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## **APHORISMS AS MEANS OF INTERPRETING OF LINGUISTIC TERMS: PECULIARITIES OF DEFINING**

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**Abstract:** The article analyzes the peculiarities of aphorisms functioning in linguistic scientific discourse. Linguistic aphorisms have been identified as individual authorial utterances that reflect subjective interpretation of linguistic terms. Over seven hundred aphoristic utterances were taken from scientific, academic, reference and fiction books, as well as from collections of aphorisms, where the linguistic terms have been presented. They serve as the material for research. Applied here are methods of targeted sampling, cognitive analysis and quantitative analysis, as well as descriptive method. A primary aim was to differentiate between two types of definitions of linguistic terms: scientific ones (i.e. the utterances of the primary nomination) and fictional ones, which serve the purpose of secondary nomination.

The scientific definitions render the essential and core features of linguistic terms, while the fictional ones focus on the indirect and peripheral term characteristics determined by author's communicative and pragmatic goal. Defining of linguistic terms through aphoristic utterances has been viewed as a unity of semantic, pragmatic and cognitive aspects. The research findings distinguish between aphoristic definitions-elucidations and definitions-interpretations, depending on either objective-logical or expressive-stylistic information dominance. Aphoristic utterances created by linguists have been viewed as the definitions-elucidations characterized by high level of reference and frequent use of linguistic terminology that bring them closer to the logical designations or scientific definitions. Associative and metaphorical thinking forms the background of definitions-interpretations, typical for writers' discourse. Therefore, their utterances have been considered as artistic definitions of linguistic terms, that are the means of additional semantization of corresponding notions. Such aphorisms illustrate anthropological approach to the analysis of linguistic phenomena.

The secondary aim was to trace the ways of rendering the meaning of linguistic terms through aphoristic utterances. The following types of aphoristic definitions have been singled out considering the modes of explaining linguistic terms: descriptive definitions, comparative definitions (simile), definitions based on either semantic opposition or similarity.

**Keywords:** aphorism, aphoristic background, definition-elucidation, definition-interpretation, nomination, linguistic term.

## 1. Introduction

Aphorism as a linguistic phenomenon has always aroused interest of researchers in various fields of study, including psychology, philosophy, literary studies and linguistics (Fedorenko and Sokolskaya 1990; Geary 2005; Hui 2019 et al.). The wide scope of interpretations of essential features of this phenomenon explains different approaches to its study: structural-functional, linguistic-stylistic, pragmatic, cognitive, intertextual etc.

However, nowadays the lingual status of aphorisms, their categorical features, selection criteria and classification as well as other aspects remain debatable. Some scientists view them as phraseological units (Gavrin 1971; Kunin 1996), others regard aphorisms as paremiology elements (Sharmanova 2002), but the vast majority consider aphorism studies to be a separate branch of linguistics (Fedorenko and Sokolskaya 1990; Ivanov 2019; Plotnikav 1994; Vereshchagin and Kostomarov 2005 and others).

Aphorisms as a writer's idiolect units have been widely researched as well. In this context, the phrase "linguistic aphorism" is used to define the author's individually formulated term definitions, which conveys subjective vision of a linguistic notion figuratively and supplies additional information about its usual meaning.

Despite the volatile status of aphorisms, researchers agree on genre requirements: informative conciseness, thought generalization, didacticism, expressiveness, precision, communicative clearness, completeness and memorability.

While studying linguistic aphorisms, special emphasis is given to semantic, grammatical, structural and stylistic peculiarities of these language units from the viewpoint of their function in fiction, mass-media, political and epistolary discourses. However, the problem with using aphoristic utterances in scientific paradigm requires special attention. Davis, an outstanding American sociologist of culture, traces the origin of aphorism back to Antique times when it was first used in a scientific context as the title of Hippocrates's book of medical observations. "Later aphorism eventually expanded to include principles of morality and philosophy. Finally, philosophers disconnected it from its scientific origins, distinguishing between aphorism [...], axiom [...], theorem [...] and hypothesis [...]" (247).

Nowadays, as a Belarusian linguist Ivanov states, formulation of scientific truths in any area of knowledge still may be regarded as aphorism (11). However, Russian language researchers Fedorenko and Sokolskaya view aphorisms as the intermediary units between literature and science, emphasizing, that “expressiveness and imagery bring aphorisms closer to fiction, while their capacity to synthesize thoughts and establish connection between phenomena, along with accuracy and conciseness affiliate them with science” (75).<sup>1</sup>

Scholars have studied the application of aphorisms, though partially (Onishchenko 2010; Trusov 2008 etc.). Meanwhile the investigation of peculiarities of representing linguistic terms by means of aphorisms leaves much to be desired.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to study the theoretical background of the problem in question and single out the peculiarities of interpreting linguistic terms by separate authors through analysis of corpus of aphorisms. We also want to trace the most frequently used terms and the means of rendering linguistic information.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

It is important to establish the correlation between term and notion and their definition. Undoubtedly, the scientific terminology is definitional by nature, meaning that every term as a special word or word combination has its definition. Thus, the specific content of a notion, designated by a term, becomes clear through its definition – short description of the essential features of the notion. Accordingly, “definition refers both to the notion and the word-term which denotes it” (Superanskaya 1976: 75).

Aphorisms are nominative units. However, Vereshchagin and Kostomarov, representatives of the Russian school of linguistics, suggest differentiating between nominal and non-nominal information within an aphoristic utterance. Nominal information is responsible for revealing the denotative meaning of an aphoristic utterance. Non-nominal semantics of aphorism includes meanings of component words that, by their turn, involve whole complexes of background knowledge. Scientists define the information irrelevant to nominative semantics of an aphorism as aphoristic background. It includes different associations with a language unit: time and circumstances of its appearance, its author and background knowledge etc. (194).

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<sup>1</sup> The translations from Ukrainian, Russian and Belorussian literature and specialist literature are our own throughout the article.

Depending on the aim and means of defining, the scientific corpus of linguistics is represented by various types of definitions (real and nominal, verbal and visual, semantic and syntactic, analytical and synthetic, genetic, contextual, operational etc.). In this context, aphoristic definitions also may refer to the linguistic terminological system.

Scientific definitions and corresponding aphoristic definitions can be viewed as correlative pairs. By nominative feature, they correlate as units of primary and secondary nomination; by the degree of semantic dominant expression – as logical and figurative; by correspondence to language norm – as usual and occasional; by stylistic affiliation – as scientific and fictional:

*A dictionary definition: Orthography is a set of commonly recognized and compulsory rules that establish the ways of representing language in writing (Ukrainian Language. Encyclopedia 410) – (This aphorism renders primary nomination and is logical, usual and scientific by character);*

*Aphoristic definition: Orthography is, basically, the language legislation (Khomiak) (This aphorism reveals secondary nomination and is figurative, occasional and fictional by character).*

Defining is a logical process by its nature. Scientific elucidations are the examples of logical definitions where the semantics of terms is revealed from the viewpoint of factual knowledge and displays generalized scientific experience. They represent denotational meaning of a notion, highlighting its essential and central features, but do not render the complete information about it:

*Phoneme is the smallest phonic unit of speech that serves to create and differentiate words and their forms (Ukrainian Language. Encyclopedia 699).*

Such definitions are typical for linguistic encyclopedias, philological thesauri and other reference books.

Unlike scientific elucidations, the aphoristic utterances are individual authorial units, and reflect the subjective comprehension of a linguistic term by the author.

Being an original thought, aphorism is opposed to a doxa, the common opinion. This explains somewhat paradoxical, unique or unusual nature of the aphorism. Often an aphorism is associated with its creator, who presented it either in written form or orally to a public (Baiaş 2015: 2268).

By its logical and semantic content, this type of definitions is similar to reflection or opinion and renders subjective interpretation of already known linguistic notion, but realized, recognized and reconsidered

anew. This enables to treat aphorism from the perspective of anthropological approach to analysis of linguistic phenomena, which is being actively discussed in modern scientific research. Thus, it is important to take into account the pragmatic intention of the author while analyzing an aphoristic utterance. We agree with Shabat-Savka, who stated that the category of communicative intention is characterized by duality: it includes both the content level (i.e. speaker's intention to inform, retell, emotionally respond to something, evaluate etc.) and level of form (i.e. verbalized content) rendered by lexical, morphological and syntactic constructions (194).

Some scientists suggest that certain linguistic terms do not have a generally approved way of application and are used in different contexts (Golovin and Kobrin 1987: 138). Their key intention purpose is not the definition itself, but rather the reflection from the perspective of author's intention. It is often determined by various factors, e.g. experience, scientific background, ideology and personal/ social/ cultural/ expressive etc. components.

The category and value of intention has been characterized in Shabat-Savka's research as well. The scholar describes this phenomenon as the direction of consciousness and the target at which thinking process is aimed. In the linguistic discourse communicative intention is viewed as "the illocutionary power of expression", being an integral feature of human life. It also serves as motivation for speech activity (194).

Aphoristic definitions in scientific texts differ considerably from interpretations of linguistic notions in writers' fiction works, in their speeches and interviews. Trusov suggests that defining in fiction is just an imitation of logical definition and is the result of synthesizing logical-analytical and associative-metaphorical thinking. Defining in fiction is produced applying mental operation diametrically opposite to the scientific language compression (19). Davis claims that "the humanities have increasingly diverged from the sciences over the question of whether to focus on what text asserts about the objective world or suggests about the subjective world viewer" (256). Gray defines aphorism as a prose genre, "in which in a strictly compressed textual space, metaphorical and metonymical drives of a language and thought enter into an exaggerated dialectical interplay". It reveals "the dialectical relationship between creative association and logical order" (50).

Franko stated (as cited in Hotsynets 2013: 77), that aphorism accompanies the process of associative thinking, when the semantic field broadens and covers primary notional meaning with secondary



expressive one. In this way, logical perception comes into play simultaneously with intuitional and sensitive one.

Davis claims, "aphorisms refer not only forward and outward to the world they ostensibly concern but also backward and inward to their creator" (Davis 1999: 256).

Authors use imagery vocabulary as outer style "inclusions", which proves "the unity of emotional and sensitive perception of reality and logical cognition" (Grishechkina 2011: 98).

Taranenko explains the process of association applied while putting linguistic terms into words, as follows: during the process of semantic composing one base joins another as a result of a certain association in the speakers' consciousness with the help of familiar notions. Moreover, these bases are not necessarily in contact syntagmatic position (53).

As Kulishkina suggests, "imaginative thinking based on the associative connections, which determines peculiar "aphoristic reception" i.e. individual "further-thinking", is the background for aphoristic utterances" (25).

A person's cognitive activity is not limited by exploration of primary, main features of objects and phenomena, but also requires connecting "differentiated, externally unrelated factors into united system and content" (Sazbandian 2008: 8). Baias even singles out an aphoristic function of a language, stating that "a brilliant aphorism is not intended to describe or explain reality, but to inspire human hearts and minds" (2270).

To sum up, we should distinguish between two major groups of definitions of linguistic terms: scientific and aphoristic ones, which differ considerably in terms of peculiarities of defining process. Scientific definitions present generalized experience in a logical way using factual information. Aphoristic ones have individual authorial character, are unique by nature and present information through author's subjective perspective. Therefore, aphoristic definitions resemble intellectual reflection, unlike scientific ones, which aim to render essential, central features of a term focusing on denotational meaning. Aphoristic utterances render the pragmatic intention of the author to respond emotionally and evaluate a defined phenomenon.

In individually authorial utterances, aphoristic background is employed, based on person's associations, relative interpretations. Thus, the process of defining in fiction may be considered as an imitation of logical thinking or rather a synthesis of logical-analytic and associative metaphorical thinking, involving additional semantization.

As Hui emphasizes, aphorism has a discontinuous and reflective nature (20) also stating that "minimal syntax of an aphorism gives it a

maximal semantic force” (3). The accent is shifted from knowledge to image, from notional to expressive dominant. However, we may view these processes as mutually complementing, as authorial utterances render notions, rather than concepts and disclose various shades of meaning. A notion is the combination of essential features of an object. A concept is the combination of different knowledge about the object.

**Table 1.** Features of definitions of linguistic terms

№	Features of definitions of linguistic terms	
	Scientific definitions	Aphoristic definitions
1.	Logical	Reflective
2.	Present factual objective information	Present subjective interpretation of the information
3.	Render generalized experience	Render author’s individual point of view
4.	Express denotational meaning of the term	Express connotational meaning of the term
5.	Are the primary nomination units	Are the secondary nomination units with additional semantisation

### 3. Corpus design and research methods

The research was prompted by the hypothesis that the interpretation of language terms by means of aphoristic definitions differs considerably from their definitions provided in the dictionaries. Respectively the following tasks have been set:

- to trace and outline the peculiarities and differences between scientific and aphoristic definitions;
- to ground the appropriateness of applying aphoristic definitions in scientific paradigm;

- to analyze the types of aphoristic definitions and means of presenting the linguistic information in individually authorial utterances using the corpus of aphorisms.

The corpus of our research comprises 773 linguistic aphorisms taken from textbooks, scientific books, fiction texts, writer's interviews, collections of aphorisms, which are used in the paper as examples and have been published as a separate collection (Author)<sup>2</sup>. The authors of these aphorisms are mostly scientists, writers, philosophers and other famous people.

To solve the tasks of the research the descriptive method has been applied to present the essential characteristics of the definitions as a set of their immanent features. Targeted sampling method was applied to choose a substantial aphoristic corpus from various texts in order to enhance the objectivity of the research results. Comparative analysis of dictionary definitions with the aphoristic ones allowed to distinguish the core features of the linguistic terms and the background knowledge about them. The cognitive interpretation method was applied to actualized the connotative meanings of the analyzed units. The qualitative analysis, represented in the diagrams, provided for comparing frequency of usage of various types of the linguistic aphorisms.

#### 4. Results and discussion

Within the meaning of every aphorism two levels of information representation can be distinguished: objective-logical and expressive-stylistic. As has been observed in every particular case of the analyzed aphoristic units, only one of them may dominate, either notional or expressive one. Therefore, considering the peculiarities of rendering content information we suggest to use terms *definitions-elucidations* and *definitions-interpretations* to distinguish between two types of linguistic aphorisms.

Aphoristic utterances are relative interpretations, as they explain terms through their relation to other words. As the authors of analyzed aphorisms are mostly linguists or writers, the aphoristic background of their definitions is considerably different. Here we provide the examples of *definitions-elucidations* of linguistic notions, found in scientific papers:

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<sup>2</sup> All detailed references to aphorisms used as illustrations in this paper are indicated in the book Author.

*Language is a united spiritual energy of a nation, which is beautifully expressed in certain sounds, and in such configuration, through interconnection with its sounds, is understood by all speakers and provokes in them approximately the same energy (Humbolt);*

*Orthography is the clothes of a written form of a literary language, built during centuries (Rusanivsky);*

*Phraseology is a kind of a pantry, storing differentiated remnants of once productive word forms, already nonmotivated components of phraseological units, idioms and wide spread quotes (Shmelyov);*

*Dialects are the real language of millions of people, they are the rivulets, that fill the rivers of literary languages with vital water (Dzuba);*

*Morphemes are the atoms of semantic structure, while the words are the molecules (Rusanivsky).*

In every given definition the author's attitude to the utterance is characterized by a high level of awareness and deep linguistic competence is marked by appropriate terminological vocabulary (*sounds, speaker, literary language, written form, productive word forms, non-motivated components, set expressions, semantic structure*). These definitions are targeted at a qualified recipient of scientific communication and have been created with particular pragmatic intention – to convey the essence of the described linguistic terms more clearly.

Therefore, such aphoristic definitions generalize the scientific truths expressively. Although “nonlinguistic” lexemes (*energy, clothes, pantry*) serve as prototypes of several aphorisms, their contextual surrounding allows retention of the words or images within a corresponding semantic field. The usage of professional vocabulary in aphoristic utterances by linguists allows declaring, that, regardless of their imagery, these elucidations tend to resemble logical definitions, as the notional component here noticeably dominates over expressive one. Thus, such explanations of linguistic terms through aphorisms are identified as aphoristic *definitions-elucidations*.

The following examples illustrate that aphoristic definitions-elucidations of linguistic terms resemble correlative scientific definitions by logical presentation of factual information which renders the denotational meaning.

*Language is not meant to express a ready-made thought, but to generate it (Potebnia);*

*A word is an echo of thought (Flober).*

The main idea in these two aphorisms can be verbalized as follows: *Word is a means of communicating thoughts*. The latter utterance is close in language register to scientific definitions.

The following aphorisms paraphrase the scientific definition of style as a particular system into which words and ideas are organized:

*Style is not only an order of words, but a certain order of thoughts (Bilodid);*

*A clear and simple style is the best style (Ohienko);*

The scientific idea that dialects reflect the historical development of a language is presented through the following aphoristic elucidations:

*Dialects are the witnesses of nation's history (Khaburgaiev);*

*Dialects are the memory of epochs, the echo of bygone times, witnesses of high language culture and imagery thinking of our ancestors (Plachynda).*

As can be seen from above examples, these aphorisms can easily be correlated with scientific definitions. Though these utterance do employ some images, however, they are strictly structured and their components predominantly embody notional information.

On the other hand, the following group of aphoristic definitions demonstrates that in *definitions-interpretations* imagination is employed more vividly, incorporating metaphorical images for rendering the content, focusing more on connotational meaning presented through author's subjective and individual perception:

*Language is the home of spirit (Heidegger);*

*Language is a picturesque belt, that has stretched from the past epochs into the future (Mushketyk);*

*Language is the fabrics, on which a person embroiders the patterns of life (Panch).*

In these examples language is metaphorically associated with home, belt, fabrics and the essence of language as a phenomenon is rendered via a set of images and associations, which are intentionally used by the authors to reveal their individual perception and understanding of the term by employing the semantics of additional words.

*A letter is the spiritual atom of the language material (Zharov).*

Here "atom" is used metaphorically to interpret the meaning of letter as though tiny but powerful means of constructing words and further the language.

*A word is the weapon. As any weapon it requires cleaning and maintenance (Rulsky).*

By interpreting word via the image of weapon the author intentionally expresses his allusion with powerful tool, that might be in danger of uselessness if not maintained properly.

The observations prove that in such aphoristic utterances the accent is shifted from the knowledge about the notion marked by a

linguistic term to its image. Here are more examples to support our findings:

*Language is not only an important means of communication, though significant. It is a deep source of artistic and aesthetic values, continual and inexhaustible accumulator of spirituality, emotions and high morals (Bortnyak);*

*Style is like a crystal; its purity is the warrant of a saying's brilliance (Hugo);*

*Speech is a river and language is its source (Skovoroda);*

*Word is a gene of culture, the soul of nation, alive memory about everything that we have and had (Radchuk).*

A writer's way of thinking and words applied provide space for imagination and creative interpretation of linguistic terms. Imaginative thinking based on associative relations serves as the background for such individually authorial aphoristic utterances. Image construction is based on associative semantic relations.

The author of an aphoristic definition, using metaphoric language "covers" the semantic-logical identification, i.e. linguistic term, with connotational meaning of notion generated by creative imagination.

This is how associative imaginary field is formed with a wide variety of micro images that go beyond inner language functions of a verbal sign, beyond purely linguistic terminology:

*Language is a song of soul expressed by words (Bilous);*

*Vowels are women, consonants are men (Balmont);*

*Words are coloured stones. It is not enough only to compile them, it is necessary to learn how to make ornaments with them (Vilde);*

*Dictionary is a linguistic prison, that separates words behind well fixed bars with a little chance of parole (Koontz).*

The information provided in such definitions is occasional and predetermined by a communicatively pragmatic purpose to evoke corresponding associations in reader's mind. This way potential semes in aphoristic definitions are brought to life. They emerge as a result of metaphorical reconsideration of the content of a linguistic notion. Thus, in aphoristic definitions of this group the expressive component dominates over notional one in the structure of linguistic terms.

Unlike scientists' aphorisms, that tend to resemble logical definitions, individually authorial fictional definitions acquire the form of linguistic terms interpretation (*definitions-interpretations*). Thus, the results of the research prove that elucidation of a word denoting a linguistic term simultaneously prompts its connection with a scientific notion and indicates its most common features, known by non-specialists i.e. spans general features of a scientific notion, adjusted to

general usage of such notion, that is marked by the term in a corresponding field (Lozova 2015: 72, Yermolenko 2003: 162):

*Language is the most important marker of national self-identification (Malkovych);*

*Word is the clothes of all facts and thoughts (Rylsky);*

*Dictionary is the world in alphabetic order (Frans).*

In the provided aphoristic utterances the peripheral semes are actualized, which are not paramount for conveying the meaning of a linguistic term. The common vocabulary is dominant here, as the texts are targeted at a wide circle of readers and their background knowledge. Therefore, these aphoristic *definitions-interpretations* may be viewed as means of additional semantization of linguistic notions. Consequently, scientific and fiction definitions can be considered as mutually complementing.

Another peculiarity of all aphoristic utterances is that the notion acquires features of a concept in the process of objectivizing the semantics of a linguistic term. A term “word” always has one notion, but it can have several meanings. A concept contains a complex of knowledge about a notion. For example, while interpreting the notional component of the term “language”, the aphoristic definitions display its versatile semantic content:

*Language is a genetic code of a nation (Ohienko);*

*Language is the basis of culture (Tykhyi);*

*Language is an interpretation of thought (Rylskiyi);*

*Language is the intellectual portrait of a person (Matsko).*

Every definition is true, though disclosing different sides of the same notion (language as indicator of national, cultural, cognitive and individual). Aphoristic definitions that verbalize the concept “Language” are the most common among the selected utterances.

The second widely spread thematic group comprises linguistic aphorisms representing the concept “word”:

*Word is a cell of thought, an artery of spiritual power (Voronko);*

*We comprehend world with word – it is a cognition tool, the most valuable gift of nature (Radchuk);*

*Word is an endless world, each one has not only sound, but also taste, scent and colour (Romen);*

*Word is a witness of history and times (Movchan);*

*Word is a business card of age, profession, social status, country, citizenship and homeland (Radchuk).*

Concepts actualize the significant content of a notion i.e. its reflection in the mind as a result of a person’s cognitive activity. They are units of thinking while meaning is a unit of semantics. As it has been

already mentioned, meaning is a part of a concept. Provided examples of aphoristic definitions demonstrate that in every particular case one of a few meanings of concepts “word” and “language” is activated. Thus, aphoristic definitions can be viewed as units of cognitive semantics, as they most vividly display mutual dependence between language and thinking. As Hui A. states, “beyond the horizon of language thinking can go no further” (16).

In the course of our research we have noticed, that aphorisms are used to interpret notions from various branches of linguistics:

*Morphemes – typical details of words (Panov);*

*A sound is something extremely peculiar in a language, its live flesh and blood (Matvienko);*

*We comprehend the world through a word – it is the tool of cognition, the most valuable gift of nature (Radchuk);*

*Grammar is brevity, the strict rules..., which subordinate the “troops” of words and make them obedient executants of its will through the power of logic (Vykhovanets);*

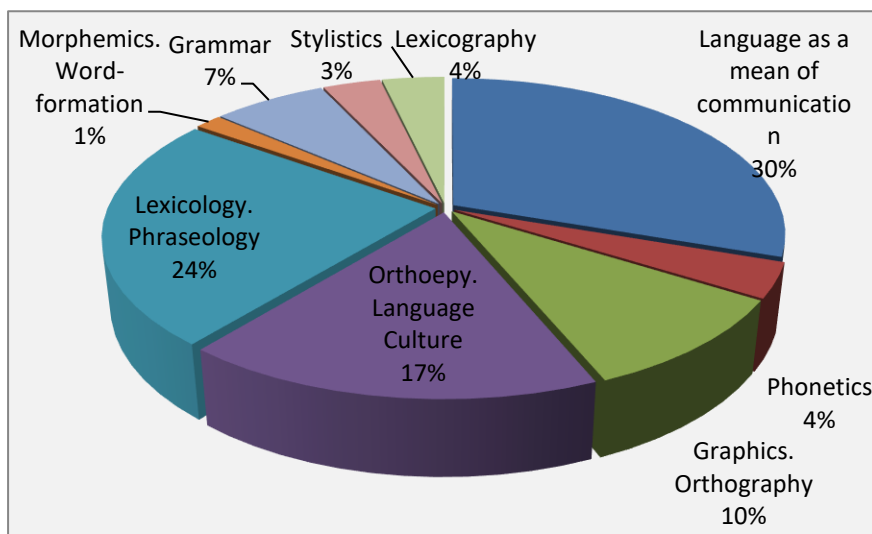
*Syntax is the eternal engine that moves the whole power of language (Vykhovanets);*

*Stylistics is the “soul” of every developed language (Budagov);*

*Style is not only the order of words but a peculiar order of thought (Bilodid);*

*Thesaurus is an endless circulation of acquired and lost words (Symonenko).*

**Figure 1.** Spheres of application of aphoristic utterances to define linguistic terms.





We have also observed that while defining linguistic terms various modes of presenting the information have been used by the authors and we have come up with the following classification. Thus, analyzed aphoristic definitions can be divided into four types:

- *definitions based on comparison (comparative definitions or simile):*

*A phraseological unit is like an ocean framed by native and foreign seas open to thousands of large rivers, small rivulets and life-giving springs of folk words, language detachments, professions, crafts, sciences, flows of apt utterances of writers (Tychyna);*

*Language is like an instrument: the more you play it, the better it sounds (Chornohuz);*

- *descriptive definitions that disclose the meaning of a term through its features:*

*Language is a reservoir of everything essential, it has no parameters, its boundaries never coincide with geography. It never fits into any existing formula. It is large, sweet, deep, reverberant and odorous... It is indefinable like God. It mesmerizes you... (Movchan);*

*Language is not only a means of communication, but something more important. Language consists of all the deep levels of a nation's spiritual life, its historical memory and the most valuable accomplishment of centuries. Besides, it is a music, a melody, colours, existence and contemporary artistic intellectual and mental activity of a nation (Honchar).*

- *definitions based on semantic opposition (antonymy):*

*Language is not material, but always materialized. Language is a live functioning of a nation's spirit, not only liveless signs (Movchan);*

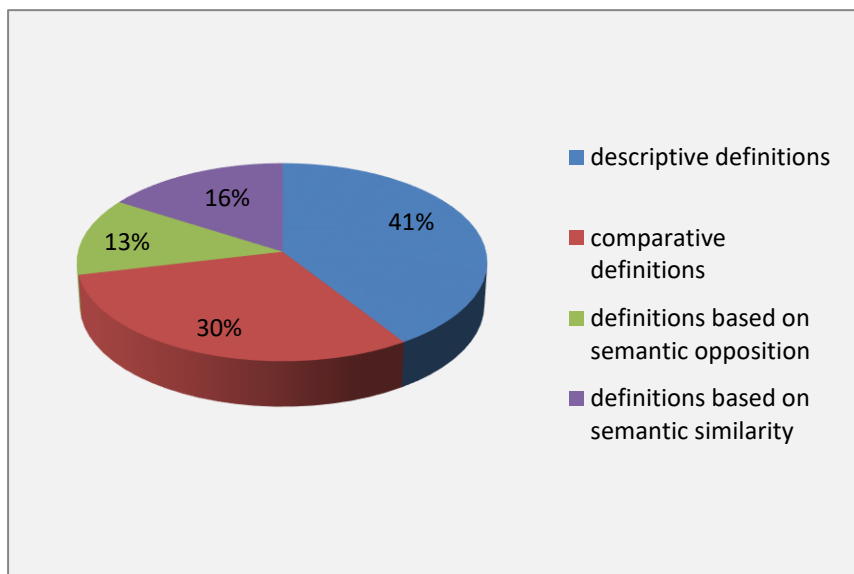
*Language is not only the sounds produced by certain muscles of certain organs. It is the voice of a nation, with a unique timbre and intonation, which is one of hereditary mechanism factors... (Oliytryk);*

- *definitions based on semantic similarity (synonymy):*

*Writing as "one of the most delicate chapters in history of culture" is the reflection of aesthetic values in this or that epoch (Borysenko);*

*Phraseological units are the sparkling treasures of language imagery, they convey the slightest shades of soul moves, add national colouring to the utterance (Uzchenko).*

These peculiarities can be explained by specific cognitive processes, which determine human comprehension.

**Figure 2.** Modes of presenting information in aphoristic utterances.

## 5. Conclusions

This study proved that within scientific discourse there is a wide range of aphoristic definitions dealing with linguistics. Having carried out the research into nature and peculiarities of the aphoristic utterances, which serve to define linguistic terms, we have come to the following conclusions. Linguistic aphorisms fall into two broad categories: definitions-elucidations and definitions-interpretations, which differ by their nature. Elucidations tend to have more logical and objective character, focusing on denotational meaning of a linguistic term.

Considering the fact that linguistic terms belong to a domain of science, this type of aphoristic utterances can be applied in scientific paradigm, though they differ from lexicographical fixations of the same terms. They do reveal the essence of the term via logical formal notions, but at the same time incorporate additional semantisation by reference to images and other notions. However, the second type, definitions-interpretations, prove to be more fictional by nature and do not carry any scientific discourse features. They contain more imagery and connotational information, which is predetermined by author's subjective intentions and perception of the terms.

Although the aphoristic definitions have been taken from various texts, they can be viewed as autonomous utterances, which cognitively demonstrate the comprehension of the essence of language

phenomena through personal perception, knowledge and experience, as well as axiological vectors.

They vividly demonstrate the interaction between lingual and psychocognitive phenomena, while authorship influences greatly the originality of the definition of the linguistic term if compared to its lexicographical fixation.

Judging from the results of the research, the following groups of aphoristic definitions related to the following categories tend to be most widely used:

“Language as a mean of communication” (30%), “Lexicology. Phraseology” (24%) та “Orthoepy. Language Culture” (17%). These categories are socially determined and always topical. We may conclude that the popularity of terms “language” and “word” in aphoristic utterances is predetermined by their value aspect in the language picture of the world.

Comparatively less popular (less than 10 %) aphoristic definitions describe the terms, characteristic of the discourse used by a narrower circle of language users, i.e. linguists and other specialists in the field of philology.

Special attention should be paid to the modes of interpreting of the linguistic terms in aphoristic utterances. Here the descriptive definitions (40,9 %) dominate, which are mostly used for describing the linguistic terms in the majority of scientific papers on linguistics.

Definitions based on comparison (30,4%) are more typical for fictional and popular science texts, as they stand out by their metaphorical nature and associational mode of thinking.

Definitions based on semantic similarity (16%) and opposition (12,7%) are used less often in the analyzed structures and are mostly used as contextual language units.

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### **АФОРИЗМЫ КАК СРЕДСТВА ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИХ ТЕРМИНОВ: ОСОБЕННОСТИ ДЕФИНИРОВАНИЯ**

В статье рассмотрены особенности функционирования афоризмов в научном лингвистическом дискурсе. Лингвистические афоризмы идентифицированы как индивидуально-авторские высказывания, в которых отражена субъективная интерпретация лингвистических терминов. Источниковой базой исследования послужили 773 афористические высказывания, которые были взяты из научных, академических, справочных и художественных изданий, а также из сборников афоризмов, в которых представлены лингвистические термины. Применены методы сплошной выборки, качественного и количественного анализа. Основная цель состояла в том, чтобы провести различие между двумя типами дефиниций лингвистических терминов: научными, которые являются единицами первичной номинации, и художественными, которые выступают единицами вторичной номинации.

Научные дефиниции передают существенные, ядерные признаки лингвистических понятий, а художественные акцентируют внимание на их косвенных, периферийных характеристиках, обусловленных коммуникативно-прагматической установкой автора. Определение лингвистических терминов через афористические высказывания рассматривается как единство семантического, прагматического и когнитивного аспектов. Результаты исследования побуждают различать дефиниции-определения и дефиниции-интерпретации в зависимости от доминирования объективно-логической или экспрессивно-стилистической информации. Афористические высказывания ученых-лингвистов можно рассматривать как дефиниции-определения, которые характеризуются высокой степенью референции, частым употреблением лингвистической терминологии, что приближает их к логическим определениям (научным дефинициям). В основе дефиниций-интерпретаций, свойственных писателям, лежит ассоциативно-метафорическое мышление. Поэтому их высказывания можно рассматривать как художественные дефиниции лингвистических терминов, которые служат средством дополнительной семантизации

соответственных понятий. Такие афоризмы демонстрируют антропологический подход к анализу языковых явлений.

Вторичной целью было проследить способы передачи значения лингвистических терминов через афористические высказывания. В связи с этим выделены следующие типы афористических дефиниций: описательные дефиниции, сравнительные дефиниции, дефиниции, основанные на семантической оппозиции или семантическом сходстве.

**Ключевые слова:** афоризм, афористический фон, дефиниция-определение, дефиниция-интерпретация, номинация, лингвистический термин.