



THE THEORY OF COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS AND ITS GENESIS

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Abstract: With the help of comparison, one can manage to find out the similar and dissimilar features. Comparison is related to a mental process. When something is compared with anything else, our brain works and acquires knowledge about the phenomena. As a result of comparison, we will be able to comprehend better, avoid confusion between things or terms and come to the precise conclusion.

All of our knowledge is the result of comparison of different things and their properties with other similar things and their properties. In linguistics we should distinguish internal and external comparison of languages. The latter is also called interlanguage comparison. Linguistic units beginning from phonemes (speech sounds) to texts are defined on the basis of internal comparison. External comparison means systematic comparing of two or more languages and in this case comparison becomes a method of linguistic investigation.

In linguistics there is a branch which deals with comparing languages. It is called Comparative Linguistics. It consists of three components that are Comparative-historical linguistics, Typology and Contrastive linguistics. Comparative-historical linguistics is also called "Comparativistics" [1].

Comparative linguistics is that branch of one, which deals with the study of languages in terms of their history, relatedness, and families and constructs new forms. Comparative linguistics looks at languages of one single family [2]. Comparative linguistics was originally called Comparative philology. It is a branch of linguistics which deals with language comparison and identify how languages relate historically. Comparative linguistics constructs language families and reconstruct proto-languages. Besides, it determines those changes all of which have resulted in the documented languages. To accomplish language classification there have been developed several methods all of which vary from simple inspection to computerized hypothesis testing. Those methods are considered to have been in a long development process.

According to U.Yusupov, the tasks of Comparative-historical linguistics, Typology and Contrastive linguistics are as follows:

Comparative-historical linguistics is characterized of being diachronic as it puts forward such tasks that are to reconstruct parent languages, parent forms, to establish kindship and the degree of kindship of languages, to investigate historical development of cognate languages, to develop the genealogical classification of the world languages. The great contribution to Comparative- historical linguistics was made by Franz Bopp and Rasmus Rusk because they were mostly concerned about comparing Indo-European languages. In addition, A.H.Vostokov, Jacob Grimm and those who lived in the XVIII - XIX centuries take a major role in contribution

of this branch of linguistics since A.H.Vostokov compared Slavonic languages, whereas Jacob Grimm worked on the study of comparison of Germanic languages.

The tasks of Typology are as follows:

- to classify the world languages;
- to determine linguistic universals which exist in all languages of the world; dominants that are in most of the languages; frequent units occurring in some languages; uniques that happens only in one or two languages;
- to define types of forms;
- to work out metalanguages so that one can compare languages [3].

Several well-known scholars, such as V.Humboldt, A.Shlaher, J.Greenberg, Yu. V.Rozdesvenskiy, B.Uspenskiy and many more are regarded as the representatives of Typology.

As to the tasks of Contrastive linguistics, it establishes comparison between mother tongue and the foreign language that is being learnt. Not only the Russian linguist V.N.Yartseva, but also Uzbek linguists J.Buranov and U.K.Yusupov are renowned for working out theoretical basis and foundations of Contrastive linguistics.

U.Yusupov further noted that the tasks of Contrastive linguistics are theoretical and linguodidactical that is practical.

We hereby mention several theoretical tasks of Contrastive linguistics determined by U.Yusupov:

- to establish similarities and differences between the languages compared;
- to fix the features of both languages escaped from the attention of linguists in the process of internal comparison of these languages;
- to define the tendencies existing in both language;
- to define the interlanguage equivalents;
- to fix loan elements, if the languages compared are permanently in contact with each other;
- to explain the reasons of the similarities and differences between the units compared as far as possible;
- to check the linguistic universals on the material of the languages compared.

Linguodidactic, in other words, practical tasks of Contrastive linguistics are as follows:

- to define whether the established similarities and differences between the units compared are methodically relevant or not, i.e. to define whether the established similarities and differences can be linguistic reasons for interlanguage interferences and facilitations. Doing so actually means defining the difficulties of the foreign language for those who are learning it;
- to define the interlanguage equivalents;
- to recommend foreign language teachers the cases when it is useful to use interlanguage comparison as a teaching method [4].

In contrast to Historical-Comparative Linguistics, the oldest branch of comparative linguistics, Contrastive Analysis is neither concerned with historical developments nor with the problem of describing genetic relationships [5]. As we have seen, in teaching foreign language, Contrastive linguistics takes a major role. However, it does not focus on the historical study of languages or their genetic relatedness.

Hereby we would like to note the distinction between Comparative linguistics and Contrastive linguistics. Comparative linguistics compares and contrasts genetically-related languages

diachronically, whereas Contrastive linguistics compares and contrasts languages which are genetically or culturally related. The goals of Comparative linguistics and Contrastive linguistics are different. Comparative linguistics mainly informs the linguistic theory in its diachronic aspects, though it may inform the linguistic theory in some way. Comparative linguistics is more concerned with comparing languages especially from a historical perspective. Contrastive linguistics has pedagogical goals in the field of translation and second language acquisition. In a word, we draw a conclusion that Comparative linguistics deals with the problems of identifying a common ancestor of languages.

The comparative study of Turkic languages has its long history and its founder is Makhmud Kashgariy who had deep knowledge about the basics of Arabic linguistics. It was Makhmud Kashgariy's work, "Devonu lug'otit turk" ("The Vocabulary of Turkic People") which is the earliest work on comparative linguistics in Central Asia dating back to the XI th century. The work is thought to be both a dictionary and a guidebook. It informs us a lot about geography, ethnography, grammar, folklore and history of Turkic people. Apart from that, the dialects as well as classification of the Turkic languages in XI century are involved.

A.Nurmonov noted that the emergence of comparative-historical linguistics is stated to date back to the XIX th century in the history of linguistics and Franz Bopp, Rasmus Rask, Jacob Grimm are renowned as its representatives by west linguists.

G'arb olimlari Mahmud Qoshg'ariyning "Devon"i bilan XX asrning bиринчи choragiga qadar tanish bo'lмаган. Agar tanish bo'lganlarida edi, uning tilshunoslikdagi xizmatlari oldida tiz cho'kkан va qiyosiy-tarixiy tilshunoslik yo'naliшlarining otasi sifatida Mahmud Qoshg'ariyni e'tirof etган bo'lardilar [6]. West scientists were not familiar with Mahmud Kahgari's "Devoni" until the first quarter of the twentieth century. If they had known his work, they would have regarded him as the father of comparative-historical linguistics admitting his contribution in linguistics. (Nazarova's translation)

In Central Asia Alisher Navoiy's work, "Muhokamat ul-lug'atayn" ("Thoughts on vocabularies") is the second one written on the basis of comparative linguistics. The main purpose of that book was to show that the Turkic language (Old Uzbek) was none the less potential than the Pharsi (the Persian language) for poetry and in some cases it is even superior to Pharsi". We can see that he made use of more than hundred Turkic words. It is worth mentioning one point is there were not Pharsi [7] equivalents at all.

Though there were not many comparative-historical investigations by linguists, we can exemplify the works of F.Abdullayev [8], I.Ismoilov [9] and Y.Abdurasulov [10] for comparative-historical studies.

In the study of language, the term philology is considered older. It was rather comparative and historical. A comparative study of languages identifies the similarities and differences within a family of related languages. With a historical study we can analyze the evolution of a family of languages as well as the changes which had within a particular language over a course of time. It was Saussure [11] who introduced time concept in language analysis. It is called diachronic if language changes are studied over a span of time. Further, if it is studied at a point of time, it is called synchronic.

Comparative linguistics was also formerly known as comparative grammar or comparative philology which deals with the involvement of the study of the relationships between two or even more languages so as to identify whether the languages have a common ancestor or not.

Comparative grammar was considered the most crucial branch of linguistics in the 19th century in Europe. Also called comparative philology, the study was originally stimulated by the discovery by Sir William Jones in 1786 that Sanskrit was related to Latin, Greek and German [12].

David Crystal defines comparative linguistics as a term used to characterize a major branch of linguistics, in which the primary concern is to make statements comparing the characteristics of different languages (dialects, varieties), or different historical states of a language [13]. According to Robert Beekes, comparative linguistics is the term we use to describe the study of the relationships which exist between such cognate languages [14]. From these definitions we can conclude that comparative linguistics is the science of studying relationships between languages, particularly cognate languages to find out their common ancestor and features that are shared.

We would also prefer to recall three principles according to which we compare and classify languages. The first and foremost, it is genetic classification. The aim of genealogical classification is to determine relationship of languages, especially, cognate (kindred) languages. In this classification the historical-comparative method is used's. The set of languages which they share and relate to a single ancestor, in other words, the proto-language of that family are regarded as the basic unit of this classification.

As for the areal classification, it compares languages regardless of their relationship so as to identify common elements of languages because of having mutual influence of languages that exist in an exact area. Borrowed elements in languages can be the object of this investigation. As we mention there are a number of elements, peculiarities of languages formed in a certain area as a consequence of having contacts mutually. The other classification is called typological or morphological one. With the help of this classification we can define mainly grammatical structure of the given language.

It should be mentioned that there had been several comparative analyses during the nineteenth century and we consider them historical because scholars tried to analyze the relationships of language families. For instance, they worked on not only such languages as Sanskrit, Latin, Greek, but on their antecedents as well. What is understood here is the protolanguage. In other words, protolanguage is a language from which such families originated and developed, as a result of which language groups in present time appeared.

The comparative method aims at establishing the isomorphic (alongside of allomorphic) features and on their basis the determining of structural types of languages under contrastive investigation. Attempts to establish the groups of kindred languages were repeatedly made from the XVI th century on. But a consistently scientific proof and study of the actual kinship (relationship) between languages became possible only when the historical comparative method of language study was created in the first quarter of the XIX th century. The historical-comparative method developed in connection with the comparative observation of languages belonging to the Indo-European family and its appearance was stimulated by the discovery of Sanskrit. The development of comparative method dates back in the course of the 19th century and it was used [15] for the study of other language families. More precisely, this method was for the use of reconstructing Proto-Indo-European. In a word, comparative method is such a helpful method with the help of which one can reconstruct of an earlier languages relying on comparing words or expressions of different languages.



The relations between the languages of the Indo-European family were studied systematically and scientifically at the beginning of the XIXth century by Franz Bopp, Rasmus Kristian Rask, Jacob Grimm, Alexander Khristoforovich Vostokov and others. These scientists not only made comparative and historical observations of the kindred languages, but they defined the fundamental conception of linguistic kinship and created the historical-comparative method in linguistics. The appearance of this method marks the rise of linguistics as a science in the strict sense of the word. After that the historical-comparative study of the Indo-European languages became the principal line of European Linguistics for many years to come.

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