The Anti-Representational Paradigm of Richard Rorty Regarding the Concept of “Language”

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Abstract: The article considers the anti-representational paradigm regarding the concept of “language” presented by the American thinker, the founder of neopragmatism, Richard Rorty. Richard Rorty is the most cited philosopher in the Western philosophical community, the popularity of the texts of the American thinker, and the resonance of his ideas in the modern philosophical community are of great interest and discussion. The relevance of the topic in the context of postmodern society is dictated by the fact that modern American philosophy, in particular, neopragmatism and the concept of “language”, are insufficiently studied and covered in Ukrainian philosophical studies. The purpose of the article is to update the discussions about the philosophical tradition of neopragmatism by Richard Rorty regarding the concept of “language”. The research methods of the study are comparative analysis and descriptive reconstruction. In the course of the study, the following provisions of the philosophy of Richard Rorty have been analyzed: criticism of the epistemologization of the discourse of philosophy; analysis of the main provisions of neopragmatism, in particular, the theory of truth and anti-representational paradigm regarding the concept of “language” as the basic concepts of human culture. The analysis of the specifics of the formulation and understanding of the main philosophical ideas in R. Rorty’s neopragmatic theory of knowledge allows approaching their analysis unconventionally, which does not refute, but complements and deepens the classical concepts, allowing them to be fruitfully applied to solving problems of specific sciences.

Keywords: *Richard Rorty; neopragmatism; postmodernism; philosophy of language; anti-representational paradigm; concept of “language”; theory of truth; human culture; epistemologization.*

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1. Introduction

Philosophy and history of philosophy (“History of Philosophy”, 2002) present the problems of formulating, comprehending, interpreting a huge number of ideas, concepts, problems, and tasks at various stages of the formation of philosophy, depending on the level of development of society, science, worldview. However, despite the apparent diversity, in philosophy and its history, according to V. A. Konev, one can single out general paradigms that “determine the type of philosophizing, the type of construction and resolution of philosophical problems and the placement of emphasis on certain aspects of eternal philosophical problems” (Konev, 2009, p. 20). In the article presented, the authors mainly analyze neopragmatism by R. Rorty regarding the concept of “language” from the point of view of postmodern philosophy, in particular hermeneutics. In this connection, the authors consider it useful and rather important to mention our previous publications concerning hermeneutics and the philosophy of language (Butko et al., 2021; Slabouz et al., 2021). Various aspects of the theory of pragmatism and neopragmatism are revealed in the philosophical and scientific literature. However, special studies of the problem mentioned are not yet available.

Although Rorty (1991) in his reflections relies on Dewey (1981), Derrida (1978), Foucault (1969), Heidegger (1961), James (1977), Nietzsche (1990), Wittgenstein (1973), many of the essential features and characteristics of postmodernism are clearly visible in his works. His concept has a pronounced hybrid and eclectic character: it combines the ideas of the post-Nietzschean tradition, pragmatism, neo-positivism, analytical philosophy, hermeneutics, and post-structuralism. In Rorty’s (1991) studies, postmodern deconstruction is presented to the greatest extent as the destruction of the previous traditional philosophy and its main components – ontology, epistemology, the concept of consciousness, the idea of reason and understanding, the concept of truth, essence, objectivity, etc. At the same time, in contrast to the pessimism of European postmodernism, Rorty (1991) expresses quite a definite optimism of American postmodernism. Again, unlike the French postmodernists, he has a rather high opinion of Hegel. Rorty consistently opposes himself to Western rationalism, makes a decisive turn “from theory to narration” and “conversation”, attaches particular importance to the style of presentation, literary and aesthetic aspects of philosophical discourse.

The main objective of the American philosopher is to overcome the existing split of culture into natural science and humanitarian one. Rorty

(1989), not without reason, believes that there is no fundamental difference between the so-called “strict” sciences – natural science and mathematics and the so-called “non-strict” ones – philosophy and the humanities. However, unlike other postmodernists who want to deprive natural science and mathematics of the monopoly on genuine knowledge, Rorty’s (1989) thought moves in a different direction. He seeks to prove that neither the humanities nor the natural sciences can claim true knowledge of reality. In his opinion, not only philosophy but also natural science should be deprived of the right to “privileged access to reality”. The philosopher in his works tries to convey to the reader the idea that science should be considered as a social and cultural practice that exists along with others, that it is one of the many language games. This is the manifestation of Rorty’s (1989) anti-representational paradigm regarding language.

The relevance of the topic in the context of postmodern society is dictated by the fact that modern American philosophy, in particular, neopragmatism and the concept of “language”, are insufficiently studied and covered in Ukrainian philosophical studies. In the study presented, the authors do not dwell on the basic concepts and philosophical constructions of Rorty (1979, 1989). The purpose of the article is to update the discussions about the philosophical tradition of neopragmatism by Rorty (1989) regarding the concept of “language”.

2. Literature review

The origins of pragmatism, according to researchers, can be found in the European philosophy of empiricism. The classics of American pragmatism are Pierce (1998), James (1977), Dewey (1981), and Rorty (1979). In non-classical philosophy, which focuses on the relationship between human activity and language, the problems of pragmatism were addressed by representatives of neo-Kantianism - Cassirer, 2008 -, analytical philosophy – Austin (1962, Strawson (1966), Wittgenstein, (1973) -, Russian philosophy of the 20th century – Florenskyi (1990), Losev (1993) -, existentialism - Heidegger (1961) -, philosophical hermeneutics - Ricoeur (1977) -, postmodernism - Derrida (1978), Foucault (1969), Lyotard (1988) -, and many others.

The most authoritative foreign researchers of pragmatism - Ankersmit (1989), Laclau (2005) etc. - have comprehensively analyzed the genesis of pragmatism, its specifics, methodological possibilities, links with European philosophy, etc. This problem attracts attention of Russian researchers - Bessonov (1999), Bobrova (1995), Danilov (2003), Griaznov (1991), Nikonenko (2003), Tselishchev (1974) etc.

Even more actively and thoroughly in the special literature, it has been covered the creative work by Rorty (1989) – the founder and originator of neopragmatism - Davidson (2001), Putnam (1991), Quine (1966) etc. Some European scholars have distinguished themselves by their critical assessments of Rorty's neopragmatism. It is worth mentioning the polemical works of such famous European thinkers as Bouvresse (2006), Derrida (1978), Habermas (1998), Vattimo (2012) and others. In Russia, the critical analysis of his work is represented by the thorough monographs of Dzho-khadze (2001), Iulina (1998), Kaznacheev (2002) etc.

In Ukraine, the philosophy of pragmatism and neopragmatism has been studied to one degree or another. A detailed work by Polishchuk (2012), "Philosophy of pragmatism", was published. Among the defended theses on this topic the following ones can be noted: Matviienko (2002), "Transformation of epistemological concepts in the philosophy of the 20th century: trends and problems"; Minakov (2007), "Experience and philosophy: the evolution of the concept of experience in the Western philosophy of the 19th–20th centuries".

3. Methodology

Taking into account the fact that the work is of an analytical and philosophical nature, in this regard, the historiography of Richard Rorty is very productive; it includes such genres as doxography, rational reconstruction, historical reconstruction, historical and philosophical narrative. The genre of doxography, according to Rorty (1984), is ahistoric, since it seals the past and mummifies it, puts it on the windows of museum exhibitions. Thus, the authors have not used it. Further, rational reconstruction is a method similar in spirit to analytical philosophers. Analytical philosophers see the history of philosophy as a dialogue of philosophers of different eras, thereby building bridges between generations, however, the philosopher notes, historical truth is not an end in itself for research. The next genre, historical reconstruction, which, according to Rorty (1984), must go hand in hand with rational reconstruction, "The two genres (historical and rational reconstruction) can never be independent because you know little about what the dead philosophers were thinking until you figure out how much truth they knew. These two themes should be seen as moments in a long movement along the hermeneutic circle, which must be scrolled through many times before embarking on one or another type of reconstruction" (Rorty, 1984, p. 53). The genre of historical reconstruction implies knowledge of issues that were relevant in a given era, be they pseudo-questions. A peculiarity of

the historical and philosophical narrative is the shift in emphasis from solving problems to posing these problems, to how and why they were formed. In this case, an attempt is made to give a holistic picture, and not be content with fragmentariness.

In our research, we mainly rely on the methods of Rorty's (1984) historiography. In studies of the historical-philosophical type, he tends to synthesize historical reconstruction with a historical-philosophical narrative. This approach, according to Rorty (1984), is the most productive. In analyzing Richard Rorty's neopragmatism, his anti-representational theory, we have relied on the methodology of comparative analysis of various approaches. We have also analyzed the texts of primary sources, have used materials from the interviews with Richard Rorty (1961, 1979, 1989, 1991), in particular, by Lewis-Kraus (2003).

4. Richard Rorty's Anti-Representational Language Paradigm

Richard Rorty (1961) is considered to be the founder of the philosophical movement of neopragmatism, but he himself often specified that he considered himself a pragmatist, a successor of the tradition by Charles Pierce, William James, and John Dewey. At the same time, Rorty (1979) can hardly be considered a model of the classical understanding of the philosopher, his role on the stage of modern American philosophy is the role of an intellectual rebel, an active participant in political and public life. This is not a philosopher-successor, but rather a philosopher-discoverer who was able to feel the tendencies of the current state of philosophy.

Rorty (1991), trying to combine the ideas of neopragmatism, post-Nitscheanism, and historicism in his metaphilosophical concept, opposed the main ideas of traditional epistemology and metaphysics. Considering himself an anti-Platonist, the scientist names two groups of researchers associated with the traditions of post-Nitschean European philosophy and pragmatism, as well as with post-Darwinian American philosophy. "Among the great names of the first tradition are Heidegger, Sartre, Gadamer, Derrida, Foucault. Among the great names of the second tradition are James, Dewey, Kuhn, Quine, Putnam, Davidson" (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 424).

Both traditions doubted the Cartesian, Kantian-Hegelian distinction between the subject and the object. Rorty (1991) substantiates the difference between them by the fact that the European non-classical tradition tried to create a new, post-Nitschean method – phenomenological ontology (early M. Heidegger and J.-P. Sartre); Denken (thinking) – late M. Heidegger; her-

meneutics – H.-G. Gadamer; archeology of knowledge and genealogy – M. Foucault. The American tradition, unlike the European one, was not carried away by the creation of new methods, but persistently raised the anti-Platonic question of whether the existing proclaimed theoretical discrepancies have any significance for practice (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 425).

In one of his first books, “Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature”, Rorty (1979) analyzes the philosophical context of the second half of the 20th century. According to his idea, starting with Descartes, Locke, and Kant (philosophy of the 17th–18th centuries), the main philosophical issue is the theory of knowledge (the relationship between man and nature) and the theory of consciousness (something that allows these relationships to be produced). From this position, knowledge is perceived as a representational relationship between ideas and reality. Rorty describes the classical understanding of the process of cognition as follows, “To know is to display what is beyond consciousness” (Rorty, 1979, p. 3). He notes that this understanding is a consequence of the representational paradigm, and analytical philosophy is the inheritor of this approach. Rorty (1979) uses the development of the philosophy of the 20th century in line with the analytic tradition, in particular, the late Wittgenstein (1973), Quine (1966), and Davidson (2001), as an example of evidence that the representational paradigm is only a consequence of chance and philosophically arbitrary. Instead of the representational paradigm, Rorty (1979, 1989) offers an “anti-representational strategy” that to some extent synthesizes the fallibilism of Peirce (1998) and the “language game” of Wittgenstein (1973). This strategy assumes the ability to get around unsolvable issues due to their insolubility and inadequacy.

The main role in Rorty’s (1989) anti-representational paradigm is played by “language”. For Rorty, language is not only a mediator between self and reality. Language plays the role of the founder of thoughts: it determines how we think, how we describe reality depends on our vocabulary and grammatical rules of the language, we do not have access to reality without language, since language is ubiquitous. The next problem is the degree of reliability of language, that is, how accurately it represents reality. Hilary Putnam writes, “We cannot go beyond the limits of language, so to say, abstract and see the world “from the point of view of the Divine gaze”” (Putnam, 1981, p. 49). In this sense, our language is random, we use a certain language as a result of random reasons, while we cannot know for sure whether it describes the world as it really is. In his book “Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity”, published ten years after “Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature”, Rorty writes, “The world does not speak. Only we speak” (Rorty, 1989).

Rorty's (1978) approach means abandoning one of the main projects in philosophy –the search for 'Truth'. Rorty's attitude to the concept of "truth" is closely related to the concept of "language". The main idea of Rorty's philosophy is based on the critique of understanding philosophy as epistemology and logic. Rorty states that philosophy and even culture in general "is more a matter of *phronesis* than *episteme*" (1978, p. 34). Truth in Rorty's (1991) understanding cannot be an absolute quantity, and even more, Rorty does not consider it a goal to seek this ideal of realness. To think of the world and oneself as something with an inner essence is, at the very least, unproductive and meaningless. Rorty's (1984) interpretation of the concept of truth is close to that of Friedrich Nietzsche. Truth is understood by Nietzsche as a kind of delusion, without which a certain kind of living beings could not live. Rorty (1984) supports this understanding by claiming Nietzsche as a model of non-classical thinking. Nietzsche appeals to the spirit of pragmatism, while Rorty (1991) concludes that we should discard the idea of cognition as an attempt to represent reality. Rather, we should see exploration as a way of using reality. Therefore, the connection between our truth claims and the rest of the world is causal rather than representative. It forces us to adhere to beliefs, and we continue to adhere to those beliefs that prove to be reliable guides to achieve what we desire (Rorty, 1991).

Rorty (1989) perceives attempts to find the truth as attempts to develop a new vocabulary that could answer the question of searching for criteria. He believes in the romantic ideal of truth when truth is not what is revealed, but what is created. Rorty writes, "... if we could ever come to terms with the idea that the main part of reality is indifferent to our descriptions, and that the human self is created not so much by the adequacy or inadequacy of its expression in the dictionary, but through the use of the dictionary, then we would finally learn what was true in the romantic idea of a created, not a discovered truth" (1989, p. 26). He calls for an end to wasting time on questions that, in principle, have no answer. The truth about the world around us is not contained in our descriptions of the surrounding world, since "... languages are made, not found, and that truth is a property of linguistic formations, sentences" (Rorty, 1989, p. 27). Rorty believes that cognitive efforts are aimed at our practical use rather than an accurate description of things as they are in themselves. Any language is not an attempt to copy the outside world, but rather an instrument for interacting with the world. Thus, the discovery of new truths is nothing more than a "change in linguistic practices", and the use of a different, new vocabulary generates changes in social practices.

Humanity is mired in historical conditions and in the contingency of language, therefore, people cannot in any way go beyond them and achieve absolute truth and reality as such. Ultimately, humanity can neither build absolute foundations for beliefs nor find evidence of its righteousness that would satisfy every rational being. The world must go beyond what Nietzsche called “metaphysical comfort” (Nietzsche, 1967). However, Rorty (1989) convinces that there is a more noble goal than the search for truth. If to abandon the idea of knowledge as a representation of reality, then we should offer a more productive paradigm of knowledge. He suggests replacing the representational paradigm with an anti-representational one. The new paradigm should renew the understanding of the community and will be more fruitful for the achievement of social goals. In this sense, Rorty (1989) sees philosophy as an assistant for solving political and social problems: if our political and social values were inherited by the tradition of the Enlightenment, designed to create a more democratic society and promote human solidarity, then an anti-representational or pragmatic paradigm will be more productive in achieving these goals.

Thus, the main task of a philosopher in this context is “to fulfill his social functions”. Descriptions of the social and cultural world, as well as of nature as a whole, should be made taking into account the contingency of experience and language. Thus, philosophy can bring a lot of new things into the discourse of modernity, while at the same time protecting itself from the stagnation of interpretations and the “freezing of culture”. In this sense, the Philosopher becomes on a par with the poet, writer, artist, or other creators of culture, but at the same time, he expresses himself in a completely different philosophical vocabulary. The American philosopher says in one interview, “When you read the pragmatists, you understand for sure that this is not Descartes, not Kant or Plato. It is like aspirin. Aspirin will not give you strength, but it can relieve headaches. Likewise, pragmatism is a philosophical therapy to stop asking unnecessary questions” (Lewis-Kraus, 2003).

In the light of all of the above, Rorty (1961) puts forward a project of “destruction”, which, in his opinion, was characterized by metaphysics, transcendentalism, and fundamentalism. Classical metaphysics in understanding the process of cognition proceeding from the metaphor of the “mirror” viewed it as a triumph of pure reason, striving for the most accurate representation of the world. According to Rorty (1961), this approach to understanding the process of cognition was finally canonized by Kant. Rorty (1961), promising to destroy epistemology, in fact, declared language to be a medium between man and the world. Rorty (1961) believes that language fulfills the same function as the categories of reason in Kant or history in

Hegel. One of the first articles by Rorty (1961), published in 1961, was called “Pragmatism, Categories and Language” (Rorty, 1961). It is dedicated to the teachings of Ch. S. Pierce on the categories. The article begins with the words “Pragmatism is again gaining respect”. The “early” Rorty (1989) chose those “analytical” themes (the theory of identity, the ban on individual language, the linguistic turn, etc.), which are subversive concerning the analytical project – which he himself showed in his “later” works. But in retrospect, it is not difficult to find in the most seemingly innocent analytical texts hints of theses that will bring Rorty (1989) the glory of a “schismatic”. For example, the editorial article for the collection “The Linguistic Turn” already contains criticism of linguistic transcendentalism, and the convergence of philosophy with poetry, and a call to invent new ways of speaking.

Sometimes historians portray the matter in such a way that until the middle of the 20th century philosophers did not know about the role of language. This is clearly not true. Yet Rorty (1989) himself points to the linguistic turn and, undoubtedly, writes a lot about language. Language is an instrument common to all people. The text, on the other hand, is a very special invention, a subject of concern for professionals in the humanities. For Rorty (1989), language is also a living, non-formal formation that shapes our judgments and practices so that we can most effectively adapt to reality. There is no specific mechanism for the connection between the world, language, and man because Rorty (1989) considers the very question of such to be metaphysical and dependent on the metaphor of the mirror.

However, the “linguistic turn” of the philosophy of the 20th century made the object of research not experience, but *language* as a phenomenon, a basic instrument of cognition and activity. Language as an all-encompassing form of human experience, along with man himself as a creative and self-fulfilling and self-creating being in language, cements a comprehensive study of individuality in society, irrespective of disciplinary and ideological divisions. Speaking about the difference between the classical tradition and the modern pragmatic one in the formulation of eternal philosophical problems, Rorty (1989) argues that from the point of view of the first they are “found”, any thinking mind inevitably stumbles upon them, and from the point of view of the second – “made” (“invented”) are not natural, but artificial. Moreover, the representatives of pragmatism point out that the language of traditional Western philosophy “was useful in its time, but has ceased to be so” (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 425).

Rorty (1989) believes that pragmatism does not deny the posing of the problems of the classical tradition, but rejects the distinction “real – seeming”, “found – done” and replaces them with the distinction “more

useful – less useful”. At the same time, the scientist notes that the language of Greek metaphysics and Christian theology, the ontotheological tradition was necessary and useful for that time, while “now there are other purposes, for which a different language is needed” (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 426). The dispute between the classical and pragmatic approaches should not be about who understands the Universe more correctly, but about why certain views are taken (for the sake of proving the truth of Scripture or space travel). Analyzing such basic concepts of classical epistemology as “consciousness”, “spiritual and bodily substance”, “representation”, “intuition”, etc., Rorty (1989) calls their operation a kind of “*language game*”, which still continues to occupy the minds of philosophers. However, the categories “consciousness”, “intuition” do not reflect any reality. So, consciousness is an essence that cannot be expressed in language, a whole series of different and confusing questions, various mental abilities merging together, which makes intuition an impossible act, and introspection (awareness of oneself) – an ability acquired in the learning process. At the same time, Rorty (1989) suggests replacing the question of what consciousness is with the question of linguistic behavior, the concept with a sociolinguistic one, abandoning the philosophy of “mind”, “foundations”, “philosophy-as-science”.

Evaluating the views of Sellars and Quine on the problem of the “given” and “necessity”, the scientist comes to the conclusion that “the concept of exact representation is an “empty compliment” given to those beliefs that allow us to do what we want” (“History of Philosophy”, 2002, p. 1150). Therefore, cognition as an “exact representation” is one of the possibilities that can be replaced by a pragmatic concept of cognition, as a result of which the opposition between thinking and action, the idea of the world, and coping with it is removed. At the same time, most of our philosophical beliefs are not judgments and statements, but images and metaphors, while philosophical and scientific knowledge itself has no foundation, does not represent reality, and cannot give true knowledge. Science and philosophy are incommensurable, alternating methods of the metaphorical depiction of reality.

Thus, Rorty (1989), following Nietzsche, the late Wittgenstein, Heidegger, substantiates the groundlessness of claims to absolute truth even in the form in which they took place in Kant, who tried to find the foundations of knowledge. Unlike Kant, Nietzsche and Heidegger viewed philosophy not as the basis of knowledge, but as “instruction”, hermeneutics, “conversation of the humanity” within the framework of culture. Proceeding from this, Rorty (1989) criticizes the correspondent, representative theory of truth as striving for the most adequate reflection of the essence of things,

while the task of the cognition process is to describe a specific situation in the context of its usefulness. The appeal to the absolutes, the striving for the universal are not the subject of philosophy, for there is nothing eternal, unchanging, rigidly determined in the world. From the point of view of pragmatism, the search for truth for its own sake is meaningless, it cannot be the goal of cognition, the task of which is to achieve “agreement between people on what they should do; to reach a consensus on the goals to be pursued and the means to be used to achieve these goals” (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 428).

In this understanding, everything that does not lead to the coordination of behavior is not a cognitive effort, but a play on words. Therefore, any theory should offer a certain plan of action, contribute to the advancement of progress in any area (technical or political). This determines the overcoming of the opposition between the natural and social sciences, science and politics, philosophy and literature, theory and practice. In this regard, Rorty (1989) correlates the essence of humanitarian knowledge not with philosophy, but with literary criticism. He distinguishes between the concepts of “meaning”, corresponding to the intentions of the author of the text, and “co-meaning”, the disclosure of truth, which is the task of philosophy. At the same time, affirming the communological tendency of modern philosophy, the researcher believes that an assertion achieves its meaning by not extracting it from the mind of the asserter, but by placing it in a context. Starting from these positions to the analysis of language as a specific human instrument, Rorty (1989) criticizes the views of the representatives of the early stage of analytical philosophy, placing language at the center of philosophical research. Developing the ideas of analytical neo-pragmatism, he considers language as an instrument of effective human action in the surrounding world. And since the circumstances in which a person acts are constantly changing, this leads to an inevitable transformation of language, the polyvariety of discourses, and the provision of communication between them. This approach views words as instruments, beliefs not as reflections, but as a habit of behavior, which makes the question that the classical tradition posed meaningless, “Do I discover or invent, find or do?” (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 428), since the descriptions we give to things flow from our needs. At the same time, the question of which of these descriptions is more true, adequate to things, does not make sense, since it is determined by the degree of interest, need, usefulness in this description.

The main argument of pragmatism in the anti-representational view of knowledge is the ratio of descriptions, goals, and objectives, because “cognitive efforts are aimed at our benefit rather than an accurate descrip-

tion of things as they are in themselves” (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 429). In this context, language is not a copy of the external world, but an “instrument for interacting with the external world” (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 429), which overcomes the “object–subject” dichotomy, since “there is no way to separate the contribution to our knowledge from the object itself” from the “contribution to our knowledge from our subjectivity” (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 428). In this context, not only the words but also the ideas that we use and put forward can be considered as the result of “complex causal-consequent relationships between human organisms and the rest of the Universe” (Aleksandrova et al., 2006, p. 428). Understanding the idea in the context of the pragmatic tradition is directed against the interpretation of it as perfect knowledge, abstracted from the internal, subjective. The idea in this sense, like language as a whole, is viewed as an instrument that coordinates our behavior, the relationship between the external and the internal.

5. Conclusions

Richard Rorty’s criticism of the epistemological basis of philosophy cannot fundamentally change the situation in philosophy and with philosophy, since it seems impossible for philosophy to abandon logical analysis and methods of logical argumentation completely. However, he managed to point out the “breaks” and “cracks” of modern philosophy, to diagnose its pathologies, expand to its discourse, to direct it to solving the problems of modernity.

R. Rorty compares language with a ladder, which should be thrown away, having climbed it to move on. A constant search for new dictionaries, the creation of new discourses is necessary for society to develop further, and not be in a state of stagnation. The distinction “the real” – “the apparent” should be replaced by the distinction “the more useful” – “the less useful”, therefore the language of the “ontotheological tradition” was useful in its time, during the Greek metaphysics and Christian theology, but now, during the liberal-democratic rhetoric it is useless. It is useless not because these problems have been solved, that the “end of history” has come, but because now there are other goals, different problems. Based on the thesis of the incommensurability of dictionaries, R. Rorty defends the idea of cultural and linguistic pluralism. The world of history is chaotic, it consists of many local cultural worlds, each of which is limited in space and time and develops according to its own autonomous laws. These laws are “games” that are played according to certain agreed rules, which all the members of a given community agree to follow, and the violation of which leads either to the “dropout”

of the participant from the given game situation or to the transformation of discursive practices, revision of the game rules and their replacement with other. Based on this vision of history, it becomes clear that the liberal community is one of the variants of an infinite number of language games, a variant that does not have any privileged status concerning other games, in no way reflects the “logic of development” of history and does not in any way express internal the essence of man.

Thus, the analysis of the specifics of the formulation and understanding of the main philosophical ideas in R. Rorty’s neopragmatic theory of knowledge allows approaching their analysis unconventionally, which does not refute, but complements and deepens the classical concepts, allowing them to be fruitfully applied to solving problems of specific sciences.

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