
General and comparative linguistics

New Theory of the Origin of Languages

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Abstract

Linguistics is a field of science that attracts interest from virtually every sphere of human activity—most notably, computational linguistics.

The primary aim of the research described in this article was to develop a more advanced theory regarding the origin and evolution of language. The study employed a transdisciplinary approach alongside modern decision-making methods. Furthermore, the project sought to devise a concept that could transform the popular website [wiktionary.org](https://www.wiktionary.org) from a repository of static articles into an interactive system, thereby enabling linguists and the general public to more easily verify and evaluate the validity of proposed hypotheses.

The study's main outcome is a new theory on the origin of language(s) that simultaneously incorporates the majority of previously existing scientific theories.

Based on this theory, a three-stage model for the emergence and evolution of languages was developed:

1. During the initial stage of language emergence, the phenomenon of water played a fundamental role in shaping humanity's early vocabulary;
2. The subsequent, crucial stage in language evolution was driven by the domestication of fire;
3. Finally, once humans settled on the land and adopted agriculture—developments that eventually led to the founding of cities and states—the third stage of language evolution began, a process that continues to this day.

Unlike the author's other works, this article focuses specifically on the first point in the list above.

Conclusion: Water—a phenomenon unique in many respects—played a decisive role in the origin of language(s); the names given to various manifestations of water formed the foundation of the modern, vast, and diverse world of languages.

Keywords: linguistics; new theory of language origins; transdisciplinarity; modern decision-making methods; interactive wiki-dictionary concept.

Introduction

Linguistics is a discipline of interest to virtually every sphere of human activity. Since time immemorial, human activity has profoundly influenced—and continues to influence—the formation of linguistic resources and structures. Conversely, a rich language enables people to refine and improve all manner of activities.

Thus, the phenomenon of language is of interest not only to linguistics but to all other areas of human endeavor; naturally, computer science holds a significant place among them.

Some 45 to 50 years ago, the author became intrigued by a view prevalent among prominent Georgian linguists: it was widely held that identifying the primordial stock of languages that emerged in the distant past—and determining the etymology of their constituent elements—was a virtually hopeless task.

For instance, some of these scholars argued that it is impossible to ascertain why the Georgian word *mta* (meaning "mountain")—along with many other fundamental concepts—came to bear that specific name rather than another.

In our view, this pessimism stemmed from the fact that the vast body of knowledge amassed by specialists using the comparative-historical method failed, in this case, it did not yield tangible results.

The issue is that, while this method allows us to trace the process of language formation back through the centuries, it generally only reaches back a few millennia; beyond that point, the trail leading to the origins vanishes without a trace... into the boundless African jungles.

Main part

In the early 19th century, scientific understanding of the composition of matter was vague; indeed, not long before that, the renowned scientist—and future president of the French Academy of Sciences—Lavoisier, along with other academicians, had categorically rejected reports from French peasants about a meteorite falling from the sky. Their dismissal was based on an argument that seemed perfectly "logical":

"Stones do not fly through the heavens!" [1].

So, there is a time for everything...

It seems the time has now come to seek new paths to the origins of language...

A non-specialist in linguistics set himself a task (purely out of curiosity):

– What specific words were coined in the distant past by our ancestors who sought to transform themselves into "speaking humans"?

He was unaware that many enthusiasts had long attempted to solve this very problem—and even a more ambitious one:

To find the **First Word**—let us call it "Ariadne's thread"—capable of unraveling the vast, tangled web of today's linguistic world!

However, our approach turned out to be somewhat different:

1. First and foremost, the object of the search was changed. The objective set was not merely to find a specific word—a particular sound complex—within the language's primordial lexicon, but to identify the *Concept* that such a word designated.
2. To achieve this, we began by studying and analyzing facts known across various fields of human activity regarding this issue, employing both methods already established in those fields and others we developed ourselves during the course of our research.
3. Furthermore, we decided to alter the direction of our search; specifically, to uncover humanity's original vocabulary, we chose to rely on deduction rather than induction, aiming to arrive directly at the primal element that gave rise to the modern world of languages.
4. Transdisciplinarity and synergetics were selected as the primary research tools.
5. To gather arguments supporting our initial, "raw" hypotheses, we employed a combination of methods: panel research, de Bono's "Six Thinking Hats," CoRT, the Delphi method, and brainstorming.
6. A significant aid was the opening of a famous Shakespearean quote:
"Perhaps things that philosophers never even dreamed of... (continuing it like this) are known to us all, but only by drawing upon the collective subconscious."
7. Based on this premise, we created a questionnaire for groups of respondents (consisting primarily of students):
"Imagine that you are beings who have decided to transform into speaking subjects—*Homo loquens*—and found themselves in that habitat.
Write down three concepts (using any terms you like) that, in your opinion, they would need in order to 'call things by their names'—primarily to establish communication with their fellow beings."

When the survey was conducted in the summer, one word emerged as the clear leader by a significant margin, whereas in the winter, a different word took the top spot! However, when we applied the Delphi method and the other techniques mentioned above to this latter case, the "summer word" returned to the top spot, and it was:

WATER

Further research once again confirmed the ancient truth:

"The new is the well-forgotten old"—or, to refine it for our specific case: **the *almost* well-forgotten old!**

Below is a list of the sources whose analysis led us to this conclusion:

- The mythological concepts of ancient peoples—widely dispersed across the globe in both time and space—according to which primordial man created his initial vocabulary to name entities, actions, attributes, and so forth, that held a semantic connection specifically to the concept of water;
- Biblical views from both the Old and New Testaments;
- Ancient Greek conceptions of the world;
- "Praise and Glory to the Georgian Language"—a short, mystically inspired work by Ioanne-Zosime, a 10th-century theologian, calligrapher, and hymnographer;
- The works of linguist Nikolai Marr. To substantiate his doctrine of the four elements, N. Marr cited a sequence of semantically related terms from various languages—terms linked to one another precisely by the concept of water!

It is our firm conviction that, in doing so, N. Marr effectively laid the foundation for the discovery of the "water theory," yet...

(Thus, we have merely continued and completed the path he began);

- Sayings by great figures (and/or characters in their works) regarding the unique nature of water;
- The insights of individuals who see "a little more" than the rest of us mortals do.

It is particularly important to emphasize that modern fundamental sciences—physics, chemistry, biology—recognize water as the most mysterious phenomenon on Earth, possessing up to 70 unique properties that defy scientific explanation.

Furthermore, the Internet proved invaluable, especially since the task was often simplified by the fact that we already knew what to look for.

For instance, by simply entering the terms "water deities" or "moon deities" into the Google search bar, we found a wealth of material relevant to our topic. We then consulted key sources such as mythological dictionaries, which significantly helped substantiate our view regarding the role of water in the origin of language.

The Internet also enabled us to formulate several hypotheses concerning connections between words from different languages; specifically, it led us to the following conclusion:

Many syllables in any language (which, in all likelihood, belong to the primordial vocabulary) can be considered **a priori** candidates for an etymological link to water.

In some cases, this connection is direct—for example, water → river, lake, dew...

In others, it is indirect, based on metonymy—water → earth, mountain, forest, path, mother, light, sky, two, both...

We present here an excerpt (translated and slightly modified) from a monograph we authored at the invitation of the German online publisher LAP Lambert Academic Publishing [2].

The work outlines hypotheses—supported to varying degrees—regarding the etymological connection between water and numerous words from various languages, focusing in particular on a syllable of great interest in this context: L * K [L * S...].

1. Hydronyms

Rivers

In Georgia: Lakbe, Lasili, Laskadura, Lashipsa, Lazviani, Lazviantkhevi, Lakatkhevi, Lakhami, Likoki, Lekhura, Lochini, Lukhuni, Lukhuta;

In Russia: Lake, Lis, Lisa, Lukha;

In France: Lys;

In Poland: Lagowica.

Lakes

Common name: Lake, *leso* (Old Russian: lake);

Proper names:

In Georgia: Lisi, Lakva; In Russia: Lis, Lisa, Lukha; Lacus (Lat.: lake, pit).

Let us also include the puddle (*luja* (Russian): puddle).

2. Liquid

The word *Liquid* itself, *lac* (Lat.: milk), *leche* (Span.: milk), *lacrima* (Lat.: tear), *lits* (Svan: water), *litslits-i* (Georgian: undulation of the water surface), *lekar* (healer ← Proto-Slavic *lěkъ; healers treated patients with mixtures/potions too);

lesvi (Georgian: saliva), *leka* (Georgian: one who has drunk too much), *leghma* (Georgian: snow beginning to melt), *leshteri* (Georgian: rain with hail), *leshkhi* (Georgian: seeping dew), *lkhoba* (Georgian: to melt), *lecken* (German: to lick).

3. Water inhabitants

laji (Georgian: fish),

loqo (Georgian: catfish),

lekeon (Armenian mythology: a huge fish coiled around the earth);

lokh, *lakh*, *losos*, *lesch* (Russian: names of fish).

4. Motion

tsa-lek-va (Georgian: being swept away, destruction by water);

laslasi, laklaki, laghlaghi, lakhlakhi (Georgian: movements);

lecken (German: to flow),

lazit (Russian: to climb),

lose.

5. Light

lūx (Latin: light);

luch (Russian: beam);

lasha (Georgian and Abkhazian: light).

6. Image (water as a mirror)

look (English: vision),

like (English: similar),
look (English: to look),
litso (Russian: face),
lik (Russian: icon, image, number),
lice (Czech, Polish: face, cheek),
lutsi (Georgian: even number).

7. And much more by metonymy, among them:

locus, loquor (Latin: place), lucus (Latin: ravine), location (English);
lego, loquor (Latin: speak);
lassen (German: 1. to let go, 2. to allow) ...

We believe that, regarding origins connected to water, one should investigate many syllables of the following structure:

We believe that, regarding origins associated with water, it is worth investigating many syllables of the following structure:

(consonant) + vowel + (consonant)

For example, in this regard, the syllables M*T(D), P*S... appear extremely productive, and, of course, the aforementioned L*S...

The author of the present article has published approximately 30 works on this topic over the years. The most important of these are included in the collection [3].

However, it would be far better if professionals took on this task and, in collaboration with computational linguistics specialists, developed a specialized computer system with the following functions:

1. Operating autonomously, the system would review and analyze accumulated data from multiple languages to propose etymological theories for various words; for instance, it might suggest—with a certain degree of probability—the following hypothesis:

In English, the etymon for the terms *and*, *end*, and *hand* is the concept of WATER—specifically, *Onde*.

2. In automated mode, the user could engage in a dialogue with the system to obtain similar information regarding their own hypothesis.

Let us also note—so to speak—the sacred aspect of this topic (the part that anyone who wishes can verify for themselves):

- This anthology of centuries-old Georgian literature—the publication of which began in the 1980s—opens, in a deliberate departure from chronological order, with a short, mystical work by the monk Ioanne-Zosime, a 10th-century theologian, calligrapher, and hymnographer (it is remarkable that this took place during the Soviet era!).

This mystical hymn to the native tongue is known by various titles, such as "Praise and Exaltation of the Georgian Language," "Laud and Glory to the Georgian Language," and others [4, 5]. Many scholars believe that this message from a distant ancestor is imbued with numerological symbolism and biblical allusions.

To summarize the hymn's essence briefly: the monk asserts that the Georgian language—currently entombed like the biblical Lazarus (Lazare—incidentally, Lazare is also a figure in Georgian mythology, a deity whom the people would implore during droughts to send down Grace, in the form of water)—will one day rise again and convey something of great importance to all nations!

- Here is what S. N. Lazarev - a renowned Russian parapsychologist, bioenergetics expert, and author of the *Diagnosis of Karma* book series - writes about water: [6]

It is the properties of water in our visible reality that lie closest to the One Universal Field of the World.

Esotericists have also expressed the following view:

WATER is a gift from the Cosmos to humanity.

And finally, we cite a passage from the Bible: [7]

"For there are three that bear record in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

And there are three that bear witness in earth: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one."

1 John 5:7-8

The Bible repeatedly affirms that the Father is Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit washes away the sins of humanity through the blood shed by the Savior.

We are convinced that this passage also reveals a third correspondence:

The Word is Water.

Regarding scientific perspectives on this subject, we should first consider the views of the ancient Greeks, who believed that WATER is the origin of all things.

Here is what a prominent figure among them, Thales of Miletus, said: [8]

"Everything is born of water; everything arises from water and transforms back into it. Water is the origin of the elements and of existing things; water is the beginning and the end of the Universe."

And studies of water conducted by specialists in modern fundamental sciences (physics, chemistry) yield truly astonishing results:

– The substance covering 71% of our planet's surface remains, to a large extent, a mysterious phenomenon to science!

– Water turns out to possess more than 60 astonishing properties that seem to defy the established laws of physics and chemistry.

There is a lot of material on this topic on the Internet [9].

It should be noted that we do not consider water to be the sole primordial concept responsible for the origin and evolution of languages. However, it strikes us as the most significant among them—so much so that, in the well-known biblical saying

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος,
we perceive the term "Logos" as
WATER.

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ენების წარმოშობის ახალი თეორია

გელა ღვინეფაძე

აბსტრაქტი

ლინგვისტიკა მეცნიერების ის დარგია, რომელიც, პრაქტიკულად, ადამიანის საქმიანობის ყველა სფეროს ინტერესს იწვევს. მათ შორის განსაკუთრებული ადგილი უკავია კომპიუტერულ ლინგვისტიკას.

სტატიაში აღწერილი კვლევების მთავარი მიზანი იყო ენის წარმოშობის და ევოლუციის თაობაზე უფრო სრულყოფილი თეორიის შემუშავება, რომლის მისაღწევად ძიების პროცესში გამოიყენებოდა ტრანსდისციპლინური მიდგომა და გადაწყვეტილების მიღების თანამედროვე მეთოდები.

გარდა ამისა, მიზნად იქნა დასახული ისეთი კონცეფციის შექმნა, რომელიც პოპულარულ ვებსაიტ wiktionary.org-ს სტატიკური საიტების საცავიდან გადააქცევს

ინტერაქტიულ სისტემად, რაც ლინგვისტებს და ფართო საზოგადოებასაც საშუალებას მისცემს, უფრო მარტივად შემოწმდეს და შეფასდეს წამოყენებული ჰიპოთეზების საფუძვლიანობა.

კვლევის მთავარი შედეგია ენის (ენების) წარმოშობის ახალი თეორია, რომელიც აერთიანებს ადრე არსებული სამეცნიერო თეორიების უმეტესობას.

ამ თეორიაზე დაყრდნობით შემუშავდა ენების წარმოშობისა და ევოლუციის სამეტაპიანი მოდელი:

1. ენის წარმოშობის საწყის ეტაპზე ისეთმა ფენომენმა, როგორიცაა წყალი, განსაკუთრებით მნიშვნელოვანი როლი ითამაშა კაცობრიობის ადრეული ლექსიკის ფორმირებაში;
2. ენის ევოლუციის შემდეგი ეტაპი უკავშირდება ადამიანის მიერ ცეცხლის „მოთვინიერებას“;
3. დაბოლოს, მას შემდეგ, რაც ადამიანები ადგილზე დაფუძნდნენ და ხელი მოჰკიდეს მიწათმოქმედებას, რასაც, საბოლოოდ, ქალაქებისა და სახელმწიფოების გაჩენა მოჰყვა, დაიწყო ენის (ენების) განვითარების მესამე ეტაპი, რომელიც დღემდე გრძელდება.

ავტორის სხვა ნაშრომებისგან განსხვავებით, ეს სტატია ზემოთ მოყვანილი სიის პირველ პუნქტს ეძღვნება.

დასკვნა: წყალმა, მრავალი თვალსაზრისით უნიკალურმა ფენომენმა, გადამწყვეტი როლი ითამაშა ენის (ენების) წარმოშობაში; სწორედ მისი სხვადასხვა გამოვლინებისთვის შერქმეულმა სახელებმა შეუქმნა საფუძველი თანამედროვე ენების უზარმაზარ და მრავალფეროვან სამყაროს.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: ლინგვისტიკა; ენის წარმოშობის ახალი თეორია; ტრანსდისციპლინარულობა; გადაწყვეტილების მიღების თანამედროვე მეთოდები; ინტერაქტიული ვიკილექსიკონის კონცეფცია.