

Integrationism in context: the integrationist tradition in the contemporary landscape of linguistic research - towards a "Critical Communication Studies"

JONES, Peter <<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1225-0192>>

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**INTEGRATIONISM
IN CONTEXT:
THE INTEGRATIONIST
TRADITION IN THE
CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPE
OF LINGUISTIC RESEARCH –
TOWARDS A “CRITICAL
COMMUNICATION
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**INTEGRACIONISMO NO CONTEXTO: A TRADIÇÃO INTEGRACIONISTA NA PAISAGEM
CONTEMPORÂNEA DA PESQUISA LINGÜÍSTICA – POR “ESTUDOS CRÍTICOS DE
COMUNICAÇÃO”**

**INTEGRACIONISMO EN CONTEXTO: LA TRADICIÓN INTEGRACIONISTA EN EL PAISAJE
CONTEMPORÁNEO DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN LINGÜÍSTICA – HACIA UN “ESTUDIO DE
COMUNICACIÓN CRÍTICA”**

Peter Jones *

Sheffield Hallam University

ABSTRACT: This paper presents a personal view on where integrationism sits in the current field of linguistics and applied linguistics research. In doing so, the paper aims at clarifying the distinctive contribution that the integrationist tradition may make in responding to the challenge that Alastair Pennycook and Sinfree Makoni (2020) have posed of a re-made linguistics that can learn from and do justice to the struggles for both social justice and equality across both the Global South and Global North as well as for harmonious and mutually beneficial relations with our world and the other beings that share it with us. The question, then, is whether in recoiling along this particular critical trajectory from within and against our own cultural heritage we will meet and

*Currently Reader in Language and Communication in the Department of Humanities, at Sheffield Hallam University, UK. E-mail: P.E.Jones@shu.ac.uk.

join productively the decolonizing tide coming towards us in the form of the insurgent intellectual and activist movements of the global south.

KEYWORDS: Integrationism. Context. Global South. Social justice. Struggles.

RESUMO: Este artigo apresenta uma visão pessoal sobre a posição do integracionismo no campo atual da lingüística e da pesquisa em lingüística aplicada. Com isso, o artigo visa apresentar a contribuição que a tradição integracionista pode oferecer como resposta ao desafio que Alastair Pennycook e Sinfree Makoni (2020) colocaram sobre a reconstrução de uma lingüística que possa aprender com as lutas e fazer justiça a elas, seja para promover igualdade social tanto no Sul Global quanto no Norte Global, como para fomentar relações harmoniosas e mutuamente benéficas com nosso mundo e com os outros seres que o compartilham. A questão, então, é se, recuando ao longo desta trajetória crítica e, a partir de dentro e contra nossa própria herança cultural, seremos capazes de nos encontrar e juntar produtivamente à maré descolonizadora que vem em nossa direção na forma dos movimentos intelectuais e ativismos insurgentes do sul global.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Integracionismo. Contexto. Sul Global. Justiça social. Lutas.

RESUMEN: Este artículo presenta una visión personal sobre la posición del integracionismo en el campo actual de la lingüística y la investigación en lingüística aplicada. Con ello, el artículo pretende presentar el aporte que la tradición integracionista puede ofrecer como respuesta al desafío que plantearon Alastair Pennycook y Sinfree Makoni (2020) sobre la reconstrucción de una lingüística que pueda aprender de las luchas y hacerles justicia, o promover la igualdad social tanto en el Sur Global como en el Norte Global, y fomentar relaciones armoniosas y mutuamente beneficiosas con nuestro mundo y con los demás seres que lo comparten. La pregunta, entonces, es si, retrocediendo en esta trayectoria crítica y, desde dentro y en contra de nuestra propia herencia cultural, seremos capaces de encontrarnos y unirnos productivamente a la marea descolonizadora que se nos presenta en forma de movimientos intelectuales y activismo. insurgentes del sur global.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Integracionismo. Contexto. Sur Global. Justicia social. Luchas.

1 INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I wanted to give a personal view on where I believe integrationism (HARRIS, 1981, 1998) sits in the current field of linguistics and applied linguistics research. In doing so, I hoped to try to clarify what I see as the distinctive contribution that the integrationist tradition may make in responding to the challenge that Alastair Pennycook and Sinfree Makoni (2020) have posed of a re-made linguistics that can learn from and do justice to the struggles for both social justice and equality across both the Global South and Global North as well as for harmonious and mutually beneficial relations with our world and the other beings that share it with us.

Integrationism itself is a “Northern” theory (CONNELL, 2007); it clearly does not spring directly from what Santos (2018, p. 1) calls “the epistemologies of the South”, anchored in “[...] the experiences of resistance of all those social groups that have systematically suffered injustice, oppression, and destruction caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy”. The critical perspective integrationists take is an antagonistic position within Northern Theory, motivated, couched (largely) in English and argued in ways that could only be possible, and have immediate relevance and meaning, to those steeped in the Northern “language myth” (HARRIS, 1981) and educated in its institutions. The question, then, is whether, in recoiling along this particular critical trajectory from within and against our own cultural heritage we will meet and join productively the decolonizing tide coming towards us in the form of the insurgent intellectual and activist movements of the global south (MAKONI; VERITY; KAIPER-MARQUEZ, 2021; PABLÉ, 2019). But that will not be for us to judge.

As I discovered around 2005, and as many readers have no doubt discovered for themselves, Roy Harris’s work has helped us to call into question many if not all of our long-held views and beliefs about language and communication, and perhaps to rethink our academic priorities or even change direction entirely. But it would be wrong to imagine that integrationism, even if we are in sympathy with its basic principles, offers or purports to offer the answers to all the challenges and intellectual issues raised by the

monumental and epochal tasks of anti-imperialism and decolonization, although it may have value in relation to such a mission. As Harris (1998, p. ix) put it himself:

Whether or not one accepts the integrationist critique, examining its claims provides a useful way of putting the orthodoxy in perspective. It is likely to sharpen an awareness of the problems that are involved in attempting to answer seemingly simple questions about how one person is able to communicate with another.

The integrationist movement is also, we should say, overwhelmingly white and male in its scholarly make up at the present time, though we earnestly hope that events such as IAISLC 2020 are helping to attract and include a more diverse body of researchers (MAKONI; VERITY; KAIPER-MARQUEZ, 2021).

2 THE INTEGRATIONIST PROJECT AND WHERE IT SITS TODAY

Nowadays, integrationism finds itself in a busy research field alongside post-humanist, post-colonial, new materialist, distributed, and existentialist approaches to the problems that applied linguistics faces in its decolonizing mission (PENNYCOOK; MAKONI, 2020; MAKONI; VERITY; KAIPER-MARQUEZ, 2021). In that context, I believe there are two key things that integrationism brings to the table: its critique of the Eurocentric “language myth” and its novel semiology of “integration”.

2.1 CRITIQUE OF THE EUROCENTRIC “LANGUAGE MYTH”

Integrationism is distinctive for the depth and power of its systematic critical analysis of the linguistic and communicational methods, assumptions, conceptions, theories, and programmes that the Eurocentric (CONNELL, 2007) “language myth” embodies and entails. This analysis embraces the core metalinguistic frameworks of linguistic theory and description but penetrates through to what Harris calls the “communication myth” (HARRIS, 2002) which both informs the more specific and explicit projects of linguistic theorization but also underpins fundamental perspectives on perception, knowledge, and learning. Both “language myth” and “communication myth” are themselves bound up with particular communicational processes in specific cultural contexts, including language teaching and literacy practices, but have also aided and abetted widespread practices of linguistic and cultural discrimination, denigration, and erasure – the “invention and disinvention of languages” in Makoni and Pennycook’s (2007) terms - in the service of the predatory and exploitative interests of the colonial elites and nationalisms of Europe and the global North more broadly.

In his 1981 book, *The Language Myth*, Roy Harris set out a project which he referred to as “demythologized linguistics” or “integrational linguistics”. The project was centered on the exposure and analysis of a specifically Eurocentric language ideology, the myth of the book’s title, which presents a picture of a segregated domain of linguistic facts, supposedly shared by whole societies or communities of linguistic communicators, rooted in discrete “languages” or “language systems”, identifiable and amenable to specialized technical procedures and/or natural scientific investigation. For Harris, such a view of language, along with the intellectual and social conditions for linguistic inquiry of this kind, constituted the primary target for critical investigation. As he put it:

Mainstream linguistics, in short, has a rather narrow, built-in cultural bias. Having its roots in Western traditional grammar, it assumes that the proper or natural basis for being a linguist is the kind of education afforded by membership of a European nation (or one of its colonies or former colonies). This means, in effect, membership of a literate society in which literacy has a common alphabetic basis. The irony of this situation is that no such basis has ever been available to the great majority of the world’s linguistic communities. (HARRIS, 1998, p. 19)

He went on (1998, p. 19):

If contemporary linguistics is to be rescued from this ethnocentric myopia (as an integrationist would hope) it must find a perspective from which “expertise” in linguistic matters is not equated with the self-serving professionalism that marked the rise of the subject to academic independence in Western universities during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Harris further argues that the “language myth” is but one manifestation of a more general “communication myth” in Western culture according to which all forms of communication are conceived in terms of transmission, a communicational model which is then applied more generally to other ways in which human beings connect to one another and the world, including perception (HARRIS, 2002).

Behind and within the myth, according to Harris, is a more fundamental sociological conception or assumption in Western culture which Harris (2002) calls “somatic particularity”, that is, a belief in the primary separateness, alone-ness, or a-social independence of individual human beings with their innate powers and propensities. From that perspective, sociality is an exteriority or imposition, something which we need to somehow derive from the initial state of naturalistic individual atomism, as was attempted by speculative 17th and 18th century accounts (TAYLOR, 1992). A key ingredient in such accounts was the postulation of a common, public language (established by natural iconicity or somehow through social conditioning, contract, or other convention) with a transmission model of communication acting as the bridging mechanism, a kind of social glue, between individual minds. Here language in effect becomes a socializing or, indeed, “civilizing” force.

Harris confronted this whole Western linguistic tradition in order to identify and problematize its core conceptions and assumptions, to demonstrate, in particular, its narrowness and elitism, and thereby to open up the field of communication both to critique from within as well to the perspectives of other linguistic traditions and philosophies in the world. Areas that Harris or other integrationist scholars have examined in this light include general linguistic theory, applied linguistic methodologies (e.g. corpus linguistics), historical linguistics, language teaching, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis (including Critical Discourse Analysis), and the linguistics of the law, with further, though less systematic, forays into cognitive and cultural-historical psychology (HARRIS, 2009; 2009; PABLÉ; HUTTON, 2015; PABLÉ, 2017). Harris stayed “true to his code”, as the Sinatra song says, for the rest of his life, pushing further and further at the ethnocentric and historically specific roots and assumptions of this communication myth and attempting to reveal its consequences for social life generally in Western societies, including the intellectual fragmentation represented by traditional academic disciplinary boundaries (art, history, science, philosophy, linguistics, psychology, sociology, and so on).

In all this, the integrationist inclination has been to emphasize the value of a humanist perspective on language and communication (PABLÉ, 2017) grounded in a shift from exclusively “third person” methods of handling the abstracted and reified products or traces of communicational activity to a focus on creative sign-makers, and their “first person” experiences, within their own situated communicational engagements (see JONES, 2017b, 2018, p. 119-123 on Conversation Analysis). The humanist tradition appealed to, however, is arguably not one that is vulnerable to the critique of humanistic rationality in the enlightenment tradition by those who advocate for a “post-humanism” (PENNYCOOK, 2018; PABLÉ, 2019; JONES; DUNCKER, 2021). The integrationist perspective, rather, emphasizes that no humanly experienced factors, whether in practices or beliefs or in the circumstances of life activity, can be ignored in advance or excluded (on theoretical or methodological grounds) from consideration of what language might be taken to be, if at all. The term “integration” itself, then, despite any mechanistic connotations that the English word may have, simply implies that attempts to find or create universally valid criteria for academic demarcation of “language” or “communication” are misguided since they precisely contravene what integrationism takes as its most basic and overriding principle – the integrated character of human activities and experience. It also follows of course that not all individuals, let alone communities, nations, or “cultures” will have commensurable metalinguistic terms for or accounts of anything that might correspond to particular readings or interpretations of the English words “language” and “communication”. Certainly, the “cosmovisions” of ubuntu (ubuntu-nepantla) philosophy (PENNYCOOK; MAKONI, 2020) and Quilombo (MAKONI; SEVERO, 2015) could never have been a starting point for the methods and constructs of the Eurocentric language tradition and offer fruitful and provocative new lines for contemporary linguistic scholarship as well as for conceptions of

humanity and sociality. On that basis, all discussion of “language”, all linguistic and communicational research, necessarily involves “intercultural translation” (de Sousa Santos, 2018).

2.2 COMMUNICATION AS INTEGRATION

Some of the principles of Harris’s (1981) “demythologized linguistics” now may appear to be fairly mainstream forty years later and have, in that time, been converged on from a variety of different and independent perspectives. One particularly important area of convergence is the rejection of what one might call the classificatory (or compartmentalizing) tendency of segregationism, represented in its commitment to an ontology of distinct and identifiable “languages”. This convergence is apparent in the widespread recognition that linguistic or other communicational acts take place in and through collections, assemblages, or distributed networks of heterogenous “stuff”, from communicating actors (brains and bodies), including possibly other animate beings, through to inanimate objects, materials and processes of all kinds (PENNYCOOK; MAKONI, 2020). This widespread rejection of a key segregationist tenet, albeit couched in different terms (e.g. “multimodality”), runs parallel to some extent with Harris’s “non-compartmentalization” principle (HARRIS, 1981, p. 165) which builds on “Sapir’s observation that “communication is based on structural correspondences between certain forms of behaviour in a situational context” (SAPIR, 1998, p. 13), however, these forms of behaviour might be categorized.

Against this emerging consensus, though, integrationism stands out for its refusal of all reificatory inclinations to bestow semiological properties, functions, or potential on the material resources, circumstances, or physical processes which are implicated and impacted in particular communicational acts, insisting that signification generally can only arise through the *signifying* or *sign-making* powers of actors themselves in specific contexts. Accordingly, Harris describes what he calls the “philosophical basis” of integrationism the position that “the linguistic universe is populated not by mysteriously unobservable objects called “languages” but by observable human beings who somehow and sometimes manage to communicate with one another”. Communicational activities, consequently, “[...] are episodes in the lives of particular people at particular times and places” and “cannot be decontextualized” (HARRIS, 2009, p. 70).

What integrationism contributes here, in a way that flows logically from its critical rejection of *segregationism*, is its remaking of the whole concept of *communication* as a semiology of *integration* in which the meanings, senses, or values experienced and deployed by subjects are created by them as they integrate their movements, actions, feelings, and goals with others and with the lifeworld. The semiology of integration does not, therefore, depend on found “semiotic resources” or on the creation of special niche “units” which serve exclusively linguistic or communicational functions by supposedly containing and conveying meaningful “content”. On the contrary: a “sign” is “[...] any observable feature or complex of features which, by virtue of its integrational function, plays some role in our diverse but continuous practices of making sense” (HARRIS, 2009b, p. 72).

Thus, the integrationist view is that it is the specific relationship between acting subject and materials to hand or made in situ, i.e. the incorporation of materials into the purposeful activities of agents, that creates a semiological function or value *for the subject acting in that way*. Signs, consequently, do not exist anywhere except in the active relationship of individuals to the people and things dynamically integrated into a time-bound programme of activity. When we talk to one another we are not sending pre-fabricated units of meaning through space and time, but contextualizing each other’s behaviours as our integrational proficiencies allow in relation to the many different interactional goals, we are jointly pursuing or taking up through our activities in context. Such sign-making activity is therefore at once an effort to create the communicational links in the lines of engagement we are contributing to and at the same time, to mutually manage the problem of semiological indeterminacy – how things are to be understood or taken - which is constantly posed and needing to be resolved for mutual understanding and joint action to be possible (DUNCKER, 2017).

Such semiological activities can, of course, be approached with a particular focus on the specific media or materials drawn into, and playing an essential part in, the relevant communicational processes, such as written forms or texts. However, it is important to remember that, as in the case of recordings of speech, written forms give us directly only products and traces of the live exercise of communicational powers by the actors concerned. A text or corpus of written materials does not, therefore, present us with a

collection, still less a system, of signs as such but, as Duncker (2017) argues, constitutes a partial and selective legacy – some of the “debris” – of a collective sign-making effort, in particular the exercise of communicational powers to address and resolve (however transiently or unsuccessfully) the linguistic (and other) indeterminacies which beset collaborative or competitive endeavour.

Such a “semiology of activity” (JONES, 2011) is clearly also relevant to the vital behaviours of non-human animals with respect both to their social interactions and relations with the world as well as with their relations with human beings. Our traditions and daily life experiences teach us that we can communicate with animals and share a productive communicational space because we live with them and work with them. In such cooperative activities as sheep gathering, for example, we integrate our activities with those of sheepdogs towards particular ends. Of course, *their* semiological proficiencies and experiences cannot be *ours* - *the shepherds*” - because our activities and their activities, though complementary, are not and cannot be the same. Nevertheless, integrationism is not in the business of attempting to prescribe or stipulate a priori semantic or cognitive criteria that rationalise an unbridgeable gulf between the communicational capacities, and the communicational worlds, of humans and non-humans.

In some integrationist work, there is a clear emphasis or indeed exclusive focus on the sign as private experience or interpretation, and this is indeed one side of the semiological picture (PABLÉ; HUTTON, 2015). But integration is fundamentally *connection* - connection of the individual person with the lifeworld - since signs are made in the integration of our activities with those of others and the world we inhabit and create together. Integrationism, therefore, is a semiology of human community, interdependence, and interconnection. While my sign-making is an irreducibly subjective experience, the signs I make are not a barrier between me and others or between me and the world I move in, work on or perceive: such signs are the ways in which our vital connections are experienced; this is what our connections to others *mean* to us - what they feel like, sound like, or look like (see JONES, 2019 on “transparency”). Integrationism, thus, is a semiology rooted in the most basic condition of our humanity – our sociality, our acting together, our being together.

Hence, this basis offers us a linguistic and communicational perspective which is a breathtaking novelty in the history of language philosophy in the West: a view of communication without explicit or implicit theoretical grounding in a prior commitment to “languages”, a linguistics without structural systems, rules, code, transmission, the distinction between form and content (“bi-planarity”), and with a view of meaning and thinking grounded in meaningful social activity and, therefore, opposed to representationalism (“surrogation”) (HARRIS, 1981, 2009; JONES, 2019). Accordingly, instead of “sign systems” or communication as transmission, we have what Harris calls “communication processes”, a perspective which, from the beginning, situates our communicational powers in the very contexts of life in which those powers are developed and exercised and which they help create: “A communication process is defined by the activities it integrates, the particular constraints on integration involved, and the signs produced to implement the process” (HARRIS, 1996, p. 63).

Such processes do not themselves exist in isolation, in a communicational and biographical vacuum. In their interactional construction, they are communicationally bound through the many threads of our lives into the entire social dynamic. Therefore, as a result, and depending on concrete social conditions, actors engaged in one network of communication processes may not be aware of other communication processes (and their actors) that are presupposed by their own or of the consequences of their own communication processes for subsequent or simultaneous processes. While the conscious communicational purposes of subjects are a necessary dimension of any communicational act (“the sign cannot be decontextualized”) the progress and outcomes of particular communicational engagements cannot, therefore, be defined or understood either as a direct expression or result of communicational intention (HARRIS, 1996) or simply in terms of the (“first person”) conscious awareness or concerns of the actors directly involved (see Harris, 1996 for a distinction between “internal” and “external” integration; cf Jones, 2019). It is certainly generally true that, while we knowingly contribute to a particular activity, we cannot on the basis of that experience alone know the shape and dynamic of social activity en masse. The relevant macrosocial patterns of integration (including “macrosocial conformities”, HARRIS, 1996) will, consequently, require special attention and focus. As we know only too well, in specific historical and cultural circumstances, such communicational organization may create, and depend on, depersonalization, alienation, and, generally, dehumanizing circumstances and consequences of all kinds. However, as Connell (2007) and Smith (2012) argue, Northern scholars have, in positivist style, decontextualized and naturalized such coercive patterns of conformity

and have regularly misread such impersonal and alienating social systems as the template or model for universal theories of social organization.

Integrationism offers a different perspective: the dehumanizing premisses and consequences of particular social systems, indeed *all* processes and activities of social exploitation and injustice, are necessarily the continuously produced outcomes of sign-making activity, i.e., communication processes and their internal and external integration (JONES, 2019). On that basis, we may decide to focus our communicational interest precisely on a critical study of the communicational conditions and processes which produce injustice and inequality, as well as on the creative communicational acts, forms, and methods of organization that afford critical awareness of and resistance to these injustices.

3 DEMYTHOLOGISATION AND DECOLONISATION OF LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH: DEGREES OF ALIGNMENT?

In this section I wanted to briefly discuss two topic areas over which demythologizing and decolonizing projects appear to be aligned: a) Critical Discourse Analysis and b) the conception of verbal thinking and its historical development in Vygotskys cultural-historical psychology.

a) *Critical Discourse Analysis: how to make the world safe for the Western grammatical tradition*

I began a critical exploration of Critical Discourse Analysis in the early 2000s. At that time I had no knowledge of integrationism, but as a Marxist and a linguist I was disturbed by what I considered the pretentious and self-serving claims of CDA to be a method of social-ideological critique based on linguistic analysis. An early paper in *Historical Materialism* (JONES, 2004) centered directly on the key arguments that both Norman Fairclough (1989) and Fairclough and Wodak (1997) advanced for such a “discourse turn” in the social sciences.

The CDA case rested on the claim that there had been “important shifts in the function of language in social life” whereby discourse had become “perhaps the primary medium of social control and power” (FAIRCLOUGH, 1989, p. 3). It was this newly won primacy of “discourse” in social life that was held to license a specifically *linguistic* approach to the analysis of social processes. This argument in turn rested on a number of claims about fundamental changes in global economic production.

It is well known for instance that the balance of economic life has shifted increasingly from production to consumption and from manufacturing industries to service, culture and leisure industries. In many service contexts, a key factor in the quality of the “goods” produced and therefore in profitability is the nature of the language that is used in “delivering” services. (FAIRCLOUGH; WODAK, 1997, p. 259)

On these grounds, the authors claimed that “[...] language has become more salient and more important in a range of social processes” and that “[...] the increased economic importance of language is striking” (FAIRCLOUGH; WODAK, 1997, p. 259). These economic arguments were intended to justify a view of global capitalism today as a social form whose driving forces are less and less “material”, or “economic” and where “[...] the exercise of power, in modern society, is increasingly achieved through ideology, and more particularly through the ideological workings of language” (FAIRCLOUGH, 1989, p. 3).

What is striking, therefore, is that these arguments for a privileging of *linguistic* methods from a distinctly Eurocentric tradition appeal quite explicitly to what are clearly Northern-centered perspectives (and blindspots) on globalization. My critical commentary at the time put it this way:

The first problem here is the failure, and this despite CDA's professed interest in "globalisation", to examine the relationship between advanced capitalist countries and the world economic system as a whole. If the authors have in mind shifts in economic activity in Britain, Western Europe, and the USA (for example) ... the fact is that these economies are globally locked in to other economies where the 'balance of economic life' remains with or is shifted towards manufacturing. (JONES, 2004, p. 102)

The second point concerned "the naivety of the view of capitalist society and the capitalist state" (JONES, 2004, p. 104):

This is evident in the equation of "modern society" with bourgeois-democratic states and in the failure to see the interconnection between apparently consensual or hegemonic forms of political domination in, say, Britain and directly coercive, violent forms of domination in others, as well as the violence meted out abroad by the British state itself (I write after the invasion and occupation of Iraq by US and UK military forces).

If I would make these arguments differently and more pointedly today, the main point is that CDA's use of *segregationist methods of linguistic analysis* needed a biased, *Northern myth of contemporary social and economic life* to support it. Who would have thought, for instance, that the traditional doctrine of "parts of speech" could be an instrument of critical social science and political analysis? And yet this is Fairclough's claim in carrying out "grammatical and semantic analysis" which "can, I believe, be very productive in social research", though "it is often difficult for researchers without a background in Linguistics to access it" (2003, p. 6). He explains:

Doing social scientific analysis of social events and texts entails shifting away from our ordinary experience of them. Human beings are reflexive about what they do in their practical social life – they have ways of talking about it, describing it, evaluating it, theorizing it. For example, we might describe what someone says as 'long-winded', or 'wordy', or say that someone is "too fond of his (or her) own voice". These are some of the categories we have for talking about texts. *We also have categories when we do social scientific analysis of texts* ('noun', 'sentence', 'genre', and so forth), but they are specialist categories which are different from the ones we use in our ordinary social interaction. *These social scientific categories*, unlike practical categories, allow particular texts to be seen in relation to elaborated general theories. (FAIRCLOUGH, 2003, p. 15, my emphasis)

Here, then, is a methodology that requires a view of the world – of global economic and political relations and processes – fashioned in the image of the methods and concepts of the Western grammatical tradition and, naturally, therefore, requiring the specialist skills of the professional linguist to handle such esoteric tools. In subsequent papers (JONES; COLLINS, 2006; COLLINS; JONES, 2006; JONES, 2007) the critique of CDA's linguistic arguments were deepened through the incorporation of integrationist insights, not least the integrationists' lay-oriented perspective, quoted above, in which "expertise" in linguistic matters is not equated with the self-serving professionalism that marked the rise of the subject to academic independence in Western universities during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (HARRIS, 1998, p. 19). Two of these critical encounters (COLLINS; JONES, 2006; JONES, 2007) went on to show how "expertise in linguistic matters" is developed and exercised by lay people in their battles to understand, expose, research, and resist, by intellectual and practical means, the impositions of governments and state forces. Jones (2007) therefore concluded:

[...] there is no such thing as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the sense of a method of political or ideological critique based on the application of conventional linguistic constructs. All of us, as language users and makers, are continuously engaged in the critical examination of and response to communication in our everyday lives. The article argues that this constant critical engagement with communication cannot be captured or accounted for by conventional linguistic methods and concepts. Such critical engagements involve the interrogation and evaluation, in moral, political, and practical terms, of novel communicative acts in their unique, contextualized links with other aspects and dimensions of conduct. The abstract entities of conventional linguistics and pragmatics allow no critical purchase on this integration of communicative behaviour into the fabric of our social lives. The article argues that the attempts by Critical Discourse Analysts to build a method of political and ideological critique out of such entities is misguided and inevitably leads to a distorted view of the role of communication in society and of the workings of social processes more generally.

b) *Vygotsky's cultural-historical psychology and the evolution of "cultural man"*

My second example comes from research on the tradition of "cultural-historical psychology", primarily developed by Lev Vygotsky and often referred to as "Marxist psychology" (JONES, 2019). The interpretation of Vygotsky's oeuvre and its relevance today is undoubtedly a highly complex and controversial area, partly because of Vygotsky's own dissatisfaction with his successive formulations of psychological principle and his consequent rapid and sometimes drastic shifts in approach and method up to and including his very final days. All the same, it is instructive to examine key stages in the shaping of his unfinished project for their problematic assumptions and conceptions of human cognitive development.

One such case concerns *Studies in the History of Behavior: Ape, Primitive, Child* (VYGOTSKY; LURIA, 1993), a book originally published in 1930 and which gives perhaps the most substantial account of the philosophical rationale and scientific orientation of cultural-historical psychology up to that point. In this work, Vygotsky and Luria are concerned to trace the psychological history of what they call "a psychological type of modern cultural man, *the European or American*" (VYGOTSKY; LURIA, 1993, p. 81, my emphasis). At another point, the description of "cultural man" is even more specific – "an average modern Parisian" (VYGOTSKY; LURIA, 1993, p.169), in contrast with "an Australian who is at a very primitive stage of development" (VYGOTSKY; LURIA, 1993, p. 169). Though "[...] the cultural man is inferior to the latter with respect to almost all the simplest psychological functions", they argue, nevertheless, that "we still know that the mental life of the latter is much richer, that he is much more powerful, and that often he is much better oriented in his environment and controls the environmental phenomena".

Vygotsky and Luria argue that such cultural "primitivism" is most clearly exhibited *linguistically*: the language of "[...] primitive man is more meagre in means, cruder, and less developed than the language of a cultural man" (VYGOTSKY; LURIA, 1993, p. 108). In particular:

The wealth of vocabulary is directly dependent on the concrete and precise nature of primitive man's language. In the same way that he photographs and reproduces all his experience, he also recalls it, just as precisely. He does not know how to express himself abstractly and conditionally, as the cultural man does. (VYGOTSKY; LURIA 1993, p. 110)

In this context, it is unnecessary to dwell on the familiar racist and colonialist tropes that these arguments and descriptions embody and expound (SMITH, 2012). However, it is worth noting that these tropes themselves – particularly the distinction between the "concrete" language of the "primitive" and the "abstract" language of the "cultural" person – rely completely on long-standing philosophical prejudices within Western thinking to do with the way in which language expresses, or mediates between, the mind and "reality". Harris critically examined such traditions and their continuing grip on views of cognition, including within Vygotsky's research, in his book on literacy and rationality (HARRIS, 2009; see also JONES, 2017b, 2020). Harris (2009) identified two problematic linguistic themes in the philosophical standpoint informing the cultural-historical account.

Firstly, Harris demonstrated how a whole methodology of comparative psychological research can take its inspiration from a segregationist view of language. Here the "abstract" use of words – words disconnected from any context of directly useful action – is valorized over use of words as part of a practical endeavour. Secondly, and allied with this first, we note the representationalist or "surrogational" assumptions about language: word meanings are arranged on a hierarchical and value-laden scale of representational scope in terms of the degree of *generality* with which aspects of the world are mirrored conceptually. Thus, the words of primitive peoples represent individual, concrete objects (like a photograph) while the words of cultural people are abstract generalizations over many (or infinite) concrete instances. In this way, a ladder or scale of semantic/cognitive content from the low (concrete) to the high (abstract) is constructed and given an evolutionary significance for human historical development (JONES, 2017b).

Integrationism rejects both these inter-dependent positions. As Harris (2008, p. 111) puts it: "Words are in the first instance tools for living. The idea that they are tools for thinking is a prejudice derived from the way we have been educated" More particularly:

[...] languages are not systems for the expression of thoughts: the essential function of words is the contextualized integration of activities. From that integration come what are called the "meanings" not only of words but of the many varieties of non-verbal signs that human beings have developed. (HARRIS, 2008, p. 112)

We should also acknowledge that this Northern, colonizers' perspective on the cognitive capacities of so-called "primitive peoples", with its "concrete"- "abstract" dichotomy, is the same perspective which became entrenched in the Northern educational systems in respect of its own populations (cf PENNYCOOK, 1998), for instance in the theory of language deficit developed by Basil Bernstein with the help and support of linguists Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan (JONES, 2013).

4 CRITICAL COMMUNICATION STUDIES?

With the help of the examples above, I hope to have demonstrated a degree of alignment and confluence between demythologizing and decolonizing projects. Specifically, the range and depth of Harris's critical engagement with the Western language tradition from an integrationist perspective reveals fundamental problems and biases in the mythological foundations of that tradition that the decolonizing movement is also addressing from its own perspective and on the basis of its own pressing concerns and aims.

In this final section, I thought it might be useful to consider some possible implications of this confluence for a demythologized/decolonized field of language and communication research or curriculum of study which I refer to, tentatively, as "Critical Communication Studies".

First of all, such a field of study would be lay-oriented in the sense that we have already discussed, i.e., "expertise" in linguistic matters' is not regarded as the preserve of a Western educated elite. Here instead the emphasis would be on probing and challenging the Western (Northern) Eurocentric language myth through a combined focus on a) our communicational powers, their development, and exercise in our everyday lives, activities, and struggles and b) on the understandings of language and communication that different communities and cultures have developed across the world in articulating their own identities and aspirations including their abilities and potential as language-users.

Secondly, instead of teaching established linguistic frameworks, we would hear and engage with direct testimony about the communicational approaches and innovations of participants in contemporary popular movements with particular attention to their methods of challenge and resistance to the communicational agendas, means, and ideologies of dominant powers. In such discussion, we could certainly learn about CDA, for example, and try to use it, but this would be a critical endeavour, aimed at finding the limitations of CDA, its problematic assumptions, and biases, as well as any potential value.

And thirdly, a Critical Communication Studies would be not merely a study of the "language" of injustice – for example, the vocabulary and semantics of class and race hate and of misogyny - but an examination of the networks of communication processes in and through which structural injustice and inequality are produced and reproduced and actual and possible ways and means by which such networks can be subverted, transformed, destroyed or replaced.

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