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Analogies and Language. A Study in Stefan Themerson's Semantic Poetry

“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone,
“it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.”
Lewis Carroll *Through the Looking-Glass*

Der Sinn einer Frage ist die Methode ihrer Beantwortung.
Sage mir, *wie* du suchst, und ich werde dir sagen, *was* du suchst.
Ludwig Wittgenstein *Philosophische Bemerkungen*

ABSTRACT: In this paper the concept of analogy within the framework of Semantic Poetry by Stefan Themerson is sketched. The Themersonian project is compactly described. Two analogies are presented. We call them the analogy by naturalness and the traveller's analogy, respectively. Some similarity between Semantic Poetry and the Fregean concept of reference is discussed. The Themersonian view on logic and the Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz's approach are also briefly compared.

KEY WORDS: analogy, meaning, unambiguity, semantics, poetry, Stefan Themerson

1. Introductory remarks

The concept of *closed and connected languages* was introduced by Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz [in Ajdukiewicz 1978a]. The paper – under the German title *Sprache und Sinn* – was originally published in *Erkenntnis* in 1934. Generally speaking, if L is a closed and connected language, then for each expression E of L there is an unambiguous coordination between E and its meaning.¹ Moreover, Ajdukiewicz wrote:

¹ See [Ajdukiewicz, 1978a, p. 64]. The Polish phrase *języki zamknięte i spójne* has been translated as *closed connected languages* by John Wilkinson and as *closed, connected lan-*