

Hartwig Kalverkämper: *Textlinguistik der Eigennamen*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta 1978. 454 pp. 56, - DM.

This work is a revised version of Kalverkämper's (K.'s) Ph.D. dissertation of 1976 (University of Bielefeld). It is the author's intention to apply the models and methods of modern textlinguistics to the grammar of proper names and to show that from a textual and pragmatic perspective more adequate solutions can be suggested for a number of theoretical and practical problems concerning the use of proper names in natural languages. His conception of textlinguistics is influenced in particular by German authors such as R. Harweg and H. Weinrich (cf. p. 23), and he believes that from this orientation it should be possible to find something like a uniform linguistic methodology for the traditionally heterogeneous field of onomastic sciences. According to K.'s view a concentration on the analysis of the functions of proper names in texts can serve as an integrating focus for different interdisciplinary interests that have always been associated with the study of proper names. In his work, K. pays special attention to sociological, psychological, anthropological, and juridical themes as being of interdisciplinary interest for his topic (cf. p. 22).

The empirical basis for the textual analyses consists of more than seven hundred French and German books for children (cf. pp. 23, 74, 397ff.) and of questionnaires, which the author had distributed at French and German schools and from which he received information concerning the names of school children (cf. p. 74). Most of K.'s analyses are comparative, contrasting the data from the French language with the data from the German language as well as contrasting the grammars of both languages. In many cases K. lays special emphasis on the French language and grammar.

In the first chapter K. provides a survey of a number of different disciplines and their respective interests in proper names, before, in the second chapter, he presents his outline of an analysis from a textlinguistic point of view. In the sections 2.1 to 2.7 he deals (among others) with the following topics: proper names as linguistic signs, the conventionality and the arbitrariness of proper names, the identifying and individuating functions of proper names, the semantics of proper names (problems of reference, the complementarity of extension and intension, translation of proper names, connotations of proper names, mystification by proper names, the so-called physiognomy of proper names), classes of proper names.

The largest section of the second chapter (2.8, pp. 129–384) is devoted to the question of how linguistic signs are marked as proper names in their

respective textual contexts — or rather in K.'s terminology, how linguistic signs-in-use are transposed into proper names by certain contextual features. The concept of transposition is applied to 'changes' from appellative names to proper names as well as to 'changes' from proper names to appellative names (cf. ch. 2.8.3). Further differentiations are made by different classifications of the contextual features which are thought to be responsible for the transposition. K. draws a difference between inner-linguistic features (ch. 2.8.1.) and extra-linguistic features (ch. 2.8.2.). Among the inner-linguistic features he differentiates between semantic features (use of verbs like French *s'appeler*, German *heißen* or nouns like French *Monsieur*, German *Herr* or of proper names in the direct linguistic context of the signs) and morphological/syntactical features (flexion, composition, derivation) and also phonological features (unusual or foreign phonemes etc.). Among the extra-linguistic features for transposition K. distinguishes between features produced by the name-bearer (e.g. name plates) and graphematic features (e.g. capital letters, inverted commas etc.).

In his chapter on transpositions from proper names to common nouns (2.8.3) K. concentrates on different kinds of metaphorical use made of proper names and on lexicological consequences to be drawn from these uses. He also reflects on rhetorical and textual devices which can be used to prevent the transpositions in question (cf. 2.8.3.3.). In 2.8.3.4. K. gives a résumé of his central ideas, and in 2.8.3.5. he deals with linguistic and legal as well as juridical problems concerning the use and registration of trade-marks. K.'s chapter on trade-marks as well as his reflections on the registration and administrative identification of persons by numbers (pp. 43–49) are very informative, and they show that there is a lot of work to be done in the interdisciplinary field between linguistic (onomastic) sciences and jurisprudence. (A critical annotation: among the nearly exhaustive citations of the relevant literature I do not find a reference to J. Praninskas, *Trade Name Creation. Processes and Patterns*. The Hague, Paris: Mouton 1968.)

In chapter 3, K. supplies a short account of macro-textological concepts for the analysis of proper names. He classifies his own method as micro-textological, a classification that will be further described and analysed below in connection with K.'s concept of transposition. In chapter 4 K. provides a list of selected titles from his corpus of children's books. Chapters 5–7 comprise the extensive indices of linguistic (onomastic) literature, of persons, and of linguistic (onomastic) topics.

This short survey of the contents of the work gives an impression of the wide range of topics dealt with by K. There is no doubt that K.'s work is one of the most important books in the field of theoretical onomastics that

appeared in the 1970s. K. gives a comprehensive account of the 'state of the art', and, for many questions concerning the grammar of proper names, he suggests new and valuable solutions. But beyond the manifold grammatical problems and the never-ending discussion in theoretical onomastics about the dichotomy between proper names and common nouns, K.'s main interest lies in a new textlinguistic approach to the traditional questions. In order to characterize this textlinguistic approach it will be necessary to have a closer look at K.'s concept of transposition.

K. derives his concept of transposition from Lucien Tesnière's concept of TRANSLATION. In Tesnière's dependency grammar TRANSLATION denotes a device by which words and syntagmas are shifted into syntactical positions which are not their original positions, or rather which are not their normal positions according to the word-classes (form-classes) they belong to. Through TRANSLATION an adjective, for example, can be used in the syntactical position of a substantive; a substantive in the position of a verb; a sentence in the position of a relative clause, etc. K. makes use of Tesnière's concept of TRANSLATION to describe and to explain the shift from appellative names to proper names and vice versa (cf. pp. 124-129). But instead of TRANSLATION he uses the term TRANSPOSITION because he does not wish to be committed to all of the implications of Tesnière's theory. (Of course, K. is aware of the fact that TRANSPOSITION is also a well-known term in linguistic theory, which has already been used for quite a number of different purposes (cf. p. 125), but these uses do not seem to disturb his own theory.)

For K. the concept of transposition is primarily a tool for classifying the immediate sentential context of proper names and of linguistic units which can be used as proper names and also a tool for classifying and describing the functions which a certain micro-context can exert on certain linguistic units. The central idea of K.'s textlinguistic approach is that in most cases the micro-context of a linguistic unit is responsible for the fact that a certain speaker/hearer understands that the linguistic unit in question is either meant to be a proper name or meant to be a common noun. To give an example: the sound-form of the German substantive *Freund* may be interpreted in certain contexts as being the sound-form of a common noun, e.g. in *Du bist mein Freund* ('You are my friend'). In other contexts the same sound-form may function as the sound-form of a proper name, e.g. in *Herr Freund hat mich besucht* ('Mr. Friend came to visit me'). It is K.'s main interest to find out and classify the linguistic units, which — like German *Herr*, English *Mr.* in our example — can serve as transponents in the transposition from common nouns to proper names (and vice versa). K. regards these units to be identified in the micro-context of the relevant linguistic signs as 'signals' given by the speaker to the hearer,

who has to decode the meaning (and perhaps even the intention) of what is being said to him. Thus K.'s analyses are primarily hearer-orientated (as some pragmatists would prefer to say), though K. emphasizes that he does not want to underestimate the role of the speaker in communication (cf. p. 126f.).

There are two main theoretical problems with K.'s textlinguistics of proper names which in my opinion deserve a closer inspection: (1) What exactly is the linguistic status of proper names according to K.'s view? Are proper names units of language (in Saussure's sense of *langue*), or are they units of speech (*parole*)? (2) To what extent can K.'s micro-textual analysis count as a textlinguistic approach which reaches beyond what traditional (context sensitive phrase structure) grammars could do in identifying and describing proper names in natural languages?

The first point can be explicated in connection with K.'s proposal for a definition of a proper name:

Ein Sprachzeichen ist dann ein Proprium, d.h. übernimmt propriale Kommunikationsfunktion, wenn es als solches intendiert (Sprecher-Perspektive) und über geeignete kontextuelle und situationelle (pragmatische) Signale auch als solches gesichert zu verstehen (Hörer-Perspektive) ist. (p. 386)

(My translation: 'A sign of language is a proper name, i.e. it takes over the communicative function of a proper name, if it is intended as such (speaker's view) and if it can also be positively understood as such with the help of appropriate contextual and situational (pragmatic) signals (hearer's view)').

In this definition of a proper name, which K. — it seems to me — gives only reluctantly in the final chapter of his book, he on the one hand continues to speak of a proper name as a sign of language (in Saussure's sense of *langue*), and on the other hand asserts that only the function of a sign (of any sign?) in certain contexts of actual use can qualify it to be perceived as a proper name by a speaker and/or hearer in an appropriate situation. Of course, K. is aware of the problem of deciding between proper names as units of language and proper names as units of speech, a very old problem that has occupied onomatologists ever since they tried to discern what proper names are in a natural language. K. cannot avoid the problem, because his textlinguistic theory is only semi-pragmatic and still so much indebted to traditionally structuralist views of language, that for him the problem cannot simply vanish beneath the new pragmatic views of the relationship between language and reality, as Wittgensteinians (perhaps the pragmatists *par excellence*) would like to have it. For Wittgenstein II the problem simply does not arise, because he has arranged his view of the relation between language and the world in such a way that there is no dichotomy between *langue* and *parole*. For him there

is a variety of language games with a variety of utterance-forms involved that a speaker can use in order to inform a hearer of what he is talking about in a situation of a special kind. In Wittgenstein there is no place for a proper name as a sign of language — even if it can only contextually be identified as such — to guarantee a safe relationship between language and the world.

I do not want to confront K. with a radically pragmatic view of language which would not appropriately take into consideration his deeply rooted structuralistic bias in his reflections on proper names. But I would like to argue that there is an important lack of consequence in his view of proper names: he has to admit that there is a class of proper names (namely Christian names, first names, given names) whose members are established as proper names qua *langue* and therefore do not need any context to be understood as proper names (cf. pp. 158, 387). This statement is in conflict with the view — expressed in the definition and elsewhere throughout the work — that units of language become proper names by virtue of their immediate contexts. I believe that K. would have come to the core of his dilemma and would perhaps have solved it, if he had paid more attention to the special semantics of proper names. The clue to the semantics of proper names in natural languages lies in the acts of 'baptism' with which speakers provide new rules of reference for selected parts of the community of the users of a language, and thereby contribute to the constitution of objects. If K. had recognized this point he also would perhaps have been able to give an explication of the speaker's intention (cf. the definition of a proper name) to use a sign as a proper name.

The second theoretical problem I would like to raise concerns K.'s conception of textlinguistics. The fact that the concept of transposition is central in K.'s analyses shows that he is only interested in the immediate context of linguistic units that are candidates for proper names. There are only very few passages in K.'s work in which his discussions reach beyond the micro-context of proper names and also take into consideration transphrastic features of grammar and semantics as well as situational components of communication (cf. e.g. pp. 203f., 221, 327f., 331ff., 362), although the concept of situation seems to play an important role in the quoted definition of a proper name. K. finds no difficulty in illustrating most of his contextual analyses by *stemmas* in Tesnière's way of graphical representations for syntactic and semantic relationships. This is also an indication of the fact that K.'s textlinguistics confines itself to a range of analyses that does not essentially go beyond that which traditional context-sensitive grammars could do.

K. is well aware of the deficiencies of his textlinguistic conception. Thus

in his final chapter (pp. 385–396) he gives a prospect of what in his opinion a macro-textology for proper names should try to work out, e.g. what is the function of proper names at the beginnings of (fictional) texts? In which way are the referents of proper names fixed in/by texts? What are the relevant textual relations between proper names and common nouns and between proper names and pronouns?

To sum up: K.'s work is thorough and informative in its micro-textological analyses. It gives a competent and nearly exhaustive survey of what has been achieved in this field of onomastics so far. Beyond this it is a first step towards a macro-textology of proper names. The work should be consulted by anybody who is interested in the relations between onomastics and linguistics.

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