

Ungeheuer, Gerold, b. July 6, 1930, Karlsruhe-Durlach, Germany, d. Oct. 12, 1982, Bonn, Germany; founder of a branch of human communication science with a social science orientation encompassing phonetics and computational linguistics.

U. studied mathematics, philosophy, and musicology at the University of Heidelberg in 1950/51, communication science under K. Steinbuch at the University of Karlsruhe from 1951 to 1955, and, having obtained a degree in engineering, went on to study phonetics and human communication science, musicology, philosophy, and linguistics at the University of Bonn, where, under the supervision of W. → Meyer-Eppler, he finished his doctorate in 1958. In 1961, he was appointed professor of mathematics and communication science at the Cauca University in Popayán, Colombia, and in 1962 *Privatdozent* at the University of Bonn, where he completed his *Habilitation* in phonetics and human communication science at the *Institut für Phonetik und Kommunikationsforschung*. In 1967, he became a professor of phonetics and communication science at the

same university, where he remained until his death, both as a teacher and director of the *Institut für Kommunikationsforschung und Phonetik* (as it was called after 1968).

U.'s work in phonetics began with investigations into the mathematical 'eigenvalue' problem and its application to vowel articulation, leading to his dissertation (1958) and eventually to his 'pioneering work' (Kohler 1983: 80) on the acoustic theory of vowel articulation (1962a; Vieregge 1999). As evidenced by his work in connection with his *Habilitation* (1962b, partially published in 1968a), U. viewed phonetics—reflecting the influence of Meyer-Eppler—as a discipline rooted in the broader science of human communication and dealing with the external conditions underlying linguistic communication. More than one third of his writings deal with phonetic problems (e.g., 1977a and b, 1993). His investigations into the phonetic aspects of linguistic communication processes focused in part on the perception of acoustic speech signals and in part on the ability of machines to recognize speech and possibly speakers, which gave rise to the *DAWID* system (*Device for Automatic Word Identification by Discrimination*).

U. played a key role in establishing and promoting computational linguistics in Germany. According to him, computational linguistics deals with problem-solving systems and communication processes between the human individual and the computerized system by means of statements formulated in a natural language. Therefore, computational linguistics can be characterized by dialogue systems (1972: 194–95).

Until the early 1960s, models from communications technology and information theory influenced U.'s thinking. He overcame their limitations by turning to a theoretical framework consisting of a theory of social action and a theory of problems and problem-solving as a basis for his innovative communication theory (1972: 9–23).

It seems true to type that U. was also the first university teacher in Germany to criticize N. Chomsky. Instead of modeling language by means of generative-transformational grammar, he proposed theories of communicative and especially semantic processes (1972; 1987, I). Re-discovering K. → Bühler (1967), U., in contrast to adherents of systems linguistics and speech-act theories, emphasized the 'dominant role of semantic phenomena in a natural language', the 'distinction between communicative utilization of linguistic entities as opposed to handling them in an extracommunicative manner', and the 'paraphrastic relationship as a fundamental

mechanism of natural languages' (1972: 105). He proposed a 'communication semantics' addressing as its object 'inner acts' engaged in for the purpose of communication between human beings as a supplement and contrast to linguistic semantics.

During the last years of his life, U. worked on the historical and philosophical foundation of his communication theory. He studied C. Wolff, J. H. Lambert, B. → Spinoza, G. → Frege, B. → Russell, F. Nietzsche, → Plato, and especially G. W. → Leibniz, whose *cognitio symbolica* (i. e. the semiotic conditions of human cognition, a central theme of the history of ideas) he considered basic to any theory of human communication (1990, II).

U.'s more than 120 publications deal with glossematics and modern linguistics, information theory and linguistics, computational linguistics and linguistic data processing, logical problems within linguistics, communicative and extra-communicative aspects of language, arbitrariness of linguistic signs, paraphrase and deep structure, creativity in expressing and understanding linguistic meaning, non-verbal communication, persuasion, hearing of witnesses and communication, discourse analysis, communication semantics, content analysis, theoretical and practical problems in scientific work, consensus in communicative situations, and language and music (Vieregge 1998).

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