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Introduction

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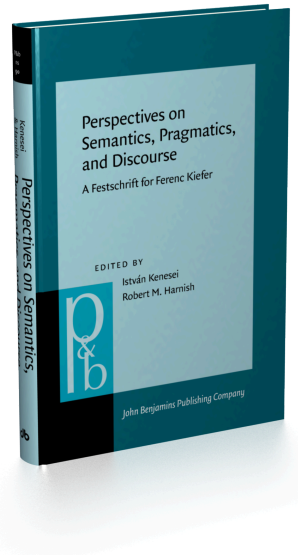

Pages ix–xviii of
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Introduction

1. The structure of the book

1.1 Pragmatics in Grammar

Most introductory textbooks take their readers by the hand and lead them through the maze of language by a path that has distinctly marked clearings or stations called Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics. This approach gives the impression of levels of grammatical description frozen into separation, with little chance of integrating their achievements. While it may be useful to point at the different natures of various linguistic phenomena, in actual research work such a segregation has long proved untenable.

Ever since the early days of Generative Semantics, reference to or even reliance on the pragmatic aspects of language has acquired importance in grammatical analyses. The implementation of the interpretation of, for instance, questions as requests or statements was a direct consequence of the emergence and attraction of speech act theory, and more results of inquiries formerly regarded to be purely pragmatic quickly found their way into formal grammatical theories. One example is the treatment of a subclass of deictic expressions, viz. pronouns. While their extralinguistic reference is still within the domain of pragmatics, their coreferential relations, i.e. the properties that define whether they can have common reference with another expression, are to a great extent accommodated in syntax.

But there are more traditional examples that can be quoted for the inclusion of pragmatic information in grammatical descriptions. Mood is after all the expression of the speaker's relationship to the event or the proposition. Tense represents the relationship between speaker's time, event time and reference time. A number of adverbial phrases also embody speakers' attitudes to the events depicted in the rest of the proposition. Theme-rheme divisions grammaticalize the speaker's view of the information conveyed by the proposition by means of order and/or prosodic devices.

There is thus no novelty in arguing for the role of pragmatics in the formal subsystems of grammar. But what types of pragmatic information can or must be accounted for in the other modules of grammar is a matter far from being settled. The articles in the section entitled "Pragmatics in Grammar" focus on problems of this nature.

In addition to the traditional problems of deixis, new data also highlight the necessity to speculate on how to reconcile pragmatics and syntax. Absentive constructions, that is, grammatical devices serving to express the absence of the subject are found in several languages, and their properties can be accommodated in a unified model (see de Groot's paper). Speakers' attitudes are also responsible for more (or less) than properties of full propositions: they arguably must play a role in the meanings of diminutive and augmentative derivational affixation (see Dressler & Merlini Barbaresi's paper). Hedges are a different device for speakers to weaken their commitment to the truth of the proposition put forward; although their semantic and pragmatic properties are worth studying, their syntactic characteristics are perhaps even more interesting (see van Riemsdijk's paper). The problems of the grammaticalization of mood and related notions is particularly interesting in such lesser-known or studied languages as Tsez and Bezhta (see Comrie's paper).

1.2 Semantic compositionality and pragmatics

In his pioneering work on the foundations of semantics, Frege proposed that the semantics of a complex expression (sense and reference) is a function of the sense and reference of its constituents, together with their syntactic mode of construction. Much research has been devoted to the exact nature and extent of compositionality in natural language. In some cases the issue is the identity of the constituents involved in the composition, and whether one form is separate from another, or just a shorted version (see Wunderlich's contribution). One traditional problem area has been the possessive. For instance, *John's book* seems to mark any number of different relations between John and his book: he owns it, he wrote it, he is holding it, etc., and this raises the issue of the argument structure of possessive constructions (see Partee & Borschev's contribution). Another problem area involves such predications as *The leaf is green* or *She's a good dancer* — are these true if the leaf is a Japanese maple painted red or she is a dancer and good? (See Gendler Szabó's contribution.) The issue of compositionality also has importance for pragmatics, because if compositional mechanisms are defined over syntactic and semantic structures, then pragmatics

might be thought to begin where compositional semantics ends. The semantic–pragmatic distinction has been notoriously hard to define. This is partly due to the fact that the word 'semantics' comes to us from two traditions: the logical tradition and the linguistic tradition. According to the logical tradition, semantics has to do with reference and truth. According to the linguistic tradition, semantics has to do with meaning encoded in the language. Most researchers agree that pragmatics involves language use and contextual information, and it is easy to see that reference and truth can involve contextual information (e.g. deixis), and that encoded meaning can involve facts of use (e.g. grammatical mood). Again, how to draw the semantics–pragmatics distinction? One strategy has been to expand the conception of semantics to include what is said, while pragmatics is confined to what is implied or implicated. This pushes the problem back to circumscribing what is said (vs. what is implied) and here facts about lexical content, syntactic structure and compositionality can be used (see Bach's contribution).

1.3 Logical structures and universals in semantics and pragmatics

Since at least Aristotle, researchers have tried to relate principles of logic and logical structure (unusually conceived of as universal) to the structure and use of natural language. The use of logic in the study of natural language has taken many guises. One project has been to find logical structure in the syntax of sentences, and work on 'logical form' (LF) illustrates this application. Another project has been to apply methods and definitions in logic to linguistic theory. In some cases even paradoxes in logic can be used to get at general issues (see Burton-Roberts' contribution). Another project is to uncover and systematize relations in the logical vocabulary of languages by finding common patterns of semantic entailment and pragmatic implications (see van der Auwera & Bultinck's contribution). Still others inquire into the possibility of extending the logical analysis of sentences beyond the traditional fact stating class of assertions, and see what logical relations might obtain between e.g. imperatives and interrogatives (see Harnish's contribution). Finally, there is the Leibnizian extension of the idea of universal logical structure (going back to Aristotle's *Categories*) to an innate universal class of predicates out of which all semantic structures can be constructed, and which can form the basis of translation (see Wierzbicka's contribution).

1.4 Dialogue and thematic structure

Since Georg von der Gabelentz in the late 19th century called attention to another dimension in which sentences are articulated, linguists have been captivated by problems of thematic organization, to pick one name for what has been termed as psychological subjects and psychological predicates by Gabelentz and in Germany, functional sentence perspective in the Prague School and in Slavic linguistics at large, theme–rheme relations in Britain among others, and topic–focus division in current grammatical analyses. While there is general agreement regarding the applicability of thematic organization to discourse, it is also universally acknowledged that individual languages differ in the particular mechanisms that implement these distinctions, constituting the grammatical problem of cataloguing and accounting for the means to express them. The question for a pragmatic analysis to address is why and how this apparatus is employed in actual or ideal discourse. Kerstin Jonasson's article provides one example for the former: it investigates the use of definite and indefinite referential expressions in focusing the reader's attention in one of Balzac's novels. Monika Doherty compares the use of clefts, i.e. the most frequent device in English to render focus, in the English translations of German short stories. Hajičová et al. provide a marking apparatus for discourse for computer applications.

Although the focus of recent linguistics, especially generative grammar, has been on sentences and their constituents, even a quick look at normal language use will reveal that we often speak in nonsentential units, i.e. we use either parts of sentences or we string sentences together to convey our meaning. But things get even more complicated when other people are involved, when we move, as some say, from discourse to conversation and dialogue. Here a speaker's contribution typically must mesh not only with what has preceded, but also with what is anticipated. The speaker will often formulate their contribution so as to highlight or focus on topics common to the dialogue, and most languages have devices available for this purpose — think of what has gone by the name of 'stylistic variants', e.g. active/passive constructions, cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions and so on. The study of discourse, conversations and dialogue covers a wide range of topics from cohesive mechanisms to turn-taking, to openings and closings, to social register. And to make matters even more complicated, not only are these communicative events taking place in a social matrix, but the social matrix is itself embedded in a biological and physical matrix. And because of this it has been very difficult to get a clear picture of

how these various dimensions of discourse and dialogue might fit together. Some researchers have chosen to provide a statistical analysis of various types of discourse (see Allwood's contribution). Others have preferred to select a particular aspect of dialogue, and to dig down deeper and see how it works in detail. For instance, some work on speech acts in general, trying to determine their nature and their categories. Others work on how we implicate things (vs. saying them) — what the mechanisms of implication are, and what their variety can cover. Others are even more specific, choosing particular uses of language for detailed study (see Fraser's contribution).

2. Overview of the articles

Casper de Groot discusses the non-lexical or grammatical expression of absence in a number of languages. It is a special form of deixis, in which the event is displaced from the "deictic center", i.e. some location specified in the sentence. The crucial properties of the Absentive are as follows. (i) The event has to be remote, (ii) it must be stative, (iii) it cannot be directional, and (iv) there cannot be direct perception of the person involved. These characteristics are then accounted for in a framework of Functional Grammar

Wolfgang U. Dressler and **Lavinia Merlini Barbaresi** contend that pragmatics is a superordinate of semantics. They ground their arguments in the analysis of diminutive and augmentative derivational affixes by claiming that in addition to the semantic features corresponding to 'small' and 'big', respectively, they contain the pragmatic feature of 'fictive', specified as 'non-serious'. Their evidence is taken from cross-linguistic data, early language-acquisition, and diachrony.

Henk van Riemsdijk shows clear cases in which pragmatics 'intrudes' into syntax. Examples like *(he is) far from innocent* or *(he bought) what he took to be a guitar* must be represented in canonical syntactic tree structures with *far* constituting the head and the so-called 'transparent relative clause' as a headless relative, although the meanings conveyed are thus not captured accurately. To circumvent this difficulty he suggests that in contrast to previous proposals that were based on deletion, duplicate structures be posited on the analogy of botanical grafts. This way the principal meanings *(he is) innocent* or *(he bought) a guitar* as well as the hedges they are embedded into can be more accurately analyzed.

Bernard Comrie examines apparently identical constructions in two closely related Northeast Caucasian languages and shows that even under such conditions the semantic fine structures may very well differ. Affective verbs in one language can be used in the imperative mood (as in the Bezhta equivalent of 'Love your enemies!'), but in the other their imperative forms are ungrammatical and alternative strategies must be made use of, such as the causativization of the verb.

Dieter Wunderlich pays his tribute to Ferenc Kiefer by confronting the intricacies of comparative constructions in his native language, Hungarian. Since in contrast to other languages, Hungarian has two distinct syntactic devices to express comparison, a case-marked phrasal one and a clausal one, he addresses the question whether there is any semantic difference between them. He concludes that the phrasal comparative evokes no generic reading, whereas the clausal comparative expresses generic quantification with the comparative in its scope. Having more than one option is found to be felicitous because it helps this language escape the constraints imposed by clausal constructions and the syntactic clumsiness of phrasal expressions encountered in other languages.

Barbara Partee and **Vladimir Borschev**'s problem is formulated along similar lines: does the genitive phrase *John's* in possessive constructions like *John's team, a team of John's,* and predicate possessives like *That team is John's* have unified or distinct analyses? Does the difference of interpretation arise from the way the genitive phrase combines with simple nouns (as *team*) and relational nouns (as *brother*)? The case is further exacerbated by the fact that while a number of languages have possessive modifiers along with argument-like possessives, there may be fine semantic differences between their uses in the individual languages. Interesting puzzles of putative elliptical constructions arise in predicate possessives as evidenced by the presence or absence of case and number agreement.

Zoltán Gendler Szabó investigates the semantics of certain adjectives and the consequences for the principle of compositionality: the meaning (i.e. the propositional content) of a complex expression is determined *only by* the meaning of its constituents and the manner in which they are combined. As formulated the principle excludes the possibility that context, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, plays a role in determining meaning (content). In other words, there are no 'context-dependent' expressions, expressions that have different contents when uttered in different contexts. After disposing of

'illusory' examples of content dependence, and noticing that the phenomenon of indexicality is a kind of context dependence, the author formulates the Context Thesis: the content of an expression depends on context only insofar as the contents of its constituents do. Is this correct? Examples such as *The leaf is green* seem to suggest that in the context of sorting leaves for decorations it could be true of a red leaf painted green, but not in the context of a botany lesson — and perhaps this extends to other kinds of adjectives as well, such as *good* as in *good N*, where context seems to fix the function of N that is being evaluated as good. The author finds variables in the logical form of sentences with e.g. *green* and *good* which allow the Context Thesis (and hence one form of compositionality) to be preserved.

Kent Bach argues that there is a theoretically important notion of 'what is said' in uttering a sentence (vs. what is implied or implicated). The idea comes basically from what Bach dubs Grice's 'Syntactic Correlation Constraint', which requires what is said to reflect the elements of the sentence, their order and their syntactic character. This semantic and compositional conception of what is said is contrasted with more inflationary pragmatic notions, such as those popular in, for instance, Relevance Theory. It is then defended against objections based on psychological, epistemological and linguistic evidence for the intrusion of pragmatic factors into what is said.

Johan van der Auwera and **Bert Bultinck** continue the work of Horn and earlier work by the authors on the semantic and pragmatic parallels between modals (necessity, possibility), quantifiers (all, some) and connectives (and, or, not). The starting point of subsequent work on these notions was the original 'Aristotelian Square of Opposition' for quantifiers (with its relations of contradictory, contrary, subcontrary and subalternation), which has subsequently been extended by various authors to other notions and in some cases recast as three, five or six sided figures. The present paper explores the similarities between modals, quantifiers and conjunctions at the cognitive level, and differences between them at the lexical — semantic level. These relations are captured in a three-level scalar square, which nevertheless shows that some differences in potential for lexicalization remain.

Noel Burton-Roberts hangs, as he puts it, a heavy coat on a small hook. The hook is Grelling's paradox and the coat is linguistic theory. Grelling's paradox, you will remember, is often formulated by first defining *autological* as 'true of itself' and *heterological* as 'not true of itself', then asking: is *heterological* autological or heterological? If it is the one, its the other, hence the paradox. After

subscribing to Ryle's dissolution of the paradox, the author pursues the issue deeper into linguistic territory: into issues of use and mention (quotation), and especially of the type — token distinction and its relation to representation in general.

Robert M. Harnish proposes seven conditions of adequacy on a theory of sentential (vs. verbal) mood (the conventionalized pairing of sentence structure and speech act potential). He then turns to one neglected aspect of Frege's philosophy of language, Frege's remarks on mood and communication for interrogative and imperative sentences. A 'minimalist' interpretation of Frege is first offered for these non-indicative sentences. But it is found to have problems and a more systematic 'extended' interpretation is proposed. First simple sentences are investigated, then truth functional compounds of various types are examined and compared with embeddings of imperatives and interrogatives.

Anna Wierzbicka argues for 'Leibnizian' linguistics as distinguished from the more dominant 'Cartesian' linguistics, though, as she notes, they are not incompatible. For instance, both Cartesians and Leibnizians see language as "a mirror of the human mind" that will tell us much about human nature. Leibnizian linguistics involves the idea that there is an innate universal alphabet of concepts or "conceptual primes" that can be used to construct the semantic representations of any sentence in any language. It focuses on the study of words (not sentences), and is centered on meaning and translation (not syntax). Leibnizian linguistics involves the trial and error construction of definitions from many languages and the inspection and reduction of the necessary primitives. The author reports the preliminary results of 'Natural Semantic Metalanguage' (NSM) project in uncovering about 60 such primitives.

Kerstin Jonasson's interest is centered on focalization, that is, the way in which authors are introduced and referred to in the course of a narrative. Focalization can be external, that is, the reader is given information only of the protagonist's identity, or internal, in which case the character's thoughts and feelings are also made known. Jonasson takes the first part of one of Balzac's novels as her corpus and investigates the French author's techniques of referring and shifting points of views, a method of changing the narrative perspective or the deictic center. It is by this method, she argues, that Balzac arouses the empathy of the reader with one or another of his characters, or the narrator himself, for that matter.

Monika Doherty examines the translations of clefts between English and German. Clefts are a convenient, and sometimes the only, means to express focus, a common device in discourse to highlight or contrast some expression in a sentence. In her view of a hierarchical structure of sentence meaning, elements of one layer can be in the scope of elements of another layer, made up of propositional meanings, illocutionary forces, and information structure. The close analysis of clefts sheds light upon the way in which elements highlighted stand in contrast with the preceding context, which serves the basis of further assumptions concerning the processing mechanisms that such constructions mobilize.

Eva Hajičová, Jarmila Panevová and **Petr Sgall** explain how the syntactic tagging of the Czech National Corpus is carried out, making use of a dependency based account of underlying, or tectogrammatical, structures. This is the second stage of the tagging procedure, itself divided into automatic and nonautomatic, or 'intellectual', tasks. The latter include recovery of deleted items in the text, the number and gender of various possessive adjectives and pronouns, and, hardly a surprise, topic–focus articulation, which shows again the crucial nature of information structuring in discourse.

Jens Allwood offers an overview of recent work on the statistical analysis of the lingusitic properties of 25 different social activities. A corpus of spoken Swedish of one million words served as the basis of the research, tagged for the relevant characteristics. The numbers and ratios relating to lengths of utterances, variation in vocabulary, parts of speech, etc., provide reliable data for further hypotheses and analyses.

Bruce Fraser investigates the puzzling phenomena of innuendo, that particular form of negative suggestion, which, unlike hinting, insinuating, suggesting etc., which can be labeled 'implying', has no verb (**He innuendoed that S.*). Probably the most famous example of innuendo is captured in the following old and often repeated joke: a captain notes in the ship's log "the first mate was drunk all day". The next day the first mate notes in the ship's log "The captain was sober all day". What exactly is innuendo, how does it work, and how does it fit into linguistics? The author reviews some of the previous work on innuendo, and finds problems with it. Most seriously, that the class of 'implied' phenomena is often said to be covert in the sense that a speaker's intention to imply is not intended to be recognized. The author suggests a different account based on the idea that innuendo is a restricted type of insinuation which itself is a type of implication, a communicative component of a communicative act that is itself intended to be recognized.

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