
The Pragmatics of Discourse

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1 Aims and Problems of Discourse Pragmatics

1.1

In this and the following chapter [of *Text and Context*] we are concerned with the pragmatics of discourse, i.e. with the systematic relations between structures of text and context. This means, on the one hand, that we must try to make explicit which specific properties of discourse are determined by the structure of language users, illocutionary acts and information processing in conversation. On the other hand certain discourse structures, when uttered in conversation, may themselves establish part of the communicative context.

The same distinction as has been made for the semantics will be made at the pragmatic level, viz between *linear structures* and *global macro-structures*. Whereas the latter will be treated in our last chapter, this chapter will investigate the relations between the linear, sequential structure of discourse and the linear structure of context, viz between *sequences of sentences* and *sequences of speech acts*.

The reason for this approach is the following. Relations between propositions or sentences in a discourse cannot exhaustively be described in semantic terms alone. In the first part of this book [*Text and Context*] it has become clear on several occasions that conditions imposed on connectives and connection in general, as well as coherence, topic, focus, perspective and similar notions, also have a pragmatic base. In other words, not only do we want to represent certain facts and relations between facts in some possible world, but at the same time to put such a textual representation to use in the transmission of information about these facts and, hence, in the performance of specific social acts.

1.2

One of the first problems to be treated in such a framework is that pertaining to the difference between *composite sentences* and *sequences of sentences* in discourse. At the semantic level, we were primarily concerned with relations between propositions, whether these are expressed within the same composite sentence or within several sentences. Although sentences and sequences may be semantically equivalent, they may reasonably be expected to have at least different pragmatic functions. Other systematic differences in the use of sentences and sequences are stylistic, rhetorical, cognitive and social, and will not be discussed here. It will be argued that the pragmatic distinction between the expression of information in composite sentences versus the expression of information in a sequence of sentences depends on the intended illocutionary acts, on their internal structure, and on the ordering of such acts.

1.3

The problem of the *distribution of information* in discourse is not only semantic. In processes of communicative interaction this ordering depends on what we know and believe and on our beliefs about the knowledge of our conversation partners. Similarly, the information ordering is subject to our own wishes and intentions for action and our assumptions about those of the hearer. *Topics of conversation* are initiated and changed under these constraints. Information may be more or less 'relevant' or 'important' with respect to a context thus defined. The same facts may be described from different points of view or under different 'propositional attitudes'. It is within such a framework, then, that notions like *presupposition* (e.g. versus *assertion*) and *topic-comment* require further explication, viz as principles of social information processing in conversational contexts.

1.4

Besides these and other pragmatic properties of connection, coherence, information distribution, sentence and clause sequencing, perspective and relative importance in discourse, this chapter must focus on their relevance for the accomplishment of *sequences of illocutionary acts*. That is, we want to know what necessary or sufficient conditions must be satisfied in order for speech acts to be combined, which acts are 'presupposed', focused upon, directly or indirectly intended, and in general how sequences of speech acts are connected and coherent.

2 Sentences and Sequences

2.1

Let us start our inquiry into the pragmatics of discourse with a problem of immediate grammatical importance, viz the difference between *composite sentences* and *sequences of sentences*. In later sections the more general theoretical background for such a distinction will then be developed.

Consider, for instance, the following pairs of examples:

- (1) a. Peter had an accident. He is in hospital.
b. Peter is in hospital. He had an accident.
- (2) a. Peter had an accident. So, he is in hospital.
b. Peter had an accident, so he is in hospital.
- (3) a. Peter is in hospital, for he had an accident.
- (4) a. Because he had an accident, Peter is in hospital.
b. Peter is in hospital, because he had an accident.

Apparently, there are various morpho-syntactic ways to express the 'same' information about an ordered sequence of facts. In all these examples, reference is made to the fact that Peter had an accident and that Peter is in hospital (now) and that the first fact caused the second fact. In other words, the different expressions are semantically equivalent at least in one sense of semantic equivalence: they have the same truth conditions.

Yet, at another level of analysis the equivalence does not hold. The differences appear both between sentences with distinct syntactic structure and between sentences and sequences.

Taking the last examples first, we see that subordinated causal clauses may occur either in 'first' or in 'second' position, viz precede or follow the main clause. Sentence (4a), however, may be used in a context in which (the speaker assumes that) the hearer knows that Peter had an accident, whereas (4b) is used in a context in which the hearer knows that Peter is in hospital.' That is, the *appropriateness* of the respective sentences depends on the knowledge and beliefs of speech participants at a certain point in the conversational context. On the other hand, examples (1) to (3) are normally used in those contexts in which the speaker has no such assumptions about the knowledge of the hearer, or rather in which he assumes that the hearer does *not* know either of the facts referred to. This means that (1a) to (3) would be inappropriate answers to any of the following previous questions of the hearer:

- (5) Why is Peter in hospital?
- (6) Where is Peter? They say he had an accident.

Sentence (4b), however, is appropriate after question (5), whereas (4a), although perhaps a bit awkward, is appropriate after (6).

The complex sentence, apparently, has properties which are similar to that of the *topic-comment* articulation: 'known' elements come in first position, 'new' elements in second position. Since the known element in this case is a proposition, we may say that the first clauses in (4) are *pragmatically presupposed*.² Hence, one of the differences between the sequences and the coordinated compound sentences is that relating to the well-known *assertion—presupposition* distinction: in (1) to (3) each proposition expressed by the utterance of the sentence or sequence is asserted, whereas in (4) only the second position propositions are asserted and the first position sentences presupposed (in the pragmatic sense of this term, i.e. assumed by the speaker to be known to the hearer). Yet, there is a difficulty, because we may also maintain that both (4a) and (4b), taken as a whole, are assertions. Below, we therefore will have to find out whether two different meanings of the term 'assertion' play a role here.

2.2

More crucial for our discussion, however, are the differences between (1a), (1b), (2a), (2b) and (3): what implications does the ordering of sentences have, if not presuppositional, and in what respect are compound sentences different from their corresponding, i.e. semantically equivalent, sequences?

Although (1a) and (1b) are equally appropriate in many contexts, there are also contexts in which the first seems more natural than the second, e.g. after a question like

(7) What happened to Peter?

e.g. on seeing his car badly damaged. On the other hand (1b) seems more appropriate after a question like

(8) Why doesn't Peter answer his telephone?

That is, the reason he doesn't answer his telephone is the one requested by the previous speaker, and in the answer this information is given first. The second sentence in (1b) then gives an *explanation* of the fact referred to by the first sentence. In (1a) no such explanation is given, only a representation of the facts, implying that the first fact caused the second. This relation between the ordering of facts and the ordering of clauses or sentences in a sequence will be further discussed below.

It might be argued that (2a) merely explicitly expresses the causal connection which in (1a) is only 'expressed' by syntactic ordering,³ and that the same holds for (2b). Again, however, there are different contextual conditions, hence pragmatic differences between (1a), (2a) and

(2b). Sentences like (2a) are typically used when *conclusions* from certain facts are to be drawn *relative to a given situation*. If during a board meeting several members do not show up, the president may say 'Harry had to meet Pierre Balmain. So, he is in Paris', and then utter sentence (2a), possibly by stressing *Peter* and *he*. In this respect, (2a) shares a pragmatic function with (1b), viz it draws attention to the fact which is of primary importance or *relevance for a certain situation*, but in (2a) this fact is referred to not only as a factual consequence but also as a conclusion drawn explicitly by the speaker. This is typically the case in those cases where only indirect factual evidence is present, e.g. in *Peter's car is damaged. So, he must have had an accident*. This does not hold for interclausal *so* in (2b), which only expresses, coordinately, the causal connection between the two facts referred to by the respective clauses.⁴ Hence, in (2b) *so* is a proper *semantic connective*, whereas in (2a) sentence-initial *So*, followed by a pause, rather relates utterances or illocutionary acts, viz those of premise and conclusion.⁵ In that case we may speak of *a pragmatic connective*.

In some languages, e.g. in Dutch and in German, the difference between semantic and pragmatic *so* (*dus* and *also*, respectively) may also show in the syntax. Inter-clausal (semantic) connectives are followed by Verb-Subject ordering, whereas sentence-initial connectives followed by a pause may also have normal Subject-Verb ordering.⁶

Finally, we may use interclausal *for* in order to relate a fact which has, so to speak, 'pragmatic prominence' focused on its cause or reason, much in the same way as (4a) — although *for*-clauses cannot be presupposed. The difference with (1b) is that *for*-clauses do not have an explanatory function; they merely state a condition of another fact stated before, in the same way as interclausal *so* states a consequence of a fact stated before.⁷

2.3

Until now we have met the following differences between sentences and sequences, e.g. in (1) to (4): different presuppositions, i.e. different knowledge—belief structures of the context, focus on the reason/cause or on the consequence, the relevance or importance of a certain fact for the present context, e.g. the interests of the hearer, indications of conclusion or explanation as specific acts. Some of these differences are rather vague and require further definition. The notion of *relevance* or *importance*, with respect to a certain context, should for instance be defined in terms of the action theoretical semantics used earlier in this book [*Text and Context*]. In that case a fact, and hence the knowledge of such a fact, is important relative to a context or in general to a situation if it is an *immediate condition* for a probable event or action (or prevention of these) in that context or situation. In the board meeting situation, the proposition 'Peter can't come' is more directly important for that meeting than the reason 'Peter is in hospital', which is in turn more relevant than the fact

that he had an accident. On the other hand, in a situation in which Peter's wife is informed of the events, the information about the accident may well be much more important than the fact that he is in hospital, which are both more important than the fact that he did not have dinner that night.

Similarly, notions like that of *focus* and *perspective* must be made explicit to account for the differences. Thus, a sequence of facts may be described from the point of view of the time, place and involved agents of the action or event, but also from the point of view of the observer or 'informant at the time—place of the context. In the first case we may have compound sentences with semantic connectives; in the latter case, a sequence with a pragmatic connective may be more appropriate:

- (9) I felt ill, so I went to bed.
 (10) Peter is ill. So, he won't come tonight.

Typical for pragmatic connectives, which may be considered as *inferential adverbs*, is that they cannot be preceded by *and*, whereas semantic *so* can be preceded by *and*. Sentence-initial **So**, used to make inferences, is also typically used in dialogues, as in:

- (11) A: Where is Peter?
 B: He is in hospital. He had an accident.
 A: So, he won't come tonight. Let us start.

That is, speaker A draws an inference from the facts presented by **B**, such that the conclusion is a condition for the actual events of the situation. In some occasions we may have semantic *so* in a dialogue at the beginning of a response, but in that case, it rather continues, by assertion or question, a sentence of the previous speaker:

- (12) A: John went to the pub.
 So he is drunk.
 B: t So he is drunk?

The differences with pragmatic *So* are expressed by stress, pause and intonation. Note that inferential *So*, and sometimes also sentence-initial *Therefore*, with rising-falling intonation and followed by a pause (in writing by a comma), not only introduce conclusions denoting consequences of certain facts, but may also introduce *inferred* reasons or causes (often together with *must*):

- (13) John was drunk that night. So, he went to the pub again.

Given the correct presuppositional structure, we may also use *because* for such 'backward' inferences:

(14) John was (must have been) in the pub, because he was drunk.

Sentences like (14), however, may be ambiguous. On a first reading the first clause is asserted and the second, if presupposed, gives an explanation, by specifying a reason for believing the first proposition. On a second reading, the first clause is presupposed, and the second is asserted as a warrant for a (known) conclusion. Just as for the other examples, our intuitions may be rather weak for these examples, but we must find the theoretical conditions and rules at least to explain the clear cases.

3 Connectives, Connection and Context

3.1

The discussion in the previous section about the assumed pragmatic differences between compound sentences, complex sentences and sequences has been based on examples with causal and inferential connectives, such as *so*, *because*, *since*, *therefore*, *for*, etc. We now must see whether similar differences hold for other connectives.

3.2

Taking the basic conjoining connective, *and*, we first of all should recall that *and* is essentially coordinative, so that it cannot be related to syntactic differences expressing presuppositional differences, as was the case with *because*. Second, the major use of *and* is inter-clausal, which seems to make it an exclusively semantic connective. In such cases, clausal ordering must parallel temporal, causal or conditional orderings of the facts:

- (15) Peter had an accident, and he is in hospital.
- (16) We visited the Johnson's, and played bridge.
- (17) Peter is in hospital, and he had an accident.
- (18) We played bridge and we visited the Johnson's.

Clearly, (17) and (18) are unacceptable under the same meaning as (15) and (16), respectively, especially if in (15) and (16) the first clauses determine the topic of discourse with respect to which the second clause is to be interpreted. In (17) and (18) the clauses are not connected because the denoted facts are not conditionally related (in that order). Sentence-initial *And* typically occurs in examples like:

- (19) Peter was not at the party. And Henry said that he was in hospital

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because he had had an accident.

(20) Laura ran off to Paris. And she did not even let me know.

(21) No, I don't need the month's bestseller. And please do not call next month either.

Sentence-initial *And* may introduce propositions denoting preceding facts. Just like *moreover*, it does not denote conjoined facts, but rather it conjoins utterances, viz by indicating an *addition* or *continuation* of a given statement. Second, *And* is used in order to change the topic or perspective of a sequence. Thus, in (19) from Peter's absence at the party to Henry's explanation of that fact, and in (20) from Laura's action to my reaction of surprise. In (21) *And* may be used to relate *different speech acts*, viz a refusal and a request. In that sense we might say that *And* relates, implicitly, the actions involved, viz '(not) trying to sell a book now' and '(not) trying to sell a book next month', as may also be seen from the specific use of *either*.

More generally, *And* may be used as an indirect connective, e.g. in *enumerations*, of facts which are not directly related, but which occur during a certain time or in a given situation, typically in everyday narrative, e.g. of children.

(22) We went to the Zoo. And, daddy gave us an ice cream. And, we had fun.

3.3

Similar remarks may be made for sentence-initial *Or* as opposed to interclausal *or*, disjoining facts in alternative possible worlds:

(23) Peter won't come of course. Or didn't you know that he is in hospital?

(24) Peter must be ill. Or perhaps he got drunk again.

(25) Let's call the police. Or no, we'd better not tell them.

Whereas *And* has an 'additive' nature, pragmatic *Or* may indicate *hesitation* and *correction*. In (23) the disjunction does not pertain to denoted facts but to the speech acts performed. The first sentence presupposes that there is (known) evidence for Peter's absence. Having uttered the sentence, the speaker, however, may have some doubt about the knowledge of the hearer and therefore 'corrects' his assertion by asking whether the presupposed knowledge is present. More accurately, it may be supposed that *Or* relates the pragmatically implied proposition 'you know that Peter is in hospital' with the expressed 'you do not know that Peter is in hospital'. Such corrective uses of *Or* occur when the speaker is not sure whether the conditions of a performed speech acts were satisfied.

Similarly, in (24) a 'disjunction' of the facts alone would require a compound sentence, so that we must assume that (24) should be taken as a 'disjunction' of conclusions, along the 'or else' meaning of *or*. Since both speech acts are actually performed, we could hardly speak of a real disjunction, so that the second sentence also has a corrective nature, by presenting the possibility of an *alternative* explanation of some fact. The corrective use of *Or* clearly appears in (25), where an exhortation is really cancelled by an exhortation not to execute the requested action.

3.4

More complicated are the inter-clausal and inter-sentential differences among the concessives and contrastives *but*, *although*, *yet* and *nevertheless*, of which *although* is subordinative, the others coordinative, *but* a proper inter-clausal conjunction, and *yet* and *nevertheless* sentence-initial adverbs.

Note, first of all, that the various connectives of this class do not always have the same meaning. *But* may denote (i) unexpected consequence, (ii) unfulfilled conditions and (iii) contrast, as in:

- (26) John is rich, but he didn't pay for his beer.
- (27) We want to go to the movies, but we have no money.
- (28) He wouldn't order a gin, but he had a beer.

We may only use *although* and *yet*, however, in the first meaning of *but*, viz the unexpected consequence. The following sentences show a shift in acceptability or meaning:

- (29) Although we have no money, we want to go to the movies.
- (30) He wouldn't order a gin. Yet, he had a beer.

Unlike conjunctions and causals, concessives may not be expressed by mere coordination of sentences:

- (31) John is rich. He didn't pay for his beer.

That is, in general asyndetic coordination may be used to 'express' either a natural consecution of events, a causal relationship, co-occurrence, or else a natural sequence of speech acts, such as an assertion and an explanation, an addition or a conclusion.

What are the differences between inter-clausal *but* and sentential *yet* when having the 'unexpected consequence' meaning? One of the differences seems to be the following, although again intuitions are rather weak for such cases: *but* essentially relates two events which are, as such, somehow incompatible, in the sense that the second fact is an 'exception' to the normal consequences of the first fact:

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(32) He is very clever, but he couldn't prove the theorem.

The same holds for relations between more general facts:

(33) The glass is very thin, but it is unbreakable.

We use *yet*, however, in those cases not only when one fact is incompatible with another, e.g. physically or otherwise, but also when actual knowledge is incompatible with justified expectations of the speaker or at least with those the hearer presumes the speaker to have.

(34) He cannot fish. Nevertheless, he caught a pike.

(35) Peter is ill. Yet, he'll come to the meeting.

In such examples the speaker refers to facts which occur but which were not expected, i.e. such connectives rather indicate *propositional attitudes* than relations between facts. This pragmatic nature of *yet* and *nevertheless* also appears in dialogues:

(36) A: This glass is really very thin!

B: And yet, it is unbreakable.

In such cases we also use sentence-initial *But*, often followed by *nevertheless*. Its function is to *deny* or *contradict* certain expectations implied by utterances of a previous speaker. As for the other pragmatic connectives, the contrastives/concessives may characterize certain *speech act sequences*.

4 Speech Act Sequences

4.1

In our analysis of the differences between composite sentences and sequences which are semantically equivalent, and of the corresponding differences in the use of connectives, we have observed a number of constraints requiring the use of sequences instead of composite sentences, and conversely. One of these conditions was that new sentences and certain connectives indicate specific speech act sequences, e.g. an assertion followed by an explanation or addition, an assertion followed by a correction or alternative, or an assertion followed by a denial or contradiction.

In general it can be argued that sentence boundaries are particularly appropriate to express boundaries between speech acts. Now, at first sight this assumption seems to be inconsistent with examples in which two speech acts are apparently accomplished by the utterance of one sentence:

- (37) I'll give you the money, but you don't deserve it.
(38) I wouldn't go to Italy at the moment, because the weather is very bad there.

In (37) we have a promise and then an assertive evaluation, whereas in (38) we have a piece of advice followed by an assertion.

On the other hand, there are many examples where speech acts cannot easily be performed by the utterance of one sentence:

- (39) It is cold in here and please shut the window.
(40) Because I am busy, shut up!
(41) Because I have no watch, what is the time?

The reason (39) to (41) are unacceptable is that the connectives used have a semantic interpretation: they relate denoted facts. However, no such relation exists in these sentences: my being cold and your shutting the window, my being busy and your shutting up, and my having no watch and your telling me the time are not directly related. Rather, we should say, my being cold is a condition for making a request, my being busy a condition for giving an order,⁸ and my not having a watch for asking a question. That is, the first speech act provides a *condition* of the next speech act, much in the same way as a proposition may be a condition of interpretation or presupposition of a following proposition in a sequence. In all cases, the preliminary assertion provides a motivation for the request, command or question. What is needed, then, are pragmatic, sentence-initial connectives or simply new sentences for cases like (39) to (41). The conclusion from these examples would be that a change of illocutionary force requires the utterance of a new sentence.

There remain such counter-examples as (37) and (38). Consider also:

- (42) Please shut the door and turn the heater on!
(43) Please shut the door and please turn the heater on!
(44) Please shut the door or please turn the heater on!

The question is: one or two speech acts? That with sentences like (42) we accomplish only one request, viz to do two things, may be concluded from the inappropriateness of (43) and (44). If we had two requests, the repetition of please would be acceptable. Similarly, in the disjunction we perform one request, viz that the hearer executes one of two alternative actions. Similarly, in (37) the second clause does not primarily intend to contradict the promise, but rather it denotes a normal condition for (not) promising. In (38) the state of the weather itself is a condition for (not) going to Italy, not primarily for the advice. In fact I do not motivate my advice but give a reason for the hearer why a certain action should not be

undertaken. Of course, *knowledge* of such conditions or reasons is a necessary element of appropriate advices. Yet, (38) does not make an assertion when uttered but counts as a piece of advice, just as (37) counts as a promise.

4.2

In order to provide a sound basis for these assumptions we should look somewhat closer into the nature of (speech) act sequences. In the theory of action we have postulated single acts and composite acts; the latter may either be compound, viz if they consist of component acts at the same level, or complex, viz if some act is embedded in one of the component major acts, e.g. as an auxiliary act. A sequence of actions is interpreted as *one* action if they can be assigned one global intention or plan, and on a more general level this action can in turn be a condition or a consequence of other actions. In other cases, we just speak about *sequences* of actions.

The same distinctions hold for speech acts. We may have sequences of speech acts, but some of such sequences may be interpreted as one speech act, consisting of several component or auxiliary acts. In the next chapter [of *Text and Context*], we shall also speak of macro-speech acts, i.e. *the global speech act performed by the utterance of a whole discourse, and executed by a sequence of possibly different speech acts.*

Let us give some examples of composite speech acts:

- (45) Please shut the window. I am cold.
- (46) You have done your best. give you a new bike.
- (47) Peter is in hospital. Harry told me.

It may be maintained that (45) does not *primarily* want to make an assertion about my physical state but to make a request, although it cannot be denied that the utterance of the second sentence of (45) counts as an assertion. Hence, for (45), *as a whole*, to be interpreted as a request, the assertion must in some sense be part of the request. For requests to be appropriate, they must be sensible in the sense that they are motivated, such that satisfaction of the requested action by the hearer at the same time satisfies a desire of the speaker. By specifying a 'justification' for my request I make it more 'acceptable', in the strict sense of that term: the probability that the hearer will comply with my request may be enhanced.⁹ In certain contexts, in which politeness is required, such a 'justification' of a speech act is essential.

Similarly, (46) is primarily a promise, not an assertion. First of all, the hearer already knows that he did his best so he need not be told. The first sentence therefore functions as a praise and as a recognition of the merits of the hearer by the speaker, who, thereby, establishes a certain obligation with respect to the hearer. Once this condition is fulfilled, the hearer is able

to make a promise. Again, the assertion is used to express a part of the promise conditions, viz the obligation of the speaker.

Example (47) has a different character. As a whole it functions as an assertion (that Peter is in hospital), consisting of two assertions. 'That Harry told me is probably of secondary importance. Assertions, however, also need justification'. That is, the *source* of our knowledge must be reliable and, if necessary, be specified. Besides direct observation and inference, the basic source of our knowledge is information obtained from others. The second assertion of (47) specifies the source of information which justifies the first. The more reliable a given source, the higher the credibility of the assertion based on it.

In the three examples, then, we have speech acts, viz assertions, which somehow function as a condition, part or basis for another speech act. It should, however, be specified whether the whole speech act is compound or complex, i.e. whether the assertions are essential components or merely auxiliary actions of the ('main') speech act.¹⁰

Although the distinction between component acts and auxiliary acts is perhaps not always clear cut, we might say that the motivation in (45) is a component part of the request, in some contexts even an essential component, because it expresses an essential condition of the act of requesting, viz that we have some wish or desire. Characteristically, the sentence *I am cold*, may independently be used as an *indirect speech act*, viz as a request to shut the window, given the appropriate context. Conversely, the second assertion in (47) seems to have auxiliary function: it indicates how I got the information and thus how I could make another assertion, but is not itself part of it, as for example the condition 'I want you to know that *p*', in:

(48) Peter is in hospital. I thought you might want to know.

where the second assertion gives a motivation for making the first one: assumed interest is essential for information.

More problematic is (46). In a sense, the first sentence expresses a motivation for the promise. At the same time it satisfies a preparatory condition for promises, viz that the speaker is in a certain state of gratitude, obligation or admiration. Yet, although previous praise may be a sufficient condition to establish the context for a promise, it is certainly not necessary. On the other hand, I only promise to do something for somebody if my action is beneficiary for the hearer. That means that the second assertion in the following example may be used to express part of the conditions for promising:

(49) I'll give you a bike. You need one.

Along this line of reasoning, (46) would be a complex speech act, in which the first prepares the second. It might, however, also be argued that (46) is not a composite speech act at all, but a proper sequence, viz of praise and a following promise, if the speaker wants both to praise the hearer and to make a promise.

The distinctions made above are admittedly subtle, but it should be kept in mind that the structure of illocutionary acts and of interaction in general has certain properties which are very similar to those of propositional structure. Acts simply do not merely follow each other at the same level: sequences of acts may be taken as one act, and some acts may have secondary rank with respect to others, viz as preparatory or auxiliary acts. By uttering sequences like (45) for example in a train situation, I primarily have the intention that somebody should close the window for me (given the condition that I cannot do it myself), not to inform him that I am cold, because my fellow passenger, if a stranger, may well not be at all interested in whether I am cold or not. That is, the assertion that I am cold has the function of a motivation for another speech act, viz the request.

4.3

With these theoretical assumptions about the structure of speech act sequences we must return to the sentence versus sequence problem, and try to answer the question whether the utterance of sentences like (37) and (38) counts as one single or one composite speech act or as a sequence of speech acts.

For (37) we can say at least that even if the utterance of the second clause were a separate speech act, viz an assertion, it is not preparatory, auxiliary or otherwise part of the promise executed by the utterance of the first clause. At most we could take it as a qualification of the promise (cf. also conditional promises, see below). If we had the sentence

(50) You got the money, but you didn't deserve it.

we would have the 'same' state of affairs represented, but this time as the assertion of a fact (of which the first, incidentally, is known to the hearer). Hence, we could say for (37) that there is one promise, but taking a compound sentence, representing a compound fact, as its argument, viz that I give you the money in a possible world which normally depends on 'you deserve it'. This tentative solution seems more acceptable, however, for the case in which the concessive clause is subordinated:

(51) Although you don't deserve it, give you the money.

in which the first clause is pragmatically presupposed and hence not an independent assertion, so that one promise is made by the utterance of a

complex sentence. Similarly for (38): I give just one piece of advice, viz not to go to Italy because of the bad weather; that is, the advice is based on a complex proposition. The problem there, however, is that the subordinate clause carries the 'new information', viz the comment of the sentence, but at the same time the first clause cannot be presupposed, pragmatically, because it 'carries' the advice, which is also 'new'. So, we have an additional problem, viz that concerning the relations between topic-comment or presupposition-assertion on the one hand, and (composite) speech acts on the other hand. This problem will receive specific attention below.

4.4

A special problem is the illocutionary status of *conditional sentences*, e.g.

- (52) a. If I go to Italy this summer, send you a postcard.
 b. If you go to Italy this summer, you must visit San Gimignano.

The utterance of such sentences counts as a conditional promise and as a piece of conditional advice, respectively. These terms, however, may be misleading. They should not be understood to mean that a promise or the giving of advice is performed only if the conditional clauses are satisfied. In both cases the utterance of the conditional sentence counts as a proper promise or piece of advice, but only the *domain of validity* of the promise is restricted. That is, I only send a postcard in those possible worlds which are determined by 'I go to Italy (this summer)' — possible worlds. The same holds for the advice. Hence, the if-clause does not pertain to the speech act, but to the acts referred to in the main clause, viz as a necessary or sufficient condition for these acts.

The situation is somewhat similar to that of *modal expressions*, e.g. in *Maybe send you a postcard*, which may also count as a promise, but the domain of validity is restricted to at least one possible world.¹¹ In fact, the actual satisfaction of denoted acts does not influence the correct performance of illocutionary acts: I have made a promise, even if for some reason I cannot execute it. The necessary condition is that, at the moment of making the promise, I sincerely believe that I will execute the promised action. For conditionals and modals I also sincerely promise, not simply to do A, but to do A in w_i or w_B .

Although *if . . . then* is a very specific connective, which presumably has a modal status and hence is not properly inter-clausal or inter-sentential, stressed *if* (often preceded by *at least* or *that is*) may be used at the beginning of a next sentence in order to restrict the domain of validity of a promise made by the utterance of the previous sentence:

- (53) send you a postcard this summer. At least, *if* I go to Italy.

Again, the connective here does not merely introduce a semantic restriction, but at the same time operates as a pragmatic connective, linking a promise with a *correction* or *specification* of the promise.

The if-conditional illocutionary acts shed some light on our earlier problem with the illocutionary status of composite sentences. Thus, as we suggested, the *because-clause* in (38) specifies a reason for the advised action (not to go to Italy), and hence specifies the domain of validity of the advice. If my hearer finds out that the weather is not bad in Italy so that my information is wrong, he is no longer 'committed' to my advice, because he only had to follow it in those possible worlds determined by the 'bad weather in Italy'-worlds. If we just had advice followed by an assertion, the advice would still hold even if the assertion turned out to be ill-founded. Nor can we say that I dissuade somebody from doing something, *because* I assert something. Yet, in the context for (38), the speaker obviously must assume that the hearer does not know that the weather is bad in Italy. In intuitive tercets, then, we could still claim that an assertion is made by (38). So what is the relationship between information processing and illocutionary acts?

5 Pragmatic Information Processing

5.1

The basic idea of pragmatics is that when we are speaking in certain contexts we also accomplish certain social acts. Our intentions for such actions, as well as the interpretations of intentions of actions of other speech participants, are based, however, on sets of *knowledge* and *belief*. Characteristic of communicative contexts is that these sets are different for speaker and hearer, although largely overlapping, and that the knowledge-set of the hearer changes during the communication, ideally according to the purposes of the speaker. Trivially, when we make a promise or give advice, we want the hearer to *know* that we make a promise or give advice. This knowledge is the result of a correct interpretation of the intended illocutionary act. At the same time we want the hearer to know 'what' we are asserting, promising or advising, viz what is the case, what we wish to be the case, what is to be done or what we will do, in some possible world (mostly the actual one). By uttering the sentence *John is ill* may express the propositional concept 'that John is ill', and in so doing accomplish a referential act if I denote the fact that John is (now) ill. These, as we saw, fairly complex acts have a social point as soon as I have the intention to demonstrate that I have this particular knowledge about this particular fact. But as long as my observer-hearer also has this knowledge, there is little more than such a demonstration, and nothing changes beyond the fact that my hearer understands that I have some knowledge. My semantic acts

acquire a pragmatic function only if I have the additional assumption that the hearer does not possess certain knowledge (about the world, about my internal states) and the purpose to *change* the knowledge of my hearer as a consequence of the interpretation of my semantic (meaning, referential) act, by which I express my knowledge or other internal state. If this purpose is realized I have accomplished a successful *communicative* act, that is, I have been able to add some propositional *information* to the knowledge of my hearer.¹²

5.2

This picture is well known. But, as soon as we try to analyse the details of such communicative acts, problems arise. In previous chapters [of *Text and Context*] we have already met the difficulty of distinguishing, within the sentence, 'old' from 'new' information, and topics from comments. In a simple sentence like *John is ill*, with normal intonation, this seems quite straightforward: 'John' is or expresses the topic, because the phrase or argument refers to a known referent, whereas 'is ill', which has comment function, refers to an unknown property of John.

Yet, we have assumed that information comes in propositional chunks, so that the new information is indeed 'John is ill', or perhaps '*a is ill*' if John has been referred to earlier in the conversation and if *a* = John. In any case, the noun phrase *John* not only identifies, and refers to, a specific referent, but at the same time indicates what the sentence, or the discourse, is *about*.

Cognitively, this means presumably that part of our knowledge-set, viz the 'John'-part, is activated, containing general and accidental knowledge and beliefs about John. The new information 'John is ill (now)' may then be added to our actual knowledge about John.

If this epistemic change takes place according to the purposes of the speaker and through the interpretation of his utterance, we say that this change is a consequence of the basic pragmatic act of an *assertion*.

Somewhat more complicated is the situation with composite sentences, e.g. *Because John is ill, he won't come tonight*. The question is: does this *whole* sentence, when uttered in an appropriate context, count also as an assertion, or only the second clause? In the latter case, what act is performed by the utterance of the first clause? If above we assumed for such sentences that the proposition underlying the first clause is 'pragmatically presupposed' by the utterance of the sentence, we thereby meant that the proposition is already in the knowledge-set of the hearer, at least according to the beliefs of the speaker. It follows that, following our characterization of assertion given above, no assertion needs to be made in order to inform the hearer about this fact. The fact that the proposition is nevertheless expressed in the given example must therefore have another pragmatic function. Much in the same way as we say that a topic indicates what an

assertion is about, a subordinate clause may 'point' to the existing knowledge into which new information must be integrated. And in the same way the expression of such a first proposition counts as reference to a known

¶
 speak, we then may say that it caused another fact, which was unknown to the hearer. Hence we need an assertion to inform the hearer about this fact. Similarly, we also need an assertion to inform him that this second fact (John won't come tonight) is a consequence of the first fact (John is ill).

At this point of our argument we may choose two roads. Either we say that in our example *two* new facts are made known and hence *two* assertions are necessary, possibly making one composite assertion, or we say that we make known two new facts, possibly constituting one 'compound' fact, by *one* assertion.

As a working hypothesis we take the second road: the utterance of a complex sentence of this kind is *one* assertion. If not, we would need assertions for each new information of a clause. The sentence *Peter kissed a girl*, when uttered, would, under an atomic propositional analysis, constitute several assertions: that Peter kissed someone, that the someone is a girl, that the kissing took place in a past world, etc. Of course, such propositions may be expressed, and hence be asserted separately. If we heavily stress the noun phrase *a girl*, we assume the other atomic propositions known but not that 'the one whom Peter kissed is a girl'. Similarly, we take *p* causes *q* as a proposition denoting one fact, viz that two facts are in a certain relation, which requires one assertion. In other words, by interpreting *one* assertion we may nevertheless acquire knowledge about *several* facts in the world, because a proposition may entail other propositions.

The question is whether our one-sentence=one-assertion approach is also satisfactory for compound sentences, e.g. *John was ill, so he went to bed*. Unlike the example with the subordinate and pragmatically presupposed clause, there is no propositional information present in the knowledge of the hearer in order to link the second part of the sentence. In fact, he did not yet know that John was ill, so he cannot not even appropriately interpret the second clause without knowledge of the first clause. We therefore are inclined to consider the utterance of the first clause as a proper assertion. Once this knowledge has been acquired (and the related topics, e.g. John, or illness), a second assertion can be made with respect to this knowledge, viz that the first fact had a certain consequence. Unlike the atomic propositions mentioned above, the first proposition here is what we may call 'world-determining'. It determines the set of worlds in which the second proposition of the compound sentence is to be interpreted. Typically, the clauses here could also have functioned as independent assertions, e.g. if only John's illness or his being in bed is contextually relevant. It may therefore be concluded that for compound sentences of this type, we have

one compound assertion. The assertion is compound because it consists of (at least) two assertions which are both essential for the main assertion: the first must necessarily be made in order to be able to make the second (. . . caused him to go to bed), because the required knowledge is not available in the hearer's memory.

5.3

Whereas an assertion, as we have defined it, is an illocutionary act, *presupposition* or 'presupposing' does not seem to be an act because there is no intended communicative change operated in the hearer due to an 'act of presupposing', which is rather a mental act, viz an assumption about the knowledge of the hearer. Of course, such an assumption may be *expressed* by various linguistic means. But as such, assuming knowledge about a fact is not much different, pragmatically, from assuming knowledge of an object. In that sense, 'presupposing' would be if anything a part of a propositional act or *semantic act*. Of course, we could give an more or less pragmatic turn to this reasoning, by saying that the knowledge of speakers and hearers is involved. And we would make it an 'illocutionary' act, if the speaker intends to act in such a way that the hearer knows that the speaker has some information, but in that case it falls together with the act of assertion. As opposed to proper pragmatic (illocutionary) acts, presupposing, as an assumed act, does not have any obvious purposes defined in terms of consequences of changes brought about in the hearer (as distinct from those of assertions).

According to this argument we can no longer speak of a presupposition-assertion articulation of sentences or utterances.¹³ First of all, presupposing, if an act at all, is semantic, whereas an assertion is a pragmatic act. Second, the act of assertion is based on the sentence as a whole, not only on the 'new'-information part of the sentence.

Yet, such a binary articulation of sentences seems useful if we keep the distinction between old and new information. In that case we need another term for the introduction of new information, viz the term *introduction* itself, whereas presupposing is the act of reference to known objects and facts. The act of introduction, similarly, may pertain to new objects, new properties of old objects, and to new facts. In general the

inferred from existing information, e.g. from previous sentences in a discourse. The illocutionary act of assertion, then, is the pragmatic instruction to use this semantic information for epistemic change, such that a set of presupposed propositions is expanded with a set of introduced propositions.

It should be emphasized that these proposals are merely tentative for the moment, and intended to underline some pragmatic difficulties involved in the usual presupposition-assertion distinction (if assertion is taken here as an illocutionary act).

5.4

This discussion about semantic and pragmatic information processing is also relevant for a further analysis of our earlier difficulties with different speech acts (or not) within the same composite sentence. Take, for example, the following sentence:

(54) send you a postcard this summer, because I am going to Italy.

Superficially speaking, we could say that by uttering this sentence we accomplish first a promise and then an assertion. Note, however, that the sentence is ambiguous. Due to its initial position, the main clause may express a presupposed proposition (I may just have made a promise with the same content). In that case, the subordinate clause in final position expresses the introduced proposition, providing the reason of my (known) future action. This makes the utterance of the sentence an explanatory assertion. The second reading arises when the first proposition is not presupposed, but simply an announcement about future action, also followed by an explanatory assertion of this future action. Both propositions are introduced in that case. The same would hold for a third reading in which the contextual conditions for a promise are satisfied (a certain obligation of the speaker with respect to the hearer). This is possible only, however, if the specific content of the promise is introduced in the sentence. In other words, presupposed elements of a sentence cannot, as such, 'carry' a speech act. Trivially, promising to do A is senseless if the hearer already knows that I will do A. But as soon as a promise is involved, we no longer have a 'mere' assertion. We have a promise with the propositional base 'to send a postcard because I will be in Italy', much in the same way as the promise 'send a postcard from Italy'. As for the conditional promises, we could say that the domain of validity of the promise is restricted: if unexpectedly my trip to Italy is cancelled, I am no longer committed to my promise.

Note, incidentally, that there are cases of complex or compound sentences which convey *composite speech acts*, viz in those cases where not the facts are related, but a fact with a speech act, or two speech acts:

(55) send you a postcard this summer, because I know that I'm going to Italy.

(56) send you a postcard this summer, because I know that you like postcards.

In these cases, the second clause expresses an explanatory assertion for the promising act, accomplished by the utterance of the first clause: they express necessary conditions for appropriate promising. On the other

hand, if we add *I promise that* to (54), the *because-clause* does not express a cause of my promising (or only when it entails 'I know that'). Similarly, we may have *When I am in Italy, I'll send you a postcard*, but not *When I know that I'm going to Italy, I'll send you a postcard*, whereas *When I know that I'm going to Italy, I (can) promise you to send a postcard* is again acceptable.

6 The Pragmatics of Representation in Discourse

6.1

Until now we have only discussed semantic aspects of meaning, reference and representation, and the conditions of presupposition and introduction of propositions. There are different ways, however, to 'represent' existing, future or wanted facts. Sometimes the ordering of propositional representation is parallel to that of the facts themselves. We have analysed examples, however, where this is not the case, viz where subsequent propositions denote preceding facts. Part of the constraints on representation — which might be taken as the converse relation of denotation, reference or interpretation — have a pragmatic nature. They are determined by properties of social information processing in conversation, beyond the semantic ones discussed in Chapter 4 [of *Text and Context*].

6.2

The determinants of the order of representation are the following:

- 1 The order of the fact-sequence.
- 2 The order of observation/perception/understanding of the fact-sequence.
- 3 The order of information transmission.
- 4 The order of illocutionary acts.

Constraints (1) and (2) are semantic, whereas (3) and (4) are pragmatic. If a sequence of propositions is expressed along an order parallel to the order of the facts themselves, we said that the representation ordering is *normal*. Example: *John bought flowers. He gave them to Sally*. That is, if the fact ordering is $(*p, *q)$, the semantic representation, and its morpho-syntactic expression, is (p, q) , where $*p$ is the fact denoted by the proposition p . Conversely, if no specific indications are given in a sequence, it will be interpreted as a direct mapping of the fact sequence.

The principle of normal ordering is also important for *cognitive* reasons: not only do we try to represent, mentally, a sequence of facts in their temporal and causal order, but this representation will also constitute the basis for our discourse about these facts. Yet, these cognitive constraints at the same time allow different ordering, according to (2). As such, the facts do not determine our representation of facts, but rather our observation/

perception and interpretation of these facts. In that case our observation of a fact **q* may occur prior to the observation of a fact **p*, or rather, having observed **q*, we may infer that this fact is a consequence of a fact **p*, which as such we may or may not have observed. That is, in our interpretation of the world, we may first focus *attention* on **q* and after that on **p*, or on the specific relation (**p*, **q*). This ordering will be called *cognitive*. Note, that in many cases the cognitive ordering may be identical with the normal ordering. Examples of cognitive ordering are *John was drunk, because he had been in the pub*, and *She is also at the party, because she had an invitation*, and *John's radio is playing. So, he must be home*, where the *tenses* allow the corresponding interpretation of the fact-orderings.

The third determinant of ordering, viz that of information processing, has been discussed already in the previous section. Whereas principles (1) and (2) depend on the facts and our understanding of the facts, the third constraint determines that the 'facts be represented' in an order dependent on the structure of the communicative context, viz my intentions and assumptions about the knowledge of the speech participants. Assuming that I want my hearer to be informed about the fact **q*, it may well be that the hearer can only interpret *q* (or '*q*') if I first inform him about a fact **p*, either because of reasons of presuppositions or because the hearer will certainly be interested in conditions (causes or reasons) of a certain fact (*Why did he go to bed?*). Hence, given a sequence of facts (**p*, **q*), the representation in actual discourse will also depend on whether the hearer already knows about **p*, or about **q*. It is this ordering which defines the presupposition-introduction structure of the sentence. Example: *He had that accident, because he was drunk* (with normal final position stress).¹⁴

Finally, we have the purely *pragmatic* constraints on representation orderings. They determine an ordering of representation with respect to the *context* beyond simple information transmission. The wishes and intentions/purposes of the speaker, the sequencing of illocutionary acts, and the known and assumed wishes, interests or intentions of the hearer are involved here.

First of all, speech act sequencing may determine that facts occurring earlier are asserted later in order to give an explanation, a correction, a restriction or similar second-position illocutionary acts following any other speech act, as in *I'll give you the money, but you don't deserve it; go to the USA if I get that grant*, etc.

Second, we have the interests and needs of the hearer as determinants of orderings, e.g. in replies to questions, requests and commands, or in general the requirements of the present situation. If John doesn't show up in a formal meeting, we will first assert, ideally, that he is unable to come, then that he is in hospital, then that he had an accident, then, perhaps, that the road was slippery with frost. We do not answer, in such a case, by begin-

ning a narrative: *'Well, it was freezing, and the road was slippery; and John was driving to London.'* Up to a certain degree, such indirect answers are possible, but only in specific contexts, and often with specific effects. The conventional order is first to provide the requested information, and then give further explanation. Thus, the topic of conversation also determines the possible orderings. This means that those propositions must be uttered first which are 'closest to the topic, after that propositions indicating conditions or consequences. If we are talking about road accidents, we first say *'John (also) had an accident last week'* and only then *'He is in hospital'* or *'The road was slippery'*. Third, not only requested information or topics of conversation order our contributions in a dialogue, but also the *structure of (inter-)action*. So, we may have both *'He won't make it. Let's give him a hand'*, and *'Let's give him a hand. He won't make it'*. The first is a description of a fact which is a sufficient condition for a speech act (adhortation), the second is the adhortation followed by an explanatory assertion about the reason for the speech act and the reason for helping. Note, finally, that speech acts are also facts. Hence, a speech act ordering is, itself, normal, if those acts are ordered along the condition-consequence line.

6.3

There are various ways to express these orderings. The schemata we have been discussing in this and the previous sections are the following:

- 1 ([pI]. [(So,) q])
- 2 ([q]. [(So,) p])
- 3 (*p*, so q)
- 4 (Qq, so *pi*)
- 5 ([because p], q)
- 6 (i q, [because p])

In these schemata, '(' and ')' are sequence boundaries, 'I' and '11' are sentence boundaries, 'T' and 'T' endose subordinate clauses, '(' and ')' endose optional connectives, and *p* and *q* are clause variables. According to these schemata, and given an ordering of facts (**p*, **q*), (1), (3) and (5) would be normal orderings, the other would be cognitive, communicative and pragmatic. The connectives in (1) and (2) are pragmatic, the others semantic. Subordinate clauses in initial position often express pragmatic presupposition, the second-position main clause the propositional introduction. With special intonation, ordering (6) is possible for introduced main clauses, e.g. for special emphasis. In general, sentence boundaries are also speech act boundaries, although there are cases in which the compound constructions (3) and (4) admit compound speech acts.

The schemata have been given for cause/reason — consequence relations

between facts, and premise-conclusion relations between speech acts. Similar schemata may be given for the other connectives and connections.

6.4

Part of the pragmatics of representation is a further explication of notions such as *focus* and *perspective*, although these notions are also, or even primarily, to be accounted for at the level of semantics.

The notion of *focus* is ambiguous. *Cognitively*, it could be reconstructed in terms of selective information processing. Specific *attention* for some object (thing, property, relation, fact) would probably involve conscious processing, fast selective perception, fast recognition, better organization in memory and enhanced retrievability (better recall), and probably presence in the (semantic) processing stores. It will be assumed that focus is *propositionally* based in that case.¹⁵ We do not, presumably, just focus (attention) on Peter, on illness or kissing, but on certain facts, e.g. that Peter is ill, or that Peter kissed Mary. The specific focus function of such facts would then consist in their role in a specific network of relations. Certain other facts would be viewed in relation to the fact under focus, viz as conditions, consequences or components.

At the *semantic* level, focus has been discussed mostly in terms of 'comment' (of a sentence), as opposed to topic. If it is to be different from topic it should not be identified with 'old information' or 'identified objects', but rather with new, introduced information as it was discussed earlier.¹⁶ Probably, the notion *change of focus* would on this level be more interesting from a linguistic point of view and for our discussion, for example if such a change would require a new sentence. A change of possible world (place, time, circumstances) and a change of involved objects, could be taken as the basis for such a change in semantic focus. Together with the sentence boundary, we would have specific sentential adverbs, tense and modal expressions as indications of focus change.¹⁷ In particular, the notion of focus would apply under the semantic (referential, representational) constraints discussed above. Sequence ordering and propositional embedding, as we saw, can express certain properties of semantic and cognitive information processing. Thus, a fact under focus, although occurring later, may be represented first, or conversely.

Pragmatically the notion of focus could also be constructed in terms of our treatment of representation. Facts under pragmatic focus would be those which are immediately relevant for illocutionary acts and interaction in the context and communicative situation, where the notion of *relevance* was defined in terms of direct conditions and consequences of (speech) acts. Instead of propositions/facts under focus we could at this level also speak of illocutionary acts or forces being under focus. A speech act would be under focus if it is the main act intended in a sequence of speech acts, such that the other speech acts are components or auxiliary/preparatory for

that act, as demonstrated in the examples treated above. Just as, on the semantic level, information under focus seems to be close to what we have called topic of discourse, made explicit as macro-structures, the pragmatic notion of focus thus becomes akin to that of the global speech act of a discourse, as will be discussed in the next chapter [of *Text and Context*]. We therefore provisionally conclude that a specific notion of semantic or pragmatic focus need not be postulated in the theory, because it covers various phenomena which have been defined in other terms. The only *specific* application of the notion would be to the four principles of representation determining discourse ordering.

Another notion which lies on the boundary of semantics and pragmatics is *perspective*, which certainly has interesting linguistic implications, although hardly any systematic research has been done on it.¹⁸ Sequences of facts may be represented in various ways, according to the factual, cognitive, communicative or pragmatic constraints discussed above. Independent of such orderings, however, we may describe the facts from various perspectives, e.g. the perspective of a certain point of time, place, person involved in the facts, an observer of the facts, or just from the point of view of a speaker/reporter of the facts. Such differences may show of course in the use of different pronouns (*I hit him* and *He hit me* may both describe the 'same' fact, viz that John hit Peter, but differ according to who is reporting the event), the use of different indexical expressions in general, different verbs, *buy* versus *sell*, *come* versus *go*, etc.

The notion is interesting in the framework of this book [*Text and Context*] if perspective and perspective change are to be defined in terms of discourse structure. Apart from specific rules in literary narratives, there are indeed strict constraints on perspective in discourse.

Perspective can be taken both as a semantic and as a pragmatic notion. Whereas truth/satisfaction is a notion determined by possible worlds and models, *semantic perspective* is a part of a model structure *relative to* which truth in a world is defined. It is this perspective which determines which worlds are in fact *accessible* from a certain world. Thus, in our crime story, sentences like *She took off her hat* have different perspectival status from *She felt depressed* or *She knew that he knew it*. The latter examples are typical in many novels, where internal mental states are described with third-person subjects, instead of first-person subjects. Thus, some sentences can only express the perspective of an observer (who may or may not be identical with the speaker/reporter), e.g. *She seemed unhappy* or *You look fine today!*, whereas others, in normal discourse, may only express the point of view or 'awareness' of the agent of an action described, as in *I wanted to hit him*. There are languages which use specific morphemes to express differences in perspective.¹⁹

Pragmatic perspective does not determine truth, satisfaction or accessibility, but the appropriateness of discourses, and hence should be defined in

terms of context, viz point of view, attitudes, etc. of speech participants. For pragmatic or contextual semantics this means first of all that sentences which are asserted are true in worlds accessible from the knowledge/belief worlds of the speaker. For pragmatics proper it means that the utterance of a sentence is appropriate relative to the wishes, intentions and goals of the speaker of the utterance, as in assertions, commands and requests. Perspective is also relative to the wishes, aims and knowledge of the hearer in promises, advices, etc. More generally, the identification or interpretation of utterances as certain speech acts may be different for speakers and hearers: in context c , the utterance u , may be a promise for A but a threat for B. Appropriateness thus depends on perspective.

Similarly, as in such typical examples as *John pretends that he won a million dollars*, the assignment of speech act verbs depends on the beliefs of the speaker relative to the truth, appropriateness or purpose of the represented speech (agent). These and other properties of linguistic perspective, especially those relating semantics and pragmatics, need further investigation.

7 Text Versus Context

7.1

One final issue which should receive some attention is that concerning the similarities and differences between *text* and *context*. Especially in this chapter, we have studied discourse at the level of sentence sequences and speech act sequences. One of the natural questions to ask in such a framework would be whether the structure of discourse, at least from a grammatical point of view, could also be accounted for in terms of (simple and composite) sentences on the one hand, and the structure of speech act sequences and of context on the other hand.² In other words, as soon as we have a pragmatics accounting for *contextual* structures, such as knowledge and beliefs, intentions, actions, etc., why do we still need a specific discourse-level of analysis, and not just a *sentences-in-context* description? For example, in order to provide the necessary relative interpretation of sentences, e.g. for the correct identification of individuals, with respect to previous sentences of the discourse sequence, we could also interpret a sentence relative to the sentence previously uttered in the same context of conversation. Such previous sentences, when uttered, would have changed the knowledge of the hearer, and the hearer would be able to interpret any new input-sentence with respect to this knowledge acquired from the interpretation of previous sentences.

Although it cannot be denied that such an approach is interesting, and would certainly be valid from the point of view of cognitive processing, there are serious arguments why an independent linguistic (grammatical)

analysis of sequences and discourse remains necessary even within a pragmatic framework.

7.2

A first argument concerns specific *macro-structures*. Just as a sentence, because of its hierarchical structure, is taken as a theoretical unit of a grammar and not as a sequence of (utterances of) individual words (morphemes or phrases), so global structures of discourse require at least one level of linguistic analysis at which discourses, or paragraphs, are taken as *theoretical units*. More specifically, macro-rules do not operate on the contents of belief/knowledge of language users, but on sequences of sentences or propositions. In this respect we maintain a distinction between grammatical or logical rules and constraints on the one hand and cognitive strategies, processes or operations on the other hand. The latter are of course based on linear linguistic input, viz sequences of words, phrases and sentences.

Similar remarks may be made for structures of sequences. First of all it should be emphasized that preceding discourse cannot always be 'represented' by context. A limited number of individuals and properties may be available for direct, indexical, reference in the context. All other individuals, properties and relations require introduction by previous discourse. More specifically, the *relative interpretation* of sentences in a sequence should be defined whether the sequence is actually uttered or not. That is, identity, continuity or difference of modalities, tenses, individuals or predicates is to be defined for sequences of sentences or propositions and cannot be given only in terms of what speech participants know or believe at a certain moment of a context in which such a sequence is uttered. Certain worlds are accessible only through the explicit presence of expressions of previous sentences. The same holds for the use of predicates like *to précis*, *to conclude*, and *to summarize*, and their corresponding nominalizations, as well as for discourse adverbs such as *consequently*, *thus*, *on the contrary*, etc.

7.3

From these few examples it follows that discourses should not only be described at the pragmatic level, but require an independent level of (relative) semantics for sequences and macro-structures.

Conversely, a pragmatic component of description, having specific categories, rules and constraints, should not be reduced to semantics by the mere fact that some speech acts can be performatively represented in the discourse itself.

Notes

1 This difference holds only with normal sentence intonation and stress. As soon as we assign specific stress to *accident* in (4a), the two sentences (4a) and (4b) become again pragmatically (epistemically) equivalent, in the sense that the proposition 'Peter is in hospital' is assumed by the speaker to be known to the hearer. However, in such a *topicalization* there are other pragmatic differences, for instance the fact that, by contrast, the speaker denies an assumption of the hearer with respect to the reason why John is in hospital.

2 By pragmatic presupposition of an (uttered) sentence *S*, we mean to say any proposition expressed by *S* which the speaker assumes to be known to the hearer. Derivatively we may also say this of the clause expressing this proposition in *S*. For further discussion of presupposition, see below, and — also for further references, e.g. about the distinction between semantic and pragmatic presupposition — Kempson (1975), Wilson (1975), Petófi and Franck (eds) (1973).

3 It may seem unusual to contend that a syntactic structure alone may *express* a connection such as causation. Although it is obvious that the meaning of propositions codetermines a causal interpretation of coordinated clauses, it should be stressed that clause ordering itself also requires semantic interpretation, e.g. temporal or causal ordering of facts. See below.

4 The kind of phenomena we study here are sometimes very subtle, and our reflective intuitions not always clear cut. Therefore, some of the differences discussed in this chapter are open to challenge from (but also among) native speakers of English. Thus, a distinction between semantic (inter-clausal) and pragmatic (inter-sentential) *so* may be blurred by the very close relationship between causal relations and 'causal' explanations, i.e. between (implicational) connectives and inference. Yet, not only in logical theory but also in grammar, it is necessary to distinguish between connection and operations of inference. See our discussion in van Dijk (1974b, 1975a).

5 For reasons of simplicity we briefly assume here that 'presuming' or 'assuming' and 'concluding', as expressed in the premise and conclusion structure of a proof or argument, are illocutionary acts.

6 See van Dijk (1975a) for some examples. Intuitions may again differ here. We would be inclined to say in Dutch *Peter is ziek. Dus, hij komt niet* [Peter is ill. So, he does not come], but in coordinated clauses: *Peter was ziek, dus kwam hij niet* [Peter was ill, so he didn't come], where in the first example we have subject-verb (SV) ordering and in the second verb-subject (VS) ordering. In any case, the normal SV ordering is imperative when *hij* [he] is stressed. After German *also* we normally have inversion, but normal SV ordering after heavily stressed sentence-initial *Also* followed by a pause. Thus, although there are slight differences, these syntactic observations seem to corroborate our distinction between semantic and pragmatic connectives in English.

7 This does not mean that sentences with *for*, denoting causal relation, are not used in explanatory contexts, but only that *for* as such is purely semantic, not an inferential (pragmatic) connective. Unlike *So*, we may not begin a sentence or a dialogue turn with it. As was remarked earlier, however, there are other connectives taking over the role of *for* in spoken English. The same holds for German *denn*, which is also more and more replaced by *weil* [because]. In Dutch, however, *want* [for] is very much used in spoken language, viz as the normal coordinative causal (semantic) connective besides *omdat* [because]. For details of German coordination, see especially Lang (1973).

8 Typically, therefore, pragmatic connectives would be acceptable in many

such cases, although it was assumed that then we should rather speak of two independent sentences than of one compound sentence: *I am busy. So, shut up!* Note, however, that in those cases where semantics and pragmatics run parallel, as in explicit performative sentences, semantic connectives in compound sentences may be used, because the facts connected there are the speech acts performed: *I promise that I will bring the money, but I ask you to wait for me until at least two o'clock.* See Groenendijk and Stokhof (1976) for correctness conditions on compound performatives.

9 We are here at the boundary of what may still be called appropriateness conditions and other conditions of 'success'.

10 Although the parallel with main clause and subordinate clause is metaphorically instructive, it is not so easy to give precise criteria for a definition of 'main' and 'subordinate' (auxiliary) acts within one 'composite' action. See Chapter 6 [of *Text and Context*] for some tentative remarks about this distinction.

11 As for several other examples in these sections, other interpretations of the phenomena are possible here. Thus, modalized sentences denoting future actions of the speaker which the hearer would appreciate might also merely count as (announcing) assertions (e.g. because *maybe*- 'promises' need not be kept, or accounted for, in the same sense as full promises). Yet, in the same sense in which we say that the utterance of a sentence such as *Maybe Peter is ill* counts as an assertion, we consider *Maybe visit you* as a (weak) promise.

12 There are a number of theoretical intricacies which are ignored here. For instance, we should speak of *degrees* of success in these (and other) cases, not only because only part of the knowledge may be successfully transmitted according to purpose, but also because knowledge/belief may, theoretically, be mutually recursive: the speaker must believe that the hearer believes what he (the speaker) said, etc. Note that according to our earlier stipulations, a communicative act as defined here is perlocutionary, not merely illocutionary.

13 For a discussion of this issue, see the standard and recent papers collected in Petófi and Franck (eds) (1973), Kempson (1975), Wilson (1975) and the references given there.

14 Note that in a sentence like *Because he was drunk he had an accident*, or *It was because . . .*, the introductory (comment) part of the sentence occurs in the foregrounded, initial position, in order to mark contrast or contradiction, which apparently is an additional (pragmatico-stylistic) criterion for sentence and sequence ordering.

15 There are perhaps a few marginal counter-examples against this assumption, e.g. in those cases where we give or request all information related to a certain concept: *Tell me all about Peter, Can you tell me something about event-splitting?*, etc.

16 For the notion of 'focus' — in the sense of comment and related notions — see Sgall, Hajičová and Benel'ová (1973), and the references given there to other work.

17 For example, *on the other hand, in the meantime, suddenly*, etc.

18 See, however, Fillmore (1974) and Kuroda (1975) and the references given there. In particular, there has been some research on 'perspective' in narratives, e.g. in relation to the problem of free indirect style. See Banfield (1973). For the literature, see Stanzel (1964) and Hamburger (1968) among others.

19 For example, Japanese. See Kuroda (1975).

20 For a discussion of this problem, see van Dijk (1974c).

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Postscript (1995): The New Pragmatics

During the many years since this paper was written, pragmatics has changed as much as my own work has changed. Scholarly truths, more than many others, are obviously relative, and the same is true for the reflections of this Postscript. Yet, from my present perspective, some remarks about my current conception of the pragmatic enterprise seem to be in order.

The Pragmatics' Label

First, the very concept of 'pragmatics' as a label for a field or even a whole subdiscipline needs comment. What Yehoshua Bar-Hillel already termed the 'waste-basket' of linguistics, is still today an area that seems to attract and define all those who do not want to do 'grammar', and who seem to be united only by their focus on 'language use'.

In the broad semiotic sense, á la Morris, this is of course fine. According to this organization of the study of 'signs', and hence of semiotic systems, syntax would deal with form, semantics with meaning, and pragmatics with language use and users. Since Morris published his study, however, more than sixty years have elapsed. The study of language has changed considerably during structuralism, Transformational Generative (TG) grammar, and functionalist approaches, among many others. So has the study of language use. Since the end of the 1960s, thus, it was not only the philosophical study of speech acts, but also sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and discourse analysis, that disputed fragments of the field of the study of 'language in use'. Since these various and well-established subdisciplines all have reached the adult age of twenty-five years, each with its own journals, conferences and even academic chairs or programmes, it seems rather inappropriate to continue to cover the whole field of the study of language use with the old semiotic label of 'pragmatics'.

Around 1970, therefore, new uses of the term 'pragmatics' appeared on the scene. At least initially, pragmatics soon came to be associated with the study of illocution, that is, with the analysis of the rather special *acts*, viz, 'speech acts', being accomplished by expressing specific utterances in specific interpersonal or social contexts. Recall, however, that language philosophers such as Austin and Searle, who had initiated and stimulated the study of speech acts, are known to have rejected or ignored 'pragmatics' as a label for their special domain of study, a label that initially was used mostly on the European continent.

With the predictable extension of the study of 'language as action', of 'language in use', or of 'language in context', over the last twenty-five years, the extension of the meaning of the term 'pragmatics' changed equally predictably. First it was soon also used in the *formal* analysis of language, e.g. to refer to the role of specific context features in the analysis of utterances, such as the variables of speakers, hearers, time and place that give rise to *deictic expressions* in utterances. Second, and most successfully, pragmatics eventually found a niche in the study of language use that remained largely ignored in its sister disciplines of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis, viz, the analysis of *politeness phenomena* and some other special forms of *strategic interaction*.

Unfortunately, attempts to restrict the label of 'pragmatics' to a specific field of the study of language use have largely failed, if we judge by the

contents of books and journals published with the word 'pragmatics' in their titles or names: pragmatics fuzzily extends to, overlaps and slowly merges with its neighbouring disciplines of sociolinguistics, the ethnography of communication and discourse and conversation analysis, though less with psycholinguistics. Thus, pragmatics in practice is broadly taken to deal specifically with the ways action, interpersonal interaction and situational context impinge on verbal utterances, and vice versa, that is, with a socio-cultural, context-sensitive approach to language use and discourse.

Abstract Pragmatics

Although it is hardly a serious problem, and even a rather normal scholarly practice, to change the definition and application of field and discipline labels, I regret this extension and increasing fuzziness of the term. Instead, I propose that the old semiotic division between syntax, semantics and pragmatics be maintained, but interpreted in light of modern theories of language. Thus, if syntax (together with morphology and phonology) deals with abstract structures of (sentence) *form*, and semantics with those — equally abstract structures — of *meaning* (and possibly those of reference), then it seems elegant to reserve the term pragmatics for the third major dimension of language, viz that of the study of *action*.

Speech act theory would obviously be part of such a domain, at least when 'illocutionary force' is defined not as part of the (propositional) 'meaning' of an utterance, but as a description of its action potential. But what else? Would conversation analysis, as the study of conversational interaction, also be part of pragmatics according to such a definition? In my view this would only be the case for those studies on conversational interaction that focus on the (abstract) structures of action *per se*. Thus turn-taking rules may be seen as regulating the distribution of locutionary acts over speech participants. Similarly, the abstract analysis of strategic interaction, e.g. in terms of rules of moves that functionally accomplish the goal of the actions of such participants, may similarly be part of pragmatics thus defined.

That is, pragmatics and conversation analysis (and hence the broader field of discourse analysis) overlap, as do many neighbouring disciplines. But as the study of dialogue, conversation analysis is, of course, also interested in many other dimensions of verbal interaction, viz syntactic, lexical, semantic, stylistic, rhetorical, interpersonal and social aspects of talk, as long as several speakers are seen to jointly accomplish such features of situated talk. For the same reasons, all other dimensions or aspects of the study of 'language in use', such as cognitive processing and understanding, social and cultural conditions on language use and variation, and social-psychological aspects of language use, would *not* fall within this *abstract* domain of the study of the rules of language as action and interaction.

Discursive Pragmatics

Keeping with the main object of analysis of linguistic theory and philosophy of language of the times, pragmatics also initially focused on (uttered) *sentences*. It goes without saying that in light of the developments in discourse or conversation analysis, such a restriction would not be very fruitful in the study of language use. On the contrary, just like sentences or propositions, speech acts and other verbal acts also usually appear in orderly sequences, both in text and in talk. Besides their syntactic and semantic organizing principles, the pragmatic dimension or **of text** and talk is also structured by specific conditions, constraints, schematic organization, and so on.

Thus, besides semantic coherence, we may define both local and global *pragmatic coherence* for a sequence of speech acts A_1, A_2, \dots, A_n , if (a) A_i implies an appropriateness condition of $A_i + j$ (which is a condition on local coherence, and (b) is there as a (macro) speech act **A** such that $A_1 \dots A_n$ entail **A** (which is the condition of global coherence).

Thus, the sequence *is cold in here. Could you please shut the window?*" is pragmatically (locally) coherent if the assertion of the first sentence satisfies a condition for the appropriate accomplishment of the request performed by the utterance of the second sentence (in a given context). Conversation analysis has studied similar forms of 'preparatory' pre-sequences of specific interactional moves (such as requests), and also in the study of politeness such sequentially performed (pragmatic) conditions of next speech acts may play a role in face-saving strategies.

Global pragmatic coherence is obtained when a whole discourse (or larger discourse fragment) has a pragmatic 'point', viz if as a whole a sequence of speech acts may be interpreted to perform one 'overall' speech act. Thus, a sequence of assertions and requests may function as a *threat* in a ransom note, and this postscript or most other forms of scholarly discourse would pragmatically function as overall, *macro-assertions*.

These are the general principles, but obviously the more interesting details of such a discursive account of pragmatics are to be investigated in the ways local and global coherence are actually accomplished, interactively or not, e.g. by negotiation, challenges, requests for clarification, etc., as studied in much conversation analysis (though not in terms of pragmatics).

The main point we would like to emphasize here, however, is that whatever kind of pragmatics one advocates, it always needs to be discourse-based. As a partial account of 'action' and 'language use', pragmatics needs to examine the specific pragmatic conditions of coherence or other forms of sequential organization of utterances as (speech or other) acts. This may be trivial in 1997; it was far from trivial not too long ago.

Indeed, even today there is still much work in the sentence-based study of speech acts.

Linking Pragmatics With Other Components

Within this discursive framework, it should also be stressed that, following the provisional definition of the specific scope and tasks of a pragmatic theory, accounts of speech acts and their sequencing should be structurally linked with theories of other levels, dimensions or aspects of text and talk. Thus, (speech) acts can be performed appropriately only by the context-sensitive 'utterance' of words, sentences and discourses with specific meanings and forms. A pragmatic theory therefore presupposes, e.g., a *semantic theory* and a *syntactic theory*, and also needs to be linked with the lexicon and other '*surface structures*'.

Similarly, the same speech acts may be performed in many variable ways, depending on personal and social contexts, and hence appear to require a *stylistic* approach as well. It is well known that, for instance, requests can be performed in a large variety of ways, viz as a function of the social position of the speakers, and different stylistic (lexical, phonological or syntactic) options may 'code for' such social or contextual variation. The same is true for the role of the *rhetorical* effectiveness of speech acts, which may or may not be more persuasive by using repetition, contrast, metaphors or other 'figures'.

Among these and many other cross-links between a discourse pragmatics and the theories of other levels and dimensions of text and talk, we may finally also mention the links with schematic or superstructures that organize semantic macro-structures. Thus, argumentation, narratives, news reports, conversations and other genres are globally organized in rule-based, conventional ways, and may be organized by canonical abstract categories such as *headers, introductions, summaries, complications, problems, solutions, premises, conclusions, abstracts*, etc., defining a hierarchical schema for the 'content' of a discourse.

We shall assume that not only sequences of propositions, but also sequences of speech acts may be organized by such conventional categories, thereby defining *pragmatic schemata* or *pragmatic superstructures*. For instance, many institutional genres are precisely defined by categories that have a pragmatic nature, such as the *question and answer* organization (not only locally but also globally) of police interrogations, courtroom interaction, parliamentary debates or press conferences. The same is true for *accusation, defence* and *verdict* sequences in court, or *assertion—question* sequences in lessons in the classroom or in textbooks, among many other genres. In other words, the schematic (overall) organization of text and talk may also have a pragmatic dimension.

Empirical Pragmatics

The arguments formulated above in favour of an action- and discourse-oriented pragmatics, may be defended with some success if we maintain a definition of syntax, semantics and pragmatics as accounting for *abstract* structures of form, meaning and action, or if we keep with the traditional distinctions between *langue* and *parole*, or *competence* and *performance*. Current practice and theorizing on language and discourse, however, has increasingly ignored such distinctions as being hardly fruitful for a broad, multidisciplinary and integrated study of communicative events, as also the close interpenetration of pragmatics and discourse and conversation analysis has shown.

Besides syntactic and maybe semantic competence, soon notions of pragmatic and communicative competence were introduced and resulted in the arbitrariness of the old distinctions, viz by extending the study of rules (and knowledge of rules) to what was traditionally seen as the field of a theory of performance. Conversely, with the development of *psycholinguistics*, both syntax and semantics increasingly became formulated in terms of *cognitive processing* conditions, mental constraints or memory representations. Thus, discourse coherence, though obviously a task of semantics, cannot properly be defined without a theory of mental models and a theory of the role of knowledge in formal interpretations (or in terms of actual processing: in production and comprehension). That is, even a more adequate and sophisticated study of linguistic form and meaning, i.e. even grammar itself, increasingly merged with a broader cognitive account of form, constraints and rules.

Hence, both from the cognitive and from the social side, increasingly empirical goals were set in linguistics as well as discourse analysis: the object of our study should not merely be abstract structures or the abstract rules and constraints of utterances, but also their actual manifestations in ongoing, situated text and talk, or the concrete communicative events of speech participants and their contextually relevant properties.

Again, this has become a standard point of departure for much of sociolinguistics, ethnography of speaking, discourse and conversation analyses since the late 1960s. Although I do not support radical and exclusive 'contextualism' (which rejects any kind of abstraction or generalization, e.g. of structures or meaning, beyond the 'ongoing context'), and although an account of context-free or abstract structures and rules for sentences, text, talk or genres is also a useful endeavour in linguistics and discourse analysis, we should of course ask what a more empirical, context-bound account of pragmatics should look like.

Indeed, we may formulate abstract appropriateness conditions for speech acts, or similarly general constraints on the interplay of moves

in interactional sequences, but a full-fledged pragmatics might also want to account for the following (among many other phenomena):

- 1 How are (speech etc.) acts actually processed (produced and understood) by language users? Which cognitive representations and mental strategies are involved in the assignment of illocutionary 'meanings' or functions? In other words, how is 'pragmatic interpretation' defined in the empirical terms of a theory of mental processing? How do language users know that a speech is actually intended indirectly, or how are sequences of speech acts produced or interpreted as coherent?
- 2 What social-psychological conditions are involved in the actual 'use' (i.e. in production and understanding) of speech acts? What shared socio-cultural knowledge, attitudes or ideologies need to be presupposed in the *socio-cognitively appropriate* accomplishment of speech acts? For instance, appropriate greetings or requests are also conditioned by (shared) knowledge and attitudes about social relationships (e.g. of social position, hierarchy, group membership and so on).
- 3 What has been formulated in the terms of a socio-cognitive study of knowledge and attitudes about pragmatic appropriateness may also be defined and further elaborated in a *social and cultural account* of pragmatic appropriateness. Here speakers and hearers are no longer merely the abstract Ss and Hs of traditional speech act theory, but social members of groups, communities, organizations, societies or cultures. Ethnographic research has shown that there are a vast number of culturally variable social constraints on who may accomplish which speech acts, to whom, when, and in what situation. Age, gender, class, position and interpersonal relationships may be involved in this *socially or culturally appropriate* accomplishment of speech acts or other verbal acts.

These questions and goals require the development of a cognitive and social-psychological, sociological and ethnographic pragmatics, that is, a broader, empirical account of the core criterion of any theory of (speech) acts, viz that of *appropriateness*. The 1980s and early 1990s showed several developments towards such a broader, empirical pragmatics, although the boundaries with other areas of linguistics, discourse analysis or conversation analysis have increasingly been blurred in the process.

Cognition and Mental Models

Yet, despite these attempts, we are still lacking a detailed theory of the mental processes and representations involved in pragmatic interpretation, that is, in the assignment (production, comprehension, etc.) of speech acts, illocutionary function of similar acts or interactions in real, ongoing text and talk. The cognitive psychology of text processing has largely focused on the mental management of form and meaning, but largely ignored the

processing of contextual functions and actions of text and talk. In this approach, it has paid extensive attention to the role of event or situation models in episodic memory as the mental basis of interpretation and coherence.

However, it hardly theorized the equally relevant mental representation of context, i.e. of goals and other systematically relevant properties of language users in communicative events. I therefore repeatedly urged the elaboration of a theory of *context models*. In such models, language users mentally represent their (possibly biased) interpretation of the ongoing situational context, such as their wants, wishes, mutual knowledge, aims, goals, and so on. These are precisely the usual categories for the classical (abstract) definition of the appropriateness conditions of speech acts. This means that the production or comprehension of speech acts as accomplished by text, and talk is based on the respective context models of participants. Since these models may differ, pragmatic misunderstanding (and hence negotiation etc.) will be the result.

Thus, whereas the semantics of discourse is controlled by mental models of events talked about, that is, by cognitively represented referents, the illocutionary and other interactional properties of discourse are rooted in the specifications of context models. Such context models also account for the mental basis of stylistic and other surface structure variation due to context, as well as the structures of impression formation and politeness. Thus, it is obviously not, as such, the age, position or class of the participants that 'determines' formal or informal language use (pronouns and other structures of deference), but the way the speech participants mutually categorize, understand and represent each other in their minds, that is, in context models. In sum, context models regulate the complex communication management between speech participants, including the appropriateness of speech acts or interactional moves and strategies.

Social Cognition

Context models regulate the contextual specifics of text and talk, including their pragmatic conditions and consequences. As is the case for the construction and continuous updating of event models, however, context models also need to be built from instantiated elements of *socially shared mental representations*, that is, of knowledge and attitudes. Speech participants not only are able to manage their speech acts and speech act sequences in specific contexts, but also have general, socio-culturally shared, taken for granted (or challenged) knowledge about pragmatic rules, constraints or norms. Some of these have been formulated in abstract terms in traditional speech act theory. However, we now need a more detailed analysis of the actual mental representations of such knowledge. Indeed, do members of a community share conversation or politeness scripts, request

and defence scenarios, or similar knowledge structures that regulate their interaction, and, if so, what do these structures actually look like?

Whereas these questions are in line with much research in the new cognitive science of text and talk, it is usually ignored that mental models also have *evaluative* dimensions. That is, among the appropriate conditions of speech acts we also find evaluative propositions or opinions of speech participants about each other and their respective (speech) acts. Attacks, reproaches, congratulations and many other speech acts or strategic moves presuppose such evaluations.

These specific, context-bound evaluations are, however, also instantiations or adaptations of general, socially shared opinions as organized in complex group attitudes and based on social and cultural norms and values. Thus, feminists may engage in critical (speech) acts based on their shared attitudes about chauvinist men (and sexist speech acts). Similar observations may be made for other attitudes presupposing evaluations of and by social groups and their position and interests.

Threats may be 'appropriately' enacted as moves in a strategy of power abuse of (members of) dominant groups directed against (members of) dominated groups. This means that such groups also need to represent themselves in such a position and relation, as well as the evaluative opinions associated with such a relation, for instance in prejudiced attitudes. The socio-cultural appropriateness (acceptability) and factual success (acceptance) of many speech acts may thus depend on socially and historically changing social cognitions.

Ideologies of gender, race and class, among others, may further organize such specific attitudes. These in turn regulate the particular contextual opinions of speech participants about each other and each others' (speech) acts. Racist ideologies may thus condition the self-serving legitimation (or dissimulation) of power abuse of speech acts that enact inequality: threats, menaces, warnings, intimidation, attacks and so on.

Unfortunately, the study of these shared social representations and the role they play in the formation of context models, and hence in the social 'foundation' of speech acts and their contextual appropriateness, has barely begun. Yet, it may be obvious that we here encounter a crucial component in a broad, empirical theory of pragmatics.

Social and Societal Structures

In the brief account of the socio-cognitive basis of pragmatics it has already been suggested that groups, group relations and group membership are involved in the general (abstract) and specific (concrete, contextual) appropriateness of acts and interaction. This means that such a socio-cognitive account must itself be based on a broader theory of *social and cultural structures and relations*, both at the micro level of everyday interaction, as well as at the macro level of societal organization.

Much conversation analysis and ethnography has examined the first, micro-dimension. Theories of politeness and impression management, among others, deal with this important 'local' aspect of the strategies of appropriate interaction.

Obviously, we also need a broader, structural account. Power relations and inequality are not merely locally enacted, managed or negotiated, but also (known, presupposed to be) structurally embedded in society. What (speech) acts may be appropriately performed in public places, in offices, on the job, in institutions, and by members of specific social groups or formations is similarly regulated by (knowledge and attitudes) about such structural relationships. Thus, speech acts of deference or politeness are not just locally engaged in, but may be embedded in the relative, context-independent positions of such group members, as is trivially the case for subordinates relative to those in charge, the young towards the old, and (at least in some cultures) of women with respect to men, the poor towards the rich, or black towards white.

Social and cultural pragmatics thus needs to spell out the details of such interrelations between societal (group, institutional) structures, on the one hand, and the ways these are legitimated and reproduced (or challenged) by the (speech) acts of members in specific situations. That is, pragmatics also needs to address the well-known issues of the macro—micro divide (and its bridges) in the account of society and culture.

Conclusion

In this postscript a number of developments and, especially, tasks of a new pragmatics have been formulated. It argued that we first of all need to agree what pragmatics is specifically about within the broader field of a theory of language use, text and talk. We suggested that such a task be rather specific, so as to avoid the common confusion with other accounts (e.g. in socio- and psycholinguistics) of language 'use', viz the analysis of speech acts and other verbal acts and interaction structures, but only at the level of act analysis.

It was further argued that pragmatics should study such acts within the broader domain of discourse, and not be restricted to isolated sentences. Speech acts usually do not come alone, but appear as functional elements in locally and globally coherent sequences. The appropriateness of (speech) acts also resides in their 'position' in such sequences, as well as the overall coherence defined by macro speech acts.

Following the more abstract accounts of speech acts and speech act sequences, however, we also need a more empirical approach. Here the actual production, comprehension and accomplishment of speech acts by language users as thinking and acting group members need to be accounted for. Thus, we need to examine in much more detail which mental strategies and representations are involved in pragmatic 'interpretation'. It was

proposed that we base such an account on a theory of context models in episodic memory.

Such models are, however, instantiations of more general, socially shared mental representations such as knowledge, attitudes and ideologies. These represent the group-based, self-serving beliefs and opinions of social groups that also impinge on the specific beliefs and opinions of speakers about each other and each others' speech acts. Many speech acts are (found to be) socially and culturally appropriate only in relation to such social representations.

And finally, such a socio-cognitive account by definition interfaces with an even broader social and cultural theory of (speech) acts in terms of groups, group relations, social position, institutional organization, and societal and cultural structures as a whole. Thus power relations are routinely enacted by, sustained, legitimated and challenged by specific speech acts. No fully fledged theory of (speech) acts may ignore these broader, macro-level, conditions and consequences of speech acts, nor their relations with the actual contexts of ongoing interaction.

Indeed, the success of a future pragmatic theory depends on whether we will be able to link these respective domains of pragmatics explicitly. Only then will we also be able to cross-link pragmatics with the other main components of a theory of language use and discourse, such as those of grammar (phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics), style, rhetoric, schematic structures, and other structural properties of text and talk, as well as the cognitive and social theories of their processing and enactment in social situations and social and cultural structures. Pragmatics is merely one task in such a vast undertaking.