

Explorations in Pragmatics



Mouton Series in Pragmatics 1

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Explorations in Pragmatics

Linguistic, Cognitive and
Intercultural Aspects

edited by

Istvan Kecskes

Laurence R. Horn

Mouton de Gruyter
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Mouton de Gruyter (formerly Mouton, The Hague)
is a Division of Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG, Berlin.

⊗ Printed on acid-free paper which falls within the guidelines
of the ANSI to ensure permanence and durability.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Kecskés, István.

Explorations in pragmatics : linguistic, cognitive, and intercultural
aspects / by Istvan Kecskes, Laurence R. Horn.

p. cm. — (Mouton series in pragmatics ; 1)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-3-11-019366-4 (cloth : alk. paper)

I. Pragmatics. I. Horn, Laurence R. II. Title.

P99.4.P72K43 2007

306.44—dc22

2007017389

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie;
detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

ISBN 978-3-11-019366-4

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Cover design: Martin Zech, Bremen.

Printed in Germany.

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Introduction

This volume consists of selected papers from the LAUD Symposium held on March 27–30, 2006 in Landau, Germany, including the keynote address by John Searle, six of the plenary talks and four selected papers from the conference. These papers reflect current trends in international research in pragmatics over recent years. The authors, coming from 10 different countries, represent all angles of pragmatics.

The development of new perspectives on pragmatics has been prompted by several factors. Recent theoretical work on the semantics/pragmatics interface, serious applications of evolutionary biology to the study of language, and empirical work within cognitive and developmental psychology and intercultural communication has directed attention to issues that warrant reexamination and revision of some of the central tenets and claims of the field. In addition, cultural changes emanating from globalization have affected the relation of language to the wider world; in particular, the spread of English as a global language has led to the emergence of issues of usage, power, and control that must be dealt with in a comprehensive pragmatics of language.

Pragmatic theories have traditionally emphasized the importance of intention, rationality, cooperation, common ground, mutual knowledge, relevance, and commitment in the formation and execution of communicative acts. The new approaches to pragmatic research reflected in this volume, while not questioning the central role of these factors, extend the purview of the discipline to allow for a more comprehensive picture of their functioning and interrelationship within the dynamics of communication.

The papers address these issues from a variety of directions. In Part I, Searle and Horn examine language use and pragmatics from a philosophical perspective. They each invoke the influence of Gottlob Frege, the father of both predicate logic and the modern philosophy of language, but they address quite different aspects of Frege's legacy for the theory of meaning. Searle seeks to rectify what he sees as the most serious gap in the otherwise impressive set of accomplishments of linguistic philosophy, the failure to fully recognize that language is a natural biological phenomenon and that linguistic meaning, the meaning of speech acts and sentences, must be considered an extension of the biologically

more fundamental forms of intentionality. This in turn facilitates a new understanding of the origin and evolution of language as part of our biological endowment.

Horn focuses on Frege's characterization of aspects of meaning that – in the terminology of modern pragmatic theory – do not constitute part of what is said. In its treatment of such non-truth-conditional aspects of meaning, including the relations corresponding to presupposition and implicature, Fregean doctrine informs current disputes in pragmatic theory. Horn defends Frege's notion of *Andeutung*, and Grice's notion of conventional implicature which descends from it, against recent challenges and extends it to new ranges of data.

In Part II, the cognitive aspect of pragmatics is represented in the papers of Moeschler, Ruiz de Mendoza and Baicchi, and Giora. They focus on well-known domains such as illocutionary constructions, the pragmatics of negation, and the relevance-theoretic concept of explicature. However, each paper sheds new light on the familiar concepts. Baicchi and Ruiz de Mendoza argue that sets of semantic conditions based on the Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model capture all the relevant information from high-level illocutionary scenarios associated with all speech act categories. Giora rejects the standard view of negation as an operator that suppresses or wipes out assumptions, and provides empirical evidence to show that a negative operator often effectively maintains rather than deactivating information within its scope. Assuming a characterization of explicatures as pragmatically derived enrichments of the logical forms of sentences, Moeschler argues that such explicatures are either basic, when they represent propositional forms, or higher-level, when they represent illocutionary forces and propositional attitudes. The main argument of his paper is that intercultural misunderstandings are caused by the triggering of erroneous higher-level explicatures by the hearer.

The papers in Part III by Mey, Kecskes, and Grundy focus on the intercultural aspects of pragmatics. Mey explains the role of pragmatics in establishing and defining intra- and inter-culturality, especially within a language-oriented context. With regard to interculturality, he argues that if it is to be exercised and defined as a meeting of cultures, it must respect the intracultural rights of individuals and groups to their own culture, including the right to use one's language, which is what linguistic rights are all about.

Kecskes undertakes to analyze data from English Lingua Franca (ELF) with the goal of identifying the main features of ELF pragmatics. His paper seeks to determine the extent to which the players will stick to the original

rules of the game with no native speakers participating in the language game, and how current pragmatic theories can explain English Lingua Franca communication. He calls for further research to identify the characteristic features of Lingua Franca Pragmatics. Grundy looks at lingua franca instruction from a practical perspective and shows how the evolution of language teaching methodology runs parallel to the evolution of pragmatic inference.

The papers by Margerie, and Geeraert and Kristiansen utilize corpus-based methodology in different ways within pragmatics. Margerie's paper addresses the grammaticalization of the pragmatic marker *kind of* and its phonetically reduced form *kinda*. She compares these hedges with their French equivalents and shows through a close observation of examples from corpora how these units develop into boosters. Taking current Natural Semantic Metalanguage-based analyses as their starting-point, Geeraerts and Kristiansen argue that a truly usage-based analysis in the domain of intercultural pragmatics must take a number of *methodological*, *descriptive*, and *theoretical* refinements into account, and particularly, that the reductionist characteristics of the Wierzbickian perspective need to be revised from a perspective grounded in empirical research.

One rich vein of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural work in pragmatics has been in the treatment of politeness phenomena, dating back to Brown and Levinson's influential neo-Gricean study of politeness two decades ago that was also inspired by Goffman's influential notion of positive and negative face. Terkourafi explores the explanatory potential of an interpretation of Grice's Cooperative Principle that takes face to be "the accepted purpose...of the talk exchange." She proposes a second-order notion of face, Face2, which is characterized by two properties: first, a biological grounding in the dimensions of approach vs. withdrawal, and second, intentionality, understood in the phenomenological tradition as a property of mental states.

Istvan Kecskes and Laurence R. Horn

Acknowledgment

The editors express their sincere appreciation to Susan Nesbitt-Perez, a Ph.D. student at the University at Albany who provided invaluable assistance to the editors in the process of making this publication camera-ready. Her dedicated, professional approach has greatly enhanced the quality of this volume.

Part I: Philosophical and Linguistic Aspects

What is language: Some preliminary remarks¹

John R. Searle

1. Naturalizing language

I believe that the greatest achievements in philosophy over the past hundred or one hundred and twenty five years have been in the philosophy of language. Beginning with Frege, who invented the subject, and continuing through Russell, Wittgenstein, Quine, Austin and their successors right to the present day, there is no branch of philosophy with so much high quality work as the philosophy of language. In my view, the only achievement comparable to those of the great philosophers of language is Rawls's reinvention of the subject of political philosophy (and therefore implicitly the subject of ethics). But with this one possible exception: I think that work in the philosophy of language is at the top of our achievements.

Having said that, however, I have to record a serious misgiving I have about the subject. The problem is that its practitioners in general do not treat language as a natural phenomenon. This may seem a strange charge to make, given that so many contemporary and recent philosophers of language are anxious to emphasize the empirical character of their theories of language. Quine and Davidson are striking examples of resolute empiricism. My objection is that few contemporary and recent philosophers of language attempt to treat language as a natural extension of non-linguistic biological capacities. Language is not seen as continuous with, nor as an extension of, the rest of our specifically human biological inheritance. I think there is a deep reason, both historically and intellectually, why language has not been treated naturalistically. It is because the philosophy of language went hand in hand with the development of mathematical logic. Indeed, Frege, in effect, invented both the philosophy of language and modern logic. And the growth of the philosophy of language through Russell and the early Wittgenstein was very much seen as an application of mathematical logic. Even later Wittgenstein and Austin, both of whom reacted against the excessive logicism of the philosophy of language, did not see language as a natural biological phenomenon. It is not hard to think of language as an extension of biological capacities, but if by "logic" we mean formal systems of the

sort developed by Frege and his successors, then logic is definitely not a biological phenomenon. On the contrary, specifically human biology existed for tens of thousands of years before logic in this sense was ever invented.

What would it be like to try to treat language in my sense, naturalistically? The first step would be one that many philosophers have resisted and that is to see linguistic meaning, the meaning of sentences and speech acts, as an extension of the more biologically fundamental forms of intentionality that we get in belief, desire, memory and intention, and to see those in turn as developments of even more fundamental forms of intentionality, especially, perception and intentional action. Among the most basic forms of intentionality, the most biologically primitive, along with hunger, thirst, and sexual desire, are perception and intention-in-action. Given perceptions and actions, animals have the capacity to develop memories and prior intentions, as well as beliefs and desires and other forms of intentionality, such as expectation and fear, anger and aggression. I believe we should see the biological foundations of language in prelinguistic intentionality. Our initial question should be: What are the similarities and differences between the prelinguistic forms of consciousness and intentionality and the linguistic forms? We do not know how in fact language evolved, and in the absence of fossil evidence we may never know exactly how it evolved, but we do know that it did evolve, and we ought at least to be able to answer the question: What are the logical, conceptual relations between prelinguistic forms of consciousness and intentionality and the evolved linguistic forms?

I want to emphasize that this approach is quite different from the standard approaches. Davidson (1984), for example, thought that only a being that has a language can have intentional states such as beliefs and desires. I think he had the biology exactly backwards. Certain species of animals have perceptions, perform actions and are capable of acquiring beliefs, desires and prior intentions, though they have no language. Furthermore, several species are capable of prelinguistic thought processes. I suggest that we think of human language as an extension of these prelinguistic capacities.

The aim of this article is to explain some of the essential features of human language, and I will emphasize especially those features of language that relate to human society. Notice I say "What is language?" and not "What is *a* language such as French, German or English?" I will not be interested in what makes one language distinct from others, but in what

they all have in common. One of my main themes will be that the standard accounts of language in philosophy of language and linguistics tend to underestimate, and therefore misrepresent, the role of society and of social conventions. The general accounts of society given in such disciplines as sociology tend to underestimate, and therefore misrepresent, the special role of language in society. I will be arguing, among other things, that language is essentially social, but not just in any old way; rather, in a way that makes human society essentially linguistic. The key connecting link between language and society is the notion of deontology, a notion involving commitments of various kinds, about which I will say more later. Language, for reasons that I will attempt to state, requires a deontology, and the deontology introduced by language makes specifically human forms of society and human civilization possible.

One of the essential questions addressed in this paper is this: Since human societies are importantly different from animal societies, which of those differences are accounted for, and how exactly are they accounted for, by the existence of human languages?

2. Language as phonology, syntax and semantics

The standard textbook accounts of language say that specific languages such as French or German consist of three components: a phonological component that determines how words and sentences are pronounced, a syntactical component that determines the arrangement of words and morphemes in sentences, and a semantic component that assigns a meaning or interpretation to words and sentences. More sophisticated accounts add that there must also be a pragmatic component that is not a component of specific languages; rather, it sets certain constraints on the *use* of language and is not internal to specific languages, such as French or German, in the way that the syntax of French is internal to French and the syntax of German is internal to German. For our purposes we can ignore phonology because it is not essential to language that it be spoken (It is important, however, that any language, whether spoken or not, must be thinkable. It is sometimes said that people think in words. Unless they are talking out loud to themselves, that is not true. They think in *images* of words.) The relation of syntax to semantics is however crucial. Syntax organizes semantics according to three principles: discreteness, compositionality and generativity. Discreteness is that feature by which syntactical elements

retain their identity under the various syntactical operations. So, for example, when you change a sentence around, the words (and morphemes) do not lose their identity. Unlike baking a cake where the ingredients are changed by being mixed together, forming a sentence does not change the words and morphemes that are being mixed together; and you can have a sentence containing eight words or twelve words, but you cannot have a sentence containing nine and a half words. Compositionality is both a syntactic and a semantic property. Syntactically a complex element such as a sentence is built up out of simple elements, words and morphemes, according to the formation rules of the language. Semantically the meaning of the whole sentence is determined by the meanings of the simple elements together with the syntactical structure of the sentence. For example, we understand the sentence “John loves Mary” differently from the sentence “Mary loves John”; even though they both have the same elements, because the elements are arranged differently in the sentences. Generativity, as I am using the term, implies that the syntactical operations of the language allow the speakers to generate an indefinite number of new sentences. There is, strictly speaking, no upper limit to the number of sentences in any natural human language.

This account is okay as far as it goes but it is incomplete. I will be arguing that it leaves out a crucial dimension of language, namely the element of what in ordinary English we could describe as *commitment* and which I will describe more generally as deontology. Deontology is essential to the nature of human language in ways that I need to explain.

3. Society and language

In linguistics and philosophy, there is a more or less orthodox conception of language but there is no such commonality in social science accounts of society. However, it seems to me that the accounts of society that I am familiar with, ranging all the way from Aristotle to the present, radically misconceive the role of language in that, in an important sense, they take the existence of language for granted and then ask: How does society work, how is it constructed?, and so on. When I say that they take language for granted, I mean that in accounting for the nature of society they do not ask: What is language? Rather, they simply assume the existence of language and go on from there. Perhaps the worst offenders in this regard are the Social Contract theorists, who presuppose beings like us, who have

language, and then ask how these beings could form society on the basis of a social contract. The point I will be making is that once a society has a common language, it already has a social contract. The situation with authors such as Bourdieu, Foucault and Habermas is not really better. They think of themselves as acutely conscious of language and its importance for society, but they do not ask *What is language?* in a way that would enable them to ask *How exactly is language constitutive of society?*

4. What does language add to prelinguistic cognition?

I am not sure how best to argue for the theses that I want to maintain. I think one way to argue for them is, so to speak, genetically. I propose to treat the question as an engineering or designer question. Imagine that there was a species like us, having a full range of prelinguistic conscious experiences, voluntary actions, and prelinguistic thought processes, but no language. What capacities would they have to have in order to create language for themselves and what exactly are they creating when they create a rudimentary language? At one time, animals more or less like us, hominids, walked the Earth without language. Now we have language. What happened in between? And when I ask what happened, I do not mean the question historically, but conceptually. What conceptual (logical, cognitive) capacities did they acquire when they acquired language? And what sorts of cognitive capacities did they have beforehand on which language could have evolved? We have a language in a sense that other species do not. What is it that we have and how could we have gotten it? I must emphasize that I am not trying to do speculative evolutionary biology, rather I am trying to do a logical analysis of the relations between prelinguistic cognitive capacities and language, with the aim of figuring out what language is.

In response to earlier drafts of this article, some people thought I was trying to enter into current discussions of animal cognition and the actual evolution of language. That is a misunderstanding. I am, to repeat, not engaging in speculative evolutionary biology nor animal cognition. There is currently a sizable amount of research on animal cognition² and important work is done on the evolution of language.³ I am not addressing the empirical issues in these fields. For comparison I will sometimes make reference to other animals, but if it should turn out that everything we currently believe, for example, about bee languages and primate thought

processes is false, that would be only marginally relevant to my questions. And even if it should turn out that some animals have full blown languages in the sense that we do, and that human language did not gradually evolve but was the result of a single evolutionary Big Bang that produced brains with full blown generative grammars, such facts would be only marginally relevant to the questions I am asking about logical dependencies. I am emphatically not arguing for the superiority of our species. If it should turn out that some other animals have what we have, I welcome them to the club.

When I ask the question, “How could language have evolved?” I mean something quite different from empirical researchers who ask a different question using the same sentence. They are asking: “Given what we know about human evolutionary history and animal cognition, how could human languages have developed in our evolutionary history?” My question is conceptual. Subtract language from a species like us: What do you have? Now add language: What are you adding?

Notice that the way I am posing the question presupposes that the *nature* of language and the question of the *functions* and *uses* of language by human speakers cannot be separated. We can explore which structural features of language are useful or even essential by exploring what use humans make of these structures.

There are apparently intermediate cases between humans and species that have no language in a human sense. The bees are the best known example. When a bee returns to the hive she performs a waggle dance that conveys different types of information depending on the variations in the dance. She conveys that there is nectar in the neighborhood, that it is in a certain direction and that it is a certain distance away from the hive. In hot weather, she can communicate the location of water, and even, during swarming, the location of possible hive sites. Different combinations of the elements of the dance convey different elements of information. In one experiment, the experimenters towed a boatful of flowers to the middle of a lake. The returning bee conveyed this information. Her hive mates showed no interest in flying to what apparently they knew to be the middle of a lake.

I will proceed by addressing four specific questions: What features of language are already present in prelinguistic consciousness? What features of language are lacking in prelinguistic consciousness? What special features of consciousness are lacking in language? What functions do humans need language to perform, given prelinguistic consciousness?

5. Features common to prelinguistic intentionality and language

I have already said that the hominids have conscious perceptions and intentional actions together with conscious thought processes, all of these in a prelinguistic form. This implies, at the very least, that animals have beliefs, desires, intentions, and at least some form of memories, enough to enable them to recognize familiar objects and situations.

These prelinguistic forms of intentionality already have some crucial logical properties. Specifically, because perceptions, intentions, beliefs, desires, and so on, are forms of intentionality, they carry within them the determination of conditions of success or failure. An animal that is hungry, for example, has a desire to eat; and pathologies apart, it thus has the capacity to recognize when that desire is satisfied and when it is not satisfied. We can generalize this point as follows: Any intentional state determines its conditions of satisfaction, and a normal animal that has intentional states must be able to distinguish, to recognize, when the conditions of satisfaction are in fact satisfied. If it is thirsty, it must be able to tell when it has drunk; if it is hungry, it must be able to tell when it has eaten; if it is trying to do something, it must know when it has done it, and so on. We can summarize this point by saying that when we supposed that our animals had intentional states we were already supposing that they had mental representations with propositional contents and conditions of satisfaction. But when I say that, I am speaking logically not ontologically. I am not saying the animals had a set of picture-like or sentence-like entities in their heads called “representations” Rather, to have beliefs and desires, for example, is already to have something that determines conditions of satisfaction, and that implies the capacity to recognize success and failure. Presumably these capacities are realized in neuronal structures, but, for our investigation, it does not matter how these structures are realized, provided only that the realization is rich enough to carry the logical properties. When I say the representations are propositional, I imply nothing linguistic. I mean that there is something that sets the conditions of satisfaction; and because a condition is always a condition *that such and such*, it follows trivially that the conditions are propositional.

We can summarize the formal features of intentionality, prelinguistic as well as linguistic, by explaining the following notions and the relations between them: *propositional content*, *conditions of satisfaction*, *psychological mode* and *direction of fit*. Our evolutionary history has given us different ways in which our mental states relate to reality. The aim of

beliefs is to represent how things are, therefore beliefs can be said to be true or false. The aim of desires and intentions is not to represent how things are but how we would like them to be or how we intend to make them be. For this reason, desires and intentions are not true or false, but fulfilled or frustrated. I find it useful to characterize beliefs as having the *mind-to-world direction of fit* (the belief in the mind is supposed to fit the state of affairs in the world) and desires and intentions as having the *world-to-mind direction of fit*. (If all goes well with the desires and intentions, the world is supposed to come to fit how it is represented in the mind.) Not surprisingly these distinctions carry over exactly to speech acts (see Searle 1975). The assertive class of speech acts (statements, assertions, etc.) are expressions of beliefs and are supposed, like beliefs, to represent how the world is and thus they have the *word-to-world* direction of fit. The directive class of speech acts (requests, orders, commands, etc.) are expressions of desires and so have the *world-to-word* direction of fit. The commissive class (promises, offers, etc.) are expressions of intention and so have the *world-to-word* direction of fit. These different directions of fit are a function not of the propositional content, by itself, but of how the propositional content is presented in the speech act. This is why in standard speech act notation, the total speech act is represented with a distinction between the illocutionary force or type of speech act and the propositional content. Thus

$$F(p)$$

represents the propositional content “p”, presented with the illocutionary force “F”. And this corresponds exactly to the representation of the intentional state as

$$S(p)$$

The “p” represents the propositional content and the “S” represents the type of intentional state, that is, its psychological mode, whether belief, desire, or whatever.

Our question is: How do we get from the intentional state $S(p)$ to the linguistic resources that would enable us to perform the speech act $F(p)$? Our task is made easier by the fact that the formal apparatus of the content and type, together with conditions of satisfaction and direction of fit, are already present in prelinguistic intentionality.

So far so good. But what about those speech acts where the fit is taken for granted, cases that I have called the null direction of fit: expressives,

such as apologizing and thanking? If you look at the forms of intentionality that correspond to these speech acts and are expressed in their performance, forms such as regret and gratitude, it seems to me these typically are combinations of beliefs and desires. That is, they are forms of desire based on the presupposition of the truth of the belief.⁴ For example, if I regret having done something I must believe I did it and wish I had not. So the existence of speech acts where the fit is presupposed, which have what I have called the null direction of fit, does not pose an insuperable problem for moving from prelinguistic intentionality to speech acts, because the prelinguistic forms also include cases where the fit is presupposed. These cases, such as pride and shame, gratitude and regret, contain beliefs and desires, which do have a mind-world or world-mind direction of fit.

In addition to the problem of expressive speech acts there is a special problem about *declarations*, speech acts that make something the case by declaring it to be the case, for example, adjourning a meeting by saying, “The meeting is adjourned”. These have no echo in prelinguistic thought and I will discuss them in the next section.

The categories. Another feature of prelinguistic consciousness – and this will prove crucial for the evolution of language – is that any animal that has the biologically primitive intentional apparatus of conscious prelinguistic hominids already has a hefty number of the traditional philosophical (e.g., Aristotelian and Kantian) categories. It already has *space*, *time*, *causation*, *agency* and *object*; and with object it has to have *identity* and *individuation* together with *property* and *relation*. I do not mean that it has to have concepts corresponding to these categories, but rather, for example, that it has to be able to recognize that one object is over there in front of it and another one on the left (space), it has to recognize that its eating occurred in a temporal sequence (time), that it did something, as opposed to something just happening (agency), that some things it did, made other things happen (causation). Perhaps most importantly, if it can perceive and recognize objects including other hominids, it must have identity and individuation, because it must be able to perceive that this is the same object as before (identity), and that this object is a separate object from that object (individuation). But once it has objects, with their identity and individuation, it already has properties and relations of objects. It can see that this person is next to that person (a spatial relation) and it can see that this object is brown (property). Given all of this apparatus, it also has the concept of change; thus it can see that this hominid, who was previously over there, has now moved over here (change from one location to another

of the same object). Finally, it can recognize objects of the same type. For example, it can recognize other animals as being or not being of the same species as itself.

6. Features that language has that consciousness lacks

What does prelinguistic consciousness lack? Perhaps above all, it lacks *internal* and *controllable* structures in its thought processes. Thus a dog can perceive and hence think that, as we would put it, “Someone is approaching the door”. But, unlike us, it cannot distinguish that thought from the thought, “The door is being approached by someone”. Furthermore it cannot use its true thought, “Someone is approaching the door” to form the false thought “The door is approaching someone”. This is an important point. Prelinguistic forms of intentionality have structure, but they do not have the sorts of *indefinitely manipulable structures with semantic content* that the syntax of language provides. Thus perception is structured by the sheer physical impact of the objects perceived and by the physiology of the perceptual apparatus. For example, the animal sees a man walk toward the door. The structure of memory is similarly shaped by the sheer physical events and the physiological apparatus. But without syntactical elements the animal does not have a rich structural apparatus the elements of which it can manipulate at will in an indefinite number of ways. Birds can perform new permutations of their songs, and an animal constructing a tool can distinguish removing the leaves from the twig and removing the twig from the leaves. Neither of these cases is, in my sense, a case of freely manipulating syntactic structures with semantic content. The beauty of human languages is not just that they have compositionality and generativity but the user can freely manipulate the *semantically loaded* syntactical elements at will.

I think that what I just said is obviously true but it is controversial. Some philosophers, especially Fodor (1975), think that all thought requires a linguistic syntax, and that humans can only acquire a natural language because they already have an inborn “language of thought” with a syntax as rich as that of any human language. Others, especially Davidson (1984), think that without language thought is impossible. So they, incredibly, deny that animals can have intentional states such as beliefs and desires. I, on the contrary, think that it is obvious that many animals, like my dog, Gilbert, have perceptions, intentions, beliefs and desires, and yet they have nothing

like a language with its freely manipulable syntactical structure. And even if I am wrong about Gilbert, there is just too much biological evidence of animal cognition to make Davidson's view credible.⁵

Structure and Segmentation. Another difference between the linguistic and the prelinguistic is that the flow of consciousness in prelinguistic thought and perception, though structured in all sorts of ways, does not, or does not necessarily, come in discrete segments in the way that language does. Non-linguistic thought is, or at least can be, a continuous flow, broken only by sleep or other forms of unconsciousness. Language, however, is essentially segmented. The utterance of sentences cannot be a continuous undifferentiated flow, but each sentence, and even each sentence fragment, if uttered as a complete speech act, must be discrete. So the situation we are in when we move from experience to language is analogous to the situation where we move from a movie to a series of still pictures. By thinking in language we break up our thought into words and sentential segments. Though actual discourse takes place in time, the intentionality of the discourse is in discrete segments in a way that the flow of prelinguistic thought and perception in action in conscious life is not in that way in discrete segments. A typical speech act, though performed in time, is semantically speaking, instantaneous. This is why it does not matter to the identity of the speech act whether, for example, the language spoken requires that the verb phrase comes before or after the subject noun phrase. This difference between unsegmented consciousness and segmented discourse is disguised from us, or at least, for a long time was disguised from me, by the fact that beliefs and desires are naturally talked about as if they were discrete units. But when they are, so to speak, in action, when I am actually looking or acting or perceiving, then they become part of the continuous flow. Suppose, for example, I have the following thought in English, "Now I must go to the supermarket and buy some food for dinner". Though that thought occurs in time, because it is expressed in an English sentence it has a kind of discreteness that pre-linguistic thoughts do not have. If, for example, I am dancing or skiing, the stream of conscious thought need not contain any words and can be in a continuous flow.

Declarations. A third special feature of language that does not exist in prelinguistic intentionality is that in language we get a type of speech act that I have baptized "declarations". These have a double direction of fit, both word-to-world and world-to-word, in the same speech act. These are not two independent fittings but one fitting that goes both ways. Consider the cases where, for example, an authorized person adjourns the meeting, or

declares war, by saying “The meeting is adjourned” or “War is declared”. Or consider linguistic declarations where somebody makes a promise by saying “I promise” or gives an order by saying “I order”. These are performative utterances; and all performatives are declarations (though not all declarations are performatives). In these cases we have the double direction of fit, because we make something the case, and thus achieve the world-to-word direction of fit, by representing it as being the case, that is by representing it with the word-to-world direction of fit. This is one of the most important powers of language, the power to create a reality by declaring it to exist. There is nothing analogous to that in pre-linguistic forms of intentionality so we need to be able to show how an extension of the prelinguistic forms to language gives us the capacity to create a form of institutional or social reality that exists only because we collectively and linguistically represent it as existing. I need to show how prelinguistic forms of intentionality could have evolved into human social and institutional reality. What we will require in order to explain this evolution is the notion of meaning and the notion of a convention. I will get to these shortly.

7. Some special features of consciousness. The unity of the proposition and the salience of objects with their features

In explaining the transition from prelinguistic intentionality to linguistic intentionality, we have some wonderful resources in consciousness that go beyond the possession of the apparatus of intentionality and the various philosophical categories – space, time, causation, identity, etc. – that I mentioned in section 5. Specifically, in prelinguistic intentionality the problem of the unity of the proposition does not arise. Why? Because the sequence of conscious thought and experience is one where the representation of the conditions of satisfaction is built in at every step of the way. There is no problem about how I can put the elements of my experience together to form a unity in a way that there is a problem about how I can put discrete words together to form a unified sentence. The experience comes with unity built into it. In conscious hunger, thirst, and visual perception, for example, the determination of the conditions of satisfaction is internal to the experience. Another resource that we have is that the actual structure of our conscious, perceptual experiences makes objects with their features salient. We consciously see, and otherwise

perceive, distinct objects and their properties. We see, for example, tall trees, ripe apples and snow covered mountains.

The combination of the unity of the proposition and the salience of some features of our experience gives us an apparent paradox, but I think it is a paradox we can resolve. Our experiences give us a built in unity corresponding to the unity of the proposition in language, but at the same time our experiences give us distinct objects and their features as salient and this corresponds to the noun-phrase verb-phrase structure in language. How do these two apparently inconsistent features relate to each other? We can only succeed in seeing when we see *that something is the case*, see *that such and such*. But all the same we do see objects, we see *that object*.

Another way to put the problem is this. It is easy enough to imagine a language which segments objects differently from the way we do, which treats a tree not as a unified whole, but as a top half and a bottom half. And has separate words for each. That is certainly a logical possibility. It is also possible to imagine a language that does not allow reference to objects, but only to processes as states of affairs. We could imagine a language where instead of saying, "That's a tree", or "That's a stone", we could say "It's treeing here" or "It's stoning here", on analogy with "It's raining here" or "It's snowing here", where the "it" does not refer to any object. We could imagine such a language, but such a language, if it exists, runs counter to our perceptual phenomenology. Our existing perceptual apparatus is constructed so that we naturally treat spatio-temporally discrete entities as single units, and these are represented by typical noun phrases of our language. Furthermore, identity as preserved in memory is crucial to the development of reference over time, because a pre-linguistic animal can nonetheless recognize the same object on different occasions, and recognize the same object as having different features on different occasions. The paradox I mentioned earlier is that the unit necessarily represented by an intentional state is a whole state of affairs, not an object. Yet perceptually objects and not states of affairs are phenomenologically salient. In language the problem is to explain the unity of the proposition, given the separate syntactical representation of reference and predication.

8. The functions of language: Representation versus expression

So far, I have attempted to answer three questions concerning (1) features common to language and consciousness, (2) features special to language, and (3) features special to consciousness.

We now go to the last of our four questions. For what primary functions do we need language? By primary functions I mean those functions that are essential to something's being a language at all. We have to specify the primary functions before we can explain the structures which are necessary and sufficient to perform those functions.

The first primary function is this: We need language to provide a mechanism by which our critters can communicate with each other. What does "communicate" mean? And what gets communicated? The standard answer to the second question is that in speaking we communicate information. But "information" is one of the most confused and ill defined notions in contemporary intellectual life. So I am wary of using it except incidentally. I will just state flatly that what typically gets communicated in speech acts are intentional states, and the point of doing that is that the intentional states already represent the world; so what gets communicated, by way of communicating intentional states, is typically information *about the world*. If I communicate to you my belief that it is raining, the point is typically *not* to tell you about me and my beliefs, but about the weather. But there is no way I can intentionally tell you something about the weather except by way of using my mental representations of the weather, my weather directed intentional states, such as my beliefs.

Our prelinguistic hominids already have perception, intentional action and prelinguistic thought processes. All of these are intentional states with full propositional contents. And when one such creature intentionally communicates to another, it tries to reproduce its own intentional content in the head of the other person. When it communicates, for example, "there is danger here" it has the belief that there is danger here and it acts in such a way as to convey this belief to another animal.

The simplest type of communication would be the cases where one animal communicates information about the world by communicating an unstructured proposition to another animal. By unstructured I mean that the propositional content so far has no internal syntax. There is nothing there corresponding to the words of natural languages. This type of communication is already very common among animals. Think of warning cries of birds, mating calls of all sorts of species, and even dogs' barks. All

such examples are cases of what Peter Strawson (1957) once called “feature placing”. We simply communicate the presence of a feature in the environment. In actual languages these feature placing utterances can often be done with one word. “Danger!” “Rain!” “Fire!” And when we expand one of these into a whole sentence, the other parts of the sentence are sometimes semantically empty, as when we say “It is raining” though there is nothing referred to by “it”. Such simple cases of intentional communication do indeed transfer an intentional content from one animal to another, but they are a very small step on the road to real language because they are so limited. The fact that all sorts of animals have this kind of communication should tell us that it is not yet linguistic, or anything like it.

We might say that the first step on the road to language would be to introduce conventional devices for communicating intentional contents from one animal to another. In most of the cases we considered the animals already have natural devices for the communication, but we can easily imagine that our hominids develop conventional devices for intentional states that have no natural external expression. A dog does not need a conventional device to convey aggression. It can just bark aggressively. But humans, for example, do not in that way have a natural way of conveying the fact that it is raining. Such reflections about the distinction between natural ways of conveying intentional states, and evolved conventional ways, will I think force us to distinguish representation from expression. We need to distinguish between those communicative acts that involve intentionally representing a state of affairs in the world and those that simply express (in the original sense of pressing out, of giving vent to) an animal’s internal state, where that expression may convey information about the world but it does not do so by representing that something is the case, or by representing other sorts of conditions of satisfaction. Thus if I say “Rain!” I represent the weather even if the representation is unstructured. But if I say “Ouch!” as a spontaneous expression of pain, I convey information but I do not represent anything. Let us now make a generalization that will make our task clearer: Simple expressive speech acts, even when performed intentionally, are not “linguistic” in the sense we are trying to make explicit, and the corresponding words of actual languages are not “words” in our sense. Ouch! Damn! Yuck! Wow! are all used to express mental states, both intentional and nonintentional, but they are not the kind of linguistic phenomena we are trying to explain. Why not? Because, though they give vent to intentional or other states of the speaker,

they do not represent. What we want to understand is, how can our hominids evolve linguistic *representation*?

What is the difference exactly between representing and expressing? If I say “Rain!” my utterance can be literally true or false, because it represents the current state of the weather. I can, for example, lie when I make this utterance. But if I say “Ouch!” though I do convey information about myself, I say nothing which is literally true or false. If I say “Ouch” when I am not in pain, I may mislead and misinform, but I do not lie.⁶

So the first thing our hominids have to create are some conventional devices for representing the same states of affairs in the world that their existing intentional states represent. One type of such a device would represent the same state of affairs, the same conditions of satisfaction, as “there is food here”, another, “It is dangerous here”, another, “it is raining”, etc. By producing a token of such a device, in what we might as well call “an utterance” a person can convey to another person the same content as he has in his existing intentional state. For example, he believes it is raining, so he produces the appropriate device to his interlocutor and thus communicates that it is raining.

There is a lot of philosophical weight contained in this simple story so let us slow down and go over it one step at a time. We are assuming that the prelinguistic hominids can recognize tokens of the same type. That is a reasonable assumption because the cognitive apparatus we assumed they came endowed with, implies a capacity for recognizing exemplars of the same on different occasions. We assume that the speaker is able to utter a token intentionally. That is implied by his stipulated capacity for intentional behavior. But now what exactly is added when he utters the device for purposes of communication? Well, he already has an intentional state with conditions of satisfaction, for example, the belief that it is raining. So what he does is intentionally impose these conditions of satisfaction on the utterance. The utterance now has the same conditions of satisfaction as his belief, and since we are supposing that he and his hearer both know the convention for using the symbol in question, he can make the utterance with confidence that the hearer will recognize that it has those conditions of satisfaction.

The introduction of conventional devices for representing states of affairs already presupposes the notion of speaker meaning. Any agent who is capable of using those devices must be able to use them meaningfully.

9. Speaker meaning as the imposition of conditions of satisfaction on conditions of satisfaction

We can now clarify the notion of meaning. We need to distinguish between the conventional meaning of words, sentences and other symbols, and the speaker meaning which the speaker expresses in making an intentional utterance. In the case we have discussed, the symbol in question has a conventional meaning: It is raining, and when the speaker makes an utterance with this symbol he expresses a speaker meaning, a speech act meaning: It is raining. When the speaker intentionally utters a token of the symbol, the production of the token is the condition of satisfaction of his intention to utter it. And when he utters it *meaningfully* he is imposing a further condition of satisfaction on the token uttered. The condition of satisfaction is: That it is raining. That imposition of conditions of satisfaction on conditions of satisfaction is the essence of speaker meaning.

The capacity to do this is a crucial element of human cognitive capacities. It requires the ability to think two levels at once, in a way that is essential for the use of language. At one level the speaker intentionally produces a physical utterance, but at another level the utterance represents something. And the same duality infects the symbol itself. At one level it is a physical token like any other, at another level it has a meaning, it represents a type of a state of affairs.

There are two separate aspects to what I have said so far. First, speaker meaning consists in the double level of intentionality I have tried to describe. The speaker intentionally produces an utterance, and he intends that the utterance should itself have conditions of satisfaction, for example truth conditions. But, and this is the next crucial point, if he is to succeed on a regular basis, then there has to be some *socially recognized conventional device*, some repeatable device, the production of which can be regularly and conventionally taken by his interlocutors to convey the message. Now we are getting much closer to language, because the first phenomenon is essential to the performance of speech acts, and the second phenomenon, the repeatable devices, consist typically of words and sentences of a language.

For the sake of explanatory simplicity, I introduced the idea of a convention before that of speaker meaning. But which really comes first, speaker meaning or convention? In the order of logical dependence the speaker intentionality must be logically prior, because these conventions for unstructured propositions encode preexisting speaker meanings.

However, without language and its conventions you can only have very simple speaker meanings. You can think, and mean, for example: It is raining here. But you cannot even think, much less say and mean, for example, “It would be nice to visit the zoo next Wednesday but I have to stay home and work on my income tax”. We will get to this point, the dependence of complex thought and meaning on language, in the next section when we get to symbols that have a compositional structure. For now I will just remark: If the speakers and hearers are to evolve a system where they can communicate effectively, they will have to develop a set of conventional devices for conveying speaker meaning.

When our animals develop a language, they are developing a set of devices for public, social, representation. That means they develop a set of devices, the production of which will be the imposition of conditions of satisfaction on conditions of satisfaction, *by convention*.

This is a first step on the way to language, but only a first step because so far we do not have syntax. The devices we were imagining correspond to unstructured propositions, and have no internal syntactical structure. In English we would have to translate them as one word sentences: Rain! Danger! Food!, etc.

10. A further step: Syntactical compositionality

A further step on the road to language (and remember, the metaphor of “steps” implies nothing historical. I am speaking of logical components. I have no idea in which order they occurred historically) is the introduction of simple syntactical devices which can be combined with other syntactical devices to produce complex syntactical devices, and each one of the complex devices will be used to communicate an entire intentional state. That is another way of saying that hominids need to evolve elements that correspond to our words and morphemes and to ways of combining these into sentences in a compositional manner, in a way that enables the participants to figure out the meaning of the sentences from the meanings of the elements and their arrangement in the sentence. For us the minimal unit of communication, the minimal unit of the speech act, is the whole sentence. The principle that guides the selection of the syntactical devices within the sentence is that they must perform a semantic function. There must be repeatable devices each of which can function as a possible communication unit (sentence) and these must be composed of elements

(words) which are such that the communicative content of the whole is determined by the elements and by the principles of their combination in the sentence.

How do we introduce these features – words and sentences – where the sentences are systematically built out of the words? We have to build on the resources that the animal already has, and these are in fact quite rich. Because our beasts already have the capacity to identify and re-identify objects, we can introduce names of objects, and because they have the capacity to recognize different tokens of the same type, we can introduce such general names as ‘dog’, ‘cat’, ‘man’, etc., and because the objects have features, we can introduce something corresponding to adjectives and verbs. But notice the crucial constraints on these. We are not assuming that reference and predication, the speech acts corresponding to noun phrases and verb phrases, are in any way simple independent elements, but rather that once we have the total speech act we can abstract these as component elements. Following Frege, we think of the nouns phrases and verb phrases as derived from the total sentence and not the total sentence as arrived at by combining nouns phrases and verb phrases.

What does that mean? Our animals already have unstructured propositional contents. But corresponding to these are structured features of the real world and the animals have the capacity to recognize these structures *and their elements*. So we are not begging any questions when we give the animal a sentential structure that corresponds to the conditions of satisfaction that it already has. The semantic function comes for free because we have already introduced meaning. Here is the basic idea: The animal has perceptual and belief contents that lack syntactic structure: It can see, and therefore believe, something that we can report (but the animal cannot report) as “It is coming toward me”. Now if the animal has the capacity to create meaningful events, i.e., speech acts, then it can already represent this state of affairs with the double level intentionality that I described earlier. From the animal’s point of view the representation might be of the form: “Coming-toward-me-thing-now”, where we are to think of this so far as if it were one word, without repeatable elements.

The animal has feature placing, but not yet reference and predication. To get reference and predication it needs symbolic devices that break up the propositional content into components. But it already has the material to construct those components from its prelinguistic intentionality. It can see something coming toward it now, and thus believe that something is coming toward it now. But that is enough to give us at least the possibility

of introducing devices that can perform the functions of reference and predication, devices that are forms of noun phrases and verb phrases. We will add rules or procedures for arranging those devices (words) into the complex resultant structures (sentences). It does not much matter how we construct these subsentential elements or how we combine them as long as they break up the sentence into repeatable components, and as long as the components match the components of the prelinguistic intentional contents. I have been assuming that they are broken up in a style similar to European languages I know, but that it's not a necessary assumption. I have been assuming that the presyntactical *coming-toward-me-thing-now* breaks up into a device which refers to a contextually specific object, such as a man, and the predication of coming toward me now, as in the English: *The man is coming toward me now*. It is not logically necessary that it be done this way, but doing it this way fits our prelinguistic phenomenology better than some ways we can imagine. As I said earlier, we can imagine a language where what we think of as objects are treated as recurring and repeatable processes, so it would come out: *It is manning now towards me comingly*; on analogy with: *It is raining now on me heavily*. But such a language would not reflect the object salience of our perceptual phenomenology.

Furthermore there are built-in structural features of human intentionality which carry the solution to the paradox I mentioned earlier, and any evolutionary account has to face this paradox. The paradox is: How do we achieve the unity of the sentence (and hence the unity of the expressed proposition) when the sentence is entirely composed of discrete entities, the string of words and morphemes that constitute it? A related second question is: How do we explain the pervasiveness of the noun phrase-verb phrase structure in human languages, however various the realizations of this structure are in the different human languages? The solution to the first problem, the unity of the proposition, is provided by the fact that, because of the nature of speaker meaning, it is a requirement on something's being a sentence at all capable of encoding a speaker meaning that it must encode an entire intentional state. All intentionality, conscious or unconscious, perceptual or nonperceptual, comes to us propositionally in the trivial sense that each discriminable intentional state has conditions of satisfaction and a condition is always that such and such is the case. The sentence is designed to encode the entire propositional content of the intentional state. So once we require that sentences encode whole intentional states, the unity of the proposition expressed comes for free. The unity of the proposition is built into the very logical structure of biological intentionality.

Now we turn to the second question. If we now look at the phenomenological structure of our experiences, particularly conscious, perceptual experience, we will see that *objects and their features* are salient. Though the conditions of satisfaction of our visual experiences require whole states of affairs, so that we never just see an object, but, for example, we see that an object with such and such features is over there; all the same, phenomenologically, we are aware of seeing objects and seeing that they have such and such features. So the propositional unity expressed by the complete sentence is already provided by prelinguistic intentionality, and the internal subject predicate structure is provided by the way our phenomenology presents the propositional content to us.

So far then we have taken three steps on the road to language: First, the creation of speaker meaning, that is, the imposition of conditions of satisfaction on conditions of satisfaction. Second, the creation of conventional devices for performing acts of speaker meaning, which gives us something approaching sentence meaning, where sentence meaning is the standing possibility of speaker meaning. Sentence meaning is conventionalized. Speaker meaning is typically the employment or use of those conventions in the performance of the speech act. Third, we have added internal structure to the speech act in the form of discriminable syntactic elements that have meanings, semantic content, but cannot stand on their own in utterances. They are parts of sentences, and thus correspond to words, but they are not yet whole sentences. We also need rules for combining these devices into whole sentences and distinguishing between grammatical and ungrammatical strings. Both of these are crucial to any account of language. The first gives us meaningful units big enough to function in communication, the second gives compositionality. The sentence is composed of meaningful elements and those meaningful elements together with their rules of combination enable us to generate new sentences and to figure out the meanings of sentences and utterances that we have never heard before.

We do not yet have generativity, that is the capacity of speakers to produce and understand a potentially infinite number of new sentences but it is easy to add generativity to compositionality by simply adding some recursive rules, rules that apply over and over endlessly. Examples of ways of providing generativity are such expressions as “It is possible that”, “Sally believes that” or rules for forming relative clauses. What about sentence connectives? They do not seem hard to add either. Indeed we already have an implicit sentence connective when we conjoin two

sentences in the speech act. If I say “It is raining. I am hungry” I have already said something equivalent to “it is raining and I am hungry”. And we can add explicit connectives to do these jobs, connectives corresponding to the English “and” “or” “if ... then” and “not”.

Notice that with the addition of linguistic syntax to animal intentionality we enable speakers to do something no nonlinguistic animal can do. The speaker can intentionally construct arbitrarily many different representations of actual, possible and even impossible states of affairs in the world. The speaker can now think and say not only the man is coming toward me now, but the man will come toward me next week, or the mountain will come toward me, and so on endlessly.

With the apparatus so far developed the hominids can extend the vocabulary to enable them to think thoughts and perform speech acts that are literally unthinkable without language. The prelinguistic animal can count on his fingers. Given numerals, initially introduced to match the fingers, he can count indefinitely and have thoughts with numerical components that he cannot have in the prelinguistic form. Without language he might think, “There are three dogs in the field”, but with language he can think, “I wish there were a thousand dogs in the field”.

11. The next step: Deontology

So with meaning conventions, plus compositionality and generativity, we are well on the road to language.

Why is that not enough? Why are we just on the road and not already there? I think there is a sense in which we are already there if we understand the implications of the account that I have given so far in a certain very specific way. It is essential to see that in the account I have given so far it is implicit that the speaker employing the conventional device in a social setting for the purpose, for example, of conveying some truth about the world to the hearer, is thereby *committed* to that truth. That is, we will not understand an essential feature of language if we do not see that it necessarily involves social commitments, and that the necessity of these social commitments derives from the social character of the communication situation, the conventional character of the devices used, and the intentionality of speaker meaning. It is this feature that enables language to form the foundation of human society in general. If a speaker intentionally conveys information to a hearer using socially accepted

conventions for the purpose of producing a belief in the hearer about a state of affairs in the world, then the speaker is committed to the truth of his utterance. I will now try to explain this point.

We saw earlier that the formal structure of the intentional state $S(p)$ looks a lot like the formal structure of the corresponding speech act, $F(p)$. But $F(p)$ represents an intentional act, and in the cases we are considering it represents an act deliberately performed in accordance with the conventions of a socially accepted language. Recall that the essence of speaker meaning is the intentional imposition of conditions of satisfaction onto utterances, the imposition of the same conditions of satisfaction as the intentional state expressed in the utterance. Thus, if I believe that it is raining and I want to say that it is raining, I express my belief by making an utterance which I intend to have the same conditions of satisfaction as the original belief. And that utterance inherits the direction of fit of the belief and thus, like the belief, the utterance can be true or false. When I say “it is raining”, my utterance has the word-to-world direction of fit and will be true or false depending on whether or not the propositional content is satisfied. And so on through the other cases.

But now an interesting problem arises concerning the relation between the speech act and the corresponding intentional state. The speech act involves a commitment that goes far beyond the commitments of the intentional state expressed. This is most obvious in the case of statements and promises, but it is also true of other sorts of speech acts such as orders and apologies. When I make a statement I not only express a belief but I commit myself to its truth. When I make a promise I not only express an intention but I commit myself to carrying it out. Where do these commitments come from? The belief and the intention have nothing like the commitments of the statement or the promise. If we are trying to explain the evolution of a language that has statements and promises, it is not enough that we explain how a speaker can convey his belief and his intention to the hearer. We need to know how the speaker adds these special deontologies to the speech act. It is tempting, and indeed true, to say that the constitutive rules of the institutions of statement making and promising make every statement into a commitment to truth and every promise into an obligation to do something. The rules typically have the form “X counts as Y in C”. (For example, making such and such an utterance X in this context C counts as making a promise, Y.) The question is: How do we get the rules?

Notice that one wrong, but very common, answer, is to think that the deontic requirements are somehow external to the type of speech act. First we have statement making and then we have a rule that commits us to making only true ones; first we have promise making and then we have a rule that obligates us to keep the promises. This view of the relation of statements to truth is held by philosophers as diverse as Bernard Williams (2002), Paul Grice (1975) and David Lewis (1972). But it is not correct. You cannot explain what a statement or a promise is without explaining that a statement commits the maker of the statement to its truth and the promise commits the maker of the promise to carrying it out. In both cases the commitment is *internal* to the type of speech act being performed, where by “internal” I mean it could not be the type of speech act it is, it could not be that very kind of speech act if it did not have that commitment. But, to repeat the question: How do we evolve the deontic power out of the act of meaning something by an utterance? Does the act of representing the same conditions of satisfaction as those of a belief somehow essentially involve a commitment that goes beyond the commitment of the belief? Does the action of representing the same conditions of satisfaction as an intention necessarily involve a commitment that goes beyond the commitment of the intention? Or are these other commitments just add-ons? Are they further accretions that come with the historical development of the linguistic institutions? I think they are internal.

To see why, we have to see that the speech act is more than just the expression of an intention or the expression of a belief. It is above all a public performance. I am telling something to someone else. But I am not just telling him that I have a belief or that I have an intention, but I am telling him something about the world represented by those beliefs and intentions. By committing myself to the conditions of satisfaction of the belief I am telling him that this is how the world is, by telling him about the conditions of satisfaction of my intention I am telling him what I am actually going to do. (The self-referentiality of promises comes in here. I do not just promise to do something, but in so doing, I promise to do it because I promised to do it.) In ordinary parlance, I give my word.

We can summarize this part of our discussion as follows. In evolving a language we found that we required speaker meaning, conventions and internal syntactic structure. But if you understand these as relating in a certain way to human intentionality, you can see the different types of illocutionary acts and in so doing, you already get the commitments that typically go with those types of illocutionary acts. Nothing further is

necessary to guarantee that speakers will be committed by their utterances. In following the common sense idea that language could have evolved, and may in fact have evolved, out of prelinguistic forms of intentionality we found that language so evolved provides something not present in prelinguistic intentionality, the public assumption of commitments.

12. The extension of deontology to social reality. How language enables us to create social institutions

The argument given so far is that intentional acts of meaning, that is the intentional imposition of conditions of satisfaction on conditions of satisfaction, performed according to accepted conventions and with the intention that they should so accord, necessarily involve a deontology. Now, once that deontology is collectively created by these intentional actions, then it is very easy, indeed practically inevitable that it should be extended to social reality generally. So, once you have the capacity to represent, then you already have the capacity to create a reality that consists in part of representations. Let me give some examples of this. If you have the capacity to say “He is our leader”, “He is my man”, “She is my woman”, or “This is my house”, then you have the capacity to do something more than represent pre-existing states of affairs. You have the capacity to create states of affairs with a new deontology; you have the capacity to create rights, duties and obligations by performing and getting other people to accept certain sorts of speech acts. Once you and others recognize someone as a leader, and an object as someone’s property, and a man or a woman as someone with whom you have a special bond, then you have already created a public deontology. You have already created public reasons for action that are desire-independent. But notice the functioning of the language that we use to describe these phenomena. It creates them. The language constitutes them in an important way. Why? Because the phenomena in question only are what they are in virtue of being represented as what they are. The representations which are partly constitutive of institutional reality, the reality of government, private property, marriage as well as money, universities and cocktail parties, is essentially linguistic. The language doesn’t just describe; it creates, and partly constitutes what it describes.

Compositionality figures essentially in the creation of social and institutional reality. Given compositionality, the animal can do much more

than just represent existing states of affairs; it can represent states of affairs that do not exist but which can be brought into existence by getting a community to accept a certain class of speech acts. So, for example, the man who says “This is my property” or the woman who says “This is my husband” may be doing more than just reporting an antecedently existing state of affairs, but may be creating a state of affairs by declaration. And if such a person can get other people to accept this declaration, they will succeed in creating an institutional reality that did not exist prior to that declaration.

We do not yet have performatives, because they require specific performative verbs or other performative expressions, but we do have declarations with their double direction of fit. If I declare, “This is my property” then I both represent myself as having a right to the property (word-to-world direction of fit) but, if I get others to accept my representation then I create that right because the right only exists by collective acceptance (world-to-word direction of fit). And they are not independent: I create a right by representing myself as already having it.

This basic move underlies much of society. It is not easy to see this point but I think it is essential to understanding society. The utterance creates desire-independent reasons for action, and these are then recognized by the collectivity. But that same move, that same X-counts-as-Y-in-context-C move by which you create desire-independent reasons for action in the case of the individual speech act, is now generalizable. So what we think of as private property, for example, is a kind of standing speech act. It is a kind of permanent speech act affixed to an object. It says the owner of this object has certain rights and duties, and other people, not the owners of this object, do not have those rights and duties. And think of money as a kind of standing permanent speech act. (Sometimes the speech act is written out. On American currency it says: “This note is legal tender for all debts public and private.”)⁷

13. Summary of the argument so far

There are two essential points I want to get across in this article in addition to the analysis of relations of nonlinguistic to linguistic intentionality. First I want to emphasize how the structure of prelinguistic intentionality enables us to solve the problems of the relation of reference and predication and the problem of the unity of the proposition. The second point is about

deontology. The basic intellectual motivation that drives this second part of my argument is the following: There is something left out of the standard textbook accounts of language as consisting of syntax, semantics and phonetics with an extra-linguistic pragmatics thrown in. Basically what is left out is the essential element of commitment involved in having a set of conventional devices that encode the imposition of conditions of satisfaction on conditions of satisfaction. Once we understand this feature of acts of meaning, it seems to me we will get a deeper insight into the constitutive role of language in the construction of society and social institutions. Let me review the steps of the argument so that it is as clear as I can make it.

Step 1. We imagine a race of beasts capable of consciousness and pre-linguistic intentionality. And, of equal importance, they are endowed with a capacity for free action and collective intentionality. They can cooperate and they have free will.

Step 2. We have to assume that they are capable of evolving procedures for representing states of affairs, where the representations have speaker meaning, as I have defined it. They can represent states of affairs that they believe exist, states of affairs they desire to exist, states of affairs they intend to bring about, etc.

Step 3. These procedures, or at least some of them, become conventionalized. What does that mean exactly? It means that given collective intentionality, if anyone intentionally engages in one of these procedures, then other members of the group have a right to expect that the procedures are being followed correctly. This, I take it, is the essential thing about conventions. Conventions are arbitrary, but once they are settled they give the participants a right to expectations.

Step 4. We can also imagine that they break up the representations into repeatable and manipulable components that perform the functions of reference and predication.

Step 5. The central idea in the argument is this: Just having a belief or a desire or an intention does not so far commit a person in any public way. Of course, a belief is a commitment to truth and a desire is a commitment to satisfaction and an intention is a commitment to action, but none of these so far are public undertakings. There is no deontology involved, no publicly recognized obligation. But once you freely commit yourself to the conditions of satisfaction of these corresponding intentional states and you do this in a public way by imposing conditions of satisfaction on conditions of satisfaction, and you do it according to the conventions of a tribe, then

you have a system for creating obligations and other sorts of deontic commitments. Notice that the commitment is to states of affairs in the world and not just to the corresponding intentional states. Thus if I make a statement I commit myself to the existence of a fact, if I make a promise I commit myself to the performance of a future action, and so on.

Step 6. The same basic linguistic move that enables speech acts to carry a deontology of rights, duties, commitments, etc. can be extended to create a social and institutional reality of money, government, marriage, private property and so on. And each of these is a system of deontologies. Once we introduce the elements of compositionality and generativity into language there is literally no limit to the institutional realities we can create just by agreeing, in language, that we are creating them. We create universities, cocktail parties and summer vacations, for example. The limits on institutional power are the limits on deontology itself. Deontic powers are powers that exist only because they are recognized and accepted as existing. Sometimes we back them with physical force, in the case of the criminal law for example, but the police and armies are also systems of deontologies.

14. Why standard semantic theories fail to account for these features

I have now completed the main arguments of this article. In this section and the next I will answer some leftover questions.

I said earlier that traditional accounts of language are unable to get at this essential deontic feature. Now, why couldn't, for example, standard truth conditional accounts get at it? The truth conditional accounts that I am familiar with make a connection between truth and meaning. What they do not see is how that connection is necessarily mediated by commitment. It is not enough that there should be a matching or satisfaction relation between the sentence or the utterance on the one hand and its truth conditions on the other, there must also be a representing relation and the representing relation is not explained by a kind of matching or satisfaction. The only way to get the representing relation is to see that an utterance with a meaning doesn't just match the truth conditions or is satisfied by the truth conditions but rather is a *commitment* to the existence of those truth conditions. You can see this weakness in its most extreme form in the case of the picture theory of meaning. Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* is the classic statement of this view. The problem is that if we are to try to think of the

sentence as a picture of a fact, then equally the fact is a picture of the sentence. Isomorphism is a symmetrical relation: If A is isomorphic to B, then B is isomorphic to A. If this sentence is somehow or other a structural model of the fact, then the fact is equally a structural model of the sentence, and we have lost the representing relation which is essential to language. Now, oddly enough, a similar difficulty affects Tarski-style model theoretic accounts such as Davidson's (1984), because if we are to say that the key notion is satisfaction, and we can explain satisfaction recursively, then the problem is that if an object satisfies an open sentence, then there must be a relation according to which the object stands in that relation to the open sentence, the relation of being a satisfier of that open sentence. But neither of these gives us representation or commitment. The particular form of asymmetry that is required between the representation and the thing represented essentially involves a commitment on the part of the speech act to the existence of the state of affairs represented. It is not enough to present language and reality as simply staring at each other blankly. Language is used to represent reality and the notion of representation essentially involves more than the notions of truth or matching, or satisfaction. It involves the notion of a *commitment* to truth or satisfaction.

15. Why language is essentially conventional and why there are so many different languages

If language is biologically based, then why is it that we speak so many different languages? If evolutionary biology gave us the capacity for language, why did it not give us a single language which all humans could speak? Humans have, with minor variations, the same way of seeing because they all have the same visual apparatus, but they certainly do not have the same way of speaking. Why not? The answer derives from the fact that speaking is a voluntary activity, perhaps the most paradigmatic form of the human freedom of the will, and where free voluntary actions are concerned, people perform these actions in their own free voluntary ways. Biology can give us a basis for talk, but it is up to us how we talk, and it is up to us what we say. Suppose there had been exactly one primordial language with its own syntax and lexicon. We know from historical linguistics that it would have evolved into different dialects, all of which would be conventional. In a sense the Roman Empire gave its subjects a common language, but over two thousand years they evolved into

contemporary French, Portuguese, Spanish, Romantsch, etc. So even assuming one biologically determined language, the free will of language speakers would have evolved the Ursprache into any number of conventional dialects, where “conventional” implies both arbitrariness and normativity. There is a right way and a wrong way to speak any language, but the way that the language fixed rightness and wrongness is conventional and therefore arbitrary.

Notes

1. This is a revised expanded version of my keynote address at the conference in Landau. It was also the keynote address at a conference in Berlin. The tentative title marks the fact that I do not regard this as a finished piece. It is still work in progress. I thank Tecumseh Fitch for his detailed comments on an earlier draft. I am also grateful to Dagmar Searle for her help and advice.
2. For a good survey, see Vauclair (1966).
3. For a good survey, see Fitch (2005).
4. In general this is true of most of what are called the “emotions”. The concept of an emotion is not very clear because we are not sure what to count as an emotion and what not. But the paradigm cases of the emotions, strong forms of love, hate, lust, disgust, shame, and pride, I think are all agitated forms of desire, presupposing beliefs.
5. See Vauclair (1966).
6. We can construct examples where what is normally a purely expressive speech can be performed representatively. If my dentist tells me to say “Ouch” if it hurts too much, then in saying “Ouch” I am making a statement to the effect that it hurts too much.
7. These points are developed further in Searle (1995).

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Toward a Fregean pragmatics: *Voraussetzung*, *Nebengedanke*, *Andeutung*

Laurence R. Horn

“The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.”
(L. P. Hartley, *The Go-Between*, 1953)

Abstract

For Grice ([1967] 1989), a conventional implicature *C* associated with an expression *E* manifests the following two definitional properties: (i) by virtue of being conventional, *C* constitutes a non-cancelable aspect of the meaning of *E*, and (ii) by virtue of being an implicature, *C*'s truth or falsity has no affect on the truth conditions of *E*. While this theoretical construct has become controversial of late (Bach 1999 consigns it to a chimerical status, while Potts 2005 attempts a partial rehabilitation, as we shall see below), the positing of material which does not affect the truth conditions of the primary asserted proposition has had a long if sometimes difficult history.

In his analysis of the semantics of natural language, Frege, especially in “Über Sinn und Bedeutung” (1892) and “Der Gedanke” (1918–19), investigated a variety of aspects of meaning that – in the terminology of modern pragmatic theory – do not constitute part of what is said. While two of the relations assumed by Frege, *Voraussetzung* (presupposition) and *Nebengedanke* (lit., ‘side-thought’), foreshadow the Strawsonian notion of (semantic) presupposition for singular and quantified expressions respectively, a third Fregean relation, here dubbed *Andeutung*, directly anticipates the Gricean notion of conventional implicature. I shall explore each relation in turn and situate it within Frege’s – and our – understanding of the different levels of meaning in natural language.

1. *Voraussetzung*: Presuppositional diagnoses of vacuous subjects

We begin our tour with the Aristotelian observation that a singular expression like (1) has two different opposed propositions:

- (1) Socrates is ill. (1') Socrates is not ill.
 (2) Socrates is well.

While (1) and (2) cannot both be true, even though (by assumption) every man is either ill or well, Aristotle explains that these statements may be simultaneously false, given the possibility that the name *Socrates* fails to refer:

For if Socrates exists, one will be true and the other false, but if he does not exist, both will be false; for neither 'Socrates is ill' nor 'Socrates is well is true', if Socrates does not exist at all. (*Categories* 13b17–19)

Thus (1) and (2) are contrary opposites, while a statement and its ordinary negation as in (1) and (1') are contradictories in that the affirmative and negative counterparts divide truth and falsity between them:

But in the case of affirmation and negation, whether the subject exists or not, one is false and other true. For manifestly, if Socrates exists, one of the two propositions 'Socrates is ill', 'Socrates is not ill' is true, and the other false. This is likewise the case if he does not exist, for if he does not exist, to say that he is ill is false, to say that he is not ill is true. (*Categories* 13b26–32)

While (1'), the contradictory of (1), does not entail the existence of *Socrates*, Aristotle also allowed for a narrow scope or predicate-term negation that does entail the subject's existence. This is typically rendered as *S is not-P* (or *S is non-P*), which predicates non-P-ness of S as opposed to denying *P-ness of S* as in (1'). (In Greek, the difference between denial and term negation is indicated by word order rather than hyphenation.) If *S* does not exist, it cannot be either P or not-P. Prefiguring the Russellian analysis, singular negative statements thus come out scopally ambiguous – *not (S is P)* vs. *S is not-P* – and no presuppositions or truth-value gaps are invoked (cf. Horn 1989: Chapter 1, and Horn 2006 for more on Aristotle's theory of opposition).

For Frege (1892), on the other hand, a singular statement like (1) and its negation (1') both require the subject to exist. More exactly, (3) presupposes rather than states that the name Kepler refers.

- (3) Kepler died in misery.
 (3') Kepler did not die in misery.

The non-vacuousness of the subject term is a presupposition for both this statement and its negative counterpart, (3'):

If anything is asserted there is always an obvious presupposition [*Voraussetzung*] that the simple or compound proper names used have reference. If one therefore asserts 'Kepler died in misery', there is a presupposition that the name 'Kepler' designates something; but it does not follow that the sense of the sentence 'Kepler died in misery' contains the thought that the name 'Kepler' designates something. If this were the case the negation would have to run not "Kepler died in misery" but "Kepler did not die in misery or the name 'Kepler' has no reference". That the name 'Kepler' designates something is just as much a presupposition for the assertion "Kepler died in misery" as for the contrary assertion. (Frege 1892: 34–35)

Similarly, (4a) and (4b) presuppose that someone did in fact discover the elliptic form of the orbits.

- (4) a. Whoever discovered the elliptic form of the planetary orbits died in misery.
 b. Whoever discovered the elliptic form of the planetary orbits didn't die in misery.

Frege regarded it as "an imperfection of language" that a given expression (*Kepler, whoever discovered X*) can fail to designate an object – given the possibility of presupposition failure – while having a grammatical form that nominates it to do so.

For Frege, as for his intellectual heir Strawson (1950), the notion of presupposition has semantic status as a necessary condition on true or false assertion, but more recent work has taken the commitment to existential import in such cases as constituting a pragmatic presupposition or an implicature (cf. e.g., Wilson 1975; Grice 1989: Essay 17). In fact, the earliest pragmatic treatments of the failure of existential presupposition predate Frege's analysis by two decades. Here is Christoph Sigwart ([1873] 1895) on the problem of vacuous subjects:

As a rule, the judgement A is not B presupposes the existence of A in all cases when it would be presupposed in the judgement A is B... 'Socrates is not ill' presupposes in the first place the existence of Socrates, because **only**

on the presupposition [*Voraussetzung*] of his existence can there be any question of his being ill. (Sigwart 1895: 122 [emphasis added]).

Note in particular the contextual nature of the presupposition and the proto-Strawsonian flavor of the conclusion. Further, unlike either Frege or Strawson, Sigwart allows for wide-scope (presupposition-canceling) negation as a real, although marked, possibility, although to be sure (1') is 'commonly understood' as implying that Socrates is alive.¹

If we answer the question 'Is Socrates ill?' by yes or no, then – **according to our usual way of speaking** – we accept the presupposition [*Voraussetzung*] upon which alone the question is possible; and if we say of a dead man that he is not ill, we are guilty of using our words ambiguously. It may still, however, be claimed that, by calling such an answer ambiguous, we admit that the words do not, in themselves, exclude the other meaning; and that formally, therefore, **the truth of the proposition [*Socrates is not ill*] is incontestable** [if Socrates is not alive]. (Sigwart 1895: 152 [emphasis added])

Like Strawson, Frege declined to recognize the possibility of a negation of *Kepler died in misery* that has precisely the form of his disjunction *Either Kepler did not die in misery or "Kepler" does not refer*, taking this instead to be a *reductio ad absurdum*. History has challenged this judgment, often through the consideration of examples like *The King of France isn't bald because he doesn't exist*, although Burton-Roberts (1989) and Cohen (2000), among others, have marshaled arguments against the viability of semantic external (presupposition-free) negation. (See Horn 1989 for a review of the issue, and von Fintel 2004 for a valuable recent take.)

2. *Nebengedanke*: Universal import as "side-thought"

Less well known than Frege's Strawsonian account *avant la lettre* of the presuppositions induced by singular statements is his anticipation of the presuppositional analysis of existential import in universally quantified statements. In classical logic, universals are standardly taken as entailing existence of the set over which the universal operator ranges, so that for Aristotle the *A*-form universal statement *All F is G* entails the corresponding *I*-form particular statement *Some F is G*.

In modern predicate logic, on the other hand, universals ranging over empty sets yield vacuous truth. The inference from *All F are G* to the particular *Some F are G* (or existential *There are Fs*) is thus invalid: If

there are no Fs, the former is true and the latter false, which in turn blows up the traditional square of opposition (cf. Horn 1997 for a survey of treatments of existential import across the ages, and Geurts, to appear, for a rather different view). Taking its cue from Russell, modern symbolic logic has severed the treatment of definites and other singular statements from that of universals – if France is a republic, *The King of France is bald* is automatically false but *All kings of France are bald* is automatically true. This in turn is a direct result of the Russellian (and Fregean) position that universals like (5a) and (5b) are disguised material conditionals, so that (5a) translates as (5b).

- (5) a. All seats are taken.
 b. $\forall x (Sx \rightarrow Tx)$

If the set of seats S is empty, the conditional is automatically true.

For Hart (1951) and Strawson (1952), this result flies in the face of ordinary usage and is thus intolerable. Strawson cites the intuition that empirical universals like (6a) and (6b)

- (6) a. All (the) seats in the room are taken.
 b. Every coin in my pocket is made of copper.
 c. All trespassers will be prosecuted.
 d. {Every/Any} perpetual motion machine will violate the laws of thermodynamics.

are clearly not true if the room is empty of seats or my pocket of coins (although he acknowledges that this intuition is a bit shakier when it comes to lawlike generalizations as in (6c) and (6d) [cf. Moravcsik 1991, and Horn 1997 for elaboration]).²

On Strawson's view (1952: 177), no universal statement – indeed, no quantified statement corresponding to any of the four classical Aristotelian forms – is capable of being true or false unless its presupposition, corresponding to the existential import of the subject term, is satisfied: “It is necessary that the subject-class should have members.” For Strawson, this presupposition of import is a necessary condition for the truth (as well as the falsity) of statements like those in (6).

The presuppositional stance taken by Strawson in fact was promoted three quarters of a century earlier in the very first volume of *Mind* by the now forgotten Dutch philosopher J. P. N. Land. Rejecting Brentano's

attempt to reduce categorical (subject-predicate) universal propositions to negative existentials, so that *All men are mortal* comes out as ‘There is not an immortal man’, Land comments:

In translating categorical universals into existential negatives, part of the meaning is dropt by the way...In an ordinary proposition the subject is **necessarily admitted to exist**, either in the real or in some imaginary world assumed for the nonce...When we say *no stone is alive*, or *all men are mortal*, **we presuppose the existence** of stones or of men. (Land 1876: 290–91 [emphasis added])

Thirty years later, the Hart/Strawson presuppositional alternative to the received view was anticipated by Frege (1906: 305) as well, although unlike Land he ultimately refused to sign on. In reply to a now lost missive of Husserl’s, Frege begins with a critical review of the former’s proto-Strawsonian line:

You write, ‘The form containing “all” is normally so understood as that the existence of objects falling under the subject and predicate concepts is part of what is meant [*mitgemeint*] and is presupposed as having been admitted.’ It seems to me that you can only give this the sense you want it to have if you strike out the words ‘part of what is meant’. For if existence was part of what is meant, then the negation of the proposition ‘All m are n’ would be ‘There is an m that is not n, or there is no m.’ But it seems to me that this is not what you want. **You want existence to be presupposed as having been admitted, but not to be part of what is meant.** (Frege 1906: 306 [emphasis added])

Note that the position Frege assigns to Husserl on universals is directly parallel to Frege’s own position on names, and that the argument from negation he provides here is itself parallel to that he invoked for his Kepler sentences as summarized in §1 above. But Frege finds such an approach uncongenial in this case:

Now I use the expressions containing ‘all’ in such a way that **existence is neither part of what I mean nor something I presuppose as having been admitted.** Linguistic usage cannot be absolutely decisive here...For one must always strive to go back to the elements, to the simple. It must be possible to express the main thought without incidental thoughts (*Nebengedanken*). This is why I do not want the incidental thought of existence to be part of what I mean when I use an expression containing ‘all’. (Frege 1906: 307 [emphasis added])

Nor, as the highlighted passage makes clear, can this particular *Nebengedanke* – literally, side-thought – be ‘presupposed as having been admitted’ in the way that non-vacuous reference is presupposed for names like *Kepler*. But despite Frege’s disclaimer on the irrelevance of linguistic usage to the formal analysis, it might be argued that his treatment of import as a *Nebengedanke*, if fleshed out as a pragmatic aspect of communicated meaning rather than a semantic implication, actually allows for a subtler and more insightful account of quantified statements than does the presuppositional story.³

The question of the proper treatment of existential import in universals, a topic of debate from Apuleius, Boethius, and Abelard to Frege, Russell, and Strawson, did not even escape Lewis Carroll, who in his *Symbolic Logic* – published ten years before Frege penned his letter to Husserl – reviews the various options for analyzing import before being led, by the context-dependent evanescence of import in examples like those in (6), down the obvious rabbit-hole:

Another view is that the Proposition “all *x* are *y*” *sometimes* implies the actual *existence* of *x*, and *sometimes* does *not* imply it; and that we cannot tell, without having it in *concrete* form, *which* interpretation we are to give to it. *This* view is, I think, strongly supported by common usage; and it will be fully discussed in Part II. (Carroll [1896] 1958: 196, emphasis in original)

Unfortunately for us, the details of this view evidently proved so thorny to fully discuss that before preparing Part II of his *Symbolic Logic*, Carroll died.

3. *Andeutung* and conventional implicature

In addition to the *Voraussetzung* of reference for names, constituting part of what is admitted but not part of what is (in the strong sense) meant in singular statements, there is thus the weaker *Nebengedanke* of existence for universally quantified statements, an essentially pragmatic relation which involves material neither presupposed as admitted nor meant. The former constitutes a necessary condition for an assertion to be made; the latter does not. But this does not exhaust the inventory of Fregean relations for subsemantic implication.

Considering a spectrum of linguistic phenomena ranging from particles like *although*, *but*, *yet*, *still*, and *already* to active/passive alternations and

word order, Frege (in “*Über Sinn und Bedeutung*” and especially in “*Der Gedanke*”) described these expressions and constructions as devices for “aiding the hearer’s understanding” without, however, affecting the propositional content (or the thought, in Frege’s parlance). Here is Frege on *p although q* as against *p and q*:

Subsidiary clauses beginning with ‘although’ [*obgleich*] also express complete thoughts. This conjunction...does not change the sense of the clause but only illuminates it in a peculiar fashion (footnote: Similarly in the case of ‘but’ [*aber*], ‘yet’ [*noch*].) We could indeed replace the conditional clause without harm to the truth of the whole by another of the same truth value; but the light in which the clause is placed by the conjunction might then easily appear unsuitable, as if a song with a sad subject were to be sung in a lively fashion. (Frege 1892: 38)

As evidence for Frege’s position that the difference between *p and q* and *p although q* does not affect the truth conditions of the proposition involved, consider a scenario in which I bet you that the Democrats will win the next election although they are not formally opposed to same-sex marriage (reputed to be a major consideration by voters who re-elected Bush in 2004), and it turns out that the Democrats do win – but that polls show voters’ attitudes toward same-sex marriage were not a factor at all (or were a reason for supporting Democrats). Then the *although*-condition in our bet is not satisfied, but it is clear (to me, at least) that I have won the bet, for which all that matters is the Democrats’ victory.

Frege provides an inventory of phenomena lending themselves to similar analyses in “*Der Gedanke*”, beginning with the choice between the neutral *horse* [*Pferd*] and its evaluatively laden counterparts like *steed* or *nag* [*Ros, Gaul, Mähre*]:

It makes no difference to the thought whether I use the word ‘horse’ or ‘steed’...The assertive force does not extend over that in which these words differ...Much of language serves the purpose of aiding the hearer’s understanding, for instance the stressing of part of a sentence by accentuation or word-order. One should remember words like ‘still’ and ‘already’ too. With the sentence ‘Alfred has still not come’ one really says ‘Alfred has not come’ and, at the same time, hints [*andeutet*] that his arrival is expected, but it is only hinted. **It cannot be said that, since Alfred’s arrival is not expected, the sense of the sentence is therefore false.** The word ‘but’ differs from ‘and’ in that with it one intimates [*andeutet*] that what follows it is in contrast with what would be expected from what preceded it. Such suggestions in speech **make no difference to the thought**. A sentence can be transformed by changing the verb from active

to passive and making the object the subject at the same time... Naturally such transformations are not indifferent in every respect but **they do not touch the thought, they do not touch what is true or false.** (Frege 1918–19: 295–96 [emphasis added])

The thought in Frege’s theory of meaning corresponds to the notion of what is said in Gricean and neo-Gricean theory,⁴ so the key claim is that the phenomena under discussion here do not affect the determination of what is said. In stating *Alfred still has not come*, I say that he hasn’t come, while “hinting” that his arrival is expected; *p but q* differs from *p and q* in “intimating” a sense of contrast. These two verbs in Geach’s rendering – *hint* and *intimate* – both translate Frege’s *andeuten*, a verb that we can accurately (with Gricean hindsight) gloss as ‘(conventionally) implicate’ and that we can nominalize as *Andeutung*. While the historical significance of Frege’s remarks in this area is often overlooked (for example, Frege is nowhere mentioned in Chris Potts’s [2005] major new monograph on conventional implicature), the *Andeutung* relation, for a component of linguistic meaning that does not affect propositional content or “touch what is true or false”, is a direct precursor of Grice’s conventional implicature. (As a logician, Frege was less concerned with the pragmatic phenomena to which Grice developed the more familiar notion of conversational implicature.)

Among Frege’s intriguing (if largely overlooked) analyses in this area is his discussion (from the 1897 *Logic* appearing in his *Posthumous Writings* [Frege 1897: 242]) on the division of labor between semantics and discourse pragmatics. This passage appears in his posthumously published 1897 “Logic”, just after a discussion of how the addition of particles like *ah* and *unfortunately* or the replacement of *dog* with *cur* “makes no difference to the thought”:

The distinction between the active and passive voice belongs here too. The sentences ‘M gave document A to N’, ‘Document A was given to N by M’, ‘N received document A from M’ express exactly the same thought; we learn not a whit more or less from any of these sentences that we do from the others. Hence it is impossible that one of them should be true whilst another is false. It is the very same thing that is here capable of being true or false. For all this **we are not in a position to say that it is a matter of complete indifference which of these sentences we use...If someone asks ‘Why has A been arrested?’ it would be unnatural to reply ‘B has been murdered by him’, because it would require a needless switch of the attention from A to B. Although in actual speech it can certainly be**

very important where the attention is directed and where the stress falls, it is of no concern to logic. (Frege 1897: 242 [emphasis added])

As we see, Frege's account of those alternations that involve the packaging of content motivated by considerations of what the Prague school linguists were later to dub functional sentence perspective – the choice between allosentences (Lambrecht 1994) involving active/passive pairs or alternants involving indirect converses (Cruse 1986: §10.7) like *give* and *receive*, motivated in each case by the goal of mapping topics into subject position – also offers a prescient foreshadowing of the modular approach to meaning in natural language: render unto logic what is relevant to sense, reference, and truth conditions, render unto pragmatics what is relevant to usage so long as it concerns distinctions without a difference to the thought or propositional content.

Summarizing, we have the following cases in Table 1. The examples above the line are explicitly discussed by Frege (1892, 1897, 1918–19); those below the line have either been analyzed similarly in recent work (particularly in terms of conventional implicature; see below) or naturally lend themselves to analogous approaches.

For Frege, these *Andeutungen* (unlike semantic presuppositions, his *Voraussetzungen*) do not constitute truth conditions (as opposed to use conditions) of the proposition in which they occur or contribute to its sense or reference. Similarly for Grice ([1967] 1989), a *Conventional Implicature* of ϕ is an aspect of the meaning of ϕ that does not affect ϕ 's truth conditions (i.e., does not affect what is said) but is part of the idiosyncratic lexical or constructional meaning of the expressions involved. There is an overlap between Grice's illustrations and Frege's, notably including *but*, for which the Gricean analysis – *p but q* says what *p and q* does but implicates contrast – directly echoes the Fregean (although neither actually counts for the full range of contrasts to which *but* can allude).

Similarly, consider *too* or *also*, as in (7):

- (7)
- a. GEORGE is worried about the war too.
 - b. George is worried about the war.
 - c. Someone else [accessible in the context] is worried about the war.

Table 1. “Andeutungen”, after Frege

Expression [vs. <i>unmarked alternative</i>]	Andeutung
<i>Frege's examples</i>	
Alfred has not <u>yet</u> come. [vs. <i>Alfred has not come</i>]	Alfred's coming is expected.
B received C from A, B was given C by A [vs. <i>A gave C to B</i>]	B is the topic of discussion
B was murdered by A [vs. <i>A murdered B</i>]	B is the topic of discussion
A murdered B [vs. <i>A murdered B</i>]	B is the topic of discussion
p <u>but</u> q [vs. <i>p and q</i>]	there is a contrast between p, q
p <u>although</u> q [vs. <i>p and q</i>]	p is surprising, given q
<u>Ah</u> , p; <u>unfortunately</u> p [vs. <i>p, simpliciter</i>] ⁵	S has relevant attitude toward p
The <u>cur</u> [vs. <i>The dog</i>] growled at us.	neg. evaluation of referent
The <u>steed</u> [vs. <i>The horse</i>] raced around the track.	pos. evaluation of referent
<i>Other examples</i>	
_F [Hercules] lifted the rock <u>too</u> . [vs. preadjacent, i.e., same sentence minus <i>too</i>]	Some other agent (identifiable in the context) lifted it
<u>Even</u> _F [Hercules] lifted the rock. [vs. preadjacent]	other, less surprising agents did so
Fr. <u>Tu es souûl</u> [vs. <i>Vous êtes souûl</i>]; similarly, Ger. <u>du</u> [vs. <i>Sie</i>], Sp. <u>tu</u> [vs. <i>usted</i>]	∃ sufficient degree of solidarity between S, H (or S>H in status)
Chris has <u>children</u> [vs. <i>a child</i>]	Chris has > 1 child

Unlike entailments or logical presuppositions, the inference induced by *too* in (7a) is irrelevant to the truth conditions of the proposition: (7a) is true if and only if (7b) is true. The inference from (7a) to (7c) is not cancelable without anomaly (*#GEORGE is worried about the war too, but he's the only one*), but it is detachable in the sense that the same content is expressible in a way that removes (detaches) the inference, as in (7b).⁶ As such, this relation straddles the boundary between pragmatics and semantics. It is semantic insofar as it involves an aspect of the conventional meaning of a given expression rather than being computable from general principles of rational behavior or communicative competence, but it is pragmatic insofar as it involves considerations of appropriateness rather than truth of the sentence in which it appears.

The notion of conventional implicature has had a somewhat rocky history. Karttunen and Peters (1979) proposed folding the better established (but, they argue, inconsistently defined and poorly understood) relation of presupposition into conventional implicature, for which they offered a compositional treatment within an extended version of Montague Grammar. Their classic example, explored in considerable depth, involves *even*:

- (8)
- a. Even BILL likes Mary.
 - b. Bill likes Mary.
 - c. *Existential Implicature*: There are other x under consideration besides Bill such that x likes Mary.
 - d. *Scalar Implicature*: For all x under consideration besides Bill, the likelihood that x likes Mary is greater than the likelihood that Bill likes Mary.

In the Karttunen and Peters analysis, (8a) entails (and indeed is logically equivalent to) (8b) while conventionally implicating both (8c) and (8d) (or the conjunction of the two).⁷

For Bach (1999), on the other hand, conventional implicature is a myth; alleged instances in Grice or Karttunen and Peters (or indeed, in Frege) involve either secondary aspects of what is said (as with *even*, *but*, *although*, *still*, and similar particles) or higher-level speech acts (as with adverbial modifiers like *frankly* or *to tell the truth*).

In his book-length treatment of the relation, Potts (2005) retains Grice's brand name but alters the product by restricting its application to expressives (*that jerk*), supplements (e.g., non-restrictive relatives and appositives), epithets, and honorifics. Potts follows Bach in arguing for the

asserted or, in his terminology, “at-issue” status of the *but/even* class. Similarly, Stanley (2002) proposes a general constraint on the relation of what is said to what is communicated, his “Expression-Communication Principle”, which he points out is inconsistent with conventional implicature, Kaplan (2004) has recently argued for an extended notion of *Truth-Plus* to deal with the contribution of expressives, while Iten (2005) – from the perspective of Relevance Theory – has presented a number of challenges to the Fregean-Gricean consensus (endorsed also by Williamson, to appear) on the status of *Andeutungen*/conventional implicatures.

But a stronger case can be made for the defense, whether or not it would finally prevail in the court of scholarly opinion. Arguably the strongest case for conventional implicatures (or *Andeutungen*) is based on T/V pronoun choice, as in the distinction between *tu* and *vous* in French or *du* and *Sie* in German. This distinction does not involve what is said, it “makes no difference to the thought”, but it does involve conventional aspects of meaning (and no inference calculable from the maxims).⁸ These expressions also raise questions for Potts’s generalization (2005: 7, [2.5]) that “No lexical item contributes both an at-issue and a CI [conventional implicature] meaning”, since such pronouns contribute both a second-person referent and an appropriateness condition.⁹ The choice between *Tu es soûl* and *Vous êtes soûl* is clearly based on the speaker’s assessment of social appropriateness and not truth conditions. Similar remarks could be entertained for natural gender, such as the choice between *he* and *she* in English or analogous gender distinctions in other languages. Thus in observing “*Tu es soûl*”, it is not part of the thought or of what is said that I believe a certain social relationship obtains between us OR that I believe you to be male; both propositions are indeed communicated, but what is said is simply that you are drunk.¹⁰

Another question is whether the notion of secondary assertion, invoked in one form or another by both Bach (1999) and Potts (2005), will suffice for the full range of cases under discussion. Thus, for example, a statement with a non-restrictive relative clause – as in Frege’s (1892: 38) celebrated example in (9)

- (9) a. Napoleon, who recognized the danger to his right flank, himself led his guards against the enemy position.
 b. Napoleon recognized the danger to his right flank.
 c. Napoleon himself led his guards against the enemy position.

– clearly does involve two “at-issue” or asserted propositions, even if one assertion (that in the relative clause, here [9b]) is relatively backgrounded. As Frege points out (although others have challenged the claim), the falsity of either (9b) or (9c) results in the falsity of (9a). One of the strongest arguments for Frege’s dual-assertion analysis of such cases is the possibility of slipping in an overt performative, which would be inconsistent with the non-restrictive relative being merely presupposed or implicated:

- (10) a. This administration’s policy on Iraq, which I hereby endorse, is morally bankrupt.
 b. The qualifications of this woman, whom I hereby pledge to support, are unquestionable.

Similar results hold for the *not only p but ({also, even}) q* construction (Horn 2000), in which *p* and *q* are both “at issue”, in Potts’s sense, but *q* is foregrounded over *p* (whether or not *q* in fact entails *p* in a particular instance). Once again, the evidence from the distribution of overt performatives indicates that both *p* and *q* are put forward as assertions, promises, etc., as seen in the googled attestations in (11):

- (11) a. Not only do I hereby retract my claim, but I also hereby apologize to the cattlemen in the great state of Texas.
 b. Not only do I promise to be a good and faithful husband to you, but also to be a patient, loving father to [children’s names].

But does this possibility extend to *but*, *still*, *even*, and similar particles, or to evaluatively laden epithets, or to the use of T and V second person singular pronouns? I know of no examples that can be used to argue the point. In these cases – contra Bach (1999), Stanley (2002), Potts (2005), and Iten (2005) – the Frege-Gricean line remains eminently plausible (cf. Williamson, to appear, for a concurring analysis). Nor are these the only expressions that lend themselves to this approach.

4. *Andeutung* and the theory of descriptions

It would appear that the reports of the death, or even moribundity, of conventional implicature, as proclaimed by Bach and partially seconded by Potts, were premature. Another candidate for the inventory is definiteness. Szabó (2000) and Ludlow and Segal (2004) have recently proposed that indefinite and definite descriptions have the same “semantics”, that of the existentially quantified expression advocated by Russell for the former. On the Russellian theory of descriptions (Russell 1905), which has just celebrated its centenary, (12a) and (12b) would be assigned the logical forms in (13a) and (13b) respectively,

- (12) a. I devised a theory of descriptions.
 b. I devised the theory of descriptions.
- (13) a. $\exists x$ [t-of-d (x) & I-devised (x)]
 b. $\exists x$ [t-of-d (x) & $\forall y$ (t-of-d (y) \rightarrow y=x) & I-devised (x)]

Indefinites assert existence; definites assert both existence and uniqueness. For Szabó, and Ludlow and Segal, (12a) and (12b) are both assigned the simple existential logical form in (13a), the difference in import between the two being treated as “pragmatic”.¹⁰ But as Abbott (2003) has pointed out, without a conventional distinction between indefinites and definites, there is nothing to run a pragmatic account off. A more plausible position is that what the definite article adds is a conventional implicature.

On this view, while indefinites and definites share the same logical form, there is indeed a conventional distinction between them. But, contra Szabó, and Ludlow and Segal (inspired by Heim 1982), the conventional meaning of a definite must involve not the givenness or familiarity of the nominal introduced by *the* but its uniqueness within a given context – or, more generally in the light of plural and mass NPs, its maximality (see Sharvy 1980, and Brogaard 2006 on maximality and plural definites). Familiarity can then be derived pragmatically from the conventional import of definite descriptions, which is consistent with the fact that – as Ludlow and Segal (2004: 425) concede – the familiarity or givenness condition may be “overridden”, where its treatment as a conventional implicature would predict non-cancelability.

Other problems for familiarity-based accounts (cf. also Kempson 1975; Hawkins 1991; Birner and Ward 1994; Abbott 1999, 2003, to appear;

Brogaard 2006) include the fact that many if not most definites (over 60 percent of them in Swedish and English texts) introduce discourse-new entities (Fraurud 1990; Poesio and Vieira 1998) and the fact that even if we were to weaken the familiarity requirement to Prince (1992)'s hearer-old category (essentially yielding the account of Christophersen 1939) there are counterexamples involving new-information definites, including those in superlatives or *there*-existentials, or Abbott's example (14), where H-familiarity is explicitly cancelled:¹¹

- (14) The new curling facility here, which I assume you haven't heard of, is the first such facility of its kind in the nation.

Further, as Szabó concedes, there are also well-formed indefinites corresponding to entities that are not novel (even within a short discourse). In the example below, Boston Celtics executive Ainge is reacting to his team's loss to the Sonics [emphasis added]:

Danny Ainge says he's not really looking at W's and L's [wins and losses] at this point of the season. He wants to see growth, effort, and togetherness. Last night, he saw **a team** start out hot (7–0) and then he saw **a team** relax, feeling that the Sonics would do what we all expected they'd do – call in the dogs, put out the fire, and head for the airport. (Boston Globe online, 17 November 2005; both instances of **a team** refers to the Celtics)

Some of these points were anticipated by Kempson (1975), who argues (§8.4) that hearer-familiarity can't be entailed or conventionally implicated but should instead be pragmatically derivable along standard Gricean lines. Further, she maintains (§5.5), it is doubtful that the uniqueness relation is one of entailment; indeed (§6.1–§6.2), definites and indefinites are identical except for the syntactic feature [+def] which has no semantic import. But that brings us back to the question of how we are to distinguish *the CN* from *a CN*. Biting the bullet, Kempson maintains that the versions of (15a) and (15b) with *the* and *a* are in fact “synonymous” (1975: 125).

- (15) a. (The/A) glass has fallen on the floor.
b. (The/A) man hit me.

But even if the definite and indefinite versions are truth-conditionally equivalent, there must be a conventional difference between the two.

One crucial prediction of the proposed account (or those of Hawkins 1991; Gundel, Hedberg, and Zacharski 1993; and Abbott 2003 on which it

I think the chief advantage [of his proposal over the Russellian account] is the possibility of a symmetric treatment of implications of uniqueness and non-uniqueness. Consider (17) and (18)

(17) Russell was the author of the *Principia Mathematica*.

(18) Russell was an author of the *Principles of Mathematics*.

Given that Russell co-authored the *Principia* with Whitehead and wrote the *Principles* alone, both of these sentences are anomalous.

But as Abbott (2003: 28) notes (cf. also Brogaard 2006), the behavior of (17) vs. (18) is *asymmetric*; in the pair below, “There is a clear sense in which the utterer of (19a) contradicts himself, whereas the utterer of (19b) does not.”

- (19) a. #Russell was the author of *Principia Mathematica*; in fact there were two.
 b. Russell is an author of *Principles of Mathematics*, in fact the only one.

The asymmetry of conditions on *a* and *the* is also supported by the behavior of the indefinite cross-linguistically as “the unmarked determiner” as demonstrated by Farkas (2006) and Farkas and de Swart (2005): It is unmarked with respect to partitivity and binding constraints as well as the constraints governing (in)definiteness per se. In addition, we can adduce positive evidence for an informativeness-based scale of the form $\langle \textit{the}, a \rangle$:

- (20) a. *Paradigmatic Contrast*

– Tenant to guest: “Did you find a towel?”

Guest to tenant: “I found **the** towel.”

(Elinor Lipman, *The Pursuit of Alice Thrift*, 2003)

- b. *Syntagmatic Contrast*

– Deforestation “was a or **the** major factor” in all the collapsed societies he describes, while climate change was a recurring menace. (Jared Diamond, quoted in NYTBR review by Gregg Easterbrook, January 30, 2005)

– “We’re supposed to tend to a bunch of Africans killing each other? Why, because we’re Americans? The answer is...Yes. Because we’re Americans. Because we’re a

nation, perhaps **the** nation, that's supposed to give a damn." (Federal judge on "Boston Legal", ABC-TV, on U.S. complicity in Sudan massacre)

- c. *Scalar Diagnostics* (data culled from Google)
- Yet time and again, North Korea is cited as **not only "a" but "the"** major threat to US security.
 - His Divine Death was **not only an Answer, but The Answer**.
 - Graham claims that cancer selection is **not a but the** driving force in the emergence of complex animal life.
 - I do not aspire, like some others, to creating "**a" or even "the"** philosophy of mathematics education.
 - So Lufthansa is **a – or even the** – German airline.
 - Thus, the relations between Europe and Islam – inside and outside Europe – is **a if not the** major challenge of our time.
 - in the majority of cases empirical investigation and the scientific pursuit of evidence is **at least a, if not the** proper way to proceed in forming beliefs

For additional attested examples, see Abbott (2003, to appear) and Horn (2005); note in each case the irreversibility of *a* and *the*, typical of scalar oppositions, and the role of uniqueness rather than familiarity in defining the relevant scale.¹²

Another argument for the centrality of uniqueness over familiarity in the distribution of definite descriptions can be constructed from the contrast between (21a) and (21b). (Assume that there is only individual John Bolton, and thus that we are dealing with the "non-restrictive" reading of the modifier.)

- (21) a. A churlish John Bolton (...reacted angrily to the committee)
 b. The churlish John Bolton (...was a poor choice to be UN ambassador)

While the indefinite in (21a) suggests a temporary state, the definite in (21b) indicates a permanent condition. Further, the use of the indefinite suggests a multiplicity of (potential) Bolton-stages or guises, whereas the definite presents a property of the individual without individuating among stages. If I didn't know him or his reputation, I could report that *A rude and*

obnoxious John Bolton shouted at me on my way into the meeting, thereby Q-implicating that for all I know he isn't always (or permanently) rude and obnoxious, just as if I assume (counterfactually, if reports can be trusted) that he really doesn't behave that way all the time I'd use the indefinite. In either case, the same sort of *<the, a>* scale operates in this [Det Adj PN] context that operates in the ordinary uniqueness/maximality cases.

For Hawkins (1991), *The F is G* entails that there is only one (salient) *F* assumed by the speaker to be identifiable by the hearer. While I agree that an assumption of unique identifiability is indeed part of a definite's conventional meaning, is it part of the entailed, *truth-conditional* meaning of the statement, or just part of its *appropriateness* conditions? The main argument for a conventional implicature/*Andeutung* approach is that there appear to be no cases in which a statement with a definite description is ever judged false on the grounds that uniqueness/maximality is violated, in the way that it may be when the existential premise fails:

- (22) a. The King of France isn't bald – (because) there isn't any.
 b. #The consul of Illocutia isn't bald – (because) there are two of them.

Is *The F is G* ever plausibly taken to be false (or even wrong) on the grounds that there are two *F*s, indeed even two salient *F*s in the context? If I say "*The book is blue*", intending on picking out a particular blue book on the table, and there's another book that may or may not be hidden from me, and you don't know which one I meant, that makes my statement hard for you to evaluate, to be sure, and potentially inappropriate (if I knew about that book), but does it make it *false*? Or compare (23) with (23'):

- (23) A: The baby is crying.
 B: # {That's false/The baby's not crying}, there's LOTS of babies here!
 (23') A: The baby is crying.
 B: What do you mean, "THE baby"? There's LOTS of babies here!

When uniqueness/maximality is not satisfied, the result is more reminiscent of the non-satisfaction of a conventional implicature, as in the standard examples in (24), than of a claim of falsity.

- (24) a. What do you mean EVEN Hercules can lift the rock? (cf. Lewis 1979: 339)
b. Whaddayamean she opposes the war BUT she's patriotic?¹³

Of course it's possible to get the "What do you mean?" response to an existence violation too, but then it's also possible to get the simple negative claim, as with the King of France in (22a), or in

- (25) A: The baby is crying.
B: No, you're wrong, there's no baby around. That's my Siamese cat.

As Emma Borg (p.c.) points out, we do get exchanges like that in (26), in which one interlocutor challenges the definite description used by another on the grounds of uniqueness failure.

- (26) A: I met the vice-chancellor today.
B: You didn't meet THE vice-chancellor; we have three VCs at our university.

But I would take B's response here to involve a metalinguistic (and in particular, implicature-canceling) use of the negative operator, much as in (27):

- (27) a. He didn't MANAGE to get a promotion – he's married to the boss's daughter.
b. She isn't poor BUT honest – there's no real contrast between the two.
c. I'm not STILL here – I'm here AGAIN.

Negation is used not to assert the falsity of an unnegated proposition but rather the infelicity of an utterance due to the non-satisfaction of the appropriateness conditions of the focused item (Horn 1989: Chapter 6).

More generally, as has been recognized for some time, uniqueness – unlike existence – is not directly cancelable by an external negation of the form *it is not true that...*:

- (28) a. It is not true that the King of America is a fascist; there is no such entity.

- b. #It is not true that the Senator of America is a fascist; there are 100 senators.
(Horn 1972: example [1.41])
- (29) a. #It is not true that {the/a} King of France visited the exhibition because there is more than one King of France.
b. #It is not true that {the/a} head of school came to see me because we have two heads of school.
(Kempson 1975: 110)

Kempson notes that (29a) and (29b) are equally “incoherent” with *the* and *a*, given that non-uniqueness is irrelevant to the truth of both indefinites and definites.¹⁴ But note that the same pattern obtains for standard cases of conventional implicatures:

- (30) a. #It is not true that EVEN Hercules can lift the rock; he was the only one.
b. #It is not true that she’s poor BUT honest. (cf. [24b] above)

We can tentatively draw the following conclusions:

The F is G conventionally implicates the context-relativized uniqueness or maximality of {F}. By her use of a definite description, the speaker conversationally implicates, *ceteris paribus*, that (she believes that) the hearer is familiar with the referent of F.

The utterance of *An F is G* conversationally Q-implicates the non-uniqueness (and, indirectly, the novelty or hearer-new status) of {F}, *ceteris paribus*, given the robust *<the, a>* scale.

Ludlow and Segal (2004: 436) note the hazards of the linguistic myopia they detect in the differential accounts Russell provides for definite and indefinite determiners:

If we are interested in the logical form of natural language (as opposed to the logical form of English only) we need analyses that “travel well”. We cannot be satisfied that our analysis works for our own language if it fails as an analysis of most other languages in the world. Accordingly, we urge that further consideration be paid to the unitary analysis.

Yet, as we have noted, neither their version of the unitary analysis (which posits givenness as a conventional implicature for definites, despite its being “overridden” in superlatives and other contexts) nor Szabó’s (which posits the same conventional content for definite and indefinite descriptions) rests on sound empirical footing.

Similarly, Farkas and de Swart (2005) also invoke cross-linguistic evidence to support their Optimality Theoretic account of the relation of definiteness to maximality and familiarity, in which (based in part on evidence from generic definites) they posit the universal soft constraints in (31) and (32):

- (31) *FaithMax*: Reflect maximality features of the input in the output.
 (32) **Def/[-Fam]*: Avoid non-familiar definites.

The constraint in (31) requires a maximal discourse referent to be associated with a definite NP, while (32) is a markedness constraint penalizing the use of a definite article with non-familiar NPs. This allows for variation in how these constraints are ordered:

- (33) **Def/[-Fam]* >> *FaithMax* (English)
FaithMax >> **Def/[-Fam]* (Romance, Hungarian)

But this ordering fails to explain why maximality is harder to override than familiarity in English definite descriptions, or why focusing on *the* (or *a*) should invariably turn on maximality (or non-maximality) rather than on familiarity (or novelty).

While I am sympathetic to the goals of a unified account with cross-linguistic relevance, as urged by Ludlow and Segal and by Farkas and de Swart, I would maintain that the approach promoted here, in which uniqueness/maximality corresponds to a Gricean conventional implicature or a Fregean *Andeutung*, is indeed an analysis that succeeds in traveling well, in particular to languages like Russian that don’t mark descriptions for (in)definiteness while still allowing for singular expressions via names and pronouns. (See Trenkic, to appear, for complementary observations.)

It is true that Frege was often quite willing to override the complexities of ordinary linguistic usage for the sake of logical elegance, a tendency that distinguished him from Strawson, despite their shared fondness for the concept of presupposition. Nevertheless, as we have seen, through his

invocation of the *Voraussetzung*, the *Nebengedanke*, and the *Andeutung*, Frege bequeathed us a versatile and subtle toolkit for analyzing the pragmatic factors affecting the meaning of natural language expressions.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Barbara Abbott, Kent Bach, Emma Borg, Berit Brogaard, Chris Potts, J. L. Speranza and members of the Yale Philosophy Lunch group (especially George Bealer, Susanne Bobzien, Keith DeRose, and Shelly Kagan) and the LAUD audience for their comments, objections, and suggestions. The discussion in §4, presented in a different form at Cambridge University (Horn 2005), benefited from e-mail conversations with Betty Birner, Donka Farkas, Jack Hawkins, Andrew Kehler, Zoltán Szabó, Danijela Trenkic, and Gregory Ward, to all of whom I am indebted to for comments, suggestions, and warnings. Needless to say, ...

Notes

1. The corresponding German versions of the passages quoted here can be found at Sigwart 1873: 123 and 1873: 160 respectively.
2. Following Strawson, Vendler, and Moravcsik, I argued (Horn 1997) for distinguishing two kinds of universal statements. Empirical universals such as (6a) and (6b), subject-predicate in nature, are about the set denoted by the subject phrase. They range over actual individuals, and cannot be true if their restrictor is empty. Lawlike universals such as (6c) and (6d), conditional in nature, range over possible individuals, and are neutral with respect to whether there are any individuals satisfying their restrictor. In neither case is a universal vacuously true; indeed, in the lawlike cases, as with subjunctive or “counterfactual” conditionals, the emptiness of the subject set would be entirely irrelevant to the truth of the statement as a whole, which is evaluated with reference to possible worlds rather than the actual world and time. See also Cohen 2000 for a related view.
3. I have suggested elsewhere (Horn 2002) one possible implementation of a non-presuppositional account for these cases, drawing on Brentano’s categorical/thetic distinction (Brentano [1874/1911] 1973; Horn 1997) and Grice’s bracketing device for representing scope. In categorical universals, corresponding to the empirical claims of (6a) and (6b), the *Nebengedanke* is entailed but not asserted (in that the existential premise is outside the scope of the assertion operator); in thetic universals, corresponding to the lawlike

- generalizations of (6c) and (6d), existence in the world of evaluation is neither entailed nor asserted.
4. To be sure, this is not an entirely straightforward matter. See Bach (2001) and Saul (2002) for two revisionist views on what is said, formulated within generally neo-Gricean accounts, and Grice offered his own reconsideration of the matter in Strand Five of his retrospective epilogue (Grice 1989: 359–68).
 5. Frege’s observations on *ah* and *unfortunately* could be generalized to encompass a wide range of pragmatic markers that index speaker attitude or illocutionary modification, such as the sentence-final particle *yo* that supplies illocutionary strength to utterances in Japanese (Davis 2006) – or its presumably accidental homonym in AAVE described in McWhorter (2004) – or the evidential markers in a variety of languages including Turkish, whose suffixes *-mIs* and *-Di* signal that the speaker’s evidence for the propositional content is indirect or direct, respectively.
 6. The cancelability diagnostic is not as straightforward as it may appear. Potts (2005: 83) argues that Karttunen and Peters (1979) are wrong to take the use of the name *Bill* as conventionally implicating that the referent is male, given the cancelability of this suggestion (cf. for example Johnny Cash’s “A Boy Named Sue”). Fair enough. But Potts concludes that “the proper classification of maleness is as a conversational implicature.” However, he offers no derivation of such an implicature from the conversational maxims, nor could he. Defeasible culture-bound generalizations like *People named ‘Bill’ are male* are not conversational implicatures; cancelability is a necessary but not sufficient diagnostic for conversational implicature.
 7. In other treatments, the existential implicature has been argued to be non-conventional (derived conversationally rather than stipulated) and the “scalar” implicature has been taken to involve relative rather than absolute comparison and noteworthiness rather than unlikelihood (cf. Horn 1992; Schwenter 2002; Rullmann 2006 inter alia).
 8. Levinson (1983: 128–29) suggests, but does not pursue in detail, a conventional implicature-based analysis of T/V pronoun choice. A speaker’s move from the T to the V form, or vice versa, will often generate conversational implicatures relating to signals of increased intimacy, alienation, etc.; it is the static values of the pronouns of power and solidarity (Brown and Gilman 1960; Taavitsainen and Jucker [eds.] 2003) that lend themselves to a conventional implicature or *Andeutung*-based treatment. See also Keenan (1971) for an earlier related treatment of T/V pronouns in terms of pragmatic presuppositions and Kaplan (2004) for a different view.
 9. Another problem for the generalization is the fact that Potts’s expressives are all adjectival modifiers or appositives (“*that damn guy*”, “*Harry, that asshole*”) rather than nominal epithets per se (“*I wouldn’t hire that*

reprobate”, “*Why did you vote for that asshole?*”). In the latter case, a lexical item clearly does “contribute both an at-issue and a CI meaning” – no problem, of course, for the echt Fregean/Gricean view of *Andeutung*/conventional implicature. Williamson (to appear, fn. 16) makes a similar point.

10. As discussed in §1, Strawson (1950) regards existence and uniqueness as not entailed or asserted in sentences like *The King of France is wise* but presupposed; the non-satisfaction of these conditions yields not falsity but a truth-value gap. Strawson also notes the difficulty posed by “improper” descriptions as in *The table is covered with books*, in which uniqueness simpliciter is neither entailed nor presupposed. See Kadmon (1990), Roberts (2003) and the papers in Neale (2005) for other approaches to improper descriptions and to the roles of familiarity and uniqueness in definite descriptions. In particular, Roberts argues persuasively that uniqueness must be defined in informational terms and not, à la Russell, purely semantically. For a related treatment of the definiteness presupposition that invokes individuation within the discourse model, see Birner and Ward 1994, 1998.
11. For Roberts (2003), weak familiarity (along with informational uniqueness) is a necessary condition on definites. In a case like (14), in which the referent is neither hearer-old nor accessible to both speaker and hearer in the assumed context, accommodation must be assumed (cf. Roberts 2003: 302), the details of which are not obviously straightforward.
12. While Szabó (2005) offers a modified view of his earlier position on the role of familiarity and uniqueness, the central elements of the story are preserved: “The functions of indefinite and definite articles are complementary: the former is used to build phrases for introducing *novel* things into the discourse, the latter is used to build phrases for talking about things already *familiar* (2005: 1218). As the evidence reviewed here indicates, this generalization cannot be criterial for predicting the distribution of *a* and *the*.”
13. An attested example:
 - “Her name is Caroline. She’s an Italian girl but she’s pretty.”
 - “What do you mean, *but* she’s pretty, Ma?” Frank said. “Why not ‘*and* she’s pretty?’”
 (Stephen McCauley, *The Object of My Affection*, p. 209)
14. As noted above, I maintain contra Kempson that (non-)uniqueness *is* relevant to the conventional import of definites, although I agree with her, contra Russell, Hawkins, et al., that it is *not* relevant to their truth conditions.

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Part II: Cognitive Aspects

The role of explicature in communication and in intercultural communication

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Abstract

This paper makes an attempt to give empirical and theoretical arguments for the central role of explicatures in verbal communication, either monocultural or intercultural. The main point of the article is to show that classical Gricean pragmatics makes erroneous predictions about the level at which misunderstandings can occur. Intercultural verbal communication is a very relevant domain of investigation for intercultural pragmatics, because failures of communication cannot be reduced to basic linguistic erroneous encodings. Moreover, interesting situations show that intercultural communication problems arise when speakers are not engaged in a linguistic decoding task, but are about to discover what the informative intention of the speaker is. Unsurprisingly, context and its content (a set of implicated premises) is the core issue for explaining intercultural misunderstanding.

The paper discusses a standard example of intercultural misunderstanding and gives a relevance-theoretical explanation. More precisely, the level at which intercultural problems arises is the level of *explicature*, either basic (propositional form) or higher-ordered (illocutionary force and propositional attitude). Basic concepts of Relevance Theory (ostensive-inferential communication, relevance, the cognitive and communicative principles of relevance, explicature and implicature) are defined and applied to a fine-grained analysis of the tool-example of the article. The paper ends with a general proposition about what intercultural misunderstanding is, and shows why a shared language can be a distracting factor and can play a role in an intercultural communicative problem.

1. Introduction

One of the main issues in pragmatics is the level on which the utterance meaning is to be specified. The classic approach, the Gricean paradigm, locates the speaker's meaning on the level of implicatures. This approach also postulates that implicatures are characterized as non-truth-conditional aspects of meaning, whereas literal meaning is often associated with truth-conditional meaning. Although several controversial versions of literal meaning have been formulated (Searle 1979, for instance),¹ literal meaning has always been thought of as a necessary stage, whether considered as truth-conditional or not, for grasping the speaker's intentions.

The classic approach has been addressed from different theoretical points of view, mainly the neo-Gricean approach (Levinson 2000) and the post-Gricean approach (Sperber and Wilson 1995; Wilson and Sperber 2000; Carston 2002). Two issues are relevant here, and mainly concern the relationship between pragmatic and truth-conditional meaning. The first issue is the so-called *Gricean circle* (Levinson 2000); the second is the contribution of truth-conditional meaning to pragmatic meaning. Briefly stated, the Gricean circle demonstrates the paradox inherent in considering that non-truth-conditional meaning (implicatures) is required in order to determine the propositional content of the utterance; that is, its truth-conditional meaning. In the Gricean circle, the border between semantics and pragmatics becomes permeable, which makes this view a very difficult one to maintain for a theory of non-truth-conditional implicatures. The second issue raises the question of the nature of the intended content, either explicit or implicit, and its logical and truth-conditional properties. In a radical version of cognitive pragmatics as defended in Moeschler and Reboul (1994) for instance, the explicit content (*explicitures* in relevance-theoretical terms) is truth-conditional, whereas implicit content (*implicatures*) is not.²

The issue of the level on which the speaker's meaning is represented is not only a theoretical one. It has a variety of implications for empirical studies in pragmatics, particularly in the area of intercultural pragmatics. One possible way of addressing issues in intercultural pragmatics is the analysis of non-successful intercultural communication, and especially intercultural misunderstanding. One interesting and secondary issue is the contrastive analysis between intercultural misunderstanding and ordinary misunderstanding.³ The thesis defended below is that the causes of each

type of misunderstanding are the same, but that the level at which they are active is not.

The following paper has two purposes, one empirical, the other theoretical. Its empirical purpose is to show the role of explicatures in verbal communication in general, and in intercultural communication in particular. Its theoretical purpose is to explain why explicatures are central to verbal communication.

From a pragmatic point of view, one prediction of the standard approach to pragmatics would be that intercultural misunderstandings are caused by contextual mismatches between speakers, which take place at the level of conversational implicatures. From a classic Gricean or neo-Gricean approach to pragmatics, this would lead to a strong assumption: pragmatic misunderstanding would be caused by erroneous application of conversational maxims or of pragmatic principles (for instance the Q-principle or the R/I-principle, cf. Horn 1984, 1988; Levinson 2000). This position will be discussed and will lead to the second, theoretical, purpose of the paper. I will argue for a definition of verbal communication that gives a central role to the development of linguistic meaning in contextual settings, that is, *explicatures*. Explicatures are defined as enrichments of the logical forms of sentences, and are either basic when they represent propositional forms or higher-level when they represent illocutionary forces and propositional attitudes. The main assumption of this paper is that *intercultural misunderstandings are caused by the triggering of erroneous higher-level explicatures by the hearer*.

This assumption will, I hope, allow for some interesting predictions, both empirical and theoretical:

1. When they occur, intercultural misunderstandings can have major consequences: they generally stem from some important mismatch between speakers. I will give an example of such a mismatch based on erroneous expectations of relevance.
2. Intercultural misunderstandings are not transparent: they are generally not perceived as such, unless some other external fact results in this awareness. I will give a cognitive explanation of this phenomenon later on.
3. Intercultural misunderstandings are more likely to occur when linguistic decoding is involved. In particular, the assumption developed here is that “the greater the audience’s mastery of the speaker’s language, the greater the risk of intercultural

misunderstanding". In other words, the better a non-native speaker masters a second language, the more likely it is that his audience will consider that he shares its beliefs and assumptions as well.

Finally, I will show how and why the construction of context is crucial for successful intercultural communication. This feature is not specific to intercultural communication, since it is crucial for every type of verbal communication. Mismatches in context construction in monocultural communication trigger an automatically erroneous comprehension, either at the explicature or implicature level, but these errors are automatically perceived and repaired. Erroneous comprehension of utterances in intercultural communication, on the other hand, is not automatically perceived. When it is, it cannot be easily repaired, because it is difficult to access mutual contextual assumptions.

2. **Explicature vs. implicature**

One prediction of inferential pragmatics is that mismatches in verbal communication are located on the level of conversational implicature. This assumption is a consequence of Grice's definition of non-natural meaning, which implies a distinction between what is said and what is implicated. Consequences of what is said are truth-conditional; that is, they exceed conventional meaning. Therefore, any communicative mismatch at the level of what is said would imply a linguistic decoding problem, caused by deficiency in the hearer's linguistic competence.

The thrust of this paper, however, is not this type of issue in intercultural communication. I would like to examine the level on which examples of intercultural mismatches like (1) take place:

- (1) *How should I go from the Airport to X?*

This utterance serves not only as a means to acquire necessary information, but also as an implicit request for the hearer to be collected at the airport and driven to X. The answer given was unfortunately literal, and consisted of precise directions to go from the airport to X by train.

At first glance, the analysis is very simple: the speaker intends to perform an illocutionary act of request for help by performing a question (a

request for information), and receives as an answer the information he asked for.

However, things are more complicated from a technical point of view, since this request (the speaker asks his audience to come and collect him at the airport) is not a conventional way to produce an indirect speech act. If this were the case, it would imply that the speaker and the audience share a rule like (2):

- (2) When the speaker does not know how to go from A to B and asks his audience how to do so, he wants his audience to come and collect him at A and take him to B.

This pragmatic rule-based description is necessarily *ad hoc*, because it implies that speakers and hearers will share common pragmatic rules for any type of specific situation. This in turn raises not only the question of how they should know that this knowledge is shared,⁴ but also the question of the acquisition of such rules. However, there is an alternative and non-conventional way of inferring the request for help; that is, through the use of the Gricean implicature device. In Gricean pragmatics (Grice 1975), implicatures are derived from the presumption that the speaker is cooperative and therefore uses or exploits one of the conversational maxims. The conversational maxim implied here could not be the maxim of quality or the maxim of quantity: it cannot be inferred that the speaker is not telling the truth or not giving the strongest information.⁵ The only conversational maxim that can be referred to here is the maxim of relevance, which results in the following summarization of the speaker's intention:

- (3) The speaker asks how to go from A to B with the purpose of requesting that his audience come and collect him at A.

Although this analysis is acceptable, it does not explain why (3) is a pragmatically acceptable way of requesting something from someone. If the speaker asks this information of his travel agent by uttering (1), he certainly is not asking the agent to come and collect him at the airport. It can therefore be stated that, if the requirement of the maxim of relevance is necessary in the context of (1), it does not suffice to explain the speaker's intention or the possible interpretation of his utterance by his audience.

I would like to propose another analysis, which is linked to the notion of ostensive-inferential communication and gives a central role to explicatures as opposed to implicatures. I would like to suggest that in example (1) the higher-level explicature of the speaker's utterance is not the illocutionary force of question, but that of request. Such a higher-level explicature is a free enrichment of the logical form of the sentence, based on premises whose accessibility is, crucially, cultural. In other words, when the audience does not obtain the expected higher-level explicature (4) as an interpretation of (1), it means that he has not correctly understood the speaker's meaning, and that communication has failed:

- (4) The speaker requests his audience to come to the airport and take him to X.

In order to develop this analysis, it is necessary to introduce two major topics which are well-defined in Relevance Theory: ostensive-inferential communication and the explicit/implicit distinction.

3. Ostensive-inferential communication and *pragmatics*

One of the main concepts in cognitive pragmatics as illustrated by Relevance Theory (RT) is *ostensive-inferential communication* (Sperber and Wilson 1995). Linguistic communication is defined in RT as a mixed process, implying both a coding-decoding device (the code model) and an inferential process based on old and new information (the inferential model, Wilson and Sperber 2004). In isolation, none of these devices correctly describes how linguistic communication works. Although linguistic communication is uncontroversially based on a linguistic code, we have good reason to think that knowledge of the linguistic code, although necessary for optimal linguistic communication, is not a sufficient condition for successful communication. It is not a sufficient condition principally because the retrieval of the speaker's intention implies much more than a shared linguistic code: world knowledge, as well as knowledge about the situation of communication, is crucial for the enrichment of the linguistic meaning encoded in the utterance.

The division of labor between the two models of communication can be explained in a functional way. From this perspective, it seems reasonable to assign efficient and rapid linguistic parsing to a specialized module (the

linguistic module), without expecting that a complete interpretation of the verbal stimulus will result from this processing phase. Conversely, the capacity of mixing outputs of linguistic parsing (represented in a logical form; that is, a string of ordered concepts) with other sources of information (old information retrieved from long-term memory, new perceptual information coming from the physical environment, and mid-term memory information resulting from previous utterance parsing) can increase the efficiency of the cognitive system by inferring new information and by strengthening or eradicating old information, since the inferential process is not subject to the time pressure inherent in the linguistic parser.

Linguistic communication, as defined above, has two aspects: it is ostensive and inferential. Ostensive communication is achieved by an act of ostension from the communicator, although ostensive communication can be non-linguistic (in other words, conveyed by gestures, glances, smiles, or any other stimuli sent by the communicator to his audience as indicators of his intention). However, the use of language in utterances gives rise to ostensive communication because the processing of an utterance follows the addressee's recognition of the speaker's intention to convey his informative intention by means of that utterance. If language were a perfect communicative device, linguistic communication would perhaps be restricted to one particular kind of communication: ostensive communication. Since speakers can convey more than what they say, as in (5), the ostension of the verbal stimulus is completed by an inferential process: the addressee must infer the speaker's intended meaning – that is, what he wants to say – from what is said (given as a clue by the speaker) and from other accessible information (the context). Here a classic example illustrating the apparent conflict between what the speaker (Jacques) says, and what he means, very cleverly implied in Axel's answer:

- (5) Jacques: *Axel, please go and brush your teeth!*
Axel: *Dad, I'm not sleepy.*

Here, Axel's recognition of Jacques' communicative intention allows him to infer Jacques' informative intention to inform Axel of something: that Axel should go to bed. In other words, the speaker expects his audience to recognize his informative intention by recognizing his communicative intention (Wilson and Sperber 2004: 611).

This analysis of communication as an ostensive-inferential device is not a new theory of verbal communication; it is merely an explicit version of Grice's theory of non-natural meaning (Grice 1957), and has become the core concept of any pragmatic approach to verbal communication. The main issue that divided pragmaticists and split theoretical frameworks is the nature of the principles responsible for the processing of inferred meaning. This difference separates Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory (RT) from Levinson's Theory of Generalized Conversational Implicature (TGCI). RT resorts to a single principle of relevance, for example, whereas TGCI triggers implicatures either from the Q-Principle (derived from the Gricean Maxim of Quantity; Grice 1975) or the I-Principle (principle of informativeness, derived from the Maxim of Quality and the Maxim of Relation – R-Principle in Horn 1984, 1988). In this paper, I will restrict my discussion to ostensive-inferential communication as described in RT, and show how the principle of relevance plays a crucial role in the recovery of the speaker's informative intention.⁶

RT claims that this criterion is the Principle of Relevance. The Principle of Relevance is a generalization of the Gricean Maxim of Relation ("Be relevant"), but also includes the Maxims of Quantity and Quality. Being relevant implies not only giving information about what is said in a conversation, but also giving an appropriate quantity of information, as well as satisfying the Gricean Maxim of Quality (Wilson and Sperber 2000). For instance, giving the right number of children in (6a) is more relevant than giving a true number, as shown in (6a) and (6b). (6b) is in effect logically, that is, truth-conditionally implied by (6a), but communicating (6b) whereas (6a) is the case would not be a relevant communication:

- (6) a. *Anne has four children.*
 b. *Anne has three children.*

The same argument can be used for the maxim of Quality. For instance, asserting (7) while walking in the rain can be relevant even if the statement is false, if the speaker's utterance mentions in an echoic way a previous thought or utterance stated during sunny weather:

- (7) *What a beautiful sunny day!*

In RT, *relevance* is a comparative concept, defined through the cognitive effects produced by the utterance in a specific context, as well as through the cognitive effort implied by the processing of the utterance. Here is the classic definition of relevance:

– **Relevance**

- a. Other things being equal, the more cognitive effects an utterance produces, the more relevant it is.
- b. Other things being equal, the more cognitive effort an utterance requires, the less relevant it is (according to Wilson and Sperber 2004: 609).

How can the principle of relevance play the role of the expected criterion responsible for the inference of the informative intention? In the first edition of *Relevance* (Sperber and Wilson 1986), the principle of relevance is simply stated as follows: “every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of its own optimal relevance” (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 158). The more recent version of RT, as stated initially in the second edition of *Relevance* (Sperber and Wilson 1995), has split the principle of relevance into two principles, the cognitive principle of relevance and the communicative principle of relevance.

Although relevance is a concept which plays a role both in cognition and in communication, its extension is not identical. As far as cognition is concerned, the key concept is *maximal relevance*: if cognition plays a crucial role in inference processes, then the thing which triggers the search for relevant information is the search for maximal relevance. In other words, human cognition is attracted by relevant information, and is able to make a sharp distinction between relevant information and irrelevant information. However, this requirement for maximal relevance is balanced by what really happens in communication: How can addressees look for maximal relevance if speakers have no means to bring forth relevant information in their utterances, or if they are reluctant to do so? The answer is as follows: the communicative principle of relevance simply states that the presumption of optimal relevance attached to the act of communication is constrained by the speaker’s abilities and preferences.

This shows why the hearer is looking for a relevant interpretation; that is, an interpretation of the utterance that resembles the speaker’s informative intention, even if his search for relevance can be difficult to

access because of the speaker's abilities and preferences. My point is that in intercultural communication the communicative principle of relevance, and particularly the definition of the presumption of optimal relevance, plays a crucial role.

How does this apply to misunderstanding and intercultural misunderstanding? I believe the definition of the presumption of optimal relevance, namely the reference to the speaker's abilities and preferences can be employed:

– **Misunderstanding (general)**

A misunderstanding is triggered, either intentionally or unintentionally, by the speaker's abilities and preferences, which allow for erroneous interpretation by the audience.

– **Misunderstanding (intercultural) (1)**

An intercultural misunderstanding is due to an erroneous evaluation of the communicator's abilities and preferences by the audience.

In order to refine this claim, I will now introduce an additional concept from RT, the explicature/implicature distinction.

4. Explicit and implicit communication

Following the work of Grice, pragmatic studies on linguistic communication have addressed a single major issue: explaining how and why speakers do not literally convey their informative intentions. Many solutions have been proposed, and two of them have become extremely popular in the literature.

The first solution (Stalnaker 1977; van der Auwera 1979) resorts to the notion of *common background belief* to explain why linguistic communication does not need to be literal and explicit. Information belonging to the common background does not need to be reset, and thus makes communication much more efficient.

The second solution (Atlas and Levinson 1981; Levinson 1983, 1987, 2000) is based on the notion of *non-controversial statement* and *common ground* (Maxim of Relativity):

– **Maxims of Relativity**

1. Do not say what you believe to be highly noncontroversial, that is, to be entailed by the presumptions of the common ground.
2. Take what you hear to be lowly noncontroversial, that is, consistent with the presumptions of the common ground.

(Atlas and Levinson 1981: 40)

Both theories imply a *principle of economy* in verbal exchanges: Speakers do not have to say what is presupposed to be true; that is, information belonging to the common ground. But neither of these maxims explains *why* it is more economical and efficient to behave like this. Sometimes, in fact, it is not: many *unsuccessful* instances of communication are caused by *not* having asserted what is presumed to belong to the common ground. Moreover, reference to common ground implies that background information is a necessary and sufficient condition for successful communication. As Sperber and Wilson (1982, 1986) have argued, common ground defined as mutual knowledge can be neither a necessary condition (otherwise communication would always be successful) nor a sufficient one (because background information can be inferred) for successful communication.

The answer to the question of non-literal communication must therefore be looked for elsewhere. In RT, non-literal communication does not contrast with literal communication in terms of *economy*, but in terms of *contingency*. Literal communication, defined as total overlap between the set of implications drawn from the thought of the speaker and the set of implications drawn from the speaker's utterance, is very uncommon. The usual situation implies a partial overlap between these two sets of implications (analytical and contextual). Hence, in verbal communication, the normal state is one in which the intended meaning is not literally communicated (and therefore not fully economical), but pragmatically inferred from (and therefore contingent on) contextual information and the utterance.

The crucial point of my argument is that *intended meaning is inferred rather than conveyed literally*. The point I would now like to develop concerns the nature of what is inferred. It will be shown that the nature of the inferred meaning is the key to the understanding of pragmatic misunderstanding in general, and to intercultural misunderstanding in particular.

Gricean and neo-Gricean pragmatics define inferred meaning as *conversational implicatures*, either generalized or particularized. This definition presupposes that what is said in the utterance is not the speaker's meaning (what he wants to convey), but the sentence meaning (what his words linguistically mean; Searle 1979), although the literal meaning (sentence meaning *plus* background knowledge) is a by-product of linguistic meaning and of background assumptions.

I would like to make the following assumption: what is inferred is not restricted to implicatures, but also contributes to the explicatures of the utterance (Sperber and Wilson 1986; Wilson and Sperber 2004). An *explicature* results from the enrichment of the logical form, that is, the propositional form of the utterance. A propositional form is a complete proposition, in which referents are attributed to referential expressions and the sentence is disambiguated (*basic explicature* in Wilson and Sperber 2004). The explicit part of the intended meaning can be completed by *higher-level explicatures* that specify the illocutionary force of the utterance and the propositional attitude of the utterance. In (8), (9a) is the basic explicature and (9b) and (9c) the higher-level explicatures:

- (8) *How should I go from the airport to X?*
- (9) a. Jacques is going from the airport to X at 10 p.m. on Saturday, April 10.
 b. Jacques is asking how to get from the airport to X at 10 p.m. on Saturday, April 10.
 c. Jacques wants to know how to get from the airport to X at 10 p.m. on Saturday, April 10.

Some aspects of the speaker's informative intention are not overt but covert, and need some additional contextual premises to be understood. For instance, (10) represents typical implicated premises allowing the audience to draw the implicated conclusion (11):

- (10) a. If Jacques is asking how to get from the airport to X, then Jacques does not know how to go to X from the airport.
 b. Jacques would prefer not to go to X alone.
- (11) Jacques is asking for someone to pick him up at the airport in order to go to X.

The analysis that gives the status of the implicated conclusion (implicature) in (11) will be more thoroughly discussed in section 5. What is relevant here is that some implicatures are strongly implicated, while others are weakly implicated. In RT, an implicature is strongly implicated if “its recovery is essential in order to arrive at an interpretation that satisfies the addressee’s expectations of relevance”, while it is weakly implicated “if its recovery helps with the construction of such an interpretation, but is not itself essential because the utterance suggests a range of similar possible implicatures, any one of which would do” (Wilson and Sperber 2004: 620).

It therefore appears that in order to recover the intended meaning, addressees must go through several stages beginning with determining the explicature and proceeding to the implicatures (implicated premises and implicated conclusions). This procedure has been fully described in Wilson and Sperber (2004: 615) as sub-tasks in the overall comprehension process:

– **Sub-tasks in the overall comprehension process**

- a. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about explicit content (in relevance-theoretic terms, **Explicatures**) via decoding, disambiguation, reference resolution, and other pragmatic enrichment processes.
- b. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual assumption (in relevance-theoretic terms, **Implicated Premises**).
- c. Constructing an appropriate hypothesis about the intended contextual implications (in relevance-theoretic terms, **Implicated Conclusions**).

The final relevance-theoretic concept necessary to support my argument is a general comprehension procedure. One of the crucial issues of pragmatics is to explain why and when addressees stop processing, that is, why they do not seek further weak implicatures, and at which point they stop processing. For instance, the question is why my addressee, when processing (8) (*How should I go from the airport to X?*), understood my informative intention as restricted to (9b) (‘Jacques is asking how to get from the airport to X at 10 p.m. on Saturday, April 10’) and not to (11) (‘Jacques is asking for someone to pick him up at the airport in order to go to X’). As an answer to this question, RT has formulated a general claim, the comprehension procedure, which states that interpretation proceeds following a path of least effort:

– **Relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure**

- a. Follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects: Test interpretive hypotheses (disambiguation, reference resolutions, implicatures, etc.) in order of accessibility.
- b. Stop when your expectations of relevance are satisfied (or abandoned).

(Wilson and Sperber 2004: 613)

We now possess all the necessary theoretical tools to return to our initial example and to account for the nature of intercultural misunderstanding (cf. section 5). However, before giving a pragmatic analysis of intercultural misunderstanding, I would like to provide a more precise description of how pragmatic misunderstandings work.

My aim is to propose a general model of pragmatic misunderstandings based on the hierarchy of levels of comprehension and on the RT-comprehension procedure. In order to arrive at a complete comprehension of the speaker's utterance, the addressee must access the following levels of comprehension:

– **Hierarchy of levels of comprehension**

Access the following layers:

- a. Basic explicature
- b. Higher-level explicatures
- c. Implicated premises
- d. Strongly implicated conclusion
- e. Weakly implicated conclusion

This hierarchy does not imply a linear order of linguistic and pragmatic processing. Its main function is to define the minimal conditions for successful communication. My hypothesis is that the determination of the explicatures (basic *and* higher-level) is the minimal condition for the recovery of the speaker's informative intention.

This hierarchy allows several predictions to be made about the relevant layers of meaning which play a role in intercultural communication:

– **Predictions about intercultural communication**

1. *Basic explicature* is the minimal level of communication. If the development of the basic explicature fails, then ordinary misunderstanding will occur.

2. *Higher-level explicature* is the middle level of communication. If the development of higher-level explicatures fails, then strong misunderstanding will occur.
3. *Implicated premise* is the first of the more sophisticated levels of communication. As implicated premises require knowledge of the world, access to implicated premises can be made more difficult when social, cultural, and behavioral assumptions differ among speakers.
4. *Implicated conclusion* is the second highest-level of communication. Since implicated conclusions have to do with speakers' intentions and the strength of their intended meaning, failure in recovery of strong implicature is worse than failure in recovery of weak implicature.

My premise is that failures may occur at *any* of these levels, and that failures at a lower level are easier to resolve than failures at a higher level. A minimal requirement for successful intercultural communication is the correct identification of basic and higher-level explicatures. The purpose of the next section is to test this prediction.

5. A relevance-theoretic analysis of intercultural *misunderstanding*

As stated in the beginning of this paper, **the first hypothesis** that comes to mind when considering intercultural misunderstanding is exactly the opposite of the above mentioned statement: that the cause of intercultural misunderstanding is a failure to recover implicatures.⁷ I would now like to provide evidence for the main thesis of this paper, and show that the first thing speakers engaged in intercultural communication need is to *access both basic and higher-level explicatures*. In other words, *explicatures and not implicatures are the key level for communication in general and for intercultural communication in particular*.

I will now turn to a more complete description of the airport example. Here is the complete record of the exchange of e-mails:

- (12) A: *Bonjour, ma réservation d'avion est faite. J'arrive à Y le 10 avril à 20h40, et je repartirai de Y le 14 à 14h. **Pouvez-vous me dire comment aller de l'aéroport à X?** Je compte sur vous pour les réservations d'hôtel ou de logement à X. ...*

- B: ...*Pour ce qui est du transport de l'aéroport de Y à X, vous pourrez prendre un train à l'aéroport, avec un changement à la gare de Z et vous arriverez à la gare de X à 2 mn de l'Hôtel W où une chambre vous est réservée.*
- A: 'Hello, my plane reservations have been made. I will arrive at Y on April 10 at 8:40 p.m., and will leave Y on 14 April at 2 p.m. **Can you tell me how to get from Y Airport to X?** I'm counting on you for the hotel reservation at X.'
- B: '...Concerning traveling from Y Airport to X, you can take the train at the airport, with a change at Z station and you'll arrive at X downtown station, at 2 min from the W where a room has been booked.'

I would like to make two preliminary remarks. First of all, the exchange was rather explicit, and my addressee's mastery of French was perfect. But the outcome of this example must be recalled. As a guest in a foreign country (North Africa), I did not know exactly how to proceed, and I was trying to get my addressee to understand my illocutionary point (Searle 1979), that is, to understand my utterance, repeated in (13), as conveying (14):

(13) *Can you tell me how to get from Y Airport to X?*

(14) *Can you collect me at the airport to go to X?*

Here again, the "implicated premise" thesis could be mentioned as an explanation of why (13) conveys (14) through the implicated premises (15):

- (15)
- a. Someone arriving in a foreign country needs some help.
 - b. To travel downtown alone from the airport at night is not a good idea.
 - c. To ask how to go from A to B is to ask for some help to go from A to B.

The crucial implicated premise is of course (15c), and at least in Western European culture, the role of a host is to manage and keep practical worries as minimal as possible.

The question is thus the following: Why, in spite of the high accessibility of (15),⁸ is (14) not answered and therefore not grasped? In other words, why is the implicated conclusion (16) not inferred?

- (16) Jacques is asking for someone to collect him at the airport to go to X.

Here is my answer. In order to understand this implicated conclusion, it would have been necessary for my addressee not to stop processing after obtaining the higher-level explicature (17):

- (17) Jacques is asking how to go from the airport to X.

It is important to recall the path of least effort that directs pragmatic processing and its second clause: “Stop when your expectations of relevance are satisfied”. This leads to a preliminary answer: As soon as he grasped the higher-level explicature (17), my addressee achieved sufficient relevance to balance his cognitive process.

This analysis explains why a literal interpretation, based on a *higher-level explicature*, does not yield the implicated conclusion from the higher-level explicature and the implicated premise. But it does address the reasons why the speaker does not explicitly ask for some help at the airport, if he expects this.

Two reasons can be mentioned in this context. Firstly, the speaker might be reluctant to express his wishes explicitly. Secondly, he may have thought that his intention was clear enough to be understood. Although the first reason is plausible, I will concentrate on the second one, which is much more interesting. There is an obvious fact that makes intercultural communication much more risky than ordinary exchanges: *Speakers can share a higher-level mastery of language L without belonging to the same culture*. This fact, far from harmless, can be fraught with danger. My hypothesis is therefore the following:

– **Intercultural misunderstanding (2)**

Within intercultural communication, the higher the level of mastery of the shared language, the greater the risk of attributing to the addressee the same beliefs and knowledge as one’s own.

According to this hypothesis, the first definition given to intercultural misunderstanding – that misunderstandings are due to false inferences caused by false explicatures – can be explained as follows: If my addressee reached a relevant interpretation by inferring a higher-level explicature, the main consequence of his answer was an avoidance of further

misunderstandings, because I realized that my addressee's answer was *not* a refusal to assist; that is, that he had reached the higher-level explicature satisfying his expectations of relevance.

I will now propose a third and final definition of intercultural misunderstanding:

– **Intercultural misunderstanding (3)**

Intercultural misunderstandings occur when false assumptions lead to false higher-level explicatures. False inferences deriving from higher-level explicatures are caused by false attributions of shared beliefs and knowledge.

Intercultural misunderstandings do not simply occur because speakers do not share common beliefs and knowledge, in other words, but because they attribute beliefs and knowledge to each other that they in fact do not possess. I would like to emphasize that this tendency is augmented when speakers share a common language.

6. Conclusion: The empirical field of intercultural pragmatics

In conclusion, I would like to make some proposals about what could be called the empirical domain of *intercultural pragmatics*. Though I have given a general sketch of how intercultural misunderstandings could occur, I would like in this final section to make some suggestions about how intercultural pragmatics could define new empirical fields for pragmatic studies.

As a guideline, I will use the “sub-tasks in the overall comprehension process” given in section 4, which concern the layers of explicitature, implicated premise and implicated conclusion.

In my opinion, the first layer (*explicitature*) is the core layer for investigating intercultural pragmatics. Here are some arguments which show that this is a central issue.

The first area of investigation would be to examine to what extent, in a given situation, the speakers of different languages and cultures use different means to convey their intention either explicitly or implicitly. For example, French culture is based on a way of communicating which emphasizes the use of implicatures, while American culture tends to expect speakers to express their intentions much more explicitly. This issue is an

extremely empirical one, and should be investigated with sound comparative methods. Diplomatic negotiation, trade, academic cooperation, and social encounters could benefit from such research.

The second area of investigation would be that of indirect speech acts and the conventional/conversational way of conveying illocutionary forces. In these cases, the possible convergence and divergence between languages and cultures would allow for the investigation of the relationships between types of illocutionary force (for instance, why and when a request for information becomes a request for help, and so on.).

The second layer of possible misunderstanding is *implicated premise*. In order for the addressee to understand the speaker's meaning, it is worth his while to concentrate on the types as well as the nature of implicated premises under specific settings (family, social relations, professional relations, politics, etc.). For instance, because of the ubiquitous nature of Hollywood movies, a person knows how to behave if an American policeman orders him to stop his car. By the same token, it would be more difficult to understand what a Kenyan policeman meant when he says:

(18) *A page of your driving license is missing.*

The policeman means that the missing item is in fact is a bank note, but this cannot be understood unless the following implicated premise is accessible:

(19) *A Kenyan policeman usually requests a bribe.*

The third layer of misunderstanding is *implicated conclusion*. The relevant issue here is not the nature of what is being communicated explicitly or implicitly, but the nature of what is *strongly* or *weakly* implicated. In this case, intercultural pragmatics has the same goals as inferential pragmatics, and much work in this area has been focused on the conventional/generalized conversational nature of implicatures. These aspects of pragmatic meaning are not simply lexical or non-lexical; in other words, they imply knowledge about the contexts in which they can be used.

Notes

1. In Searle's definition of literal meaning, literal meaning is not restricted to propositional content, but to the by-product of linguistic meaning (sentence

meaning) and background assumptions. The role of literal meaning is to make the utterance pass a truth-conditional test (metaphor, irony) or a cooperation test (indirect speech acts), which in turn allows or does not allow the continuation of the comprehension strategy.

2. In Wilson and Sperber (2000), the question of the contribution of truth-conditional meaning is maximally reduced, because there is no such rule as the maxim of truthfulness. In Carston's approach to Relevance Theory, explicatures are at the core level of pragmatics meaning, as well as being truth-conditional.
3. Ordinary communication presupposes no possible interference caused by cultural differences. A culture is defined here as a set of accessible beliefs and assumptions which play a crucial role in the selection of context during utterance interpretation. As all organisms, culture is a living organism which reproduces (see Sperber 1996).
4. This issue is the famous 'mutual knowledge' problem, defined as unsolvable by Sperber and Wilson (1982) with a theory of mutual knowledge.
5. Maybe the speaker is saying less in order to communicate more, but this is not a question of quantity of information: In this case, it refers to the I/R-principle, not to the Q-principle.
6. Neo-Gricean pragmatics focuses much more on generalized implicatures than on nonce implicature. The question of the recovery of generalized implicature is thus a question on how pragmatic meaning is linguistically structured. I would like to defend the perspective according to which the recovery of implicatures is principally a question of contextualization.
7. The implicature-thesis would imply that: a.) implicated premises are necessary to draw implicated conclusions, and b.) strong and weak implicatures correspond to the speaker's informative intention. This assumption locates intercultural misunderstandings (IM) in the non-mutual access of implicated premises, and describes IM as being caused by different sets of (cultural) background knowledge. Conditions (a) and (b) make intercultural communication very improbable and difficult to succeed in.
8. This is a minimal presumption due to the intentional stance (Dennett 1987). The formulation given here is taken from Reboul and Moeschler (1998: 47): "The intentional stance consists of an individual predicting others' behavior from two simple premises:
 1. Others are rational agents.
 2. They have beliefs, desires and other mental states".

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Illocutionary constructions: Cognitive motivation and linguistic realization¹

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Abstract

Moving from the metonymic grounding of illocutionary meaning proposed by Panther and Thornburg (1998), in this paper we offer a refined model of illocutionary scenarios which includes additional pragmatic variables like power and solidarity relations, and a cognitive version of Leech's (1983) cost-benefit scale. Illocutionary scenarios will be redefined as high-level situational models constructed through the application of the high-level metonymy SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC to multiple low-level situational models. Such scenarios are then applied to specific situations through the converse metonymy, GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC. Furthermore, we will illustrate central and peripheral elements of illocutionary scenarios belonging to most directive, commissive and expressive speech act categories. We will identify elements common to all of them and construct a higher-level description that we label the *Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model*. Finally, we will study a number of conventional and non-conventional linguistic realizations of the various parts of the model and explore the way in which such realizations are used to produce illocutionary meaning. We will argue that the sets of semantic conditions based on the model capture all the relevant information from high-level scenarios associated with all speech act categories.

1. Introduction

In order to deal with the metonymic grounding of illocutionary meaning, Panther and Thornburg (1998) have proposed the existence of *illocutionary scenarios*, complex structures which are accessed metonymically and consist of three main parts – a *before*, a *core*, and an *after* – which specify traditional Searlean felicity conditions in a cognitive-model theory format. Moving from Panther and Thornburg's framework, we will first argue that

illocutionary scenarios are high-level situational models constructed through the application of the high-level metonymy SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC to multiple low-level situational models. Such scenarios are then applied to specific situations through the converse metonymy, GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC. We will indicate central and peripheral elements of illocutionary scenarios common to most directive, commissive and expressive speech act categories, and we will construct a broader high-level description that we call the *Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model*. The corresponding notion in Leech's pragmatic theory (1983), which he called the *cost-benefit scale*, was formulated to apply to directive and commissive speech acts. However, we will show that the scale also applies to expressive speech acts to the extent that they are regulatory of speaker-hearer interaction. Finally, we will study a number of conventional and non-conventional linguistic realizations of the various parts of the *Cost-Benefit Cognitive Model* and we will explore the way in which such realizations are used to produce illocutionary meaning. We will argue in this connection that the non-semantic part of a construction has a realizational potential that may be captured by means of sets of semantic conditions based on the proposed high-level cognitive model.

2. Speech acts in cognitive linguistics

The interpretation of indirect speech acts has drawn a great deal of attention. Most proposals assume that some inferential work on the part of the hearer is required in order to identify the speaker's communicative intention. Following the classical Searlean proposal (Searle 1975), many linguists claim that the interpretation of intended meaning follows "regulative" [sic] rules, which, unlike constitutive rules, do not create the system to which they apply, but rather express accepted behavioral patterns (Morgan 1978). Leech (1983) distinguishes very clearly propositional from implicated meaning and argues that the latter is obtained by applying pragmatic principles, but, all in all, his approach does not differ substantially from the more traditional Searlean approach. Conversely, other linguists contend that even the literal meaning of an utterance is dependent on inferential strategies (Bach and Harnish 1979; Sperber and Wilson 1995).

Working within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics, Panther and Thornburg (1998: 756) have discussed traditional inferential analyses of

indirect speech acts pointing to two shortcomings in those approaches that do not take into satisfactory consideration the cognitive import of inference patterns:

- in spite of indirect interpretation being based on inferential processes – which are, at least theoretically, rather time-consuming – speakers are able to grasp the ulterior indirect force of a speech act very quickly, and draw the needed inferences almost effortlessly;
- traditional inferential theories do not systematically describe the inference patterns involved in the interpretation of indirect illocutions and their cognitive grounding.

In order to deal with these shortcomings, Thornburg and Panther (1997) and Panther and Thornburg (1998) propose that our knowledge of illocutionary meaning may be systematically organized in the form of *illocutionary scenarios*. This type of organizational structure of generic knowledge is shared by the members of a linguistic community and is stored in our long-term memory. Illocutionary scenarios may be accessed metonymically by invoking relevant parts of them. By way of illustration, indirect requests such as *Can you open the door?*, *Will you close the window?*, *Do you have hot chocolate?* exploit pre-conditions for the performance of a request, i.e., the ability and willingness of the hearer, and his possession of the required object. Such pre-conditions are used to stand for the whole speech act category. In later work, Panther (2005) has gone as far as to claim that metonymy is an “inference schema” rather than a substitution relation or a reference point phenomenon, as has been maintained by many cognitive linguists (following Langacker 1993). More specifically, he argues that metonymies provide natural inference schemas that are used constantly by speakers in meaning construction and interpretation.

Let us describe Panther and Thornburg’s *request scenario* below for convenience (Panther and Thornburg 1998: 759):

- (1) The BEFORE:
 - The hearer (H) can do the action (A)
 - The speaker (S) wants H to do A

- (2) The CORE:
 – S puts H under a (more or less strong) obligation to do A
 – The RESULT: H is under an obligation to do A (H must/should/ought to do A)
- (3) The AFTER:
 – H will do A

In their view, by means of a metonymic cognitive operation, any of the components of the scenario may stand for an act of requesting. It is the specific linguistic items present in the utterance that determine the activation of one component of the scenario or another. Compare the following utterances:

- (4) *Can you bring me my sunglasses?*
- (5) *Will you bring me my sunglasses?*
- (6) *You will bring me my sunglasses, won't you?*

Utterances (4) and (5) activate the BEFORE component. While the modal verb *can* points to the hearer's ability to perform the action, the future auxiliary *will* points to the willingness to perform the action.

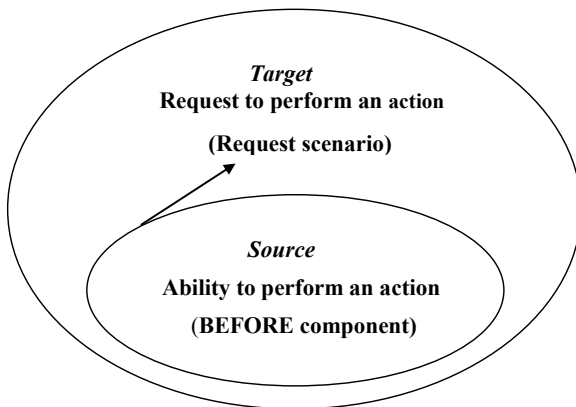


Figure 1. Ability for request to perform an action

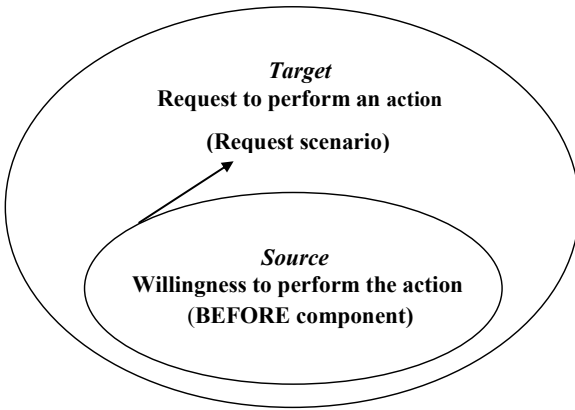


Figure 2. Willingness for request to perform an action

However, in utterance (6) *will* instantiates the AFTER component of the request scenario:

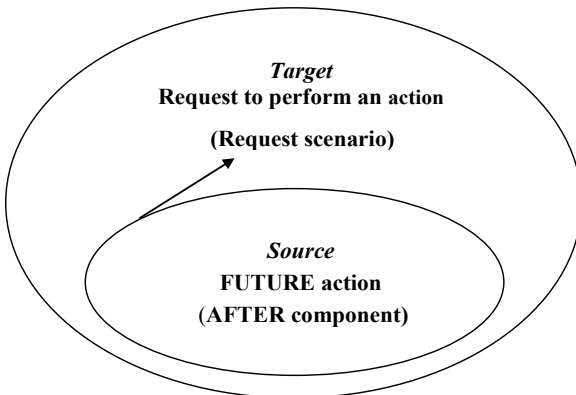


Figure 3. A future action for the request to perform the action

In a nutshell, by means of the explicit mention of one of the components of the scenario, it is possible for the speaker to give the hearer access to the whole illocutionary category of ‘requesting’, in such a way that the

utterance is effortlessly interpreted as a request. From this premise follows that the higher the number of overtly instantiated components, the easier the illocutionary intention of the speaker is recognized, and vice versa.

2.1. Illocutionary scenarios as high-level situational ICMs

Storage in our long-term memory in the form of scenarios and metonymic instantiation are the two elements that make Panther and Thornburg's proposal highly innovative and interesting from a cognitive perspective. This is so because in this proposal illocutionary meaning is directly tied to the notion of *Idealized Cognitive Model* or *ICM* (Lakoff 1987).

According to Lakoff (1987), our understanding and conceptual representation of the world is organized in the form of ICMs, which are principle-governed cognitive structures of at least the following kinds: *propositional* (sets of predicate-argument relationships or 'frames' à la Fillmore 1985); *image-schematic* (pre-conceptual topological representations whereby, following Protagoras' epistemology, our body is the experiential measure of all things, as argued in Johnson 1987, and Lakoff and Johnson 1999); *metaphorical* (set of correspondences, or mappings, across two conceptual domains, as described in Lakoff and Johnson 1980, and Lakoff 1993); and *metonymic* (mappings within a single domain, as discussed in Lakoff and Johnson 1980; cf. also Barcelona 2002).

It is evident that illocutionary scenarios are a form of propositional structure, but there are other qualitatively distinct notions like 'mother' or 'buying' that make use of the same kind of structuring principle, i.e., propositional structure, while clearly evincing a distinct nature. A more adequate notion of illocutionary scenario requires a more refined description of ICM types, which, as will be shown later, allows for a full understanding of the way in which this notion can be incorporated into a comprehensive theory of illocutionary meaning from a cognitive perspective. In this connection, Ruiz de Mendoza (2007) proposes three refinements that we summarize below.

The first refinement of the theory concerns the dynamic versus non-dynamic nature of ICMs, with results in a distinction between *operational* and *non-operational* ICMs. While propositional and image-schematic ICMs are *non-operational* since they are static in nature and consist of stored information, metaphor and metonymy are *operational* in that they

are the result of a productive cognitive operation that exploits non-operational ICMs.

A second refinement is related to the ontological nature of cognitive structures on the propositional level of representation. The relevant distinction here is between *situational* and *non-situational* ICMs: situational ICMs encompass frames like taking a taxi, ordering a meal, or going to the dentist, whereas non-situational ICMs refer in a more general fashion to objects ('mother'), events ('earthquake') and relations ('kissing').

Finally, ICMs can be further described at two levels of conceptual representation: *non-generic* (or *low-level*), and *generic* (*high-level*). The low-level conceptual representation (e.g., 'mother', 'taking a taxi') is created by making well-entrenched, coherent links between elements of our encyclopedic knowledge store; the high level (e.g., 'cause-effect', 'action', 'process') is created by deriving structure common to multiple low-level models. What we add to the state of the art here is that a high-level ICM, the SPECIFIC FOR GENERIC metonymy, is operationally used to derive generic-knowledge or high-level propositional structures from lower-level ones. The converse metonymy, i.e., GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC, is then used to apply higher-level structures to lower-level situations.²

Illocutionary scenarios are thus the way in which language users construct interactional meaning representations abstracted away from a number of stereotypical every-day illocutionary situations where people try to have their needs satisfied through directive expressions of various kinds. If this is so, we are allowed to assign illocutionary scenarios the status of high-level situational ICMs. Non-illocutionary situations are, in contrast, low-level (interactional) representations, such as going to the dentist, taking a taxi, and teaching a class. These situations may also be exploited metonymically, but the result is not illocutionary meaning, but implicated meaning. Consider the following exchange:

- (8) A: *How did you learn so much Ancient Greek?*
 B: *There's a weekly seminar in my college.*

Simply mentioning the availability of a way to learn Greek affords metonymic access to low-level situational knowledge (very close to Schank and Abelson's 1977 notion of script) about teaching and learning, which allows the hearer to derive the implicature that B attended the seminar and thus learned Greek.

Now, consider:

- (9) A: *I fancy eating out in a Chinese restaurant.*
 B: *Great. Let's go Chen Fui's tonight.*

B's understanding of A's utterance as a request to take her out to have dinner in a Chinese restaurant is based on the recognition of A having some need that she wants satisfied. Every day we encounter situations where people make manifest specific needs to other people with the expectation that they will get what they want. From these situations we derive generic knowledge which is then re-applied to other situations with which they share relevant features.

Clearly, this kind of account captures the relevant similarities and differences between implicated meaning and illocutionary meaning since both are derived metonymically by the linguistic expression which provides the hearer with access to a situational ICM; however, in the case of illocutionary activity, the ICM is a high-level knowledge structure, while implicatures seem to be the result of exploiting low-level representations.

3. Some further features of illocutionary constructions

Illocutionary activity is more than a matter of metonymically activating relevant (parts of) illocutionary scenarios (cf. Pérez and Ruiz de Mendoza 2002). There are other features that play a role in the process that have not been taken into account by Panther and Thornburg (1998). We specifically refer to:

- The power relationship between interlocutors.
- The degree of optionality conveyed by the illocutionary act.
- The degree of politeness.
- The degree of prototypicality of certain utterances over others.
- The degree of cost-benefit of the requested action.

- The semantic motivation for other types of indirect speech acts as expressed by an oblique modal (*could, would*) or a negative modal (*can't, won't*) in the case of requests.
- The cognitive grounding of speech acts in experiential gestalts.

These features are related in many ways, as we hope to clarify in a larger discussion about requests below.

3.1. Power relationship

The notion, labeled “social power” by Leech (1983: 126), refers to the asymmetrical relation between two participants holding different positions in a social hierarchy of authority. Verschueren (1985) and Spencer-Oatey (1996) make a distinction between different kinds of power relationships: moral, institutional, and knowledge-based, among others. These distinctions are immaterial for our understanding of the notion of power (a refinement of Leech’s definition) as an asymmetrical relationship whereby a participant considers himself potentially capable of imposing his will on other participants, for whatever the reason(s).

The power relationship between interlocutors heavily constrains a speaker’s grammatical choices. The following directive utterances may shed some light on the issue:

(10) *Bring me my sunglasses.*

(11) *Can you bring me my sunglasses?*

The first example is an explicit order realized by means of the imperative construction. It is intended to put the hearer under a strong obligation to comply with the order, which will only take place if H accepts S’s presumption of authority. In this case, the speaker has a higher degree of power than the hearer, or rather acts under the presumption that he has greater power than the hearer. This is, of course, the default interpretation of (10). There are contexts where (10) may be used by peers in a familiar context who share an equal power relationship where there would not be such a strong directive value, or it may be used jokingly by two friends. The power variable is just one example that illustrates – as will be further

clarified in section 6 – how the same grammatical form may point to more than one constructional base (and therefore more than one illocutionary value), thus acquiring various degrees of “instantiation (or realization) potential” for each possible value.

The use of the modal *can* in the second example may give rise to two different readings. On the one hand, the speaker may share the hearer’s status and choose a polite formula which conveys a weaker obligation so that the utterance is readily interpreted as a plain request. On the other hand, the *can you* construction is often used by speakers with a higher status to achieve a greater degree of politeness by giving the hearer some (apparent) degree of optionality. In such a case, the hearer is not expected to refuse even if the more polite *can you* form is selected, so the utterance is actually a covert form of (polite) command.

3.2. Degree of optionality and degree of politeness

Here we also follow Leech (1983) in his understanding of optionality as the degree of freedom that the speaker gives the hearer to decide whether he wants to perform the required action or not. Since restricting someone’s freedom is generally perceived as negative in our social system, optionality degrees correlate with politeness degrees. As such, optionality is strictly intertwined with the degree of politeness between the interlocutors and consequently with other interpersonal variables such as formality and intimacy. Compare the following two utterances:

(12) *Could you close the door?*

(13) *Would you close the door?*

The capacity and willingness conditions are activated through the use of oblique modals, which have the communicative consequence of increasing the degree of politeness of the requests. In a similar fashion, the use of negative modals has the opposite result of decreasing the optionality of the hearer, who may refuse to carry out the action required, thereby rendering the act impolite:

(14) *Can’t you close the door?*

(15) *Won't you close the door?*

In our view, optionality is here based on an interesting communicative strategy. The speaker acts as if he were surprised to see that the hearer is unable or unwilling to perform the required action. The underlying idea, which is now part of the conventional meaning of the construction, is captured by the following paraphrase: “You should have closed the door, but you haven’t, which surprises me. Is it because you are unable or unwilling to do so?” The hearer will generally find it difficult to refuse since it is obvious that he has the capacity to close a door and, by cultural convention, he is expected to be willing to help other people. We will return to this observation in section 5 below, in relation to our proposal for a high-level cognitive model which captures this and other related conventions.

3.3. Degree of prototypicality

Optionality and politeness are characteristic features of requests so that the higher the degree of optionality and politeness, the higher the degree of prototypicality of the request. The degree of politeness is often reinforced by the use of mitigating devices such as past modal auxiliaries, the adverb *please*, and certain specialized constructions (e.g., *I wonder if*; *Would you mind*). Consider the examples below:

(16) *Can you hold my box?*(17) *Will you hold my box?*(18) *Can you hold my box for one moment?*(19) *Can you hold my box for one moment, please?*(20) *Could you hold my box?*(21) *Would you hold my box?*

(22) *Would you mind holding my box?*

(23) *I wonder if you could hold my box.*

Mitigating devices convey slight differences between almost identical realizations of the speech act. Nevertheless, although such devices do not activate any part of the basic scenario – as conceived by Panther and Thornburg (1998) – we intuitively feel that they are a source of prototypicality effects, i.e., they contribute to the ‘goodness-of-example’ ratings as requests of the expressions in which they take part (cf. Taylor 1995 for a review of the notion of prototypicality at various levels of linguistic description). This is a further reason why we stick to the proposal made in Pérez and Ruiz de Mendoza (2002) according to which illocutionary scenarios are more complex structures than those described by Panther and Thornburg. Not only does the scenario comprise three components, which can be metonymically activated, but it also contains variables instantiated by further linguistic items, like *for one moment*, *I wonder if*, *please*, which are instances of (low) power and (high) optionality parameters. With such elements being part of the scenario, it is not unreasonable to postulate that prototypicality effects are greater the higher the number of (complex) scenario elements.

In sum, we strongly believe that the semantic description of illocutionary categories in terms of scenarios is not sufficient to account for the multi-faceted amount of information that language users possess during interactional communication. In our view, illocutionary scenarios should be elaborated and integrated into a more complex type of high-level knowledge structure of the propositional kind, one that is ready to be exploited metonymically.

3.4. Degree of cost-benefit

Leech (1983) has dealt with the relationship between the cost-benefit scale and politeness effects in considerable detail. Consider first the following utterances:

(24)	<i>Wash the dishes.</i>	Cost to H	Less polite
(25)	<i>Bring me my slippers.</i>	↑	↑
(26)	<i>Sit down.</i>	↑	↑
(27)	<i>Enjoy your holiday.</i>	↓	↓
(28)	<i>Have some more tea.</i>	Benefit to H	More polite

We will refine the scale considerably in section 5 to make it compatible with a perspective that regards illocutionary activity as based on the metonymic exploitation of high-level situational models. For the time being, note that in Leech’s formulation, a directive act that is costly to the hearer is less polite than one that is beneficial to him. This has consequences in terms of the illocutionary value assigned to the same grammatical construction. Thus, while (24), (25), and (26) have fairly strong requestive values, (27) is more readily regarded as a wish, and (28) as an offer. The same imperative construction thus gives rise to different outcomes in terms of politeness, as we will see in section 6.

4. Some illocutionary scenarios

The Lakoffian notion for propositional ICMs (Lakoff 1987: 285) can be developed and made sensitive to the requirements of a cognitive account of illocutionary meaning. We may envisage an illocutionary scenario as a high-level situational ICM consisting of an “ontology” – the different values of the variables relevant to its description – and a “structure” – the interplay between the variables. In a discussion of illocutionary ICMs, variables are largely culture-specific to an extent that the label *conventions* will be preferred to refer to them. Such cultural conventions carry pragmatic information like the ones exemplified in section 3: social power, social distance, politeness, optionality, cost-benefit, and so on. Those conventions are realized through the use of lexico-grammatical resources, such as mitigating devices, oblique modals, etc., which, having a “meaning potential” as proposed by Halliday (1978), become the semantic make-up of illocutionary categories.

Illocutionary constructions may thus be characterized as (sets of) grammatical resources that are capable of (jointly) activating relevant parts of an illocutionary scenario in connection to a context of situation (which may activate other parts of the scenario in a complementary fashion). The direct consequence is the production of indirect speech acts with different degrees of explicitness. In turn, explicitness is dependent on the speaker's communicative intention and on the availability of contextual information. For example, for the utterance *I am alone* to be interpreted as a request, it must be clear from the context that the speaker does not want to be alone (cf. *I am alone and that's how I want to be*, which cancels out that presumption). Contextual information thus contributes to the explicitness of the message, and allows us to derive the implicit part by means of metonymy on the grounds of a condition-consequence reasoning schema along the following lines: "If the speaker is alone and he does not like to be alone, then he is asking me to stay with him or to find someone who can bear his company." The linguistic expression only supplies the condition part of the reasoning schema, while the consequence part has to be accessed metonymically, thus producing the relevant inference.

In the discussion that follows we discuss the form illocutionary scenarios may take and illustrate how they may be realized linguistically. However, one word of caution is needed since we will use the speech act categories for descriptive purposes only. We are in fact convinced that the Cost-Benefit ICM attains a greater degree of explanatory adequacy than the traditional accounts. To keep the category labels from the first part of the paper will allow us to construct preliminary descriptions of generic structure by abstraction. And it is from these preliminary descriptions that we will then derive the more abstract and encompassing Cost-Benefit ICM.

In the next sections (4.1 and 4.2), we will discuss the speech act categories of *requesting* and *begging* to illustrate the interplay between high-level scenarios (i.e., generic structures) and low-level scenarios.

4.1. Requesting

We derive the generic structure of requests from various everyday situations where people want something and try to get someone to satisfy their needs. Some possible low-level scenarios for requesting may be the following:

- (29) A person needs something. The person makes this situation manifest to another person. The second person takes care of the first person's need.
- (30) A person needs something. The person makes someone aware that he has the capacity to provide him with what he needs. The second person ignores the first person's need.
- (31) A person is asking for something from someone in a position of authority by appealing to his willingness to help. The second person is moved to help.
- (32) A person who is not in real need is asking for help while pretending that he is in a needful situation. The second person is deceived and is moved to help.

To the above low-level scenarios there is a corresponding set of common elements belonging to the generic structure:

- (33) A person appears to be in need of something.
- (34) The person makes somebody else aware of his need.
- (35) The person makes other people aware of their ability to provide for his needs.
- (36) The person appeals to the hearer's willingness to help.
- (37) The hearer may be persuaded to help or not.

The generic structure is realized by means of linguistic expressions or, to use a more refined terminology, *realization procedures*, i.e., sets of entrenched lexico-grammatical devices that have an instantiation potential with respect to one or more (combinations of) cognitive models (Ruiz de Mendoza 1999; Pérez 2001):

- (38) *I am cold.*
- (39) *Do you think I could have a sweater?*

(40) *You could give me a sweater, couldn't you?*

(41) *Will you give me sweater?*

(42) *You will give a sweater, won't you?*

The above realizations, which profile a shared conceptual representation, qualify as requests in the appropriate context.

4.2. Begging

A request and a plea are quite similar since they share the same degree of optionality. What is crucial here is the speaker's insistence, which is linguistically realized through formal mechanisms like repetition and certain intonational features, supported by gesturing and tone of voice. Insistence is used in order to overcome a suspected unwillingness on the part of the hearer to satisfy the speaker's needs.

Two possible (and related) low-level scenarios for begging encompass a situation in which a person is in real need of help from another person who is reluctant to assist him, or a situation in which a person is asking for mercy in an insistent manner from someone who is reluctant to show compassion since this could be interpreted as a form of weakness on his part.

To these low-level scenarios correspond some common elements of generic structure:

(43) A person appears to be in need of something.

(44) The person makes somebody else aware of his need.

(45) The person makes other people aware of their ability to supply for his needs.

(46) The person makes an open show of his purported bad situation.

(47) The person appeals to the hearer's generosity.

(48) The hearer may be moved to compassion or not.

The realizational resources for the generic structures may be exemplified by the following utterances:

- (49) *Please, have mercy on me.*
- (50) *I have three children to take care of and we have no food.*
- (51) *Give us just a little bit to eat.*
- (52) *Thank you, sir; God will reward you.*

It is worth noticing that, in contrast to what we saw with requests, in begging the “after” component of the scenario may hardly be used to stand for the whole speech act. This occurs because anticipating the outcome of the directive act is a way of expressing certainty as to the way the addressee will behave, which clashes with the speaker’s uncertainty involved in begging. This uncertainty, in contrast, is fully compatible with the insistence ingredient.

In the following section, we will generalize over the multifarious features of illocutionary scenarios by postulating a single description.

5. The Cost-Benefit ICM

From the semantic makeup of various kinds of illocutionary scenarios, such as the ones illustrated above, it is possible to derive further generic structure. A previous and partial attempt to do this may be found in Pérez and Ruiz de Mendoza (2002). Here we provide a more elaborated version:

- (a) If it is manifest to A that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to B, and if A has the capacity to change that state of affairs, then A should do so.
- (b) If it is manifest to A that a potential state of affairs is not beneficial to B, then A is not expected to bring it about.
- (c) If it is manifest to A that a potential state of affairs is beneficial to B, then A is expected to bring it about provided he has the capacity to do so.

- (d) If it is manifest to A that it is not manifest to B that a potential state of affairs is (regarded as) beneficial for A, A is expected to make this manifest to B.
- (e) If it is manifest to A that it is not manifest to B that a potential state of affairs is beneficial to B, A is expected to make this manifest to B.
- (f) If it is manifest to A that a state of affairs is beneficial to B and B has brought it about, A should feel pleased about it and make this feeling manifest to B.
- (g) If it is manifest to B that A has changed a state of affairs to B's benefit, B should feel grateful about A's action and make this feeling manifest to B.
- (h) If it is manifest to A that A has not acted as directed by parts (a), (b), and (c) of the 'cost-benefit' model, A should feel regretful about this situation and make this feeling manifest to B.
- (i) If it is manifest to B that A has not acted as directed by parts (a), (b), and (c) of the 'cost-benefit' model and A has made his regret manifest to B, B should feel forgiveness for A's inaction and make this feeling manifest to A.
- (j) If it is manifest to A and B that a particular state of affairs is not beneficial to B but A has no power to change it to B's benefit, A should still feel sympathy for B over the non-beneficial state of affairs and make this manifest to B.
- (k) If it is manifest to A that A is responsible for a certain state of affairs to be to A's benefit, A may feel proud about this situation and make it manifest to B.

As is clear from the descriptions above, the Cost-Benefit ICM generalizes over specific characteristics of different kinds of illocutionary scenarios, and finds common structure plus logical implications and interactional connections among them. For example, part (a) of the ICM underlies many kinds of directive acts:

- those where the speaker questions the hearer about his ability to do something, including those acts where the speaker uses the more indirect strategy of asking with surprise whether the hearer is not capable of doing something;
- those where the speaker questions the hearer about his willingness to do something, including those where the speaker uses the more indirect strategy of asking with surprise whether the hearer is not willing to do something;
- those where the speaker simply asserts that he has a problem.

There is something crucial about our proposal. For quite some time, there has been a lot of debate over speech act categories. Within inferential pragmatics, some theorists, notably Sperber and Wilson (1995), have long contended that we do not store speech act categories like warnings, offers, requests, etc., in our minds, but rather that we work out the illocutionary meaning of utterances without having specific categories in mind. The classification plays no role in comprehension. Thus, what makes an utterance a warning is not the fact that the speaker ostensibly communicates that he is warning the hearer, but that he ostensibly communicates an assumption with a certain property (the utterance makes the speaker aware of the harmful consequences of a certain course of action). However, Sperber and Wilson make provision for a few speech acts (e.g., promising and thanking) that depend on categorization to be recognized as such, since they have a strong institutional dimension. Most other acts do not need to be identified as such in order to be successfully performed. Not only does our Cost-Benefit ICM live up to the pragmatic constraint on illocutionary meaning derivation proposed by Sperber and Wilson, but takes it to its logical extreme, since even cases of promising and thanking can be processed effectively without thinking of the institutional category they belong to. Consequently, an utterance is a promise by virtue of communicating that the speaker will act in a way that is desired by the hearer (who considers the action beneficial for himself), not by virtue of the speaker communicating that he is making a prediction. Additionally, note that many threats, which are not classified by Sperber and Wilson as categorizable institutional acts, take the form of promises with negative consequences for the hearer (e.g., *I'll sue you*; *I promise I'll*

sue you), often in conditional form: “If you (don’t) X, (I promise) I’ll Y”, where Y is taken to be undesirable to the hearer.

The Cost-Benefit ICM makes evident all the connections between different speech act categories. Thus, promises and some requests exploit part (c) of the ICM but in different ways. A promise like *I will take you out to dinner* is a form of reassurance to the hearer about the speaker’s intention to meet the hearer’s expectation that the speaker will cater to her desires. An indirect request like *I would love an evening out* is based on the idea that the speaker wants the hearer to become aware of her needs or desires, which is the first element in part (c) of the ICM.

The concept of manifestness is used throughout the description of the ICM. A state of affairs is manifest to a person if the person can make a mental representation of it (Sperber and Wilson 1995). In constructing their messages, speakers trust that their hearers will be able to make a mental representation of what they want to communicate; even if it is a partial representation, they trust that it will be enough for their communicative purposes. The speaker may make use of more or less explicit mechanisms to make his illocutionary goal manifest to the hearer. Thus, the utterance *I’m thirsty* may function as a request to the extent that it is capable of making manifest to the hearer that there is a non-beneficial state of affairs affecting the speaker; in principle, it involves greater communicative risk than *Could I have a glass of water?*, which is based on a conventional request-construction.

We will now examine a number of speech acts in order to illustrate how the Cost-Benefit ICM may be useful in determining the cognitive motivation and linguistic realizations of some illocutionary constructions.

Considerations of cost or benefit to speaker and hearer are an essential part of understanding the value of illocutionary speech acts. We will now illustrate the cognitive version of the pragmatic scale proposed above by illustrating some conventions.

For example, the declarative sentence below spells out convention (a) of the Cost-Benefit ICM in that it describes a negative state of affairs for the speaker and functions as a request:

(53) *It’s hot in here.*

If the hearer wants to be polite, such an indirect request has the same effect as a more direct one.

Convention (b) makes unnecessary the use of a more straightforward, imperative-based request:

(54) *He doesn't like anyone messing with his laptop.*

Convention (c) is triggered by the following declarative utterance:

(55) *I would love an evening out.*

Here it is sufficient to expect that the hearer will do his best to satisfy the speaker's wish.

Convention (d) underlies the complaint (and indirectly requestive) value of the following sentence:

(56) *Obviously you didn't realize I was in trouble.*

The speaker's speech act is polite since it attributes the addressee's inaction to lack of awareness, even in cases where the context suggests that the addressee intentionally avoided helping the speaker.

Again, the use of a negative-interrogative question is an impolite speech act that entails a low level of optionality on the part of the hearer, as regulated by convention (e):

(57) *Why don't you buy those books? You'll like them.*

These formulations are based on a socio-cultural convention according to which we are generally expected to be helpful to other people and not do them harm. In much the same way, we are entitled to be helped and not harmed.

Convention (f) illustrates the case in which the speaker is pleased about something and expresses his feeling to the hearer. In many instances congratulatory statements are expressed as exclamations:

(58) *Well done! A great job!*

The same realizational resource is exploited in the case of the expression of thankfulness, which follows convention (g), whereby the speaker makes his gratitude manifest to his hearer:

(59) *Thank you a lot for your help!*

When a person behaves in an unexpected way and desires to apologize for his wrong action, following convention (h), he expresses his regret as in the utterance below:

(60) *I'm sorry I couldn't attend your lecture.*

A reply to such an expression of regret should generally communicate forgiveness for the other person's inaction, in compliance with convention (i):

(61) *Don't worry. It's OK.*

Convention (j) exemplifies the case in which the speaker desires to express his feeling of sympathy to the hearer for a non-beneficial state of affairs:

(62) *I'm sorry your sister died.*

The declarative utterance below exemplifies the case in which the speaker is proud of his actions:

(63) *This is the best cake I've ever baked.*

By means of convention (k), the speaker exults in being responsible for a positive state of affairs.

Due to space constraints, it is not possible to describe in detail all types of speech acts categories. Table 1 below displays a selection of the categories with the corresponding parts of the Cost-Benefit ICM exploited in their realizations.

5.1. Some further speech act categories

As has been observed, the main difference between a request and a plea follows from the different degree of optionality. Similarly, there is a slight difference between a request and an order (see Table 1 below), which depends on the degree of power between the two interlocutors (more specifically, orders require S's presupposition of authority over H). Particularities about some further speech act categories have been grouped

Table 1. Speech act categories in terms of the Cost-Benefit ICM

Speech act category	Cost-Benefit ICM part	Realization procedures
Requesting (asking, demanding, begging, etc.)	a	<i>Can you give it back to me?</i> (S = B/ H = A)
	b	<i>Could you stop making noise?</i> (S = B/ H = A)
Ordering (telling, commanding, etc.)	a	<i>Give it back to me.</i> (S = B/ H = A)
	b	<i>Don't make so much noise.</i> (S = B/ H = A)
Advising (recommending, suggesting, etc.)	c	<i>Why don't you buy those books?</i> (S = A/ H = B)
Offering	d	<i>Shall I take you home?</i> (S = A/ H = B)
Promising (undertaking, vowing, etc.)	d	<i>I will stand by you.</i> (S = A/ H = B)
Threatening	e	<i>You're in for trouble if you do that/if you don't do that.</i> (S = A/ H = B)
Congratulating	f	<i>I'm glad it worked out fine.</i> (S = A/ H = B)
Thanking	g	<i>Thank you for giving me a hand.</i> (S = A/ H = B)
Apologizing (regretting, lamenting, etc.)	h	<i>I'm sorry I couldn't come.</i> (S = A/ H = B)
Pardoning	i	<i>Don't worry, it's OK.</i> (S = B/ H = A)
Condoling (commiserating, sympathizing, etc.)	j	<i>I'm sorry your sister died.</i> (S = A/ H = B)
Boasting (exulting, etc.)	k	<i>This is the best film I've ever made.</i> (S = A/ H = B)

into Table 1. For each category some linguistic realizations have been indicated, along with the part of the Cost-Benefit ICM that is exploited. As exemplified by the realization procedures in the table, the act of ordering is often realized linguistically on the basis of the imperative construction (*Do that/Don't do that*), but the same meaning can be conveyed through other realization procedures (*must, have to*). Each of these linguistic resources exploits the same ICM differently. The imperative construction has a broad realizational potential in that there are cases in which it may trigger different speech acts, like advising, offering, and warning. An imperative construction may be taken either as an offer (*Drink some more tea*), when a speaker brings about a potential state of affairs that appears to be beneficial to the hearer, or as a warning (*Don't touch that wire!*), which is a way of making the hearer aware of the non-beneficial consequences that a course of action will have for him. Since the illocutionary force is strictly intertwined with the context, the authority of the interlocutors and their relative benefits of the action, precise distinctions between speech acts are not practicable. The Cost-Benefit ICM generalizes over specific characteristics of the different kinds of speech acts and provides the analyst with a more manageable tool for a description of illocutionary scenarios.

6. Conventional realization of requests

We will now discuss how grammatical devices differ in their potential to activate the relevant part of the semantic base of an illocutionary construction. We believe that the greater the ability of a formal string to activate a crucial element of the semantic base, the more prototypical the string may be said to be. To illustrate this point, consider the case of requests.

In the request scenario we have identified a number of features that are to be satisfied in a specific situation, whose semantic base exploits the Cost-Benefit ICM by means of conventional linguistic resources. Let us imagine that the speaker wants someone to bring him his sunglasses; the request scenario could be represented as follows:

- (64) (i) Illocutionary goal: Getting the hearer to go and bring the speaker his sunglasses.
 (ii) Situation: A lot of sunlight is bathing the garden, which bothers the speaker.

(iii) Semantic base: The Cost-Benefit ICM.

(iv) Some conventional linguistic realizations:

- a. Can/Could you + VP? (*Can/Could you bring me my sunglasses?*)
- b. Can/Could you + please + VP? (*Can/Could you please bring me my sunglasses?*)
- c. Can't you VP? (*Can't you bring me my sunglasses?*)
- d. Will/would you VP? (*Will/Would you bring me my sunglasses?*)
- e. Won't you VP? (*Won't you bring me my sunglasses?*)
- f. Imp + can you? (*Bring me my sunglasses, can you?*)
- g. Imp + will you/won't you? (*Bring me my sunglasses, will you/won't you?*)

6.1. Lexico-grammatical devices

Let us now consider in detail some lexico-grammatical devices for the expression of requests and the way each realizational formula exploits the semantic base of the construction.

(65) Can/could you VP? → *Can/could you close that window?*

Through application of part (a) of the Cost-Benefit ICM, the hearer should have closed the window without being asked to do so; the speaker then inquires about the hearer's capacity to close the window. In most contexts, the '*can you/could you*' construction gives easy access to the whole high-level scenario, which is then applied to the specific situation through the GENERIC FOR SPECIFIC metonymy.

However, there may be cases of ambiguity. For example, *Can you lift that heavy box?* may just as well be a question about the hearer's capacity

to lift the box, unless we have a well-defined context where it is evident that the speaker needs the box to be lifted.

- (66) Can/Could you + please + VP? → *Can/Could you please close the window?*

The cognitive operation of mitigation is here coded by the modal auxiliary³ together with an interpersonal adverb – *please* – whose function is that of increasing the degree of politeness. This is the typical case in which the Cost-Benefit ICM intertwines with the politeness ICM.

- (67) Can't you VP? → *Can't you close the window?*

Through application of part (a) of the Cost-Benefit ICM, the hearer should have closed the window without being asked to do so; since in normal circumstances the speaker may expect that the hearer has the ability to close the window, the speaker inquires about any unexpected inability on the part of the hearer to perform the action. In unmarked contexts, this construction has a strong power to give access to the whole directive scenario, especially because it suggests that the speaker expects the hearer to be able to perform the required action anyway. In a marked context, it is possible to cancel out the preferred request interpretation of this construction, as in *Can't you hear the wind howl*, uttered in a context where the hearer is not expected to do anything about the situation, especially because of the use of a perception rather than an action verb.

- (68) Will/would you VP? → *Will/would you close the window?*

Through application of part (a) of the Cost-Benefit ICM,⁴ the hearer should have closed the window without being asked to do so; the speaker then inquires about the hearer's willingness to close the window. In unmarked contexts, this construction will yield a preferred request reading. But it may work as a question: *Will you find more love in her than in me?*

- (69) Won't you VP? → *Won't you close the window?*

In this example, through application of part (a) of the Cost-Benefit ICM, the hearer should have closed the window without being asked to do so. Since in normal circumstances the speaker may expect that the hearer would be willing to close the window, the speaker inquires about any

unexpected unwillingness on the part of the hearer to perform the action. In unmarked contexts, this structure has a strong power to produce a request, since it suggests that the speaker expected the hearer to perform the action anyway. In more marked contexts, it is possible to use it to ask questions: *Won't you buy lottery tickets anymore?*

(70) Imp + can/can't you? → *Open the window, can/can't you?*

The rationale here is the same but there is a greater degree of conventionalization of the illocutionary value. Compare:

(71) *Can you lift that heavy box?* [may be read as a question about H's ability]

(72) *Lift that heavy box, can you?* [may only be read as a request]

It should be noted that certain devices, some tags (*can you/will you*) and inserts like *please*, affect the construction differently depending on whether the conditions for commands, advising or offers hold:

(73) *Do that, will you?* [tag mitigates command]

(74) *Buy that car, will you?* [tag reinforces piece of advice]

(75) *Eat some more cake, will you?* [tag reinforces offer]

(76) Imp + will/won't you? → *Open the window, will/won't you?*

The degree of conventionalization of the illocutionary value in the examples below is even greater. Compare:

(77) *Will you buy the tickets tomorrow?* [may be read as a question about the future]

(78) *Buy the tickets tomorrow, will you?* [may only be read as a request].

6.2. Some less conventional linguistic realizations

Some realizations may appear less conventional. Consider some further linguistic expressions:

(79) *I need*

(80) *I want*

(81) *I wish*

(82) *If only I had*

(83) *I'd rather*

(84) *You'd better*

Take the case of a declarative construction:

(85) *I need a coat.*

We see that, through the application of part (d) of the Cost-Benefit ICM, the speaker manifests that a potential state of affairs is beneficial to the hearer and the speaker is expected to make this manifest to the hearer. In turn, the hearer is required to infer what he is expected to do, i.e., to bring the speaker a coat. It means that a declarative construction may serve to perform a request. The same applies to the utterance below:

(86) *I want a glass of wine.*

The rationale here is the same as before, but the manifestness of the speaker's desire is made even more explicit and, along a cline going from requesting to ordering, utterance (86) is closer to the ordering end.⁵

(87) *I wish this room were warmer.*

The *wish* construction exploits part (d) of the Cost-Benefit ICM, whereby the speaker makes his wish manifest to the hearer, who is expected to infer the speaker's wish and to satisfy such wish, e.g., by heating the room.

(88) *If only I had my newspaper!*

(89) *I'd rather like a cup of coffee.*

The rationale here is the same as in (87), but the constructions are a bit more indirect.

(90) *You'd better leave at once.*

The request of leaving by means of a statement shows a very low degree of conventionalization and the utterance may be interpreted as a threat. In addition to the above unconventional linguistic realizations, there are others that accommodate along a less prototypical cline:

(91) *Can't you see there is wind coming in?*

In this realization, the speaker treats the hearer as if, counter to all expectations, the hearer had not realized that there is a situation that affects him negatively.

(92) *There is too much wind coming in through the window.*

Here the speaker treats the hearer as if the hearer had not realized that there is a situation that affects the hearer negatively and tries to make the situation manifest to him.

(93) *Aren't you feeling cold?*

In a context where the speaker is feeling cold and he wants the hearer to close an open window, the speaker inquires as to whether the hearer feels cold in order to make him aware that the speaker may feel cold too and closes the window in the application of part (a) of the Cost-Benefit ICM. Note that on the basis of this part of the Cost-Benefit ICM, the hearer also has the right to believe that the speaker should close the window if the speaker knows that it is cold, which could make it easier for the hearer to challenge the speaker in this case. In other contexts (for example if the speaker is dressed more warmly than the hearer) the same sentence can be an indirect suggestion that the hearer might want to borrow or put on a sweater, etc. This would happen in application of conventions (c) and (a) in combination.

Thus far we have seen that the pragmatic cost-benefit scale (and therefore our own development in terms of our Cognitive Model Theory) applies to traditional directives and commissives, as has been already shown by Leech (1983), but it also applies to expressive speech acts to the extent that they regulate speaker-hearer interaction. The Cost-Benefit ICM derives its structure and implications from characteristics that are common to a number of illocutionary scenarios.

Finally, in Leech's cost-benefit scale, a benefit to the hearer will involve a cost to the speaker and vice-versa. However, in the formulation of the Cost-Benefit ICM we propose, explicit mention of cost has been avoided since it may be derived as a logical implication when relevant (e.g., bringing about a state of affairs which is beneficial to the hearer may involve a cost to the speaker). Our formulation has the advantage of including non-directive and non-commissive items as part of the ICM, which endows the model with greater parsimony and explanatory power.

7. Concluding remarks

Our analysis of illocutionary constructions, although necessarily incomplete, has shown that their semantic base consists of high-level situational meaning. In this respect, we have provided evidence that the Cost-Benefit ICM captures all the relevant information from high-level scenarios associated with all speech act categories. We have further examined the rationales for a number of conventionalized directive formulas and have explored their realizational potential. We have finally argued that the linguistic realization of illocutionary meaning is based upon the use of different lexico-grammatical resources that exhibit an instantiation potential for relevant parts of the semantic base of constructions, in connection with the context of a situation (which may also instantiate relevant parts of the semantic base).

Notes

1. This research has received financial support from the DGI, Spanish Ministry of Education and Science, grants HUM2004-05947-C02-01/FILO, and has been co-financed through FEDER funds. The research is also part of a FAR project financed by the University of Pavia and coordinated by Baicchi: "Linguistic and cognitive dimensions of some illocutionary constructions"

2. Radden and Kövecses (1999: 34) hinted at the importance of these metonymies in the interpretation of proverbs.
3. As noted by Taylor (1995), among others, this value can be traced back to a metaphor whereby we see past events as more psychologically distant.
4. Note that part (a) of the ICM, just like other parts, may be exploited with other possible illocutionary values. Thus, a sentence such as *You should have closed the window*, interpreted as a reprimand, also follows from the idea that we are expected to change a state of affairs that is negative to others. Indirectly, the sentence has a more subtle directive value. Once the addressee is made aware that he should have done something for someone else's benefit, he is expected to act accordingly (e.g., by apologizing and closing the window).
5. We are aware that other work has distinguished "hints" from indirect speech acts proper. Thus, Searle (1975) argued that there is a greater degree of conventionalization with standard indirect speech acts (e.g., *can you* requests) than with hints. In our framework, expressing a wish to make a request is a way of exploiting convention (d) of the Cost-Benefit cognitive model, whereby the hearer is made aware of a situation, in order to activate convention (a). This observation suggests that our account is sensitive to a distinction between hints and standard indirect speech acts in terms of the chained activation of relevant parts of the Cost-Benefit cognitive model.

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“A good Arab is *not* a dead Arab – a racist incitement”: On the accessibility of negated concepts

Rachel Giora

Abstract

According to the teachings of negation in psycholinguistics, concepts within the scope of negation are eradicated from the mental representation and replaced by available antonyms. Thus, given enough processing time, *He is not alive* is represented as *He is dead*. However, a systematic look at natural language use suggests that this is not always the case. Instead, concepts within the scope of negation often remain accessible to addressees so that they can refer to them later on in the discourse (“Not **alive** but **evolving**”,¹ “It’s not **alive** but it was [**alive**]”,² “Not **dead** but **dying**”³). That concepts within the scope of negation are not suppressed unconditionally is established here by both offline and online experimental data showing that, when relevant either to early or to late context, concepts within the scope of negation are not discarded. Instead they remain active in the minds of speakers and listeners who integrate them into their discourse representation.

No winners, just broken hearts (Damelin 2006)

1. Introduction

Does *not dead* always mean ‘alive’; does *not alive* always mean ‘dead’? When hearing “Bush isn’t a Nazi”, do we deactivate the concept of ‘Nazi’ and activate instead an alternative opposite such as the concept of ‘a peace seeking person’? Linguists and psycholinguists have long been intrigued by the effects of negation on information within its scope. The consensus, probably inherited from logic (where $q \neq \sim q$; see Horn [1989] 2001), is that

negated concepts are discarded from the mental representation in order to allow a focus shift from the negated concept to an available alternative. Thus, *open* in *The door is **not open***⁴ gives way to an alternative opposite – *closed* as in *The door is **closed*** (Kaup, Lüdtkke, and Zwaan 2006; see also Fillenbaum 1966; Hasson and Glucksberg 2006; Kamp 1981; Kamp and Reyle 1993; Kaup et al. in press; Kaup 2001; Langacker 1991; MacDonald and Just 1989; Mayo, Schul, and Burnstein 2004; and see Giora 2006 for more details).

Indeed, when presented with sentences in isolation, participants' responses to a probe word (*bread*) were slower following a negative statement (*Every weekend, Mary bakes **no bread** but only cookies for the children*) than following an affirmative statement (*Every weekend, Mary bakes **some bread** but no cookies for the children*). Such findings attest to the reduced accessibility of the concepts within the scope of negation (MacDonald and Just 1989, Experiments 1–2; but see Experiment 3). Similarly, out of a specific context, when readers were allowed enough processing time (~750–1500 msec), negative and affirmative statements were represented differently. Whereas in the affirmative (*The door is **open***), the target concept (*open*) remained accessible, in the negated counterpart (*The door is **not open***), its initial levels of activation were reduced to baseline levels (Hasson and Glucksberg 2006) and below (Kaup, Lüdtkke, and Zwaan 2006; for a review, see Giora 2006). Even in the presence of a specific context, the availability of an alternative opposite ('tidy'/'messy') allowed for a negative description (*not a tidy person*) to be represented in terms of its antonymic schema ('a messy person') as shown by Mayo, Schul, and Burnstein (2004; for similar results for words presented in isolation, see Fillenbaum 1966).

The (originally) Hebrew example cited in the title, however, begs to differ. It serves to question the assumption that negation is an operator that obligatorily effects the elimination of the negated concept from the mental representation. The slogan *A good Arab is not a dead Arab* made up part of an ad in the *Herut* party's campaign in the recent Israeli elections. This ad section was removed by the Central Election Committee chair, Judge Dorit Beinisch, who found that it "*clearly* makes reference to a familiar, blatantly racist slogan: *A good Arab is a dead Arab*". Therefore, the judge concluded, "this is an *explicitly* racist saying, which will most probably hurt the feelings of the Arab population if allowed to air" (Alon 2006). In spite of the fact, then, that *a dead Arab* appeared within the scope of

negation, in the mind of the judge, it was retained rather than suppressed (as it would have been in the mind of the ad's target audiences).

Indeed, speakers are aware of the resistance of salient meanings to suppressive negation effects. Consider the following (jocular) example, in which the speaker is aware that his addressees might be inspired by ideas he manipulatively introduced via negation (*none of you*), as his final statement suggests:

- (1) Now, I'm sure that **none** of you out there will abuse your new configuration power, such as by writing a macro that would play a song from "South Park" every time a user types a certain key combination. But if you decide to do it, *you didn't get the idea from me.* (Haugland 2006)

Addressees, on their part, are not insensitive either. In the following, the journalist (Shelakh 2005) reports on Amir Peretz's (head of Israeli Labor party and currently the Defense Minister) election campaign, while describing his use of negation as self-defeating:

- (2) "I will **not** let the prime minister's [Sharon's] health become **part of the campaign**," he [Peretz] said, thereby making it, of course, **part of the campaign**.

Similarly, in the following, prefacing a piece of advice by negation allowed its 'effective' communication upon which the addressee indeed acted (Kelley 2006):

- (3) A.D.A. Douglas Koupfer: He **effectively** counseled his client to skip trial and run. Now, he prefaced this by saying he **was not legally permitted to give such advice**. But, come on, he gave it all the same, and the client did in fact, flee.

Or consider how the following negative statements by William Bennett were treated as affirmatives by both the addressees and the speaker himself (as discussed in Zizek 2005). On his call-in program *Morning in America*, William Bennett said: "But I do know that it's true that if you wanted to reduce crime, you could, if that were your sole purpose, you could abort every black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down. That would be an **impossibly** ridiculous and morally reprehensible thing to do, but your crime rate would go down." The White House spokesperson's

reaction to this followed immediately, as reported in Zizek (2005): “The president believes the comments were not appropriate.” Not surprisingly, as commented on by Zizek, two days later, Bennett qualified his statement: “I was putting a hypothetical proposition... and then said about it, it was morally reprehensible to recommend abortion of an entire group of people. But this is what happens when you argue that ends can justify the means.” This is exactly what Freud meant when he wrote that the Unconscious knows no negation.⁵ The official (Christian, democratic...) discourse is accompanied and sustained by a whole nest of obscene, brutal racist and sexist fantasies, which can only be admitted in a censored form” (Zizek 2005).

Similarly, in the minds of the addressees, what is prefaced by negation might nonetheless pass for affirmation. The following example is the accurate quote of a statement by the Israeli PM, Ehud Olmert, speaking at the National Security College in Tel Aviv:

- (4) I could have said it but I **don’t intend to say** that if the campaign were over today, it could be stated with certainty that the face of the Middle East has changed.” (August 1, 2006, Channel 2 [in Hebrew, my translation, RG])

However, the reports and quotes of this speech omitted the negative preface while replacing it with affirmative mitigation modality (on negation as mitigation, see Giora, Balaban et al. 2005; Giora, Fein et al. 2005):

- (5) “Even today, it may be said that the face of the Middle East has changed following the great achievement of the State of Israel, of the army of Israel, and of the people of Israel,” Olmert said, speaking without notes. (Benn and Rosner 2006; see also Benn 2006)

Even when a negated concept has an available antonym (guilty/innocent), it is not always the case that when using negation, speakers intend the addressees to access that opposite. For instance when a functionary was happy to break the news to the second Israeli Prime Minister, Levy Eshkol, informing him that once again he was acquitted of charges against him, Eshkol muttered: “Interesting. I was never found innocent” (Haglili 2004). Was Eshkol trying to implicate that he was always found guilty? Not at all. What he was trying to get across was the message that he had never been charged or tried.

That speakers are not always aiming to get across an alternative opposite is also clear from the following example, which reports an IDF questionnaire, to be presented to high school students (aged 15–18), under the (Hebrew) title “The IDF to look at why the kid does **not** want to be a **combat soldier**”. Apparently, according to this title, the IDF is not interested in why kids want or don’t want to serve in different units other than a combat unit. In the language of the military this translates into “Now we want to ... act where the problems are” (Greenberg 2006). And the problem is why ‘not a combat unit’.

These examples thus demonstrate that, in the minds of speakers and hearers, information within the scope of negation is not unconditionally eliminated from the mental representation. Instead, it often remains accessible (albeit at times mitigated).

Still, one could wonder whether the accessibility of such information might, nonetheless, be short-lived. The following examples argue to the contrary. For instance, a few days after Israeli Northern Command Major General, Udi Adam, said that “human life is important, but we are at war, and it costs human lives. We **won’t count the dead at present**, only at the end” (Harel 2006), Israeli women, in an anti-war rally, chanted (in Hebrew):

(6) “We **are** counting the dead ...”

‘Counting the dead at present’, although presented via negation, was retained in the minds of Israelis for longer than a few days.

Similarly, in the case of Tali Fahima, a statement uttered via negation was remembered for longer than a year. Tali Fahima – an Israeli Jewish Mizrahi woman – was charged with assisting the enemy for going to the occupied territories to see first-hand the facts on the ground. On the first day at court, the prosecution stated that “it will **not pursue the death penalty** even though by law the charge of assisting an enemy at a time of war can draw such a sentence” (Harel 2005). A year later, when Fahima was acquitted of these charges, Jacob Katriel (December 31, 2005, personal e-mail communication) referred to it in the following way:

(7) Please remember that on the first day in Court the possibility of the death sentence was discussed!

This piece of information, then, resisted negation and was retained in memory as an affirmative possibility even as long as a year following its mention (for similar errors following negation see Fillenbaum 1966).

To test the view that negation is not necessarily a suppression operator and that often it maintains rather than deactivates information within its scope, I will first consider instances of natural conversations and written texts and offline studies that attest to the accessibility of negated information (sections 2–4). Later, in section 5, I will present converging evidence from online empirical studies.

2. The accessibility of negated concepts

2.1. Can negated concepts be marked as highly accessible?

If information within the scope of negation is not obligatorily deactivated then it should, at times, be retrievable by means of high accessibility referring expressions. Use of high accessibility referring expressions indicates that the speaker assumes that the concepts referred to are highly accessible to the addressee. Markers such as zeros, ellipses, deletion, or elision (indicated here by [] for convenience) and pronouns attest that the speaker considers the information referred to as highly accessible to the addressee (Ariel 1990).

The examples below exhibit use of such high accessibility markers to refer to information within the scope of negation. For instance, in the statement issued by the British architects (planning to impose a boycott on construction companies involved in building the separation fence and the settlements in the occupied territories in the West Bank and Jerusalem), *we are opposed* is elided in the second clause (having been introduced via negation in the first). Such deletion testifies to the assumed accessibility of this information:

- (8) We are **not** opposed to the existence of Israel, but [] to its actions.
(Zandberg 2006)

Similarly, Harold Pinter's (2005) Nobel speech, in which deletion is used to refer to information (*hard distinctions*) presented previously via negation, constitutes another example. Interestingly, this negated information is treated as accessible even across paragraph boundaries,

being marked by a pronoun (*these*) – a high accessibility marker. In addition, information following negation (*stand by them*) is so accessible that it can be elided without failing to refer:

- (9) There are **no** hard distinctions between what is real and what is unreal, nor [] between what is true and what is false. A thing is not necessarily either true or false; it can be both true and false.

I believe that *these* assertions still make sense and do still apply to the exploration of reality through art. So as a writer I stand by them but as a citizen I **cannot** []. As a citizen I must ask: What is true? What is false?

Speakers, then, treat information within the scope of negation as highly accessible to the addressee and indicate this by employing high accessibility markers.

2.2. Is ‘X is not X’ comparable to ‘X is X’?

If information within the scope of negation need not be sieved out as indicated by the examples above, then in natural language, q and $\sim q$ need not always be mutually exclusive as they are in logic. Instead, natural language should be able to accommodate such apparently conflicting thoughts. As a result, negated and affirmative tautologies, for example, should be interpretable along the same lines (see also Horn 2001: 562 fn. 9).

The following, by Hilda Domin (cited by Almog 2006), is an example that juxtaposes ‘ $q = q$ ’ and ‘ $q = \sim q$ ’, thus comparing an affirmative and a negated tautology:

- (10) A rose is a rose
But a home
Is **not** a home

A close look at these tautologies suggests that both indeed make sense in a similar way. The affirmative “A rose is a rose” alludes to Gertrude Stein’s *Rose is a rose is a rose*, which is often interpreted metaphorically as “things are what they are”. “In Stein’s view, the sentence expresses the fact that simply using the name of a thing already invokes the imagery and

emotions associated with it” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rose_is_a_rose_is_a_rose_is_a_rose). Thus, unlike a logical tautology, tautology in natural language is informative in spite of its apparent redundancy, because it is often used to mean X is a Y where X is a prototypical member of the category Y which is named after X (Glucksberg and Keysar 1990). In a similar manner, the negated tautology (i.e., logical contradiction) suggests that (for a German Jew who had to flee her home) a (literal) home is not a (metaphorical) home in that it does not provide for the sense of security associated with the notion of home. To make sense of this negated tautology, we need to retain the negated category in the same way we retain the affirmative one.

Along the same lines, the Hebrew *ze lo ze* (literally – ‘it not it’ – which translates into ‘this is not it’) is informative in spite of the use of the same referring expression (*ze*) both in the topic and in the predicate positions. In the predicate position, *ze* is associated with what should have been included in *ze* in the topic position. Here, then, *ze* in predicate position could mean ‘la promesse de bonheur’. This nonliteral interpretation is close to that invoked by *it’s it*, which, in California, is also a candy’s name (alluding to its promise of happiness).

Faulkner’s (1951) “The past is never dead. It’s not even past” is yet another instance of a negated tautology that comes across as informative, despite the apparent contradiction. The focus marker *even* makes it even clearer that the negative constituent ‘not past’ highlights an abstract, nonliteral feature that should be included in the concept of *past*.

The following is yet another example, which requires the retention of two notions of happiness:

- (11) my happiness bears no relation to happiness
(Muhammad Ali 2000: 50)

In this connection, consider an intriguing example part of a Quaker State commercial (cited and analyzed by Horn 2001: 562 fn.):

- (12) A: *What brand of motor oil do you use?*
B: [Starting car engine.] *Motor oil is motor oil.* (Implicature: There is no difference between various motor oils.) [Smoke belches out of B’s exhausts.]
Voice-over: *Motor oil is definitely **not** motor oil.* (Implicature: There is a difference between various motor oils.)

Note that the metalinguistic negation here (which cancels the implicature from B's words) does not suppress the concept of motor oil.

Negation then does not necessarily do away with the negated concept. Rather, negation often serves to highlight some specific features of it, which allows negated tautologies to be as meaningful and as appropriate as affirmative ones.

2.3. Is 'X is not Y' comparable to 'X is Y'?

We are not Nazis!

Shalom Chetrit⁶ (2006)

Write it, write it down, black on white,
To all the Arabs, and the Arab-lovers,
And the bleeding heart traitors,
Let's make one thing clear, first of all,
Before you open your mouths
With comparisons and self-loathing,

We are not Nazis!

And there is only one Holocaust,
There never was and never will be another.
There is no dispute! Period.

What's that?

What do you want from me?

What is this picture?

You want me to cry?

Holocaust?

Go on,

It's not even a massacre.

One child?!

One child – compared one and a half million children!?

What's wrong with you, are you twisted?

Or are you trying to make me laugh,

So you can say "what an evil man,"

But I'm not crazy, I have a heart,

I am not laughing, nor crying,

But I am mad!

You, and everyone who is behind this,

Are you writing? Write this:

It is a vicious attempt to tar the People of Israel with a broad brush,

But it won't help you!
We're not Nazis!
 We are the victims,
 Any child can see that,
 Even today,
 And write this down again:
 There was only one Holocaust,
 There never was and never will be another.

It really breaks your heart, But I don't lose my head like you do.
 More pictures of children? All right,
 How many more children? Two more? Three? Four?
 Fifty? Take a hundred children, just for the arithmetic,
 To shut you up once and for all,
 What are a hundred – compared to a million? And I'm rounding it up, for
 you.
 One hundred don't make you a Nazi; neither do one thousand,
 And all in self defense – we're not murderers, I want to make that clear!
 Don't turn it upside down
 With all kinds of comparisons –
 We're not killing anybody,
 We're fighting for our lives.
 Write, how come you're smiling, write this:
 You can't say it,
We're not Nazis,
 And there is only one Holocaust,
 There never was and never will be another,
 Never Again! Never Again!
 We won't let you!
 Period....

If negation need not sieve out information within its scope, then, in natural language, *X is not Y* should be comparable to *X is Y*. Both should come across as appropriate comparisons. Consider, for example, a natural (chatroom) conversation (originally in Hebrew) in which A introduces a negative simile (*Unlike Modi Bar-On... Nadav...*) which B then rejects by explicitly referring to this as a “comparison”. Such an explicit reference means that B perceives this statement as a comparison (which he considers “spurious”):

- (13) A: **Unlike** Modi Bar-On ... Nadav responded/trying to respond to at least 95% of the questions...
- B: I don't underestimate Modi, but he comes across as an ordinary person, one of the gang sort of and not a respectable interpreter like his broadcasting colleagues, the **comparison** is spurious ... (Yair 2004)

Similarly, in the following example, the implicit negative comparison (*No buzzards were gliding overhead, but several helicopters...*) is later repeated in an affirmative form (*the helicopters kept circling; high-tech buzzards*) attesting to the equivalent status of negative and affirmative comparisons:

- (14) **No buzzards** were gliding overhead, **but several helicopters** circled, under black sky tinged blue. On the shore of a stunning bay at a placid moment, the state prepared to kill.

Outside the gates of San Quentin, people gathered to protest the impending execution of Stanley Tookie Williams... Overhead, the **helicopters** kept circling; high-tech **buzzards**. (Solomon 2005)

To validate this empirically, we presented subjects with similar strings to (13), which, in B's response, make explicit that A's utterance, whether affirmative or negative, is a comparison:

- (15) A: Bush is/isn't Hitler! /Bush is like/is different from Hitler!
B: How can you compare?

Indeed, when participants were asked to rate the appropriateness/coherence of B's utterance in relation to either the negative or the affirmative version of A's utterance, ratings following affirmative (5.6) and negative (5.3) comparisons were perceived as similarly adequate – similarly (significantly) different from the mean (4) rating on a 7 point scale (Giora, Zimmerman, and Fein 2006).

Negative comparisons, then, come across as comparisons. This is consistent with the view that negation does not necessarily suppress negated thoughts but often retains them.

2.4. Is ‘X is not Y’ as sensitive to prototypicality as ‘X is Y’?

If negation need not sieve out information within its scope, then, in natural language, *X is not Y* should be comparable to *X is Y*. Both should come across as relatively appropriate, depending on the degree of prototypicality of the comparison’s shared features (on affirmative comparisons being sensitive to degrees of prototypicality, see Rosch 1973; Armstrong, Gleitman, and Gleitman 1983). Thus (16a–c), which make reference to prototypical features of the predicate entity (*yellow stars, tactics of fascists, Nazi, Holocaust, Auschwitz*) should be perceived as more appropriate than (16d), in which the shared feature is less prototypical (*orator*) and therefore might be viewed as ironic or more generally as humorous:

- (16) a. I hate to make the Nazi comparison because it’s so tired, and **Bush isn’t Hitler**. But forcing people to wear yellow stars was shocking at first. (February 08, 2005, <http://www.pekingduck.org/archives/002237.php>)
- b. I am always very cautious with the Nazi analogy, which is why I preface it – **Bush isn’t a Nazi**. But there are **thuggish and repressive aspects** to his rule that merit at least some comparison with the tactics of fascists, from Peron to Mussolini to Hitler (and to other pigs like Stalin and Castro). (February 08, 2005, <http://www.pekingduck.org/archives/002237.php>)
- c. **President Bush isn’t Hitler**. The United States of America isn’t **Nazi Germany**. The War Against the Terror Masters isn’t the **Holocaust**. Guantanamo isn’t **Auschwitz**. (Anderson 2005)
- d. It’s going a bit far to compare the Bush of 2003 to the Hitler of 1933. Bush simply is not the orator that Hitler was. (Lindorff 2003)

The following ironic excerpt by Ted Rall (2005), a cartoonist and writer, exemplifies rather forcefully the way a negative comparison (*you’re not necessarily a Nazi*) is used to introduce a list of features included in the negated predicate entity (*necessarily a Nazi*) so that it reads like an affirmative comparison that does not invite suppression. Note that Rall himself considers this negative statement an affirmative comparison. When he is after differences he is explicit about it (*Of course, there are*

differences) and picks up a marginal feature as a common ground, which demonstrates the extent to which a non-prototypical feature (*legally elected*) sounds humorous:

- (17) Lately we're being told that it's either (a) inappropriate or (b) untrue to refer to Bush's illegitimate junta as Nazi, neo-Nazi or neofascist. Because, you know, **you're not necessarily a Nazi** just because you seize power like one, take advantage of a national Reichstag Fire-like tragedy like one, build concentration and death camps like one, start unprovoked wars like one, Red-bait your liberal opponents like one or create a national security apparatus that behaves like something a Nazi would create and even has a Nazi-sounding name. All of those people who see a little Adolf in the not-so-bright eyes of America's homeland-grown despot are just imagining things.

Me, I'm catching it for this week's cartoon for daring to suggest that, well – you know.

Of course, there are differences. Hitler, for example, was legally elected. And he had a plan – not one that I like, but a plan – for the period after the war.

I'll be happy to stop comparing Bush to Hitler when he stops acting like him.

To test the hypothesis that negative comparisons are sensitive to degrees of prototypicality, which would attest to the accessibility of information within the scope of negation (for a similar study, see also Giora, Balaban et al. 2005), we compared negative comparisons based on a prototypical common ground with negative comparisons based on a less prototypical common ground (degrees of prototypicality were established independently). We predicted that the former will be rated as more appropriate than the latter. To test this prediction, we created a list of negative comparisons consisting of four types: One (18a below), featuring a prototypical property of the predicate category, another (18b below), featuring a less prototypical property, and two controls (18c and 18d below), including non category members. We expected comparisons that negate a prototypical feature of the predicate entity to be rated as more appropriate than those that feature a marginal one. We further predicted that the controls would be similarly inappropriate and significantly different from the comparisons based on more and less prototypical features:

- (18) a. George Bush is not Adolf Hitler. Bush did not exterminate Jews.
 b. George Bush is not Adolf Hitler. Bush is not a great orator.
 c. George Bush is not a Dalmatian. Bush did not exterminate Jews.
 d. George Bush is not a Dalmatian. Bush is not a great orator.

Results indeed show that negative comparisons focusing on a prototypical feature of the predicate entity were rated as significantly more appropriate (5.76) than those focusing on a less prototypical feature of the entity (4.43) and that both were significantly more appropriate than their controls (1.60, 1.52), which did not vary in appropriateness (Giora, Zimmerman, and Fein 2006). Such results support the view that, like affirmative statements, negative comparisons are sensitive to degrees of prototypicality. This sensitivity can only be explained by the accessibility of negated concepts.

3. Resonance and the accessibility of negated concepts

Why did Hamlet say “to be or not to be” instead of “to be or die”? Is it because “to die” is not exactly the opposite of “to be” and hence less available (although “die” features quite dominantly later on in that soliloquy)? Not necessarily. Other instances show that negated concepts often resonate with other concepts mentioned in the discourse even though they could easily be replaced by an alternative antonym. This is true even of dichotomous concepts such as ‘alive’/’dead’, ‘right’/’wrong’, whose alternatives are assumed to be highly accessible and often replaceable (Mayo, Schul, and Burnstein 2004). In what follows, I argue that negated concepts abide by “dialogic resonance” (Du Bois 1998, 2001) and resonate with concepts present in the discourse context just as nonnegated ones do. Dialogic resonance pertains to “the activation of affinities across utterances” (Du Bois 2001). Such activation of affinities induced by negated constituents is allowed by the accessibility of information within the scope of negation, which renders negated and nonnegated concepts alike.

Resonance can obtain between a given utterance and a previous one, to be termed here ‘backward resonance’ (3.1), as well as between a given utterance and a future one, to be termed here ‘forward resonance’ (3.2). In

what follows instances of forward and backward resonance provide further evidence for the accessibility of concepts within the scope of negation.

3.1. Backward resonance

If concepts within the scope of negation resonate with information mentioned previously in the discourse, this suggests that speakers assume their accessibility and hence their affinity with previously mentioned information. The following examples indeed demonstrate that the choice of a given concept marked by negation (*not **alive**, not **dead**, not **right**, not **wrong**, not **white**, not **report**, **illogical***) is sensitive to the occurrence of that concept in prior context (*alive, dead, right, wrong, white, report, logics*) even though its dichotomous antonym ('dead', 'alive', 'wrong', 'right', 'redbone', 'absentee', 'fallacious') is available:

- (19) "In my mind there was always a question: Is he **alive**? Is he **not alive**?" she recalled. (Burns 2005)
- (20) Is she **dead**? Is she **not dead**? (Weich 2003)
- (21) ... this does not mean I am looking to convince myself it is **right**. It is **not right** all of the time and ... (Pixie 2002)
- (22) But the moment you realize that something is not right, then even if the whole world feels it is **right**, it is **not right** for you. (Osho 1999)
- (23) ... even if the whole world says it is **wrong**, it is **not wrong**. (<http://www.oshoworld.com/onlinebooks/BookXMLMain.asp?BookName=discourse+series/the%20zen%20manifesto.txt>)

- (24) Name: oldschoolbrother
 Comment: ... As far as the skin color thing, my kids are very light skinned, and when they were babies, I would bring the baby pictures in and get asked (on the sly) if my wife was **white**. Now that they are older, sometimes some person will ask them the same question. And no she is **not white**, just a redbone.⁷ (Comment 2006)
- (25) Shabbath, a Sderot's resident, hasn't decided yet whether he will **report** to his unit and make a statement there about his refusal [to serve in the occupied territories] or whether he **won't report** at all – and be considered absentee. (Galili 2006)
- (26) To destroy and to smash. To tolerate blood, especially of others'. To forget that we bombed civilian facilities. Eight **logics** of an **illogical** war (Landau, July 2006)

Such examples attest to the role of negated concepts in maintaining backward affinities. Backward resonance of this kind can be explained only by the accessibility of concepts within the scope of negation, which allows the activation of these affinities.

3.2. Forward resonance

Forward resonance occurs when a given constituent is setting the scene for the next one. Following the resonance principle (Du Bois 1998, 2001), the speaker's choice of a given constituent may be determined by the next constituent she is planning to use, with which the current constituent will be resonating. The following examples thus demonstrate how negated constituents can prime future constituents. In these examples, negated concepts (*not fast, not soon, not late, not good, not bad, not allowed, not forbidden*), which could be replaced by an available antonym ('slow', 'late', 'early', 'bad', 'good', 'forbidden', 'allowed'), are preferred over that opposite alternative, because they allow for the activation of affinities across a given and a future constituent (*faster, soon, late, good, bad, allowed, forbidden*). It is the negated concept, then, rather than its

available opposite, that is selected so as to maintain dialogic resonance (Du Bois 1998, 2001). This selection could not be allowed were it not for the accessibility of information within the scope of negation:

- (27) It also reduced the exposure, and film stock **was not fast**. But Edison films were photographed much **faster** than the films of most other companies. (Brownlow 1980)
- (28) I think DVD's days are numbered, perhaps **not soon but soon enough**. (Jayson 2006)
- (29) The curtain descended on the stage, the show came to an end and Jack looked at his watch. Ten o'clock. **Not late, but late** enough to go to bed. (Prodigal Son 2006)
- (30) Ewww, that's **not good** (but **good** to know). (Holmer 2003)
- (31) There are **no** obesity-causing **bad** foods, only **bad** eaters, according to the celebrated host of the Food Network's "*Good Eats*" and "*Iron Chef America*" Alton Brown. (Staff reporter October 2006)
- (32) 'Politics is **not bad**, only some politicians are' [**bad**]. (Staff reporter July 2006)
- (33) "Slaves here" is **not allowed**, but "Free the slaves" is [**allowed**] (The AOL Sucks Homepage)
- (34) For to eat is **not forbidden**, but to swear is **forbidden**. (<http://christdot.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=7108>)
- (35) Riches are **not forbidden**, **but** the pride of them is [**forbidden**]. (John Chrysostom <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/j/johnchryso181827.html>)

Forward resonance also occurs between a given negated constituent and the next negated constituents with which it resonates. In the following interview, Tanya Reinhart says:

- (36) The citizens do **not** have a way to **influence** the policy, but the truth is that the government itself does **not influence** [it either]. The dominant factor in the Israeli society is the military. (Elbaz 2006)

Not that less resonant discourses are not produced by speakers. They are. When, during The Second Lebanon War, the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, opened his address to the nation by saying “Israel is **continuing** to fight”, he was rejecting the option of a ceasefire, considered at the time, by selecting an opposite alternative to ‘ceasefire’. Had he opened by saying “There will be **no cease-fire**”, this statement would have been a lot more resonant. The less resonant choice, however, was compensated for by the headline reporting this speech, which resonated with the ongoing discussion over a ceasefire: “Olmert: There will be **no cease-fire** in coming days” which, in fact, occurred far later in his speech (Schiff, Harel, and Benn 2006).

It is important to note, though, that dialogic resonance, whether backward or forward, should not be confounded with coherence (which, for one, requires that the newly added sentence will discuss the same discourse topic or be signaled as digressing from it [Giora, 1985]). It is not coherence that is hampered when an alternative antonym is used, but resonance. The following contrived examples, then, just like Olmert’s, are not less coherent, only less resonant:

- (37) It also reduced the exposure, and film stock was **slow**. But Edison films were photographed much **faster** than the films of most other companies.
- (38) It will be **late** but as **soon** as possible.
- (39) I think DVD’s days are numbered, perhaps **later** but **soon enough**.

- (40) The curtain descended on the stage, the show came to an end and Jack looked at his watch. Ten o'clock. **Early**, but **late** enough to go to bed.
- (41) Ewww, that's **bad** (but **good** to know).
- (42) All foods are good, but there are bad eaters, according to the celebrated host of the Food Network's "Good Eats" and "Iron Chef America" Alton Brown.
- (43) 'Politics is good, only some politicians are' [bad].
- (44) "Slaves here" is forbidden, but "Free the slaves" is [allowed].
- (45) ... for to eat is allowed, but to swear is forbidden.
- (46) Riches are allowed, but the pride of them is [forbidden].

For synoptic illustrations of both backward and forward resonance, consider the following excerpts (47–48). The first is taken from an op-ed criticizing the Israeli policies in the occupied territory (Landau, January 2006). In this example, the instances of backward and forward resonance (**not a partner-partner; partner-no partner**) could not have been made possible were concepts within the scope of negation not accessible to comprehenders:

- (47) Hamas is **not a partner** for peace. Namely, Hamas is the only **partner** for peace, ergo – **no partner**. Ever since the crushing of the Palestinian Authority – chapeau to IDF and the Fattah crooks – Hamas has become the major popular movement amongst the Palestinians. Starting last week, it is also the political representative of the Palestinian majority. In other words – the only **partner** for peace. Which is precisely why Israel insists that it is **not a partner**. Indeed, every **partner** with the potential of becoming a **partner** was ruled out as a **partner** precisely because Israeli governments, have **never**, in fact, **been partners** for peace. And yet they constantly seek after a **new partner**: for occupation, for settlement blocks, for roadblocks.

For another synoptic illustration, consider Gaarder (2006), who marks The Second Lebanon War as a turning point. In this example, the accessibility of concepts within the scope of negation (*recognize*) allows to retain backward and forward resonance which, in turn, allows for an implicit comparison between the state of Israel and other ruthless regimes such as South African apartheid, Afghan Taliban regime, Saddam Hussein's and the Serbs' ethnic cleansing:

- (48) There is no turning back. It is time to learn a new lesson: We do **no** longer **recognize** the state of Israel. We could **not recognize** the South African apartheid regime, **nor** did we **recognize** the Afghan Taliban regime. Then there were many who did **not recognize** Saddam Hussein's Iraq or the Serbs' ethnic cleansing. We must now get used to the idea: The state of Israel in its current form is history.

In sum, the activation of backward and forward affinities allowed by negated concepts can be made possible only if one retains information within the scope of negation. Evidence of both backward and forward resonance thus supports the view that concepts within the scope of negation can be accessible.

4. Manipulating the accessibility of negated information

The received view of negation takes it to assert the negated statement while rejecting as false an assumption believed to be true. Thus, while the affirmative (*The police chief here is a woman*) "asserts a simple fact" (about the police chief: that she is a woman), the negative (*The police chief here isn't a man*) "adds an assumption listeners may well believe" (that police chiefs are males), and of which they are being disabused (Clark and Clark 1977: 241; Givón 1978, 1993, 2002; Verhagen 2005). A closer look, however, reveals that, at least in some cases, in order to be informative enough, the affirmative (*The police chief here is a woman*) must also refer to an additional belief (that police chiefs are males), which it implicitly rejects (as discussed in Horn 2001: 199).

To reject assumptions, then, one need not always use negation. However, one does need to keep in mind what is asserted in order to access that which is rejected. This is true for both affirmative and negative

sentences. It is the accessibility of information within the scope of negation that led researchers to conclude that only negative sentences introduce the assumption they deny in their assertion. Indeed, speakers may take advantage of this fact about negation and introduce false beliefs as assumptions taken for granted, or messages they want to get across as unasserted. Such negated sentences do, of course, present (semantically) true statements.

Consider, for instance, a report of the arrest of 12 (out of 25) Israeli left-wing activists, protesting the killing of civilians in Lebanon, in front of an Israeli Air Force base. According to this report, “The protest was held without authorization” (Waked 2006). While this statement asserts something true, it also takes for granted the assumption that demonstrations, as a rule, require a permit (which the demonstrators in question neglected to obtain). Assuming it is informative, readers of this statement must, then, conclude that the demonstration in question was unlawful (as a conversational implicature). Given, however, that in Israel any (peaceful) gathering involving up to 50 participants or even more (using no megaphones, etc.) requires no permit, the implicature that the demonstration was illegal, although derived appropriately (and later even stated), is misleading, since this small gathering required no permit (and indeed the arrests followed illegal activities such as disrupting traffic etc., which are illegal regardless of whether one holds a protest or not). Thus, negative statements, although true, might nonetheless introduce false beliefs as assumptions to the discourse (as might affirmatives). To derive this false inference, readers must retain the information within the scope of negation and access an assumption against which to weigh this contribution. On the basis of all the above, comprehenders might have even deduced that the arrest of the protestors was justified, given that they were breaching the law.

Similarly, talking in an anti-war rally in Tel Aviv, Yael Dayan, a former Knesset member, declared: “I am not against the residents of the north [of Israel]” (August 5, 2006). For such a statement to be relevant, the audiences, or at least some of the addressees, must be seen as being against the residents of the north. Having derived this false implicature, the audiences, defying the manipulative ‘accusation’, indeed muttered: ‘But who is [against the residents of the north]’? Relevant to our discussion is the inferability of this false assumption, which relies on the accessibility of information within the scope of negation with which the audiences disagreed.

Note, again, that had Dayan said: ‘I am in favor of the residents of the north’, people might have wondered too (and muttered: ‘But who isn’t’), given that it’s hard to imagine any Israeli who is *not* feeling sympathy for them.

To lead comprehenders down this kind of path, then, speakers must assume that information within the scope of negation is retainable. (That one can generate false implicatures, regardless of negativity, see Ariel 1985, in press; on how the accessibility of negated information is manipulatively used in political speeches, see Giora 1994: 110–115).

Or consider a way to get across a message via negation, which allows the addressee to generate the implicature without necessarily conceding that it is in fact binding. Thus, in *The Firm* (Grisham 1991, see below), the negative statement “working is not forbidden”, referring to wives’ working, must assume that wives, as a rule, are forbidden to work. Note that this must also be true of the affirmative alternative ‘working for wives is allowed’, which must assume that wives, as a rule, are forbidden to work. In the negative statement, however, wives are implicitly encouraged not to work (as is clear from the shocked addressee, a newcomer wife whose husband has just joined the firm, who repeats it unbelievably – “forbidden by whom?”). In the affirmative alternative, wives are encouraged to work, as is also evident from a similar affirmative “Babies are encouraged” used later on. Note, however, that while the negative is a manipulative use of negation, which allows one to generate an implicature and therefore grant it, in the affirmative the message is straightforward:

- (49) Abby smiled and shook her head as if this impressed her a great deal. “Do you work?”
 “No. Most of us don’t work. The money is there, so we’re not forced to, and we get little help with the kids from our husbands. Of course, working is **not forbidden**.”
 “Forbidden by whom?”
 “The firm.”
 “I would hope not.” Abby repeated the word “forbidden” to herself, but let it pass.
 Kay sipped her coffee and watched the ducks. A small boy wandered away from his mother and stood near the fountain. “Do you plan to start a family?” Kay asked.
 “Maybe in a couple of years.”
 “Babies are **encouraged**.”
 “By whom? ”

“The firm.”

“Why should the firm care if we have children?”

“Again, stable families.” (Grisham 1991: 23)

Clearly, what makes possible such manipulative uses is the accessibility of negated concepts.

5. On the accessibility of negated information – evidence from online experiments

So far the evidence coming from language uses supports the view that negated information need not be suppressed unconditionally. Is there also supportive evidence coming from studies of online processing of negated constituents that might account for the accessibility of negated concepts demonstrated above? Although outside a specific context, negation often affects suppression or a focus shift from the negated concept toward an alternative opposite (see section 1), there are findings showing that, when embedded in a coherent environment, negation need not obligatorily affect elimination of the concepts within its scope. As shown by recent studies, when comprehenders have a chance to consider global discourse requirements, they retain negated information when this is deemed instrumental (Giora 2006).

For instance, Giora et al. (in press) showed that the attempt to maintain backward and forward coherence resulted in comprehenders retaining rather than suppressing information within the scope of negation (compared to incoherent environments or unrelated concepts). Thus, in the presence of a relevant prior context, negated targets were shown to be available after a rather long delay, long enough for suppression to be operative were it invited. Specifically, following Hebrew statements such as *All my girlfriends indeed have good taste but I have to admit that the dress Sarit is wearing is **not pretty***, the concepts related to the affirmative meaning (‘nice’) were accessible as long as 750 msec following their offset. They were retained, we contend, because they were mappable on a substructure recently processed (Gernsbacher 1990). Negated targets began to lose accessibility only later on, between 750–1,000 msec following offset of the negated concept (***not pretty***), probably when backward coherence has been established.

Similarly, in the presence of a relevant late context, negated targets were also shown to be available after a rather long delay. Thus, when English statements such as *The train to Boston was **no rocket*** were followed by a late coherent context such as *The trip to the city was **fast** though*, negation (**no rocket**) did not induce suppression of the concepts within its scope (**rocket**). Instead, these concepts were retained as long as (and even longer than) 1,000 msec and primed the target (*fast*) in the late context. Recall, though, that, when presented in isolation, such statements exhibited reduced accessibility of the negated concepts (*rocket*), which, therefore, did not prime a related target ('fast') after a delay of 1,000 msec (Hasson and Glucksberg 2006). In contrast, Giora et al.'s (in press) findings demonstrate that, where concepts might be instrumental in maintaining forward coherence so that they can be mapped on and get integrated with the ongoing discourse representation, they are retained rather than discarded from the mental representation.

Such results support the view that, when the affirmative meaning of the negated concept may be relevant to and mappable on either prior or late context, it is retained as long as necessary. In all, such findings support the view that concepts within the scope of negation are not discarded unconditionally. Rather, they are sensitive to global discourse considerations, which regulate their suppression and maintenance.

That negation effects are sensitive to global context considerations has also been demonstrated by Kaup and Zwaan (2003). Kaup and Zwaan showed that, rather than being primarily affected by negation, a concept's accessibility was affected primarily by its presence in or absence from the situation described. Thus, while (English) concepts (*blue*) absent from the situation (*she only wished that the bike had a blue frame*) lost accessibility, concepts present in the situation gained in accessibility (*she only wished that the bike didn't have a blue frame*), regardless of negation. Specifically, 1,500 msec after participants read target sentences, they were faster in responding to a color probe (blue) mentioned in the target and present in the situation than to a color probe mentioned in the target but not present in the situation. This was true regardless of whether the concept was negated or not. Such findings attest to the accessibility of concepts present in the situation model, regardless of negation.

It is interesting to note that when brain waves were recorded from the scalp (Lüdtke et al. 2005), results showed no suppressive effects of negation even when probes following negated sentences (presented in isolation) did not reflect the factual state of affairs. Thus, at a long delay of

1,500 msec, brain responses to pictorial probes ('ghost') following negative and affirmative (German) sentences (*In front of the tower there was/was no ghost*) were the same, suggesting that even when the negated concept was absent from the situation described it was not suppressed. Specifically, following both types of sentences, related probes ('ghost') induced only small amplitudes of N400 brain waves,⁸ suggesting that negated concepts were not suppressed and hence no incompatibility was sensed. In fact, these results indicate that negated concepts were as accessible as nonnegated ones.

More recent studies using Visual World Paradigm – a cross modal paradigm which monitors eye movement while participants, who are exposed to spoken sentences, are also presented related visual stimuli – also attests to the accessibility of negated concepts. In Shuval (2006), native speakers of French were presented pictorial primes, which included four objects and a human protagonist (as shown in Figure 1):

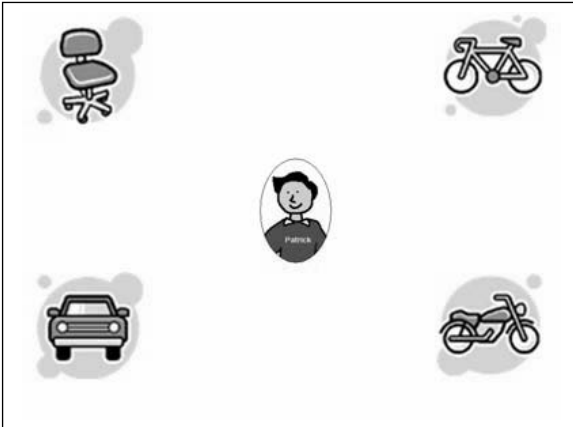


Figure 1.

Having been presented these primes, participants listened to one of the following targets (originally in French):

- (50a) Early disambiguation/N1:
You should buy a car_{N1} and not buy a motorcycle_{N2} this year, said Patrick. *Drive it* during the vacation.

- (50b) Early disambiguation/N2:
You should buy a car_{N1} and not buy a motorcycle_{N2} this year, said Patrick. *Rent it* during the vacation.
- (50c) Late disambiguation/N1:
You should buy a car_{N1} and not buy a motorcycle_{N2} this year, said Patrick. *It could be driven* during the vacation.
- (50d) Late disambiguation/N2:
You should buy a car_{N1} and not buy a motorcycle_{N2} this year, said Patrick. *It could be rented* during the vacation.

In these sentences, the pronoun (*it*) is potentially ambiguous between two previously mentioned referents (car; motorcycle). In (50a, 50b), *it* is disambiguated by the verb that precedes it; in (50c, 50d), it is disambiguated by the verb that follows it.

Of particular interest are the late disambiguation conditions (50c, 50d), in which the pronoun is kept ambiguous for a while. In these conditions, the negated objects (motorcycle) were fixated on to a greater extent than the controls – the close associate (bicycle) and unrelated (chair) objects. At times, these levels of fixations reached the same levels induced by the non-negated objects (car). In fact, the fixation pattern, recorded from the onset of the pronoun, exhibited alterations between the negated and non-negated objects, suggesting that comprehenders were wavering between the two. Such patterns demonstrate that the negated object was not suppressed but rather retained as a candidate antecedent of the pronoun (even if less favorable).

These results, then, attest to the relative accessibility of negated information. They show that negated concepts are accessible to comprehenders who therefore focus on them even when referred to by a least informative, high accessibility expression. This is indicated by their gaze duration, which testifies to the relevance of these concepts to the interpretation of the sentences in question (see also section 2.1).

In sum, results obtained by various online methodologies provide evidence supporting the view that information within the scope of negation is not obligatorily discarded. Rather, when motivated, such information is retained and partakes in the interpretation process. Thus, when relevant to contextual information, concepts within the scope of negation remain accessible.

6. Concluding remarks

In this chapter I question the assumption prevailing in psycholinguistics that negation, as a rule, reduces the accessibility of the negated information. I suggest instead that negation is sensitive to discourse considerations and will not deactivate concepts deemed necessary for discourse goals such as resonance maintenance, coherence maintenance, comparison making, tautologies' meaningfulness, and the like. In Giora (2006) I outline the conditions under which negation might indeed involve suppression, but again, like retention of information, I show that suppression following negation is just as sensitive to discourse considerations as affirmation and will not operate unconditionally.

Indeed, evidence accumulated in various laboratories shows that once context is allowed to play a role in processing, negated information is retainable (section 5). Its retainability, I argue, accounts for the vast array of natural examples presented here which argue that negation cannot obligatorily reduce the accessibility of negated thoughts. Rather, to make sense, the various natural examples discussed here must assume the accessibility of negated information (sections 1–4). Would the feminist joke 'A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle' be a joke were the concepts within the scope of negation deactivated?

Acknowledgments

This research was supported by grants from Tel Aviv University Basic Research Fund and Adams Super Center for Brain, Tel Aviv University. I am also very grateful to Mira Ariel and Larry Horn for their insightful comments and immensely so to John Du Bois for both numerous examples and illuminating comments. I also wish to thank Meira Hass, Ory Henn, Noa Shuval and Dana Zimmerman for helpful examples.

Notes

1. <http://vivalaevolucion.blogs.ie/2006/07/07/not-alive-but-evolving-two-about-viruses/>
2. <http://209.85.135.104/search?q=cache:pqYo9p5r0ZEJ:cgi.bytebin.net/living-machine/blog/2006/07/27/how-do-we-know-something-is-really-%E2%80%998alive%E2%80%99/+%22not+alive+but+it+was%22&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=1>

3. http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/wto_july_deal.pdf
4. All emphases in this article are added for convenience.
5. “‘No seems not to exist as far as dreams are concerned. Anything in a dream can mean its contrary’ (Freud 1910: 155)... ‘In our interpretation we take the liberty of disregarding the negation and picking out the subject-matter alone of the association’ (Freud 1925: 235).” (Horn 2001: 93).
6. Sami Shalom Chetrit, an Israeli Mizrahi activist, intended this poem, only part of which is cited here, to ironically protest the Israeli reoccupation of Lebanon.
7. Of Native American and African descent.
8. N400 brain waves are associated with difficulty to integrate an incompatible concept with contextual information.

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Part III: Intercultural Aspects

Developing pragmatics interculturally

Jacob L. Mey

Abstract

Anthropologists and linguists have traditionally sought to preserve and codify the cultures of nations as a ‘heritage’, to be transmitted to the next generations and conserved in non-invasive ways. The description of cultural phenomena had to be given in terms of the phenomena themselves, without interference from outside ways of thought or ideologies. ‘Leave your language/culture alone’ was the watchword. In a pragmatic view, there is no culture without a user, just as a language is unthinkable without people using it; even dead or artificial languages, even the most abstract soliloquy or the most concrete poetry still presuppose someone at both the sending and the receiving ends. With regard to the intercultural, if it is to be exercised and defined as a meeting of cultures, it has to respect the intracultural rights of individuals and groups to their own culture, including the right to use one’s language – which is what linguistic rights are all about. Pragmatics defines its field of interest as the users’ use of language, in a context that is both intra- and inter-cultural. Hence the connection between pragmatics and the cultural should be clear: inasmuch as language is part of the culture, and pragmatics is predicated on the use of language, pragmatics has a role in establishing and defining intra- and inter-culturality, especially in a language-oriented context.

0. By way of introduction

Commenting on the stunning victory (59% over 41%) in May 2005 of the new mayor elect of Los Angeles, Antonio Villaraigosa, LA’s first Latino mayor, *LA Times* columnist Gregory Rodriguez wrote:

Villaraigosa’s overwhelming victory is a reminder that despite the uniqueness of Mexican immigration, the process of – and desire for – achieving ‘Americanness’ is as strong as it ever was. Over the next generation, Mexican-Americans will only produce more of their own modern Smiths and DiMaggios. In so doing, they will be exchanging the

now outdated language of multiculturalism for an updated version of the melting pot.¹

Rodriguez added the following:

“Why we’re the new Irish: Mexican-Americans, too, began apart – and are now a thread in the tapestry.” (*Newsweek*, May 30, 2005: 35)

1. The intercultural as property and right

1.1. Cultural property

Culture has usually been thought of as a proprietary asset of individuals and societies: an inalienable good and right. One should distinguish here between the *intra-cultural*, which has to do with culture as it is held and exercised within one community, and the *inter-cultural*, which regards the relationships between various cultures. But also, the intercultural naturally presupposes the existence of the intracultural: no cultures can interact unless they are recognized and treated as such. And even if it at times may be difficult to distinguish between the two, as Knapp and Potthoff have observed (1987: 6), we should keep in mind that we “cannot take the culture out of the country” (Mey 2004: 35), even if we can move the people whose cultural ‘property rights’ are being affirmed (or questioned, as the case may be).

1.2. Rights and clashes

Property and rights are closely related. In particular, clashes over property are usually clashes over rights, and the case of cultural or intellectual property is no exception. The notion of owning something, say a piece of land, cannot be discussed without asking the question what that ownership implies. The piece of land that I own may be chosen for development by some powerful developers; or the State or one of its subsidiaries may claim it by virtue of ‘eminent domain’; also, there are clear limits to how much, and how, I am allowed to protect my property from being invaded by tourists and trespassers (for instance, booby-trapping an access road will normally not be recognized as a legitimate protective measure). But that

said, the right of a person or a group to their proper culture is universally acclaimed, if not always practically endorsed.

As to the inter-cultural, we are faced with a dilemma, or even a paradox. As mentioned earlier, the inter-cultural must have an intra-cultural basis in order to make sense; but such an intra-cultural basis does not in itself guarantee or promote a healthy inter-cultural environment. But how is this intra-cultural basis to be realized? Successful maintenance and preservation of indigenous cultures have always been dependent upon a stable 'home' community, usually in the form of a tightly-knit network of social and other relationships around a social or religious kernel (a neighborhood, a newspaper, a church, or a social club, or any of them in conjunction).

Classic examples are found in environments such as the New York Lower East Side neighborhood of the early 19th century, where East European culture flourished; or the Brooklyn, New York immigrant communities from Eastern Europe, where as late as the mid-1980s, several newspapers were published in 'European' languages such as Ukrainian, Russian, and Yiddish. But for all their advantages, these communities could only preserve their ethnic character through what some would call 'ghettoizing'; and even if we avoid the nasty associations of that term, it still is the case that these healthy intra-cultural environments had very little outside contacts, hence inter-cultural interaction was at a minimum.

In particular, the language question looms large here. Many people from such isolated ethnic communities had, and still have, even today, problems communicating with the world outside, due to the absence of a common language. I personally know of villages in the South of Brazil (e.g., in the states of Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul) where the population speaks mainly German, even after three to four generations, and where one can find people age fifty and over who cannot express themselves in Portuguese, but only in German. Clearly, in such cases the interactive, outgoing aspect of a culture is entirely absent.²

2. Expanding culture: A coffee break

I will now propose a change in venue, from what used to be called the 'New World', to what no longer can be called the 'Third', but rather should be styled the 'Future World' of the Far East. Enter Mr. Howard Schultz.

2.1. Starbucks in China

In the fall of 2005, the U.S. based coffee company Starbucks, as part of its expansion program, had just opened the 140th of its stores in Mainland China. On this occasion, the chairman of the company, Mr. Howard Schultz, was interviewed by National Public Radio's reporter Steve Inskeep (Source: Radio Station KUT, University of Texas at Austin, 'Morning Edition', November 8, 2005, 8:00–9:00 am CST).

Chairman Schultz was asked several questions in this interview, among others, how the Chinese, who in U.S. terms did not earn the equivalent of a U.S. hourly wage a day, were able to afford what amounted to U.S. \$3–\$4 for a cup of coffee (which is what the Starbucks outlets charge their Chinese customers).³

To this, there was no direct answer. Instead, Chairman Schultz talked about the Chinese having 'leapfrogged' into the 21st century, leaving intermediate stages such as the 'classical' telephone behind (most of the current 300 million Chinese mobile phone users have never even owned a regular telephone earlier in their lives).⁴ So the Chinese are willing to adapt themselves to new developments, he said. He also added that the normal Chinese unit of living space would fit several times into the regular Chinese Starbucks store; as a result, the Chinese preferred to spend their coffee breaks at Starbucks. In contrast to U.S. customers, the great majority of the Chinese consumed their coffee on the premises, often spending whole days doing their computer and other work there; of the North American customers, 80 percent would pay for their cup and take it out to consume elsewhere (office or home, mostly).

2.2. Adopting and adapting

From an intercultural point of view, several interesting observations can be made in connection with this interview. Clearly, the Chinese are adapting their life-styles to Western ones ('Coffee in the land of the tea drinkers?' was the caption given the program). The Chinese are willing to give up part of their cultural heritage, tea drinking, to adopt a new, foreign style of life, as embodied in coffee. And they do this with amazing speed and lightness, just as they adopted the idea and practice of mobile telephoning.

But behind this seamless interface, a number of intercultural problems lurk, and some of them can serve as signposts in our quest for developing

pragmatic trends interculturally. First of all, even though 300 million is a big number, it by no means comprises all of China, where the population rapidly approaches the one and a half billion mark.⁵ And among the many Chinese Starbucks customers, several tendencies may be detected, just as is the case for the U.S. From what I have observed myself, it is by no means the case that the majority of Austin, Texas Starbucks visitors take their cup to drink it outside the store; in fact, at least in locations close to the main campus of the University of Texas, many students spend time in-store doing their work over a cup of Starbucks. Clearly, the ways people consume their coffee have to be differentiated according to geographical locations and social strata: there is a world of difference between the busy representative who grabs a cup on the fly, and the academic who sits down with his or her cup and starts to grade term papers or do an assignment.

In other words, we cannot glibly and in broad terms speak of ‘culture’, let alone an ‘interculture’, not even when it comes to relatively banal cultural phenomena like coffee drinking across continents. A culture is always a ‘subculture’, and people cannot be equated across the board when it comes to assessing their coffee-drinking and other habits.

2.3. Coffee anyone?

The second point to be made here regards the ‘value’ of the coffee consumed by the respective drinkers – a value not measured in terms of financial outlay, but rather as to what the drinking of coffee represents in terms of a particular culture. It is not at all certain that the Chinese flock to Starbucks just because they overnight have acquired a taste for coffee.

Of course, while some Chinese may indeed have developed such a sudden taste, we can plausibly assume that for a great number of the new consumers, coffee plays the role of a cultural icon, rather than of a simple beverage that may be either hot or cold, tall, grande or venti, weak or strong, regular, espresso, or embellished with fancy names and additions. As all elements making up a culture, eating and drinking, in addition to their life-sustaining roles, *index* our personal status in society and the group with which we want to be affiliated. In the case of Starbucks in China, the affiliation is clearly to a foreign culture, or (in a future perspective) to a new, Chinese-adapted Starbucks culture which, although its origins are U.S.-based, will have developed into a Chinese (sub-) culture of its own.

Speculation aside, it seems that the two aspects, that of a subculture and that of an icon, have validity for the general question of how to build a pragmatically relevant description of the inter- as opposed to the intra-cultural. In the Chinese case, even though the ‘intra-’ initially is alien to the foreign intruder, there almost immediately emerges a division of the recipients into those that can and will, and those that are not able or willing to adopt the ‘inter’-perspective. Subcultures emerge, as is always the case when we have to focus on aspects of culture. And the cultural value of a particular way of behaving needs to be differentiated according to the subcultures involved: while drinking a cup of coffee in one’s apartment may have only ‘intra’-, and little ‘inter’-cultural value, consuming the same cup in a Shanghai Starbucks outlet may serve to proclaim one’s Western orientation and open-mindedness to the ‘inter’-cultural.

2.4. Absorption or adaptation?

A final aspect here is of relevance. Mr. Schultz (when asked how he could manage his U.S.-based value system within a “Communist dictatorship”), remarked that the approach he taught his people when dealing with China was “to come with their hats in their hands”. This may sound like a cheap pep talk for a group of traveling salesmen, but in reality it contains more than a little grain of wisdom. When approaching a foreign culture pragmatically, one has to realize that the moment the intercultural kicks in, the intracultural also begins to change. The Starbucks company makes inroads onto the Chinese market: a first change. But this is accompanied (sometimes even preceded) by a change in the Starbucks culture entering China: ‘hat’ (or, as the case may be, ‘coffee-cup’) ‘in hand’. But as soon as the outstretched hand (with or without cup) has gained acceptance, its character changes, too. The Chinese version of Starbucks is already different from the American one, and predictably will be quite different in a couple of years. Stubbornly hanging on to one’s own culture’s presumed privileges and prerogatives in a foreign cultural environment makes no commercial sense; neither does it, pragmatically speaking.

Let me illustrate the above by giving an example from a linguistic culture that is sufficiently different from our own, yet presents many familiar traits: Brazil. Here, we see how users are able to absorb (some would say: usurp) parts of a foreign culture into their own, and in the

process, change it so as to make it almost unrecognizable for the original owners. The case in question has to do, in particular, with loan words.

In Brazilian Portuguese, one often meets the expression *outdoor* (pronounced [aut'dor]). In the Brazilian context, this word is neither an adjective nor an adverb, but has become a substantive with a very specific, concrete meaning, namely that of 'billboard' (in a process called 'semantic narrowing' already by Bloomfield [1933] 1950: 426ff). Thus, one can ask for permission from the city to put up an *outdoor*, or one can rent an *outdoor* from a company called *Outdoor Ltda do Brasil*. But the process doesn't stop here: the word can also be used for "any open-air advertisement", that is, not necessarily on a billboard, but also on a wall, as neon lettering, etc. (Michaelis *s.v.*); here, we have to do with a 'widening' of the meaning. In hindsight, we are of course able to follow, as linguists are wont to, the track leading to this Brazilian innovation, starting from the English expression 'outdoor billboard' through the successive processes of 'semantic narrowing' and 'widening'. But since so much is 'outdoor' in English-speaking cultural environments (like 'outdoor activities', 'outdoor party', 'outdoor outfitter', 'outdoor use', and so on and so forth), narrowing down the meaning of the word to one specific usage and then widening it again is as unpredictable as it is irreversible.

Similar cases are encountered in other languages of the world; thus in Danish, the word *container* is used in one specific meaning only, and one that is not even the most prominent one in the culture from which it was borrowed. 'Container' in Danish (apart from its 'international' use in compounds such as 'container freighter', or the 'container division' of Maersk Tankers) normally stands for what in America is called a 'dumpster', in Britain and Ireland a 'skip'.⁶

The upshot is that we have to let users manage their language in their own way, and this includes the acquisition and use of loan words. A meeting of cultures in the *intercultural* sphere results in irreversible *intracultural* changes (which in their turn may spur further changes, as we have seen in many cases, often to the dismay of the linguistic puritans). In all this, the old adage 'Leave your language alone' could be expanded to 'Leave everybody's culture (including their language) alone'.

I will come back to these various aspects in the following, where I discuss the development of the inter-cultural on an intra-cultural basis, especially with regard to language.

3. Linguistic rights and the inter-/intra-cultural

Language, being a part of culture, has all the properties defining culture, and all the prerogatives inherent to culture, including the right to protection.

Linguistic rights have been defined as “all the rights that individuals, groups, organizations, and states have in relation to languages (‘their own or others’)” (Skutnabb-Kangas 2006: 213). Most often, linguistic rights are thought of as belonging to individuals or groups: the rights to use their own languages in every type of context. Such rights could be defined under the broader notion of ‘linguistic human rights’, and it is by no means certain that such a broader definition in reality is operative for the majority of language users of our planet (cf. Skutnabb-Kangas 2006: 213). But how do linguistic rights interact with the intercultural, and what has pragmatics got to do with it?

3.1. The pragmatics of interculturality

Linguistic rights are about using one’s language. Pragmatics defines its field of interest as the users’ use of language in a social context (cf. Mey 2001: 6). The social context is, by its very origin, cultural (both intra- and inter-); this establishes the connection between pragmatics and the intercultural. Pragmatics is predicated on how the users use their culture, including the right to use their language, and hence plays a major role in establishing and defining interculturality, especially in relation to language rights.

In a pragmatic view, there is no culture without a user, just as a language is unthinkable without people who are using it. Even dead and artificial languages fall under this description; and even the most abstract language (as in what is paradoxically called ‘concrete poetry’) still presupposes a human presence at both the sending and the receiving end. As to the intercultural, it is defined and exercised in a meeting of culture users, and hence has to respect the rights that individuals and groups have to use their culture (including their language).

3.2. Protecting and preserving the culture

Anthropologists and linguists have traditionally sought to preserve and codify the cultures of peoples and nations as a ‘heritage’, transmitted to the next generations and to be conserved in non-invasive ways. The description of cultural phenomena had to be given in terms of the phenomena themselves, without interference from outside ideologies or ways of thinking. With a variant on a well-worn slogan, the watchword was: ‘Leave the culture alone’.

As originally intended, the slogan was meant to exclude any interference by the observer with the observed, in accordance with the research principles of the natural sciences. Extended, the slogan appeals to anthropologists, linguists, sociologists, psychologists, administrators, missionaries, and so on, to protect native cultures and languages from outside interference: ‘Leave native peoples alone’, as one could reformulate it. And here some of the ‘natives’ would concur, witness the recently (November 15, 2005) deceased American Indian activist and lawyer Vine Deloria, Jr., who is reported to have said that the Native Americans were doubly cursed, first by being ‘Indians’, second by having anthropologists studying them (Source: Radio Station KUT, University of Texas at Austin, ‘Morning Edition’, November 15, 2005, 8:30–9:00 am CST).

In a pragmatically oriented perspective of the intercultural, such a basically romantic view does not hold up. If ‘leaving alone’ is interpreted as trying to prevent any miscegenation of native and foreign cultures, or any ‘bastardizing’ of a particular language under the influence of other languages, the slogan is as naïve as it is unrealistic. It is naïve because it bases itself on an unwarranted and undocumented assumption that languages and cultures possess a kind of ‘pristine’ character from their beginnings, and that the way of evolution always is a down-turning path. It is unrealistic because it doesn’t correspond to the ways the natives themselves see things and want things done (and here I do not mean just the ‘natives’ and their languages that anthropologists and linguists study in jungles and deserts, but also, and in particular, native speakers of well-established, non-endangered languages such as Danish or Portuguese).

A pragmatic approach to culture, including language and its users, interprets the principle in a slightly different way. In order to retain its validity, the principle must carry with it a recognition of the robustness of cultures and languages when left to their own devices, that is, as long as

the speakers and ‘culture-bearers’ are ‘left alone’, that is, stay outside of the predatory reaches of globalized greed (understood, specifically, as a world trade order organized on capitalist premises). In contrast, a commonsensical recognition of the influence that cultures and languages have on one another when they enter into contact, and of the legitimacy of the resulting changes, does not automatically spell an abrogation of the ‘linguistic rights’ of a particular population. People have the right to conserve, but also to change and adapt their culture and language whenever they feel the need to do so.

4. Some actual questions

With the influx of immigrants into cultural and linguistic domains other than their own, several ideological and practical questions arise, among them the following:

- In an ‘intercultural’ situation, whose culture should be recognized as the dominant one, with all the political and economic consequences such a recognition implies? (cf. the current German debates on *Leitkultur*, the ‘leading culture’)
- As to the other cultures, should they be respected and promoted (how, and to what extent), or should they merely be tolerated?
- Should language and culture be allowed to serve as defining and delimiting indexes, shibboleths, not only in the theoretical and ideological sense, but also as a practical means of separating out ‘dispreferred’ groups (think of the current discussions in countries such as the U.K., France, and Denmark about the introduction of successfully passed ‘language tests’ as a condition for obtaining citizenship or permanent residence in a country)?⁷
- What are the practical consequences of adopting one or the other position (cf. the debates about ‘English only’ in Florida and many other U.S. states, the bickering about bilingual education funding in Georgia, Texas, California, etc., the legitimacy of organizing one’s culture politically and linguistically, not only in the (presupposed) ‘homeland’ (think Kurdistan) but also outside of it (such as in Kurdish communities abroad),⁸ etc., etc.?)
- Is multiculturalism “outdated”, and should it be replaced by the ideology of the “melting pot”? In the U.S. context, should one opt for assimilation or integration? For instance, is ‘Americanness’ still an ideal for Mexican immigrants, as implied by Gregory Rodriguez (cf. my initial quote from

Newsweek, May 30, 2005), or should we pay more attention to the vociferous proponents of an independent culture for people of Latin descent (cf. the La Raza movement in the U.S.)?

Let me illustrate some the above questions and their importance by focusing on one particular intercultural clash, the one that we have witnessed developing as a concomitant result of the war in Iraq. I will focus in particular on one aspect of this clash, namely the failure on the part of the coalition's military and civilian personnel to understand the very nature of the intercultural clash they are involved in. I will do this by making use of a notion I have developed in another context, that of the *pragmeme*. This will be the subject of the next section.

5. Intercultural 'shock and awe'

5.1. Pragmemes and institutions

A pragmeme is an n-tuple one of whose members is a speech act (Mey 2001: 221ff).⁹ Among the other members we find, first of all, the situation (sometimes called the context). The situation itself is another n-tuple, comprising first of all, the institution that is the dominant element in the situation.

All situations underlie some kind of institutional dominance. For instance, we cannot vote as citizens without the institutions of electoral laws, an electoral machinery, a system of rules specifying voting rights, and so on. Similarly (or so most people believe), one cannot exercise religion outside the institutionalized affordances that religions have put in place: churches, parishes, congregations, sacraments, etc. As the old adage has it: *Hors de l'Église, point de salut* [No salvation is possible outside of the Church] – (understood here as the Catholic Church). In other words, the respective pragmemes covering the acts of 'voting' and many of the religious acts exercised in church-like surroundings (such as getting married, baptizing a child, burying a deceased relative, and so on), while logically comprising the situation, depend for their existence on that very situation, including the institution in which the acts are embedded.¹⁰

Societies may be more or less overtly 'institutionalized'. Overt institutionalization means that there exist, in a society, a number of well-described and legalized institutions, publicly affirmed (in debate as well as critique) and commonly accepted as the natural contexts in which certain

acts can or should be performed. In contrast, there are societies where institutionalization is much more hidden, being incorporated in a fabric of social relations of varying stratification and density, as is the case in countries where family ties and relationships are strong, and often run counter to the official institutionalized structure. Here, one may think as an example of the Sicilian Mafia and its code of *omertà*: allegiance to this code, with its notions of *onore e famiglia*, often outweighs the obligations inherent in being a law-abiding citizen. Another example is furnished by societies where the visible societal superstructure dwindles in the face of the invisible fabric of clan and tribal ties; here, we can think of the difficulties the Americans are having in their efforts to establish what they consider to be democracy in countries such as Afghanistan or Iraq.

5.2. Overt vs. covert institutionalization

As to the various degrees of overtness in institutionalization, we find at one end the U.S. with its numerous institutions governing all aspects of citizens' lives; here, in particular, the legal contexts are regulated by institutions all the way from the Federal legislature and the Supreme Court down to the local boards regulating access to libraries and parks. Organized religion provides another example: it is rare to find an American who professes no adherence to some institution of religion: a church, a temple, a congregation, a mosque, a lodge, or even a loose association of followers of some saint, sage, guru, or prophet (Sai Baba comes to mind). And even less formally institutionalized associations of people pursuing common spiritual or secular interests are found. As to the first, think of organizations such as the Brazilian *União do Vegetal*, the *Instituto Teosófico de Brasília*, with its associated organization, the *União Planetária*; as for the second, there exists a Minneapolis-based financial company called *Thrivent for Lutherans*, self-described as a savings and loan-cum-investment association whose members, in order to be eligible, have to be Lutherans, or be associated with some Lutheran institution. But these probably count as borderline cases.

At the other side of the spectrum we find nations whose organizational patterns are structured in accordance with local, tribal, familial, clan- or moiety-like divisions and affiliations. Institutions like national parliaments or legislatures, such as exist in Western countries, are more or less unknown and have to be introduced from the West, with all the problems

this implies. In Middle East countries such as Afghanistan or Iraq, the whole process of ‘building democracy’ (as opposed to what one could call ‘eliciting democracy’ on the existing cultural premises) is predicated on the notion that it is possible, even necessary, to ‘institutionalize’ these particular societies exclusively in accordance with Western traditions and norms. And if it is true, in the words of anthropologist Paul J. Nuti, that “cultural worldviews shape constructions of democracy”, then what we see here is how such worldviews “collide with democratic ‘scripts’ driven by other institutional and foreign policy concerns.” The result is “a classic collision between a culturally-inflected interpretation of a democratic form and a rigid, externally-rendered democracy script” (Nuti 2006).

The next section will illustrate some of the concrete problems this approach is likely to generate.

5.3. Wrong institutions, wrong pragmemes

On Friday, November 11, 2005, National Public Radio, NPR, broadcast an interview with Jason Christopher Hartley, the author of the much-discussed book *Just Another Soldier* (Hartley 2005); the interview was aired on KUT, the radio/television station of the University of Texas at Austin on the nationally syndicated NPR *Fresh Air* program, 3:00–4:30 pm CST. The author had been on active duty in Iraq as an enlisted soldier, later promoted to sergeant. Among other things, Hartley had kept a blog where he recorded his impressions of military and personal life at boot camp before, and on the ground during, the war. His book is based on this blog, and (besides becoming a best-seller) it earned its author a demotion and a \$1,000 fine.

In the book, the author vents his dissatisfaction with the way the American military conducted the war, especially in relation to its own men, but also to its enemies of all kinds and its prisoners. In the radio interview, he vividly and rather candidly described his irritation and anger at detainees who failed “to recognize my authority”, as he expressed it, and even made fun of him, showing their disrespect and contempt for whatever he stood for. He felt that he was not prepared for this: nobody had taught him how to exercise authority in the presence of enemy combatants or prisoners. To him, these people who were in an inferior position, compared to himself, did not recognize his superiority and did not pay him due respect; but on the other hand, how could he possibly punish them for that?

What is the problem here? Societal relations are perceived and practiced according to a particular institutional pattern which prescribes the relevant behavior. This U.S. soldier (a sergeant, prior to his demotion) had been socialized, both before and during his training, into a number of institutionalized patterns for military behavior that could be identified with particular institutions of his civil societal context. As an example, consider the situation of interacting with a detainee for the purpose of extracting useful information. The general pattern of asking questions in order to obtain an answer is prevalent in a number of institutions, but most commonly practiced in the educational situation, where the *pragmeme* of Questioning captures and legalizes this behavior.

The questions directed at a student in an educational context may have to do with his or her knowledge (as in the examination situation or the classroom quiz); other types of questions may be about his or her whereabouts at particular times (e.g., being late for, or absent in, class involves a predictable teacher questioning, to which the student in advance has prepared a suitable answer); and so on (see Capone 2005). The institution that comes closest to the sergeant's idea of 'exercising authority' in the interrogation situation is the common American educational institution known as the school. This is an institution that the majority of Americans know from personal experience, whether they only have a kindergarten through high school (often named K–12) experience, or have been enrolled in a university program leading to a degree. And at this exact point, the Questioning *pragmeme* kicks in.

5.4. Power and *pragmeme*

A speech act of authority, as embedded in Questioning, only makes sense in a situation of power, where the presence and distribution of power is understood and accepted by all the participants. Thus, a question can only be a valid speech act if it is subsumed under the corresponding *pragmeme* and conforms with the conditions governing that *pragmeme*, including the situation in which the question is, or may be, asked.

Now, the situation of questioning in the classroom is very different from that of interrogating a prisoner. Questioning and Interrogating simply subsume two entirely different situations; they are different *pragmemes*. The military interrogator selects the wrong *pragmeme*, that is, he or she relies on a wrong conception of the situation. In particular, with regard to

the interrogator's belief that s/he is in a position of power similar to that of the teacher trying to extract a correct answer from a student, nothing could be farther from the truth.

What the military interrogator does not realize is that the situation, despite superficial identity, belongs to a different *pragmeme* altogether for the prisoner. While the American assumes he is operating within a situation subsumed under the *pragmeme* of Questioning, the interrogated person views the situation more realistically as an antagonistic one of Interrogating: after all, he is at war with the interrogator and his fellow military. Rather than answering the man's questions, he'd much prefer to put a bullet between his eyes. The respective *pragmemes* and their corresponding situations are simply miles and miles apart.

On top of this, the war itself is viewed rather differently by the conflicting sides, and this, too, influences their attribution of the speech acts discussed here to the respective *pragmemes*. While the American soldier, officially and by training, has been (ideally) socialized into a frame of warfare conducted along institutional rules (such as Article 17 of the 1949 Geneva convention for the treatment of prisoners, and similar rules for treating civilian non-combatants), many, or even all, such rules do not seem to apply to any concrete situation on the battlefield or to the military interrogation, as we have seen happening time and again during the current Middle East confrontations and the so-called 'war on terrorism'. Rules like these are felt by some to be in vigor only at the time of writing, and may at any time be abrogated by the warring parties if this is considered useful for their purpose (compare U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's and U.S. President Bush's dismissal of the Geneva convention as not applicable to captives from the Al Qaeda and Taliban organizations).¹¹

One could say that the U.S. military have the wrong 'script' for modern warfare, and therefore they have no idea what it means to ask a question from an unwilling prisoner; they believe that by putting pressure on the prisoner, they can obtain his or her collaboration. The interrogating officer forgets that the person he is questioning is an enemy, and that the detainee looks at him as somebody he would rather kill than answer. The war situation does not allow for dialogue, the kind of collaborative effort that we associate with the Q&A pattern of speech acting, or the adjacency pair model of Conversation Analysis.

These mismatches, both those regarding the nature of warfare and in particular, that of the applicable *pragmemes*, have led to some disastrous misunderstandings. By reducing prisoner interrogation to a type of speech

acting where questions by authorities require answers, the sergeant in the example mentally substituted the ‘Questioning’ pragmeme for that of ‘Interrogation’. As a result, he did not realize that the latter case is entirely different from the former as far as preferred answers go. His frustration at obtaining only silence or mockery in lieu of a reply now becomes less difficult to understand, and this, in turn, may help to explain the further corruption of the pragmeme and its being replaced, in the end, by the application of force and other, even worse extrajudicial measures, such as torture and all kinds of mistreatment. Conversely, one also can understand the hectic tweaking of the existing rules that is taking place both in the military and in its civil judiciary backup, combined with a rush to patch up the definition of the situation, without however moving out of the current pragmeme and selecting (or even creating) a more pertinent one.

What has been said in this section is of prime importance to the problem raised initially: how to deal with pragmatics interculturally, as the next section will detail.

6. The pragmatics of interculturality

Culture is where the users are: culture as displayed in museums or as hawked by the tourist industry is mostly dead. But culture does not live in the individual user only: it exists, and thrives, in a societal whole, embodied in cultural institutions (school, church, civic organizations, political parties, state and other governmental institutions, and so on). Just as speech acts need a societal context to be effective (cf. Austin’s, Grice’s and Searle’s conditions), so too, ‘acts of culture’ (as intra- and interculturally located pragmemes) depend on societal conditions for their effectiveness.

More specifically, the intercultural can only exist in an intracultural environment of users (Mey 2004). And just as language users may disagree on the correct use of language, members of different cultures may clash in their evaluation of the features that characterize a particular culture. As an example, compare the discussions of the fifties and sixties on ‘highbrow’ vs. ‘middlebrow’ vs. ‘lowbrow’ culture, in which the metaphorical dimension of ‘height’ served to index a societal preference as well as a power differential. Even given that the notion of culture as such is universal (we all have culture, just as we all speak some language), in a comparison

or even a clash of cultures, the question remains whose culture will carry the day and impose itself: 'our' culture or the others'.

Pragmatics, being explicitly concerned with the users, points to a way out of the dilemma: while cultures differ, their users may agree, even when they belong to different or conflicting cultures. Again, the comparison with language makes sense: belonging to several different cultures is no less respectable nor any more 'exotic' than being bilingual. And similar to language rights and duties, we may speak of cultural rights and cultural duties. Thus, Amish parents who home school their children or Jewish parents who send theirs to Hebrew School on Saturdays exercise a cultural right, manifested in what they see as a cultural duty; on the other hand, those parents that prefer to send their children to the local community school also perform a cultural duty. The two are not exclusive, provided the societal conditions for peaceful coexistence are there.

But while this view may be commendable, it leaves one factor out of consideration: the one that the previous section defined as the *power* embedded in the *pragmeme*. Pragmemes are realized in use; the relative power inherent in the users makes or breaks the realization of a particular pragmeme in a particular social context. Thus, the Questioning pragmeme is realized in different ways in the classroom than in a press conference; and when it comes to questioning prisoners, the pragmeme cannot be upheld in its original form, but is superseded by that of Interrogation, as we have seen.

A further consequence of this prevalence of societal power is that in contexts where there is a power differential, cultures may clash. In intercultural terms, this translates to the dominant culture being able to realize its overt or covert aims at the expense of the dominated culture. In general, 'mainstream' values and standards will prevail over the values and standards inherent in the subjugated segments of the population, unless measures are taken to affirm the right of the underdogs not only to exist, but to actively affirm and determine their existence.

Again, the main battleground for these intercultural struggles is the institutions, and the battles are fought here both overtly and covertly. The difference is that overt institutionalization (as embodied in schools, the legal system, cultural organizations, and so on) is relatively easy to identify, whereas covert institutionalization mostly escapes the attention of the very participants in the activities of those institutions. For instance, consumers think they're actively participating in the free enterprise of the market, while they in reality are providing the capitalists with the means to

fatten their wallets. In Marx's immortal phrase, they do this without knowing that they're doing it (*Sie tun es aber sie wissen es nicht*). Covert institutionalization operates behind the users' backs, so to speak.

As a result, while policies supporting programs, say, of bilingual education, can be overtly set in motion by governmental decree, financed by local bond issues, and not least criticized in the popular fora of discussion, it remains almost impossible to deal efficiently with the covert representations of power that are beneath the surfaces of its varying commercial, ethnic, or religious manifestations. In the end, the societal power is where it's at; all institutionalization, including the overt kind, represents a pattern of societal power disparity. Typically, inadequate and window-dressing efforts at remedying a society's ill-balanced distribution of power (as is found in economies based on slave-ownership) do not aim at restoring the balance by attacking the power itself or its representatives, but by leaving matters of justice in the hands of the remote bureaucratic Powers That Be for the here and now, and ultimately appealing for compensation in the hereafter (the infamous 'pie-in-the-sky').

In parallel to this, when members of a power institution or power culture find themselves temporarily deprived of power, or even are reduced to extreme powerlessness (as in the case of Americans taken prisoners in Vietnam or Iraq, and being detained in subhuman conditions), the subjugated individuals' survival depends to a great extent on their ability to internally reaffirm the power that used to flow to them through their institution – the connection to which had been cut off externally, with the person's level of power temporarily dropping to zero. Similarly, the Taliban fighter internally reaffirms his connection to Islam, his center or power, by reciting verses of the Qur'an, thus rendering himself impervious to the questions and torture methods of his interrogators.

In the words of U.S. Senator John McCain, "[we] are always, always Americans, and different, better and stronger than those who would destroy us" (from an interview in *Newsweek*, November 15, 2005). American culture, the U.S. 'way of life' is thought of as superior, and specifically more powerful, than other ways of life, other cultures, in particular the cultures of the peoples 'we', the Americans, are fighting. And this explains also why a culture that is 'superior' (that is, more powerful, in one or the other sense) finds it so hard to be accepted by the less powerful culture (think again of the ways the efforts of the West to introduce democracy in 'primitive' societies have failed).

7. Conclusion: Some practical problems and implications

7.1. 'Translating' culture

I started out by saying that pragmatics is about language use, and therefore is primarily concerned with the users of language and the ways they are able (or not able, as the case may be) to use their language in their daily practices – in fact, are able or unable to shape their daily lives through and in language.

On the next level, I have shown how the use of language inherently depends on the societal power that one commands (or on the social and linguistic 'capital' that Bourdieu talks about in this connection; 1999: 57, 64). But the power must have an origin in society, as Bourdieu also is quick to point out. Above, I have alluded several times to the power of institutions. But these, too, are, in the last instance, people-, that is, user-created entities. I think it is here that we should start working toward a proper understanding of the inter-cultural, inasmuch as it is based on people's intra-cultural institutionalization.

While it may sound simplistic, and a bit programmatic, to (re-)affirm that 'all power stems from the people', the venerable slogan contains a grain or two of truth, seen in our perspective. If it's the people who have created the institutions that they live with (or under?), then the intercultural, understood not just as a touristic intermingling of individuals, but as an interleaving of cultures on the societal level, must nevertheless begin where the people are, that is, *within* a culture. And the languages we use to develop our intercultural contacts must both be commensurate with our intracultural social structures, and correctly project our values onto the structures of the society we are meeting and mixing with.

Cultural values cannot be simply translated, or 'converted', as if they could be expressed in some kind of monetary equivalent (actually, this is the danger of using terms such as 'capital' in these contexts: cultural 'capital' is automatically thought of as something that can be used like commodities and money in a regular market, *pace* Bourdieu). The reason is that cultural values are distributed through and in institutions: they are institutionally integrated, 'locked into' the context of the institution, and can only be made available through a process of 'unlocking', that is, interpreting the institutional code in an intercultural, not just interlingual, effort at translation. Just as it is impossible to compare monetary values (like national currencies) on a pure exchange rate basis (instead, one has to

ask for equivalents in terms of purchasing power, so-called PPE, in a particular economy), so, too, we only can act interculturally when we not only understand the scales that our interactors operate with, but also know where their baselines are located.

Let's finally consider some of the practical implications of this view in the context of one particular application, the teaching of foreign languages.

7.2. The application: L2 education

Interculturally based second language (L2) education should be grounded in the institutions that characterize the language and culture of the speakers. Techniques such as the discourse completion task (DCT) are a step in the right direction; however, as indicated by its name, the task (or 'test', as it used to be called) is typically conceived of in terms of 'discourse', not in terms of the relevant, institutionalized situation.

Much of the de-institutionalized dialogue ('discourse' in a non-Foucauldian sense)¹² that we encounter in these tasks (and in general, in texts used for L2-teaching) is chosen precisely because institutional contexts lend themselves badly to 'translation'. Institutions do not usually match from culture to culture; in addition, the dialogues used are often marked by the norms of a particular social class or stratum. Such norms do not necessarily reflect the L2-learners' class consciousness, but rather, correspond to what other, more influential social classes deem appropriate or necessary in the context of L2-instruction. For instance, how many DCT or other L2-oriented dialogues deal with the problems that workers have in unionizing, employees have in obtaining sufficient medical care, industry or plantation workers have in protecting themselves against the nefarious impact of the production line and the highly unsafe working conditions of fruit farms and vineyards in many areas of California, Florida, and a number of other states, where mechanical, chemical, radiation related, and other hazards threaten the lives and safety of the workers?¹³

In order to answer these (admittedly rhetorical) questions and to properly deal with the underlying problems, we have to apply the insights provided by intercultural pragmatics. In particular, we must know how to use not just any kind of L2, but the specific L2 of the institution in question: the language of the labor market, the language of the factory safety code, the language of the workers' rights (as specified in local and

national legal documents), the language of the immigration regulations, and so on and so forth.

Only by integrating themselves in the locus of social power, the institution, and by doing this on the proper premises (that is, including the use of the appropriate language), immigrants and other displaced persons worldwide will be able to prevent their inter-cultural ghettoizing and intra-cultural isolation, and thereby avoid the ‘Scylla and Charybdis’ of intercultural pragmatics: the opposition between a pragmatics-only and a culture-only approach, that is: between gaining the social world and losing one’s individual soul (compare Rodriguez’s ‘assimilation’, referred to initially; for more on this, see Mey 2004).

Appendix

Some further topics for reflection/discussion

- practical use vs. theoretical aims
- what language should immigrants use/be taught?
- L2 teaching/acquisition/management
- cultivating culture and language without offense to other cultures and their symbols (cf. the head scarf debates in France or the purported desecration of the Holy Qur’an by U.S. soldiers in Guantánamo)
- separate, self-contained environments vs. ‘mainstreaming’ policies (cf. the debates on the use of American Sign Language, ASL, vs. vocalizing by deaf people in the U.S.)
- language policies on state and local levels, inclusive funding of bilingual language programs
- older and recent tendencies amongst immigrants toward partial or complete assimilation (cf. Rodriguez’s comment, cited above)

Notes

1. Al Smith was the Irish Catholic Democrat who ran unsuccessfully for the Presidency in 1928. Joe DiMaggio was the baseball icon of Italian American descent who was also known for his brief marriage to Marilyn Monroe.
2. Naming (of people, cultural activities, or concrete objects) is traditionally considered to be a prerogative of a cultural community or people belonging to such a community. This explains the nomenclature policy of many countries that prohibit ‘exotic’ name-giving or make it difficult for a person to use a name that isn’t universally accepted in the country. My own experiences in

this respect are manifold: from having to fight with the Danish authorities for the right to name my firstborn daughter ‘Kari-Anne’ (a name by now completely ‘acculturated’, both in Norway and Denmark), or some years later, with the Czechoslovak authorities, who insisted that I could not name my daughter Sara without adding the (Czech) obligatory length mark (Sára), or even give her two names, the second being ‘Katrine’, which they insisted be spelled the Czech way, with both metathesis and ‘hacek’ on the -r-! (Luckily, I prevailed, thanks to the intervention of none lesser than the famous academician Bohuslav Havránek). Also interesting is the fate of the airport of the South Brazilian city of Blumenau, S.C. As the name indicates, the city was founded in the 1880s by German immigrants to Santa Catarina, and given this purely German name. However, when sixty years later, an airport had to be constructed, the tide of culture had changed. This airport is not called ‘Blumenau’ (which would have been historically and geographically correct), but was given the totally unrelated appellation ‘Navegadores’ – a name reflecting a period of early Brazilian history, and reminding us of the colonial Portuguese seafarers (who however had nothing to do with Blumenau: that city was founded three centuries later!).

3. Here is my receipt (translated) for a recent visit to the Shanghai Starbucks outlet #33:

“2006-08-25 20:10 pm
 check: 503044 table: 14
 Small regular coffee 15
 Small capucchino [sic] 22
 Total 37
 Tended 100
 Change 63”
 [prices in yuan (RMB)]

The total amount came to around U.S. \$ 4.50 for two small-to-regular coffees. Note that the standard monthly wage in China is RMB 590, about U.S. \$73.50.

4. Just as they have done in other areas of life. On a recent visit to China, I was told by my hosts that my technology of presenting (transparencies, overhead projector) was ‘antiquated’; some of them didn’t even know what a transparency was. They also said that they didn’t recall ever having seen an overhead projector – until someone suggested that in some remote storeroom there might be one. And so it was: the contraption was brought back and (after a much needed dusting exercise) put at my disposal, to the amazement of the Chinese audience, who had indeed ‘leapfrogged’ from the humble handout to PowerPoint presentation level.
5. Also, to obtain a more accurate representation, the figure of ‘300 million’ should be adjusted downward for multiple use. What Mr. Schultz said was

- that ‘300 million Chinese use a mobile phone each day’ – obviously, they need not be all different people.
6. The borrowed English term could originally have been narrowed down to describe a ‘trash container’, and may at one time also in English have been the descriptive label used locally for this kind of object, even if in this sense, it is not used by many English speaking people today.
 7. According to an article by Christopher Dickey, France requires “complete linguistic and cultural assimilation” as a condition for citizenship. (‘Europe’s time bomb’, *Newsweek*, November 21, 2005, p. 43)
 8. While the cultural and linguistic oppression of the Kurdish people in certain countries of the Middle East is widely known, few people are aware of the fact that in the past, the Turkish government repeatedly has tried to interfere with Kurdish literacy programs, aimed at immigrant Kurds in Denmark.
 9. An n-tuple can be described as an ordered set of n elements $p_1, p_2, p_3, \dots, p_n$ of which each member picks out an element of some original sets $P_1, P_2, P_3, \dots, P_n$. A special case is the so-called ‘Cartesian product’, which consists of a set of ordered pairs (or couples; there are only two sets involved). The ‘ordering’ is necessary to ensure that all of the original sets have a chance to get a member assigned.
 10. Here, one should keep in mind that the relationship I call ‘embedding’ is a dialectic one: the act that is embedded, by being exercised, affects the embedding context. The strictly logico-mathematical notion of the n-tuple is perhaps not the most appropriate model for this kind of relationship.
 11. “Al Qaeda and Taliban individuals under the control of the Department of Defense are not entitled to prisoner-of-war status for purposes of the Geneva Convention of 1949” (Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. Secretary of Defense, January 19, 2002); cf. also the Presidential directive of February 7, 2002, which uses more or less identical language (Source: *Newsweek*, November 21, 2005, pp. 30–31).
One amendment to the U.S. Department of Defense’s appropriation bill, introduced by the Arizona Republican Senator John McCain and banning the use of torture, has recently (October 5, 2005) been passed by an overwhelming majority (90 to 9) in the U.S. Senate; the bill, with its amendments, is currently before a House of Representatives/Senate joint conference committee (Source: *Amnesty International*, Winter 2005, p. 4).
 12. A broader, Foucauldian interpretation of the term ‘discourse’ comprises the total social and cultural practices of a particular culture, “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault [1969] 1972: 44). But it is apparently not in this sense that the ‘discourse’ of the DCT originally was conceived (see further Mey 2001: 191).
 13. One recent example among many:
On the morning of May 12, 2005, Fabiola González, along with twenty-two other women working in a vineyard in Arvin, California, were

sprayed accidentally with the ‘moderately toxic’ pesticide Baythroid 2 by a helicopter treating a nearby grove. All were taken to local hospitals and all suffered major or minor symptoms of poisoning (four of the women had convulsions and had to be treated in intensive care). On being released, the women were handed their [moderately toxic!] clothing in black plastic bags, and told to ‘burn [not wash] it!’ (Source: *United Farm Workers of America, AFL–CIO Newsletter*, Summer 2005 [article signed by Arturo S. Rodríguez, UFW President]).

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Formulaic language in English Lingua Franca

Istvan Kecskes

1. Objectives

The focus of this paper is the use of formulaic language in English Lingua Franca (ELF). The conversation in (1) demonstrates a frequent problem occurring in lingua franca communication in which the language in use is not the L1 of either speaker:

- (1) Chinese student: – *I think Peter drank a bit too much at the party yesterday.*
Turkish student: – *Eh, **tell me about it.** He always drinks much.*
Chinese student: – *When we arrived he drank beer. Then Mary brought him some vodka. Later he drank some wine. Oh, too much.*
Turkish student: – *Why are you telling me this? I was there.*
Chinese student: – *Yes, but you told me to tell you about it.*

One of the nonnative speakers used a formulaic expression in a native-like way. However, the other nonnative speaker was not familiar with the conventional connotation of the expression. For him the most salient meaning of the formula was its literal meaning, its combinatorial meaning. This discrepancy in processing led to misunderstanding between the speakers.

Recently English Lingua Franca communication has been receiving increasing attention in language research. Globalization has changed the world and the way we use language. With English being the most frequently used lingua franca much communication happens without the participation of native speakers of English. The development and use of English as a lingua franca is probably the most radical and controversial approach to emerge in recent years, as David Graddol (2006) claimed in his book *English Next*. The book argues that it is an inevitable trend in the use of global English that fewer interactions now involve a native speaker, and that as the English-speaking world becomes less formal, and more democratic, the myth of a standard language becomes more difficult to maintain. Graddol claims that in this new world the presence of native speakers hinders rather than supports communication. In organizations

where English has become the corporate language, meetings sometimes go more smoothly when no native speakers are present. Globally, the same kind of thing may be happening on a larger scale. Understanding how non-native speakers use English talking to other non-native speakers has now become an important research area. The Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) project, led by Barbara Seidlhofer, is creating a computer corpus of lingua franca interactions, which is intended to help linguists understand ELF better. Although several studies have been published on the use of ELF (e.g., House 2002, 2003; Meierkord 1998, 2000; Knapp and Meierkord 2002; Firth 1996; Seidlhofer 2004), our knowledge about this particular variety of English is still quite limited. What makes lingua franca communication unique is that interlocutors usually speak different first languages and belong to different cultures but use a common language that has its own socio-cultural background and preferred ways of saying things. So it is essential to ask two questions:

1. With no native speakers participating in the language game how much will the players stick to the original rules of the game?
2. Can current pragmatic theories explain this type of communication in which basic concepts such as common ground, mutual knowledge, cooperation, and relevance gain new meaning?

Second language researchers have worked out several different tools and methods to measure language proficiency and fluency. In the center of all these procedures stand grammatical correctness and pragmatic appropriateness. There is no room here to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches. Let's just say that if we want to learn how much lingua franca speakers stick to the original rules of the language game, we will need to find out something about their thought processes and linguistic conventions as reflected in their language use. What are the possible means for this? First of all, people belonging to a particular speech community have preferred ways of saying things (cf. Wray 2002) and preferred ways of organizing thoughts. Preferred ways of saying things are generally reflected in the use of formulaic language and figurative language while preferred ways of organizing thoughts can be detected through analyzing, for instance, the use of subordinate conjunctions, clauses and discourse markers. This paper will focus on the use of formulaic language in ELF to answer the two questions above.

2. Formulaic language

2.1. The formulaic continuum

By formulaic language we usually mean multi-word collocations which are stored and retrieved holistically rather than being generated *de novo* with each use. Collocations, fixed expressions, lexical metaphors, idioms and situation-bound utterances can all be considered as examples of formulaic language (Howarth 1998; Wray 1999, 2002, 2005; Kecskes 2000) in which word strings occurring together tend to convey holistic meanings that are either more than the sum of the individual parts, or else diverge significantly from a literal, or word-for-word meaning and operate as a single semantic unit (Gairns and Redman 1986: 35).

Certain language sequences have conventionalized meanings which are used in predictable situations. This functional aspect, however, is different in nature in each type of fixed expression, which justifies the hypothesis of a *continuum* (Kecskes 2003) that contains grammatical units (for instance *be going to*) on the left, fixed semantic units (cf. *as a matter of fact*; *suffice it to say*) in the middle and pragmatic expressions (such as situation-bound utterances *welcome aboard*; *help yourself*) on the right.

Table 1. Formulaic Continuum

Gramm. Units	Fixed Sem. Units	Phrasal Verbs	Speech Formulas	Situation-bound Utterances	Idioms
<i>be going to</i>	<i>as a matter of fact</i>	<i>put up with</i>	<i>going shopping</i>	<i>welcome aboard</i>	<i>kick the bucket</i>
<i>have to</i>	<i>suffice it to say</i>	<i>get along with</i>	<i>not bad</i>	<i>help yourself</i>	<i>spill the beans</i>

The more we move to the right on the functional continuum the wider the gap seems to become between compositional meaning and actual situational meaning. Language development often results in a change of function, i.e., a right to left or left to right movement of a linguistic unit on the continuum. Lexical items such as “going to” can become grammaticalized, or lexical phrases may lose their compositionality and

develop an “institutionalized” function, such as *I’ll talk to you later*, *How are you doing?*, *Welcome aboard*, and the like. Speech formulas such as *you know*, *not bad*, *that’s all right* are similar to situation-bound utterances (SBU). The difference between them is that while SBUs are usually tied to particular speech situations, speech formulas can be used anywhere in the communication process where the speakers find them appropriate.

Corpus studies have broadened the scope of formulaic expressions. Researchers working with large corpora talk about formulaic sequences that are defined by Wray (2002: 9) as “a formulaic sequence [is] a sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar”. Based on this definition much of human language is formulaic rather than freely generated. I did not follow this definition in this study, and concentrated only on fixed expressions that are usually motivated and allow relatively few structural changes (fixed semantic units, speech formulas, phrasal verbs, idioms and situation-bound utterances). I ignored collocations such as *if you say...; this is good...; I have been...*, etc., which are frequent in the database but hardly fit into the categories given in the table.

Current linguistic models emphasize combinatorial creativity as the central property of human language. Although formulaic language has been mostly overlooked in favor of models of language that center around the rule-governed, systematic nature of language and its use, there is growing evidence that these prefabricated lexical units are integral to first- and second-language acquisition and use, as they are segmented from input and stored as wholes in long-term memory (Wood 2002; Wray 2002; Miller and Weinert 1998). Formulaic expressions are basic to fluent language production.

2.2. Preferred ways of saying things

Formulaic language is the heart and soul of native-like language use. In fact this is what makes language use native-like. Languages and their speakers have preferred ways of saying things (cf. Wray 2002). English native speakers *shoot a film*, *dust the furniture*, or ask you to *help yourself* at the table. *Having said that*, if we want to find out how much non-native speakers stick to the rules of the game when no native speakers are present,

we should look into the differences in the use of formulaic language. Keeping the preferred ways of native speakers means that lingua franca interlocutors try to keep the original rules of the game. These preferred ways lead to the use of prefabricated expressions. The knowledge of these expressions gives a certain kind of idiomaticity to language use. Our everyday communication is full of phrasal expressions and utterances because we like to stick to preferred ways of saying things. Why is this so? Three important reasons can be mentioned:

- Formulas decrease the processing load

There is psycholinguistic evidence that fixed expressions and formulas have an important economizing role in speech production (cf. Miller and Weinert 1998; Wray 2002). Sinclair's *idiom principle* says that the use of prefabricated chunks "...may...illustrate a natural tendency to economy of effort" (Sinclair 1991: 110). This means that in communication we want to achieve more cognitive effects with less processing effort. Formulaic expressions ease the processing overload not only because they are "ready-made" and do not require the speaker/hearer any "putting together" but also because their salient meanings are easily accessible in online production and processing.

- Phrasal utterances have a strong framing power

Frames are basic cognitive structures which guide the perception and representation of reality (Goffman 1974). Frames help determine which parts of reality become noticed. They are not consciously manufactured but are unconsciously adopted in the course of communicative processes. Formulaic expressions usually come with framing. Most fixed expressions are defined relative to a conceptual framework. If a policeman stops my car and says *Step out of the car, please*, this expression will create a particular frame in which the roles and expressions to be used are quite predictable.

- Formulaic units create shared bases for common ground in coordinating joint communicative actions

The use of formulaic language requires shared experience and conceptual fluency. Tannen and Öztekin (1981: 54) argued that "cultures that have set formulas afford their members the tranquility of knowing that what they

say will be interpreted by the addressee in the same way that it is intended, and that, after all, is the ultimate purpose of communication”. Nonnative speakers do not share a common ground or similar experience either. This is especially true for lingua franca communication where participants belong to different speech communities and use a common language that does not reflect any of these speech communities.

2.3. Formulaic language in pragmatics research

Formulaic language (pre-patterned speech) has not received much attention within any subfield of pragmatics. Certain groups of formulas such as idioms, phrasal verbs and others have been discussed in figurative language research. But with few exceptions (Coulmas 1981; Overstreet and Yule 2001; Wray 2002; Van Lancker-Sidtis 2003, 2004; Kecskes 2000, 2003) not much has been written about formulaic language in pragmatics. Why is it that pragmaticists almost ignore this topic although our everyday conversation is full of formulaic expressions? I can think of two reasons:

- ‘What is said’ is not well defined for formulaic utterances.

In the Gricean paradigm listeners determine “what is said” according to one set of principles or procedures, and they work out (calculate) what is implicated according to another. Implicatures are based on “what is said”, the combinatorial meaning of the expression. But listeners often have to calculate certain parts of “what is said” too. This somewhat contradicts the basic assumption of major pragmatic theories (neo-Gricean approach, relevance theory) according to which “what is said” is usually well defined for every type of utterance. If it weren’t we would have no basis for working out implicatures. However, in formulaic language there are many counter-examples, especially in phrasal utterances. Clark (1996: 145) argued that when you tell a bartender *Two pints of Guinness*, it is unclear what you are saying. Are you saying in Grice’s sense *I’d like* or *I’ll have* or *Get me* or *Would you get me* or *I’d like you to get me a glass of beer*? There is no way in principle of selecting among these candidates. Whatever you are doing, you do not appear to be *saying* that you are ordering beer, and yet you cannot be implicating it either because you cannot cancel the order – it makes no sense to say *Two pints of Guinness, but I’m not ordering two pints of Guinness*. “What is said” simply is not well defined for phrasal

utterances. (In relevance theory Carston [2005] has also questioned the utility of the concept “what is said”, which is sometimes identified with the “explicature”, which is in large part contextually determined.) A further example:

(2) To the cashier in a store: “*Are you open?*”

– Linguistic units only prompt meaning construction.

The leading thought in present day linguistic research on meaning is that linguistic stimuli are just a guide in the performing of sophisticated inferences about each other’s states of minds and intentions. Linguistic units only prompt meaning construction. Formulaic expressions do not fit very well into this line of thinking because they usually have fixed meanings. They are like frozen implicatures. The modular view rarely works with fixed expressions. When situation-bound utterances such as *Nice meeting you; You’re all set; How do you do?* are used, there is usually just one way to understand their situational function.

3. English Lingua Franca database

3.1. Data collection and analysis

Data were collected in spontaneous lingua franca communication. Participants were 13 adult individuals in two groups with the following first languages: Spanish, Chinese, Polish, Portuguese, Czech, Telugu, Korean and Russian. All subjects had spent a minimum of six months in the U.S. and had at least intermediate knowledge of English before arriving. Both Group 1 (7 students) and Group 2 (6 students) participated in a 30-minute discussion about the following topics: housing in the area, jobs, and local customs. The conversations were undirected and uncoached. Subjects said what they wanted. No native speaker was present. Conversations were recorded and then transcribed, which resulted in a 13,726 word database. After a week participants were given the chance to listen to their conversations and were asked to discuss their thought processes using a “think aloud” technique.

Data analysis focused on the types of formulaic units given in Table 1 above. The questions I sought to answer can be summarized as follows:

- How does the use of formulas relate to the ad hoc generated expressions in the data?
- What type of fixed expressions did the subjects prefer?
- What formulas did speakers create on their own?

3.2. Findings

The database consists of 13,726 words. Table 2 below shows the number of words that represent the six types of formulaic units that I focused on in the database. Words were counted in each type of formulaic chunk in the transcripts. Following are samples for each unit:

- (3) Grammatical units: *I am going to stay here; you have to do that*
 Fixed semantic units: *after a while, for the time being, once a month, for a long time*
 Phrasal verbs: *They were worried about me; Take care of the kids; I am trying to remember*
 Speech formulas: *not bad; that's why; you know; I mean*
 Situation-bound utterances: *How are you?; How about you?; That's fine*
 Idioms: *gives me a ride; that makes sense; figure out what I want*

Table 2. Number of words that represent the six types of formulaic units

Gramm. Units	Fixed Sem. Units	Phrasal Verbs	Speech Formulas	Situation-bound Utterances	Idioms	Total
102	235	281	250	57	115	1,040

What is striking is the relatively low occurrence of formulaic expressions in the database. It is only 7.6 percent of the total words. Even if we know that this low percentage refers only to one particular database, and the results may change significantly if our focus is on other databases it is still much less than linguists speak about when they address the issue of formulaicity in native speaker conversation. Hymes (1972) pointed out that an immense

portion of verbal behavior consists of linguistic routines. Bolinger suggested that “speakers do at least as much remembering as they do putting together” (Bolinger 1976: 2). Fillmore also found that “an enormously large amount of natural language is formulaic, automatic and rehearsed, rather than propositional, creative or freely generated” (Fillmore 1976a: 24). Analyzing computer databases Altenberg (1998) went even further: he claimed that almost 80 percent of our language production can be considered formulaic. Biber et al. (1999: 990), in their study of “lexical bundles”, defined as “sequences of word forms that commonly go together in natural discourse”, irrespective of their structural make-up or idiomaticity, argued that conversation has a larger amount of lexical bundle types than academic prose.

All these authors define formulaicity in a different way, and their numbers and percentages change depending on their definition. Being aware of these facts we can still say that native speakers use fixed expressions to a great extent. Formulas are natural consequences of everyday language use, and language users feel comfortable using them because fixed expressions usually keep them out of trouble since they mean similar things to members of a particular speech community.

Even if our database is very limited and does not let us make generalizations about lingua franca communication, one thing seems to be obvious: As far as formulaic language use is concerned there seems to be a significant difference between native speaker communication and lingua franca communication. Non-native speakers appear to rely on prefabricated expressions in their lingua franca language production to a much smaller extent than native speakers. The question is why this is so. But before making an attempt to give an answer to the question we should look at Table 2 that shows the distribution of formula types in the database.

Most frequent occurrences are registered in three groups: fixed semantic units, phrasal verbs and speech formulas. However, we have to be careful with speech formulas that constitute a unique group because if we examine the different types of expressions within the group we can see that three expressions (*you know; I / you mean; you're right*) account for 66.8 percent (167 out of 250) out of all words counted in this group. The kind of frequency that we see in the use of these three expressions is not comparable to any other expressions in the database. This seems to make sense because these particular speech formulas may fulfill different functions such as back-channeling, filling a gap, and the like. They are also

used very frequently by native speakers so it is easy for non-native speakers to pick them up.

If we disregard speech formulas for the reason explained above, formulas that occur in higher frequency than any other expressions are fixed semantic units and phrasal verbs. We did not have a native speaker control group but we can speculate that this might not be so in native speaker communication. It can be hypothesized that native speakers use the groups of formulas in a relatively balanced way, or at least in their speech production fixed semantic units and phrasal verbs do not show priority to the extent shown in lingua franca communication. How can this preference of fixed semantic units and phrasal verbs by non-native speakers be explained? How does this issue relate to the first observation about the amount of formulas in native speaker communication and lingua franca communication?

As the “think aloud” sessions demonstrated the two issues are interrelated. ELF speakers usually avoid the use of formulaic expressions not necessarily because they do not know these phrases but because they are worried that their interlocutors will not understand them properly. They are reluctant to use language that they know, or perceive to be, figurative or semantically less transparent (see also Philip 2005). ELF speakers try to come as close to the compositional meaning of expressions as possible because they think that if there is no figurative and/or metaphorical meaning involved their interlocutors will process the English words and expressions the way they meant them. Since lingua franca speakers come from different socio-cultural backgrounds and represent different cultures the mutual knowledge they may share is the knowledge of the linguistic code. Consequently, semantic analyzability plays a decisive role in ELF speech production. This assumption is supported by the fact that the most frequently used formulaic expressions are the fixed semantic units and phrasal verbs in which there is semantic transparency to a much greater extent than in idioms, situation-bound utterances or speech formulas. Of course, one can argue that phrasal verbs may frequently express figurative meaning and function like idioms such as *I never hang out...*; *they will kick me out from my home...* However, when I found cases like this in the database, I listed the phrasal verb among the category “idioms” rather than “phrasal verbs”. So the group of phrasal verbs above contains expressions in which there is usually clear semantic transparency.

The use of semantically transparent language resulted in fewer misunderstandings and communication breakdowns than expected. This

finding corresponds with House's observation about the same phenomena (House 2003). The insecurity experienced by lingua franca speakers make them establish a unique set of rules for interaction which may be referred to as an inter-culture, according to Koole and ten Thije (1994: 69) a "culture constructed in cultural contact".

Another example of this interesting phenomenon in the database is the endeavor of speakers creating their own formulas that can be split into two categories. In the first category we can find expressions that are used only once and demonstrate an effort to sound metaphorical. However, this endeavor is usually driven by the L1 in which there may be an equivalent expression for the given idea. For instance:

- (4) *it is almost skips from my thoughts*
you are not very rich in communication
take a school

The other category comprises expressions that are created on the spot during the conversations and are picked up by the members of the ad hoc speech community. One of the participants creates or coins an expression that is needed in the discussion of a given topic. This unit functions like a *target formula* the use of which is accepted by the participants in the given conversation, and is demonstrated by the fact that other participants also pick it up and use it. However, this is just a temporary formula that may be entirely forgotten when the conversation is over. For instance:

- (5) *we connect each other very often*
native American

Lingua franca speakers frequently coin or create their own ways of expressing themselves effectively, and the mistakes they may make will carry on in their speech even though the correct form is there for them to imitate. For instance, several participants adopted the phrase *native Americans* to refer to native speakers of English. Although in the "think aloud" conversation session, the correct expression (*native speaker of English*) was repeated several times by one of the researchers, the erroneous formula "native Americans" kept being used by the lingua franca speakers. They even joked about it and said that the use of target formulas coined by them in their temporary speech community was considered like a "joint venture" and created a special feeling of camaraderie in the group.

The avoidance of genuine formulaic language and preference for semantically transparent expressions can be explained by another factor. The analysis of the database and the “think aloud” sessions shed light on something that is hardly discussed in the literature. It seems that multiword chunks might not help L2 processing in the same way they help L1 processing. Speaking about native speaker communication Wray (2002) pointed out that if processing is to be minimized, it will be advantageous to work with large lexical units where possible, storing multiword strings as if they were single words. In some cases this will make it possible for speakers to go to their mental lexicon and pull out a single entry that expresses a complete message meaning (e.g., *How do you do; Fancy meeting you here!*). However, lingua franca speakers usually do not know how flexible the formulas are linguistically, i.e., what structural changes they allow without losing their original function and/or meaning. Linguistic form is a semantic scaffold; if it is defective, the meaning will inevitably fall apart. This is what lingua franca speakers worry about as was revealed in the “think aloud” sessions. The “unnaturalness” of their language production from a native speaker perspective is caused more by imperfect phraseology than by inadequate conceptual awareness. These imperfections differ from the kind of alteration and elaboration of conventional phrases that native speakers produce, because there is flawlessness to native-speaker variation that ELF speakers usually fail to imitate. If native speakers do alter conventional expressions, they make any necessary changes to the grammar and syntax as a matter of course. This way they ensure that the expression flows uninterruptedly from word to word and expression to expression, and this really helps processing. However, this does not appear to work the same way for lingua franca speakers who may not be able to continue the expression if they break down somewhere in the middle of its use.

We can say that formulaic language use in ELF communication points to the fact that with no native speakers participating in the language game the lingua franca interlocutors still make an effort in their own way to keep the original rules of the game. This means that they try to use formulas that appear to be the best means to express their immediate communicative goals. The fixed expressions they use most frequently are the ones that have clear compositional meaning which makes their interpretation easy. As the examples in (5) demonstrate, lingua franca communicators may also create new formulas if the need arises.

4. Lingua franca and pragmatic theory

The second question to be answered is how pragmatic theories explain lingua franca communication in which basic concepts such as common ground, mutual knowledge, cooperation, and relevance gain new meaning. Seeking an answer to this question I will review two important issues in pragmatic theory:

- cooperation, common ground, and mutual knowledge; and
- literal and non-literal meaning.

4.1. Lingua franca speaker behavior

Meierkord (1998) noted that studies on lingua franca all stress the cooperative nature of lingua franca communication. The question is whether this really is cooperation or a particular type of collaboration. Conversations in our database point to the fact that ELF speakers primarily have their communicative goals rather than cooperation in mind. They want to get their message through with all possible communicative means at their disposal, and they want to make sure that their meaning is understood. But in order to do so they do not necessarily look for common ground or mutual knowledge. Rather, they focus on linguistic means and certain discourse strategies as the following examples demonstrate:

- (6) German: – *So you own a house.*
Urdu: – *Yes, I have a house. I bought it... that's mine. Nice house.*
German: – *OK, OK, this is what I am saying. The house is yours. You own it.*
- (7) Pakistanese: – *You said you live with your son. So your wife is not here.*
Chinese: – *Yes, I am alone. I am with my son.*
Columbian: – *Will your wife come to visit?*
Chinese: – *Yes, she came yesterday.*
Pakistani: – *Did she come from China?*
Chinese: – *Yes, she arrived from Nanjing.*

As the examples show ELF speakers usually try to achieve their communicative goals with discourse means such as repetitions, paraphrasing, giving more information than needed, and using words and expressions whose most salient meaning coincides with their literal meaning rather than seeking what common ground and knowledge they share with their interlocutors. This is true at least for the first phase of production and/or comprehension. These findings are in line with House's observations (House 2003). She analyzed the preliminary results of part of a long-term study of ELF talk among university students in Germany involving a variety of real-life and simulated conversations. The first major tendency observed by House was the dominating, self-centered behavior of ELF speakers. Subjects engaged in parallel monologues and exhibited no fine-tuning of moves to fit their interlocutors' needs. They ignored questions, and there was a lack of prefacing or mitigating of dissimilative action. New topics were usually started without preparation or initiation.

The analysis of our database showed similar speaker-hearer performance. However, this egocentric communicative behavior goes together with a special kind of camaraderie and consensus orientation. Both House's findings and my own point to the fact that lingua franca speakers do not ignore their interlocutors' needs, rather they know that they have very little in common both culturally and socio-linguistically, and act accordingly. As claimed above, the main thing they can rely on in getting their message through is the linguistic code, the linguistic system of English which is, to a great extent, given the same way to each party. All ELF speakers have studied the system, structure and vocabulary of the English language. ELF data show that non-native speakers use the linguistic code itself as a common ground rather than the socio-cultural background knowledge that differs significantly with each participant. This strong reliance on the linguistic code results in the priority of literal meaning over non-literal, figurative language and formulaic language. This is why ELF language use generally lacks idiomaticity, which is so important in native-native communication. For lingua franca interlocutors it is almost always the literal meaning that is the most salient meaning both in production and comprehension. This is where a significant difference between native speaker and lingua franca communication should be noted. While for native speakers either (or both) literal and non-literal meaning can be the most salient meaning, non-native speakers usually consider literal meaning as the most salient meaning of an expression in most

situations. If that does not work out they make the necessary modifications by negotiating meaning.

4.2. Cooperation, common ground and mutual knowledge

As stated above, lingua franca speakers demonstrated a very egocentric approach to language production and comprehension. It is not that they did not want to be cooperative, or relevant, or committed to the conversation. Rather, in the first phase of communication, instead of looking for common ground, they articulated their own intentions with whatever linguistic means they had immediate access to. This does not mean, of course, that lingua franca communication is not a collaborative phenomenon. Rather collaboration happens in a different way than in native-native communication.

It is not just lingua franca speaker behavior that has directed attention to the egocentric behavior of speaker-hearers as well as to the problems with the interpretation of cooperation, common ground and mutual knowledge. Current research in cognitive psychology conducted with native speakers (cf. egocentric approach: Keysar and Bly 1995; Barr and Keysar 2005; and graded salience hypothesis: Giora 1997, 2003) has also pointed out that individual, egocentric endeavors of interactants play a much more decisive role in communication than current pragmatic theories envision. What interlocutors actually do is not always supported by current pragmatic theories that primarily seem to emphasize the collaborative character of interaction and modularity of processing, and usually consider the goals and beliefs of the interlocutors of secondary importance. Speakers are expected to design utterances that listeners can understand, and listeners are supposed to interpret utterances the way they were intended. Because ambiguity is pervasive in language use, pragmatic theories assume that speakers and listeners should strive to speak and understand against the background of a mutual perspective. However, Barr and Keysar (2005: 23) argued that speakers and listeners commonly violate their mutual knowledge when they produce and understand language. Their behavior is egocentric because it is rooted in the speakers' or listeners' own knowledge instead of in mutual knowledge. People turn out to be poor estimators of what others know. Speakers usually underestimate the ambiguity and overestimate the effectiveness of their utterances (Keysar and Henly 2002). The findings here reinforce Stalnaker's observation that "It is part of the

concept of presupposition that the speaker assumes that the members of his audience presuppose everything that he presupposes. They may, of course, be mistaken, but they realize this and have systematic strategies for resolving such discrepancies” (Stalnaker 1978: 321).

Findings about the egocentric approach of interlocutors to communication are also confirmed by Giora’s (1997, 2003) graded salience hypothesis and Kecskes’s (2003, 2004) dynamic model of meaning. Interlocutors seem to consider their conversational experience more important than prevailing norms of informativeness. Giora’s main argument is that knowledge of salient meanings plays a primary role in the process of using and comprehending language. She claimed that “privileged meanings, meanings foremost on our mind, affect comprehension and production primarily, regardless of context or literality” (Giora 2003: 103). Privileged meanings are the results of prior conversational experience. They depend on familiarity, frequency and conventionality.

Kecskes’ dynamic model of meaning also emphasizes that what the speaker says relies on prior conversational experience reflected in lexical choices in production, and how the listener understands what is said in the actual situational context also depends on his/her prior conversational experience with the use of lexical items applied in the speaker’s utterances. Smooth communication depends primarily on the match between the two. Cooperation, relevance, and reliance on possible mutual knowledge come in to play only after the speaker’s ego is satisfied and the listener’s egocentric, most salient interpretation is processed. In comprehension it is not that we first decode the language and then try to make sense of it but we try to make sense of it right away and make adjustments if language does not make sense (Gibbs 1994, 1999; Giora 1997; Kecskes 2004, 2006). In production the speaker’s primary goal is to formulate the message according to her/his intention. Barr and Keysar (2005) argued that the mere observation that a speaker produces an utterance that is in alignment with mutual knowledge does not warrant the inference that she or he directly computed that knowledge as mutual at any time. The speaker may have or may have simply used information that was simultaneously available and salient to him or her and the interlocutor. According to their findings, it appears that mutual knowledge is most likely implemented as a mechanism for detecting and correcting errors instead of an intrinsic, routine process of the language processor. The following excerpt from the database support this assumption:

- (8) Br: – *Have you ever heard about ‘au pair’ before?*
Col: – *No, what is ‘au pair’?*
H-K: – *It’s a French word.*
Br: – *We come as an exchange to take care of kids.*
Col: – *What kids?*
Br: – *Kids in the host family. We live with the host family.*
H-K: – *By the way, how about the kids? How do you know what to do with them?*
Br: – *We have to go to training.*

The participants of this interaction are girls from Brazil, Columbia and Hong Kong. The Brazilian girl works as an “au pair”. As the conversation unfolds they say what they think with simple linguistic means. They create mutual knowledge on the spot, making sure that their interlocutors really understand their intention.

It is important, therefore to rethink exactly what it means to be cooperative, a concept that is at the heart of most theories of language use. For one, the supposition that speakers strive to be maximally informative in lexical selection does not seem to fit what they actually do. Perhaps a better description of what they do is simply to rely on their past and current discourse experience and select the terms that are most strongly available to them. It is not through the individual sentence by which language users demonstrate they are cooperative, but rather it is how they behave over the course of the conversation. So cooperation and relevance may be discourse-level rather than sentence-level phenomena.

4.3. Literal meaning and non-literal meaning

In the lingua franca database formulaic language was analyzed, and an overwhelming predominance of expressions used in their literal meaning was observed in both production and comprehension. This supports the assumption that literal meaning has both linguistic and psychological reality for non-native speakers because for them the most salient meaning of lexical units in the lingua franca is almost always the literal meaning. This finding may have relevance to the ongoing debate in pragmatics literature about the content of ‘what is said’ and the semantics–pragmatics interface.

Currently there has been a heated debate going on about literal meaning that has usually been defined as a type of pre-theoretical semantic or linguistic meaning (Ariel 2002). The classical definition (see Katz 1977; Searle 1978) says that linguistic meaning is direct, sentential, specified by grammar, and context-free. Being fully compositional, linguistic meaning is generated by linguistic knowledge of lexical items, combined with linguistic rules. According to Grice literal meaning is also “what is said” (Grice 1978). He actually claimed that “what is said” is “closely related to the conventional meaning of words” (Grice 1975: 44).

In recent pragmatic theories there is a tendency to distinguish three levels of interpretation instead of the Gricean two: the proposition literally expressed (compositional meaning), explicitly communicated content (“explicature” or “implicature”) and implicitly communicated content (implicature). There is no consensus on the explicit nature of pragmatically enriched content. The debate is about whether the pragmatically enriched content is explicitly communicated or not. The relevance theorists argue that the pragmatically enriched content is explicitly communicated so they use the term “explicature”. However, most neo-Griceans (e.g., Bach 1994; Horn 2005) resist the term “explicature” because they do not consider the pragmatically enriched content explicitly communicated. Therefore they prefer to use the term “implicature” for these cases. For Bach (1999), the implicature is the implicit component of what is said, and it is not explicitly communicated. Recanati (2001) speaks about “what is said_{max}” in these cases. The pragmatically enriched content is a partially pragmatically-determined proposition which may accommodate different degrees of explicitness and implicitness. It appears to be necessary to distinguish this level because in most cases the proposition literally expressed is not something the speaker could possibly mean. For instance:

- (9) At a gas station:
 – *I am the black Mercedes over there. Could you fill me up with diesel, please?*
 – *Sure.*

Berg (1993: 410) goes so far to say that: “What we understand from an utterance could never be just the literal meaning of the sentence uttered”. Although actual communicative behavior of native speaker interlocutors in many cases points to the fact that Berg may be right, we will need to reject this assumption both in native speaker communication and lingua franca

communication. Examples from the ELF database demonstrate that literality plays a powerful role for ELF speakers.

Bach (2007: 5) said that (actual situational) context does not literally determine, in the sense of constituting, what the speaker means. What the speaker really means is a matter of his communicative intention although what he could reasonably mean depends on what information is mutually salient. Bach further argued that taking mutually salient information into account goes beyond semantics, for what a speaker means need not be the same as what the uttered sentence means. This claim raises two important questions from the perspective of lingua franca speakers.

What is the “mutually salient information” for lingua franca speakers? Salience is based on familiarity, frequency, common prior experience (Giora 1997, 2003). Mutually salient information (unless it is connected with the ongoing speech situation as we saw it when ELF speakers created their own formulas) is something ELF speakers lack because they speak several different L1s and represent different cultures. For them mutually salient information should be directly connected with the actual speech situation and/or encoded in the linguistic code so that it can be “extracted” by the hearer without any particular inference based on non-existing common prior experience in lingua franca communication. Inferencing for the lingua franca hearer usually coincides with decoding. It is essential therefore that pragmatics for lingua franca interlocutors not be something “...they communicate over and above the semantic content of the sentence” as King and Stanley (2005: 117) assume. For ELF speakers “pragmatics operates even when there is no gap between semantic content and conveyed content” as Bach (2007) says (see below). For lingua franca speakers the semantic content is usually the conveyed content. If this is not clear from their utterance they try to reinforce it with repetition, paraphrasing or other means as in examples (7) and (8). This assumption seems to be in line with Bach’s argument about native speaker language processing:

It is generally though not universally acknowledged that explaining how a speaker can say one thing and manage to convey something else requires something like Grice’s theory of conversational implicature, according to which the hearer relies on certain maxims, or presumptions (Bach and Harnish 1979: 62–65), to figure out what the speaker means. However, it is commonly overlooked that these maxims or presumptions are operative even when the speaker means exactly what he says. They don’t kick in just when something is implicated. After all, it is not part of the meaning of a sentence that it must be used literally, strictly in accordance with its semantic content. Accordingly, it is a mistake to suppose that “pragmatic

content is what the speaker communicates over and above the semantic content of the sentence” (King and Stanley 2005: 117). Pragmatics doesn’t just fill the gap between semantic and conveyed content. It operates even when there is no gap. So it is misleading to speak of the border or, the so-called ‘interface’ between semantics and pragmatics. This mistakenly suggests that pragmatics somehow takes over when semantics leaves off. It is one thing for a sentence to have the content that it has and another thing for a speech act of uttering the sentence to have the content it has. Even when the content of the speech act is the same as that of the sentence, that is a pragmatic fact, something that the speaker has to intend and the hearer has to figure out (Bach 2007: 5).

Bach’s conclusion is correct. Even if the content of the utterance is the same as that of the sentence, the fact that the speaker uttered it constitutes a pragmatic act that the speaker has to intend and the hearer has to figure out. Inference does not kick in just when something is implicated. It is always there. This may have sometimes been overlooked in native speaker communication where there is much more of a gap between what is said and what is meant than in lingua franca communication in which it is of utmost importance that the speaker should mean what s/he says otherwise “common ground” (that is compositional meaning of linguistic expressions) is lost for the hearer.

The other important issue that lingua franca communication points to is the matter of salient meaning in production and comprehension. The critical variable should be saliency rather than literalness of the lexical unit (e.g., Giora 2003; Katz 2005; Kecskes 2004). Unfortunately, the two are often mistakenly equated. Here is Coulson and Oakley (2005: 1513): “Indeed, there is often a systematic relationship between the literal and non-literal meanings of a given utterance. We suggest below that the systematic character of this relationship is best seen in the way that literal meaning, defined here alternately as coded and salient meanings (following Ariel 2002a)...” Ariel (2002: 376) also seems to have misinterpreted Giora’s proposal saying that “In a series of articles, Giora (1997, 1999a, 2002, this issue, in press; Giora and Fein, 1999b) has suggested substituting the classical, ahistorically defined notion of literal meaning with the concept of ‘salient’ meaning”. To my knowledge Giora has never suggested “substituting” the notion of literal meaning with salient meaning. Explaining her graded salience hypothesis (GSH), Giora suggested that the literal priority model (“the lexicon proposes and context disposes”) should be revised. Instead of postulating the priority of literal meaning, the priority of salient (e.g., conventional, familiar, frequent, predictable) meaning

should be assumed (Giora 1997, 2003). At a later point in her article Ariel also refers to the fact that Giora actually argues that “some context-invariant meanings are primary”. This is what Ariel says:

Note that while Gibbs and Giora agree that the literal-figurative dichotomy is not crucial, their positions are quite contradictory. Both base their claims on psycholinguistic experimentation, but Gibbs finds support only for a contextually enriched meaning (the explicature) as a minimal meaning, whereas Giora argues that some context-invariant meanings are primary, despite their contextual inappropriateness. Gibbs’ explicatures are a later product, she argues (Ariel 2002: 377).

Of course, Giora accepts that there is “some context-invariant meaning” because she does not want to substitute “literal meaning” for “salient meaning”. In fact, she claims that the most salient meaning(s) can be either literal or figurative or both (Giora 2003).

In a recent paper (Kecskes under review) I proposed to draw a distinction between “collective salience” and “individual salience” because prior experience with a lexical unit or utterance changes not only by speech communities but also by individuals. This division is especially important for lingua franca communication in which speakers do not belong to the same speech community as is the case with native speakers. As a consequence, lingua franca speakers can hardly rely on collective salience. This is why they avoid formulaic language that usually expresses some kind of collective salience to the members of a particular speech community. Phrasal units, situation-bound utterances, and idioms do not convey the same message to lingua franca communicators because they come from different language backgrounds and different cultures, and their prior experience with those fixed expressions in the lingua franca is quite limited and differs from one individual to the next. We can almost be sure that native speakers will understand *as a matter of fact*, *welcome aboard*, *piece of cake*, *have another go* in a similar way because they have relatively similar prior experience with those expressions in conversation, which has resulted in the development of a salient meaning for the whole speech community (collective salience). However, this is not the case in lingua franca communication where what is common for each interlocutor is what the linguistic item actually says.

Conclusion

In an analysis of English Lingua Franca (ELF) data this paper concludes that lingua franca communication can be best explained as a third space phenomenon. Postmodern theory, particularly in anthropology, literature, and cultural and feminist studies, has created the concept of third space, third culture that refers to intermediate spaces – linguistic, discursive and cultural spaces – between established norms (Barnlund 1970; Evanoff 2000). They appear to be problematic because they constitute neither one thing nor another but are, by definition, in-between. The crucial question for ELF research is to investigate how much and/or what kind of autonomy these intermediate spaces can reach by transcending their component sources through a dialectical process to make a new, expanded space that did not exist before or existed in another form.

This study demonstrated that lingua franca speakers do not treat their common language as something different from what they use with native speakers. Rather they are constrained by the specific nature of lingua franca communication, which requires them to use the linguistic code as directly as possible even if their language proficiency would allow them to sound more native-like than they actually do. It should be underlined, however, that this is not a simplistic way of using the common language although a particular simplification is also essential in this language use mode. The complexity of lingua franca can be detected on the discourse rather than the utterance level. Using their linguistic repertoire, lingua franca speakers try to do two things. First, they make an attempt to stick to the original rules of the game inasmuch as it supports their communicative goals, and second, they try to create some ad hoc rules of the game “on-line”, during the lingua franca interaction.

Actual speech situations in lingua franca communication can be considered open social situations which do not encourage the use of formulaic language. In native speaker communication we have much more closed social situations defined by the parameters and values taken for granted in them (see Clark 1996: 297). The result of these closed social situations is a highly routine procedure. For instance:

- (10) Car rental desk: – *I have a reservation.*
 Bar: – *Two vodka tonics.*
 Museum ticket booth: – *Three adults and one child.*

In close social situations the participants know their roles. As Clark (1996) says their rights, duties, and potential joint purposes are usually quite clear. All they need to establish is the joint purpose for that occasion. That they can do with a routine procedure. The first interlocutor initiates the conversational routine often with a phrasal unit, and the second interlocutor completes it by complying. Use of conversational routines and formulas requires shared background knowledge of which there is very little in lingua franca communication. Therefore it is quite clear why lingua franca communicators avoid formulaic language. For them literality plays a powerful role.

English Lingua Franca can hardly be considered a language, or even a variety of language. Rather it is *a language use mode*, which should be described from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective. The language competence of ELF speakers is put to use under particular circumstances in which the participants usually represent several different languages and cultures. The result is a language use mode which has some common pragmatic, discourse and grammatical features. Therefore, the primary goal of ELF research should be to investigate discourse strategies that keep this language use mode coherent, pragmatic structures that give it its uniqueness and lexico-grammatical features that account for its closeness to standard English. Further research should also focus on Lingua Franca Pragmatics that will not only describe the characteristic features of lingua franca communication but also relate the new findings to existing concepts within the pragmatics paradigm such as intention, cooperation, common ground, mutual knowledge, inference and relevance. This paper has been an attempt in that direction.

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Language evolution, pragmatic inference, and the use of English as a lingua franca

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Abstract

This paper considers the significance of Kirby's iterated learning account of language evolution (1999, 2001, 2003) for the evolution of pragmatic inference and metapragmatic constraints on interpretation, arguing the need for a theory of pragmatic strengthening which interprets uses of language in relation to complementary as well as coincident contexts. The evolution of pragmatic inference is shown to have significant consequences for intercultural communication, which, given the non-native member background of the speakers involved, necessarily relies more on token- than on type-inference. Methodological options in second language instruction are also shown to relate closely to the evolution of pragmatic inference, a perspective which enables language trainers to make informed decisions in their preparation of successful intercultural communicators. The discussion is set within a wider consideration of the position of English as a lingua franca, defined here as a deterritorialized language used for intercultural communication where neither user has, or affiliates to, native speaker status. The paper rejects the lingua franca core proposals in favor of a theory of accommodation. It is tentatively argued that the current status of English is not only a consequence of political and social development but also of language evolution and iterated learning.

1. Introduction

In this paper I will argue that the evolution of pragmatics enables intercultural communication by deterritorializing understanding and by licensing a non-reductive second language acquisition pedagogy. Clearly, this argument will need some unpacking.

One obvious place to start the unpacking is with Levinson's observation that animal cries signal that there is something to be taken note of "Right

here, right now” (2004: 98), thus encoding an indexical coincidence of context and communicative intent. Levinson continues: “The question naturally arises, then, whether in studying indexicality in natural languages we are studying archaic, perhaps primitive, aspects of human communication, which can perhaps even give us clues to the evolution of human language” (2004: 98). Later in the same paper, he suggests that “Indexicality probably played a crucial part in the evolution of language, prior to the full-scale, recursive, symbolic system characteristic of modern human language” (2004: 121).

Another important observation about animal cries is that they convey propositions, and thus function as proto speech acts, although the form of these cries is not decomposable, just as a baby may signal discomfort or hunger or boredom by means of vocalizations that also appear to be holistic (Wray 2000). These suggestions prompt an obvious question: If intentional communication was at the outset entirely indexical and non-decomposable, how far from such a coincidence of context and language has the evolution of a componential symbolic system brought us? And how far do we each travel on our journey from issuing vocalizations that convey whole propositions rooted in the moment that they are experienced to becoming readers and writers of papers such as this one?

In the following sections, I will first discuss the evolution of pragmatics, arguing that while an indexical context was sufficient to support the understanding of protolanguage, there are very obvious reasons why a notion of context limited to coincident observable events is insufficient to support the understanding of componential symbolic utterances. This discussion will include a consideration of the means of constraining pragmatic interpretations. I will then argue that there are striking parallels between the evolution of pragmatic inference and choices in second language teaching methodology, and that, like token-inference, an evolved methodology is non-reductive, deterritorialized and appropriately prepares language users for lingua franca intercultural communication.

2. Learnability and the evolution of pragmatics

It is a very striking fact that there is virtually no discussion of the role of pragmatics in the considerable language evolution literature that has appeared in recent years – indeed, in as far as they exist at all, considerations of inference seem to focus on disambiguating the reference

of unfamiliar words (e.g., Smith 2005: 373), rather than on determining relevant interpretations for utterances. However, several suggested accounts of language evolution, and in particular the iterated learning theory (ILT), seem not to be credible without the inclusion of a pragmatic dimension.

The iterated learning theory of language evolution is associated principally with the work of Kirby (1999, 2001, 2002a, 2002b) and various colleagues, many with an Edinburgh connection. Starting from the observation that our innate predisposition for language has evolved over millions of years, that the language of a community of speakers develops over hundreds of years and that our individual competence develops over tens of years, the question that naturally arises is how these systems interact, and in particular how language evolves as a result of its transmission from one generation of users to the next in the process of iterated learning. One crucial principle of iterativity is that in each cycle of learning, what gets learned has been partly determined in the last cycle, so that each time learning is repeated by a succeeding generation, what is learned changes or evolves.

Accepting that the nature of language is partly determined by iterated learning constitutes a breach of the principle of detachment, according to which cognitive mechanisms alone account for the properties of human language (Brighton, Kirby and Smith 2005: 294). ILT is thus a theory of cultural adaptation where the language (rather than the user) adapts as a result of its transmission from one generation to the next. Rather than a process of millions of years of human adaptation, we need to consider a historical period of hundreds of years of community development. This opens up the two possibilities of tracking language evolution from historical sources and of modeling it in computer simulations, so that both historical pragmatics and cognitive science may inform our understanding of language evolution. However, the relevant data are not only measurable in historical time: it is also likely that language evolution will be visible to us in the form of the language change that we witness over our allotted span of tens of years.

How then does the language adapt? In the direction of learnability, obviously enough, since for language to be passed (iteratively) from generation to generation, it has to be learnable. To be readily learnable, an extensive language has to be componential, thus enabling a single form to combine with many other forms. ILT therefore sees language evolution as a progression from the expression of propositions holistically toward the expression of propositions componentially, for precisely the reason that

componentiality permits combinations over many items, hence enabling economical learning. This hypothesis is confirmed experimentally by Kirby (2002a), who shows by means of computer simulations that communication systems that are compositional and recursive are induced from holistic communication systems as a result of iterated learning over substantial numbers of generations.

One obvious observation is that language is not fully componential or entirely regular. Although the majority of English verbs mark past by the addition of a phonetically conditioned allomorph of *-ed*, so that past meaning is associated with most lexical verbs in a predictable, and therefore learnable, way, there are many counter-examples. However, as Kirby and Christiansen point out, it is no coincidence that “the top ten verbs in English by frequency are all irregular in the past tense” (2003: 289). Indeed, it is precisely their frequency that allows them to remain irregular, and thus unlearnable by a general rule. The unlearnability of irregular past forms is readily illustrated by the BrEng north-east dialect form *tret*, whose meaning (*treat* + *ed*) will not be readily recovered by anyone unfamiliar with it, just as ‘dove’ (*dive* + *ed*) is not understood by speakers unfamiliar with AmEng and just as many contemporary users of English are unsure about whether to continue to look backwards with *learnt*, *leapt*, *woke*, *dreamt* or look forward with *learned*, *leaped*, *waked* and *dreamed*. Indeed the case of *tret* seems to prove that learnability and regularity go hand in hand, since its meaning is most readily induced when someone encountering the form for the first time is invited to work its meaning out by analogy with *met*. If *met* is the past form of *meet*, then *tret* must be the past form of *treat* we reason, thereby invoking a grammatical paradigm.¹

Despite being a theory of cultural adaptation, ILT does not consider culture in any particular way. In fact, researchers such as Brighton, Kirby, and Smith (2005) deliberately set out to explore the extent to which language structure can be explained independently of function, although they do concede that the role of language function in the evolution of compositional structure has to be a fruitful line of inquiry (2005: 307). It seems obvious to anyone interested in pragmatics that the functional consequences of a theory of developing linguistic componentiality for their discipline are immense, and for precisely the reason that componentiality frees meaning from the one-to-one association with an immediate context on which it had formerly relied, thus motivating a process of pragmatic strengthening which interprets uses of language in relation to

complementary as well as coincident contexts. Thus a plausible theory of pragmatic inference is also evolutionary, with deixis and presupposition representing relatively early stages, and speech acts and implicature representing relatively late stages in a process of accommodation made necessary by an increasingly componential and underdetermined syntax. How then does this come about?

As language developed a more componential character, it gradually lost the transparency that results from the coincidence of context and meaning while gaining the advantage of freedom from the need for a matching context to assure an interpretation. Thus indexicality was no longer at the heart of language, and the interpretation of utterances gradually came to rely on the addressee's ability to identify complementary contexts to understand them, in the process enabling multiple potential interpretations for each use of language. As a result, *Shakespeare* is no longer only a phonetic realization which refers to a particular individual visible in some context and picked out by uttering the associated sound sequence, but may equally be used metonymically to refer to Shakespeare's writing, or metaphorically to attribute to someone else in some other field the qualities associated with Shakespeare or with his writing, or even, with appropriate intonation, as a speech act to indicate that the speaker admires Shakespeare's writing, or is bored by it – or indeed any other interpretation that some complementary context may license. Viewed as a principle of economy, the goal of language evolution is to have many times more meanings than utterances, with the very obvious consequence that the recovery of meaning has to depend on pragmatic strengthening. As uses of language become less indexical, they become more economical in the sense that they permit an ever increasing number of interpretations. Linguistic formulas are relevant, not because they are indexical and convey some message equally recoverable from the coincident context, but as a result of the addressee's ability to supply a complementary context, or array of such contexts. So we see that an account of language evolution that depends on iterated learning and an increasingly componential syntax implies a collateral need to access *complementary* as well as *coincident* contexts in determining optimal meanings for forms.

To sum up, at the dawn of human language, our first utterances were holistic and were understood by reference to the coincident contexts in which they occurred. The evolution of language was then away from a phenomenon in which context and language were coincident and toward a situation in which the majority of utterances is radically underdetermined

and requires the addition of pragmatically recovered complementary contexts for successful interpretation. This scenario associates deictic reference with an early stage in the evolution of human language, and implicated meaning with a later stage.

We now turn to the study of pragmatics, which has tended to identify pragmatic meanings under different categories – deixis, presupposition, speech acts, and implicature. It might plausibly be argued, however, that all pragmatic meaning relies on accommodation, with different degrees of accommodation required at different stages in the evolution of language. The first indexical uses of language required addressees and overhearers to accept as non-controversial a co-incident link between what ostensibly exists in the here and now and what is pointed to in an accompanying linguistic demonstration. From here, it is a relatively short step to accept as non-controversial the existence of referents not present in the here and now and of propositions not immediately verifiable by coincident context, so that a presupposition is a special kind of *quasi*-indexical in which the existence of a co-incident context (or perhaps even common ground) can be accepted without the need for a demonstration. From here it is another relatively short step to recognizing that holistic formulas may function as different acts (speech acts) in different coincident contexts, depending on the speaker's intention. From this point, it is a further short step to accept that non-coincident, or complementary, contexts need to be recovered, and indeed can be recovered, so as to allow implied meanings. Table 1 reflects the claim that an iterated learning account of language evolution implies an evolutionary history for pragmatics in which deixis came first, then presupposition and speech acts, and finally implicature.

3. Some consequences of pragmatic evolution

So far we have made the assumption that language evolution applies only to homogeneous speech communities. In the final section of the paper, the role of migration in language evolution will be discussed. For the moment, I want to move toward the tentative suggestion that, by virtue of separating occasions of language use from immediate context, language evolution, and particularly pragmatic evolution and the notion of Gricean implicature and neo-Gricean utterance-token-meaning, make intercultural communication possible. In order to explore this further, I first consider the problems that

Table 1. The evolution of pragmatics

Stage 1	<p><i>Language:</i> holistic and not readily learnable.</p> <p><i>Uses of language:</i> indexical.</p>	<p><i>Pragmatic accommodation:</i> addressees required to accept as non-controversial a coincident link between what demonstrably exists in the here and now and what is pointed to in an accompanying linguistic demonstration.</p>
Stage 2	<p><i>Language:</i> begins to exhibit componentiality and learnability.</p> <p><i>Uses of language:</i> presuppositional</p>	<p><i>Pragmatic accommodation:</i> acceptance of the existence of possible referents not present in the here-and-now is required; addressees required to accept as non-controversial the existence of a co-incident context than cannot be demonstrably verified.</p>
Stage 3	<p><i>Language:</i> both componential (learnable) and formulaic (frequent).</p> <p><i>Uses of language:</i> illocutionary.</p>	<p><i>Pragmatic accommodation:</i> addressees required to recognize that formulas may function as different acts in different contexts depending on the speaker's intention, so that the meaning of an expression is variable.</p>
Stage 4	<p><i>Language:</i> predominantly componential and readily learnable.</p> <p><i>Uses of language:</i> radically under-determined, with understanding dependent on pragmatic strengthening.</p>	<p><i>Pragmatic accommodation:</i> addressees required to recover non-coincident complementary contexts in order to interpret utterances relevantly.</p>

utterance-type-meaning poses for intercultural communication. This leads to a discussion of typical interpretation resulting from repeated instances of token inference, a process that appears to be going in the opposite direction from the evolutionary process toward token-inference described in the previous section. However, I will show that the historical process by which token-inference may lead to typical interpretation furthers the process of language evolution by providing a metapragmatic dimension guiding the hearer in the proper interpretation of radically underdetermined utterances.

3.1. Pragmatic inference and the availability of context in intercultural communication

As Sperber and Wilson point out: “In aiming at relevance, the speaker must make some assumptions about the hearer’s cognitive abilities and contextual resources, which will necessarily be reflected in the way she communicates, and in particular in what she chooses to make explicit or what she chooses to leave implicit” ([1986] 1995: 218). By its very nature, intercultural communication places a speaker in a situation where it is notably difficult to be sure of assumptions about the hearer’s contextual resources. For this reason, a speaker may favor a more explicit, less economically communicated utterance than would be usual between members of a homogenous speech community. However, users of highly evolved languages in which context plays a major part in interpretation cannot communicate with the required degree of subtlety by restricting themselves entirely to utterances that are simply referential, especially given their expectations of the plurifunctionality of the sign (Silverstein 1976). From the perspective of second language pedagogy, an area to be discussed in more detail later, the issue is therefore to identify areas in which intercultural communication differs from intracultural communication, and particularly areas in which pragmatic inference is more problematic. With this in mind, I want to try to show how pragmatic strengthening is problematic for a category of form that seems to be moving from utterance-token to utterance-type status (Levinson 1995, 2000), and for which the complementary contexts required to determine meaning are largely unavailable to non-native members of a community of users.

As we know, the notion of utterance-type and utterance-token-meaning derives from the fundamental distinction between Grice’s categories of

generalized and particularized conversational implicature (Grice [1967] 1989). Consider the following exchange in which my wife asks me when I am likely to return from a planned trip to a seminar in another city:

- (1) BG: *What time will you be back?*
PG: *I should be back by eight but you know what trains are like*

This exchange gives rise to the generalized scalar implicature that I probably will not be back by eight, resulting from the speaker's presumed observance of the first Quantity maxim. Alongside this understanding, which results essentially from the way things are put, a wide range of particularized implicatures generated by the maxim of Relation might be recovered. Depending on the complementary contexts identified, these might include the inference that my wife should make the dinner, that we shouldn't eat before half-past-eight, or that she should buy the national lottery ticket (it being Saturday and the draw taking place at eight p.m.), and so on.

Another more problematic background understanding that arises and reinforces the understanding that I probably will not be back by eight is the implicated premise that trains are unreliable. This inference shares certain properties with generalized implicatures. For example, it would be an interpretation likely to be drawn from this utterance in all conversations between my wife and myself and does not therefore have a meaning particular to this occasion of use. Indeed, the fact that I choose to say "trains" reinforces the notion of typicality by virtue of my not inviting the addressee to identify a speaker-hearer shared set, as would have been the case if I had said "the trains". The implicature also seems to be related to the formulaic structure *you know what <x> are like*, with the chosen way of putting things tending to imply a negative evaluation. On the other hand, *you know what trains are like* also has particularized properties, at least to the extent that a similar utterance in a Japanese context, where trains are notably reliable, would seem either anomalous or to convey the odd meaning that although the speaker would be unlikely to be back by eight, with trains being what they are, there might be a slim chance that the over-efficient railway system would see to it that he was.

Under Levinson's neo-Gricean proposals, which re-interpret the two Quantity maxims and the Manner maxim as heuristics which are applied to stereotypical uses of language to reveal utterance-type-meanings, *you know what trains are like* may perhaps invite interpretation under the I-heuristic,

“What is expressed simply is stereotypically exemplified” (to use Levinson’s 1995 formulation) on the grounds that “minimal specifications get maximally informative or stereotypical interpretations”. In the context of intercultural communication, however, how is an addressee to know that *you know what <x> are like* is a formula? And even supposing an addressee did suspect it of being a formula, how would they know that it invited a negative interpretation, particularly if the utterance seemed not to be so interpretable, as for example in the case of a reference to trains communicated to someone familiar only with trains in Japan?

The qualitative difference between a scalar reading of *should* which appeals to the Q-heuristic and transparently invites an utterance-type-meaning on the one hand, and stereotypical I-heuristic exemplifications on the other is especially significant in intercultural communication when utterances which hint at the likelihood of stereotypical inferences with formulas such as *you know* are recoverable only if the addressee does indeed know what <x> is like.

I got into similar difficulties with an example in the first edition of *Doing Pragmatics* (Grundy 1995) with what seemed to me at the time to be an entirely transparent example of a conversation between the Faculty tea-lady and myself:

- (2) Phyllis: *Wasn't the wind dreadful in the night*
 Peter: *I didn't hear it*
 Phyllis: *Eee it was dreadful*
 Peter: *You know what they say*
 Phyllis: *I must have a guilty conscience*

Phyllis’s response, “I must have a guilty conscience”, to my second utterance, “You know what they say”, obligingly provided the utterance-type-meaning associated in my mind and hers with my use of *you know what they say* and constituted an explanation as to why she was awake and therefore heard the wind in the night. However, this was far from clear to readers, who constructed all sorts of scenarios, including the inaccurate but plausible interpretation e-mailed to me by a Japanese scholar and presumably recovered by appealing to a complementary context that facilitated the interpretation, that I was hinting that ‘sexual activity’ was involved. The question that then has to be asked is whether someone who does not *know what they say*, perhaps because they belong outside the community of users where people do *know what they say*, is liable to treat

the utterance as inviting a token-interpretation particular to the occasion of use, such as that constructed by the Japanese scholar.

Parallel examples are easy to think of. A language learner might well imagine that *I don't know how to say this* would be an appropriate speech act when faced with a linguistic challenge in the second language, as indeed it would be. However, in a work context, colleagues in conversation with the Dean would hope not to find themselves required to recover a stereotypical interpretation of this apparently formulaic utterance. More puzzling still are the kinds of stereotypical meanings associated with linguistic formulas like (3) and (4) below:

- (3) *University A do not get the same quality students as University B* (inference – A's students are less good)
- (4) *She's taken 10 years off my life* (favors the inference that the speaker feels 10 years younger, i.e. 10 years have been taken off the speaker's present age rather than the inference that the speaker expects to die ten years earlier, i.e. 10 years have been taken off the age, to which the speaker might otherwise have expected to live)

If as Levinson (2000: 22) says “[U]tterance-type-meaning ... is a level of systematic pragmatic inference based not on direct computations about speaker intentions but rather on general expectations about how language is normally used [which] ... give rise to presumptions, default inferences, about both content and force,” the question is how such general expectations arise and where does direct computation end and general expectations begin. Clearly for an utterance like *you know what they say*, computation ends and expectations begin in different places for different speakers. With regard to general expectation, how, for example, does *I don't drink* come to systematically imply for some particular culture that the speakers do not drink alcohol?

Levinson's suggestion is that I-inferences might be expected to play a significant role in language change “because inferences to the stereotype will reflect changes in sociocultural environment” (Levinson 2000: 370). In this way, forms which repeatedly lead to the same token-inference will in the course of time become understood typically. Knowing whether a type-inference has become established and, if so, what the typical inference is precisely the problem faced in intercultural communication. In addition, when a speaker is unaware of the availability of a maximally informative interpretation from a minimal specification and attempts to convey the

intended meaning by a more elaborate form, there may be undesired consequences. Thus a speaker who intends a meaning such as that inferred from *I do not drink* will convey a different meaning by using the elaborated form *I do not drink alcohol*, confirming Levinson's observation that "the more explicit I try to be, the more unintended implicatures I will generate" (Levinson 1997: 18).

In considering the pragmatic challenges of intercultural communication, it is also important not to overlook lexical pragmatics and the issue of how non-scalar lexical items invite both I-inferences and M-inferences. This is because componentiality creates radical semantic underspecification in the lexicon too, which also requires compensation by pragmatic strengthening. As Blutner notes, "The situated meanings of many words and simple phrases are combinations of their lexical meanings proper and some superimposed conversational implicatures" (2004: 506). Thus *How Shakespeare became Shakespeare*, the subtitle of Stephen Greenblatt's *Will in the World*, invites a different interpretation for each use of *Shakespeare*: How did "Shakespeare", one of six children born to illiterate parents in a small town in the English Midlands in the mid-sixteenth century, turn into "Shakespeare", the greatest writer to put pen to paper in the English language?

As well as such maximal interpretations of minimal specifications, we also find marked lexical forms which invite M-inferences. For example, in his opening plenary at the 43rd JACET Convention in Tokyo in September 2005, Mamoru Morizumi repeatedly referred to "Japanized pronunciation of English". He clearly intended *Japanized* pronunciation of English to be contrasted with the more expectable *Japanese* pronunciation of English. Listening to his talk, the audience inferred that, although phonetically indistinguishable from the problematic *Japanese* pronunciation of English, *Japanized* pronunciation was to be accepted as a variety in its own right and worn as an unproblematic badge of identity. Examples such as these underlie the Optimality Theory proposals being developed (e.g., Blutner and Zeevat 2004) in which possible form/meaning enrichment pairs are constrained by principles derived from the Q- and I-heuristics and other neo-Gricean insights.

We are now in a position to try to establish an equation between the discussion of language represented in Table 1 and the discussion of utterance-type and utterance-token-meanings in this section. In Table 2 below, I attempt to show the nature of the inference type for which the groundwork is done at each stage in the evolution of language – of course,

the term 'stage' is very much an idealization and the type of inference suggested does not necessarily appear at this stage, although it would be unlikely to appear without such a stage having been achieved.

At this point we need to ask why the evolution of pragmatics has been in the direction of token-inference and yet at the same time we sense that the stereotypical inferences associated with expressions like *you know what trains are like* and *you know what they say* have arisen from repeated occasions of use in which they gave rise to the same token-inferences. Like the English strong verbs, these formulas are relatively unlearnable and pose problems for non-native members but persist in native member use by virtue of their frequency. However, they differ from strong verbs in that holistic strong verbs are tending to give way to composite forms (e.g., *dreamt* → *dreamed*) whereas type-inferences are tending to establish themselves, a process which work in historical pragmatics has sought to reveal. Whereas language evolution is driven by learnability considerations pragmatically motivated language change involves a process in which literal forms first give rise to token-inferences, which, if they come to be seen as typical, eventually become new encodings. Because the language change is in the direction of conventionality and hence toward uses of language that defy learnability by virtue of being holistic, this process appears to be regressive in going against the general direction of language evolution.² However, the many instances of pragmatically motivated language change of this kind assist language evolution by providing new procedural encodings which constrain the interpretations of utterances, as we shall see in the following section.

3.2. Procedural constraints on interpretation

In alerting a hearer to the possibility that a conventional interpretation of a following complement structure is preferred, *you know* acts as a constraint on interpretation, advising the addressee that a privileged understanding of some kind is required. The expression is to a degree delexicalized and functions metapragmatically. In a highly evolved language where entailment is rarely the most salient meaning the speaker intends the hearer to recover, it becomes technically possible for anything to mean anything. Although language is more economical by virtue of having a maximal number of uses of a minimal number of expressions, interpretation is

Table 2 Language evolution and pragmatic inference

Stage 1	<p><i>Meaning:</i> indexical and dependent on coincident context.</p> <p><i>Language:</i> holistic and not readily learnable.</p>	<p><i>Inference:</i> limited to establishing the coincident link between a demonstration and a use of language.</p>
Stage 2	<p><i>Meaning:</i> presuppositional and dependent on coincident context.</p> <p><i>Language:</i> begins to exhibit componentiality and learnability.</p>	<p><i>Inference:</i> I-inferences drawn from linguistic formulas holding a one-to-one relationship with a situation which is typically unguessable by hearers lacking access to the wide context that such expressions represent.</p>
Stage 3	<p><i>Meaning:</i> illocutionary, variable and dependent on coincident context.</p> <p><i>Language:</i> both componential (learnable) and formulaic (frequent).</p>	<p><i>Inference:</i> Q-inferences which are genuinely context-free, typically scalar and probably universal.</p>
Stage 4	<p><i>Meaning:</i> underdetermined and dependent on complementary context.</p> <p><i>Language:</i> predominantly componential and readily learnable.</p>	<p><i>Inference:</i> forms have a wide range of pragmatic functions and hence utterance-token-meanings; for the most part, language and context are in complementary distribution; the entailed meaning of an utterance is rarely the most salient meaning, so that what is meant by what is said can only be recovered by appealing to a non-coincident, complementary context.</p>

correspondingly problematized. Hence delexical metapragmatic markers with stereotypical functions come into existence to help to constrain interpretation. Viewed from this perspective, we see that they assist the process of language evolution, so that what appears to be a retrenchment in fact serves the broader process of language evolution.

We should not therefore be surprised to find that as the indexicality of language reduces and the number of deictic forms shrinks, we find a corresponding development of metapragmatic markers indicating propositional attitudes, and of procedurals (Blakemore 1987) such as *anyway*, *indeed*, *still*, etc. These forms once had literal meanings only, but when they develop a procedural function, enable a speaker to indicate the way they would like a hearer to understand the relationship between the proposition which follows the procedural and the proposition which precedes it. Another notable way in which English has developed a means of encoding subjective meaning results from the development of auxiliary verbs such as *may* and *must*, first with their deontic meanings, and then with epistemic speaker meanings. Similarly, the German conjunction *wenn*, which was once able to convey only temporal meaning, is now the default way of conveying that the existential status of a following proposition cannot be guaranteed (Lockwood 1968). Comparably, the Japanese genitive case marker *no* gradually acquired a series of new functions, the most recent that of marking factive nominalization, which appeared approximately three hundred years ago. As well as rendering the preceding proposition factive, with the optional co-occurrence of a following copula, it enables speakers of Japanese to assert, question or problematize the proposed reification of that proposition and thus to indicate a range of speaker attitudes to the proposition. All these developments serve the common purpose of enabling pragmatic or speaker meaning to be added to sentence meaning and of enabling speakers to indicate how they want what they say to be interpreted or accommodated.

At the start of this paper, I claimed that the effect of the evolution of pragmatics was to deterritorialize understanding, a necessary prerequisite for intercultural communication. I hope that the argument is now clearer – as the balance of what is required for the successful interpretation of an utterance shifts away from coincident context in the direction of complementary context, and particularly as token-inference becomes more critical than type-inference, the membership criteria necessary for interpreting utterances is considerably widened away from those with sufficient common culture to *know what they say*. It is only when we live in

a world where token-inference is the expected way of optimizing meaning that a speaker is required to make appropriate “assumptions about the hearer’s cognitive abilities and contextual resources”. The second claim I made at the start of this paper was that the evolution of pragmatics licensed a non-reductive second language acquisition pedagogy. This is the claim that I now want to begin to unpack.

4. Pragmatics, second language learnability and intercultural communication

We have already touched on some areas of obvious relevance to second language learning and intercultural communication. For example, we might ask whether in intercultural communication speakers make sufficient use of procedural encodings and overt indications of propositional attitude to facilitate the recovery of optimal interpretations, and whether appropriate attention is given to procedurals and markers of propositional attitude in language training. Another relevant area is the role of context in language pedagogy. If “the semantic description of an utterance is an underspecified representation f determining a wide variety of possible enrichments m , one of which covers the intended content” (Blutner 2000: 204), one obvious question concerns the extent to which it is appropriate for the focus in second language teaching, particularly at the more advanced levels, to be so strongly on language and semantic meaning rather than on context and pragmatic meaning. Issues such as these prompt us to consider whether there might be a closer relationship between language evolution, and particularly the evolution of pragmatics, and our largely intuitive approaches to second language teaching methodology than has been noted before. And in fact, the comparison is revealing.

In the first stages, second language instruction tends to proceed through demonstrations in which learners are encouraged to associate phonetic and sometimes graphemic representations of second language symbols with realia, with visual representations of objects and situations, and with first language spoken and written representations.

Subsequently, learners are encouraged to make interlingual identifications within the second language, recognizing both the internal structure of linguistic categories and principles such as inclusion and membership. In order for this important stage to be accomplished effectively, learners have to exercise a principle of goodwill, accepting that

new vocabulary items will often share category membership or be in a superordinate/hyponymic relationship with items whose meanings they already know. Thus new words are learned as non-controversial interpretations by extension from known interpretations.

At the next stage, learners are encouraged to recognize that what we might, with some license, call the isonomy (as opposed to autonomy) of utterances, according to which form, meaning and context are in an invariant relationship, no longer holds up. At this point, language learners recognize that particular contexts license different interpretations of the same form and that different forms may have the same communicative value.

Finally, as the learners' knowledge approximates to that of native speakers, they encounter second language utterances whose pragmatic meanings are more salient than their literal meanings and can only be determined by recourse to a recoverable complementary context. These stages in the evolution of pragmatic meaning and in language teaching methodology are captured in the synoptic table below, which suggests that Stage 1 of language learning mimics our earliest indexical use of language, Stages 2 and 3 mimic an intermediate stage in the process of language evolution in which presupposition and speech acts emerge, and Stage 4 mimics the stage which the recovery of meaning has now reached, where implicature is typically the most salient level. Additionally, the table suggests that the evolution of language teaching methodology from grammar/translation to the present post-communicative situation runs parallel to the evolution of pragmatic inference, with learn-in-order-to-use approaches, which privilege the production of optimal forms for meanings, corresponding to an early coincident context stage in language evolution, and use-in-order-to-learn approaches, which privilege the recovery of optimal meanings from forms, corresponding to a later complementary context stage.

From the point of view of language teaching methodology, several further questions arise, which are listed below because of their importance in language teaching methodology but not pursued further in a paper whose principal focus is pragmatic inference:

- Is it reasonable to conclude that a language teaching methodology which hurries learners to Stage 4 will provide them with an experience of language more comparable to the experience of language with which they are familiar in their everyday communication?

Table 3. The evolution of pragmatics and language teaching methodology

Stage 1 Beginners level	<p><i>Language:</i> holistic and not readily learnable.</p> <p><i>Uses of language:</i> indexical.</p> <p><i>Pragmatic accommodation:</i> addressees required to accept as non-controversial a coincident link between what demonstrably exists in the here and now and what is pointed to in an accompanying linguistic demonstration.</p>	<p><i>Methodology of second language instruction:</i> proceeds through demonstrations in which learners are encouraged to associate phonetic and graphemic representations of second language symbols with realia, with visual representations of objects and situations, and with first language representations.</p> <p><i>Historical antecedent:</i> the translation dimension of <i>grammar/translation</i>.</p>
Stage 2 Elementary level	<p><i>Language:</i> begins to exhibit componentiality and learnability.</p> <p><i>Uses of language:</i> presuppositional.</p> <p><i>Pragmatic accommodation:</i> acceptance of the existence of possible referents not present in the here-and-now is required; addressees required to accept as non-controversial the existence of a co-incident context than cannot be demonstrably verified.</p>	<p><i>Methodology of second language instruction:</i> learners are encouraged to make interlingual identifications within the second language, recognizing both the internal structure of linguistic categories and principles such as inclusion and membership; new items are learned as non-controversial interpretations by extension from known interpretations.</p> <p><i>Historical antecedent:</i> the grammatical paradigm dimension of <i>grammar/translation</i>.</p>

Stage 3
Intermediate
level

Language: both componential (learnable) and formulaic (frequent).

Uses of language: illocutionary.

Pragmatic accommodation: addressees required to recognize that formulas may function as different acts in different contexts depending on the speaker's intention, so that the meaning of an expression is variable.

Methodology of second language instruction:

learners are encouraged to recognize that form, meaning and context are not necessarily in an invariant relationship, that particular contexts license different interpretations of the same form and that different forms may have the same communicative value.

Historical antecedent: the presentation-practice-production mode of the *audio-lingual* and '*communicative*' approaches.

Stage 4
Advanced
level

Language: predominantly componential and readily learnable.

Uses of language: radically under-determined, with understanding dependent on pragmatic strengthening.

Pragmatic accommodation: addressees required to recover non-coincident, complementary contexts to interpret utterances relevantly.

Methodology of second language instruction:

learners encounter second language utterances whose pragmatic meanings are more salient than their literal meanings and can only be determined by recovering a complementary context.

Historical antecedent: none – the approach is *post-methodic*, espousing a use-in-order-to-learn perspective.

- Do second language learners need to retrace (all) the steps that characterize the stages of language evolution? Do the early stages of instructed second language learning as commonly practiced put back the evolutionary clock, with predictable consequences for the many unsuccessful learners who experience only these approaches?
- What opportunities do classroom learners have to access the complementary contexts necessary for the recovery of implied meaning?
- In intercultural communication, are some kinds of complementary context more readily recoverable than others?

In the first two sections of this paper I set out to demonstrate that the evolution of pragmatics enables intercultural communication by deterritorializing understanding. In this section I have tried to show how a parallel evolution in language teaching methodology licenses a second language acquisition pedagogy which is non-reductive in that it reverses the traditional assumption that a language is learned in order to be used and acknowledges the role of indeterminacy in enabling language learning. As well as such considerations, language teaching methodology decisions also need to take social context into account and, in the case of English in particular, the global status of the language, a topic to which we now turn our attention.

5. Learnability and English as a lingua franca

Clearly, learnability considerations apply to second as well as to first language acquisition, and, increasingly in the case of English, to the acquisition of a lingua franca useful in intercultural communication. In this section, we first consider the wider political issues raised by the deterritorialization of English, and then consider whether the lingua franca core position or a broader notion of accommodation is more appropriate in enabling users to acquire intercultural communicative competence.

As far as English is concerned, we live in an age of linguistic diaspora. This diaspora is no longer linked only to the migration of native speakers, as in past centuries. Today, the English we speak results to an unprecedented degree from the migration of large numbers of non-native

speakers to English speaking and English using countries, a significant proportion of them with the express purpose of acquiring language. Non-native speaker migration is also a virtual phenomenon, with English regarded as a lingua franca in electronic communication between speakers who share no common first language.

With regard to numbers of interactions, it is routinely held that in 80% of the interactions in English involving a second language user, the interlocutor is also a speaker of English as a second language (Hesselbeg-Møller 1998). It is in this sense that English is a lingua franca in intercultural communication. As Firth and Wagner (2003:184) remind us:

In the case of English, the international status of the language means that a vast number of NNS routinely interact with other NNS, in which case English is a lingua franca. In most cases, such interactions are not, at least ostensibly, undertaken for educational, instructional, or learning purposes but are a quotidian part of life, the range of purposes, like the social settings in which they occur, varying widely.

Strictly defined, a lingua franca has no native speakers, a perspective implicit in the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) project, whose Web site defines a lingua franca as “An additionally acquired language system that serves as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages.” Canagarajah points out more positively that, “In a context of locally developed Englishes, all speakers are ‘native speakers’ of this pluralized variety” (2005: xxvii), a perspective that could hardly exclude *native* ‘native speakers’.

However, native speakers of English are not necessarily welcome in the community of speakers of English as a lingua franca. As Graddol points out, “Traditionally, native speakers of English have been regarded as providing the authoritative standard and the best teachers. Now, they may be seen as presenting an obstacle to the free development of global English” (2006: 114). Indeed, if English is a lingua franca, a fundamental consequent question is whether the standard variety of the native speaker minority can or should prevail over the emerging varieties of the majority of non-native speakers who use English as a lingua franca, especially in view of the fact that English is only international to the extent that it is not owned by native speakers (Widdowson 1994: 385).

More particularly, in intercultural communication in English it is increasingly argued that effective communication may be prejudiced when one of the interlocutors is a native speaker, particularly a native speaker

unable or unwilling to recognize the difference between cross-cultural and intercultural communication. This is a question addressed by Jenkins (2000), who argues for a phonological lingua franca core for English. Among other properties, the proposed core does not include interdental fricatives and either syllabic or pre-consonantal /h/, since, according to Jenkins, the effort required to achieve native-like control of these segments is frequently disproportionate to the benefits achieved. Moreover, when realized, they tend to make English less rather than more intelligible. Since native-speaker varieties are often less intelligible than lingua franca varieties, it has been argued that native speakers should make “productive and receptive adjustments” in intercultural interactions (Jenkins 2000: 135).

The question that arises is whether a lingua franca core of the kind proposed for the phonology of English as an international language might also be usefully proposed for the pragmatics of English as an international language, given that it could plausibly be argued that I-inferences pose intelligibility problems at least as great as those posed at the phonological level by interdental fricatives.

The arguments for lingua franca cores are certainly well-intentioned and are motivated by several important issues:

- Should we assume, for example, that the needs of lingua franca learners coincide with those of second and foreign language learners?
- Although the assumption of the native speaker norm as the standard for intelligibility may make sense in foreign language teaching, it makes little sense for intercultural learners when intelligibility is determined by an addressee who is more often than not a second language user. Moreover, there seems to be little point in attempting to communicate meanings that are not recovered.
- And recognizing that intelligibility is not necessarily reciprocal, should we not make the attempt to identify a core set of pragmatic phenomena which intercultural communicators can readily accommodate?

As Jenkins points out, there are also powerful socio-cultural arguments for the democratization of English and for recognizing the rights of all its users to equal ownership and access, and not just the rights of those whose parents or grandparents spoke it. Already the many intralingual varieties of English suggest a pluricentric view of the language which should be

capable of accommodating the principle that lingua franca English is not tied to any particular culture, although struggling to find ways of making intralingual varieties mutually intelligible seems something of a stop-gap solution.

At the same time, recent developments in the teaching of English as a foreign language have begun to question the appropriateness of teaching national, standard or prestige varieties such as GenAm and RP, particularly when such 'standard' varieties are not even the norms in L1 use and when acceptable English, including L1 varieties, is remarkably variable (Jenkins 2000).

The assumption of the lingua franca core argument is that the core will exclude a sub-set of native segments and suprasegmental patterns for phonology, and, for pragmatics, perhaps meaning-types that mark native membership and are particularly opaque for non-native users. At the same time, aspects of non-native phonology, syntax and pragmatics may be included, so that the core represents what is easily accomplished by and readily intelligible to lingua franca users. Adherence to such a core might seem to privilege intelligibility over identity, although Jenkins suggests that convergence on those L2 features that are essential to intelligibility leaves plenty of scope for native speaker maintenance of L1 features that do not pose intelligibility problems (2000: 173).

At the same time, the notion of a core is problematic to the extent that lingua franca users operate with relatively little awareness of those features of their language that render them less intelligible, especially in their pragmatic performance, where, as Sperber and Wilson (1995) point out, there is a natural tendency for speakers to self-adjust in a way which takes account of the cognitive abilities and contextual resources of the addressee. Even assuming a speaker had sufficient awareness of the lack of intelligibility of utterance-type-meanings, it would seem a very costly, not to say impractical, strategy to try to eliminate them from one's repertoire. The notion that intelligibility is enhanced by adhering to a restricted lingua franca core may apply in phonology but seems more problematical in pragmatics. Precisely because phonology admits the notion of standard with respect to accent, it can also entertain the notion of a core without significant loss of meaning potential, whereas in pragmatics the notion of standard seems vacuous given that pragmatic meanings are predominantly instantial and token rather than institutionalized and typical. At a more theoretical level, a standard pragmatics would necessarily imply the notion of a decontextualized pragmatics, a contradictory notion, not least for the

reason that, as we have seen, pragmatic strengthening by invocation of complementary contexts is an interpretation requirement for a learnable linguistic system that has evolved a componential character.

Implicit in the notion of a core is the view that its use should be privileged and that language instruction should acknowledge it to the extent that core forms would not be considered remediable. But of course the core is the product of iterated learning, a notion conspicuously absent in L2 pedagogy despite all the obvious evidence of the existence of the phenomenon. Until we know more about the possible effects on language evolution of a conscious attempt to alter the variable input that would otherwise have characterized a cycle of learning, perhaps we should note the enhanced intelligibility of core items but weigh in the balance the possible ecological consequence of the loss of variety that adopting them would entail.

Moreover the notion of a lingua franca core is a-theoretical to the extent that it is defined entirely on observed frequency of use without an explanatory mechanism enabling us to understand the significance of the extent of this frequency among any particular population of users in any particular cycle of iterative learning. Although learner English among several different populations frequently diverges from native speaker standard varieties in well-documented ways, for example by not marking third person present or in extending the use of infinitives to environments where gerunds might be expected, this does not seem a sufficient reason for adopting these structures as a lingua franca core. This is because lingua franca core construction takes its cue from corpora without fully understanding that a corpus is the product of a cycle of iterated learning in which regularity, irregularity and *quasi*-regularity all have a part to play in language evolution. It may be true that “English is being shaped at least as much by its non-native speakers as by its native speakers” (Seidlhofer 2005: 339) and that *transfer of training*, the forgotten process in Selinker’s (1972) original interlanguage proposals (and, in a sense, the precursor of iterated learning), significantly influences second language learning. But do these possibilities justify promoting a core whose principal warrant seems to be motivated by the prospect of short-term intelligibility gains?

For these reasons, this section of the paper will conclude by appealing, not to the notion of *core* but to the notion of *accommodation*, which seems to be the process underlying pragmatic understanding and to be crucial in language evolution.

At a naïve level, accommodation to the new reality of lingua franca English is evident in what Graddol calls “a paradigm shift away from conventional EFL modes” (2006: 15). The nature of this paradigm shift is set out in Table 3, where it is labeled post-methodic (Kumaravadivelu 1994) and without historical antecedent. The shift is away from the belief that we first learn a language in order to use it (Howatt 1984: 279), thus privileging the production of optimal forms for meanings (corresponding to an early coincident context stage in language evolution), and toward the belief that we use a language in order to learn it, thus privileging the recovery of optimal meanings from forms (corresponding to a later complementary context stage in language evolution).

Now any ‘method’ of language teaching, and of course any notion of core, is essentially reductive, and therefore contrasts with accommodation, which is a non-reductive process. Globalization too is often seen as a reductive process, with *Mc*, as in *McDonald’s*, frequently used as a prefix to denote a globalized, homogenized entity. However, as we saw in our early consideration of the evolution of pragmatic inference, with respect to language, intercultural communication depends on non-reductive token-inference, unlike intracultural communication which also accommodates the more reductive, type-inference. And just as pragmatic inference, which at the beginning accommodated only indexicality, became, literally, deterritorialized so as to accommodate inferences drawn from non-coincident contexts, in a parallel way English has become deterritorialized too and relies on the affordances of a developed pragmatics for intercultural communication. This perception underlies Canagarajah’s distinction between the former pedagogy in which language was regarded as context-bound and the contemporary pedagogy in which language is regarded as context-transforming and in which students need to develop “competence in a repertoire of codes to manage postmodern communication” and “focus more on strategies of communication rather than on grammatical rules”. Accommodation rather than adherence to either standard or core is important “at a time when the notion of language as transparent has been challenged by the awareness that speakers and communities represent their identities, values and cultural practices through this rich semiotic system” (Canagarajah 2005: xxv–xxvi). Thus, “[B]oth parties in a communicative situation have to adopt strategies of speech accommodation and negotiation to achieve intelligibility” (Canagarajah 2005: 48). Intercultural communication too depends on pragmatic strengthening, which, given the

non-native member background of the speakers involved, necessarily relies more on token- than on type-inference.

Returning to the earlier discussion of pragmatic inference, we thus need to recognize that accommodations in the form of I-inference and some Q-inference utterance-type-meanings are problematic for non-members of the community of language users familiar with the utterances that give rise to these inferences. Such meanings might therefore be a focus in the kind of pre-paradigm-shift, foreign language teaching which relies on a learn-in-order-to-use teaching methodology and where subsequent interaction with native speakers is the expected outcome. Utterance-token-meanings, on the other hand, would be a more appropriate focus for the kind of post-paradigm-shift, lingua franca teaching which favors a use-in-order-to-learn teaching methodology and where intercultural communication is the intended goal. Lingua franca teaching also offers learners the opportunity to work from utterance-token-meaning to utterance-type-meaning in a way that parallels historical language change, as they gradually become aware that what might at first have seemed particularized is in fact more generalized than they had supposed.

In considering lingua franca language teaching and learning methodology, we also need to recognize a further effect of the English diaspora – that native speakers are no longer in the majority. Indeed, according to Graddol, native speakers lost their majority in the 1970s and must now look forward to a future when English will be a language used mainly in multinational contexts between non-native speakers (Graddol 1999: 57–58). To those of us who work as English language teachers, it is already obvious that significant numbers of English language learners and users, and particularly those outside Europe, no longer aspire to control of native varieties, preferring instead to settle for what they take to be a comprehensible learner-generated communication. This is a position increasingly acknowledged and even welcomed in the professional literature (e.g., White 1993). It is also recognized as an expected effect of what has been termed postmodern globalization (Hall 1997), the situation in which English has been appropriated for their own purposes by second language users and thus deterritorialized, in the process becoming a vehicle for intercultural communication and for the transnational flow of knowledge and people.

Hall argues that two stages of globalization can be identified. The phenomenon of postmodern globalization described above is preceded by modernist globalization, a stage at which a language like English is

exported by native speakers to be learned as a foreign language by non-native speakers. At this stage, the stereotypical I-, Q- and M-inferences drawn by native speakers are privileged in second language instruction. At the present stage of postmodern globalization, English is no longer a foreign language for anyone, so that non-native users may legitimately intend their own particular stereotypical inferences to be drawn by those they address as they use English ideologically to encode their own identity. Perhaps it is precisely the evolution of “the full-scale, recursive, symbolic system characteristic of modern human language” (Levinson 2004: 121) that enables addressees to find a means of pragmatically accommodating the forms of users who no longer aspire to control of native varieties, and thus enables the use of English in intercultural communication.

Table 4 below therefore relates the pre-paradigm-shift methodology associated with modernist globalization and the teaching of English as foreign language to early-stage second language instruction pedagogy, and relates the post-paradigm-shift methodology associated with postmodern globalization and the teaching of English as lingua franca to late-stage second language instruction pedagogy.

Not surprisingly, on the relatively rare occasions on which the pedagogic literature addresses second language pragmatics, both modernist and postmodern globalization perspectives can be found. As one would expect, the modernist perspective tends to support early stage and the mainstream foreign language teaching paradigm displayed in Table 4. A good example in Bardovi-Harlig et al. (1991) who observed how learners have difficulty with closing conversations in contexts which are presumptive and target culture determined:

Language learners interacting with speakers of a target language must be exposed to language samples which observe social, cultural, and discourse conventions – or in other words, which are pragmatically appropriate. Speakers who do not use pragmatically appropriate language run the risk of appearing uncooperative at the least, or, more seriously, rude or insulting. This is particularly true of advanced learners whose high linguistic proficiency leads other speakers to expect concomitantly high pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig 1991: 4).

It therefore follows that

... teachers have the responsibility to equip them [learners] with not only the structural aspects of the language, but with the pragmatics as well: more simply, the right words to say at the proper time (Bardovi-Harlig 1991: 14).

Table 4. Pragmatic meaning, inference and modernist/postmodern language teaching paradigms

Early-stage learning / traditional mainstream methods of instruction.	<p><i>Uses of language:</i> indexical; presuppositional.</p> <p><i>Inference and methodology:</i> utterance-type-meanings are important for <i>foreign language</i> learners because control over them eases communication with native speakers (but impede intercultural communication and are useless for <i>lingua franca</i> learners).</p>	<p><i>Language teaching principles (modernist paradigm):</i> language input is scripted (textbook models); learners are observers of dialogues; language is treated segmentally; focus on linguistic paradigm; acquisition of an access language; high context culture presupposed; utterance-type-meaning privileged; learning how to provide optimal forms for given meanings.</p>	<p><i>Fundamental beliefs:</i> we learn a language in order to use it; languages are teachable.</p>
Later-stage learning / post-methodic paradigm / natural (eclectic) methods of instruction.	<p><i>Uses of language:</i> illocutionary; radically underdetermined, with understanding dependent on pragmatic strengthening.</p> <p><i>Inference and methodology:</i> presenting learners with forms that do not invite identification of a complementary context leading to a token-inference (i.e., decontextualized teaching) is ineffective and does not coincide with learners' expectations of natural language.</p>	<p><i>Language teaching principles (postmodern paradigm):</i> language input is relevant; learners are participants in dialogues; language is treated holistically; focus on extralinguistic context; acquisition of a language of self-representation; low context culture presupposed; utterance-token-meaning privileged; learning how to recover optimal meanings from given forms.</p>	<p><i>Fundamental beliefs:</i> we use a language in order to learn it; languages are learnable.</p>

Such views also imply a rationalistic pragmatics of the kind critiqued by Kopytko as an ideal type “more concerned with the question of how ‘rational agents’ should use their language to meet the standards of rationality and predictiveness than with describing how language is actually used by the speakers” (Kopytko 1995: 489).

In contrast, White’s (1993) discussion of the (inappropriate) use of *please* in English by Japanese speakers resulting from the apparent transfer of a supposedly equivalent form from their L1 is an early example of the postmodern perspective applied to pedagogy. In his discussion, White recognizes the importance of non-native instantial *use* and implicitly supports a lingua franca perspective, but in discussing *usage* (i.e., generalized and legitimized patterns of *use*) and ‘rules’ stops short of recognizing token- as well as type-meanings:

The example of *please* raises another significant issue: whose rules of interpretation are to apply when English is being used as a vehicle for international communication? The rules which have been discussed with regard to the use of *please* are those derived from native English speaker usage. Should the same rules apply to non-native use? Should these rules apply in inter-cultural communication? Indeed, is one being imperialistic to claim that native-speaking rules should apply at all? Should not native speakers learn to adapt their rules toward non-native usage? (White 1993: 201)

White’s discussion is taken a step further by Meier (1997), who critiques Brown and Levinson’s rationalistic theory of politeness, arguing that politeness is largely a matter of appropriate use:

In short, I am advocating an anthropological approach of sorts that points to an awareness-raising of different expectations regarding, for example, rules of dominance, power, and rights, which interlocutors bring with them to intercultural encounters. Such an awareness-raising entails at least two aspects:

1. An understanding that different evaluations of appropriateness may exist across cultures, and that interpretations based on the learners’ own interrelated linguistic and cultural systems may go amiss.
2. Attention to contextual factors and their possible values in the target language, so that learners can make informed choices in negotiating effective communication and in presenting their desired image in a particular context (Meier 1997: 24–25).

Table 5. Pragmatic meaning in the modernist and postmodern language teaching paradigms

Early-stage learning / traditional main-stream methods of instruction	<p><i>Uses of language:</i> indexical; pre-suppositional.</p> <p><i>Pragmatic perspective:</i> “Language learners must be exposed to language samples which observe social, cultural and discourse conventions.”</p>	<p><i>Language teaching principles (modernist paradigm):</i> focus on understanding and replicating target language utterance-type-meanings; declarative knowledge is privileged; well-formedness conditions on form acknowledged.</p>	<p><i>Fundamental beliefs:</i> there is a standard to be enforced.</p>
Later-stage learning / post-methodic paradigm / natural (eclectic) methods of instruction	<p><i>Uses of language:</i> illocutionary; radically under-determined, with understanding dependent on pragmatic strengthening.</p> <p><i>Pragmatic perspective:</i> “Whose rules of interpretation are to apply when English is used as a vehicle for international communication?” and “Attention to contextual factors so that learners can make informed choices in negotiating effective communication.”</p>	<p><i>Language teaching principles (postmodern paradigm):</i> understanding and replicating utterance-type-meanings counter productive; procedural knowledge is privileged; well-formedness conditions on meaning acknowledged.</p>	<p><i>Fundamental beliefs:</i> pidginization and transculturation (Brutt-Griffler 2002) are accepted.</p>

Meier’s position seems to be not far short of a rejection of utterance-type-meaning (“interpretations based on the learners’ own...systems may go amiss”) and an acceptance of utterance-token-meaning.

Table 5 shows how the perspectives found in the pedagogic literature which address second language pragmatics map on to the models of second language instruction represented in Table 4.

If English is a lingua franca and a language of representation as well as a language of access for those who use it as suggested in Table 4, teachers of English have a responsibility to teach English in a way that encourages learners to recover the complementary contexts required for the optimal determination of utterance-token-meanings and to develop metapragmatic means of indicating procedural constraints on interpretation. Pragmatics has tended to view utterances from an understanding perspective, with theory principally concerned with the means by which relevance or enrichment is established. Thus while pragmaticians have focused on the role of the addressee in utterance interpretation, language teaching pedagogy has focused predominantly on the role of the speaker. The reasons for this difference are not hard to see. As language teachers, we³ think we can judge the optimality of the form produced by a speaker, whereas when we ‘teach listening’, there is no obvious way for us to determine whether an optimal meaning has been recovered by the hearer, so we conveniently assume that it has, unless there is obvious evidence to the contrary. This enables us to treat listening as the first, apparently unproblematic, skill for the second language learner to master. Yet, precisely because they rely on the “cognitive abilities and contextual resources” of the hearer, listening and understanding are fundamentally different from speaking and producing, and are arguably a truer measure of what it is to know a language. Teachers therefore need to recognize that context, including ways of constraining contextual choice, is as important as form and that the recovery of optimal meanings for given forms is at least as important as the production of optimal forms for given meanings, a position that language teachers, and materials developers in particular, have difficulty acknowledging.

6. Conclusion

In this final section I will first summarize what has been argued in relation to language evolution, pragmatics, intercultural communication and language teaching, before making some very tentative comments about language evolution and English as a lingua franca.

6.1. Language evolution and pragmatics

This paper has argued that pragmatic strengthening is a necessary consequence of a theory of language evolution based on iterated learning and the associated development of a componential syntax. Taking pragmatic phenomena such as deixis, presupposition, speech acts and implicature as representing degrees of accommodation related to stages in the increasing componentiality of language and the dissociation of language and immediate context, I argued that it was possible to see a parallel series of stages in the typical process of second language instruction. I then went on to consider how the different purposes for which second languages are learned will determine the extent to which relatively early or relatively late stages in the process of language evolution provide models for instruction, arguing that when English is regarded as a native-speaker-less lingua franca for use in intercultural communication, instantial utterance-token-meaning will be privileged over formulaic utterance-type-meaning. This suggests that language teaching practitioners need to accept the fundamental indeterminacy of natural language and recognize that the dominant learn-in-order-to-use methodological paradigm needs to be radically revised in favor of a use-in-order-to-learn paradigm that takes account of pragmatic reality and the facts of language evolution. Because language and context are rarely coincident but rather in the kind of complementary relationship that requires an addressee to recover enough context to make sense of an utterance, we need to avoid the use of teaching materials and classroom routines which imply that each use of language is uniquely associated with a particular situation. For many of us in the profession, this requires a shift in our methodological paradigm.

6.2. Language evolution and English as a lingua franca

Fundamental to ILT is the concept that a language evolves in the direction of learnability. In this paper, I have argued that a language that has evolved to the extent that utterance-token-meaning is frequently the most salient level of meaning has reached the highest degree of learnability. The emergence in historical time of procedural constraints on pragmatic interpretation and the prevalence of means of indicating propositional attitudes, and thus guiding addressees in the intended interpretation of utterances, is especially striking in English and frequently remarked on by

second language users. Tentatively, I suggest that the spread of English as a lingua franca cannot be owed entirely to social and historical causes such as historical British imperialism and American economic power, as is usually asserted. Perhaps sociolinguistic notions such as ‘prestige’ are also reflections of learnability. Could there be something about the extent and nature of the evolution of English that makes it especially learnable as a second language? Is it only laziness that underlies the folk belief that ‘the English’ are no good at second language learning?

Although this may seem at first blush a rather extraordinary series of suggestions, there are a number of facts which perhaps make them more credible. For a start, there are areas of the world in which there is a very dense concentration of different languages and areas of the world in which a very small number of languages predominate. This suggests that there must be something about the languages, their interaction and the process of iterative learning which accounts for the different observable realities. Secondly, we know that different aspects of different languages are relatively easier and relatively more difficult for second language learners – interdental fricatives have been mentioned above. Perhaps it is also the case that some languages as a whole have evolved to a degree where the prevalence of unmarked features makes them especially learnable. Thirdly, it is a very remarkable fact that very large numbers of adults who are no longer in mainstream education choose to learn English.

The issue of language dominance and language variety has also been addressed in ILT. Solan et al. (2005) report a series of simulations in which they model language fitness, or ease of use and learning, and rates of migration between communities. They compare three learning modes (learning from parents, with more effective communicators producing more offspring; learning from parents, with effective and less effective communicators producing offspring equally; learning from communicatively effective role models) and report that in all the modes a sufficient rate of migration results in convergence to a single dominant language, although the number of generations required to achieve this solid stage varies significantly with mode and rate of migration. In other words, the efficiency of a language (defined in the simulations as a measure of learnability), the mode of learning and the rate of migration together determine the extent of language diversity. Imagine that English has reached a critical level of ‘efficiency’, and that migration (physical and virtual) and a mode of instruction likely to hasten a reduction in diversity have all been achieved. Speculative, maybe, but ...

With respect to ease of learning, we know that languages differ in ‘efficiency’ in different areas. The generative account of language appeals to notions of markedness to capture this effect. In second language acquisition studies, the contrastive analysis hypothesis failed precisely because the difficulty of learning contrasting features is not bi-directional, place/time vs. time/place order of adverbials being a good example. Imagine that a language as a whole evolves to a point where the natural balance of marked and unmarked structures is significantly skewed in favor of the unmarked. If this were the case, might we perhaps expect very large numbers even of adult learners to step that way? Again, speculative, but ...

If large numbers of adult learners were to attempt to learn a dominant language, we would presumably expect this to be a passing phase which would come to a very rapid conclusion as older learners died out and were replaced by young learners exposed to the dominant language in their initial education. As far as English is concerned, language teaching methodology may soon be a part of the past, although the vastly expanded population exposed to iterative learning may have consequences for the language which are as yet undreamt of (undreamed of?) by those who recognize that “English is being shaped at least as much by its non-native speakers as by its native speakers” – and consequences for the evolution of pragmatics not dreamed of by those for whom utterance-token-meaning is at present the ultimate inference.

Notes

1. The treatment of issues of frequency and *quasi*-regularity is very simply dealt with here. For a more extensive treatment of the role of *quasi*-regularity in language evolution see Roberts, Onnis and Chater (2005), who also list further sources.
2. At the same time, it should be noted that the diachronic process by which utterance-token-meanings may be open to typical interpretations over time is also compositionality driven, at least in the case of Q- and M-inferences which tend to build scales and paradigms, and hence to exhibit componentiality.
3. I use ‘we’ as a means of affiliation to the language teaching profession and as a way of acknowledging the importance of the application of knowledge to practical contexts.

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On non-reductionist intercultural pragmatics and methodological procedure

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Abstract

Intercultural Pragmatics constitutes a promising field of research within the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics. However, the methodological and analytical procedures implemented in cross-cultural linguistics of a Cognitive Linguistic persuasion could still be upgraded. Taking current NSM-based analyses as our starting-point, in this paper we argue that a truly usage-based analysis in the domain of intercultural pragmatics must take a number of *methodological*, *descriptive*, and *theoretical* refinements into account, and particularly, that the reductionist characteristics of the Wierzbickian perspective need to be avoided in favor of an approach that is firmly grounded in empirical research.

1. Introducing the argument

Research on culture falls very naturally within the scope of cognitive linguistics. To mention just three well-defined strands, the relationship between culture and cognition has received due attention in the form of studies in the field of linguistic relativity (e.g., Gumperz and Levinson 1996; Lucy 1992a, 1992b; Niemeier and Dirven 2000; Pütz and Verspoor 2000); much research has been carried out to describe language-specific conceptual schemas or establish differences across languages and cultures (e.g., Casad 1996; Casad and Palmer 2003; Hutchins 1995; Tuggy 2003); and the work on cultural cognitive models and cultural beliefs initiated in Holland and Quinn (1987) has been investigated in both the language-internal and cross-linguistic dimension (e.g., Koller 2004; Morgan 2001).

On the other hand, the picture could also be drawn in a far less positive way than the one just described. The cultural dimension is frequently ignored in linguistic analysis in general, and, when it is explored in its own right, the analysis is often not systematic. In this article, we will concentrate

on the latter point: If and when the cultural dimension is incorporated into cognitive linguistics research, what methodological requirements and criteria should be imposed on the analysis? In particular, we will expose the danger of a methodologically reductionist approach, focusing on the following four forms: the reduction of *language to linguistic structure*, the reduction of *thought to language*, the reduction of *intralinguistic and intracultural variation to linguistic homogeneity*, and the reduction of *semantic variation to essentialist definitions*.

Examples will be drawn from *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics. The Semantics of Human Interaction* (Wierzbicka 1991, 2003), which is a conspicuous (and influential) illustration of the reductionist approach that we argue against. It should be made explicit right from the start, however, that the Wierzbickian approach serves an exemplary function only – the point we are making is a general one, not one that is exclusively or specifically directed at the Wierzbickian stance. As a matter of fact, we need to acknowledge a certain degree of caution in the position taken by Wierzbicka herself. As she clarifies in the Preface to both the first edition (1991) and the second edition (2003), the research described in the volume in question remains at the level of a pilot study. In line with this observation, the comments made in the present paper are to be interpreted in terms of a constructive contribution to a cognitively-oriented intercultural pragmatics: If we try to go beyond the level of the pilot study presented by Wierzbicka, what would the methodological requirements¹ be? How can initial hypotheses about language and culture become transformed in such a way that they become amenable to empirical investigation? How can data be gathered in such a way that they reflect real usage in a given speech community? From a theoretical point of view, what models could serve to enrich the discussion? In this respect, our critical examination of a methodologically reductionist approach to intercultural pragmatics leads to the formulation of a set of requirements for an alternative approach. Emphasis will also be made on the fact that the approach we advocate links up in a natural way with a number of existing empirical traditions in cognitive linguistics, pragmatics and cultural studies towards greater empirical accuracy.

The paper is organized as follows: In section 2 we discuss the method used by Wierzbicka and the problems it entails, and critically scrutinize a number of her examples. Section 3 systematizes the criticisms by systematically discussing the four forms of reductionism. Section 4

provides the reader with a number of concluding remarks and with a broad indication of the methodological alternatives that would seem to be able to live up to the anti-reductionist challenge.

2. Some examples of reductionist thinking

The argumentative strategy of *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* can be summarized as follows: Wierzbicka begins, after a series of preliminary observations on culture, pragmatics and the need for a universal language, with a series of linguistic examples which allegedly reveal a variety of cultural and conceptual differences between Polish and English. These examples are followed by this “interpretative hypothesis” (2003: 30):

Of course, Polish is not alone among European languages in differing from English in the ways indicated above. On the contrary, it is English which seems to differ from most other European languages along these lines. Many of the observations made in the present chapter would also apply to Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and many other languages. It is English which seems to have developed a particularly rich system of devices reflecting a characteristically Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition: a tradition which places special emphasis on the rights and on the autonomy of every individual, which abhors interference in other people’s affairs (*It’s none of my business*), which is tolerant of individual idiosyncrasies and peculiarities, which respects everyone’s privacy, which approves of compromises and disapproves of dogmatism of any kind.

The rest of the book provides the reader with a further selection of examples and case studies, all of which are taken to support the view expressed in the above hypothesis. Hence, the argumentative structure is basically repetitive – more and more linguistic examples are given of the specifics of “Anglo” culture, but the level of analysis for each individual example does not go beyond establishing the presence or absence, in a given language, of a certain expression, and then assessing that observation in the light of the interpretative hypothesis just mentioned. A few examples may serve to illustrate the point that such an endeavor is not without raising questions.

2.1. Privacy

The previous quote establishes that according to Wierzbicka, individual privacy is one of the key concepts of “Anglo” culture. One of the arguments that she draws on to support her claim involves the following lexical evidence (2003: 47):

The cultural differences between English and Polish discussed here have also innumerable lexical reflexes. ... One is the presence in the English lexicon of the word *privacy*, which has no equivalent in Polish, nor, apparently, in other European languages. In fact, the concept of privacy seems to be a characteristically Anglo-Saxon one. The word *privacy* is a very common one, frequently used in everyday speech, and it clearly reflects one of the central values of Anglo-Saxon culture. To have *privacy* means, roughly, ‘to be able to do certain things unobserved by other people, as everyone would want to, and need to’. The cultural assumption embodied in this concept is very characteristic: it is assumed that every individual would want, so to speak, to have a little wall around him/her, at least part of the time, and that this is perfectly natural, and very important.

But to what extent can this really be considered “evidence”? Let us first concentrate on the statement that “the word *privacy* has no equivalent in Polish, nor, apparently, in other European languages.” The following list only enumerates ten out of the many related, more or less related or completely unrelated languages co-existing in Europe, but even within this restricted set, we found linguistic cues for ‘privacy’ in all of them:

Spanish: *privacidad, intimidad; el derecho a la intimidad* (the right to privacy); *no te metes en mi vida privada* (lit. don’t get into my private life); *se mete en todo* (lit. he gets into everything, i.e., he’s always sticking his nose into other people’s business).

Portuguese: *privacidade, intimidade*.

French: *intimité; dans l’intimité* (in privacy); *c’est mon affaire* (it’s my business).

Romanian: *intimitate; e viața mea privată* (it’s my private life); *tot timpul se amestecă în treaba mea* (lit. he’s always getting into my things. i.e., he’s always sticking his nose into my business); *tot timpul se amestecă în viața mea* (he’s always sticking his nose into my private life); *în casa asta e imposibil de a avea intimitate* (lit. in this house it’s impossible to have intimacy).

- Italian: *intimità, privacy, riservatezza. Vita privata* (private life); *in privato* (in privacy); *non voglio interferenze nella mia vita privata* (lit. I don't want interference in my private life); *in questa casa è impossibile avere un po' di privacy/intimità* (lit. in this house it's impossible to have a bit of privacy); *quando parlo al telefono ho bisogno de riservatezza*; (when I make a phone call I need privacy); *ho bisogno della mia privacy* (I need privacy).
- Danish: *privatliv; krænkelse af privatlivets fred* (invasion of privacy); *privatlivets fred* (the sanctity of private life).
- Norwegian: *privatliv*.
- German: *Privatleben, Intimsphäre, Privatsphäre*.
- Basque: *bakardade; etxebizitza honetan ez da bakarrik egoteko modurik* (there is no privacy in this flat); *batzutan bakarrik egon behar dut* (sometimes I need some privacy); *norbera bakarrik dela, bere etxean* (in the privacy of one's own home).
- Hungarian: *mindig beleszól az életembe* (he's always sticking his nose into my life); *mindig beleszól a dolgaimba* (he's always sticking his nose into my business). *nincs magánéletem!* (lit. no life of my own!)

It does not seem unlikely that Wierzbicka, when confronted with examples such as these, would claim that the “Anglo” notion of ‘privacy’ is essentially different from the concepts expressed in these languages. In fact, in a recent paper (2006a: 5) she has expressed precisely this view:

And yet English is the only language in the world which has a word for the concept of ‘privacy’ – a fact which native speakers of English often find hard to believe. “Surely at least European languages like French and German would have a word for it?” Well, they don't, and bilingual dictionaries recognize this. For example, the best that the Collins-Robert English-French dictionary can offer for *privacy* is *intimité, solitude*, and Langenscheidt's English-German German-English Dictionary, *Zurückgezogenheit* (glossed in turn as ‘retirement, seclusion’) and *Privatleben* ‘private life’. None of these putative equivalents comes anywhere near *privacy* as it is used in modern English, and, for example, none of them could be used to translate Coetzee's phrase “an animal indifference to privacy...” or the sentence “he cannot live without privacy”.

That correspondences between the meanings of such expressions across different languages are not exact could, in theory, be the case – but the point to be made here is, first, that evidence to that effect is nowhere provided, and that, second, it does not take a lot of research to find

examples in other languages that necessitate such a further step in the argumentation.

The suggestion that the degree of empirical substantiation provided in *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* is as yet too meager may be further enhanced if we consider a number of other questions that immediately spring to mind when we are confronted with sweeping statements to the effect that *privacy* has no equivalent in other European languages and that the concept of ‘privacy’ is a typically Anglo-Saxon one.

First, even if there is no literal translation, does that really mean that languages do not possess the same or similar concepts? Idiomatic expressions, stock phrases, metaphors and lexemes, even syntactic variants are resources which speakers can, and do readily draw on in order to evoke a given concept. Is it legitimate to focus on one type of expression only, and shouldn’t we rather take into account the full onomasiological set of potential expressions for a given concept?

Second, just *how* frequently is the word *privacy* actually used in English (and in which contexts) as opposed to the relative frequency of other nouns? And how frequent does a word have to be in order to be characteristic of a given culture? To what extent does frequency of occurrence of a lexical item reflect the “central values of a given culture” at all? How, in other words, do we establish cultural centrality on the basis of a lexical analysis?

Third, to what extent is the alleged importance of ‘privacy’ shared by all speakers of English? Does *privacy* have the same value for a British aristocrat as it does for a New Zealand farmer? Wouldn’t there be different models (and evaluations) of *privacy* in different subcultures within the English-speaking world? At the same time, over and above the variation that we might observe within one language, would a systematic analysis of European languages perhaps not show that ‘privacy’, contrary to the statement made by Wierzbicka, is a very basic concept in most, if not all, European cultures?

2.2. Suggestions

Similar questions crop up when we look at the discussion of indirect and direct speech acts in *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*. The existence of certain verbs, or constructions, in one language is once again viewed as an indicator that an underlying cultural model is at work. In the following

quotation (Wierzbicka 2003: 3) it is observed that Englishmen frequently make use of the phrases *I suggest* and *I'd suggest* to make a request by means of an indirect speech act and that it lacks the performative use of the verb *ask*, in frequent use in e.g., Italian and Russian:

It is also important to note that in English, too, *some* performative verbs are not only widely used, but in fact have a much wider range of use than their closest counterparts in other European languages. This applies, in particular, to the ubiquitous English phrases *I suggest* and *I'd suggest*, which have no colloquial equivalents in Italian, German, French, Polish or Russian. . . . The explanation for such differences lies not in some universal logic of conversation, as suggested by Searle (1975) and Grice (1975), but rather, in *cultural* logic. Clearly, speakers of English are quite happy to identify some of their utterances as (mere) 'suggestions' but are reluctant to identify any as attempts to 'put pressure' on the addressee. For speakers of many other languages, for example, Russian or Italian, on the other hand, the opposite is true. In saying *ja tebjja prošu* or *ti prego* ('I ask you'), they are happy to emphasize that this is precisely what they are trying to do – put pressure on the addressee; because in doing so, they can be putting pressure on the addressee more effectively. The same cultural logic which encourages speakers of Russian or Italian to emphasize (by means of explicit performative phrases) that they want to pressure the addressee, discourages them from ever wanting to emphasize that what they want to say is 'a mere suggestion' – so much so that Italian or Russian has not even developed any lexico-grammatical resources for saying something like *I'd suggest* or *it's only a suggestion*.

Again we meet with the assumption that the existence or inexistence of certain language-specific expressions should link in a fairly direct way with intentional meaning, and that a direct translation will suffice to determine whether a given domain exists as such. Addressing the latter question first, let us ask ourselves whether it is true that Italian has not developed any lexico-grammatical resources for saying something like *I'd suggest* or *it's only a suggestion*. Clearly, Italian *does* indeed possess verbs, phrases and expressions which serve to express a suggestion as effectively as it can be done in English:

<i>Ti suggerisco di ...</i>	(I suggest that you ...)
<i>Ti consiglio di ...</i>	(I advise you to ...)
<i>Dovresti ...</i>	(you should/you would have to ...)
<i>Per me dovresti ...</i>	(In my opinion, you should/you would have to ...)
<i>Perché non fai così ...</i>	(Why don't you do this ...)
<i>Se fossi in te farei ...</i>	(If I were you I would ...)

Further, the claim that the existence or inexistence of certain lexicogrammatical resources should have a direct relationship with intentional meaning is a strong one, if only because it is assumed that the (erroneously claimed) absence of linguistic devices in Italian to say *I suggest* or *I'd suggest* reflects the absence of a face-threatening act for Italians in situations in which speakers of other languages would opt for mitigating resources to bring about the desired effect.

2.3. Requests

For an additional illustration let us consider another speech act analyzed in *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* (2003: 32). The observation is made that while in English orders are frequently realized by the bare imperative, requests are frequently realized, not by the performative use of the verb *ask* as in a number of other European languages (cf. above), but rather by indirect speech acts, i.e., by interrogative and conditional constructions:

In English, if the speaker wants to get the addressee to do something and does not assume that he could force the addressee to do it, the speaker would normally not use a bare imperative. Speech acts which could be reported by means of the verbs request or ask (to) frequently have an interrogative or an interrogative-cum-conditional form, as in the following examples...: *Will you close the door please? Will you close the window please? Will you please take our aluminum cans to the Recycling Centre? Would you take out the garbage please? Would you get me a glass of water?... Do you want to set the table now? Why don't you clean up that mess?...* Not a single one of these utterances could be translated literally into Polish and used as a request.

Wierzbicka then goes on to relate these patterns to her initial interpretative hypothesis, that is to say, the presence of interrogative or conditional forms where other languages use direct speech acts is viewed as a reflex of a characteristically Anglo-Saxon tradition, viz. that which “places special emphasis on the rights and on the autonomy of every individual, abhors interference in other people’s affairs, is tolerant of individual idiosyncrasies and peculiarities, respects everyone’s privacy, approves of compromises and disapproves of dogmatism of any kind”:

The heavy restrictions on the use of the imperative in English and the wide range of use of interrogative forms in performing acts other than questions constitute striking linguistic reflexes of this socio-cultural attitude. In

English, the imperative is mostly used in commands and in orders. Other kinds of directives (i.e., of speech acts through which the speaker attempts to cause the addressee to do something), tend to avoid the imperative or to combine it with an interrogative and/or conditional form.

The pattern of the multiple problems one may have with such an analysis is the same as in the previous examples. First, to achieve a more reliable picture of just how heavy the restrictions on the use of the imperative are and just how wide the range of use of interrogatives actually is when English speakers perform orders and requests, some kind of empirical corroboration is needed. It would be interesting to know with which relative frequency imperatives and interrogatives occur on average as opposed to the many other possibilities available, in which particular social situations they occur, and between speakers with which particular status relationships. When are imperatives actually sanctioned? How often is the affirmative mood employed (*I'm thirsty* as opposed to *Would you mind getting me a glass of water* or *Fetch me a glass of water*) and in which situations? In general, what would the relative frequency of alternative expressions be in a corpus and in the usage of an average English speaker during one day of real, social interaction? A precise picture would involve not just a qualitative, but also a quantitative description of real usage. The proportion in which English speakers actually use a wide range of devices, the imperative included, in addition to interrogatives or conditionals to express directives which could not easily be classified as orders, might well turn out to be more significant than at first sight.

Second, speech acts are viewed as discrete categories (which can be described by means of an essentialist definition) with corresponding discrete categories of linguistic triggers, a conception which leaves little room for vagueness and flexibility, and for internal variation within a language or a culture. This is an issue to which we shall return in section 3.4.

Third, a direct relationship is once again established between linguistic form, intentional meaning and cultural values. Wierzbicka selects a number of indirect speech acts (interrogative and conditional structures) from among a wider range of possibilities (affirmative mood, suggestions etc.) and takes them at face value, so to speak – the locutionary force is interpreted as reflecting central values of a culture. That is to say, the relative frequency of occurrence of interrogative and conditional constructions to make a request in English is interpreted as signaling a desire to protect individual autonomy. But how tacit is the relationship between form, meaning and culture? While the observation that English

often uses interrogative structures (locutionary act) to make a request (illocutionary act) is a fairly trivial one (though admittedly useful for L2 learners of English), the claim that the use of interrogatives should reflect core values in Anglo-Saxon culture is a far more serious one. And even if we were to accept that the locution as such is interpretable in this way (i.e., not “grammaticalized and overridden by the illocutionary and perlocutionary forces”) how could the “significance” of the existence of interrogatives be interpreted? The counterclaim could, for instance, easily be made that the relative frequency of indirect speech acts in English to express polite directives reflects an acute sensibility to social relationships within a traditionally class-oriented society. Indeed, English may well be considered to be relatively *rich* in “styles” and “registers”, typologically speaking.

3. Against reductionism in intercultural pragmatics

In the previous section, we have seen how the pilot studies included in *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* are empirically weakly substantiated, and how they systematically call up methodological questions. Let us now try to systematize our critical remarks: What are the fundamental underlying problems with an approach such as that of *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*? We would like to suggest that there are four essential forms of reductionism at work: The reduction of language to linguistic structure, the reduction of thought to language, the reduction of intralinguistic and intracultural variation to a homogeneous language, and the reduction of semantic variation to essentialist definitions. For each of these features, we will indicate the specific *theoretical* issues involved, and we will point to the *methodological* consequences involved in overcoming the reductionism.

3.1. The reduction of language to linguistic structure

As we have seen, Wierzbicka draws a series of examples from the English language which all presumably point in the same direction and serve to uncover the Cultural Model described earlier. One such example (2003: 48) involves the fact that English has now lost its traditional *tu/vous* variable, one which Polish still possesses:

Intimacy reflects an especially close personal relationship between the speaker and the addressee; and English has no devices to convey that [...]. Being the great equalizer, the English you use keeps everybody at a distance – not a great distance, but a distance; and it doesn't allow anybody to come really close.

But surely, intimacy² could be conveyed in numerous other ways apart from the use of the *tu/vous* variable – why should the absence of variants in the particular subset of personal pronouns prevent English speakers in general from conveying intimacy by means of any other linguistic or non-linguistic device at their disposal? Gesture, intonation, emphasis, linguistic constructions of all sorts, lexical variables and evidentiality are just a few possibilities. The resources by means of which non-referential meaning (e.g., the social, phatic, emotive functions of language in functionalist terminology) may be expressed are manifold and vary from language to language. Absence of direct correspondences in the form of structural components or (literal translations of) lexical items across languages need not imply absence of a concept. Rather, the inherent flexibility of languages understood as complex systems allows for concepts to be expressed in multiple different ways.

The theoretical background of this observation is the importance of usage in the study of language – it is not just the structure of language that is important, but the actual choices that language users make from among the options that are available in the linguistic structure. The experience of language is an experience of actual language use, not of words as you would find them in a dictionary, or sentence patterns as you would find them in a grammar. That is why it is becoming common practice to say that cognitive linguistics is a *usage-based* model of grammar (Langacker 1988, 2000). If we take the experiential nature of grammar seriously, we will have to take the actual experience of language seriously, and that is experience of actual language use. From the point of view of mainstream twentieth century linguistics, that is a fairly unorthodox approach. An existing grammatical tradition tended to impose a distinction between the level of language structure and the level of language use – in the terms of Ferdinand de Saussure, between *langue* and *parole*. Generally (and specifically in the tradition of generative grammar), *parole* would be relatively unimportant – the structural level would be essential, the usage level epiphenomenal. In a usage-based model that considers the knowledge of language to be experientially based in actual speech, that hierarchy of values is obviously rejected.

Clearly, such a usage-based approach is by definition congenial to any form of pragmatics – historically speaking, pragmatics arose as an antidote to the neglect of language use in linguistic theorizing. What we are suggesting, then, is basically that Wierzbicka’s approach to intercultural pragmatics is insufficiently pragmatic – it fails to take actual language use into account.

From a methodological point of view, implementing a consistently pragmatic, usage-based approach involves two things. First, the investigation should be based on actual usage data – not just on reported or invented examples or utterances produced by the researcher on the basis of his own knowledge of the language. Spontaneously produced language use may be elicited in experimental circumstances or it may be collected from non-elicited sources (as when corpus materials are used), but in either case, it is the choices that language users make from among the structurally available options that is the actual object of enquiry, and not just the presence of those options. The second methodological feature follows naturally from this observation – an adequate method for intercultural pragmatics will have to be a consistently onomasiological one, i.e., it will have to compare the relative preference that language users may have for each of the alternatives that they have at their disposal for expressing a given function (see e.g., Geeraerts 1997). Studying a *tu/vous* variable alone makes little sense if you are interested in the expression of intimacy. Other verbal (and maybe even non-verbal) modes of expression will have to be incorporated into the analysis, and it will have to be investigated language users choose among them in relation to the communicative situation.

3.2. The reduction of thought to language

We noted that *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* readily jumps from language to thought – the presence of a given type of expression in the language is taken at face value as an indication that this is the way we think. But the relationship between language and thought is obviously not as straightforward as that, as the abundant literature on linguistic relativity proves. To illustrate the point, we may start from a slightly older text on the subject. In 1974, Rosch wrote the following (1974: 95–96).

When many of us came into contact with the Whorfian hypothesis, it seemed not only true, but profoundly true. We felt we could look inwards and see our comprehension of the world molded by language just as we

could “watch” as our personalities were irrevocably shaped by society and upbringing. But profound and ineffable truths are not, in that form, subject to scientific investigation. Is linguistic relativity an empirical “theory”? If so, it must be possible to derive from it concrete statements about specific relations of actual languages to the thought of the people who speak them; and these statements must be of a type which can be judged true or false by comparing them to facts about those actual languages and thoughts.

As is well-known, the “weak” claim (Linguistic Relativity) about the role of language in thought simply holds that both languages and thoughts are *different* in different language communities. The “strong” claim (Linguistic Determinism) is that language differences *cause* thought differences. The main point Rosch makes in her 1974 paper is that it is necessary to set up *falsifiable hypotheses* about the relationship between language and culture if we are to establish linguistic relativity or linguistic determinism with some degree of certainty. In other words, whatever initial hypothesis is arrived at on the basis of observed linguistic behavior must be translated into specific research questions, so that the hypothesis in question becomes amenable to empirical investigation.

Whorf based his hypotheses in part on evidence drawn from a comparison between such distinct languages as American Indian languages (e.g., Hopi) and the Western tongues he labeled as “Standard Average European” (e.g., English). As Rosch reports (1974: 96–97), Whorf found the grammar of several American Indian languages to differ from English grammar to such an extent that literal translations made no sense. On the assumption that each language both embodies and imposes upon the culture a particular world view the claim was made that Hopi does not operate with categories such as ‘thing’ or ‘action’, and that ‘substance, motion, space and time’ are relatively important notions. Rather, Hopi grammar divides the universe into two great “principles”: ‘manifested’ (all that is or has been accessible to the senses) and ‘unmanifest’ (all that we call future, or mental).

Rosch however warns us against jumping too readily to such conclusions. To illustrate, she proposes we take a Whorfian view on French and suppose that the order of nouns and modifiers (as in e.g., *le chat gris*: literally “the cat gray”) is indicative of a difference in metaphysics. The assumption, or hypothesis, would be that in French the basic units of nature are defined not in terms of substantive things but of pervasive attributes such as colors – what we see as a thing-with-attributes the Frenchman sees as a specific perturbation of a general Attribute. That is to say, we could in

theory take the fact that the French say *le chat gris* to imply that what “we” call a cat with a particular color is, in French, a particular modification of the general color manifold – some “cat gray” as opposed, perhaps, to some “fog gray”. Rosch asks herself why such interpretations should seem absurd for French but not for Hopi: “If there were a sovereign Hopi nation to the south of the United States, would we be learning in our classrooms not to make errors of literal translation in Hopi?” (Rosch 1974: 98). She thus warns us against assuming that differences reflected in the linguistic pole should invariably indicate differences in the conceptual pole.

On the other hand, it is also a fact that there need not even be formal differences for conceptual variation to occur. Words or expressions co-existing in different languages, or used in the same language by different cultural groups, may “mean” quite different things. But how can such differences be proved?

Recent advances in the study of linguistic relativity have increasingly (and successfully) used experimental methods to study the relationship between language and thought (see e.g., Slobin 2000; Boroditsky 2001; Levinson 2003; and compare the works on linguistic relativity mentioned earlier: Lucy 1992a, 1992b; Gumperz and Levinson 1996; Niemeier and Dirven 2000; Pütz and Verspoor 2000). In order to establish the hypotheses put forward by Wierzbicka with a stronger degree of empirical backing than what her present method allows for, the adoption of such experimental techniques would seem to be called for.

3.3. The reduction of intralinguistic and intracultural variation to linguistic homogeneity

The Wierzbickian approach predominantly works at the rather high taxonomic level of “a language” or “national variety of a language”:

Polish is not alone among European languages in differing from English in the ways indicated above. On the contrary, it is English which seems to differ from most other European languages along these lines. Many of the observations [...] would also apply to Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and many other languages. It is English which seems to have developed a particularly rich system of devices reflecting a characteristically Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition” (2003: 30).

This high level of abstraction entails that rich and complex patterns of structured language-internal and culture-internal variation fail to form part

of the picture – both languages and cultures are presented as internally uniform and homogeneous entities. Such a tendency to think of speech communities and cultural groups as monolithic wholes certainly contrasts with the variability of use that is known to exist within both social groups and language communities.

Spencer-Oatey (2005: 339), for instance, has recently pointed out that while culture, by definition, is concerned with regularities within a social group, this “regularity does not preclude variability. On the contrary, regularity and variability go hand in hand”. Spencer-Oatey mentions the following regularities in terms of manifestations of a group’s culture: basic assumptions and values; beliefs, attitudes, and ideologies; laws/rules/regulations; goals and missions; policies and strategies; perceptions of role relationships, including rights and obligations associated with them; behavioral rituals, conventions, and routines (linguistic and nonlinguistic), and understandings/interpretations of them; artifacts and products. With respect to the issue of variability, Spencer-Oatey (2005: 339–341) observes the following:

...the culture of a group is inextricably linked with the regularities that occur within the group and that help bind the members together as a group. However, this does not mean ... that a given social group necessarily has to manifest regularities in each of the elements listed above in order for it to be regarded as having its own culture. For example, members of a work-based community of practice ..., which can be regarded as having its own culture because of the shared repertoire that emerges through the group’s mutual engagement in a joint enterprise, may share various regularities that are associated with their specific practice (including, for example, work-related behavioural conventions and routines, artifacts, assumptions about role rights and obligations etc.). However, those same members may simultaneously hold very different beliefs about life (e.g., religious beliefs) from each other, or may each make very different assumptions about the rights and obligations of family members. So in other words, the group may show cultural patterning in certain aspects but variability in others... Moreover, although I believe that the culture of a group refers to the regularities that exist within that group, this does not mean that the cultural manifestations are either uniformly distributed within the group or are uniformly upheld across different contexts. Culture is an individual construct as well as a social construct, and so variability is inevitable.

The kind of structured variability which Spencer-Oatey describes has important methodological consequences (i.e., it calls for a linguistic description that is sensitive to intracultural variation), but it also has

theoretical consequences – it means that intercultural pragmatics will have to incorporate (or at least confront) theoretical views that acknowledge the inherent internal variability of culture. To better understand what is involved, let us have a look at three such theoretical approaches: Prototype Theory, Social Identity Theory and the notion of Distributed Cognition.

– **Prototype Theory**

From a cognitive linguistics perspective, social groups may be understood as prototype categories with members adhering to a variety of cultural norms, models, beliefs and practices to varying degrees. Prototype theory (e.g., Rosch and Mervis 1975; Lakoff 1987; Geeraerts 1989; Taylor 2003) holds that categories cannot be defined by a single set of criterial factors. Category membership is not determined by the presence of common denominators, or features shared by all the members of the category. Rather, they exhibit a family resemblance structure. Prototype categories also exhibit degrees of category membership (ranging from the clearest, core case – or most prototypical instantiation – to peripheral cases) and some are characterized by fuzzy areas and the absence of clear boundaries. A description of a community of practice in terms of a “node of mutual engagement that becomes progressively looser at the periphery, with layers going from core membership to extreme peripherality” (Wenger 1998: 118, as quoted in Spencer-Oatey 2005: 341) certainly matches that of a prototype category. One of the implications of a prototype-oriented conception of cultural groups is that adherence to a particular Cultural Model need not characterize all the members of the group in question. It could thus be argued that it is a fallacy to view social groups in terms of homogeneous categories. There is no need to posit a set of beliefs, shared attitudes or practices which should be common for all the members of a group for the group to exist as such.

– **Distributed Cognition**

In consonance with Prototype Theory, culture can be interpreted in terms of Distributed Cognition (e.g., Kronenfeld 2002; Sharifian 2003). Beliefs and knowledge spread within social groups and hold the group together, but they are shared only to a degree. In Sharifian’s terms, the elements of cultural schemas are not shared by all members of a cultural network, but rather distributed across “the minds”. That is to say, it is not by virtue of the knowledge of (or rather, the belief in) only one

schema that one becomes a member of a cultural group. It is the overall degree to which a person draws on various cultural schemas that makes an individual more or less representative of a cultural group. Morgan (2001) likewise assumes that there are multiple cultural models³ at work within large-scale social groups and that its members (e.g., North Americans in the case of her 2001 analysis on the semantics of impeachment) can draw on these on a more individual basis. As Spencer-Oatey affirms above, members of a given group “may simultaneously hold very different beliefs about life (e.g., religious beliefs) from each other, or may each make very different assumptions about the rights and obligations of family members” (2005: 340). It could thus be argued that a rather imprecise picture emerges when culture is analyzed on the level of a nation in terms of adherence to just one basic model, and that the task should rather be envisaged as a search for a variety of predominant, but different models to which members of cultural communities can adhere to, to varying degrees. However, in the Introduction to the second edition of *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*, Wierzbicka (2003: xiv) seems to argue that “a culture” can be described as such:

As the differences between cultures and subcultures were increasingly celebrated, there was also a growing suspicion of any generalizations as to what exactly these differences might be. Diversity was seen as beautiful but also as inherently elusive and indescribable. With the growing emphasis on diversity, the view gradually developed that diversity was everywhere, and that while those differences could and should be celebrated they could not be described. Thus, in many quarters, there developed a great fear of the notion of culture (especially “a culture”), and attempts to identify any differences between particular cultures came to be seen as ‘static culturologies’ (cf. Darnell 1994). ... There can be no quarrel with the claims that “cultures are not essences”, that “cultures are not monads”, and that “cultures have no fixed contours”. But to conclude from this that cultures cannot be discussed, described, and compared at all – because they have no substance at all – would be a spectacular case of throwing the baby out with the bath water.

– **Social Identity Theory**

Cultural regularity and cultural variability are perhaps easier to come to terms with if we take into account the fact that at least some cultural categories can be organized in terms of taxonomic hierarchies and that humans are complex and multi-faceted beings who construe their “self” by means of multiple social identities. One can “be” a Catholic, black,

female, neo-liberal Canadian lawyer from Quebec at the same time, choose from a variety of specific models having to do with Canadian identity, neo-liberalism, Catholicism, race or gender, and at the same time opt for views on particular issues such as free abortion or language policies in Quebec which fail to fit the (prototypical) core of the models adhered to (or sympathized with to allow for more active stance-taking). Social Identity Theory (Tajfel 1978, 1981; Tajfel and Turner 1979) and Self-Categorization Theory (Turner et al. 1987) both assume that we have multiple social identities. According to Social Identity Theory our self-concept is derived from our membership of groups and the value and emotional significance of those memberships. Self-Categorization Theory expands on Social Identity Theory by establishing a differentiation between personal identity and social identities (depending on the situation, either our personal identity or a social identity become salient, or foregrounded, while others remain backgrounded). Identities and social groups thus range between ‘the self’ and ‘human’. Yet the practical and theoretical problems arising from attempts to define one common cultural model which characterizes a large-scale cultural community – reflected by a language conceived as a homogeneous entity – are still manifold.

Given this theoretical background, a note is now in place on stereotyping and the possible objection that Wierzbicka’s essentialist reduction of cultures to linguistically entrenched patterns is a form of stereotyping. This is an objection to which she has reacted explicitly, so it is important to have a look at it.

Scientific approaches to stereotyping differ from the popular view that stereotypes represent no more than distorting, exaggerated images, and Social Identity Theory has indeed taken a special interest in group formation and social stereotype formation. In the early 1960s Tajfel conducted a series of empirical experiments which allowed him to adopt a then revolutionary approach. Contrary to the popular view that social stereotypes represent distorting and exaggerated images, he began to consider them as the outcome of the general cognitive process of categorization:

Stereotypes arise from a process of categorization. They introduce simplicity and order where there is complexity and nearly random variation. They can help us cope only if fuzzy differences between groups are transmuted into clear ones, or new differences created where none exist...

[I]n each relevant situation we shall receive as much stereotyped simplification as we can without doing unnecessary violence to the fact (Tajfel 1969: 82–83).

In this view, categorization produces a series of fairly automatic effects: accentuation of intragroup similarity and accentuation of intergroup differences, the outcome being distinct and apparently homogeneous categories. Social stereotypes are general images capturing the commonalities of such categories – pervasive in folk perception, imprecise but cognitively necessary. Viewing an out-group as a homogeneous unit is known as the out-group homogeneity effect.

Now, in the Introduction to the second edition of *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*, Wierzbicka defends herself against the statement that she would seem to be “fighting ethnocentrism with cultural stereotypes” (Davis 1998: 175). She argues that “the fear of ‘cultural stereotypes’ has been as great an obstacle in the development of cross-cultural pragmatics as has the fear of ‘essentialism’ and the ‘reification’ of cultures” (2003: xv). Wierzbicka sees it as a necessity to describe how the conventions of a given society relate to cultural values, e.g., to explain to Chinese immigrants that the use of the imperative in “cut down that branch – we don’t want it on our side of the fence” can be perceived as offensive in Australia:

With the increasing domination of English in the world, both Anglos and non-Anglos need to learn about various Anglo “cultural scripts”. To try to describe these scripts, and to explain the values reflected in them is not to indulge in stereotyping, but on the contrary, it is to help Anglos to overcome their inclination to stereotype Chinese (or, for that matter, Polish) immigrants as “rude”, while at the same time helping the immigrants to better fit in, socially, and to improve their lives. (2003: xv)

Two things are important in this quotation. First, it rightly points out that a description of actually existing regularities in cultural behavior is different from stereotyping folk perceptions (and is, as such, entirely legitimate). The question remains, of course, which theoretical model suits the description best: essentialism or a prototype-based conception? But on this point, a second interesting feature of the quotation comes to the fore – the notion of “cultural script” would seem to leave room for more intracultural variation than her original emphasis on languages did. This impression is confirmed by the following extract from the Introduction to the second edition (2003: xvii).

In the twelve years which have elapsed between the first and the present edition of this book, colleagues and I have been increasingly moving from the language of “cultures” to that of “cultural scripts”. Since we have never thought of cultures as “timeless monads”, this is above all a change in the style of exposition. The formulae included in this book under headings like “Polish culture” or “Japanese culture” would now be presented explicitly as “cultural scripts”. Although this would only be a change in presentation, not in substance, it would be an important change. Since for logistic reasons this change is not being made in the text of this book, the reader of this second edition is asked to bear this point in mind: this book is not seeking to describe whole cultures, let alone to imply that these cultures are immutable, but rather, to articulate certain specific “cultural scripts”.

Wierzbicka’s position remains ambiguous, however – intracultural variation is now explicitly accepted as part of the phenomena to be described, but at the same time, the theoretical refinement and descriptive precision that would have to accompany this recognition have not yet been realized. This impression is confirmed by the studies in Goddard (2006), a recent collection of papers that applies the *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* approach and the notion of ‘cultural script’ to a variety of languages, but that does not yet signal a major methodological change beyond the original approach as proposed by Wierzbicka.

3.4. The reduction of semantic variation to essentialist definitions

The descriptions provided by Wierzbicka are couched in a specific format known as Natural Semantic Metalanguage (or NSM). The main characteristic of NSM consists of the restricted metalanguage used for definitions: a limited set of allegedly universal, cross-linguistically neutral concepts (there are some 60 of them) constitute the building-blocks for all definitions. The definitions then take the form of “reductive paraphrases”: words are broken down into combinations of semantic primes as given by the metalanguage. Definitions take a characteristic form, like the following description of *order*, *ask*, and *suggest*.

I order you to do this (x)

I say: I want you to do this (x)

I say this because I want you to do it

I think:

 you have to do it because of this

 you will have to do it because of this

I ask you to do this (x)

I say:

I want you to do this (x)

it will be good for me

I say this because I want you to do it

I think:

you don't have to do it

I don't know if you will do it

I suggest that you do this (x)

I say: I think it may be good if you do this (x)

I say this because I want you to think about it

I think: I don't know if you will want to do it

As has been pointed out on a number of occasions by the second author of the present paper (see e.g., chapters 6 and 17 in Geeraerts 2006a), the NSM approach has a strong reductive aspect to it – the prototypically structured semantic variation that regularly occurs in natural language categories is reduced to the description of the prototypical core of the category. In the examples given above, this reductive type of definitional endeavor entails a rejection of the possibility that the distinction between directives, requests, offers, suggestions and other speech acts might be graded or fuzzy rather than discrete. Wierzbicka objects, for instance, to the possibility that there should be a vague or ambiguous distinction between orders and requests depending on external variables, as posited by Leech (1983: 175). Her objection to scalarity also contrasts with the view that the linguistic expression of speech acts could be placed along a continuum involving differences in the presence or absence of the different aspects of a speech act scenario (cf. Thornburg and Panther 1997).

A scalar view would also seem to be implicit in analyses such as Brown and Levinson's classic work on Politeness Theory (1978). Brown and Levinson argue that politeness is reflected in linguistic form according to general politeness strategies. Based on a study of three unrelated languages and cultures (Tamil, Tzeltal, and English) they propose a model for the abstract principles underlying these politeness strategies. They claim that in all three of these cultures speakers take the same three factors into account in calculating how a request should be formulated: the magnitude of the request (i.e., the burden that compliance would impose on the addressee), the status of the speaker relative to that of the addressee; and the closeness of the speaker-addressee relationship. Regardless of the question whether the Brown and Levinson model is indeed as universally applicable as they

suggest (Wierzbicka for one does not agree), it should be clear that, for those cultures to which it does apply, the three dimensions involved in the model imply the possibility of a graded concept of politeness. As in so many natural language concepts with a prototype structure, the three dimensions of magnitude, status and closeness are a matter of “more or less” and hence automatically yield a scalar concept of politeness.

Wierzbicka, however, explicitly rejects any such scalarity. Where Leech (1983: 175) wrote (*h* stands for hearer, *s* for speaker, and *A* for act):

The difference between ‘ordering’ and ‘requesting’ is partly a matter of the scale of optionality (how much choice is given to *h*), and the difference between ‘requesting’ and ‘offering’ is a matter of the cost-benefit scale (how far is *A* to the cost/benefit scale of *s/h*),

Wierzbicka (2003: 200) replies:

But clearly, the difference between ‘order’ and ‘request’ or between ‘request’ and ‘offer’ can be represented by means of discrete illocutionary components. There is no need to invoke any ‘scalar variability’. An order includes a component which can be stated, roughly, as follows: ‘I think you have to do what I say I want you to do’; a request includes the component ‘I think: you don’t have to do what I say I want you to do’; an offer includes components such as ‘I think you might want this’, ‘I think this would be good for you’.

It is clear that the definitional parsimony of the NSM approach ties in with the other forms of reductionism that we have described. From both a methodological and a theoretical point of view, if words in a language are subjected to rigid definitions that do not allow for variation, the subtle modulations and contextual adaptations that concepts tend to undergo in actual language usage are likely to pass unnoticed. In the same way, the possibility of language-internal variation is downplayed by postulating a single, essentialist definition.

4. Concluding the argument

Many scholars still work around form-meaning relationships on the rather abstract level of “a language”, disregarding culture and ignoring language-internal variation. There are two obvious reasons why: a relative lack of cultural awareness and scarce usage of adequate methodological tools. In one respect, cultural knowledge is “often transparent to those who use it.

Once learned it becomes what one sees *with*, but seldom what one *sees*” (Hutchins 1980: 12), and subjective stance-taking also affects linguists. Although ‘culture’ (e.g., cultural models, social variables, domains as culturally construed) ought to form a natural and fundamental starting-point when analyzing our ‘object of conception’ (i.e., whatever linguistic phenomenon happens to be under scrutiny), it often remains offstage as a subjectively construed dimension. In other words, “it inheres in the subject of conception – an aspect of the conceptualizing process that is not itself conceived” (Langacker 2004: 90).

Yet, it is unquestionably easier to work around “a language” as if it formed a homogeneous unit. On such an almost structuralist level of abstraction (speech communities as homogeneous categories), evidence can be drawn from anecdotal evidence, personal observation, occasional use of dictionaries or introspection. However, to the extent that language variation can be seen as a potential indicator of conceptual or cultural variation, the data-gathering process must be as systematic and detailed as possible. Developing tools which allow the researcher to obtain information on a whole range of not only sociological variables (e.g., age, gender, region, social class, profession etc.), but also textual (e.g., oral vs. written text, genre, register), contextual, (e.g., situation, degree of formality etc.) and co-textual (e.g., topic, information flow) parameters is a cumbersome affair, but a usage-based linguistics cannot ignore language-internal variation of the type just mentioned – it inevitably must take language as it is actually used in real situations by real speakers as its object of study.

Given this double premise – the primary necessity for taking culture seriously in linguistic analysis, and the secondary necessity for doing so in an empirically sound and systematic way – we have subjected the approach put forward by Anna Wierzbicka in her book *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* to a critical scrutiny. We have argued that the NSM enterprise is characterized by severe and undesirable forms of reductionism, and we have suggested that an alternative approach must take a number of *methodological*, *descriptive*, and *theoretical* refinements into account.

From a *descriptive* perspective, the level of granularity of existing research in NSM is generally still too coarse. National varieties of a language are not homogeneous entities. Distributed cognition, variation across socio-regional groups within the same country and situational factors must also be brought into the picture.

The *theoretical* improvements take the form of a closer interaction with existing concepts and frameworks in the domain of pragmatics and the field

of cognitive linguistics at large. For instance, a technical discussion involving the notions of Social Stereotyping, Social Identity Theory and Cultural Cognitive Models would seem to be necessary as the very starting-point of the analysis.

From a *methodological* point of view, this paper emphasizes the need to subject the variables under scrutiny to a systematic onomasiological analysis in order to investigate the many resources speakers of a given language can and do draw on to evoke a domain. Furthermore, as usage-based approaches describe language as it is actually used in real situations by real speakers, the sources upon which data are drawn must be systematized. The paper also discusses the caution with which it is necessary to proceed when it comes to establishing causal links between language-specific expressions and cultural variation. Whatever initial hypothesis is arrived at must be tested in a sound empirical way.

In pursuing this goal, Wierzbicka and her followers may have recourse to the many forms of empirical research that exist within the broad field of investigation that her proposal addresses. In fact, in each of the three domains that her approach links up with – cognitive linguistics, cultural linguistics, and pragmatics – empirical methods are well entrenched. Cultural linguistics shares the field methodology of anthropological linguistics and ethnosemantics (see Sharifian [2001] for an overview). In cognitive linguistics, employing empirical methods is a more recent trend, but it is one that is on the rise (see Geeraerts [2006b] for an analysis of current developments). And in pragmatics, if we make a distinction between theoretical, formal pragmatics and descriptive, empirical pragmatics, the latter approach has a firm empirical grounding in the methods of conversational analysis. Currently, descriptive pragmatics is expanding in different methodological directions: advanced quantitative corpus investigations are linking up with computational linguistics (see Walker and Moore 1997); variationist studies are linking up with sociolinguistics (see Schneider and Barron, forthcoming); and experimental research is linking up with psycholinguistics (see Noveck and Sperber 2004). If Wierzbicka is ready to take on the challenge of a non-reductionist approach, each of these trends and tendencies might provide a good starting-point for methodological advances.

Notes

1. At the moment of writing this paper, we have been unable to consult the recently published volume *English: Meaning and Culture* (Wierzbicka 2006b), which is an elaboration of *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* with specific emphasis on English. We are unable to assess at this moment, what methodological advances the new volume might present.
2. Why should the disappearance of the *tu/vous* variable suppress the existence of intimacy? If we follow Wierzbicka's logic, couldn't we just as well argue that English cannot express distance and politeness, and that all speech becomes familiar?
3. An example of Sharifian's "schemas" would be "family". The lexical item "family" triggers different schemas in the case of Aboriginal Australians and Anglo-Australians, but not all the elements of the schemas in question are necessarily shared by all the members of these cultural groups. Schema is thus used as a more complex term than element. Examples of Morgan's Cultural Cognitive Models (CCMs) include "the President", "military honor", and "democracy". Wierzbicka's cultural models seem to consist of a combination of specific schemas and CCMs.

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From downgrading to (over) intensifying: A pragmatic study in English and French¹

Hélène Margerie

Abstract

This paper is part of a wider study which addresses the grammaticalization of the pragmatic marker *kind of* and its phonetically reduced form *kinda*. The collocations in which these two items can be found provide an illuminating insight into their grammaticalization. While I previously examined the collocation involving *kind of/kinda*, *just* and/or *like* (Margerie 2005b), I here wish to study the collocation *really kind of*² and its French near equivalent, *un peu grave* (/très/vachement), lit. ‘a bit very/really’. *Sort of* fits in the same pattern, but the data presented is essentially restricted to *kind of* – although it does not exclude *sort of* altogether.

The collocations *really kind of* and *un peu grave* offer an interesting contrastive viewpoint for two main reasons. First, *kind of*, as a degree modifier, is usually listed in the category of compromisers, i.e., markers of moderate degree, but not of diminishers or boosters – markers of low and high degree, respectively.³ Examples of such uses do exist, however (Margerie 2005a), and the purpose of this paper is to argue for the development of *kind of* into a booster. The collocation under investigation provides evidence for this incipient grammaticalization.⁴

As for French *un peu*, it is originally a diminisher but is also becoming a focus marker or a booster when in collocation with other such markers, *grave* for instance, whose use is limited to very colloquial French.

Secondly, there is an interpretation of the collocation in which *kind of* and *un peu* are not necessarily, or at least initially, boosters but rather keep their meaning as epistemic or evaluative hedges. The meaning of the collocation is then fairly compositional: *really* and *grave* are emphasizees, and *kind of* and *un peu* hedges. I surmise that the development of *kind of* into a booster in the collocation is contextually induced from the collocation [*really*_{emph} + *kind of*_{hedge}]. Similarly, *un peu* developed into a focus marker after a context-induced reinterpretation of its meaning in the collocation [*un peu*_{diminisher} + booster/focus marker].⁵

I will also consider the existence of a cline from compromisers (or diminishers) to boosters as evidenced by other items such as *pretty* in English and *pas mal* in French, on which the boosters/focus markers *kind of* and *un peu* may have been modeled analogically.⁶

1. The compositional meaning of the collocation

I will first present the compositional meaning of the collocation in which each item keeps its own distinct meaning. I believe this meaning is the starting point for the development of *kind of* into a booster in the collocation *really kind of*.

1.1. Eng. really/Fr. *grave*

I will not elaborate on the meaning of *really* because it does not change whatever the interpretation of the collocation is.⁷ It is initially an emphasizer, i.e., a device “that adds to the force of the adjective” (Quirk et al. 1985: 447), which can often be interpreted as a booster (Stenström 1986; Paradis 2003).

As for *grave*, originally an adjective meaning ‘serious’, ‘severe in effect’,⁸ it has very recently become a fashionable marker in very colloquial French (Margerie 2006) which can be a quantifier (1), a booster or emphasizer (2) and/or a modal, attitudinal marker (3):

- (1) *Venez gagner grave de tunc, c pas du bleuf (Venez gagner grave de thune, c'est pas du bluff).*
‘Come and win packs of money, no kidding.’⁹
(class.hit-parade.com/general/annuaire_guides/enhausse.asp?p3=70)
- (2) *Je dois reconnaître que ce dessin est vraiment grave grave joli.*
‘I must admit that this drawing is really very, very pretty.’
(http://laseriequitabasse.hautetfort.com/archive/2005/04/18/edmond_et_le_referendum.html)

- (3) *Il fait grave petit jouet en caoutchouc!*
 ‘It so looks like a cheap rubber toy!’
 (<http://www.forum-2d.com/f/index.php/communaute-graphisme-2d/realisation/infographie-cg/t315.html>)

Grave here suggests a high quantity, a high degree and/or high involvement on the part of the speaker.

1.2. Eng. kind of/Fr. *un peu*

The pragmatic marker *kind of* is, generally speaking, multi-functional (Aijmer 1984; Margerie 2005a): its uses range from degree modifier to (epistemic or affective) hedge, filler, marker of reported speech, etc. Now when part of the collocation *really kind of*, it is exclusively a hedge, that is a device meant to “make things fuzzier or less fuzzy” (Lakoff 1972: 195), or as Kay (1984: 162) puts it, a “metalinguistic” device used “to express a reservation or apology on the speaker’s part for attempting to denote with the linguistic object X what X is in fact being used to pick out in the utterance.” Notice that the hedging function is the most frequent one regardless of the context in which *kind of* appears (Margerie 2005a).

1.2.1. Epistemic hedge

Hedges can be broken down into two major subcategories: epistemic (evidential) and affective/attitudinal (interpersonal). As an epistemic hedge, *kind of* suggests tentativeness on the part of the speaker who is not sure whether he is using the right words and indicates that these merely approximate what he actually has in mind. It is a device “by whose aid, in spite of the limited scope of our vocabulary we can always avoid being left speechless” (Austin 1962: 74). It is also sometimes referred to as an identifier (Bolinger 1972).

Examples of this use outside the construction with *really* are presented in (4)–(5); (6)–(8) show the epistemic hedge inside the construction:

- (4) People who are organizing foreign policy they have to, kinda work on two levels, one with the the other country and one like within, with the force within their, their own country. (MICASE corpus)

- (5) Oh I was in a really good mood, I woke up this morning in a really good mood, so I kind of danced into work. (BNC spoken corpus)
- (6) I just wanna say that it s- kinda seems like you guys, were able to come in and, like pinpoint something that needed to happen and kind of help them think like horizontally about it, you know? Like it really kind of of like, shone some light into like, ways that the program could improve and things that needed possibly changing. (MICASE corpus)
- (7) She said that she was really kind of um... (WSC corpus)
- (8) Superimposed on that, um came, a recognition starting in about the late ei- nineteen eighties, and really, kind of peaking in, about nineteen ninety... (MICASE corpus)

In (5), for instance, *kind of* is an epistemic hedge in that it underlines the metaphorical use of the phrase “dance into work”. The speaker indicates that some distance should be taken from the literal meaning of the phrase.

This use is often marked prosodically by a pause. This is the case in (6) where *like* is another marker of the speaker’s search for the most appropriate term or phrase. The end of the utterance in (7) is missing, so that we cannot pinpoint the exact meaning of the construction. Notice, however, the speaker’s hesitation as marked by *um*.

1.2.2. *Affective hedge*

Kind of is also often used as an affective, interpersonal hedge which is “an important resource for the realization of politeness strategies” (Aijmer 2002: 8). It is meant to tone down the force of the speaker’s assertion which may include vulgar terms (9) or be face-threatening for the speaker (10). It may also show his embarrassment vis-à-vis the co-speaker (11), or indicate a polite request (12), for instance:

- (9) I like her and everything but, holy shit, I really need I do need some time to go to school and like be by myself. Do you know what I mean? It’s kind of fucking important. (COLT corpus)

- (10) You know it was, I mean I was, already an astronomy major by then. I was just taking it for fun you know so like I was pretty far ahead most of my class so I was really kinda bored. *I mean* it was cool, *you know* cuz it's astronomy but, like, the pace was kinda slow... (MICASE corpus)
- (11) "Now, that's what printer you should get. Have you got a printer?" "Yes." "Oh, keep it still." "But this is kind of a, that my dad's use." (CSAE corpus)
- (12) "Right good, alright, so what do you – do you have specific questions about this for me like are there parts that you think are, weak and parts you think are particularly strong?" "I was just kinda hoping you'd read over and say this has to be changed or you know whatever." (MICASE corpus)

(13)–(15) are examples of the affective hedge used in the construction:

- (13) Then there's a question about should you be indifferent about getting rid of people at different ages? And then there's the question of how will the age discrimination law look at what you do, if you offer different bonuses. And and here it's really kind of bizarre right because it's not entirely clear whether we're offering a big bonus to old workers, is treating them nicely, or nudging them out... (MICASE corpus)
- (14) So, I mean it's kind of like, the one argument it seems that he would be able to use to justify, uh crossing out existence of time and space, he still holds on to the fact that there is, a real, dough out there or something with the numina... So y- that part really kinda confuses me. Cuz, it seems like the only explanation of how to cross over, cross out, the existence of time and space... (MICASE corpus)
- (15) I, um, I'll be brief cuz uh, we're really kind of out of out of time. (MICASE corpus)

In (13) the speaker expects confirmation by the co-speaker. *Kind of* suggests a modulated use of the adjective *bizarre*: The speaker is obviously

aware that the co-speaker may disagree with him, so he deliberately tones down the force of the adjective.

In (14), the speaker realizes he cannot openly say he is confused because it may be too face-threatening for him. Hence the broken speech which follows (*cuz*).

In (15), the speaker intimates that he is now running late because the co-speaker has spoken for a very long time. He does not want to sound impolite, so he uses *kind of* as a hedging device to soften the impact of the phrase *out of time* on the co-speaker.

1.2.3. *Fr. un peu*

Un peu takes on two main functions, quantifier (*un peu d'argent* 'a little money') and diminisher (*un peu petit* 'a bit small'); in the latter case it can also often be interpreted as an attitudinal hedge (*il est un peu pénible* 'he is kind of a pain in the neck'). It is this use of the diminisher/attitudinal hedge that is transferred onto the use of *un peu* in the collocation with *grave* and other boosters, as in (16).

(16) *Quand elle m'a dit qu'elle préparait un BEP mécanique, je me suis un peu, grave foutu de sa gueule. Désolé.*

'When she told me she was taking a pre-high school mechanics exam, I kind of made fun of her very much. Sorry.'

(<http://www.egypte-antique.com/grece/voyage.php>)

This use then gives rise to the interpretation of *un peu* as a booster itself.

1.3. An unexpected combination

Both uses of *kind of* in the construction, as an epistemic or an affective hedge, and the use of the attitudinal hedge *un peu* in French suggest a contradictory strategy on the part of the speaker. The combination of the hedge with the emphasizee *really* in English or the booster/attitudinal marker *grave* in French seems odd. The speaker uses the emphasizee to convey a general sense of high intensity. In (15), *really* verges onto a booster: as the speaker highlights the delay, he intimates that they are *very much* out of time.

On the other hand, *kind of* softens the force of the speaker's assertion. *Really* thus loses part of its emphasizing role because *kind of* signals tentativeness or politeness on the part of the speaker.

The seemingly paradoxical interpretation of the construction makes sense, though, if the utterance is processed in a linear way and we agree that speakers' thoughts evolve and may take an unexpected turn as the speech is delivered. It is likely that the speaker initially intended to convey the full meaning of the emphaser, but then realized that the tone of his utterance might not be appropriate in a politeness strategy or that he finally had doubts as to whether the term that first came to his mind best approximated what he actually wanted to say.

There now remains to examine examples of the collocation in which the compositional meaning cannot be retrieved.

2. The new meaning of Eng. *kind of* and Fr. *un peu* in the collocation

2.1. Really kind of

In the examples to follow, *kind of* obviously reinforces the emphasizing role played by *really*. *Kind of* thus shows signs of grammaticalization into an emphaser or a booster. Boosters are part of the category of reinforcers "assign[ing] a high value on a scale to their heads... Scalar 'boosters'... push their complements up the scale" (Buchstaller and Traugott in press). I have shown that the use of *really* sometimes verges on use as a booster. I now intend to show that *kind of* is following a similar cline, grammaticalizing into a high degree modifier.

- (17) You have to take your, your own educational goal very seriously, and explore check out different things and kinda go, that was an experience I can pass on next time I don't wanna do more of that or you know I like sociology I'll take more of that or, *I liked math* I even find it you know I found it really kind of interesting I like the group work I wanna go on in that. (MICASE [emphasis mine])¹⁰
- (18) – "The group was small and *I saw myself fitting very well* there. I could contribute, so it's, been fine, so far. I guess you don't want all those answers, huh?"

– “No, I am, I am interested in those, you’ll see. You’ve answered some questions that I haven’t asked yet. But, that’s great. So, the fit is really kind of important. Not just the topic, but, um, that it, that it work, as a group, that you feel good in it, feel comfortable. Yeah, yeah, right...I think so too. People, people often sort of propose, group work, w- without really considering, how hard group dynamics can be. You know *how crucial they are.*” (MICASE)

- (19) I mean isn’t this a *gorgeous* thing? I’m really kinda pleased how well these, show up. (MICASE)
- (20) You need calc, so Math one-fifteen, Econ one-oh-one and one-oh-two Intro Comp you have, and Accounting two-seventy one. So you’d need, I mean that really kind of *very very much* all of a sudden, shapes up your curriculum *quite* differently and then you’d probably be taking, economics and pre-calc this semester, coming up. (MICASE)
- (21) So it sounds like your distribution’s pretty healthy, I think you should be really selfish and you should read through the course guide and *think about what you like*. And so take four-oh-one Stats one-eleven, and two courses that seem really kinda interesting to you. (MICASE)

The interpretation of *kind of* as an emphasizer or a booster is inferred from the context (cf. italics). In (20), it is quite evidently supported by the subsequent elements, *very very much*, and *quite*, which admittedly modifies another element, still is another sign of the speaker’s general emphatic style.

In (22), the positive polarity of the adjective *cool* which is modified by the collocation *really kinda* obviously points to the use of *kinda* as a booster.

- (22) The, details although, you certainly don’t need to know them but some people are somewhat interested in, how one exactly gets the D-N-A from the bacterial cell, into the plant cell. So I have a little picture of that here. And it’s really kinda cool. (MICASE)

In (23), the marker of hesitation *um* following the collocation might suggest at first a function as an epistemic hedge but the co-text (cf. italics) supports quite clearly the use of *kind of* as booster or emphasizer:

- (23) I couldn't find another picture so, I chose this one so I'm just gonna say it right now but this is an interesting picture to publish because it's a picture of one of the boys leading the two-year-old out of the mall. Which is *obviously kind of scary* because, you see this, what normally-looking two kids walking hand in hand, down a mall and you don't realize that one of these is a- about to commit like a *really bad murder*, and so it's really kind of um a scary picture. (MICASE)

Other examples with *sort of* instead of *kind of* provide further evidence for the new meaning of the collocation. As I mentioned earlier, I have restricted my research to *kind of* but a quick investigation of the corpora yields a few occurrences of the collocation *really sort of* in which *sort of* is equally emphatic (cf. italics):

- (24) She told us this story when we were all feeling, all feeling absolutely dreadful and it really sort of livened us up for the afternoon exam. *We didn't feel half as bad* when we got there. (LLC)
- (25) I jumped a New Zealand junior record on the day and jumped a lot higher than my New Zealand ranking and um you know it went *really well* um so no I was *pretty happy* with it but yeah it really sort of brought out the best in me. (WSC)
- (26) The other thing I could get it [my hair] permed cos it takes a perm quite well but I really sort of *quite* like it just straight. (WSC)
- (27) She was *obviously* really sort of getting a kick out of the achievements. (WSC)

Although examples of such collocations are, admittedly, not numerous, we have to reckon with the spread of a new construction in which *kind of* and *sort of* have developed a new meaning.

2.2. *Un peu grave*

Similarly, the following examples show that *un peu* has moved away from its use as a diminisher and an attitudinal hedge. It takes on a meaning similar to that of *grave* with which it collocates:

- (28) *Ça déchire grave. Mais il y a aussi quelques trucs un peu grave nul.*
 ‘It’s damn good. But there are also a few things which suck very very much.’ (http://www.20six.fr/Sub_a_roues/archive/2004/02/)
- (29) *Des fois on s’ennuie grave et on finit par sortir...de la salle...C’était un peu grave à chier.*
 ‘Sometimes you get bored to death and you finally leave the room. It was really, really¹¹ shitty.’ (http://theresnoplacelikeplrtzglrb.blogs.com/in_the_dark/euh/)
- (30) *Je suis un peu grave dégoûté que tout mon travail soit gâché comme ça.*
 ‘It really pisses me off that all my work be wasted.’ (mbr0ken.skyblog.com/6.html)

In (28) and (29), the speakers give their opinion about the design of a Web site and a film, respectively. They are very straightforward in expressing their negative feeling, using colloquial, if not vulgar, language (*nul*, *à chier*). We might at first think that *un peu* is an attitudinal hedge meant to counterbalance the style and register used in the rest of the utterance. But in fact, it serves as a means to reinforce the high degree conveyed by the booster *grave*, which is also an attitudinal hedge here in that it indicates the speaker’s high degree of involvement vis-à-vis the opinion the speaker expresses.

2.3. Other collocations

Support for the interpretation of *kind of/un peu* as emphaizers or boosters also comes from other collocations.

2.3.1. Eng. *very kind of*/Fr. *un peu très/un peu vachement*

In (31)–(32), *kind of* collocates with the prototypical booster in English, *very*, while in (33)–(34), *un peu* collocates with various boosters such as the prototypical booster *très* or the more colloquial booster *vachement*:

- (31) I thought you would have been the sort of person that wouldn't have bothered to vote because the whole thing's all bunkum and rubbish. I thought you were very kind of apolitical. (LLC)
- (32) So as you can see it's, very kind of, okay this is how I see myself in that situation she puts the hug in you know and it's very kind of, uh casual and *really* she pictures herself and her friend in that situation. (MICASE)
- (33) *Bon disons qu'il est un peu très con (et très égoïste) pour quelqu'un qui se veut protecteur des peuples.*
 'Well, let just say that he is a little bit¹² very much of a jerk (and very selfish) for someone who claims to be a protector of the peoples.' (<http://blogs.nofrag.com/Noolay>)
- (34) *Ils vendent ça pour 90 euros. C'est pas un peu vachement cher?*
 'They sell this for 90 euros. Isn't it a bit very expensive?'
 (www.Nolarytech.net/forum/achive/index.php/t-11401.htm)

In (31) the speaker obviously does not fear the co-speaker's reaction in speaking his mind. *Kind of* is not a hedge but rather a booster complementing *very* in the indication of a high degree of "apoliticalness".

In (33), the segment within brackets, containing another instance of the booster *très*, points to the speaker's emphatic style and confirms that the preceding segment *un peu très con* is meant to convey a similar high degree. *Un peu* does not impair the boosting effect of *très* but rather reinforces it.

2.3.2. *Eng. really quite/really absolutely/Fr. grave trop/hyper grave/vachement grave*

In (35)–(41), *really* does not collocate with *kind of* but with *quite* or *absolutely*.

- (35) I said, if accommodation was difficult, I could of course get back to London the same night, you know, really quite late. (LLC)
- (36) “It was really quite unlikely that one could entirely escape detection.” “*Sure.*” (LLC)
- (37) I was getting colder and colder and I was really quite frightened. (LLC)
- (38) The landscape itself is *very*, is r- really quite heterogenous. (MICASE)
- (39) And that’s fine I think that’s *great*. Uh it’s really quite *wonderful* to recognize that... (MICASE)
- (40) Darrel Watson really absolutely, socked this poor guy, in the chops, just knocked him flat, cuz he said... (MICASE)
- (41) It’s just frightening, just really is absolutely dehydrating. (LLC)

These collocations show the combination of *really* with attested boosters, which then suggests that *kind of* has entered this paradigm too. Similarly, (42)–(45) show *grave* in collocation with various boosters:

- (42) *Vous avez remarqué qu'elle a une trop grave belle voix?*
‘Have you noticed that she has a very very nice voice?’¹³
(www.greatestjournal.com/users/missingchild)
- (43) *Ce site est super grave trop bien. J’l’adore.*
‘This website is really very very good. I love it.’ (www.lexode.com/home/guestbook.php ?debu=540&f=570/)
- (44) *Moi je trouve Daniel Raddcliffe hyper grave mignon.*

'I find Daniel Radcliffe really very cute.' (www.jecris.com/txt/courrier/Filles.html)

- (45) *Ça m'a vachement grave méga touchée.*
'I felt really really moved.' (www.cyberscriptus.org/cyber47/marathon.html)

In French, such instances of multiple boosters are very colloquial. *Trop* in (42) is a fashionable booster which has just recently been grammaticalized into such a functional item. Its use is restricted to a certain age group, probably to the under 30, and it is especially favored by teenagers who are also very keen on piling up more than two boosters, as in (43) where *super*, *grave*, and *trop* all point to a hyper-emphatic style.

2.4. Problems

Although the meaning of the collocations as well as the existence of other similar collocations point to the development of a new individual meaning in the case of *kind of* and *un peu*, the collocations *really kind of* and *un peu grave* interpreted as [emphasizer + emphasizer/booster] raise a few problems.

2.4.1. Paradigm

First, if examples of collocations such as *really quite* or *really absolutely* point, as I said, to the inclusion of *kind of* in the paradigm of boosters or emphasizers collocating with *really*, just as collocations such as *super grave*, *hyper grave*, *trop grave*, *vachement grave* suggest the inclusion of *un peu* in the same paradigm, the paradigm of emphasizers or boosters collocating with *kind of* is, however, quite restricted.

Other likely items are *pretty* and *quite*. They both take on a double function, that of compromisers or boosters. As boosters, they would be expected in the paradigm of forms collocating with *kind of*, just as *really* does. But there is no such collocation in the corpora investigated.

The reason, however, may be the ambiguous interpretation of both *pretty* and *quite*. Their meaning as compromisers or boosters is dependent on the context. As a result, the collocation *pretty/quite kind of* does not

explicitly take on the same meaning as *really kind of*. It may just as well illustrate the collocation of two compromisers, although there seems to be no pragmatic reason for the speaker to reinforce a moderate degree modifier by means of another one.¹⁴

2.4.2. Syntactic variability

Secondly, *kind of* has not attained the status of a full-fledged booster/emphasizer. If it were the case, then its position in the collocation involving *really* would not matter very much. But it does. In (46), *kind of* occurs in front of *really*. The pause following *really*, and the marker of hesitation *um*, suggest that it is an epistemic or interpersonal hedge. We could suppose at best that it overlaps two functions, i.e., hedge and booster. But it does not take on a definite booster meaning:

- (46) In Turkey they're, I mean they had a really, um religious government the government was, the religion it was all tied together, completely tied together and they're just trying to, rip it apart, in this kind of radical way within the last, say one hundred years and so it's led to, these kind of really, *um* harsh laws to try to separate it out. (MICASE)

This is by the way the only example where *kind of* occurs in front of *really* in the corpora investigated. All other examples show the collocation *really kind of* in that order.¹⁵

Similarly, *un peu* and *grave* are not syntactically interchangeable:

- (29') **C'était grave un peu à chier.*
- (30') **Je suis grave un peu dégoûté que tout mon travail soit gâché comme ça.*

On the other hand, when *grave* collocates with other items than *un peu*, these can be moved around easily. Examples (47)–(49) involve *grave* and the same boosters as in (42)–(44), i.e., *trop*, *super* and *hyper*, but in a different order:

- (47) *La mariée, elle est grave trop belle. Franchement, il a trop de la chance, mon cousin.*
 ‘The bride is very very beautiful. Honestly, my cousin is a lucky bastard.’ (rafal7.skyblog.com/)
- (48) *On s’est toujours pas vu mais je l’ai déjà en photo, il est grave super mignon.*
 ‘We still haven’t met but I already have a picture of him. He’s awfully cute.’ (blog.staracademy.tf1.fr/blogs/cocotte425/staracademy/)
- (49) *C’est grave hyper lent, le transfert.*
 ‘The transfer is awfully slow.’ (www.3dchipsfr.com/forum/showthread.php?threadid=82077)

2.4.3. Really kinda/really sorta

That *kind of* is just beginning to grammaticalize into a booster or an emphasizer is further supported by the fact that *kinda*, which is supposed to be a more grammaticalized version of *kind of* (but see Margerie 2005b), does not collocate with *really* as often as *kind of* does. Moreover, *sorta*, the phonetically reduced form of *sort of*, is never used in collocation with *really* in the corpora investigated. The grammaticalization of *kind of* into a booster or an emphasizer is therefore just incipient. It needs to generalize and expand to more contexts in which it unambiguously takes on this function.

I will now address the issue of the development of this function and provide evidence for a context-induced reinterpretation triggered by the ambiguous interpretation of *kind of/un peu* either as hedges or as boosters when collocating with *really* and *grave*, respectively.

3. Origins of *kind of/un peu* as boosters or emphasizers

There are two possible explanations for the rise of *kind of/un peu* as boosters or emphasizers. The first examined here is their context-induced reinterpretation from a hedge into a functional item due to the influence of the emphasizer *really/grave*. The change thus fits into the Invited

Inferencing Theory of Semantic Change proposed by Traugott (1989), and Traugott and Dasher (2002):

The term ‘invited inference’...is meant to elide the complexities of communication in which the speaker/writer (SP/W) evokes implicatures and invites the addressee/reader (AD/R) to infer them. We prefer this term over, e.g., ‘context-induced inferences’ (Heine, Claudi and Hünemeyer 1991), since the latter term suggests a focus on AD/Rs as interpreters and appears to downplay the active role of SP/Ws in rhetorical strategizing, indeed indexing and choreographing the communicative act.¹⁶ (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 5)

3.1. Context-induced reinterpretation

My claim is that the reinterpretation was triggered by ambiguous examples of the collocation *really kind of/un peu grave* in which *kind of/un peu* can equally well be understood as hedges or boosters/emphasizers.

3.1.1. *Kind of*

Here a few examples showing the ambiguous interpretation of *kind of* in collocation with *really*:

- (50) As I said before you can plug it in, um the battery does charge and it does hold a charge so I’ll be able to kinda hold it up for you guys. Um, turning it on and off is pretty simple, it’s right here in the control panel, um, gives a little beep. Uh now this is...buttons up here, are really kind of hard t- hard even for me to press down... (MICASE)

After saying that the system is “pretty simple”, the speaker mentions the difficulty in pressing down the buttons. *Kind of* sounds like a booster complementing the emphaser *really* but the contrast with the easiness the speaker has just talked about seems to turn *kind of* into a hedge as well.

In (51), it is the hesitant ending of the utterance which evokes the use of *kind of* as a hedge, although *really*, which is used just before *kind of*, points to its emphatic meaning:

- (51) The *link* between uh B-S-E and Variant Creutzfeld-Jakob Disease this is important because, this means the B-S-E can, convert over to humans and affect us. Uh they first realized this because they both happened out of nowhere and certainly increased out of nowhere, in the same place in the same time in the U-K, in the uh, eighties and then nineties. Then there're three other features which really, kind of show that these are similar, it's uh just... (MICASE)

The pause after *really* also suggests that the speaker is thinking about the terms to be used or that his use of the emphazier *really* is to be interpreted loosely because he may not actually want to lay that much stress on the end of the utterance.

In (52), it is the self-repairing discourse at the very beginning which is a good indication of the hedging meaning:

- (52) You know the thing with that class that k- that really kinda sucks is the fact that um, you know I enjoy the class and th- the only thing is is that like we do assignments, but it took me a while to figure out that the assignments like he doesn't, you know he reads them, but he doesn't really critique them you know he just it's just to see like that you're reading. And you know so then when the midterm came around it was like hello. You know I like I did my reading and everything but I didn't know how to write like he wanted me to per se. (MICASE)

It seems that the speaker first wanted to say "the thing with that class that *kinda* sucks". He would then have thought that the hedge *kinda* minimizes the intensity of his message, hence the addition of the emphazier to convey a high degree. At the same time, the co-speaker is led to believe that the class sucks *very much*; he therefore reinterprets *kinda* as a booster. The context in this example is ambiguous as to which interpretation should be favored.

The context in this example is ambiguous as to which interpretation should be favored. The primary function of *kinda* seems to be to signal the use of vulgar language and suggest the speaker's modal distance from such language. The booster function is secondary.

In (53), it is the presence (and repetition) of other hedges and fillers, *sort of* and *like*, and the pauses following the use of *kind of*, which evoke a hedging function for *kind of*.

- (53) Now she's sort of hanging out with this really rough crowd. I went out to this new nightclub in Auckland and they were there, like quite rough and she's sort of still really kind of... gentle and innocent sort of like she's really kind of, I... don't know. She seems like a really innocent sort of girl. (WSC)

Notice that the speaker is finally not sure about what he is saying. *Kind of* is very close to an epistemic hedge. On the other hand, the speaker uses *really* four times within two sentences, together with the booster *quite*. This strongly suggests that *kind of* is intended to reinforce the meaning of the emphasizer. At least, it is up to the interlocutor to make out which interpretation the speaker means to convey.

3.1.2. *Un peu grave*

Such ambiguity in the French collocation *un peu grave* is illustrated in (54)–(55):

- (54) *Franchement, j'ai bien kiffé la soirée, c'était nikel, j'étais juste un peu grave mort le lendemain.* 'Honestly, I really got a kick at the party, it was damn good. I was just a bit very much knackered the next day.' (www.forum-auto.com/sqlforum/section4/sujet146869-630.htm)

On the one hand, *un peu* complements *grave* in the expression of a high degree of fatigue, but the interpretation of *un peu* as an attitudinal hedge cannot be excluded. Having said that the party was "damn good", the speaker cannot, for pragmatic reasons, say that he was absolutely knackered the next day because it may be face-threatening for himself and maybe for the co-speaker too.

In (55), *un peu* unexpectedly turns out to be an epistemic hedge, a function it rarely takes on in the construction:

- (55) *Je peux me tromper... mais c'est un peu grave cher non?*
'I may be wrong, but it's a bit very expensive, isn't it?' (www.yaronet.com/en/last.php?s=62781&sl=6)

Un peu signals the speaker's tentativeness as to the pricey cost, just as "I may be wrong" and the tag do. At the same time, the sentence can be interpreted as meaning "it's damn expensive/it's very very expensive".

3.2. The cline from compromiser/diminisher to booster

There is also reason to believe that there exists a cline from compromiser or diminisher to booster. Evidence comes from the attested evolution of the English intensifier *pretty* which was, historically, initially a compromiser and then developed a booster function (Margerie 2004). This development is another example of the subjectification of language which Traugott (1989, 1995) and Traugott and Dasher (2002) see at work in grammaticalization processes. Example (56) shows *pretty* used as a booster.

- (56) I am glad to be here. Nevertheless, I do feel a bit like Zsa Zsa Gabor's fifth, or was it sixth, husband on their wedding night. I'm, er, I'm pretty clear what's expected of me but not so certain that I know how to make it sufficiently interesting to achieve your undivided attention. (BNC spoken)

Quite similarly French *pas mal*, which started off as an adjective ('attractive', lit. 'not bad'), and then took on the function of compromiser (Margerie 2004), also allows a booster reading in certain contexts, as in (57):

- (57) *La voiture est pas mal esquintée.*
'The car is pretty well damaged.' (Riegel, Pellat, and Rioul 1994)

It is to be noted that *pas mal* also turned into a quantifier locating the quantity in question somewhere between 'rather' and 'a lot of' (Horn 1989: 358).

Both in English and French, the booster function may have been the result of a reinterpretation of the compromisers *pretty* and *pas mal* by means of litotes. Listeners are invited to infer a booster meaning in utterances where there is ambiguity between the two meanings, i.e., compromiser or booster, the intonational contour giving clues as to which interpretation is intended by the speaker (Horn 1989: 356–359).

Now *kind of* may have analogically turned into a booster itself, on the model of *pretty*. An example where *kind of* (i.e., outside the collocation examined here) can be interpreted as a booster:

- (58) Oh I like that song. That's wicked! (singing)...Wicked! There's gonna be DJ (name) and all that. With all hard core music. It's safe. Kinda wicked! Well I'm buying my ticket today...Oh yeah, Dad guess what? Slick come back from his own, whatsername? Holiday from Jamaica. He got, he got me, he got me a t-shirt, hat, erm, he got me trousers, a *wicked* pair of ragamuffin trousers. He got me a lot of stuff man! Got me records, tape. He got me Shaggy, Carolina, erm, Shabba Ranks, and all these songs. (singing) [unclear]. They got, they got *wicked*, raga music over there. (COLT)

Again, *kind of*, which can undeniably serve as a compromiser (Aijmer 1984; Margerie 2005a), might have turned into a booster in contexts suggesting such a reinterpretation. When we say that something is quite good, there is ambiguity between the moderate degree reading and the high degree reading of *quite*. The compromiser may just as well be used euphemistically to suggest a booster meaning.

It is pretty hard to make out whether the booster function developed inside the construction and then spread to single uses of *kind of* or vice versa. Still, examples of the booster outside the construction are scarce, which might suggest that the collocation first gave rise to the new meaning before *kind of* was able to convey a booster meaning on its own. In this case, the new meaning is the result of a context-induced reinterpretation inside the collocation and we might consider that markers such as *pretty* then serve as a model for the extension of *kind of* as a booster to a wider range of contexts.

In the case of Fr. *un peu*, it is initially a diminisher, not a compromiser. The leap from diminisher to booster is rather unlikely in contexts where *un peu* appears on its own, i.e., outside the collocation [*un peu* + booster], although it is not impossible, especially if speakers perceive an ironical use of the diminisher, as in (59):

- (59) *T'es un peu lourd quand même.*
'You know, you're quite annoying.'

But the phrase *quand même*, which suggests insistence here, is highly responsible for the reinterpretation of *un peu* as a booster. Without this phrase, *un peu* would sound much more like a diminisher and/or an attitudinal hedge, but this also depends on the intonation and the stress adopted.

Yet, there are other instances where *un peu* verges onto a compromiser, which might then facilitate its development into a booster. In such cases, *un peu* collocates with the compromiser *pas mal* “rather” which, as I said, can itself sometimes take on a booster meaning. In (60), the use of *un peu* in front of the compromiser *pas mal* suggests that it is to be interpreted as a compromiser itself:

- (60) *On m’a dit que les Indiens étaient un peu pas mal intrigués par les Occidentaux alors on risque de se faire aborder souvent.*
‘I was told that the Indians are a bit rather intrigued by Westerners, so we may often be collared.’ (http://voyageforum.com/voyage/inde_seule_D175157)

In (61), *pas mal* conveys a more than moderate degree. Here it may not be a booster in its own right but the degree that the speaker intends to convey is located somewhere between the degree expressed by the compromiser and that expressed by the booster on the gradient representing the general notion of intensity:

- (61) *J’voudrais pas trop te vexer mais t’es un peu pas mal relou (Je ne voudrais pas trop te vexer mais tu es un peu pas mal lourd).*
‘I don’t want to upset you too much but you’re a bit much of a pain in the neck.’ (<http://kimie-lan.skyblog.com>)

Un peu definitely reinforces the degree expressed by *pas mal* instead of conveying a low degree, as in its prototypical use.

In (62) and (63), the addition of the booster *beaucoup* after the sequence *un peu pas mal* does not actually show a gradation in intensity but rather suggests that the first two degree modifiers, *un peu* and *pas mal*, should be interpreted as boosters too:

- (62) *Tu étais un peu pas mal beaucoup ridicule.*
‘You were a bit rather a lot ridiculous.’ (<http://www.20six.fr/weblogEntry/1p89a4frzq7om>)

- (63) *T'as l'air de t'y connaître un peu pas mal beaucoup.*
 'You seem to be a bit rather quite familiar with that.'
 (forums.sharepoint-france.com/forums/2027/ShowPost.aspx)

All in all, instead of positing that *un peu* is turning into a booster on its own, it is more convincing to consider that the meaning of *un peu* is being affected by the boosters it occurs with in frequent collocations such as *un peu grave*. This might lead in future times to the entrenchment of *un peu* as a booster in its own right.

Conclusion

The parallel evolution of *kind of* and *un peu* in English and French shows that these two items are developing from compromiser and diminisher, respectively, into booster or emphasize. Their grammaticalization into such functional items is just incipient, as their new meaning is still slightly dependent on their collocation with other emphasize or boosters, although there are a few occurrences outside the collocation where they appear as such.

I have argued that the semantic change is favored by two types of factors, one context-internal and the other, language-internal. The main trigger is the influence of another booster or emphasize when *kind of* and *un peu* appear in collocations such as *really kind of* and *un peu grave*, leading to a context-induced reinterpretation of the two items into boosters or emphasize themselves.

Another possible influence is the similar development of forms such as Eng. *pretty* and Fr. *pas mal* from compromisers to boosters. This language-internal factor may later favor the spread and entrenchment of the boosters *kind of* and *un peu* outside the collocations I have examined here.

Notes

1. I am very grateful to Laurence Horn for his extensive reading of this paper, his remarks and suggestions, and to Elizabeth C. Traugott for her very helpful comments on a previous version. I also wish to thank the audience at the LAUD symposium 2006. All remaining errors are mine.
2. For the sake of simplicity, I will not mention *kinda* explicitly but it should be included in my reference to "kind of".

3. Kay (1984: 159) glosses adverbial *kind of* as “slightly, a little, somewhat”. But the literature on the topic more often describes *kind of* as a ‘downtoner’, or more specifically a ‘compromiser’ (Quirk et al. 1985: 446, 598, 599; Aijmer 1984).
4. This paper distinguishes itself from other papers on *kind of/sort of* which adopt a historical perspective (see Denison 2002). The aim is to provide insight into an apparently new meaning, the use of which is only confirmed by the synchronic data. Time will tell whether *kind of/kinda* has developed into a full-blown booster or not. For the moment, historical corporuses are not helpful in this regard.
5. Note that in French, there are several focus markers with which *un peu* collocates whereas in English, *kind of* seems to favor the collocation with *really*.
6. Note that there also exists a reverse cline, from booster to compromiser as exemplified by adverbial *quite*, for instance.
7. I do not mean that the meaning of *really* is always easy to define precisely (cf. Paradis 2003). But when collocating with *kind of* in the examples provided, it seems to invariably serve as an emphasizer or a booster. As Paradis (2003: 1) has it, “the motivating factors for the readings are semantic/pragmatic rather than syntactical/positional”.
8. The adjective has developed another meaning, which is, roughly speaking, the negative viewpoint of someone on someone else. The precise meaning of the adjective relies on the context (Margerie 2006).
9. The French examples were found on French Web sites. There are few spoken corpora of French and these do not show the uses of *grave* and *un peu* as illustrated here because of their newness. I am reproducing the sentences exactly as they appear on the Web sites. A standard version is given in brackets when they show specific orthographic variations or mistakes which may not be recognized easily.
10. The italics in examples (17)–(27) are added to highlight the elements in the context pointing to the use of *kind of* as a booster.
11. The translations may not always be idiomatic, but they only aim at showing the strong booster meaning conveyed by both *un peu* and *grave*.
12. I am giving the literal, or primary, meaning of *un peu* but the meaning is quite clearly that of a booster in these two examples.
13. The translation in English only shows that there is a general sense of high intensity involved; it is not meant to reflect the type of register used.
14. On the other hand, the reinforcement of one booster by means of another one is a matter of pragmatic enrichment.
15. A Google search does show a great number of *kinda really* and *kind of really* collocations. The first hits, however, seem to involve a moderator use of *kind of/kinda*. Due to the large number of occurrences, I was not able to examine

them individually and cannot therefore assure that *kind of/kinda* never take on a booster reading when they precede *really*.

16. The authors add that “despite the term, Heine, Claudi, and Hünne Meyer view SP/Ws as central forces in innovation” (Traugott and Dasher 1989: 5). In the present paper, the terms ‘context-induced reinterpretation’ and ‘invited inferencing’ are used interchangeably.

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Corpora

BNC (British National Corpus); Part 1 of CSAE (Corpus of American Spoken English); COLT (Corpus of London Teenage Language); LLC (London Lund Corpus); MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English); WSC (Wellington Spoken Corpus)

Toward a universal notion of face for a universal notion of cooperation¹

Marina Terkourafi

Abstract

This paper aims to clarify what might be “the accepted purpose...of the talk exchange” mentioned in Grice’s Cooperative Principle. Following an overview of previous proposals, I propose the notion of face as an accepted purpose on which more specific purposes may be superimposed. To fulfill this role, a revised notion of face is required. I suggest that such a notion may be built on two properties: a biological grounding in the dimension of approach vs. withdrawal, and intentionality. In virtue of being biologically grounded, Face2 is universal. In virtue of being intentional (or *about* an Other), Face2 presupposes an awareness of Self, making it a uniquely human feature and irreducibly relational. Rationality and Face2 jointly regulate the generation of implicatures under the umbrella of the Cooperative Principle, by prompting recursive application of the maxims to ascertain how one stands in relation to one’s interlocutor(s) in conversation – in other words, to determine whether one’s face has been constituted or threatened. Examples of behaviors ranging from over-cooperation (altruistic behavior) to outright conflict are discussed to illustrate this expanded understanding of the Cooperative Principle.

1. Previous approaches to interpreting “accepted purpose”

The Cooperative Principle (henceforth: CP) reads: “Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (Grice [1975] 1989a: 26). Interpreting “the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange” has exercised scholars a great deal over the last four decades, and this despite the provision of some guidance, however minimal, by Grice himself. According to Grice, “[t]his purpose or direction may be fixed from the start (e.g., by an initial proposal

of a question for discussion), or it may evolve during the exchange; it may be fairly definite, or it may be so indefinite as to leave very considerable latitude to the participants (as in casual conversation)” (1989a: 26). From the ensuing discussions, two main lines of interpretation have emerged. According to a ‘weak’ reading, “accepted purpose” refers to understanding and being understood: no more specific (extra-linguistic) purpose can be assumed to be shared by interlocutors. Adopting this reading, Bach and Harnish (1979) restrict the application of the CP to linguistic communication (cf. Harnish [1976] 1998: 304, fn. 31; Bach 1987). Perhaps closer to the spirit of the original formulation by Grice, who saw “talking as a special case of purposive, indeed rational behavior” (1989a: 28), a second line of interpretation adopts a ‘strong’ reading, suggesting that “accepted purpose” refers to some (specific) extra-linguistic goal shared by interlocutors. Proposed within the field of Artificial Intelligence, this ‘literal’ understanding of co-operativity is considered to be hardwired into agents. Cohen and Levesque, for instance, attribute to co-operative agents the properties of being “sincere and helpful” (1990: 229–230), for which they also offer a formal definition, while Thomason suggests an implicature-enabling notion of accommodation defined as “acting to remove obstacles to the achievement of desires or goals that we attribute to others” (1990: 332).

In a series of papers, Attardo (1997, 1999, 2003) attempts to set the record straight by spelling out the differences between these two interpretations of “accepted purpose”. He distinguishes between two levels of co-operation: locutionary co-operation (LC) or “the amount of co-operation, based on the CP, that two speakers must put into the text in order to encode and to decode its intended meaning”, and perlocutionary co-operation (PC) or “the amount of co-operation two speakers must put into the text/situation to achieve the goals that the speaker (and/or the hearer) wanted to achieve with the utterance” (1997: 756). He then proposes the following Perlocutionary Co-operative Principle (PCP): “Co-operate in whatever goals the speaker may have in initiating a conversational exchange, including any non-linguistic, practical goal. (Or in other words, be a good Samaritan)” (Attardo 1997: 766).

The PCP is more general than the CP and takes precedence over it. However, other principles may override the PCP in case of conflict (1997: 777). In other words, it is possible for the speaker to be LC co-operative (s/he can abide by the CP) without necessarily being PC co-operative (taking the hearer’s goals into account). These other principles include

Rationality, Self-interest, Politeness, and Non-Co-operation, which jointly delimit a bounded, ‘practical’ rationality interacting with the CP in an optimality-theoretic way to yield the most likely interpretation (Attardo 1999, 2003).

Although Attardo’s distinction between locutionary and perlocutionary cooperation disentangles competing interpretations of “accepted purpose” in the literature, it does not provide any clear insights as to why the PCP should hold. Early on, Leech took a step in this direction when he introduced the P[oliteness] P[rinciple] to regulate the application of the CP:

The CP enables one participant in a conversation to communicate on the assumption that the other participant is being co-operative. In this the CP has the function of regulating what we say so that it contributes to some illocutionary or discursual goal(s)...[T]he PP has a higher regulative role than this: to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being co-operative in the first place. To put matters at their most basic: unless you are polite to your neighbor, the channel of communication will break down, and you will no longer be able to borrow his mower (Leech 1983: 82).

On this view, to ensure cooperation at the locutionary (linguistic) level – that is, understanding and being understood – it is necessary to share a goal at the perlocutionary (extra-linguistic) level. For Leech, this goal is specified as politeness.²

While being in the right direction, attempts to relativize the operation of the CP to the situational context by distinguishing between its levels of application (locutionary/linguistic vs. perlocutionary/extra-linguistic) are not without problems. A first problem concerns the (arbitrary?) number of competing principles: two in Leech’s scheme (notwithstanding the additional second-order principles and as many as seven maxims), six in Attardo’s most recent proposals. Such proliferation of principles raises the question of their interaction: which takes priority in case of conflict? Both problems seem to emanate from a deeper question, namely motivation: Why should it be *these particular principles* (Leech’s PP, Attardo’s hierarchy of principles) that underlie communication *and no others*? The question of motivation is in turn intimately related to those of universality and irreducibility. Are the proposed principles universal? Furthermore, are they irreducible?³ So long as additional principles are proposed on the basis of observational facts about conversation but lacking deeper theoretical motivation, these questions will remain open.

2. Face as the “accepted purpose ... of the talk exchange”

In view of the problems highlighted above, I would like to explore an alternative path for interpreting Grice’s “accepted purpose...of the talk exchange”. Specifically, I would like to propose interlocutors’ mutual awareness of face as constituting such an ever-present purpose. More specific purposes potentially shared between interlocutors – such as purposes relating to an activity type (Levinson 1979) or genre (Fetzer 2004) – may be superimposed upon this generic purpose, forming a ‘pyramid’ of accepted purposes, so to speak. Face constituting would then be comparable to that “indefinite” purpose shared by participants in casual conversation which would leave them “very considerable latitude” in choosing a subject matter (Grice 1989a: 26). An interesting consequence of this move is that it provides *prima facie* motivation for talk falling under the general rubric of ‘phatic communion’, that is, for co-operative activities apparently not serving any practical ends, such as casual talk between strangers about the weather (cf. Terkourafi 2005a: 239–240, fn. 6).

This move is preferable to having face specify the content of the “such as is required” clause of the CP, reserving “accepted purpose” for references to genre as proposed by Fetzer (2004: 217; personal communication). While there are certainly occasions when interlocutors’ pragmatic presuppositions and hence meanings derived from the situation diverge – in Fetzer’s terms, occasions when interlocutors operate with different genres (or, frames of reference) in mind – it is still possible on those occasions, once the discrepancy has been noted, to negotiate a shared genre (or, frame of reference) and salvage communication. This should be impossible in the absence of a broader, overarching frame of reference, providing the terms for this negotiation. Face provides exactly such an overarching frame of reference for human communication, under whose umbrella negotiation of the applicable genre can occur and recur as necessary. Genre, on the other hand, may still constitute an “accepted purpose” for the exchange, but given a ‘pyramid’ of accepted purposes, one that builds on the least (or, lowest) common denominator of accepted purposes: interlocutors’ mutual awareness of face.

Rather than postulating additional principles interacting with the CP to produce the empirically observable outcomes, what I propose, then, is to view the CP itself as reducible to the underlying, ever-present principles of rationality and face. The CP may then be reformulated as follows:

- (1) Co-operate as much as necessary to constitute your own face (which may involve constituting or threatening your interlocutor's face in the process).

Out of this interaction of face and rationality, the entire range of empirically observable behaviors, from outright conflict and under-co-operation, to co-operation proper and over-co-operation, can be produced. As these behaviors now fall under the umbrella of the CP, it is possible to explain the generation of implicatures in all of these cases. In this way, we are afforded with a theoretical account of what could so far be grasped only intuitively, namely that interlocutors do not refrain from inferencing when co-operation proper cannot be assumed. On the contrary, they seem to be engaging in inferencing ever more intensively in cases that are somehow marked by departing from co-operation proper, either in the direction of over-cooperation or of outright conflict. What is more, the trail of inferences in such cases is still possible to draw with the help of the Gricean maxims, suggesting that implicature derivation based on the maxims is not restricted to cases of co-operation proper.

Taking face to be the “accepted purpose...of the talk exchange” provides a satisfactory solution to the problems faced by approaches that attempt to relativize the operation of the CP to the situational context by proposing additional principles. The problems of the number of principles and of their interaction do not arise, since no new principles are introduced. Rather than being separately stipulated, the CP is now treated as a principle derived from the interaction of rationality and face, which produces the entire range of degrees of co-operation. The CP is thus motivated with reference to these two notions and ontologically (though perhaps not psychologically) reducible to them. Finally, since these notions are taken to be universal (section 4), it follows that the CP itself is also universal.

In this respect, the current proposal effects a major departure from previous approaches that take the CP as the baseline for communication providing an ‘unmarked’ or ‘a-social’ framework for interaction from which considerations of face subsequently motivate departures (e.g., Lakoff 1973: 296; Leech 1983: 80; Brown and Levinson [1978] 1987: 5). Face awareness now comes first, motivating and regulating how the inferential apparatus of the CP and the maxims will be applied to yield implicatures in context. In other words, the CP is being re-interpreted as an inherently social principle.

Initial experimental support for re-interpreting the CP as an inherently social principle comes from psychological game-theory (Colman 2003). Starting from the observation that human experimental players do not always adhere to game-theoretic rationality, which dictates maximizing individual payoffs, psychological game theory suggests that team-reasoning players first identify strategies maximizing *collective* payoffs and then use these to *derive* their individual strategy. Interestingly, as a result of behaving more cooperatively, team-reasoning players earn higher payoffs, which speaks to the advantages, at an individual level, of adopting a supra-individual type of rationality that prioritizes collective payoffs. In the terms of this essay, the observations motivating psychological game theory can be explained if face is an inherently collective goal (see section 4.2) and interlocutors mutually assume that each will pursue this goal in conversation.⁴ Clearly, the weight of the current proposal is carried by the notion of face and how this is defined. In what follows, I will be expanding on two key properties of face: its *biological grounding* in the dimension of approach vs. withdrawal; and its *intentionality* or *aboutness* (as this is understood in the phenomenological tradition, i.e., a property of mental states; e.g., Jacob 2003).

3. Face: a scientific lineage

Terms correlating face with character are attested in English (and possibly other European languages) at least since the Middle Ages. However, it appears that such references remained firmly tied up with a physical component and did not develop the more abstract sense of ‘good name’ or ‘reputation’ encountered in metaphorical uses of the term later on (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura, and Guo 1995: 44).⁵ Rather, research on the origin of ‘face’ as a scientific term in the anthropological linguistic literature has traced this back to Asian cultures (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura, and Guo 1995). Chinese, Japanese and Korean, all lexicalize metaphorical uses of ‘face’ to refer to one’s social standing in relation to others (cf. Yu 2001). This more abstract sense was imported into educated English and French usage in the mid-nineteenth century, along with the cultural stereotype of the restrained, dignified and prototypically polite East Asian person, a stereotype presumably also influenced by the secular morality of Confucian philosophy (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura, and Guo 1995: 47–48). ‘Face’ with this abstract sense reportedly first appears in the expressions *perdre/sauver*

la face and *lose face* from 1850 and 1876 respectively, translating corresponding expressions from Chinese.

Undoubtedly, a metaphorical, bodily basis, seen in references to the color or thickness of the skin of the face (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura, and Guo 1995: 53–54; Yu 2001: 2–9, 27), must also be acknowledged for the original Asian terms on which the English and French folk terms were modeled. However, the former appear to have carried in addition certain connotations of interdependence that point to a more flexible understanding compared to what eventually transpired in later Anglo-American usage. In a metonymical twist in which face stands for the body and then the body for the person, much as ‘name’ can be used to refer to one’s (good or bad) reputation, in Asian cultures concern is first and foremost with self-face, i.e., with perception and treatment of the self by others. However, self-face is shared with the group to which one belongs:⁶ One’s actions can result in loss or gain of face for the group, and similarly, loss or gain of face by the group will reflect on one’s perception and treatment by others (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura, and Guo 1995: 50–51; cf. Mao 1994). In this way, face is intimately linked with awareness of one’s position in a hierarchical web of relations. Behaving accordingly to this position is a prime determinant of face, which thus emerges as central to the process of socialization in these cultures. Moreover, concern is not only with losing face: face may be gained as well as lost (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura, and Guo 1995: 52–53). This suggests that face is not an inalienable right of individuals at birth which must be subsequently safeguarded, but something that must be constituted through interaction as proposed within recent linguistic accounts (e.g., Arundale 1999; Terkourafi 2001). Finally, the conceptualization of face in Asian cultures points to a notion that is graded rather than monolithic (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura, and Guo 1995: 57). Having to do with one’s perception and treatment by others, rather than the essence of one’s character,⁷ it is possible to preserve an outward appearance of harmony and respect even if transgression has occurred. In other words, face is not all lost or gained in one go but rather incrementally, affording one several opportunities to secure what remains a central concern throughout one’s life. Face thus emerges as a regulatory principle promoting conformity with established norms by encouraging behavior that seemingly reigns over individual instincts.

This rich situated understanding of face within Asian cultures appears to have been transplanted only in part to Western cultures. In the latter, emphasis is placed on saving face (Ervin-Tripp, Nakamura, and Guo 1995:

57), creating the impression that face is an *a priori attribute of individuals* that stands to be *threatened* in interaction, and must thus above all be safeguarded. This bias of the English folk term “which ties face up with notions of being embarrassed or humiliated, or ‘losing face’” is explicitly acknowledged by Brown and Levinson (1987: 61) to whom we owe the introduction of the term ‘face’ in the anthropological linguistic literature. These authors acknowledge two sources for their notion of face: the writings of Goffman (1967) and the aforementioned English folk term. Face is now defined as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself” (Brown and Levinson 1987: 61). An important distinction made by Brown and Levinson is between “(a) negative face: the basic claim to ... freedom of action and freedom from imposition [and] (b) positive face: the positive consistent self-image or ‘personality’ claimed by interactants, crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of” (Brown and Levinson 1987: 61). This echoes Goffman’s distinction between remedial and supportive interchanges respectively, which in turn harks back to Durkheim’s ([1915] 1976) earlier one between negative and positive rites.

However, in distinguishing between positive and negative face, Brown and Levinson also propose a (seemingly arbitrary) order of priority between the two. Arguing that “it is safer to assume that [the] H[earer] prefers his peace and self-determination than that he prefers your expressions of regard, unless you are certain of the contrary” (1987: 74), they propose that negative face takes priority over positive face. This assumption, not found in the writings of Goffman and Durkheim,⁸ most likely reflects the negative bias of the English folk term, and has been frequently criticized as ethnocentric (Matsumoto 1988; Rhodes 1989; Gu 1990; Wierzbicka 1991; Nwoye 1992; Sifianou 1992).

On the whole, tying up their conceptualization of face with the English folk term seems to have done Brown and Levinson more harm than good. Goffman’s own writings, where he refers to face as “located in the flow of events” (1967: 7) and “on loan from society” (1967: 10), and of face maintenance as “a condition of interaction, not its objective” (1967: 12; cf. Bargiela-Chiappini 2003), point to a more flexible and multi-faceted understanding than the rather rigid and one-sided notion perpetuated (and often criticized; cf., e.g., Schmidt 1980; Matsumoto 1988; Wierzbicka 1991; Bayraktaroglu 1992; Mao 1994) within the field of politeness studies ever since. And this despite the fact that Goffman’s own fieldwork was conducted wholly within an Anglo-American setting. In fact, Goffman

appears to have been aware of the historical limitations placed upon his observations, and warns against generalizing from folk notions to universal principles:

If we examine what it is one participant is ready to see that other participants might read into a situation and what it is that will cause him to provide ritual remedies of various sorts..., then we find ourselves directed back again to the core moral traditions of Western culture. And since remedial ritual is a constant feature of public life, occurring among all the citizenry in all social situations, we must see that the historical centre and the contemporary periphery are linked more closely than anyone these days seems to want to credit (Goffman 1971: 184–185).

Subsequent authors have apparently not heeded these cautionary notes. The scarce references to face being “enhanced” (1987: 61), “not an unequivocal right”, and the possibility of “not fully satisfy[ing] another’s face wants” (1987: 62) in Brown and Levinson’s work pay mere lip service to Goffman’s more flexible understanding, scattered among an avalanche of negative terms such as “being embarrassed or humiliated”, “losing face”, “maintaining face”, “the mutual vulnerability of face”, “defending face”, and “threatening face” (1987: 61). Contrary to the original Asian construal of face, then, the scientific term found in the socio-pragmatics literature is characterized by an emphasis on Other’s face (with the concomitant notion of non-imposition), an emphasis on the individual rather than the group, and an emphasis on saving face and the possibility of threatening face. Since these features are inherited from Western folk terms, it should not come as a surprise that this scientific term seems ill-fitted to serve the demands of a universalizing principle.

4. Toward a universal notion of Face

The need for a universalizing notion of face has been pointed out several times in the past. Suggestions include distinguishing ‘group face’ from ‘self-face’ (Nwoye 1992), and ‘centripetal’ from ‘centrifugal’ ‘relative face orientations’ (Mao 1994). Inspired by a distinction between first-order and second-order politeness proposed by Watts, Ide, and Ehlich (1992) and now current within politeness studies (e.g., Eelen 2001; Terkourafi 2005b) O’Driscoll (1996) suggests that what we need is a second-order notion of face “divorc[ed] from any ties to folk notions”, in other words, “a theoretical construct, not a notion which various societies invest with

varying connotations” (1996: 8). In this section, I outline two defining properties of such a universalizing notion of Face2: its biological grounding in the dimension of approach/withdrawal, and intentionality (as this is understood in the phenomenological tradition, i.e., a property of mental states). These properties exhaust what is universal about face. Its culture- and situation-specific contents are then filled in under particular socio-historical circumstances, yielding distinct, but motivated, conceptualizations of Face1.

4.1. The biological grounding of Face2

By ‘biological grounding’ I mean the grounding of Face2 in the dimension of approach/withdrawal (or avoidance), a dimension that goes well beyond the realm of the human:

Organisms approach and withdraw at every level of phylogeny where behavior itself is present. To approach or to withdraw is the fundamental adaptive decision in situations or conditions that have recurred during our evolutionary past. ...In very primitive organisms with simple nervous systems, rudimentary forms of approach and withdrawal behavior occur. ...Over the course of evolution, approach and withdrawal action emerged prior to the appearance of emotions to solve adaptive problems in simple species (Davidson 1992: 259).

This dimension is important because it is tied up with the evaluation of a stimulus as ‘friend’ or ‘foe’, which is thought to precede its identification as this or that type of stimulus.⁹ Being phylogenetically primary and encountered across species, it is furthermore proposed as universal. Various referred to as positive vs. negative ‘valence’ or ‘affect’, approach/withdrawal is widely accepted as the common substratum of all human emotions, and has been associated with the pre-cognitive reactive level (Ortony, Norman, and Revelle 2005: 179–182). In fact, there may be little beyond it that is universal about human emotions (Davidson 1992: 259). Early recognition of its importance is found in Aristotle’s *On rhetoric*, where he singles out pain and pleasure as the two overarching emotions and motivations for action (Ross 1925: Book II, §6). His views are echoed by Gibson’s distinction between affordances of benefit and injury (1982), and Damasio’s views on the duality of pleasure and pain:

Pain and pleasure are thus part of two different genealogies of life regulation. Pain is aligned with punishment and is associated with

behaviors such as withdrawal or freezing. Pleasure, on the other hand, is aligned with reward and is associated with behaviors such as seeking and approaching. ... This fundamental duality is apparent in a creature as simple and presumably as nonconscious as a sea anemone (Damasio 1999: 78).

In sum, the literature on human emotions concurs on the importance of a dimension of approach/withdrawal that is phylogenetically primary, universal, and pre-conscious. It seems to me that such a dimension provides a natural basis for a universalizing notion of face, from which the latter can inherit two important features: its dualism between positive (approach) and negative (withdrawal) aspects, and its universality. But what would make face, biologically grounded in approach/withdrawal, uniquely human?

4.2. The intentionality of Face2

The property making face uniquely human is descended from the philosophical tradition of phenomenology, in particular the writings of Brentano ([1874] 1981) and Husserl ([1900] 1970). Therein, the notion of intentionality refers to the distinguishing property of mental (as opposed to physical) phenomena of being *about* something, i.e., directed at an object. Distinguishing intentionality thus understood from the more ‘volitional’ understanding of intention also found in common usage, Jacob (2003) writes:

Although the meaning of the word ‘intentionality’ in contemporary philosophy is related to the meanings of such words as ‘intension’ (or ‘intensionality’ with an *s*) and ‘intention’, nonetheless it ought not to be confused with either of them.... [I]ntention and intending are specific states of mind that, unlike beliefs, judgments, hopes, desires or fears, play a distinctive role in the etiology of actions. By contrast, intentionality is a pervasive feature of many different mental states.

Beliefs, hopes, judgments, intentions, love and hatred all exhibit intentionality, inasmuch as they presuppose that which is being believed, hoped, judged, intended, loved or hated. Face is similarly intentional inasmuch as it presupposes an Other. Awareness of the Other, in turn, presupposes a notion of Self.

Self is known to emerge through joint attentional behaviors involving the primary caretaker (usually the mother) from nine months onwards (Tomasello 1999: 61–77; Brinck 2001). At the heart of these behaviors is the infant’s newly found ability to make a distinction between “others not

just as sources of animate power but as individuals who have goals and make choices among various behavioral and perceptual strategies that lead toward those goals” (Tomasello 1999: 74). Understanding others as intentional agents prompts the infant’s understanding of itself as an intentional agent, and is neurophysiologically mediated by the experience-dependent maturation of a “dual process frontolimbic system” around the middle of the second year (Schorre 1994). Interestingly, children with autism and some non-human primates including chimpanzees also exhibit a basic understanding of the efficacy of their own actions on the environment. This understanding, however, never seems to reach full-blown intentionality. One reason for this may be that it is not supported by “the uniquely human biological predisposition for identifying with others in a human-like manner” (Tomasello 1999: 76–77). This uniquely human predisposition, also referred to as ‘empathy’, appears to be favored by a combination of factors, including “an extended life history, altricial [sic] development, and the increase in prefrontal functions” (Preston and de Waal 2002: 20).¹⁰ Cross-disciplinary evidence concurs on the fact that empathy is a *phylogenetically continuous* phenomenon (Preston and de Waal 2002: 2). Nevertheless, these factors are co-instantiated to a high degree only in normally developing humans, creating the semblance of a predisposition that is “uniquely human”.

The intentionality of Face2 captures at once the fact that it is a characteristic of humans, and irreducibly relational. In virtue of being intentional, Face2 is grounded in the interactional dyad: people do not ‘have face’ and cannot ‘do face’ in isolation. Without an Other to whom they may be directed, face concerns do not arise. It is awareness of the Other, as distinct from Self, that raises the possibility of approaching or withdrawing that constitutes face. The moment face concerns arise may be prototypically identified with the moment Other enters Self’s visual field (or, is represented in Self’s consciousness), creating the possibility of interaction realized as approach/withdrawal.

At the same time, the intentionality (or directedness) of Face2 toward an Other means that Self will have several faces concurrently, as many as there are Others involved in a situation. Putting this somewhat schematically, if I am interacting with an interlocutor in front of an audience, I make (and am aware of making) a bid for face not only in the eyes of my interlocutor, but also in the eyes of each of the members of that audience taken separately and as a group. And the same applies to each of them. Since face is relational, bids for face are always bi-directional. As

Self makes a bid for face in the eyes of Other, by the very same token Other too makes a bid for face in the eyes of Self.

Speaking about Self and Other does not mean they are to be understood as monolithic entities co-extensive with the physical body. Rather, Self and Other are sociopsychological constructs. In the physical presence of one participant, I may be simultaneously apprehending several Others, some of whom I may be approaching while withdrawing from others. There is nothing preventing the same instance of behavior achieving approach on one level and withdrawal on another – what Arundale calls connection and separation face being “co-instantiated” (2004: 16–17) – so long as these are directed at different Others (for an example, see section 6.1).

5. Face2 and related notions

In section 4.1, I proposed that face is biologically grounded in the dimension of approach/withdrawal which also serves as the common substratum of all human emotions (Davidson 1992: 259), thereby drawing an implicit link between face and emotions. This is not the first time that the two notions have been brought to bear on each other. Yu (2001: 9) draws a similar link between the folk notion of face and emotions, when he suggests that physical face provides an iconic link between social face, metaphorically grounded in physical face, and emotions, which are externalized in facial expressions. Goffman too highlights the link between the scientific notion of face and emotions, when he points out that, harm to another’s face causes “anguish” while harm to one’s own face causes “anger” (1967: 23), a comment that can be interpreted as suggesting that, in addition to a cognitive aspect, face has an inextricable emotional aspect.

Despite these clear points of contact between Face2 and emotions, Face2 is *not* an emotion. Although emotions are affective conditions with a cognitive content, and thus, like Face2, intentional in the sense outlined earlier, that is, they are “*about* something, rather than being vague and amorphous, as are, for example, moods” (Ortony, Norman, and Revelle 2005: 174), they remain firmly rooted in the individual. The intentional object of the emotion, that which the emotion is about, remains external to it, merely serving as ‘pretext’ for the emotion to arise. In other words, any response by the intentional object of the emotion is *not* a constitutive part of the emotion itself. This is, however, not the case with Face2. The locus of Face2 is the dyad, which cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts, the

interacting individuals. The interactional dynamics of the dyad necessarily involve the interactants in joint action through coordination that cannot be acted out by either of them reasoning in isolation. In this case, the intentional object of Face2 is by definition implicated not only in the generation, but also in the fulfillment of face concerns. A response by this intentional object *is* a constitutive part of Face2; indeed, such a response is what face consists in. Securing this response is the aim of face-constituting behavior, and it is the frustration of this expectation that gives rise to the emotions of anguish and anger, as suggested by Goffman (1967: 23, cited above). Face2 is, ultimately, ‘in the eye of the beholder’: my face is constituted in your perception of me. This perception may (but need not) be based on evidence of my behavior as seen by you, and is eventually manifested back to me through evidence of your behavior as seen by me.

Face2, as outlined above, is then relational, as proposed by Arundale (2004, 2005). Arundale bases his analysis of face as relational on the last of Baxter and Montgomery’s three dialectics for interpersonal relationships (1996). According to these authors, “[i]nterpersonal relationships are characterized by *openness*, or sharing, as well as by *closedness* with one’s partner, by *certainty* about the relationship as well as by *uncertainty* about it, and by *connectedness* with the other, as well as by *separateness* from them” (reported in Arundale 2005: 11). Building on the connectedness/separateness dialectic, Arundale suggests that connection and separation face are:

Participant interpretations of “our persons as connected with and separate from one another”...[S]uch interpretations are not matters *either* of connection face *or* of separation face separately but rather involve *both* connection face and separation face together...[C]onnection and separation are not separate aspects of face that form a dualism...[T]hey are also not opposite poles in a single dimension...: an interpreting of greater interdependence may co-exist with an interpreting of greater independence. Connection face and separation face change dynamically in interaction: connection face may be temporarily in balance with separation face, but attaining or maintaining balance is not a goal... The tension between connection face and separation face is never resolved or eliminated short of ending the relationship (Arundale 2004: 16–17).

The current proposal for a universalizing notion of face as outlined in section 4 above bears both similarities to, and differences from Arundale’s proposal. Like separation and connection face, approach/withdrawal may be co-instantiated (for an example, see section 6.1). However, while

approaching or withdrawing are continuously effected as we necessarily, and often inadvertently, position ourselves in relation to others – and thus Face2, like connection face and separation face, “change[s] dynamically in interaction” – a state of balance *can* be empirically achieved. This is not so much a balance between approach or withdrawal – and in this sense the inherent tension between the two is “never resolved” as Arundale correctly suggests – as a balance between our expectations of the type/degree of approach or withdrawal that should be operative in the situation and our perception of the actual type/degree of approach or withdrawal that are going on. So long as what is going on is in line with these expectations, the “inherent tension” between approaching and withdrawing mentioned above is handled by reproducing moves that have worked in the past and so pass unnoticed, face-constituting seemingly taking care of itself.

In addition to the similarities and differences at the operational level outlined above, Arundale’s and the current proposal may also be compared at the level of motivation, where again, both similarities and differences emerge. Like Face2, which is top-down – that is, theoretically rather than empirically motivated – connection face and separation face are “not derived from a generalization across culture-specific facework practices, nor are they defined on the basis of a given emic concept of face. They are culture-general in that they are derived instead from a conceptual framework” (Arundale 2005: 12). “[E]thnographically grounded research” is needed “to establish how persons in [a] group interpret the dialectic of connection face and separation face” (Arundale 2005: 12). Moreover, “there is nothing to prevent a cultural group from using one construal of connection face and separation face in one domain of social contact, and a distinct construal in another, or even two or more construals in the same domain” (Arundale 2005: 14). In other words, the situated contents of connection face and separation face are both culture- and situation-specific, much as Face2 is instantiated under particular socio-historical circumstances through distinct, but motivated, conceptualizations of Face1.

Arundale’s and the current proposal, however, remain distinct when it comes to their ontological bases. Arundale bases his account on Baxter and Montgomery’s three dialectics, identified “[o]n the basis of a critical study of the extensive body of theory and research in relational communication” (Arundale 2005: 11). In this sense, the proposed dialectics may be considered as empirically emerging generalizations across a body of evidence from a single field, that of communication research. Whether a different body of evidence would have led to the same three dialectics, in

other words, the question of the motivation for the three dialectics (and hence of their universality – why *these* and *no others*?) remains open. The current proposal, on the other hand, is grounded on two independently motivated principles, the approach/withdrawal dimension and intentionality. Both of these have been independently proposed in different fields (neurophysiological research on emotions and the phenomenological tradition in philosophy) and are supported by evidence from those and other fields. In this way, Face2 builds on existing premises established independently of the conceptualization of face. Moreover, the cross-disciplinary basis of these premises supports their universality (and hence, the universality of Face2).

Arundale gives two reasons for his decision to base his re-interpretation of face on the connectedness: separateness dialectic. “First, achieving connectedness and separateness is the defining characteristic of all human relationships...Second,...connectedness and separateness provides a clear, culture-general conceptualization of ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ face” (2005: 12). It seems to me that a stronger justification is desirable in this respect. Lacking such a justification, one may wonder whether positive and negative face may have been possible to conceptualize with respect to another of the three dialectics – for instance, the openness: closedness dialectic – and if not, why not? The approach/withdrawal dimension, on the other hand, proposed as a biological basis for Face2, does not involve a choice among parallel or competing dimensions, but is rather proposed as the common substratum of all human emotions. This invests it with both the ontological necessity and universality that are desirable for a proposed universal notion of Face2.

6. Deriving implicatures on the basis of the revised CP

To show how the incorporation of Face2 – to be precise, of its situated Face1 instantiations – into the inferential process can generate degrees of co-operation, I discuss two well-known examples from the pragmatics literature. The first exemplifies less than full co-operation, while the second is an example of over-co-operation. Both have been considered problematic for the classical Gricean account. I demonstrate how a re-analysis of these examples using the Gricean inferential apparatus is possible along the lines proposed above, and suggest that incorporating Face2 into the CP enhances

its explanatory power and should therefore be viewed as an extension of the Gricean scheme.

6.1. Somewhere in the South of France

Grice (1989a: 32) discusses the example in (2) as an instance of co-operation prompting a flouting of the first sub-maxim of Quantity in order to uphold Quality:

- (2) A: Where does C live?
B: Somewhere in the South of France.

On this analysis, B's utterance gives rise to the implicature that B *does not know* exactly where C lives.

However, in addition to Grice's analysis, Sperber and Wilson ([1986] 1995: 273–274) point out that an alternative analysis is possible on which B's utterance is implicating that B *does not want to tell* exactly where C lives. Say, for instance, that A and B are planning a trip to France. A wants to know where C lives so they may pay C a visit – only B cannot stand the sight of C, and is determined not to give out the information that A needs to go ahead with his/her plan. Now, if A has reason to believe that, contrary to appearances, B in fact possesses this information (say, because A recently witnessed B receiving a letter by C on which C's address was clearly written), A may well interpret B's utterance as indicating B's reluctance to reveal this information. In this case, to derive the implicature that B *does not want to tell* exactly where C lives, A must reason on the opposite assumption to that warranted by the CP, specifically on the assumption that B is *not* being co-operative (in the sense that B does *not* share A's *extra-linguistic* goal). The fact that implicatures can be generated quite independently of the CP, including when this is explicitly assumed *not* to be in operation, leads Sperber and Wilson to conclude that the CP is sometimes too strong – in the sense that it predicts that interlocutors always share some common extra-linguistic goals and will co-operate to achieve them – and is therefore “neither always at work, nor always presumed to be at work” (1995: 274).

Sperber and Wilson's analysis is not the only possible route by which to reach an interpretation of less than full co-operation for the exchange in (2). Another possibility is to assume that B is opting out of the CP (Grice

1989a: 30). However, this entails that the CP must be operative to start with, allowing A to derive from B's reply the implicature 'B does *not know* exactly where C lives', then to contrast this with a piece of background knowledge (that A in fact *knows* that B knows exactly where C lives), and based on the resulting contradiction to infer that B had in fact opted out of the CP. This is problematic, since the CP is first assumed to be operative, and subsequently not to be. Also, in this case, B's opting out is inferred, while Grice only predicts that the CP may be opted out of by "say[ing], indicat[ing], or allow[ing] it to become plain that [one] is unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires. [One] may say, for example, *I cannot say more; my lips are sealed*" (1989a: 30).

A further possibility is to assume that the CP remains operative throughout. Two lines of argument are now possible. First, one may argue, given the blatancy of B's performance, that B is trying to mislead A (Grice 1989a: 30). Again, this will not work if A already knows that B has the information A needs, and B knows that A knows that. Alternatively, we may allow the maxims to operate not just on 'what is said', but also on what is implicated. Quantity operates first and gets A from B's reply to the implicature that B does not know where C lives. Then Quality enters the picture. When the implicature that B *does not know* is contrasted with the piece of background knowledge that B in fact *knows*, the implicature that B *does not want to tell* is derived. This proposed two-stage application of the maxims is schematically represented in Figure 1 (where '+>' stands for conversationally 'implicates'). This time, rather than B's utterance, it is the *implicature* that B does not know that breaches Quality, since B has now *implicated* something which s/he believes to be false.

But what could prompt A to apply the maxims not just to 'what is said', but also to what is implicated, so as to derive this further implicature? Interlocutors' reciprocal sensitivity to face suggests itself here.¹¹ To derive the further implicature that B *does not want to tell*, A must reason on the basis that, inasmuch as B represents an Other separate from Self, B may choose to either approach or withdraw from A. In this case, B is withdrawing from A because B does not identify with A's plan to visit C. However, on another level, B is approaching A. B does this by not openly declaring that B does not share A's wishes, which would suggest that A's wishes are not worthwhile. B's answer, that is, divorces A from A's wishes on this occasion and treats the two separately, at once approaching the former and withdrawing from the latter.¹²

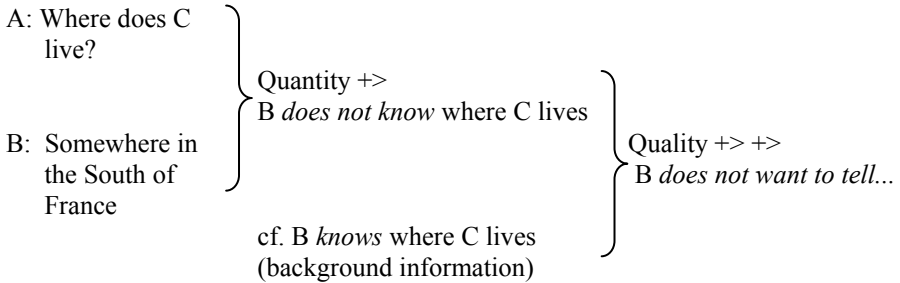


Figure 1. Two-stage application of the maxims to what is said and to what is implicated

Only if A realizes both that Other may approach as well as withdraw from Self, and that Self may be treated separately from Self's wishes, will A be able to derive the implicature that B *does not want to tell* based on B's utterance "Somewhere in the South of France". Satisfying the first conjunct of the antecedent amounts to having, and being aware of others having, face concerns, something which, given the definition of Face2 in section 4, should be a universal human characteristic. However, tackling the second conjunct of the antecedent – that Self may be treated separately from Self's wishes – is trickier. Satisfying this conjunct depends on how Self is defined, namely how closely Self is intertwined with Self's wishes (a matter of how Self is defined intra-culturally) and how closely A in particular is intertwined with the specific wish to visit C (how 'close to A's heart' this wish is – a matter of how Self is defined in this particular situation). The answers to these two questions will flesh out the notion of Face1 operative on this occasion. In other words, A's deriving the implicature that B *does not want to tell* is incumbent on A's satisfying both conjuncts of the antecedent above, and thus a matter of Face1. Face1 in turn constitutes the situated interpretation of Face2, arrived at by fleshing out the properties of this abstract notion according to what is applicable to the culture and the situation at hand.

The path leading from B's answer to B's intended meaning can thus be traced in several ways depending on the situated content of Face1. If A thinks that B is approaching A, A may only derive the *does not know* implicature. On the other hand, if A considers the possibility that B may be withdrawing from A's wishes, A may derive the *does not want to tell* implicature instead.¹³ Whether A thinks B is in this way constituting A's

face is totally dependent on the degree to which A is prepared to be dissociated from his/her wishes on this occasion. If A is not so inclined, A may well derive the *does not want to tell* implicature, but take it to be a withdrawal from A's person as well. Furthermore, if A thinks withdrawal is not appropriate on this occasion (for whatever culture- and situation-specific reasons), A will take B's behavior as not constituting A's face but merely B's. That is, A will experience B's refusal to tell as face-threatening to A.¹⁴ Conversely, if A thinks withdrawal *is* appropriate on this occasion, A may take B's behavior as constituting A's face as well as B's. Finally, if A is prepared to be dissociated from the wish to visit C, A may derive the *does not want to tell* implicature *and* consider B to be approaching A as a person viewed separately from this wish. In this case, again, A may take B's behavior as constituting A's face as well as B's.¹⁵

6.2. Let alone Louise squid

Kay (2004) discusses the example in (3) in terms of the pragmatic (in this case: non-truth-conditional) aspects of meaning contributed by the construction *let alone*:

- (3) A: Did Louise order squid?
 B: Are you kidding? Fred didn't order shrimp, let alone Louise squid.

According to Kay's analysis, (3) communicates a conjunction of three propositions: p (Fred didn't order shrimp), q (Louise didn't order squid), and (p unilaterally entails q in the context of utterance), call this r. Now, the entailment referred to in r is clearly some sort of pragmatic entailment: the truth conditions of the proposition would not change if both p and q were true but r failed to hold. r may therefore be analyzed as a conventional implicature attached to the expression 'let alone', much like 'but' always comes with the suggestion of a contrast between the two conjuncts that it links together.¹⁶ According to Kay, the 'let alone' construction also introduces as a pragmatic requirement a further proposition, the "distinct matter of a proposition's being 'on the floor'". In this case, we may call this proposition q', i.e., q modulo negation and modality, something like ORDER (Louise, squid). This proposition is 'on the floor' in virtue of A's

question. Kay (2004) gives the following analysis of the interplay between these propositions in Gricean terms:

Consider B's situation after A has posed her question. Relevance demands that B answer the question (and Quality that he answer it in the negative): Louise didn't order squid. But this response would not be maximally cooperative because B knows something relevant and equally succinctly expressible that is more informative, namely that Fred didn't order shrimp. Quantity enjoins B to express the more informative proposition. The *let alone* construction functions to reconcile the conflicting demands in situations like this of Relevance and Quantity. It enables the speaker economically to express both propositions in a form that indicates his awareness of the greater informativeness of the proposition answering to Quantity [p in (3)]. (Kay 2004: 678).

The claim that I would like to take stock with is that "Quantity enjoins B to express the more informative proposition" and that consequently Quantity and Relation give rise to "conflicting demands". It seems to me that this claim is untenable, in view of the second sub-maxim of Quantity, "Do not make your contribution more informative than is required" (Grice 1989a: 26). Quantity-2 places an upper bound on informativeness, such that expressing p, r and q' should be ruled out *both* on the grounds of Relation (which demands merely a reply to A's question, that is, q) *and* Quantity-2.¹⁷ The maximally co-operative (or co-operative proper) answer on B's behalf would then be to say that Louise didn't order squid and leave it at that. Any additional propositions expressed place an extra burden on the hearer, raising the question: to what effect?

I would like to propose that in expressing these additional propositions, B is not being co-operative proper, but rather over-co-operative, and that the effect achieved in this way relates to considerations of face. Once more, the argument hinges on a two-stage application of the maxims not just to what is said but also to what is implicated (cf. Figure 1 in section 6.1). As already explained, and *pace* Kay (2004), B is actually in breach of Quantity-2, since in response to A's question B provides not only the answer to this, q, but also three additional propositions (p, r, and q'). This breach of Quantity-2 gives rise to some further implicatures that build on each of the three additional propositions (including the conventional implicature r) as well as on their conjunction. B, in this case, is "co-operat[ing] as much as necessary"¹⁸ to constitute his/her own face, which may involve threatening or enhancing [A's] face in the process" (cf. (1) in

section 2). Again, the exact path of inference, i.e., which implicatures will be derived, will depend on the situated contents of Face1 on this occasion.

By providing the extra information, B may be approaching A, since B could have simply provided *q*, the answer to A's question, and still been co-operative proper. Now, if A thinks approaching is appropriate on this occasion, A will acknowledge that B is approaching A, and approach B in return, i.e., derive the implicature that 'B is a knowledgeable/interesting/lively interlocutor', thereby constituting B's positive face. However, if A thinks approaching is not appropriate, A may still recognize B's attempt to approach A, but not approach B in return, deriving instead the implicature that 'B is indiscreet/talks a lot' – something that does not constitute B's positive face despite his/her efforts. It is also possible that by providing the extra information B is not in fact approaching but withdrawing from A: How could A ask such a stupid question? B is still trying to constitute his/her own face, i.e., to appear knowledgeable (about Fred and Louise's seafood-eating habits), but this time doing this involves withdrawing from A. B's answer may be intended as a put-down in this case. If A thinks withdrawal is appropriate (e.g., because A bows to B's authority on these matters), A may still approach B in return by thinking 'B is a knowledgeable etc. interlocutor'. However, if A finds withdrawal inappropriate, A may also withdraw from B, thinking 'B is arrogant/self-centered' instead.

The two-stage application of the maxims exemplified in the last two sections is compatible with Grice's scheme, and indeed extends it. The inferential process is still guided by the maxims on the assumption that the CP is operative. And the CP is operative because interlocutors, whether they share any more specific goals relating to the exchange at hand or not, always share (in fact, according to section 4, cannot *but* share) the overarching tendency to approach or withdraw from one another which is instantiated in their mutual awareness of face. Not only does the CP not have to be abandoned in the case of conflictual or otherwise not co-operative proper interaction, but implicature derivation becomes much more flexible and open-ended once face considerations are incorporated in the inferential process.

7. Conclusions

An important critique leveled against the CP concerns the extent to which it is socially informed and universally valid. Grice himself appears to have been equivocal on this point: while considering conversation to be “a special case or variety of purposive, indeed rational, behavior” (1989a: 28) – which would point in the direction of the CP’s universality – he, in the same breath, acknowledged the limitations of his scheme, phrased “as if [the] purpose [of conversation] were a maximally effective exchange of information” (Grice 1989a: 28) – and thus justifies Brown and Levinson’s characterization of it as “an ‘unmarked’ or socially neutral (indeed asocial) presumptive framework for communication” (1987: 5). These authors and other politeness pioneers have gone on to suggest that social (indeed, politeness) considerations motivate departures from the CP, setting the tone for numerous cross-cultural descriptions of conversational behavior which view the CP as an underlying principle that is ‘maintained in the breach’ – i.e., hardly ever openly adhered to, thereby enabling all sorts of additional messages to be communicated implicitly. However, the path of *incorporating* social considerations into the CP – rather than viewing them as *post facto* reasons for deviating from it – has remained relatively unexplored.

My aim in this chapter has been to explore this path, by proposing to view the CP as not primary, but rather further reducible to the premises of interlocutors’ rationality and face (section 2). Tracing the genealogy of face back to its Asian roots, I argued that the scientific term found in anthropological linguistic writings is irredeemably colored by the Western folk term, raising serious doubts as to its universality (section 3). In its place, I proposed a second-order notion of face, or Face2, which is biologically grounded in the basic emotional dimension of approach/withdrawal, and intentionality (section 4). Its biological grounding makes Face2 universal, while its intentionality makes it uniquely human and irreducibly relational. Different first-order conceptualizations of face, or Face1, instantiate Face2 in particular cultural and situational circumstances.

Placing such a definition of face at the basis of conversational behavior generates the full range of possibilities from overly co-operative behavior to non-cooperation and even openly conflictual behavior (section 6). In all these instances, interlocutors aim to constitute their own faces, which leads them to enhance or threaten Other’s face. Mutual awareness of face

prompts interlocutors to continue inferencing, recursively applying the maxims, until they are satisfied they know something about how they stand in relation to each other. In this way, social – in particular, face – considerations take part in the inferential process, determining its potential end-point. Since Face1 is fleshed out in particular cultural and situational settings, allowing social considerations actively to take part in the inferential process by determining its potential end-point increases the explanatory potential of Grice’s original scheme.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Bob Arundale, Anita Fetzer, and Salvatore Attardo for valuable comments on previous drafts of this work. This work was supported by a grant from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (RG-112379).
2. Ten years earlier R. Lakoff (1973) also discussed how the Rules of Clarity, spelled out in the CP and the maxims, interact with the Rules of Politeness. However, in Lakoff’s proposal Clarity and Politeness mutually constrain each other, i.e., either can take precedence depending on context, whereas in Leech’s work the PP is thought to play a higher regulative role than the CP. In that sense, Leech’s proposal is closer to my current purposes, as will become clear below.
3. The question of the reducibility of principles of implicature derivation has been answered in at least three different ways in the post-Gricean literature. Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1995) considers all inference to be driven by the principle of Relevance, which replaces both the CP and the concomitant maxims. Horn’s (1984, 1988) neo-Gricean approach relies on two interacting principles, the Q principle (for Quantity) and the R principle (for Relevance), which mutually constrain each other in producing both generalized and particularized implicatures. Finally, Levinson’s (2000) neo-Gricean scheme is the most prolific, with 3 heuristics (Q, I and M) proposed for generalized implicatures, and the Gricean battery of four maxims preserved for particularized ones.
4. A game-theoretic analysis of polite linguistic behavior has been put forward by van Rooij (2003). However, van Rooij suggests that politeness is only opted for if the speaker’s and hearer’s preferences are not aligned. In such cases, the CP cannot be assumed to be in operation. “Polite utterances”, then “come with social costs that can establish a harmony of preferences between sender and receiver that did not exist before, but these costs can be afforded only by certain types of individuals” (2003: 56). In the author’s own words, “[p]olite linguistic behavior, in particular, should be taken as rational interaction of conversational partners that each come with their own beliefs

and preferences” (2003: 45). Van Rooij’s proposal, then, represents the traditional view about game-theoretic rationality that Colman (2003) is arguing against. Moreover, his proposal is essentially a game-theoretic reformulation of Brown and Levinson’s equation of politeness with indirectness, an equation often criticized in politeness studies (cf. Blum-Kulka 1987; Terkourafi 2004). Specifically, his proposal differs from the proposal put forward in this paper in three ways. First, it assumes that politeness (in our terms, face considerations) may be dispensed with if “the (overall) preferences of speaker and hearer are not really different” (2003: 47). However, if face is biologically grounded as proposed in section 4, face considerations must be relevant to all exchanges, including when speaker and hearer preferences are aligned. Second, van Rooij seems to be operating with the stronger reading of the CP outlined in section 1, i.e., of cooperation as the sharing of specific extra-linguistic goals between speaker and hearer – indeed, for him politeness serves to align speaker and hearer preferences in case there is a conflict between them. On the contrary, I propose to understand the CP much more weakly as the sharing of face concerns between speaker and hearer (specifically, sharing of an awareness that each is trying to constitute his/her own face through conversation). Combined with the omni-relevance of face that follows from its biological grounding, this makes the CP virtually inviolable, enabling us to use the Gricean maxims to account for inferences derived under all sorts of circumstances, from overt co-operation to outright conflict. By the same token, of course, this move does not confine the understanding of ‘cooperation’ to mean overt cooperation. Third, van Rooij’s proposal that costly signaling “can be afforded only by certain types of individuals” (2003: 56) is warranted only if politeness is associated with indirectness, and on the assumption that indirectness increases with higher Power, Distance and Ranking values (as may, for instance, be found among the higher social strata; Brown and Levinson 1987: 245–246). However, these assumptions are not confirmed empirically (cf. Terkourafi 2004). The current proposal refrains from making these assumptions.

5. For instance, a search in the Opera del Vocabolario Italiano (OVI) textual data base confirmed this claim for Italian [<http://ovisun198.ovi.cnr.it/italnet/OVI/index.html#search>; accessed November 20, 2006].
6. This expanded notion of Self that takes in one’s intimate society and culture may be better understood with reference to traditional (if somewhat outdated today) accounts such as Hsu (1983).
7. According to Yu, “the face contrasts [with] the heart as they represent, respectively, one’s outside and inside” (2001: 12).
8. For instance, Durkheim writes: “Whatever the importance of the negative cult may be,... it does not contain its reason for existence in itself; it introduces one to the religious life, but it supposes this more than it constitutes it” (1976: 326).

9. Neuroscientific evidence suggests that incoming stimuli are simultaneously sent to two types of brain mechanisms (LeDoux 1998: 67–71, reported in Theodoropoulou 2004: 110–111). Evaluation mechanisms assess whether a stimulus is good or bad, prompting an appropriate response from a predetermined and limited suite of actions. Such mechanisms are fast and coarse because the organism's survival depends on them. Identification mechanisms, on the other hand, are slower and more flexible. They identify incoming stimuli as particular kinds of stimuli, opening up a range of possible reactions from which to choose.
10. Although "altricial" is a technical term in ornithology, the authors seem to be using it generically to refer to all species, including humans, whose young are born helpless and naked, increasing the period of parental dependence (Preston and de Waal 2002: 20).
11. This suggestion agrees with Brown and Levinson's remark that "respect for face involves mutual orientation, so that each participant attempts to foresee what the other participant is attempting to foresee" (1987: 99).
12. This is, then, an opportune example of approach/withdrawal being co-instantiated, a possibility mentioned in section 5.
13. It is also possible that A may not be able to decide whether B is withdrawing from, or approaching A, deriving both implicatures as a disjunction (Grice 1989a: 40).
14. In this case, B's face will have been constituted by means of threatening A's face in the process, a possibility explicitly allowed for under (1) above.
15. The possibility that approaching may not be appropriate is not considered. While this causes an asymmetry with respect to withdrawal, for which both appropriateness and inappropriateness are considered, I think it is faithful to the spirit of this exchange. If A's question is interpreted as an indirect request to visit C, A is thereby putting forward a joint plan for A and B, and in this way makes explicit A's wish to approach B. That is why A cannot consider B's approaching inappropriate on this occasion, since this is exactly what A himself is doing and presumably desires B to do in return. The possibility that approach may be considered inappropriate is of course very real but it is not one that can be illustrated with respect to this example (but see section 6.2).
16. I am using here the notion of conventional implicatures *pace* Bach (1999). Bach considers most conventional implicatures to be part of Gricean 'what is said', i.e., in some sense explicit. The same intuition may be captured in RT terms by making conventional implicatures part of the explicature, to which they often contribute as aspects of procedural meaning.
17. The close relationship between Relation and Quantity-2 that I am advocating here has been previously pointed out by Horn (1984) and Grice (1989b), and has actually led Horn to collapse them under his proposed R principle (Horn 1984, 1988).

18. How much is “necessary” is a totally subjective question. If face is construed not as a monolithic but as a graded notion (section 3) – which is possible if it is conceptualized on the basis of the approach/withdrawal dimension (section 4.1) that implicates a degree of approach/withdrawal – interlocutors may approach or withdraw from particular others to a greater or lesser degree.

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