

## FROM THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Cognitive Studies | Études Cognitives, a journal published by the Slavic Publishing Center of the Institute of Slavic Studies PAS, publishes articles in English and French only, which is why its title is also bilingual — an English and French one. The profile of our yearbook is focused on describing semantics and contrasting Slavic and non-Slavic languages in the cognitive approach. In this respect, this is the only journal with such a profile which describes Slavic languages.

Contrastive linguistics is known to be a field of synchronous linguistics with both theoretical and practical applications. Contrastive studies which deal with the analysis of differences and similarities between languages conducted for practical (didactic or translation-oriented) purposes are a field of **applied** linguistics, connected first of all with foreign language teaching. **Among them, one can also single out the stream of research on machine translation theory. Theoretical** contrastive studies concern universal linguistic issues, and employ language examination methods aimed at distinguishing within the studied languages, treated equally, all elements which are either common or different for them. With respect to the research methods employed, as well as the **synchronous approach** used, theoretical contrastive studies are close to typological studies, but differ from the latter in the aim of description: **typological** studies lead to classification of languages, while contrastive studies — to systemic analysis of the languages under comparison.

The strict distinction between the morphological, syntactic and lexical levels in traditional grammars did not allow for a comprehensive treatment of semantic language phenomena. However, already in the *Bulgarian-Polish Contrastive Grammar* (1988–2009) the authors consciously resigned from a strict division into grammatical and lexical levels, and as a result contributed many new observations regarding the studied phenomena in Polish and Bulgarian. Here, this new approach is referred to as cognitive one. On the one hand, cognitive studies are understood as theoretical semantic studies which allow for taking into consideration linguistic means from different levels: both lexical and grammatical ones, but seeing them as a single whole. On the other hand, when necessary, we make use of broader language situations where the studied phenomena are unambiguously understood by language users. Those situations also always take into account the language

user's state and his/her attitude to the conveyed contents, especially the modal ones. A comprehensive cognitive description of language phenomena plays a very important role in translations from one language to another. Thanks to such an approach — for example — a translator translating texts from Bulgarian will learn that in Polish there is a semantic category of definiteness/indefiniteness, which the traditional grammar does not mention. He/she will also learn what lexical means in Polish convey the different meanings expressed with the morphological means of the same category in Bulgarian. In other words, the translator will know how to translate the Bulgarian article. In the cognitive approach, there is no room for the mistaken conclusion that Polish allegedly has no modality known as imperceptiveness and that this is a modality typical of Bulgarian only, which is stressed by the traditional grammar. Imperceptive modality expresses the speaker's doubts as to the content he/she is uttering. In Bulgarian it is known as *преизказност* and *преизказно наклонение*, and is described as morphological means for expressing the state of speaker's ignorance. In Polish, similar content is expressed lexically using the expressions *jakoby*, *ponoć*, as well as the present (*czas teraźniejszy* / *praesens*) and past (*czas przeszły* / *praeteritum*) of the verb *mieć* appearing with an infinitive.

The aforementioned phenomena are illustrated by the following examples:

Bulg. *X бил добър лекар.* and Pol. *X jest ponoć dobrym lekarzem.*  
 Bulg. *X бил завършил филология.* and Pol. *X miał ukończyć filologię*

Translation based on traditional grammar is often done blindly, and its quality depends solely on the translator's intuition and experience. The comprehensive treatment of semantic phenomena in natural languages proposed here can have great impact on translations, including machine ones. Regarding the latter, the reader is referred to works under the European Grant titled "Mondilex" (Koseska, Mazurkiewicz 2009)<sup>1</sup>, (Dimitrova, Koseska 2009)<sup>2</sup>, as well as to the project "Semantics and contrastive linguistics with a focus on a bilingual electronic dictionary" realized jointly by ISS-PAS and IMI-BAS, and to the currently developed electronic Bulgarian-Polish online dictionary.

The composition of our Editorial Committee is and will be changing. At present, we have the honour to present new Committee members. They are:

Prof. ROMAN LASKOWSKI — Institute of Polish Language PAS, Warsaw School of Social Psychology. He is a Professor Emeritus of Göteborg University and Jagiellonian University in Krakow, and a specialist in Polish and Slavic studies and

<sup>1</sup> Koseska, V., Mazurkiewicz, A. (2009). Net Net Based Description of Modality in Natural Language (on the Example of Conditional Modality). In Shyrov, Dimitrova (Eds 2009), *Organization and Development of Digital Lexical Resources*. Dovira Publ. House, Kyiv, Ukraine, pages 98–105.

<sup>2</sup> Dimitrova, L., Koseska-Toszewa, V. (2009). Bulgarian-Polish Corpus, *Cognitive Studies* / *Études Cognitives*, vol. 9, SOW, Warsaw, pages 133–142; Dimitrova, L., Koseska-Toszewa, V. (2009). Classifiers and Digital Dictionaries, *Cognitive Studies* / *Études Cognitives*, vol. 9, SOW, Warsaw, pages 117–132.

language theoretician. Prof. Laskowski is also a Member of the Committee on Linguistics PAS, corresponding member of the Faculty of Philology of Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (Polska Akademia Umiejętności; [http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polska\\_Akademia\\_Umiejętności](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polska_Akademia_Umiejętności)), member of the Royal Scientific Society in Göteborg, and member of the Czech Linguistic Society. He is the author of papers on dialectology, history of the Polish language and contemporary Polish language. He is also the author of the first monography on the [http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fonologia\\_generatywna](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fonologia_generatywna) in Poland, written in Polish (*Studia nad morfonologią języka polskiego*, 1975), as well as the author of Academic Grammar of Polish<sup>3</sup>, Editor of *Biuletyn Polskiego Towarzystwa Językoznawczego* (Bulletin of Polish Linguistic Society) and *Studies in Polish Linguistics*.

The second new member of our Editorial Board is Dr LUDMILA DIMITROVA, who holds the position of Associate Professor in Informatics at the Institute of Mathematics and Informatics, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Her main research activities and interests include computational and contrastive linguistics, language technologies, multilingual digital resources (corpora, lexical databases, dictionaries). She is an author of scientific publications and studies in the field of natural language processing. Dr Dimitrova is the coordinator of the ongoing EC project MONDILEX *Conceptual Modelling of Networking of Centres for High-Quality Research in Slavic Lexicography and Their Digital Resources* ([www.mondilex.org](http://www.mondilex.org)).

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<sup>3</sup> Grzegorzcyk, R., Laskowski, R., Wróbel, H. (Eds.) *Gramatyka współczesnego języka polskiego* [Contemporary Polish Grammar] (1984/1998), Warszawa.