

The Values of Morality from the Scientific Perspective

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ABSTRACT: The paper represents an attempt to establish the field of *morality* and *science* from a linguistic perspective, having as a sole criterion for the selection of the terms - etymology. We intend to observe some theoretical aspects, determine how morality works as a means of persuasion in certain contexts, and what are the lexical criteria. We will follow the lexeme *science* from the point of view of the relationship as meaning, with the lexeme *morality*.
KEY WORDS: moral, morality, science, knowledge, lexical, sense

Preliminaries

The lexical field that we intend to study is related to the significance of *morality* and *science* lexmas, but as Trier (1931, 2) states, we will try that in our research „to bring in a knowledge of the extra-linguistic sphere, the aim being not the history of language as a mirror of spirit history, but only the history of the spirit (mirrored) in the history of the language.”

We will start from the systemic approach to Trier's vocabulary, who considers that the lexical elements can not be treated in isolation, because each term draws its semantic outline by constantly reporting to the other members of the field (paradigmatic perspective). The value of a word is recognized only when we delimit it from the value of its neighboring words which oppose them" (Trier 1931, 3). This theory of „distributive fields" was supplemented by other linguists from the point of view of syntagmatic relations - Walter Porzig¹, John Lyons² and Eugenio Coşeriu³. Even if at first glance the two notions are not part of the same semantic sphere, we will consider changes in meaning due to linguistic contact with the French and Greek models.

The concept of *morality* is a research theme for psychologists, pedagogues, psychologists, philosophers, aestheticians, sociologists, axiologists, anthropologists, economists, linguists and psycholinguists. Compared with the society of past centuries, contemporary society has undergone fundamental changes in principles, values, and perceptions, which it knows (or not) and acquired over the passing of time. A factor that has caused this change in inter-human relations is the moral factor.

Science can not be neutral from the point of view of the values promoted, since it has a normative character and promotes moral values since the seventeenth century, even Descartes being the one proclaiming the dichotomy „values-facts". But science has a great disadvantage: it can not explain the meaning of life or the purpose of man on Earth. Science helps us to understand morality, but it can not give us moral advice, nor can it clarify the distinction between good and evil.

1. The concept of science

Starting from the synonyms of the word *Ştiinţă* (*Science*) 1. s discipline. (Cybernetics is a recent ~) 2. teaching, (rare Latinism)

sapience, (inv) teachership. (~ about growing bees.) 3. science about science = science, scientology; the science of exegesis v. hermeneutics; political science = politology; the science of the future = futurology, prospective, futureology. 4. erudition, (fam., often ir.) savantlâc. (He is amazed by his ~) 5. v. skill. 6. v. craftsmanship, we will stop at three meanings that will connect with the theme we approach:

1. „knowledge acquired directly; experience”
2. „knowledge of Good and Evil (moral)”
3. „ensamble of knowledge gained through study; intellectual training, instruction;

Referring to the Biblical text, the term *συνείδησις*⁴ „consciousness, the ability to discern between good and evil” (derived from the Latin *conscientia* „together science”) is a linguistic calculation of Gr. *είδησις*, formed with the prefixoid Gr. *συν* which expresses the idea of community in an action or association („self-leveling”), signifying Christian moral values, emphasized by the autonomy of individual judgment and the binding nature of ethical prescriptions, but in the text printed in 1688, the modeled phrase of the term „science” has been reduced. From the same word, the word *cunostinta* (knowledge) was preferred in translations⁵ (formed by derivation from verb *a cunoaste* (to know) + suffix *-inta*) with the meaning „the action of knowing; the fact of having knowledge” (Munteanu 2008, 318, 367).

So the term *science* has begun to be used in the old language as a sign of significance as an alternative to *knowledge*, *conscience* and *consciousness*.

According to linguist Eugen Munteanu, Dosoftei tried to replace Gr. *συν* with prep. rom. *cu* (with), with the meaning of „sly cunning”, Radu Greceanu (Mart. Ort. 1691)⁶ transposes Gr. *συνείδησις* through the phrase „knowledge of the soul”, and Dimitrie Cantemir uses the phrase „the good science of the hidden heart” (Munteanu 2008, 367).

In the current language the meaning of „my knowledge as a knowledgeable subject isolated about me as me knowing” and „my knowledge of me in the face of the superior forum” has been semantically transferred to the noun *con-stiinta* (consciousness) (formed from the Latin *scientia* (science) + Lat. prefix *con-*) (Stăniloae, 1987, 71).

Starting with the first half of the nineteenth century *prestiinta* (foreknowledge) lexical calculus was used, formed from the Latin *scientia* (science) + Lat. *pro / prae*.

According to the definition in the *Explanatory Dictionary of Romanian Language*⁷, we note that the term *science* is used in these meanings in certain phrases / expressions: *knowingly, to science*.

As we have seen from the occurrences of the word *science*, it has meanings that bring us closer to the lexeme *morality*, semantic-lexical structures that originate from Biblical text.

2. The concept of *morality*

The word *morality* comes from the Latin *moralitas, -atis*, Fr. *moralité*. „It has the meaning of *teaching, moral, parable*.

The lexeme is formed from the adjective „moral”, by suffixing with the suffix „-ity” into „morality”, widening the semantic sphere of the word and imposing it as a noun that designates „a person’s appropriation, quality, ability or aptitude to be moral”.

We will include in the lexical field the members of the derived classes of the lexeme components, because the term derived by prefixing / suffixing may involve a change in the lexical meaning.

Interesting is the derivation with negative prefixes, with which the antonymy is formed in Romanian, the category of antonyms formed with the prefixes *a-* and *i-* being rich: *moral – imoral - amoral*, both

forms are correct **amoral** și **immoral** (according to the model of the French words *immoral* and *amoral*), but with different meanings (some speakers mistakenly consider them to be synonymous). **Immoral** (< Fr. *immoral*) in the sense that it is contrary to morality, which violates its principles, which has no moral principle, knows the rules of morality, but practices actions that are rejected by the majority of society (DEX), and **amoral** (Fr. *amoral*) has the meaning: *which does not have the notion of morality, regardless of morality.*

The adjective **imorál** (immoral) enters into a relation of partial synonymy with adj. *unethical, unmoral, corrupt, depraved, harassed, disillusioned, degraded, broken and even obscene.* The two notions are related to morality.

The adjective *immoral* can be attributed to:

- to a person, so an immoral person is a shameless person, without a character and living without rules.
- generic notions: *immoral act*
- contrary to morality: *immoral book.*

As for the terms **amoralism**, „a concept that requires an attitude of indifference to morality,” and **immoralism**, „a theory that contests the value of moral norms and judgments in a given age, denying morality,” are words derived from *amoral* and *immoral*.

In the Romanian language, the productive prefix is **the negative prefix ne-**, which forms nouns, adjectives, adverbs: *nemoral* (not moral). The neologist prefix **in-** (**im-** before the bilabials and **i-** before the sonants [l, m, n, r]) doubles **ne-** for the words corresponding to the savant Romanian language variant: *immoral, immorality*. Other prefixes of cult origin (not inherited) from ancient Latin or Greek, that are present in Romanian, especially through latin-romanic loans (analytical or calculations), specific to the lexical field of morality are: **pre-** (‘before’, *pre-moral*). Some affixes have an uncertain status, between prefixes and prefixoides (constituent elements) of Greek

origin are: *anti-* („against”, versus, *antimoral*), *hyper-* („over-measure, in a very high degree, super”; *hypermoral*). The words *pseudomoral* (*pseudo-* „false, apparently similar, supposedly”) and *quasi-moral* (*quasi-* „half, somewhat, almost”) are formed by composition, because *quasi* and *pseudo* are prefixoids.

According to the *Orthographic, Orthoepic and Morphological Dictionary of Romanian Language*, 2nd edition revised and added, 2005, the lexeme *morál* accepts three forms of plural: adj. m. - moral, pl. moráli; adj. f. - morálă, pl. morále; s. n. - moral, pl. moráluri.

In literature, especially in children’s literature, morality is reduced to a conclusion from the history of the story, the purpose of which is to transmit the moral values (good and bad etc.) that can be applied in social relations, here the term *moral* has the plural form of *morale* (morals). As a literary species of the epic genre, the fable has a specific structure: the narrative part and the moral - resembles some sayings (moral is delimited from the first part by a blank or can be deduced from the action). The addition with which this species intervenes in literature is the way to highlight the human defects that must be addressed by personification (the characters are animals, plants or objects in human situations), but also the funny character of the events, because laughter can have an educational character.

In philosophy, morality has a broader meaning than ethics, and defines „the sciences of the spirit,” which contemplates all manifestations that are not expressly physical in the human being. Hegel differentiated between *objective morality*, which refers to obedience to moral laws (set by standards, laws and traditions of society); and *subjective morality*, which addresses the fulfillment of a duty by its own act.

In the philosophical context, *ethical* and *moral* have different meanings the Terms have a different etymological origin. The word „ethics” comes from Greek *etos* which means „way of being” or

„character”. Already the word „moral” originates in the Latin term „*morales*”, which means „in relation to habits”.

A problem that we will not deal with in our study is: How do we become moral? Are we born moral or become on the way (progressive-chronological morality or momentary *kairos*)?

Morality is to put your act of choice and feelings in order (eg common - the fear of things and unnatural - the fear of water). Here reference can be made to morality as compared to psychoanalysis. Morality does not mean to respect certain rules, choices can turn man into a good being (understands more clearly what is evil) or bad (you can understand or not).

A taxonomy of morality seems almost impossible, we do not know the moment when a person becomes moral, there are aspects of overlapping in terms of morality, starting from the definition. It can be a process of society, this is a delicate problem.

3. The valence of lexems *science* vs *morality*

Combining the two words *morality* and *science* could form the phrase *morality of science*, but at the same time, the phrase *science of morality*. In this situation, can the genitive go in both directions at once? In what way can or should science have a moral dimension? Should science not be approached in a cognitive sense, as a way of understanding and not necessarily being used (or not) in the ethical direction?

We did not intend to demonstrate that there is a necessary ethical moment in the act of science, because we may go out of the study area (which may be vague and even speculative) but we will observe that the *morality of science* can be oriented in two directions. The first direction is determined by the presence of the imperative „must ...”, which means that we are limited by rules (deviation is freedom,

which can be an amoral act), and the second direction is given by a particular and individual in the sphere of social and institutional which imposes, unwilling/unworthy, rules and responsibilities (here they refer to what they want to convey). It's not enough that you know what to do, but you have to also act.

From this perspective, the Romanian speakers introduced French loans referring to the act of morality:

nouns - *immorality, amorality, moralist, immoralism;*

adjectives - *moral, antimoral, overmoral, premoral, pseudomoral, quasi-moral, immoralistic, moralizant (moralizing), moralizator(moralizing);*

adverbială – *moral, premoral, quasi-moral.*

Verbs – *to moralize*

Despite the apparent disjunction between the two terms, they intersect as meaning in contact with the Greek language, so that we can assert that science, in its incipient phases, was based on moral principles. We believe that in any field of activity it is necessary to have some moral principles, here referring especially to the horizontal relation (man-society), which can be a result of the vertical relation (man-God report). You can not have a good relationship with God, and horizontally, relationships not to rely on moral principles.

Socrates mentions that self-knowledge (Rotaru 2005, 124) is the basis of morality. History presents human society as a hierarchical structure, the deviations from this structure being harshly punished. The intervention of morality has created a bridge between the mobile society and those punished. Thus, the moral factor meant the creation of equality relations and favored the relationship and the interaction between the people.

Unfortunately, the material factor puts pressure on society, which leads to alienation to yourself, to principles and values.

Conclusions

As far as the lexeme *science* is concerned, we compared the Romanian lexeme to the Greek one in order to create a clear picture of what we wanted to highlight during this study.

It started from the definition of the meanings from a descriptive semasiological perspective, then we tried to process the material from the onomasiological perspective, emphasizing the relation between the Romanian and the French lexemes, regarding the lexeme *morality* and the Greek one with reference to the notion of *science*.

In addition to old words and phrases with a moral sense, the lexicon of morality knows a variety of enrichment and diversification, the modalities of lexico-semantic renewal being diverse: calchieri⁸, paraphrasing, translation or borrowing of foreign affective terms: *immoral*, *immoralism*, *immorality*, *amoral*, *amoralism*, *amoralst*, *amoralize*, *moralist*, *moralizing*, *moralization*.

The development of this terminology is based on old lexical elements, so the basic generic noun, *moral* (< Lat. *sentire*) generates a rich lexico-etymological family by derivation, calc and lexical loan, the dynamics being from a primary, concrete sense, toward many abstract ways. (see DEX, DLR).

The results of the present research thus confirm the basic premises of the analysis: interdependence between the scientific context, morality and language (lexic); the diachronic and diatopic variation of conceptualization and affective lexicalisation.

Endnotes

1. Vezi Porzig, Walter, *Das Wunder der Sprache*, Berna, 1950: uses the term "inclusive semantic field" which means that structure within the vocabulary determined by the semantic relations between units which objective designations are related, in other words linguistic units that refer.
2. Lyons, John, *Structural Semantics. An Analysis of a Part of the Vocabulary of Plato*, Oxford, 1969, p. 59: considers that "the significance of a given language

- unit is defined as the set of (paradigmatic) relationships that the unit contacts with other units of the language (in its context or contexts in which it occurs):
3. Coșeriu, Eugenio, *Teoria limbajului și lingvistică generală*. 5 studii, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2004, p. 305: "The lexical field is defined as a lexical paradigm that derives from the segmentation of a lexical continuum of content in various units which in the language are in the form of words and which are available in immediate oppositions on the basis of simple distinctive features".
 4. Cf. Munteanu, Eugen, *Lexicologie biblică românească*, Editura Humanitas, Iași, 2008, p. 364: „Most lexicograph researchers, as well as theologians, converge to the conclusion that Gr. *συνείδησις* is a lexical creation of stoic philosophers who, since Chrysippos (dead in 208 BC), have been using this term to name in particular psychological consciousness (cf. Diogenes Laertius, VII, 85) and then the moral consciousness, perceived as the source of remorse for the one who did wrong.”
 5. There is instability in translation, because the lexical norms were missing, hence the differences in meaning of Gr. *Συνείδησις*.
 6. Mărt. Ort. 1691 = *Pravoslavnica Mărturisire a săborniceștii și apostoleștii Bisericii, după grecească (...) întoarsă în limba rumânească de Radul Logofăt Greceanul (...)*, Buzău, 1691. Ediție de Niculae M. Popescu și Gheorghe I. Moisescu, București, 1942.
 7. See DEX 98 s.n. *Știință*, sciences, s.f. I.1. Being aware of (something) of being informed; knowledge. * Loc. adv. with (or without) science = (not) knowing; (un)conscious; with (or without) permission. Consciously = knowingly, fully aware of the facts. With (or without) one's knowing = with (or without) the consent or approval of someone. To know = for it to be known. ** News, hearing. 2. Conscience. II.1. Intellectual training, instruction; education, erudition. * Book science = knowledge of writing and reading. 2. A systematic set of knowledge about nature, society and thinking; an assembly of knowledge from a certain area of knowledge. * Scientist = scholar, taught. [Pr: know-in] - Ști + suf. -ință (with some meanings after Fr. science).
 8. *Ibidem* s.n.: the notion of **morality** is defined as "The appropriation of what is moral (I 1); the nature, the character, the value of a fact, the conduct of a person or a community from a moral point of view. ** Behavior, conduct, manners in accordance with moral principles; honesty, good behavior."
 9. The meaning of "morally good, according to moral rules" is recorded for the first time at the end of the 14th century, the **moral** word coming from the Lat. **moralis**, which, in turn, derives from the Latin word, **mos, moris** "habit." The word **morālis** has been applied to the **concrete rules governing the actions and behaviors of people**. These norms, in general, came from the use and customs of society, that is, from tradition.
 10. Porzig, *Idem*, 1950, p. 74: „Derivative families and semantic fields are segmentations of one and the same vocabulary. Thus a word belongs as a rule to a derivative family as well as to a semantic field. Thus, a semantic field can also be composed, as a whole or in part, of words that are members of a derivative family.”
 11. "a" is a compositional element that indicates absence, exclusion, etc. [Var . : an -]

12. Cf. Iordan, I., Robu, Vl., *Limba română contemporană*. București, 1973, p. 114: **Prefixoidele** (*false prefixes or pseudoprefixes*) have in common with the prefixes only the position of affixation, but they are words with their own meaning in their home language (most of them are from ancient Greek). The most common prefixoids in Romanian are: **aero-** („regarding air”, aeropurtat), **auto-** („self, own”, autobiografie), **bio-** („regarding life”, bioenergetic), **geo-** („regarding earth”, geopolitic), **hemo-** („regarding blood”, hemostatic), **hipo-** („regarding the horse”, hipofag), **iso-/izo-** („equal, same”, izomorfism), **orto-** („correct”, ortografic), **filo-** („lover of”, filogerman), **micro-** („tiny, a million part”, microradiografie), **mono-** („unique, alone, once”, monocelular), **poli-** („many”, polivitamină), **proto-** („first, previous, prehistoric, primitive, simple, initial”, protocronism), **radio-** („regarding electromagnetic radiation”, radiolocație), **semi-** („half”, semipreparat), **tele-** („far, at distance, from far”, telecomandă), **tri-** („three, triple”, tri), **zoo-** („regarding animals, animal”, zootehnician) etc.
13. The father of the fable is Esop (a Greek slave), but its origins are found in the ancient Orient. Jean de Fontaine (French writer of the 12th century) was the one who imposed the modern fable. In Romanian literature the first fabulist was Alecu Donici, followed by Grigore Alexandrescu who is considered the greatest Romanian fabulist. Other Romanian writers who approached this genre are: Anton Pann, George Topîrceanu, Tudor Arghezi.
14. See *Dicționarul etimologic român*, 1958-1966: moral (morală), adj. – Etic. Fr. moral. – Der. morală, s. f. (etică; dojană), din fr. morale; moralicesc, adj. (moral), inv., sec. XVIII; moralicește, adv. (moralmente); moralitate, s. f., din fr. moralité; moraliza, vb., din fr. moraliser; moralizator, adj., din fr. moralisateur; moralmente, adv., din fr. moralement; moralist, s. m., din fr. moraliste.
15. Also see *Marele dicționar de neologisme*, 2000: *Moral*, -Ă I. adj. 1. according to moral principles. ◇ from which a teaching takes place, didactic. 2. In terms of psychic, spirit or intellect, intellectual, spiritual. II. 1. the ensemble of mental, spiritual faculties. 2. mood. ◇ courage. (< lat. moralis, fr. moral)
16. Cf. *Dictionary.com Unabridged* © Random House, Inc. 2018: Morality refers to generally accepted behavioral habits and the right to live in a society and the individual's practice in relation to them: the morality of our civilization. Ethics now involves high standards of honorable and honest negotiation, as well as of methods used, especially in professions or business: the ethics of the medical profession.
17. See *Dicționarul de neologisme*, s.n. ÉTOS s.n. Ensemble of moral traits specific to man, social group or age; morality ** Cultural specific of a community. ** Character, moral, morality, ensemble of moral norms and customs; part of a speech in which morals are spoken of. [Writting and ethos. / <lat., gr. ethos].
18. Morality in the public sphere can be modeled by religious values and principles; see Sorin Bădrăgan, „The Concept of the Holiness of the Church as a Paradigm for a Society Governed by the Rule of Law”, *Jurnalul Libertatii de Conștiinta (Journal for Freedom of Conscience)*, Editions IARSIC, Les Arcs, France, vol. 5, 2017, pp.794-803.
19. Vezi DEX s.n. *Moralist*, -Ă, moralști, -ste, s.m. și f. 1. Philosopher, thinker, writer, etc. who is concerned with moral issues. 2. (Fam. peior.) A person

- who likes to give nagging advice, to always reprimand. From fr. moraliste.
20. Ibidem, *Moralizant*, -Ă, moralizanti, -te, adj. (Rar) Moralizator. From fr. moralisant.
 21. Ibidem. *Moralizator*, -Ooare, moralizatori, -oare, adj. Which contributes to the creation of a moral atmosphere, to the spreading of morals, which gives moral teachings, moralizing someone; educational. (As noun, peior.) Who preaches moral principles with ostentation. From fr. moralisateur.
 22. *Moraliza*, *moralizez*, vb. I. Tranz. 1. To give someone moral teachings. 2. (Fam.) Making someone moral; to reprimand, to rebuke. From fr. moraliser.
 23. Stanciu-Istrate, M., *Calcul lingvistic în limba română*, București, Editura Academiei, p. 57: „The calculations and translations, made especially by French words, had the advantage, in relation to loans, that they seemed Romanian, although in reality they were 'neologic imitations'.

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