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Introduction

This third volume of the Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics covers a diversity of topics which range from general linguistic theory to child language. To provide coherency, we have, therefore, grouped the papers into a number of major sections as reflected in the Table of Contents. What follows is our attempt to capture the major point of each paper, organized according to those sections.

The first paper is Ken Miner's "On the Notion 'Restricted Linguistic Theory': Toward Error Free Data in Linguistics." Miner maintains that linguistic theories must be more firmly grounded on secure data bases. He contends that the attempt to construct theories based on limited data from a few languages leads to serious errors. Rather than seeking to construct general theories, Miner advocates that we should limit ourselves to "restricted theories" which may be confined to one language family.

The Phonetics-Phonology section contains four very different papers. Geoff Gathercole's research demonstrates that instrumental evidence can play a crucial role in phonological analysis. His instrumental research on strong and weak stops in Kansas Potawatomi clearly indicates that the underlying contrast between these series is preserved even in final positions, not neutralized as heretofore supposed. In addition, the paper provides evidence for the interaction between stress and the syntactic structure of Potawatomi.

Mehmet Yavas' paper on the implications of borrowing for Turkish phonology provides a modus operandi for the analysis of languages which have lexicons replete with loan words. In the case of Turkish, previous analyses, though recognizing the importance of loan words, have neglected to incorporate them into their descriptions. Drawing evidence from borrowing, Yavaş proposes that current treatments of vowel and consonant harmony should be drastically revised: consonant harmony plays the pivotal role in determining the vowel choice, not conversely. By so analyzing Turkish, he is able to account for a wide range of data unaccounted for by treatments which assume the primacy of vowel harmony.

Robert Rankin's study of Quapaw as a dying language supports the evidence from child language acquisition, aphasia, and comparative linguistics that there exists a universal hierarchy of sound-type complexity. As Quapaw functioned less and less as a native language, principled changes occurred in its phonology: the types of series lost and the order in which they were lost were determined by their relative complexity, with the most marked being lost first.

Code-mixing is the topic of Maria Dobozy's paper. Taking a letter written by a bilingual American-Hungarian as her data, Dobozy describes the phonological rules that are operating in such a code-mixing, with special emphasis on vowel harmony. She demonstrates that vowel harmony is an important process in the system and plays a central role in the rendition of English words by such speakers.

The first paper in the Syntax-Semantics section is Gerald Denning's, "Meaning and Placement of Spanish Adjectives." Denning attempts to clarify the problems of the differences in the meaning and treatment

of restrictive adjectives in three dialects of Spanish. He argues that a strict generative semantic approach will not handle the data and suggests an analysis within the framework of pragmatics.

Virginia Gathercole provides a cross-linguistic study of the use of the deictic verbs "come" and "go." She formulates the uses of "come" and "go" in eleven languages by extending Talmy's (1975) model for verbs of motion to include a presuppositional component. Gathercole divides the contexts in which "come" and "go" are used into (a) immediate deixis and (b) extended deixis. Her goal is to characterize the use of deictic verbs of motion in the eleven languages studied by a limited number of assertional and presuppositional components and thus suggest a possible universal framework for such verbs.

Whereas Denning and Gathercole focus on language related issues, Juan Abugattas takes a more general, philosophical approach in his discussion of speech acts. He claims that previous speech act analyses used the sentence as the basic unit. Abugattas believes, however, that we must go beyond the sentence: "social reality" dictates that we categorize sets of sentences into speech acts, which he calls "complex acts."

Kurt Godden's paper, "Problems in Machine Translation Between Thai and English Using Montague Grammar," brings us to a specific language oriented concern: how to mechanically translate sentences, in particular those containing restrictive relative clauses, from one language to the other. He enumerates the problems related to such a task and proposes a solution involving meaning postulates and context within a Montague framework.

Historical and Comparative Linguistics is represented by Karen Booker's "On the Origin of Number Marking in Muskogean." Booker reconstructs two proto-Muskogean number markers, one dualizer and one pluralizer which were first used with intransitive verbs of location and then generalized to locative transitives. Later these markers spread to intransitive non-locatives. Booker maintains that the highly complex suppletive verb system of Muskogean arose when these markers lost their original meaning.

Three papers, Esther (Etti) Dromi's analysis of the acquisition of locative prepositions by Hebrew children, Gregory Simpson's study of children's categorization processes, and John More's review of relative clause research, constitute the Child Language Acquisition section of the working papers. Dromi's study, which is one of the few published works in the acquisition of Hebrew, compares the order of acquisition of Hebrew locatives with Brown's (1973) order for English and also with Slobin's (1973) universals. Among her findings, Hebrew al ("on") is acquired later than English on. Her findings for Hebrew locatives are particularly interesting in that they allow a comparison of the acquisition of prefixes with that of full prepositions. Her conclusions point to the pivotal role that morphological complexity plays in the order of acquisition of locatives in Hebrew.

Gregory Simpson's major concern has to do with the process by which children form conceptual categories. He argues, on the basis of experimental data, that overextensions should not be taken as evidence

for category formation. His data suggest a distinction between concept formation and object naming, a distinction not made in previous studies. "Function," what objects can do or what can be done to them, determines how that object is conceptualized, but an object's perceptual properties may determine the name given to it. Therefore, "the child may know that two objects don't really belong together, but gives them the same name until he has more evidence."

The acquisition of relative clauses has been a topic of great interest among psycholinguists. John More presents a valuable critical review of the recent literature with special emphasis on the debate between Dan Slobin (1971), Amy Sheldon (1974), Michael Smith (1975), Tavakolian (1977), and deVilliers et al. (1976). The Minimal Distance Principle, the Noun-Verb-Noun Strategy, the Parallel Function Hypothesis, and Slobin's operating principles are compared, along with the formulations of deVilliers and Tavakolian.

Five major topic areas are represented in this third volume of the Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics. Each paper in its own way is a contribution to linguistic scholarship: some provide evidence in new areas of inquiry, others bring new evidence to bear on old questions, while still others suggest future courses of research.

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Language Acquisition

SPEECH ACTS, FUNCTIONS AND PRESUPPOSITIONS

Juan Abugattas A.

As is well known, modern linguistics started with the threefold distinction between 'langue', 'langage' and 'parole' proposed by F. de Saussure. This distinction, which made it possible to delimit a field of study for the new discipline, has been preserved, almost unchanged, until very recently. In fact, the so-called 'transformational grammar', initially developed by N. Chomsky, is firmly grounded on it: the 'langue' of de Saussure is the 'competence' of Chomsky, the 'parole' of one is the 'performance' of the other, and both share a similar contempt for 'langage'. None of them wants to occupy himself, qua linguist, with the study of the "multiform and heteroclite" totality, whose "unity", according to the celebrated Swiss scholar, is so difficult to 'disentangle'.

It is also in de Saussure that we can find a further and not less significant restriction of the object of study of linguistics: 'langue' was taken to refer almost exclusively to the syntactic component of language. It was assumed that syntax is the realm of language better protected against the influence of those elements that make of it an heteroclite, undetermined entity, hostile to systematic exploration. Linguistics, in order to become a science, had to be provided with a perfectly defined subject matter and, certainly, the social and psychological realms in which the speech act occurs were not the best candidates. So, one had to settle for an abstraction.

That this abstraction proved to be fruitful can hardly be denied. The descriptions of the structuralists and the analyses of the transformationalists have undoubtedly contributed to further the understanding of some of the most important mechanisms of language. But the problem with this whole approach is not that it does not allow some understanding, the problem is that it does not allow enough understanding. Actually, all these limitations did not become evident as long as the study of the semantic component of language was consciously left out of the realm of concern of linguists. These problems, though, surged when Chomsky tried to deal with this component without substantially deviating from the classical perspective. More daring than their predecessors, he and, later, Katz told us clearly what others had only insinuated: meaning is determined, to a great extent, by syntax.

For Katz this is a great advantage, which he discovers with a petitio principii, for since syntax determines meaning (that is what was to be proved in the first place), grammarians can study a "sentence isolated from its possible settings in linguistic discourse (written or verbal) and of its linguistic context (social or physical)."[1]

At this point, the whole business can be reduced to a discussion concerning the notion of grammaticality. For Chomsky and Katz, the degree of grammaticalness of a sentence depends exclusively on whether the syntactic rules of categorization, subcategorization and selection have been violated or not. Grammaticality is, then, a function of the base or syntactic component. The purpose of postulating this would seem to be, again, escaping the danger of failing to distinguish the linguistic knowledge of the speaker from the rest of his knowledge about the world. For, while the inclusion in the base of a list of semantic markers such as (+ human), etc., insures a sufficient systematization of the first kind of knowledge, the second kind, i.e. non-linguistic knowledge, cannot be classified.

This approach has been the target of innumerable criticisms. U. Weinreich showed, for example, that the whole semantic component, as originally understood by Chomsky, turns out to be totally unnecessary[2], and its tasks simply duplicate those performed by the base. But perhaps potentially more fruitful are the criticisms of the proponens of 'generative semantics'. Lakoff[3] has shown that the violation of syntactic rules does not necessarily make the sentence generated ungrammatical, at least, not for "all readings" of this sentence. This criticism is ultimately tied in with the recognition of the importance of the concept of "presupposition." Lakoff, McCawley and others became involved with the study of "presupposition" because of their interest in spelling out the requirements for the development of a "natural logic," a logic capable of accounting for all the kinds of reasonings possible in natural language. This is, indeed, nowadays the most common interpretation of the notion of presupposition. There is, nonetheless, another way of understanding this notion that would seem more relevant for the development of semantic theory. As a matter of fact, both ways of understanding presupposition are usually confused.

Take for example the sentence, "the black rock sleeps." If judged with Chomskian criteria, this sentence is ungrammatical, but, as has been noted more than once, we would be reluctant to say so, if we were to consider either the context in which it appears, maybe a story for children, or the beliefs of the person who uttered it, a convinced animist. Basically, these are the sort of problems with which that part of the science of language known as 'pragmatics' is supposed to deal. The object of study of 'pragmatics' is, in de Saussure's terms, 'parole'. In the end, the attempt to study 'meaning' forces the scientist to focus his attention on the concrete performance of the speaker, and the problem is, once more, to find a way to grasp each one of the determinants that operate simultaneously when this performance takes place.

Some recent writers have suggested that this can be done by introducing the notions of 'index' or 'points of reference' into the analysis of speech acts.[4] An index is a collection of 'coordinates'. There are place coordinates, time coordinates, etc. Some other writers have proposed alternatives to this kind of analysis. But there seems to be agreement regarding the necessity of taking into account some "extralinguistic" information, including the beliefs of the speaker, for the analysis of an utterance. This implies, in principle, as is evident, a major deviation

from the postulates of traditional linguistics. Nevertheless, this deviation has not been so radical in at least one important aspect.

R. C. Stalnaker[5] in his paper "Pragmatics," while attempting to explain the role of this part of linguisitc theory, says the following:

> Syntax studies sentences, semantics studies propositions. Pragmatics is the study of linguistic acts and the context in which they are performed. There are two major types of problems to be solved within pragmatics: first, to define interesting types of speech acts and speech products, second, to characterize the features of the speech context which help determine which proposition is expressed by a given situation.

There are obviously many things to be said in relation to such a general statement. But the one thing that is most striking is the implicit acceptance of both sentences and propositions as basic elements of language. This is an almost universal practice among linguists. A speech act, then, is conceived of as the utterance of a sentence. This act of uttering a sentence is taken to be an independent, elementary unit, that can be fully understood by itself. This 'logical atomism', to give it a name, has infiltrated pragmatics so thoroughly that Lewis, for example, speaks of a "possible-world coordinate."

This approach would seem to work at least as long as one's concern is restricted to the classification and analysis of isolated utterances. But, this is not the case. The first task that those who accept this perspective have to undertake is the classification of the speech acts into classes. The basis for this classifications is usually the kinds of sentences or statements being uttered. J. Austin, for instance, distinguishes between 'constative' and 'performative' sentences. We would expect the deep-structure of these kinds of statements to be fundamentally different, that is, we would expect to find some elements to be lacking in the deep-structure of a constative sentence that are present in the deep-structure of a performative sentence. It is most interesting, therefore, to see that some writers are inclined to find a performative element in almost all sentences, including constative sentences.[6]

This reductionism is not accidental and it has its counterpart in the attempts by some philosophers and logicians to give a truth-value account of such operations of language as interrogation, commanding, etc. If isolated, a constative sentence can well be the subject of a truth-value analysis, and one can even go so far as to consider such an analysis part of a speech act analysis. But a truth-value analysis can never show the 'performative' component of a constative sentence; this component has to be read into the sentence. The merit of Ross' paper is to have shown that this maneuver is indispensable from the point of view of an atomistic approach to pragmatics, thereby exhibiting its inherent weakness. The main disadvantage of any kind of reductionism of the sort we are considering now is that the different linguistic functions cannot be studied in their specificity and, thus, cannot be fully understood.

But the difficulties of adopting the framework of logical atomism for

pragmatics become even more evident if we consider not isolated sentences, but a set of sentences together. Let us take a piece of oratory or, better yet, the harangue of a general before battle. Certainly, it will consist of a set of sentences, some of which will be declarative, some others will be interrogations (rhetorical questions), and still others that will be exclamations; as a matter of fact, the whole thing could end with a command. Now, how are we to proceed if we want to give a full analysis of such a set of sentences? In a sense, many speech acts are involved and the harangue as a whole has clearly a performative character. But does this character originate in the fact that all the sentences uttered by the general are performative sentences? This is indeed what we would have to say if we were to adopt an atomistic approach. Furthermore, what is the speech act here? Is it the actual delivery of the harangue, or do we have only a set of more or less independent speech acts? Are the presuppositions relevant for the total act also relevant for each of the constituent acts, or not? Are there any presuppositions relevant to a given act that are irrelevant to the totality? These are the kinds of problems that, so far as I can tell, have not been considered by linguists, although, in the end, the answers to them will determine the future of pragmatics.

It is clear that in this short paper I cannot even attempt to deal with all these questions. But I would like to make some suggestions as to how they might be answered. It is quite doubtful that we would like to say that delivering a harangue is only 'asking rhetorical questions + uttering some declarative sentences +. giving an order', for the same reasons that we do not want to say that writing a paper is only moving a finger + making signs on a piece of paper. Delivering a harangue and writing a paper are not, in a very important sense, collections of acts, but elementary or basic acts. The proper answer to the question, "What is the general doing now?" is not, "He is asking rhetorical questions +, etc...", but rather, "He is delivering a harangue." It is clear, though, that delivering a harangue presupposes doing all these other things we were talking about. Considered in isolation, nevertheless, none of these 'acts' can be said to make any sense. Their meaningfulness rests on the basic presupposition that together they constitute what we call 'delivering a harangue', 'performing a play', etc. It is this sort of, so to say, complex act that constitute social reality and, thus, linguistic reality, and it is these kinds of complex acts that pragmatics has to view as elementary. So it is only as part of a complex speech act that sentences, which in themselves do not have a performative element, can be said to have one.

But if what has been said so far is true, then we are forced to postulate a starting point for linguistics quite different from the one it has had so far. Instead of trying to classify isolated sentences into classes, linguistics ought to start by classifying the kinds of possible complex acts or functions that can be performed in a given society; these functions are the most important determinants of the meaning of speech acts and, thus, they constitute the basic set of presuppositions for the understanding of any sentence. To paraphrase Stalnaker, complex acts are the interesting types of speech acts that pragmatics ought to study.

In this brief communication I have had one main purpose; to wit, sketching the history of modern linguistics in order to show that it has not been arbitrary and that each of its periods has been marked by an attempt to incorporate new parts of a totality into its field of study. In a sense, it has been the transition from 'langue' to 'langage'; from the abstract part, to the concrete whole. But the study of the whole is equal to the study of human social action in its symbolic manifestations, an enterprise that requires methods much more sophisticated, and conceptual frameworks much more encompassing than those available today. The assumption that underlies the thesis presented here is that the same forces which determine man to act socially the way he does, determine his mode of speech.

Footnotes

1 Katz, J., 1966. The structure of a semantic theory. In Fodor and Katz, eds., The Philosophy of Language. New York: Harper & Row, p. 484.

2 Weinreich, U., 1972. Explorations in Semantic Theory. The Hague: Mouton.

3 Lakoff, G., 1972. Linguistics and natural logic. In Harman, G. and D. Davidson, eds. Semantics for Natural Language. Dordrecht: Reidel.

4 Lewis, D. General semantics. In Harman and Davidson, op. cit.

5 Stalnaker, R., 1973. Pragmatics. In Præsuppositionen in Philosophie und Linguistik. Frankfurt: AthenæumVerlag, p. 392.

6 Ross, J.R., 1970. On declarative sentences. In Jakobs, R.A. and P.S. Rosenbaum, eds., Readings in English Transformational Grammar. Waltham, Mass.

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