
Lexical Entry on Friedrich Kainz

by Gerhard Gelbmann

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Kainz, Friedrich

birth: July 4, 1897, Vienna, Austria

death: July 1, 1977, Vienna, Austria

Austrian Philosopher, Historian of Literature, and Psychologist; best known for his Psychology of Language.

Biography

K. studied Philosophy, Psychology, German Philology, History, Music and Linguistics in Vienna. Promotion to Dr.phil. in 1921, teacher at the Pedagogical Institute of the City of Vienna since 1923; *venia legendi* at the Univ. of Vienna in 1925.

In 1939 K. became associated professor at the Univ. of Vienna, concentrating on Aesthetics and Psychology of Language. K. received a tenured position in 1948, became full professor at the Univ. of Vienna in 1950, working at the "I. Philosophisches Institut" and at the "Dolmetsch- und Übersetzungsinstitut", provisionally heading the Department for Psychology and the "Institut für Theaterwissenschaften". K. was corresponding member of the Finnish Academy of Sciences and from 1950 onwards of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, gaining full membership in 1955, heading its Commission for History of Education and Teaching. K. retired in 1968, but taught until 1970.

K. was honoured with the "Wilhelm Hartel-Preis" in 1961, with the "Großes silbernes Ehrenzeichen für Verdienste um die Republik Österreich" in 1968, with the "Österreichisches Ehrenzeichen für Wissenschaft und Kunst", the "Ehrenmedaille der Bundeshauptstadt Wien in Gold", and the "Grillparzer Ring". (Gelbmann 2004: 13-29; Heintel 1977: 510-513).

Polyhistor

K. studied with K. Bühler, R. Reininger, R. Meister, M. Schlick and B. Juhos. K. was influenced by W. Wundt, Ch. and W. Stern, A. Stöhr, O. Külpe, R. Höningwald, H. Hörmann, F. Mauthner, and G. v. d. Gabelentz.

The thinking of K. is rooted in classical and romantic modes of research on language as an activity and performance (Gr. "energeia"), as to be found in W. v. Humboldt's writings, but is also essentially formed by gestalt-theory.

K. transforms the principle of abstractive relevance (G. "Prinzip der abstraktiven Relevanz"), that refers to the phonological research of N. Trubetzkoy, K. Bühler, and W. Porzig, into a general semiotic one (1954), connecting it to the mental ability to pick the correct form even though one is confronted with defective linguistic productions (G. "Zurechthören", "Zurechtlesen"). For K., language thus essentially becomes mind (G. "Geist") (cf. Kainz 1965: 317; Gelbmann 2004: 73).

K. makes a fundamental conceptual distinction between linguistic act (G. "Sprachhandlung"), speech act (G. "Sprechhandlung", "Sprechakt"), and linguistic capacity (G. "Sprachfähigkeit"), without referring to J. L. Austin's speech-act-theory. K. shows that F. de Saussure's famous differentiation between *langage*, *langue*, *parole*—later on complemented with the term *parler* by H. Delacroix—was anticipated by H. Steinthal and W. von Humboldt (1941). K. understands language as a superstructure, a term he borrows from E. Sapir (1941).

Linguistic Criticism

K.'s main philosophical achievement is a linguistic criticism that differs from the analytical approach of R. Carnap or L. Wittgenstein. K.'s approach, though, is not purely psychological yet an analysis of practical and semiotic consequences of word use and applied terminology, including an analysis of pathological forms of political rhetoric (1972).

K. especially attacks the tie between the notion of expression of judgment (G. "Urteilsausdruck"), thought, and predication or sentence, and suggests the term of wording (G. "Wortung") as frequent form of "Urteilsausdruck". With M. Palágyi he speaks of a concentration of judgments and thoughts (G. "Urteilsauskonzentrat") to be encountered in a single, well fitting word or part of a phrase, in contrast to Carnap, G. Frege, B. Russell and others that knew only a one-to-one relation between well formed declarative sentences and the thought or judgment they express (1969).

K. advocates a modified ontological relativism of language (G. "ontologischer Sprachrelativismus"), which stems from B. L. Whorf, linking it to a psychology of nations (G. "Völkerpsychologie"), which as a scientific undertaking is retraceable to M. Lazarus and Wundt as precursors of comparative studies in language (cf. Gelbmann 2004: 88-89). K. treats this as a psychology of individual languages (G. "Psychologie der Einzelsprachen") (1969), making use of ethnological and anthropological research.

In this context, K.'s axiological and aesthetic considerations on an evaluation of languages (G. "Sprachbewertung") and on the ethics of language (G. "Sprachethik") (1965) are also worth mentioning. Another original development can be found in K.'s psychology of writing (G. "Schreibpsychologie"), and a psychology of reading (G. "Lesepsychologie") (1956).

K.'s understanding of a linguistic instinct (G. "Sprachinstinkt") differs from St. Pinker's famous concept of a language instinct as an inborn disposition (Pinker 1994); to K., it rather means an ability of linguistic sense (G. "Sprachgefühl"), acquired and refined by the variety of its stylistic applications in a community (1944; 1956: 356).

K.'s unique contribution to the debate about linguistic criticism consists in his concept of seduction by language (G. "Sprachverführung") (1972)—more specific, also within philosophy as the misleading of thinking by language, demonstrated in famous examples from Aristotle, I. Kant, G. W. Hegel or M. Heidegger—and in the conception of an interdependence of thinking and speaking. Referring to Bühler's psychology of thinking (G. "Denkpsychologie"), K. conceptualizes diction, inner speech and articulation. In his last systematic contribution (1972), K. gives examples of such linguist seductions and their specific dangers, e.g. reification (G. "Verdinglichung"), synonymy, homonymy, metaphoricity, glossomorphy, empty formulations (G. "Leerformeln"), etc. (cf. Gelbmann 2004: 111-142).

Integrative Position

K. provides a synthetic view on the manifold phenomena of language. His versatile writings realize this perspective on various grounds, in studies of specific representatives of literature or philosophy like Fr. Schlegel or F. Grillparzer, in empirical and pedagogical research as well as in the organic synopsis of the enfolding of humanity in the activities of language, speech, and writing.

He influenced i.a. philosophers of language like K. A. Wucherer-Huldenfeld, E. Heintel, H. Hofmeister, but also communication studies and cultural philosophy as to be met in P. Watzlawick, but was rather skeptical towards the school of transformative grammar with its belief in a grammatical apriori according to N. Chomsky. K. held no explicit idealist tenets, advocated an inductive methodology, and believed in universal and invariant principles of language use in Humboldt's tradition. By sharing Humboldt's metaphor of mind's organic growth in language, however, K. himself might have fallen prey to a seduction by language.

With K. the unity of philosophy and psychology in the study of linguistic phenomena came to an end.

Works by Kainz:

(1914): "Zur dichterischen Sprachgestaltung", *Zs. f. Ästhetik u. allgem. Kunstwissenschaft* 18: 196-222. (1924): "Das Steigerungspänomen als künstlerisches Gestaltungsprinzip. Eine literarpsychologische Untersuchung", *Zs. f. angew. Psychol.* VII. (1927a): "Lügenerscheinungen im Sprachleben", in: Lipmann, O./ P. Plaut, eds., (1927b): *Die Lüge in psychologischer, philosophischer, juristischer, pädagogischer, historischer, soziologischer, sprach- und literaturwissenschaftlicher und entwicklungsgeschichtlicher Betrachtung*, Leipzig. (1928): *Geschichte der dt. Literatur*, Berlin. (1932): *Personalistische Ästhetik*, Leipzig. (1933): "Differentielle Psychologie und Ästhetik", *Zs. f. angew. Psychol.* 45, 4/6. (1934a): "+| here Wirkungsgestalten des sprachlichen Ausdrucks im Deutschen", *Zs. f. Ästhetik u. allgem. Kunstwissenschaft* 28, 4. (1934b): "Geleitwort", in: BÜHLER, K., *Sprachtheorie. Die*

Darstellungsfunktion der Sprache, Stuttgart, (1934): V-XIX. (1936a): "Zur Entwicklung der sprachstilistischen Ordnungsbegriffe im Deutschen", *ZDPPh* 61: 4-48. (1936b): "Entwurf eines Systems der Sprachphilosophie", *Kant-Studien*: 381-402. (1938): "Die Sprachpsychologie der dt. Romantik", *Zs. für Psychologie* 143: 318-390. (1940), "Friedrich Schlegels Sprachphilosophie", *Zs. f. dt. Geisteswissenschaft* 3: 263-281. (1941): *Psychologie der Sprache*, Stuttgart I: *Grundlagen der allgemeinen Sprachpsychologie*, 1941, (²1954, ³1967); II: *Vergleichend-genetische Sprachpsychologie*, 1943, (²1960); III: *Physiologische Psychologie der Sprachvorgänge*, 1954, (²1965); IV: *Spezielle Sprachpsychologie*, 1956; V: *Psychologie der Einzelsprachen: Erster Teil*, 1965; *Psychologie der Einzelsprachen: Zweiter Teil*, 1969. (1944): *Über das Sprachgefühl*, Berlin; aus: *Archiv für vergl. Phonetik* 7, 3/4. (1946): *Einführung in die Sprachpsychologie*, Wien. (1948a): *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik*, Wien. (1948b): "Einführung in die Philosophie der Kunst", *Handbuch der Geisteswissenschaften* 1-2. (1955): "Schiller als Philosoph. Festvortrag", *AlmÖAW* 105: 471-505. (1956): "Linguistisches und Sprachpathologisches zum Problem der sprachlichen Fehlleistungen", *SbÖAW* 230, 5. (1957): "Sprachtheoretisches zum Problem der Kommunikationssysteme im Tierreich", *AÖAW* 23: 356-379. (1958): "Die Sprachtheorie als Verbindung zwischen Geistes- und Naturwissenschaft", *Studium Generale* 11: 270-290. With R. LUCHSINGER et al. (1959): *Lehrbuch der Stimm- und Sprachheilkunde* (²1959). (1961): *Die "Sprache" der Tiere. Tatsachen, Problemschau, Theorie*, Stuttgart. (1964): *Die Sprachentwicklung im Kindes- und Jugendalter*, München (³1973). (1968): "Dialektik und Sprache", *Studium Generale* 21: 117-183. (1969): "Philosophische Etymologie und historische Semantik", *SbÖAW* 262, 4. (1972): *Über die Sprachverführung des Denkens*, Berlin. (1973): "Hubert Rohrer: Versuch eines Psycho- und Ergogramms", *AÖAW* 110, 2: 30-75. (1975): "Grillparzer als Denker. Der Ertrag seines Werks f. d. Welt- u. Lebensweisheit", *SbÖAW* 280: 2. (1976): "Ludwig Wittgenstein", *AÖAW* 113, 8: 236-242. (1977): "Hauptprobleme der Kulturphilosophie. Im Anschluß an die kulturphilosophischen Schriften Richard Meisters", *SbÖAW* 360. (o. J.): "Grillparzer als Sprachtheoretiker", Sonderdruck: 368-383.

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