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PRAGMATICS, MICROPRAGMATICS, MACROPRAGMATICS

Abstract

The paper addresses the distinction between micropragmatics and macropragmatics. It is postulated that this differentiation, a consequence of a number of controversies surrounding the core field of pragmatics, does manifest a number of conceptual merits and methodological feasibility. The article also aims to elaborate on the four concepts central to the methodology of pragmatics, i.e. deixis, presupposition, implicature and speech acts, from an essentially 'micropragmatic' perspective, describing their contribution to the proposition of an utterance, its illocutionary force, and a wide range of effects the utterance may produce. At the same time, however, three relativities-regularities are indicated and presented as prompts for an integrated study of intentionality at the macro level of discourse/text.

Keywords

Macropragmatics, micropragmatics, deixis, presupposition, implicature, speech acts.

1. Preliminaries

If we set ourselves the daunting task of providing a 'critique-proof' definition of pragmatics, we would inevitably lean towards well-known generalizations like "pragmatics is the study of *meaning* by virtue of the *use* of language", "pragmatics is the study of *meaning* in *context*" or even "pragmatics is the study of all aspects of human linguistic behavior."² The reason these claims are hard to attack is not only that they involve the obvious difficulty to 'identify the enemy', i.e. to make sense of what is precisely meant by such indeterminate concepts as *context*, *use of language* or *meaning* itself. More significantly, they are safeguarded by their

¹ A version of this paper will appear in Wolfram Bublitz and Neal Norrick's *Handbooks of Pragmatics* (vol. I: *Foundations of Pragmatics*), Berlin / New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

² I am not quoting from a specific book, but giving a general overtone.

ability to fit in with virtually each of the contemporary approaches to pragmatics, and certainly with the two main schools of thought that have emerged, i.e. Anglo-American and European Continental (for a discussion of the two schools, see e.g. Huang 2007).

The former takes the *component* view of pragmatics, namely the view that pragmatics should be treated as a core element of a theory of language, on a par with phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. Thus, on the component view, pragmatics is assigned, similar to the other elements of the theory, a set number of objects of investigation. These usually include deixis, implicature, presupposition and speech acts. The congruence of the component view of pragmatics with the sample definitions of pragmatics offered above lies in the common assumption of a visible relation between what there is to study (for instance, the meaning of a linguistic item) and in what way (for instance, through context analysis of the uses of language involving this item).

The latter school, European Continental, treats pragmatics not so much as a distinct element of a theory of language, but more as a functional *perspective* on all aspects of our linguistic behavior, studied within any of the disciplines advocated by the component view – syntax, semantics, etc. Again, this approach is not inconsistent with the definitions provided. It only detracts from the apparent one-to-one correspondence between the object of the study and the method, to suggest that the object (for instance, meaning) can be studied across a variety of disciplines, and also, that these disciplines (be them syntax, morphology, etc.) can borrow from the functional, context-based approach, to reinterpret their original findings. In this sense, we can talk of the following order of investigation: first, there is a perspective (functional), then, different objects are approached to see if they lend themselves to analysis from this perspective and whether such an analysis could yield any extra output compared to the output from investigation within their source disciplines.

To get an idea of what is exactly meant by this ‘extra output’, consider the following example:

- (1) A: Never before have I seen such a cute girl working in our departmental library.

A traditional, syntax- and semantics-based approach to this sentence could be as follows (see e.g. Cole 1978; Lyons 1995). There is a class of time frequency adverbials which is *semantically* distinct from other classes by virtue of its members possessing an explicit marker of negation or being conventionally considered ‘negative’. “Never before” belongs to this class, as do “seldom”, “hardly ever”, etc. *Syntactic* rules allow extraposition of such ‘negative adverbials’ (with the simultaneous inversion of the subject-predicate order), for extra emphasis

on the speaker's commitment to the truth of the predication, which, in our case, amounts to A's stressing his absolute certainty that a girl that attractive has never worked in this particular library before. An account of this kind does, basically, three things: (i) it defines the meaning of the proposition (only) as compared to the meaning of the 'unmarked' version (i.e. without the extraposition); (ii) it prescribes what other extrapositions are grammatically possible, given the semantic characterization of the class (of 'negative' time adverbials); (iii) it prescribes the changes to the word order of the sentence (i.e. subject-predicate inversion) that have to follow the extraposition. Thus, in repetitively addressing the relation between the semantic paradigm of lexical choices available for extraposition and the syntactic form of the sentence, the account leads to little more than the observation that the speaker has considered a set of lexical-structural alternatives, choosing one of them to put, for *some* reason, extra emphasis on the proposition expressed. It does not ask what this reason might be and, consequently, how different reasons and intentions could result in different 'meanings' of the sentence.

Of course, an attempt to answer these questions needs concentrating on not merely the structural relations, but mainly on the speaker, the language user who interprets each such relation in terms of the rhetorical choices he or she possesses in his or her interaction with the hearer, to obtain a specific goal (whether involving an action or not), under specific conditions, which go far beyond the linguistic form as such, and are usually referred to as 'context' (which is where our 'sentence' becomes an 'utterance'). Context is notoriously hard to define (or rather, delimit, at least in the sense of saying what context is *not*) (e.g. Bezuidenhout 1997, 2002; Elugardo and Stainton 2004; Recanati 1993, 2001, 2004), but we can attempt the following approximation: it is the back catalogue of situations and utterances and their (physical) consequences, determining the (function of) the current utterance, a combined (or even common) prehistory of the speaker's and the hearer's (linguistic) experience, including a set of expectations the speaker (pre-)possesses with regard to the effect of his or her current utterance. In such a mass of factors, linguistic and extralinguistic, the linguistic factor of 'co-text' (seen as part of context (cf. Mey 1993: 181-4)), is not to be ignored – it is important that the current utterance is understood relative to utterances (the speaker's and/or the hearer's) that have preceded it or are expected to follow it, in a given discourse situation.

Thus, if we take a 'pragmatic' inquiry into meaning (of any linguistic unit, but most commonly, sentence-utterance) as necessarily involving context, and if we accept to approach meaning in terms of a paradigm of different, context-dependent intentions/functions giving rise to a paradigm of different effects, then, in the 'pragmatically enriched' analysis of (1) we generate the 'extra output' by looking at the utterance through a number of questions about its possible context. First of

all, do A and the hearer know each other well, and in what capacity? Have they ever talked about the library staff and, specifically, the female staff? What is the 'prehistory' of A's (and his hearer's) assessment of physical attractiveness of the female staff who, as is implied, used to work in the library before? How far do A and the hearer agree in their views, in this situation and in general? Do other libraries A and the hearer know tend to employ attractive females? Is there any stereotyping, whether positive or negative, involved: for instance, do A and the hearer believe, even subconsciously, that the concept of a mundane, dull library job and the concept of beauty, freshness and young vigor (all of which are more or less salient in the description "cute girl") contradict each other? Of course, the answers can form into a number of different configurations, so let us assume just one specific set and see how the 'contextual' meaning evolves. Let us imagine that A and the hearer are both second year students of the department, that they are flat-mates, but there is little more they have in common. A considers studying a sad duty and prefers going to parties and socializing with girls instead; on the contrary, his hearer is a studying enthusiast, in fact a bookworm. As a result, living under one roof, they have been arguing a lot and now tend to disagree on virtually every topic that comes up. Obviously enough, A had only occasionally visited the library before. Recently, however, there has been a pile of books growing on his desk and, one day, his mate asks the reason. A replies with (1). Now, what do we make of it? Which of the factors do we relate to, and how extensively, to pinpoint the most likely 'compromise' between the intention (function) of the utterance and its effect, which, altogether, get us close to capturing its *meaning*?

Some of these contextual factors seem more productive to consider than others. For instance, it is of utmost importance that, having reviewed the context, we can presuppose a lasting, firm difference in opinion, or judgment predisposition, between A and the hearer. In other words, we can assume that no matter what kind of proposition comes from A, the hearer may be reluctant to accept it. This leads us to believe that (1) can be more than a simple, direct assertion, or giving a reason (why, all of a sudden, A has taken to 'reading'). One can argue that an extra force is present as well. Since A expects natural antagonism of the hearer, he is apt to use a language form which will, first and foremost, increase his commitment to the truth of the message and, possibly further on (indirectly), turn this increased commitment into a directive/persuasive device (to use the occasion of borrowing books as a pretext for regularly meeting the girl). The caliber of the directive force may vary, from a directive to accept the message as truthful (a "do believe me [my explanation]" kind of force), to an (indirect) directive for the hearer to test the truthfulness for himself (a "just go and see" force). Still, whichever of the A's aspirations is exactly at play here, the language form used (the extraposed "Never before") remains the primary lexical tool for increasing his commitment, same as the disagreement factor remains the primary premise for interpreting the target

intention. Altogether then, the way the function of the utterance is eventually determined can be described as a semantically/syntactically-pragmatic enterprise, with each of the domains making its own contribution: either by defining the autonomous lexical meaning (semantics), or by describing the options and the basic functional consequences of different sentence locations of items carrying this meaning (syntax), or else, and not least, by refining the syntax-functional perspective through a complex analysis of the (extralinguistic) context (pragmatics). The latter is exactly what makes up our added value, the ‘extra output’.

The other contextual factors pertaining to (1) seem to merely add to, or detract from, the core forces with which the function of the utterance is performed. If A ever mentioned the apparent unattractiveness of the female staff working in the departmental library and his remark met with a flat counter-opinion such as “Actually, I think they’re pretty”, the rationale for more directive/persuasive force of the current utterance is getting stronger. On the other hand, if negative stereotyping is involved, (1) can be deemed – in addition to its primary status of an ‘explanation’ – a manifestation of surprise, a Searlian expressive (cf. Searle 1975, 1979), without much directive impact. Of course, there’s plenty of other ways in which reliance on one of the factors, at the expense of others, profiles the core function(s) of the utterance. And, to extend the perspective, there are whole alternative sets of factors, or conditions, which determine inferences of radically different contextual meanings – we have only briefly looked at one such set. The existence of these alterations, however, does not undermine the mechanism of the pragmatic enrichment of analysis as has just been sketched.

It is as late as this point that we can first turn to the concepts of micropragmatics and macropragmatics, which will be dealt with in this article. Micropragmatics can be defined as the study of illocutionary force at an utterance level (a force traditionally assumed to reside in (a) speech act(s) responsible for enacting a specific function of the utterance – but, as will be argued, also traceable elsewhere or determinable in a different way than via investigation of the umbrella concept of the speech act as such). In contrast to micropragmatics, the focus of macropragmatics is not on the utterance, but on the series or sequences of utterances which form into discourses, seen as carriers of global intentionality of the speaker (i.e. the intentionality resulting from different speech act configurations, often referred to as *speech events*), and as producers of complex effects (whether on a single hearer or on a class of hearers). In proposing such definitions, I am purposefully assuming a significant overlap between the two domains: there is no micropragmatic analysis that would not provoke a macropragmatic extension of scope; similarly, there is no macropragmatic study that would not question, retrospectively, its micropragmatic components, thus prompting revision or modification of the original analytic track.

The distinction between micro- and macropragmatics seems to be, in a way, a product of three ‘infelicities’, which have been tackled so far in our discussion. The first has to do with loose definitional boundaries of pragmatics, the second with its rather undefined status as compared to other fields in linguistics, and the third with an apparent lack of formal rules according to which pragmatic analysis enriches e.g. semantic and syntactic considerations. If we take pragmatics to be – recall the first paragraph – the study of *meaning in context*, then context, as has been seen from the analysis of (1), is not limited in formal ways, such as the length of sentence/utterance or the amount of its ‘prehistory’. Contextual considerations which are used for determining the function and effect of an utterance may or may not stop within the boundaries of the language form used. Thus, we need a conceptual handle on the interface between smaller and larger functional units of discourse (e.g. speech act versus speech event), coded in smaller or larger forms (e.g. sentence versus text).

Secondly, the micro-macro divide reflects the controversy over the component and the perspective view of pragmatics. Better still, it reflects a possible consensus between the two views, which allows them to exist side by side. We can have a ‘pragmatic component’, understood as the set of whatever pragmatic functions (and methods of their investigation) can be assigned to language, along with a ‘pragmatic perspective’, that is the way these functions operate within the individual units of the language system and of language use, respectively. This approach, seemingly gaining ground over the past two decades,³ entails that we take into account both the macrocosm of all language, and the microcosm of specific manifestations of language, on which manifestations we project methods of investigation selected from the macro catalogue.

Thirdly, there is no way in which to formally characterize or delimit the pragmatic enrichment of semantic and/or syntactic studies – since one simply cannot delimit context, the primary source of such an enrichment. The more access to contextual (including co-textual) embedding of an utterance (recall (1)), or a series of utterances, the better profiled the meaning. Hence a tendency on the part of the analyst to pile up contextual clues and to add to the picture as much of the ‘prehistory’ of the discourse situation as possible (and feasible). But since access to contextual clues is each time different and invariably limited by a dynamic network of constraints (consider scripts of off-record cues in institutional meetings: in some countries they are eagerly handed over to linguists as co-text data for business discourse studies, in some only parts of them or none are

³ Apparently, this line is followed by most contributors to the Horn and Ward’s (2004) seminal handbook. It is also characteristic of the Elsevier’s *Journal of Pragmatics*. On the other hand, mission of the International Pragmatics Association and the aims and scope of its quarterly *Pragmatics* express mostly perspectivist views (see also Verschueren 1999).

revealed (cf. Ramallo, Lorenzo-Suarez, Rodriguez-Yanez and Cap 2009), the analyst can hardly ever claim to have exhausted ‘all context’ to determine the meaning. In this sense, the micro-macro dichotomy involves a relation between the minimal and the maximal contextual input into analysis, irrespective of its scope, i.e. the length of the language form under scrutiny.

The fact that the micro-macro distinction might be, as has been postulated, a result of a number of controversies surrounding the core field of pragmatics, does not detract from its conceptual merits and, mainly, methodological feasibility. I shall repeat what has been said earlier (and what will be documented in the rest of this article), (i) there is no micropragmatic analysis that would not provoke a macropragmatic extension of scope; (ii) there is no macropragmatic study that would not question, retrospectively, its micropragmatic components, thus prompting revision or modification of the original analytic track. Altogether, we arrive at a bottom-top-bottom cycle of ‘upgrades’ on the explanatory power of both micropragmatic and macropragmatic concepts. By way of illustration, consider a sample analytic procedure whose objective is to account for the pragmatics of speeches of the American cold war presidents (say, Harry S. Truman or Dwight D. Eisenhower). Imagine that a micro-level analysis of utterances making up these speeches points to a large number of deictic, referential and anaphoric markers, embedded in a multitude of direct speech acts. On the contrary, some other units or phenomena explored in such an analysis, for instance implicatures and presuppositions, turn out to be underrepresented. The next step the analyst takes is to classify these findings under controlling categories, such as speech events or macro speech acts, to establish the performative denominators and thus postulate global function(s) of the discourse genre (i.e. the presidential cold war speeches) as a whole. This macro-analytic task needs inviting the extralinguistic context, which informs and complements the linguistic observations. The likely content of the contextual considerations is that the cold war presidents address a world that is ideologically divided and respond to a need to clearly define to their audience the essence of this divide, which eventually leads them to construct the well-known ‘us and them’ opposition. Hence the rhetorical urge for directness and clarity, rationalizing the opulent use of indexicals or anaphoric expressions and banning most forms of implicit communication such as implicatures or presuppositions. Reaching this conclusion means that the analyst was able to use micropragmatic considerations as building blocks of a functional hypothesis, which he or she then tested against contextual factors (including his or her expert knowledge), in order to generate a macro-function of the genre. This is, roughly, how the analytic curiosity about regularities governing the salience of some phenomena observed at an utterance level can provoke the ‘macropragmatic extension of scope’. Yet, the ‘upgrade cycle’ does not stop here, there is still room for a reverse procedure, which has the macropragmatic findings relate to the

original component premises. Namely, the analyst may want to return to the bottom level of an utterance to look for more data, to further strengthen the macro conclusion(s). This may mean leaving out some of the now 'useless' forms (e.g. markers of implicitness) and delving deeper into those which have passed the context verification. As a result, further micropragmatic activity can follow, with a view to, either, narrowing down the study of the original parameters, e.g. deixis or direct speech acts, to only those aspects which are in line with the macropragmatic conclusion, or, possibly, identifying more bottom-level forms which are relevant, for instance more cohesive devices, relational propositions, etc. Which is where the first round of the bottom-top-bottom cycle ends, but, apparently, more rounds can still happen, with the micro-macro conclusions refining each other virtually ad infinitum. The existence of such a dialogue is probably among the most significant methodological arguments for having the two concepts, micropragmatics and macropragmatics, in the theoretical framework of the field.

The rest of this article is organized as follows. In 2., I elaborate on the four concepts central to the methodology of pragmatics: deixis, presupposition, implicature and speech acts. I spend most of the space discussing them from an essentially 'micropragmatic' perspective, describing their contribution to the proposition of an utterance, its illocutionary force, and the range and kinds of effects the utterance is able to bring about. At the same time, however, I give a foretaste of the macropragmatic approach, by pointing to three relativities-regularities. The first is the different potential each of the four concepts possesses to contribute to the description of function and effects of an utterance. The second is the fact that, in the process of describing an utterance, some of the concepts 'go together' and form more sophisticated methodological tools, better than others. The third is the different range of utterance contexts each of the concepts is able to account for, which opens up prospects for their hierarchical application in analysis.

In 3., I take these relativities-regularities as prompts for an integrated study of intentionality at the macro level of discourse/text. Addressing such notions as *speech event* and *macro speech act*, I revisit the potential of individual speech acts (considered analytically superordinate to deixis, presupposition, implicature), for combining in large functional units enacting discourse topics. I discuss the conceptual infiniteness pertaining to speech events in terms of their composition and hierarchy, and show the resulting relativity of the concept of the macro speech act.

2. A micropragmatic perspective on deixis, presupposition, implicature and speech acts – with some implications for macropragmatics

2.1. Deixis

There are at least two reasons why to start this section with deixis. First and foremost, if we accept that pragmatics deals with studying meaning (defined by the function(s) of language form(s) which people apply to obtain real-world goals) in the broadly conceived ‘context’, then deixis seems the concept that captures the relationship between the language form and the context in the most evident and direct manner. Deixis, derived from the Greek word meaning ‘to point to’, can be viewed as the main phenomenon whereby features of context of utterance (or speech event, as macropragmatic considerations will show) are encoded in sentences-utterances by primarily lexical (e.g. demonstratives), but also grammatical (e.g. tense) means. This brings us to the second reason, which is that deixis is among the most universal pragmlinguistic concepts. Deictic expressions must be present in all human languages, to serve the pragmatic needs of their users. The accomplishment of these needs always involves setting up a relation between the words people use and the context, hence there must be ‘pointers’ which indicate *who* utters the words to accomplish *what*, *when* and *where*.

Since such indications clearly bind together the person who makes the utterance, as well as the time and place where the utterance is made, most work on deixis has distinguished between the three categories: person deixis, time deixis, and place deixis (among the most useful overviews of research in deixis are Nunberg 1993; Fillmore 1997; Levinson 2004). Below I shall give credit to this work, adopting the tripartition and related concepts (e.g. deictic center), as the framework for discussion (except the final, ‘extra’ account of ‘discourse deixis’, meant to inspire a later return to deixis from macropragmatic perspective) and summarizing the major points as regards basic utterance functions of the three types. However, on top of it, there will be a critical evaluation of the explanatory power of deixis in (micro-)pragmatic research in general, and a tentative attempt to place the analysis of deixis (so far, within an utterance) at a specific level of pragmatic investigation.

2.1.1. Person deixis

Person deixis serves to identify interlocutors and the roles they play in a situation depicted by an utterance (and later, a speech event). Its grammaticalization occurs, primarily, in personal pronouns (which express the standard features of person,

number and gender) and vocatives (encoded in proper names, titles or kinship terms). The two types of grammaticalization of person deixis are illustrated in (2) and (3), respectively:

(2) *You* can leave the room now.

(3) *Mr. Smith*, you are kindly requested to proceed to Gate 9.

Both (2) and (3) allow some extra observations. (2) can be accompanied by the speaker's gesture (specifying which person from among a few, is permitted to leave the room), in which case we speak of a gestural use of deixis. If there is no accompanying gesture, but it is still possible to work out, e.g. from the conversational or monologic co(n)text, which person is referred to, the use of the deictic expression *you* can be described as symbolic. The same label applies if the *you* is to refer to the part of, or the whole group, but again, there is no physical indication and the referents get worked out from the context (or, possibly, just co-text). There are of course more complex interpretations of *you*, if we reach beyond the example above. Consider an utterance like,

(4) You don't want to live in Bronx.

and it becomes clear that the use of *you* is not only non-gestural, but in fact also non-symbolic, since there is hardly a way in which a specific referent could be established from contextual considerations. Thus, (4), having a general, impersonal reference, is an example of a deictic expression used non-deictically. It's quite interesting, though, that while such a use of *you* may render its analysis irrelevant to a standard account of deixis, its functional properties prompt an extremely productive discussion. The *you* in (4) invokes a spectrum of functions possibly larger than can be expected from the same deictic expression used in the 'typical', deictic manner. Depending on context, such functions can involve anything from a counter-advice to a warning or even a threat! Intriguingly, although (micro-)pragmatics cannot afford to leave deixis beyond its scope of investigation, the most interesting functional considerations, (possessing significant explanatory value for macropragmatic accounts as well), often rest in borderline or apparently marginal cases.

In (3), the vocative deictic expression, (whose formal properties are such that it refers to the addressee, but forms no part of the arguments of the predicate), is *Mr. Smith* and, as a call, is utterance-initial. Some other vocatives, (especially addresses), can occur later in the utterance, as in

(5) Excuse me, *sir*, we're about to close.

Both (2) and (3), (as well as (5)), exemplify the fact that deixis, (not only person deixis but in fact all types), is organized, essentially, in an egocentric way, the central anchorage point being the so-called deictic center defined by the spatio-temporal parameters 'I(speaker)-here-now' (cf. Lyons 1977). However, a word of caution is necessary here: in some languages, (e.g. Japanese or Korean), we encounter the so-called 'deictic projection'. This means that the speaker may choose, usually for politeness reasons, to speak about another person's attributes not from his or her own perspective, but from the perspective projected on the hearer. In such a way, the speaker omits to make an 'uncomfortable' evaluation him- or herself. Needless to say, a comparison of various kinds of deictic projections across world languages offers an extremely fertile ground for studies in pragmatic ways of encoding social distance and prestige (cf. Marmaridou 2000; Manning 2001).

2.1.2. Time and place deixis

Time deixis involves the encoding of points and periods of time relative to the moment at which the speaker produces his or her utterance. The deictic expressions that serve this function are adverbs of time and tense patterns, which two concepts can be illustrated, respectively, by *yesterday* and *is working* (a BE+*'ing'* structure marking a relatively short time span during which a particular present activity occurs). Of course, as could be expected from the description of person deixis above, temporal projections are possible as well, which pragmatic literature has acknowledged in a variety of terms, such as coding versus receiving time, or proximal and distal adverbs (cf. Levinson 1983; Fillmore 1997). Instead of going into these typologies, I shall point to the likely subjectivity of messages containing time deixis, a phenomenon often adding to the speaker's manipulative capacity. If, at 4:01 p.m. on Friday, I send an e-mail to my publisher which says,

(6) I will submit the manuscript on Saturday.

I have a good reason to expect the publisher (who works until 4 p.m. and only on weekdays) to read the e-mail no earlier than Monday and, seeing no attachment containing the ms. in the mailbox, to get puzzled – did I mean the Saturday that has just passed or the one to come? Of course, the rhetorical comfort of denying whichever interpretation stays with myself. In fact the 'comfort' starts the moment the Friday e-mail is sent out – I can feel free to submit the manuscript on whichever of the two Saturdays, as I see fit. There is no way I can be blamed for not submitting the ms. on the first of the two Saturdays, as I can always respond I took my addressee's perspective, (i.e. receiving time), not mine. All in all, such

considerations are obviously close to instances of implicature cancellations, defining interesting ways in which the utterance forces of deixis and implicature can potentially combine.

Ambiguities of this kind are by no means alien to place deixis, which is concerned with specifying entities' location in space relative to the location of the speaker and the hearer. Place deixis is usually expressed by demonstratives, (e.g. *this*), adverbs of place, (e.g. *here*) and motion verbs, (e.g. *go*, as opposed to *come*). Here, vagueness of reference is directly related to the number of deictic expressions a language possesses to indicate the distance between the deictic center and the referent. While English has only a two-member set of such proximal markers (*this/these-that/those*), there are languages, (e.g. Malagasy), with over four markers. Needless to say, the English system, albeit counting among the most common ones (cf. Diessel 1999; Levinson 2004), has to allow for acts of miscommunication, resulting from the perceptual relativities underlying expressions such as *this* or *that*. Another source of difficulty could be place adverbials, (viz. *on the right hand side*), often interpreted differently depending on whose perspective is taken – speaker's or hearer's. In general, however, the contribution of place deixis to the clarification of the positioning of entities which an utterance refers to is rather undisputed. This claim is endorsed, incidentally, not only by pragmaticians, but also by cognitive gestalt theorists, who have plausibly demonstrated that, in studying, (especially), place deixis, methodological contact between pragmatics and cognitive linguistics is nothing but natural (excellent examples are Lakoff and Johnson 1999; Marmaridou 2000).

2.1.3. Discourse deixis and a brief summary of (micro-)function of deictic expressions

The reason why the phenomenon of discourse deixis is tackled last in this section is that it invites studies at both the utterance and the discourse level, thus leading to macropragmatic considerations. Discourse deixis involves the use of a lexical item within an utterance, to point to the preceding or following utterances in the same discourse situation (speech event). The backward and forward reference can be illustrated by (7) and (8), respectively, where *already* refers to the earlier stretch of discourse and *here* anticipates the upcoming stretch:

(7) As *already* indicated, all languages possess deictics.

(8) *Here* goes my argument.

Seemingly, there is no rule as to how much textual distance should hold between the deictic expression and its referent; while it is reasonable to expect that the referent of *here* will be the immediately following utterance(s), the referent of *already* is surely not the closest, preceding utterance, but rather an utterance made much earlier in the unfolding discourse. This brings us to an important (though, as yet, tentative) conclusion regarding the pragmatics of deixis as a whole. By using a specific number of deictic expressions, the speaker is able to control the overt connectedness of discourse and, in consequence, its comprehension by the hearer. The presence of deictic markers in utterances – which make up a discourse situation where a specific topic is pursued – usually contributes to explicitness and clarity. On the other hand, the speaker may choose to withhold the use of deixis, to purposefully obscure his or her message. Finally, it is also possible to use a deictic expression with intent for ambiguity, as has been shown in (6). These observations pave the way for a possible analysis of the force of deixis compared to and contrasted with the kind of force characteristic of forms of implicit, rather than explicit, communication, (viz. presupposition and implicature). Naturally enough, the descriptive potentials will differ, determining, eventually, a specific hierarchy or sequence of the analysis. For instance, the deictic framework of an utterance may be sketched to establish the basic, lexically encoded relations between the referent(s) of the utterance and the ‘common ground’ of knowledge the utterance assumes to exist between the speaker and the hearer. Yet, a full account of these relations, (and of the utterance function(s) the relations contribute to), may need complementation from methodologies which deal with concepts that go beyond lexically encoded relations, (e.g. presupposition). Whatever outcome is reached from such an integrated analysis, does not, however, affect the general status of deixis as a pragmatic phenomenon worth analyzing at both an utterance and discourse level. The study of deictic expressions provides evidence that language is not a self-contained phenomenon, but that aspects of context are organized into grammatical systems, to support their users in accomplishing real-life goals.

2.2. Presupposition

While, indeed, many aspects of context are grammaticalized in utterances, many are not. Let us take this observation as a starting point for discussing presupposition, a phenomenon lying, apparently, at a number of intersections: the encoded and the assumed, the semantic and the pragmatic, (or even) the linguistic and the non-linguistic.

Presupposition can be defined as a mechanism whereby the speaker addresses a body of knowledge and experience, involving both linguistic and non-linguistic contexts, which he or she assumes to be common to him-/herself and the hearer.

The assumption of existence of the ‘shared’ knowledge (usually) makes it the case that the speaker does not assert it overtly in the utterance.

Not long ago, during my consultation hours, I received a phone call from our Rector’s secretary, urging me to show up at the Rector’s office immediately (it didn’t end up quite as bad as it sounded!). The call came about 30 minutes before the end of the consultation time, the remainder of which was supposed to be taken up by my Ph.D. student Anna, (who hadn’t come by then). Despite the circumstances, I felt rather uncomfortable about having to miss the appointment and, to leave behind an apology, I instructed my office-mate (A):

(9) Please tell Anna the Rector wanted to see me.

thus presupposing, more or less successfully, (at least) that:

- a. A would know there is such a person as Anna.
- b. A would know the Rector exists.
- c. A would know Anna is a Ph.D. student of mine and what she looks like.
- d. A would know Anna is about to come for consultation.
- e. A would pass on the message to Anna.
- f. A would do (e) with an intention of communicating my apology, as efficiently as possible.

Clearly, all these presuppositions have different anchoring in the form of the utterance, and in its linguistic, as well as non-linguistic, context. We will now take a closer look at the particular beliefs that are involved in each case. This will serve to unfold a discussion about, (i) the formal status of presupposition as an apparently semantic but eventually pragmatic phenomenon, (ii) the contribution of presuppositions to force and function of an utterance, and, most importantly, (iii) the descriptive power of investigating presupposition, both in itself and in relation to the other (micro-)pragmatic concepts, especially implicature.

Looking at the list of presuppositions legitimating the utterance of (9), it is easy to observe that only two of them, (a) and (b), are lexically encoded, by means of definite descriptions. The rest draw upon narrower or wider, but all of them potentially non-linguistic, contexts. Defining the contexts as ‘narrower’ or ‘wider’ has to do with the different amounts of knowledge and experience that are addressed in each case. To presuppose (c), I may simply recall a previous occasion on which I introduced Anna, as one of my Ph.D. students, to my office-mate. In addition, I may recall a situation in which my office-mate saw Anna enter the room in which I normally run my Ph.D. seminar, at the time when the seminar should begin. Note that these two assumptions involve knowledge which has been obtained through, respectively, linguistic and non-linguistic means – so it looks

like our view of presupposition is getting more and more complex. Still, (c) is only a foretaste of intricacies that underlie (f). To presuppose (f), I need to invoke a whole network of beliefs, which not only involve the knowledge carved out from the catalogue of my interlocutor's past experience, (whether linguistic or non-linguistic), but also link this knowledge to the proposition asserted explicitly in the form of the utterance. The presupposition (f) consists in a series of expectations: that (A) possesses all the knowledge embedded in (a)-(d), that he wants to and will be cooperative, that he is able to recognize (9) as a request to communicate an apology on my behalf; finally, that he is able to do it as well as I imagine I would. Interestingly, many of these expectations are only legitimate on the assumption, (which counts as a presupposition, too!), that (A) relates them to his own experience triggered by the mention of specific lexical items in my utterance. For instance, hearing about "the Rector", (A) may 'replay' his own thoughts and feelings experienced before a similar meeting he attended (for instance a belief that the meeting will be long enough to put paid to other commitments planned) – thus putting himself in my shoes. Which of course is a very useful prerequisite for communicating the function of my utterance exactly as expected.

Traditionally, the more a presupposition was linked with a lexical item or a linguistic construction generating it, (viz. (a), (b)), the more it was treated as a semantic phenomenon. The other cases were deemed 'pragmatic' and worth less attention precisely because of the absence of fixed language forms responsible for enacting particular presuppositions. This view has produced multiple typologies of presupposition, based on its embedding in some specific expressions named as 'presupposition triggers'.⁴ Examples of presupposition triggers could be *return* (assuming previous presence, in 'iterative presuppositions'), *manage* (assuming an act of (strenuous) trying, in 'implicative presuppositions'), or *know* (assuming the existence of a state of affairs predicated, as in 'John knows that Jim is bald', a 'factive presupposition'). A number of properties have been assigned to presuppositions, including cancellability (a possibility of denying a presupposition, usually by adding more content to the utterance where it occurs – just think what would happen if I added in (9) "..., do you remember her?"), and constancy under negation (amounting to the fact that negating a lexical item carrying a presupposition does not detach or change it in any way) (cf. e.g. Beaver 2001).

Interesting as these explorations may be in their own right, they offer little explanatory power compared to an integrated, global view of presupposition as a concept which should be studied from the perspective of utterance and discourse goals it serves. Such a view must be called 'pragmatic', because, as we have seen from (9), even though there are specific lexical items, (in fact, many), associated

⁴ Examples of battles over the status of presupposition are Stalnaker (1973) and Soames (1989), while Horn (1996) and Atlas (2004) offer well-balanced overviews.

with specific assumptions, (for instance, the assumptions of existence), their descriptive capacity does not expire within the structural boundaries of the linguistic expression. On the contrary, their significance goes much beyond as they are able to combine with primarily experiential premises, and thus successfully contribute to a network of contextual, often non-linguistic beliefs making up the entire load of knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer.

Evidently, one of the most prominent communicative goals served by presupposition, (and especially relevant to micropragmatic considerations), is economy of expression. Imagine that in communicating (9) I cannot rely on any shared assumptions and thus have to say:

- (10) I am expecting Anna, my Ph.D. student, soon and since I know you know what she looks like and I know that you are willing to pass on an apologetic message that I had to go to the Rector's and thus miss our appointment, please tell her the Rector wanted to see me.

—which still might not suffice to turn explicit all the presupposed information analyzed above! Although economizing on the linguistic form can be seen as an utterance goal in itself, it can also be seen as a contribution to a larger, utterance or discourse goal. This becomes clear in analyses of series of utterances containing consecutive acts of adjustment to shifting discourse expectations. If I am overweight and say “I started jogging after visiting my doctor”, and my confession meets with a blatant attack like “So it took you going to the doctor's to work out you should”, I can always follow a defense line in continuing, “Well, to be honest, I tried to do some jogging a few times before, but now I do it regularly”. Since the short form of the initial utterance makes it underdetermined in terms of meaning, the denial of the ‘only then and never before’ presupposition comes rather easy, contributing to the overall explanation and justification. This case obviously invokes some ‘fragmentary’ concepts, such as cancellability of presupposition, proving that, despite their apparent limitations in determining the global functionality of utterances, they could do some work at the very bottom level of description.

Furthermore, I advocate the ‘integrated’ approach to presupposition as it best inscribes into the very nature of all (micro-)pragmatic considerations, which target at establishing *why* people say things in utterances and why they say them the way they do. The answer to these questions hinges on the complex analysis of how people communicate their knowledge and experience understood in terms of not only what can be verified as true or false on the basis of matching language form with a state of affairs in the world, but also what their expectations, desires, interests, etc., are. It is this variety of aspirations that eventually defines utterance and discourse goals and such goals can only be studied in a conceptual framework which, while fragmented in its internal composition, (just as the ‘knowledge and

experience' is), recognizes a superordinate, controlling tenet. In the case of presupposition this tenet can be described the way I defined the essence of presupposition at the beginning of the current subsection: it consists in assuming a body of S/H-shared knowledge. And it seems that, for the purposes of handling the issue of speaker's *goals* pursued with the help of such an assumption of knowledge, we do not necessarily need to go into the semantic-pragmatic subdivisions.

Finally, note that it is only the concept of presupposition 'as a whole' that allows its apparently fruitful dialogue with the other areas of (micro-)pragmatic investigation. We have seen that presupposition comes in contact with deixis on the plane of its partial anchoring in lexical and structural forms. On the other hand, since many instances of presupposition can only be approached with reference to (non-linguistic) context, presupposition also reaches out in the direction of the implicit, constituting, in a sense, a shared knowledge 'prerequisite' for communicating messages, whose final destination is their inference by the hearer. Hence its feasible combination with the apparatus of implicature, a relation which will be addressed in the next subsection.

2.3. Implicature

To discuss this relation (as well as its methodological merits), I will first introduce the major concepts associated with the phenomenon of implicature.⁵ In doing so, I will refer to the classical work by Paul Grice (cf. Grice 1975, 1989). Despite several subsequent reformulations and additions, (let alone reductionist attempts),⁶ Grice's postulates continue to be considered the cornerstone of contemporary thinking in the area of how implicit meaning arises and how it is processed and interpreted. As such, they constitute a sufficient, highly feasible groundwork, for discussing not only the concept of implicature in itself, but also its relevance to all (micro-)pragmatic investigations into the force and function of utterances and their communicative goals.

On Grice's view, implicatures arise from breaches of some of the norms that underlie human communication and determine its efficient and rational character. Grice defines these norms in terms of the 'cooperative principle' (CP) and 'maxims of conversation'. The most common interpretation of the relationship

⁵ Unless indicated otherwise, my use of the term 'implicature' is synonymous with 'conversational implicature'.

⁶ See, e.g. Horn's (1984) Q-R model or Levinson's (2000) Q-I-M principles.

between the two concepts is that the latter is a sort of subdivision of the former.⁷ However, our considerations will show that seeing the maxims as complementing the CP, (rather than being merely constitutive of it), makes the account of implicature fuller in its explanatory value. The CP and the maxims are defined as follows:

The cooperative principle (CP)

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

The maxims of conversation

- a. Quality: Try to make your contribution one that is true.
 - (i) Do not say what you believe to be false.
 - (ii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
- b. Quantity:
 - (i) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
 - (ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
- c. Relation: Be relevant.
- d. Manner: Be perspicuous.
 - (i) Avoid obscurity of expression.
 - (ii) Avoid ambiguity.
 - (iii) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
 - (iv) Be orderly.

Let us see how speakers may go about observing or breaking these norms in view of the communicative goals they wish to perform. Imagine two students, A and B, both male, discussing their chances of passing an oral examination which is scheduled for the following day. Consider the two options for B's reply to A's question:

- (11) A: So, what do you think, are we going to pass?
 B (option 1): No, I don't think so.
 B (option 2): Yeah, and the sun will rise in the West tomorrow.

The interpretation of the option 2 reply can go a very long way towards understanding the phenomenon of implicature and all the (contextual) relativities

⁷ A representative quote comes from Huang (2007: 25): "He [Grice] called this overarching dictum the co-operative principle and subdivided it into (...) maxims of conversation (...)." "

that pertain to it. Eventually, it will also put us in contact with the concept of presupposition. But let us start from the basics.

Let us first assume that B's goal is to communicate that he does not believe they will pass. Then, option 1 does the trick explicitly. Option 2, however, seems inadequate since the reply contains a lexical marker of positive response ("Yeah"). Still, it is quite likely that A will take the response as negative. Such a conclusion is the result of a process of contextual inference, which binds together the concepts of the CP and the maxims of conversation. Though A is aware that "Yeah", standing alone, would mean positive response, he interprets it in conjunction with the proposition that follows, which is clearly negative. Interestingly, A bothers to interpret the proposition, even though it blatantly flouts⁸ the Quality maxim. The reason why A does not disqualify B as a "liar" is – and here is where the CP and the maxims 'complement' each other – that he believes in cooperation, a conversational 'good faith' on the part of B. This amounts to the belief that, while B might appear irrelevant, illogical, uncooperative on the surface of the exchange, he would not have said what he did without some, apparently deeper, goal, ('folded in' what we can now call the implicature in B's reply). Thus, A feels an obligation to set out on a road to decipher this goal, which means that he starts to collect (contextual) premises to unfold the implicature. First, he acknowledges that there are, essentially, two ways in which B could reply his question satisfactorily. One is a yes or a yes-like answer that predicates probability of passing the exam. The other is a no or a no-like answer, predicating a lack of such probability. Since the sun does not rise in the West and thus B's proposition is deemed improbable, A uses it as a contribution to the following, negative analogy: it is just as probable for A and B to pass, as is probable for the sun to rise in the West on the exam day. The recognition of this analogy allows the ultimate inference: B implies that they will not pass the examination.

This path of inference certainly suggests that A gets a much more productive prompt for his inference from the proposition B makes about the sun, than from the initial "Yeah", but the function of this marker should not be disregarded, either. First, as has already been mentioned, it contributes to a logical clash with the proposition and thus alerts A to the suspicion that the utterance as a whole might not be explicit. Second, and perhaps more importantly, it 'refines' the goal of B's reply in the eyes of A. Since A eventually recognizes that the proposition about the sun would, alone, suffice to convey the implied negative response, he is likely to assign it some extra function. This function, determined on the basis of a variety of contextual factors, (e.g. what consequences failing the exam might have

⁸ Other types of maxim breaches, though hardly conducive to implicatures, are 'unostentatious violations' and acts of 'opting out' of a maxim (cf. e.g. Huang 2007, ch. 2).

for A and B, how difficult the exam seems, etc.), could be, for instance, to give the negative answer an ironical or sarcastic overtone.

But, to delve deeper, isn't a different interpretation of B's option 2 reply possible? Let us imagine that B's goal is to suggest that, even though the probability of passing the exam is low, it still exists if there is luck or other circumstances that go beyond the 'hard', scholarly rationale. Then, the proposition B makes about the sun could be read, through analogy again, as implying the claim: "anything can happen tomorrow and thus we might pass, though it is rather improbable." However, this inference can only be expected if the 'shared knowledge' assumed by B prior to making his reply involves situations less typical than those embedded in presuppositions for the utterance meant as an unequivocally negative response. What needs to be assumed is, for instance, A's past experience with many events, actions, aspirations that *did* happen or *were* accomplished, even though, logically, they were not supposed to. Thus, the presupposition of A's optimism, shaped up as a result of such experience, is also a factor. Finally, what needs to be presupposed to put the utterance to work in the way of suggesting some, even marginal, probability, is A's intellectual capacity to be able to infer the utterance as intended. Since the interpretation B expects is, essentially, far from 'prototypical', there is obviously some tough inferential job facing A, which requires that A possesses faculties able to handle it.

In this way we have arrived at the highly significant relation that holds between the assumptions, (that is, presuppositions), made by speakers prior to saying things with some intended effects, and the interpretations (of implicatures) accomplished by hearers through complex inferences. These inferences involve a continual verification of what the hearer is told explicitly, against the underlying context, to determine whether the 'explicit' message is really explicit, or maybe 'implicit', in view of certain 'hints' salient in the speaker's utterance (such as the hint for analogy in (11)), and/or the hearer's own linguistic and non-linguistic experience. The hearer's experience is of course what the speaker tends to assume as part of his or her presupposition before the utterance is made, but we have to remember that it is the hearer who gives the ultimate verdict on whether such an assumption is correct. If, in (11), B expected his option 2 reply to be taken as a partly positive response and it turned out that A took it as an unequivocally negative one, it would mean that at least some of B's assumptions about A were unsubstantiated.

The argument above corroborates a naturally complementary character of the concepts of presupposition and implicature, and the clear methodological feasibility to apply both to the complex analysis of the process of encoding messages by speakers and decoding them by their hearers. This process is essentially a continuum, where making a presupposition serves to pave the way for the utterance before it takes on a linguistic form and where, later, the

presupposition may or may not be lexically encoded, (though it is always ‘pragmatically’ encoded). From this point, i.e. the point of making the utterance by the speaker, the recovery of the implicature(s) by the hearer may begin – of course, if the hearer senses a prompt to search for it/them. The inference of the implicature(s), whether in accordance with the speaker’s expectations or not, finalizes the whole process, thus ‘updating’ the status of the interaction and, potentially, creating a new basis on which to build presuppositions for further utterances in the exchange.

In discussing the methodological and descriptive contribution implicature makes to (studying) the micropragmatics of utterance(s), let us finally note that, since implicature is rarely encoded in language form,⁹ it involves a virtually indeterminable number of more or less complex contextual inferences. As such, it constitutes a valuable rhetorical tool whereby the speaker can control the flow of discourse, adapting his or her consecutive utterances to the current goals. This is due to a central property of implicature, namely cancellability (cf. Sadock 1978; Levinson 2000, etc), which makes it possible for the speaker to deny, at any moment of speech situation, any implicature he or she apparently created. We have seen this property as partly relevant to presuppositions, but it is implicature that permits its broadest manifestation. For instance, if B means his option 2 reply to allow positive interpretation, but A’s reaction is “So you’re suggesting we’re going to fail”, he can go on to say “No, what I meant is that we actually do have some chance, albeit small”. B can also deny A’s (whichever) interpretation if, for some reason, he wants to ‘play’ with A, play a trick on, or simply annoy him. Following on this note, many implicatures get cancelled for ironical or sarcastic effect, which is most visible in humor studies (cf. Attardo 1990, 1993). And, of course, another area where implicatures and their cancellations surface, is public, (especially political), discourse. Implicatures contribute to rhetorical safety of public speakers, who, on the one hand, wish to make statements that are universally acceptable, but on the other, want to retain the possibility of ‘refining’ or ‘fine-tuning’ these statements for hearers who hold different expectations of the meanings conveyed in them (cf. e.g. Cap 2008).

2.4. Speech acts

There is a reason why speech acts are addressed last in this section, thus bridging it with macropragmatic considerations. Discussing deixis, presupposition, and implicature, I have often related them to such concepts as ‘force’ and ‘function’ of utterance. I have shown that the conceptual frameworks of deixis, presupposition

⁹ We do not deal with ‘conventional implicatures’ here (cf. e.g. Davis 1998; Bach 1999).

and implicature make their own, (though often overlapping), contributions to understanding how utterance is built, what its referents are and how they are encoded, what assumptions are made before the utterance is produced; finally, what effects can be expected after it has been produced and what inferential processes determine these effects. In other words, I have been preoccupied with tracing the process of enacting *goal(s)* of the utterance, from the speaker's intention to realize its envisaged function via application of specific indicators of force (such as the logical clash in B's second-option reply in (11), eventually triggering sarcasm), to the hearer's successful (or not) recognition of this function and its results. A procedure that complex quite obviously needs a controlling, 'umbrella' parameter of description, one that is able to cover both speaker and hearer related aspects of the utterance function, and, while doing so, draw upon and thus systematize the particular contributions from the frameworks of deixis, presupposition, and implicature. The concept of speech act seems an excellent theoretical candidate to take up this task.

Virtually all theories of speech acts¹⁰ treat utterances and their functions in a rather consequential way; they assume that saying something amounts to, (at least partly), doing something, i.e., that words are (part of) deeds. The classical, Austin's and Searle's approaches are especially useful in elucidating the potential of speech act to bind together the speaker and the hearer related aspects of the utterance function. Since they also offer perhaps the most direct evidence of how the concept of speech act can integrate various properties of the other 'micropragmatic' concepts, they will constitute the main thread of our discussion.

The orientation of speech acts to both parties of a verbal exchange, as well as to their linguistic matter, is visible at a glance from the traditional distinction between the locutionary, the illocutionary, and the perlocutionary aspect of a speech act (see Austin 1962 and a review of Austin's ideas in e.g. Alston 1994). The locutionary aspect involves the production of a meaningful, (in its phonological, syntactic and semantic sense), linguistic expression containing a speech act. The illocutionary aspect has to do with the intention or the purpose the speaker has in performing this act. The perlocutionary aspect involves the effects the performance of the act brings about in the hearer. In sum, then, while the locutionary facet of speech act is the most 'objective' one since it concerns the language form of the utterance wherein the speech act is conveyed, the illocutionary and perlocutionary facets are indicative of a 'subjective' negotiation of meaning between the speaker and the hearer. In saying "It's hot in here" a speaker may be producing an (implicit) illocutionary act requesting the hearer to open the window, and the perlocutionary act (effect) might be that the hearer indeed opens it, but it might also be that he or she turns on the air-conditioning

¹⁰ Tsohatzidis (1994) is an excellent, objective overview.

instead. Thus, the illocutionary-perlocutionary relation does not only, in a way, mirror the complex process of meaning evolution as sketched at the beginning of this subsection; it also inscribes in the distinction between explicit (direct) and implicit (indirect) ways of communicating a speech act. Consequently, it invokes the notions of deixis, presupposition, and implicature, since they all situate themselves at some specific yet different points of the conceptual axis which links ‘what is said’ with ‘what is effected’.

We cannot really assess the methodological potential of the concept of speech act as a controlling category of description without at least briefly recapitulating its typology. Searle’s classical though still most influential typology recognizes five speech act classes: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives (see Searle 1975). Assertives, (represented by specific cases such as stating, claiming, asserting, reporting, thinking, etc.), express the speaker’s belief about some state of affairs in the world, as in “I think she’s pretty”. Directives (ordering, commanding, requesting, advising, etc.) represent the speaker’s attempt to make the hearer do something, as in “Turn the music off”. Commissives (promising, offering, refusing, etc., as in “I will help you”), express the speaker’s own intention to do something. Expressives (apologizing, congratulating, thanking, etc.) involve cases in which the speaker gives vent to his or her attitude or psychological state, an example being “Congratulations on passing the test”. Finally, declaratives (declaring, nominating, naming, etc.) are acts whereby the speaker exercises his or her authority to perform institutionalized changes in the state of affairs in the world, as in “I find the defendant guilty” or “I baptize you”. Of course, each type of speech act may be produced with or without the performative verb;¹¹ while in our account the assertive includes such a verb (“think”), the directive does not.

The overview provided may be extremely general, but it suffices to illustrate the two apparently major criteria¹² whereby the particular acts are assigned to the five classes. One such criterion is the psychological state expressed; while assertives express a belief, directives arise from a desire that something be done, etc. The other criterion is the type of relationship between the words used to produce a given act, and the reality which these words are supposed to reflect or influence.¹³ For instance, commissives influence the reality by predicating a change that will take place in it as a result of a future action performed by the speaker. On the contrary, assertives do not predicate any change, but they aspire to mirror the state of affairs ‘as is’, at the moment the speaker produces his or her

¹¹ The verb that names the action while performing in it (for instance, *name* in “I name this ship Queen Elizabeth”).

¹² Searle’s (1975) list includes four basic criteria (also ‘illocutionary point’ and ‘propositional content’).

¹³ The so-called ‘direction of fit’.

utterance. A particularly interesting case is the category of declaratives – these acts possess a uniquely bi-directional orientation, in that they both reflect and influence the reality. Take the example “I find the defendant guilty”. The moment a judge utters these words, a new reality is created and part of this reality is, for instance, a sentence that follows. Still, the judge cannot produce the act but for the pre-existence of a number of factors – for instance, the evidence collected, the setting where the verdict is delivered, etc. In this sense, the judge’s act inscribes in or refers to the reality as it has existed, in much the same way in which the speaker of “I think she’s pretty” refers to the (pre-existing) reality “she” is part of.

Arguably, the speaker’s psychological state and the relationship between ‘the words’ and ‘the world’ are two concepts which put us in contact with another tenet of the speech act theory, namely felicity conditions, i.e. the conditions that underlie a successful, logical, ‘felicitous’ production of a speech act (cf. Austin’s (1975) account of felicity conditions; see also Searle 1969). For example, a speaker cannot make a successful order if he or she does not sincerely want the order to be followed, or if he or she deems the hearer incapable of following it. These two felicity conditions are, furthermore, excellent illustrations of the connection that holds between the concept of speech act and the other ‘micropragmatic’ concepts – a relation that we have postulated at the very beginning of this subsection. Their awareness by the speaker at the moment of producing the act amounts to no less than making *pragmatic presuppositions* about the contextual aspects of the utterance that contains this act. Then, once the act is made, we ‘leave behind’ the speaker’s presuppositions and concentrate on direct or indirect inferences of the utterance’s function. This part of the process is naturally the domain of implicature studies, but, again, we do get some extra insight from the ‘cover’ framework of the speech act theory and, specifically, from its contribution to research in indirectness.

To receive this insight, we should first acknowledge the studies that attempt to draw a clear distinction between what is direct (speech act) and what is indirect (speech act). Traditionally (see discussion in Levinson 1983), directness of a speech act is determined on the basis of the correspondence between the three major sentence types (declarative, interrogative, imperative), and the forces typically associated with them, i.e. asserting, asking, and ordering, respectively. If there is an explicit match between a sentence type and its corresponding force, a speech act is considered direct. If no such explicit match can be established, the act is regarded as indirect.

Ironically, the greatest advantage of this distinction lies in its ability to almost remove one of the two concepts from our scope of investigation. As pointed out in several studies, most speech act usages are indirect (see findings by Bertolet 1994 and Holdcroft 1994), and indeed, even the apparently straightforward act of asking for salt in “Can you pass the salt?” is, formally speaking, indirect. This, however,

should not be discouraging. The orientation of the speech act theory to indirect usages is only reflective of the visible emphasis on indirectness that is salient in the other (micro-)pragmatic concepts; after all, our discussion of deixis, presupposition, and implicature has been mostly preoccupied with ‘hidden’ meanings. Thus, the speech act theory turns nothing but congruent with the other apparatuses. Moreover, it extends over all of their fields of application, from the stage where knowledge is assumed to get encoded in the utterance, to the stage where the utterance is interpreted. Conceivably, a single speech act can be ‘realized’ through recourse to an x number of presuppositions, an x number of deictic markers in the utterance, which the latter could produce an x number of implicatures. We are thus invoking a certain hierarchy of analysis, with speech act constituting a category superordinate over the other micropragmatic categories. At the same time, however, we are not considering the speech act the top-most variable of description; in order to account for discourses, rather than individual utterances, we are clearly in need of higher-rank concepts.

3. Macropragmatics

I rarely start my pragmatics seminar by reading out students’ names from the attendance list. Instead, I tend to ask:

(12) Hello, are we all here?

by which, in terms of the findings presented in 2.4., I perform two direct speech acts (greeting and asking), as well as an indirect act of requesting my students to reveal the names of the absentees. The speech acts involve a deictic anchoring (e.g. “here” recognized as classroom), presuppositions (e.g. of some students yet missing), and the indirect act involves a process of inference. This is, with some simplification, where a (micropragmatic) analysis of (12) can get us.

However, being myself the producer of (12), I can enjoy the privilege of stating with absolute certainty that, most of the time, I do *not* open the class with this utterance for the mere sake of greeting, asking, and requesting, as described above. That would be unlikely considering that (12) happens regularly and has thus become (a part of) expectable routine, a pattern that arises, usually, from some kind of a *larger*¹⁴ *intention*. Mark an analogy: If I follow the routine of buying each morning a newspaper (an action which involves micro-actions analogical to the acts defined in (12)), the ‘larger intention’ can be described as an aspiration to

¹⁴ Despite a temptation to the contrary, I save the term *global* for the discussion of macro acts.

stay updated with the current news. So, it appears, especially when we accept after speech act theorists that ‘actions’ and (speech) ‘acts’ are fundamentally interrelated, that there must be a larger intention which underlies (12) as well.

Indeed, the larger intention in (12) is *to begin the seminar*, making sure all things are in place for a productive meeting. This finding does not sound terribly original in itself, but we will take it as a starting point to show, eventually, that the *nature of intentionality* is such that it cannot be a matter of the individual utterance and thus the scope of inquiry must be extended accordingly.

The truth is that, more often than not, I may need to say more than just (12), to successfully begin the seminar. In fact, I may choose from an apparently *infinite* catalogue of other utterances, which are able to serve the same intention, to start the seminar. Some typical cases may be: “It’s getting late”, “Would you close the doors please?”, “Now, Adam, listen up, will you?”, “Right, shall we begin?”, “And the chalk is missing as usual!”, “I can’t remember when we last started on time”, etc. Apparently a diverse bunch, all these utterances contribute, in one way or the other, to realization of the principal intention. Interestingly, they do so while containing, technically, different speech acts (assertives, directives, expressives), whose force may also be different, direct or indirect. Consequently, each of these acts may accommodate a different input from deixis, presupposition, and implicature.

The routine such as above, involving speaker’s performance of individual speech acts, (which may in turn involve the other micropragmatic categories), in the service of a larger intention, can be defined as *speech event*.¹⁵ Speech events may contain, as we have seen, a potentially infinite number of utterances, depending on how many are actually necessary to carry out the intention. If, for instance, my seminar group enters the classroom discussing a just-finished exam in which they participated, I may be in for a longer stretch of talk to ‘set up the stage’ for my own class. Otherwise, it may take me a few short remarks to cover the technicalities and initiate the topic proper. Whatever happens in actuality is thus dictated, as anything in pragmatics, by context. A speech event can comprise just as many utterances (and speech acts) as needed to match the contextual preconditions. These utterances do not have to come in a monologic pattern. I may keep performing the principal speech event by producing a few utterances in a row, then pausing, then, possibly, reacting to a question that comes in the meantime, then resuming the monologue, etc. Thus, my performance is a genuine ‘discourse’ performance, which exists in and responds to a social setting, though, of course, some parts of it can mirror ‘textual’ units and their connectedness patterns.

¹⁵ cf. e.g. Mey 1993, 2001. Levinson (1983) uses the term ‘activity type’. Grundy’s (1995) proposal is ‘genre’.

Intriguingly enough, the concept of *infiniteness* resurfaces once we go on to discuss speech events as ‘building blocks’ for realization of a yet ‘larger’ intention. To readdress the case initiated by (12), the speech event which realizes the intention to successfully begin the seminar is not only an umbrella category for a series of individual acts, but may itself be subordinate to a larger discourse goal – be it, for instance, conducting a productive seminar meeting as a whole. This goal entails that an apparently infinite number of speech events are carried out ‘on the way’, from a speech event of providing a complex, multi-act explanation to a problem that has arisen during the session, to a speech event of assigning homework, which may again involve a number of component speech acts. The latter (event) may include: an expressive (e.g. reprimanding students for not completing the previous assignment), a commissive (e.g. threatening to fail students at the end of the course, if they keep neglecting their assignments), a directive (e.g. telling students to do a particular task for the next meeting), an assertive (e.g. describing a rationale for the task), etc. The variety and diversity of the acts involved is, here, no smaller than in the case of the speech event performed to begin the seminar.

In this clearly bottom-up fashion, we have approached the problem of the ‘uppermost’ or ‘global’ category of intentionality enactment, one whose promise would be to encompass all the subordinate intentions realized in speech events and their attendant acts. Such a promise is partly fulfilled by the classical concept of the *macro speech act*, which is, in Van Dijk’s words, “a global speech act performed by the utterance of a whole discourse, and executed by a sequence of possibly different speech acts” (Van Dijk 1977: 217).¹⁶ Still, while doing some useful job in the way of systematizing speech events, the macro speech act suffers from a problem of an inherent relativity as regards the range of its own operation. The definition of the macro act only corroborates the problem; we do not get to know how much is ‘a whole discourse’. Is it, to return to our example above, the whole body of discourse produced within the duration of the seminar, controlled by the global intention to make it a productive meeting? Then the relationship between the macro speech act and the component speech events (and their individual acts) seems analytically elegant. But, does this account exhaust the potential of the macro speech act to combine with further macro speech acts, to serve a yet-more-global intention? Apparently not. The intention to carry out an academically rewarding seminar can be considered subordinate to the intention to conduct the entire course as planned, which in turn partakes in the intention to

¹⁶ See mainly Van Dijk’s work, from classical contributions to text grammar (cf. Van Dijk 1977, 1980), to recent research in critical discourse analysis (cf. e.g. Van Dijk 2008). See also his joint work with Walter Kintsch (e.g. Van Dijk and Kintsch 1983), which in my view represents the best step ever taken to integrate the concepts of ‘discourse’ and ‘text’ in a ‘pragmatic’ analysis.

perform my (academic) duties properly as a whole, etc., etc. - which, naturally, makes the consecutive macro acts accumulate accordingly. To envisage the highest-rank intention, pursued in the highest-rank speech act, turns, then, a philosophical undertaking.

One of the undisputed methodological values of the search for the clear-cut categories signposting the particular levels of intentionality and its enactment lies, paradoxically, in the recognition of limits to which intentionality *could* be accounted for in larger stretches of discourse. Thus, endeavors like the macro speech act theory should not be carelessly brushed off, as they eventually motivate research, however minimalist, in better demarcated and better empirically equipped areas. A prominent example of such an area is Conversation Analysis (CA), which has been flourishing for the past two decades or so.¹⁷ Conversation analysts have elaborated an impressive arsenal of techniques for the description of speech act deployment, though in necessarily limited contexts, often just co-texts. As a result, the apparatus of macropragmatics has been endowed with a number of relevant concepts, such as 'floor', 'topic', 'turn', 'turn-taking', 'transition relevance place', etc., each of which contributes its share of insight in how people manage their intentions and goals in particularized (conversational) settings.

A related and, in my view, the most important value is that a 'macro' perspective on the pragmatics of discourse makes the analyst approach intentionality as continually re-shaped and updated by extralinguistic context and thus work out methodological tools to handle the variability of enactment of the speaker's intention(s) over an extensive period of time. Let us illustrate this phenomenon by with an example from political discourse, a domain rich in speakers' attempts to continue with an enactment of a global intention, though often in consecutively modified patterns, responding to the changing extralinguistic reality. Consider an excerpt from one of G.W. Bush's speeches legitimizing the US involvement in the recent Iraq war:

- (13) By advancing freedom in the greater Middle East, we help end a cycle of dictatorship and radicalism that brings millions of people to misery and brings danger to our own people. By struggling for justice in Iraq, Burma, in Sudan, and in Zimbabwe, we give hope to suffering people and improve the chances for stability and progress. [...] Had we failed to act, the dictator's programs for weapons of mass destruction would continue to this day. For all who love freedom and peace, the world without Saddam Hussein's regime is a better and safer place.¹⁸

¹⁷ In research by such linguists as Emanuel Schegloff, Harvey Sacks, Gail Jefferson, Jonathan Potter, etc. See Ten Have (2007) for an overview.

¹⁸ The Whitehall Palace address, November 19, 2003.

This speech comes eight months into the war, which started on the assumption that the Iraqi regime (and its alleged terrorist allies) had developed access to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), thus becoming a world threat and unwilling to disarm unless forced to. In his address, Bush attempts to maintain the aura of legitimization of the US intervention, against the increasingly evident collapse of the original premise – no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq ever since the US and the coalition troops entered it in March 2003. Since he can no longer employ the single WMD argument to execute his global intention (to keep the legitimization process intact), he deftly switches to a more universal, ideological rationale. Instead of invoking a *direct* threat from a destructive impact of WMD, he concentrates on building up an ideological framework for a *potential* growth of such a threat in the future and presents the US strike as part of the necessary means to ensure that the antagonistic ideologies (“dictatorship”, “radicalism”, “regime”) do not materialize in the form of physical impact. The localization of these ideologies in more countries than Iraq itself (viz. “Burma”, “Sudan”, “Zimbabwe”) is in fact a clever rhetorical ploy. By extending the spectrum of the ideological conflict and, thus, the spectrum of the US foreign involvement, he encourages the construal of the WMD intelligence failure in terms of an isolated incident, fully justifiable given the range of the American mission as a whole. Altogether, Bush keeps up with the global intention to continue with legitimization of the Iraq war, now on ideological grounds, but the pragmatic patterns (and, consequently, lexical choices) responsible for realizing this intention within a macro-temporal reality need to be updated to meet the extralinguistic developments.

I said in the first section, quite emphatically, that macropragmatic analyses, (which, as we can see, obviously borrow from broadly contextual considerations), often lead to minor or major redefinitions of the micropragmatic input that has been utilized to build up their tentative versions. They also tend to, retrospectively, review the micropragmatic concepts and point to those whose descriptive potential has not yet been fully exhausted. The analysis of Bush’s speech is a good case in point. At its macro level, we consider the general patterns of adaptation of the political speaker to contextual conditions. This leads us to the more focused question, namely which of the micro-level concepts are able to account for such processes in the possibly richest lexical way, i.e. which of them are most frequently reflected in lexical items and structures that eventually make up the matter of the macroanalysis. The analysis of (13) reveals, for instance, that a lot of explanatory power is yet to be drawn from a careful scrutiny of implicature forms in the text. If we gather from macro-contextual considerations that Bush is forced to switch to a new argumentative strategy, yet, as seems logical, without discrediting the previous argumentation, what better way to accomplish the goal than through implied meanings, which are always subject to cancellation as the

speaker sees fit? Recall the phrase “programs for weapons of mass destruction”. It is flexible enough to concede that Saddam did not indeed possess WMD understood as a ‘product ready for use’, at the outset of the war, but it does not completely detract from the original assumption that he did. It is quite likely that a microanalysis of this implicature, (as well as of many other bottom-level forms in (13)), could get overlooked but for the prompt from the macropragmatic approach, involving a vast range of contextual factors affecting the entire *discourse* of the Iraq war.

In this way I have returned to the question of the ‘micro-macro dialogue’, which I defined in the first section of this article as one of “the most significant methodological arguments for having the [distinction between the] two concepts, micropragmatics and macropragmatics, in the theoretical framework of the field.” In closing, let me say that prompts for such a dialogue need not come from ‘pragmatic’ analyses alone; in fact, the dialogic relationship between micropragmatics and macropragmatics is kept alive by insights from approaches which, at least definitionally, go much beyond linguistics-based disciplines or perspectives. An example of such an approach is the rapidly developing critical discourse analysis (CDA), which extends onto the fields traditionally associated with various branches of sociology and social psychology (cf. e.g. Fairclough 1995; Wodak and Chilton 2005). Rooted in the conception that discourse is just as much reflective of the existing reality as is potentially constitutive of a new reality (a standpoint quite evidently accepted by pragmaticians!), CDA offers a number of useful ways in which to analyze ‘the reality’, which pragmatics would rather term (extralinguistic) aspects of context. In doing so, it provides (macro-)pragmatic considerations with socio-cognitive grounding of discourse (cf. Van Dijk 1995, 2002), thus signposting the ‘downward’, top-down analytic procedure. Two examples of how such a procedure could operate have been, in this article, the suggested refinements and extensions of the analysis of deixis and direct speech acts in the language of the cold war presidents, as well as the just-discussed hint for a fully-fledged study of implicature in (13). Of course, CDA has much more to offer, as does any approach or discipline that recognizes the paramount importance of context in human (linguistic) behavior. In whatever kind of acting, including pragmatic acting, we adapt ourselves to a context ‘as is’, but at the same time we change it with a view to future effects. As Mey writes, all this is done through the intermediate use of language as the tool helping us to select the relevant features of any situation in the total context (cf. Mey 1993: 263). Micropragmatics and macropragmatics are two perspectives which, on the one hand, ‘statically’ account for the different size manifestations of this ‘total’ context. On the other, they ‘dynamically’ inform each other (and thus the pragmatic analysis as a whole) of, first, which instances of the utterance-level use of language are worth a broader contextual verification to determine their function, second, which parts of the

broader contextual check are applicable as determiners of further analytic activity at the utterance level.

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