Linguistics.

Resumen

Este trabajo es una crítica a los estudios sobre la evolución del lenguaje mediante la identificación de tres problemas epistémicos. La crítica epistémica parte de la definición del lenguaje y la unidad de evolución. El resultado es remitirnos de la pregunta por el origen del lenguaje a la pregunta por el origen del ser humano que son los otros dos problemas epistémicos. El límite superior en el estudio de la evolución del lenguaje es cómo saber qué es ser humano. De esta manera, entendemos que los estudios sobre la evolución del lenguaje se refieren al proceso de cómo nos reconocemos como humanos. La falta de la definición de lenguaje para tener la unidad de evolución, con la confusión sobre el origen del lenguaje y los humanos apunta que la evolución del lenguaje aún está al nivel de una taxonomía, lejos de ser una explicación sistemática del lenguaje o la evolución.

Palabras clave: Lengua; Evolución; Origen; Ser humano; Lingüística.

1 olaldejuan@gmail.com

1 · Introduction

This work deals with the evolution of language in humans. We analyze the unit of evolution, the origin of language and the origin of human being because the language. In the 20th century, the language has being the source of the development of philosophy in all its aspects. In general, the human beings have been characterized as a *Homo symbolicus* (Cassirer 1945), what are the humans? is understood since the role of discourse, the place of signs in the conscious and unconscious life of people, the scope of truth judgments was valued by language use, the structure of thinking and feeling, interpretation, even the possibility of the truth could be sings or systems of signs. All inside the linguistic turn (Scavino 1999). So, if we get to explain the evolution of the linguistic capacity of the human being, it is possible that we can understand what makes us human and how the humans originated. This is the scope of possibilities, but the focus is reverse because to study evolution of language is at the time, general human evolution. To make this possible we have to know what is the language?

2 · Definition of language

The proposal of this section is to explain that the evolution of language should be the study of evolution of a bio-psycho-social-cultural processes. That means that language needs to be a unit of organic evolution. To be so, the evolution of language is the evolution of the people who make the language. So, we begin with the definition of language:

The word *language* does not allow to make the distinction which is key to understanding the evolutionary process. We are going to use the terms F-language to talk to the human faculty of language (biological, psychological, social and cultural, in fact; an evolved ability for communication) and PS-language to refer to the psychological and sociocultural aspect, and its realization as speech or tongue. P-Language is the mental component. And S-Language is the social aspect for communication inside a cultural scope, which is where the linguistic community is formed. P and S are together to show their coherent unit. Finally the speech and discourse are the manifestation of the F-SP-Language.

Language is a social (and individual according to Saussure) human phenomenon, it is based on a system of signs for communication, and it is an instrument of thought and activity (Lewandowski 1995). Framing on human general view Bloomfield note: "Language is the form of expressive movement adequate to the mentality of man" (Bloomfield 1914 16). Hockett paraphrasing said: "Man does not live by bread alone: his other necessity is communication" (Hockett 1958 585). The first point highlights that F-Language with PS-Language are the human phenomenon, and the human is not limited to one aspect, but to the unity of being biological, psychological, social and cultural. The second point, highlighted by the quote from Hockett, is that communication is the central axis of language. Both points are unified in the sign, which is the basis aspect of human communication. Through language, human beings complete the definition of culture from Harris, which says: "it is the socially learned way of life found in human societies and that encompasses all aspects of social life, including thought and behavior" (Harris 2000 17). Language is part of the cultural whole that are the human beings; it is integrated with the biological, the psychological, the social, which is taken as a means of thinking and acting. To this whole we call it bio-cultural, and the definition does not close the area of application, but open to the human processes. When at the end of the article we talk about the language to build a concept of person/human, we have in mind this whole ability from language to make possible the humanity.

F-Language is the general human capacity that manifests itself in units that we know as S-Language, specifically identified as the tongues and P-Language the psychological capacity to develop and use the language, the speech and discourse. The PS-Language, each tongue (once example of PS-Language) is the social product, a totality in itself and a classification system, it is created and presented by the community and must be considered as the main instrument for understanding the language, the linguistic community (based on Saussure 1945). By the very definition of Saussure, the PS-Language is a system of signs that corresponds to thought. Hockett summarizes the differences between S-Language and animal communication systems by seven aspects: duality (phonological and grammatical system), productivity (creative capacity), arbitrariness (based on semantic conventions), interchangeability (one can be a speaker, listener and exchange po-

sitions), specialization, displacement (one can communicate about what is present or not in time and space) and cultural transmission (Hockett 1958 574). This distinction between F-Language and PS-Language is fundamental, representing the F-Language as the ability and the PS-Language as its mental and social manifestation, it is a system of differences (Saussure 1945). Then, the evolution of language has to include the biopsychological and sociocultural (PS-Language) aspects with the totality of the human semiosis (the ability to produce and reproduce, receive and circulate meanings, Hodge and Kress 1988) for communication (F-Language) with the evolving human-beings.

The so-called faculty of language (F-Language) is a proposal that seeks to explain that there is a specific human faculty for the acquisition and production of the SP-Language. Though is an idea related with Chomsky perspective, its origin can be traced until Plato and we are thinking within the biocultural process explained above. The faculty of language biologically is a property of the mind common to the human species (Chomsky 1989). That means it has evolved in our species. Highly probably it is a faculty for the use of signs, because we share it with others primates. Psychologically “It seems to consist essentially of a computer system that is rich and strongly limited in structure and rigid in its essential operations” (Chomsky 1996: 59). It can help us to perceive, learn, understand, know and interpret the world, a “method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols” (Sapir 1921: 7). Socio-culturally this faculty is the one in charge of giving organization as a system to the SP-Language. Even the S-Language is a structure of mind (Bartres 1984 51ss). In its sense of communication system allows the organization of society (Parsons 1951, Habermas 1987). At the same time the society the condition for language (Benveniste 1971). That explain the essential requirement from society to acquire the language, the pragmatic of language and the basic for the evolutionary process. Because the society is evolutionary previous to the language as we can prove when we search the ancestral hominids. It is having all these aspects that we can speak of human being, and of the language based on signs into society as its articulator. Here we identify the unity between F-Language with PS-Language.

The use of signs is the joint between all the human phenomena, the signs bring coherence between the human live and the language. The biological faculty for the use of signs (F-Language), that we share with other primates, has evolved in the hominid evolutionary history to do possible that, in the mind the use of signs (P-Language) joint the neuronal electrical and chemist process with the cultural language of society (S-Language). This is prove by the grandmother neurons that can make possible to develop concepts (P-Language) because sociocultural stimulus (S-Language) (Quian *et al.* 2008). The result is an F-Language with components psychological (P-Language) and social (S-Language) adaptively united.

The faculty of language generates the SP-Language in a way that Chomsky and Saussure agree in defining SP-Language, but in Chomsky it is only individual in the mind-brain, while in Saussure it is both individual and social. The proposal has been widely criticized because there is no evidence of an organ of language. However the F-language is not limited to faculty in the mind, it is a system of communication that matures in the person, based on a social system, and that is made based on the use of signs. This is why there is not a language organon, but behave as a faculty that shows the unity of human beings. As the same sense is why without the society there is not a normal development of language and is necessary for the pragmatic sense. In this sense we said that language depends on the culture to build its meaning. The language is the human specie-specific capacity for communication. The non-human primates do not share the specific capacity, their lack of speech is enough to prove it. Because language goes since F-Language, has its core at SP-Language and goes until its expression on speech and discourse.

All the SP-languages change in time, the S-Language changes with the historical time and the P-Language changes along the lifespan. They are made up of a limited group of gestures and sounds that are combined to form meaningful elements or words that are combined in turn to form sentences. All the S-languages have a group of consonants and vowels. They have similar grammatical categories like verbs and nouns. They can form questions and statements as well as refer to the past and the future (Fromkin *et al.* 2007). Linguistic signs are a part of the S-language, and thus are social because they are generated in the cultural environment, another part of the sign is its psychological being where they acquire meaning and got a

meaning when is produced by the people (Saussure 1945). So, since Saussure language is centered on people.

According Saussure the S-Languages are systems of signs arbitrary, conventional, and oppositional, The S-Language is the rule to see all the manifestation of the language. He said:

“For us, S-Language is not confused with language: S-Language is nothing more than a certain part of F-Language, albeit an essential one. It is both a social product of F-Language faculty and a set of necessary conventions adopted by the social body to allow individuals to exercise that faculty ... it is a totality in itself and a principle of classification... it is an acquired and conventional thing” (Saussure 1945 37-38, my translation).

So, the S-Language is the social part of F-Language, can be study by itself, it is a homogeneous system of signs, and it is tangible. Is the particular structure of one particular system (Ricoeur 1995). In the P-Language we can find the logical and psychological relations that joint coexisting terms and form a system, as the relations that join successive terms. The SP-Language does not exist by itself, is only the manifestation of social interaction of people, person to person, according the rules of culture, grammar and human knowledge. This is why the person can be the unit of cultural evolution (Olalde 2012), meanwhile we understand the person inside a systems of interaction (Following Olalde 2016, 2022). Said Benveniste “the SP-Language is a duality; social institution, that works by the individual; continuous discourse, that is built on fixed unities” (Benveniste 1977 52). The SP-Language is the most important system of signs of the human being (Benveniste 1977).

There is no one S-Language that can be considered primitive compared to the others (Sapir 1921, Hockett 1960). All SP-Language had evolved and are evolving. The unity of evolving systems is because the SP-Languages have a semantic universality (Greenberg 1968) is a system of communication that can means about properties, domains, aspects, places, phenomena from the past, present and future, real or possibles (Harris 1998). This semantic universality is what we call at the end the ability for the human beings to say; who we are? “The minimum structure any signification requires is the

presence of two terms and the relationship linking them” (Metz 1974 16). “Begin with words, a word is an association of piece of phonology, a piece of composite semantics, and some syntactic features, all stored in long-term memory” (Jackendoff 2015 8) In more general terms are the F-SP-Language with the reality, and the link is the SP-Language (based on Hodge 2017)

Regarding innateness we have two explanations: the innate character of F-Language is about the human cognitive capacity to develop the SP-Language to which it is exposed, and not innate as a description of the SP-Language means that it is transmitted culturally. The SP-Language is not an instinct (Sapir 1921), it is not inherited genetically, but is transmitted culturally. The child has a state of mind, a biological endowment to relate sound and meaning, and the ability to acquire the language (Chomsky 1989, 1996). Tomasello (1999) is more specific, he said that the genetics part are the cognitive abilities for learning the language (what we call F-Language), thus the intersubjective social cognition develops inside the social and cultural environment of development. In our terms is the P-Language developing inside the S-Language context to end as a SP-Language. The final result is the language as a product of social and cultural transmission and communication (Tomasello 1999). The SP-Language is for Tomasello “the entire collective wisdom of the entire social group throughout its entire cultural history” (Tomasello 1999: 7) were F-Language is just a biological basis for social cognition. Gärdenfors and Osvath call it the “coevolution of cooperation about future goals and symbolic communication (discussed by Tomasello 1999)” (Gärdenfors and Osvath 2012 113). Their arguments are in the way to explain the unity of system that is the language with the human life that evolved.

Finally, the speech is where the essence of the SP-Language is found. Jespersen said that speech is where one makes himself understood by the other, is the core of communication (Jespersen 1924). The individual presentation of the SP-Language is the speech that depends on person will and intelligence (Saussure 1945). “Speech is a human activity that varies without assignable limit as we pass from social group to social group, because it is a purely historical heritage of the group, the product of long-continued social usage” (Sapir 1921 3). It is heterogeneous, individual, discontinuous and contingent where private experience becomes public (Ricoeur 1995).

“Speech and thought are interdependent, neither occurring without the other, and both made possible by language” (Harris 1988:29). Speech is the quintessential data of the SP-Language, speech as performance, as opposed to competence (the F-Language). Therefore the evolution of language is the study of the evolution of F-Language, SP-Language and speech. This is why is a whole complex that can be reach only inside the entire study of human evolution.

In the speech and discourse the speaker takes the place of *I* leaving the other the place of *You*. Then “insert the presence of the person without any language is possible” (Benveniste 1977 70). SP-Language helps to build the intersubjectivity, and we can not think about the person without this character. The experience of language, the P-Language, is subjective and impossible to transmit completed (Benveniste 1977, Ricoeur 1995). Against the complete intersubjectivity are the structure of SP-Language, the society and the culture that are working to make possible the communication. The person use the SP-Language (Benveniste 1977), and the SP-Language develops the person way of communication. Then the SP-Language is a “cohesion power” (Benveniste 1977 98) between the individuals and an “identity point” (*Idem*) for the human beings that speak.

The discourse must be made by the persons (Harris 1951, Metz 1974). “Language, in its broadest reality, is manifest every time something is said with the intention of saying it” (Metz 1974:40). That points the language since the lowest level of the individual person to the highest level of the human language.

3 · The evolution of language and the unit of evolution

When we study the definitions of language used in studies of language evolution: Benítez 2011: 33, Bolhuis, Tattersall, Chomsky, Berwick 2011, Chomsky 2006: 90, Jackendoff 2010 66, Hauser, Chomsky and Fitch 2002 1576, Pagel 2014 786, we find a reductionism useful for analysis on which no synthesis has been made. Therefore they are partial studies on the broad characteristic phenomenon of the human being.

Following the problem with language definition, what complicates the studies is because it is use different evolutionary units. The text of Bolhuis et al. (2014) uses syntactic structures to talk about the F-Language evolution. In his review on the evolution of F-Language, Pagel uses words as evolutionary units analogous to genes (Pagel 2014, similar are Bhattacharya et al. 2018, Gong et al. 2022, Hoffmann et al. 2021, Roberts and Clark 2020). Are use genes such as for FOXP2, SRGAP2 and CNTNAP2 as units of language evolution (DeSalle and Tattersall 2018, Martins 2018, Mountford and Newbury 2018). Also kinds of word, for example pronouns (Rojas-Berscia 2020). Images that can be related with categories (Atkinson 2019). The use with the greatest relevance and experience in evolution was the work of Cavalli-Sforza who used the construction of phylogenetic trees based on nuclear genes and compared with linguistic families, with which he took both genes and SP-Languages (Cavalli-Sforza 1988, 1992, 1997). Others units on the studies are the vowel lengthening, stress shift ad tone change (Sóskuthy and Roettger 2020). The order of the components of the sentence helps Gell-Mann and Ruhlen (2011) to carry out a very finished work. Ruhlen also used nasal vowels to explain evolution in 50 SP-Languages (Ruhlen 1973). Constituent order and words (Kirton et al. 2021) and word order (Rejwan and Caciularu 2021). Grammar has also been taken as a unit of evolution and specifically to test the evolution of universal grammar proposed by Chomsky (Nowak, Komarova and Niyogi 2001, Saldana 2019). Have been apply to the evolution of mental computational operations (Fujita and Fujita 2021). A recent study change the unit of evolution between words, learning a story, retell it (Shufaniya and Arnon 2022). Also signals in gestural evolution of language (Abramova 2018). Even some say work with language without an explanation of what it is (Hudson 2019, Maurits et al. 2020, Ritchie and Ho 2019, Robbeets and Bouckaert 2018).

Fitch sought to solve the evolution units problem by proposing to focus on the F-Language propose the FLN and FLB and focus on narrow sense (FLN) (Fitch 2010, Hauser, Chomsky and Fitch 2002 1571). Instead of solve the problem, he makes it worst, he atomizes what already is fragmented and lay on the idea of essence. The problem with the definition based on a computational model is that the mind is not like that, it is open and closed, dichotomous and not dichotomous, manipulated by emotions, disturb by

medications, and change by illnesses, society and culture. Even more properties that we have not found yet, meanwhile a computer system is a dichotomous machine.

Others proposals are, for example the Universals of Language of Greenberg (1963), the Universal Grammar of Chomsky (Barón and Müller 2014) and the Language Instinct of Pinker (1994), Roberts (2020), etc. But no one has solved the problem of the unit of evolution, because they have been only thinking that the study of language evolution means that any part of language is the unit of evolution. The same confusion breaks up the joint of language with the whole unity that means to be humans.

The evolutionary process we are talking about is biological evolution that explains biodiversity and adaptations. “Adaptation is not only reproductive capacity, it is also the set of structures and behavioral patterns that allow the organism to adjust to its environment” (Soberón 1999: 3). As an adaptation or exaptation we can consider communication with all its components as a whole: the faculty of language, possibly the SP-Language and, of course, the speech. For example the ear evolution could be a beginning before the language and later be evolutionarily useful (Martínez y Arsuaga 2009). So there is no evolution of F-Language, SP-Language or speech, but the evolution of the human being that can be identified from changes in their linguistic faculty, their diversity of SP-Language and change in their modes of communication, including speech.

Evolution studies focus on a Darwinian perspective, but not all the change in the SP-Language does have a Darwinian evolutionary explanation. Human evolution has many biological processes of change. For example, the ontogeny is superimposed, in a variable way, with the processes of education and socialization. Other factor is variability as construction of the niche, analogous to Harris’s concept of culture (Harris 2000) that makes its own evolutionary dynamics. It is possible that all these processes mentioned are maintained in the hereditary system by means of epigenetic marks. Also the history of wars, conquests, colonization and racism are part of the processes that causally impact on language evolution. So that evolution are complex processes.

The evolutionary unit must have “a genealogical basis of evolution as a branching tree and the causal efficacy of selection as a governing process

of evolutionary change” (Gould 2004 638). The evolutionary units satisfy the following requirements: reproduction, inheritance, variation, and interaction (Gould 2004). Those who meet these requirements are speakers within linguistic groups. Therefore who are the unit of language evolution are people (Olalde 2014) that speak a SP-Language inside an ethnic group (Bonfil 1991) that evolve. As a consequence the epistemic problem of the unit of evolution is raised in an unit that joint the biological aspect of F-Language with the psychological, social and cultural aspect of SP-Language and the living beings that speak.

Just Bickerton (2012) points on survival, in the sense of reproductive fitness, is a concept that is key on evolution. In the theory of evolution, survival applied to language evolution talk us about the processes on F-Language. The FSP-Languages behave phylogenetically as living entities. But they are not living entities. They behave as living entities as they are manifestations of living beings. So it is the beings that evolve and the SP-Languages, as a part of the human beings that change. This is the reason to use a unit of evolution that is living not only that can change. At the end there is no such thing as language evolution, it is human evolution.

The similarity of the syntax with the sequences and the long developed work on evolution with sequences promises to be revealing of language evolution. However, in all the studies on SP-Language and speech, we can see the relevance of meaning to root any explanation about language. The meaning in a natural language is a structure of information built by human beings (Saeed 2003, Chapter 9) because the biological system, it is develops in the mind, with the social context and enclose in society, thanks to the social interactions, with the sense given by the culture, making the linguistic community. Instead the evolution of language based on words and sequences of words, we recognize that the scope is much more general, it is about the construction of meaning. It is not the meaning of some keywords, but the meaning as construction based on the relation between the human beings with the world, between the signs in the system of meaning, between the sequence of meaning, and the pragmatic sense.

That is the key problem about the origin, because system of meaning are before S-Language and speech, there are system of meaning between F-Language and P-Language. There are systems of meaning between the

FP-Language and the cognitive system, all before the emergence of human language. This hypothesis is agree with the ancestral origin of Wernicke's area (Aboitiz and García 1997) that makes possible to build meaning in the relation of the organism with the world. From systems to understand the world it is originated the language. Cognitive systems that impact on language evolution, for example the organization of the world in dichotomies, triads, four points of reference, the representation of the human body by five lines, the number seven as full or completed, the decimal or twelve. Social structures and systems that drive patterns of behavior, preceding rules and systems of meaning, and the specific sense of the culture that include the mayor input of SP-Language. It is agree with the capacity of neuron to build meaning as concepts (Quian *et al.* 2008), the ontogenic development of language and its evolutive value (Olalde 2013), the innateness in the acquisition (Chomsky 1989, 1996, 2006) as well the requirement for social interaction (Tomasello 1999). The people as evolutionary unit can hold the complexity of the processes.

In the evolutionary process, the human evolution of language leads to the point where human language originates, which is exactly the same point of origin as human beings. That is what is going forward.

4 • The idea of origin

Bloomfield says: "from the single cry of pain to which some animals are limited, up to the present speech of man, there would be no point at which one could say: Here language begins" (Bloomfield 1914 15). The origin is a philosophical and scientific problem, and at the heart of evolutionary theory. Regarding what we said about the language concept and the unit of language evolution, the evolution of language depends on what we consider is human being. Therefore, we arrive at the epistemic problem about the origin. We do not confuse with the origin of SP-Language which we have seen many times on historical time, for example Spanish from Latin and the Iberian languages. We can said that communication is a characteristic of living beings, the F-Language an evolutionary phenomenon of hominidae and SP-Language specifically of *Homo*.

Understand the evolution of language include two processes, on the one hand its origin at a certain point in time, and the attention to the process of change. Let's start with the origin. We have a history that is difficult to overcome by understanding the beginning. It is an epistemic activity that assumes that there was a beginning with all the components assembled. That include a moment in time when the structure took place and could fundamentally be characterized as itself from thereafter.

If the evolutionary process of language has the current principles of change, a moment of origin cannot be supported. If we go back in time, more and more primitive forms of language will be found, but it is possible that we will go deeply back to a past where human language is so different from ours, but based on our capacity for interpretation and ethnographic openness, it seems human to us. It could be that those beings hardly refer us to the human and yet their language has a syntax, a phonological and morphological system, all linked by meanings of their way of life. We have said that is the meaning that is previous, patterns of cognitive systems on sociocultural groups that provide ways to understand the world and communicate. The work with chimps shows that they can work with the complexity of language, except that they do not do without human input. The lack of one point in language origin is according with its character; the language is built on a sign system that need of previous signs, the signs are reference to something, to have a language we need social system of communication previous, on the individual sense to communicate and to use signs the human need an emotional disposition to communicate and understand. Even we consider hypothetical all the characteristics quoted, are examples of systems that can no begins without a background.

We would have a language and we would have to decide to what extent it is a human language. Such an assumption of searching in the past is intended to show that the transition in the evolution of language must take place so gradually that one cannot speak of an origin without constructing an arbitrary point of beginning. So the origin of language is an invention that we make since we seek to determine a starting point.

Those who propose abrupt change, by mutation, will be ensured that it is a process, which must have taken a few generations, two? Or three? Maybe ten, or a hundred? The proposal once again becomes a process with

antecedents that go back in time just as we have imagined. That is, even those who advocate abrupt change, mutation or accelerated evolution, do not imagine that one night our ancestors went to sleep without knowing how to say good night and the next morning they already had a SP-Language to say good morning. The human evolution is a mosaic evolution (Foley 2016) between biological, psychological, social and cultural. Thus continuity and transformation belong to change. Continuity of change as gradualism and transformation as the idea of abrupt change. Change that is happening and transformation that, our vision of the difference, accounts for when comparing states. Change that can be slow and accelerated while remaining the continuity of change.

What stands out as the minimum limit to treat the origin of language are the reference and the social context of its use. It is the answer to the Platonic reflection on language in the Cratilo dialogue. The relationship of language with what is known and how meaning is constructed. It is a question of what humans want to know or are given to know and what is pertinent for us to do with what we know. Those are the Kantian questions about: What is it possible for us to know? What is it possible to do? And, what are we given to expect? As it is said, Kant would have referred these questions to a more general one: What is the human being? When we are inside the origin of language we are inside our bigger problem that is what and how we are as human beings?

5 • Human being

There is a confluence point between being recognize human and have language. Even the paleoanthropology identify the language as the last characteristic to be part of the human evolution, actually is the first whose lack claims to be in front non-human beings. With this we enter the last point of the article, the origin of language is the signal of the origin of the human being. So, the evolution of language has a process about the origin of human beings. This is the third epistemic problem because to understand the evolution of language we have to be inside the general process of human evolution and we need a concept of human being (Olalde 2015). I quote Hockett: "The appearance of language on our planet is thus exactly as recent

as the appearance of Man himself” (Hocket 1958 569). With Hocket we understand the statement about the SP-Language as we currently recognize that system. The origin of F-Language can be traced back to our non-*Homo sapiens* ancestors, and more precisely, to the evolutionary process of primate communication systems from which the hominid derives. If we return to the human to account for language and the language with which we recognize it, we question; how to define it?

The human being is defined in many and diverse ways, Nicol said that the humans are the beings that define themselves, the beings that make definitions of themselves, to make ideas of themselves because are historical beings (1977). Part of the problem of our definition is in the complexity of being human and in how each human being seeks to be represented. Era has its way of understanding the society and the human being. At another time and another culture the human being is clearly defined with others perspectives. It has its clearly structured limits and possibilities. In that case there is no place for the definition, to be human is already given and is solved with the idea *us* or *we*. Between the total and clear definition and the complete doubt we imagine that everything is possible to be different. But this phenomenon is what makes similar the diversity of human groups.

What everyone agree is to identify the humanity we have to chat, to talk, to communicate and say yes; we are humans, we are persons, we are similar. In this bio-cultural dynamics we can see the potential of human evolution that shows what the human being is (Beorlegui 2011, Henrich 2014). It is what the F-PS-Language provide to the humans that makes the language the core to understand the human beings. In the center of that core is the ability to identify as similar humanness, in which the language has the central role.

The process to understand the humanness of us is share by the way of language and results in the identity of the group. Is from the identity of human as an *us*, since that moment develops/evolves a concept that is today in the idea of person. We are following a proposal from Olalde (2012, 2016, 2022) that said, with Mauss (1971), that the person is the general concept found in all the cultures around the world to said what is to be human, how is the way to be human being, who are the true humans inside the cultural context to understand the humanity. In that proposal every explanation of

the person is a cultural way to explain the human being, for example Bueno (1996) is a great example of the modern Spain, as is in Zubiri (Murillo 1992, Zubiri 1963). The key to the idea of person is that at the same time that identifies the human as common through the body and a similar way of life, it distinguishes them from the non-identical other or part of their own group, it serves to say; “we are the true humans, what is fully human belong to us”. The language allows us to make ourselves feel human and share what is human with others (Arsuaga y Martínez 1998). It is a tautological construction to say human, within language, culture, society with psychological influence. It is tautological because it is, based on language, self-referential explained by language, humanized by language, and proven by the presence of language.

Bueno (1996) talks about the historical and evolutionary idea of the person, but he does not develop it, he assumes that it is not necessary to erase the differences but to underline the essential similarities. Between the similarities Mauss (1971) characterizes the person by belonging of the body, ancestors, name, surname, own property and moral conscience. On the evolutionary perspective is the time when the symbolic system work as joints of the social systems, the culture in any social system, both systems (society and culture) made the reality for the mind of the people that end as symbolic systems, is evolving and ontogenic way to said what is to be an human being. Since that perspective Levi-Strauss (1971) said that everything is social, as everything is psychological and by extension everything is cultural, that way every human act is bio-psycho-socio-cultural. Here the human act we consider is the answer to: Who are human? Specifically, who are person? Echeverria (2003) based on Mayr evolutionary perspective suggests, on his ontology of language, that the person is the way to be human and the language as the key to be and understand the humanness. We can said that the hominization is the process that links human, language and person. Because to answer: who are us? Is trough one specific PS-Language, building a long the life the F-Language (ontogeny, socialization and language acquisition) and on evolutionary aspect the unity between F-PS-Language (language evolution). We center on person, but to explain sociocultural the persons have to talk and take part on about a great part of society, being part a whole culture about how to be.

The evolution of language can tell us something that the linguistic turn had taken as a rule or discussion, is related with the idea of system and structure, sign and meaning, semiotics or semantics. According our understanding of the evolutionary processes we do not have a couple of possibilities, we have at least, four. We have a system that relates the world with the sign through the first structure of communication in hominids, probably in others primates. The second is the semiotic system where the structure of the components interact between each other to give the meaning of the signs as Saussure taught. The third is the system of the SP-Language where the structure, the sentence or clause organize all the meaning in the system. The fourth is what have been building through the evolutionary process that is the F-Language, that express as SP-Language in *Homo* and makes effective in the speech or discourse. The naturality, natural feeling, natural behavior or spontaneous of our mother tongue makes us think that we live in the house of language, but we can found some inconsistencies that comes from the coexistence with the others three systems, however there is the dominance of the cultural way of discourse. The last one can explain limits on the interpretation, as textuality according Derrida. On the other hand, the first can explain the basics of behavior, including the unconscious. But the argument that here we present is the unity of all according the bio-psycho-socio-cultural unity of human being. Many levels between signs and humans, signs and language, with the possibility of identifying ourselves only through language. We are the human beings because we said that, the way we said is the manner we judge. Evolutionary, and in the successive stages of human history, we build social and culturally the ontogenic bio-psychological way to recognize ourselves with language, through language and just because we have language.

Our humanness is built through the language evolution of the hominization process, part of the process is the sociocultural construction of the human being idea. First as one part of the F-Language that we can see today in our faculty to identify a human being. Second as one nucleus of the system that is PS-Language with the concept of person/human that affect human ontology, society and culture. Once we recognize the modern *Homo sapiens*, we admit the presence of F-PS-Language, not just now with the scientific knowledge, but since thousands years ago in every sociocultural group.

The definition of human/person on the evolutionary time is not just a conceptual construction, it is the huge aspect of human evolution, behaviour and ideas about the human way of live that can share by language, and through language the human characteristic to make ourselves human beings (Olalde 2021).

6 • Conclusion

The study on the origin of language is considered highly hypothetical because the evidence for its evolution is limited. If it is accepted that the origin of F-Language, with its SP-Languages as the systems we know, points to the origin of the human being, the problem is not solved, but the interest increases. So its study requires a broad stance that allows us to understand all the human.

The linguistic process is undoubtedly determined by the human capacity to acquire knowledge. The SP-Language is an external part of the linguistic process insofar as it pre-exists the life of the individual. It is a structured system prior to acquiring the SP-Language. In the SP-Language, as a communication process, the individual bio-psychological process converges (P-Language) with the sociocultural one S-Language. In communication the linguistic process is structured within the context; what is said, when, how to be understandable in the social environment. In the communicative environment, the intersubjective of meaning is presented, how open it is to interpretation, the meaning and how diffuse it is to know what the other thinks through their words. To these peculiarities of language we add the complexity of the human being that carries with she all her existence, at all times.

It is this complex system that evolves and changes. The limited perspectives in the study of the so-called evolution of language is analogous to when Lineus classified living beings without an evolutionary theory as a basis. Lacking the unit of relationship, the classification was arbitrary and did not explain the relationships between living beings. What we found with the epistemic question is that at the same time the human and the language interact making what we are.

With the language, at the beginning of humanity, is proposal the questions and answers to Kant, starting and ending with what is human being. Because language is a complex system that is part and in between biology, psychology, society and culture, the evolution of language is the evolution of human being as whole. For example: when we speak of the evolution of F-Language we do it of how we have become human (*Homo*), when we speak of the origin of the SP-Language we do it of the human being (*Homo sapiens*), on the speech and discourse we actualize our personhood. A proper study of the evolution of language begins by understanding the evolutionary unit in the context of human evolution, questioning the usefulness of the idea of origin, and identifying the extent to which have become human through language.

7 • References

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