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**The Semantics and Pragmatics of
Functional Coherence in Discourse**

1. The problem

In this brief paper we will discuss a neglected problem of linguistic theory, viz. functional relations between sentences and between speech acts in coherent discourse. The first type of relations are of a semantic nature, whereas the latter should be accounted for in pragmatic terms. The discussion of this problem at the same time involves the issue about the delimitation of semantics and pragmatics against each other.

The kind of relations we have in mind are e.g. expressed in the following discourses:

(1) John is sick. He has the flu.
(2) John can't come. He is sick.
(3) Can you tell me the time? I forgot my watch.

Intuitively, we may say for (1) that the second sentence of the sequence expresses a "specification" of the first sentence, e.g. due to the fact that it represents a more specific instance of the fact denoted by the first sentence. Since relations between meanings or denotata are involved, we then speak of a *semantic* relation. Moreover, since the second sentence has the "role" of specifying information of the first sentence, we call such a relation *functional*. Taken as the representations of speech act sequences, examples (2) and (3) express pragmatic relations, viz. between two assertions in (2), and between a request and an assertion in (3). In both cases the second sentences may be used as an "explanation" of the preceding speech act. Thus, in (3) the speaker provides an explanation for the request, whereas in (2) a reason for the first denoted fact is specified as "further information", so that this second sentence so to speak may function as a warrant for the first assertion. In this case, however, we observe too that the semantic and pragmatic functions are so close that they cannot properly be distinguished without further theoretical analysis.

In this paper then we will try to see whether a systematic account of semantic and pragmatic relations can be given, whether semantic and pragmatic functions can properly be distinguished, and finally, what the theoretical framework should be in which such

functional relations can be explicitly described. In order to be able to spell out these theoretical notions, we will in the first part of our paper briefly summarize the more general pragmatic model which serves as the basis for our discussion, as well as some of its relations with semantics. Clearly, such a summary can only be fragmentary, and will have to focus on the major features of the theoretical framework.

2. Pragmatic theory

Although in the ten years which have elapsed since the publication of John Searle's influential Speech Acts much research has been done, both in philosophy and in linguistics, in the domain of pragmatics in general and on speech acts in particular, we do not as yet have even the outline of a unified pragmatic theory. Scholars differ as to the very aims, basic notions, explananda, and the rules of pragmatics, as well as about the status of pragmatics in linguistic theory. Although we cannot possibly go into the many controversies and discuss the various approaches, we will briefly enumerate the basic properties of a pragmatic component of linguistic theory as we see it:[1]

1. Pragmatics stricto sensu is a proper component of linguistic theory, having a status which is comparable to that of syntax and semantics: for this reason we consider it to be the "third" component of a "grammar", taken in a wide sense of that term.

2. According to 1. pragmatics should also systematically account for utterances of natural language; whereas syntax accounts for abstract structures of expression types of such utterances, and semantics for the meaning and reference assigned to these expressions, pragmatics accounts for the systematic uses of such utterances as a particular type of social actions, viz. speech acts or illocutionary acts; in a wide sense of the term "meaning", the pragmatics hence also contributes to the "theory of meaning" for utterances. We will however instead of this illocutionary "meaning" speak of (pragmatic) functions of utterances.

3. Pragmatic functions, or speech acts, are assigned to utterances of natural language which are syntactically well-formed and semantically meaningful and satisfiable. This assignment will be called a *pragmatic interpretation* of the utterance (or of the uttered sentences).

4. Pragmatic interpretations are relative to a *context*, viz. the pragmatic context. Such a context is an abstraction of the cognitive and social context in which the utterance is used. Hence, pragmatics does not

[1]For details of our positions and for further references we refer to van Dijk (1977, 19796).

belong to a cognitive model of language use or a sociological model of language interaction, but has such models as its empirical basis.

5. It is the main aim of pragmatics to specify the *conditions*, the so-called *appropriateness conditions*, under which an utterance functions as, or counts as, an appropriate speech act in some context. The appropriateness conditions are formulated in terms of structural features of the pragmatic context. And conversely, a pragmatic context may be defined as the set of features of a speech situation which may determine the appropriateness of speech acts.

6. The *abstract nature* of pragmatics (with respect to actual language use) lies in the fact that it specifies abstract conditions for the abstract appropriateness of abstract utterance structures, viz. sentence and/or texts which are assigned abstract meanings.

7. The *empirical part* of a more general theory of pragmatics would e.g. consist of a cognitive model of actual speech act processing (comprehension, storage in memory, etc.), and of a model of language use and interactive communication in socio-cultural situations (e.g. strategic uses of speech acts, socio-cultural variations, etc.).

8. Illocutionary functions of utterances are *signalled* in the morpho-syntactic structures of these utterances (word order, sentence form, intonation, particles, etc.) and the meaning and reference of the utterances (reference to speaker and/or hearer, to actions, time, etc.). In this respect pragmatics specifies the "meanings" of such structures or expressions, or more in general their pragmatic function.

9. Linguistic theory should not only account for utterances in terms of (isolated) sentences, but also in terms of *sequences of sentences* having a *textual* structure (e.g. coherence, both local and global); hence, pragmatics should also account for their functions, i.e. for *sequences of speech* acts, or more complex discoursive (e.g. also dialogical) complexes of speech acts.

Of course, these major features of a (linguistic) theory of pragmatics are not without problems, but these cannot be gone into here. Similarly, many important sub-domains of the theory have hardly been developed as yet. Thus, we still need complete lists of speech acts for particular languages and cultures, together with their appropriateness conditions; the features of the pragmatic context need to be elaborated (e.g. beliefs, wants, and valuations of speakers and hearers, their social relations, and a number of institutional features); the relations with the (other) components of grammar have only been studied partially; the empirical basis of the theory is virtually non-existent (in fact, it was originally worked out as part of the philosophy of language); and finally the sequential nature of speech acts, e.g. in texts and conversation, has received little attention.

In this paper, then, we will choose one of these lacunae, viz.

the last: the sequential aspects of speech acts. Of that problem we will isolate the more specific aspect of semantic and pragmatic relations which have a functional nature. Our discussion will take place against the wider background of a *theory of discourse*;[2] in other words, we will discuss some aspects of the pragmatics of discourse. In order to be able to define typical pragmatic relations, however, we also briefly have to discuss semantic functional relations between sentences in discourse.

3. Semantic relations in discourse

A discourse may be briefly defined as an utterance type of natural language which realizes a sequence of sentences which satisfies a number of properties. Besides relative grammaticalness of sentences at the syntactic level, the most conspicuous property defining the "textual" nature of a sequence of sentences expressed by a discourse, is the semantic property of coherence. This coherence, which ideally holds both for monological and dialogical discourse, defines the delimitation of a discourse with respect to previous and following discourses in speech interaction.[3]

We distinguish between two kinds of coherence, viz. *local* and *global* coherence. Local coherence is defined for (pairwise) relations between sentences of a textual sequence. Global coherence is defined in terms of (operations on) whole sets of sentences, e.g. for the discourse as a whole. Global coherence is also known, in more intuitive terms, as the "theme", "idea" "upshot" or "gist" of a discourse or a passage of the discourse. It is made explicit in terms of *semantic macrostructures*.[4] These are derived from sequences of the text by so-called *macrorules*, which delete or select information (propositions), generalize, or construct more embracing propositions. Macrostructures, accounting for the global coherence of a text, are also necessary as the "basis" for local coherence relations, as we may see in the following examples:

(4) I bought a ticket, and went to my seat.
(5) I bought a ticket, and walked to the platform
(6) I bought a ticket, and jumped into the pool.

[2] For general reference about the (linguistic) study of discourse, see e.g. Dressler (ed.) (1977).

[3] For a discussion about the various aspects of semantic and pragmatic coherence in discourse, see especially van Dijk (1977).

[4] For more detailed discussion about macrostructures in discourse, see van Dijk (1979a).

These discourse fragments are meaningful, viz. locally coherent, only with respect to macrostructures (themes) like "I went to the movies", "I took a train", or "I went swimming", for instance. In this paper we will further neglect semantic global coherence, but it should be borne in mind that local coherence depends on global coherence.

Local coherence, then, involves semantic relations between sentences, hence relations between propositions expressed by these sentences. Among the various types of local coherence, we may first of all distinguish the coherence relations between propositions as "wholes", and we will call these relations *connections*. Two propositions are (pairwise) connected if their denotata are related in some (pair of) possible world(s). As denotata of sentences expressing propositions we do not take truth values, but *facts*. We will ignore here the intricate problems involved in this semantic notion of fact, and simply take a fact as a "fragment" of a possible world. Thus, two sentences (or propositions) are connected if their respective facts are related. Often, these relations have a *conditional* nature: the first fact allows, probabilizes or necessitates the subsequent fact; also temporal and modal relations may be involved between the facts; one fact may precede, co-occur, and follow (which in part is required by the conditional relations), or one fact may be a link with other possible worlds. The connectives of natural language are largely used as expressions for these connection relations between propositions. Note though that they also have pragmatic properties (see below).

Other coherence relations between sentences at the local level of textual sequences pertain to relations between "elements" of these sentences, e.g. predicates and arguments. Properties and individuals may e.g. be identical or have other relations (e.g. of contiguity, possession, inclusion) in related propositions, but these contribute to coherence only if the whole facts are related as well. Thus, the sequence "Peter went to the movies. He has blue eyes" is not (directly) coherent, although it contains two references to the same individual. In other words, facts are usually related with respect to one course of events, one situation, one possible world, and so on. Further details about the various conditions on connection and coherence will not be given here.

4. Functional coherence at the semantic level

The semantic relations briefly discussed above are both intensional and extensional. That is, they are based on meaning links between

propositions, and on relations between facts and their properties in possible world. However, it does not seem that they fully account for the local coherence of discourse.

If, for instance, we have a closer look at our earlier example:

(1) John is sick. He has the flu.

we first of all may observe that the relation between the subsequent sentences is not a conditional connection. Nor can we say that the first sentence provides the background, the situation, or the possible world with respect to which the second should be interpreted. Yet, the two facts denoted by the respective sentences are semantically related: the second proposition properly entails the first, or in terms of world-properties: "sickness" is a property of the flu. Part of these respective facts, which seem to have a hierarchical relation among each other, is the presence of the same experiencer, viz. John. In other words, the first sentence provides a description of a more or less general level, which is *specified* by the second sentence. Hence, intersentential relations may express .relations between the general and the more particular, or vice versa:

(7)   Peter is late. He never comes in time.

In the latter example, the second sentence expresses a *generalization* with respect to the fact denoted by the first sentence. In other words, sentences may have a specific semantic role or *function* with respect to other sentences of the text. We therefore will call this type of relations functional.' Now, the question is what other kinds of functional relations exist between propositions of a text.

Closely linked with the specification function is that of the *example* function, as in:

(8) Most of our children are living in California now. Judy, for instance,
       lives in Berkeley.

where the second sentence functions as the example or illustration of the information provided by the first sentence. Again, this function also has its converse:

(9) Pete is late again. But, so is everybody today.

This relation is close to that of generalization; but, whereas above generalization pertained to the temporal argument of (7), we here

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[5]One of the few linguists who has studied this kind of functional relations in discourse is Grimes (1975), who calls them "rhetorical". His rhetorical relations however involve several kinds of coherence relations, semantic and pragmatic ones, and connexive and functional ones. In this paper we try to make distinctions between different kinds of coherence relations between sentences.

witness the well-known individual generalization (from element to set), which we also may call "extension".

This general type of "generalization" also may be based on the predicate, as in:

(10) I would be glad if you came. In fact, I would be delighted.

In this case, the second sentence expresses a higher degree of the same emotion denoted by the predicate of the first sentence. In this case, we also witness already a first *pragmatic* function, viz. that of correction: the second assertion might be taken as a correction of the first. We will come back to these pragmatic functional relations below, but as we already observed for sentence (2) in our first section, it may sometimes be difficult to distinguish between semantic and pragmatic functions. Our explicit criterion is that semantic functions must be definable in terms of propositions, properties or elements of propositions, and their respective denotata. In (10) for instance we see that the second sentence entails the first of the sequence. Similarly, we also observe that these kinds of functional relations have (well-known) *rhetorical* aspects: (10) is a characteristic example of what classically is called an "amplification". We will however try to distinguish between semantic functions and rhetorical functions. The latter pertain to the function of sentences (or parts of them) within an interaction context, e.g. within argumentative or narrative moves. Of course, the basis of the rhetorical operation may well be a semantic one, as it is the case in (10), where an entailment relation is involved, and a semantic function of predicate extension.

If we would like to take stock and look for similarities between the semantic functions discussed so far, we discover that they all involve semantic *hierarchies* based on entailment: general vs. particular, general vs. example, extensions of predicates, etc. A particular proposition, then, being part of a textual sequence, may have a specific function with respect to another proposition in that hierarchy e.g. function as a "specification".

What other types of function can we distinguish? Within the same perspective we have of course the semantic relations of identity and paraphrase, both functioning as forms of *repetition*:

(11) I can't come! Really, I can't come! Believe me!
(12) I can't stand him. I just don't like him.

Again, we see that this kind of semantic relations have a rhetorical and hence also a cognitive function: they assign specific emphasis or importance to a certain proposition. The converse of this functional relation is of course the semantic contrast between sentences of a sequence, which may also have a rhetorical effect:

(13) I really like her. But, I can't stand him!
(14) The rich often have several villa's, while the poor are living in misery.

Below we will see that both kinds of relations also have their pragmatic counterparts.

Exploring in the same direction we meet sequences which cannot be described in the same straightforward way:

(15) He looked outside. It was snowing.
(16) He thought of this morning. She had been very kind to him.
(17) She phoned very late. She was upset.

Intuitively speaking, (15) features a relation where the second sentence describes so to speak the "content" or "object" of the predicate of the first sentence. In a sense, then, it seems a form of specification: it specifies what the "he" saw. Something similar occurs in (16): the second sentence is part of the thoughts mentioned in the first sentence. Yet, in these cases there is no proper semantic implication involved between the respective propositions, unless we interpolate from the set of our world-knowledge propositions like "He saw that p" or "He thought that p". Instead of this kind of content description of fact-creating predicates, we may also have individual descriptions, as in (17) and in sequences like:

(18) A tall man came by. He was wearing an old navy jacket.

The latter kind of specifying description will simply be called *attribution*: given an individual mentioned in a previous sentence, such a proposition describes an attribute of the individual. The examples (15) and (16) will provisionally be taken as instances of a *description* function: propositions having that function characterize the place, time, situation, possible world, and also the "contents" of predicates creating them ("see", "hear" "think" "imagine", "pretend" "say" etc.). Just as in the specification function we seem to have a hierarchical relation, where the concept of an individual or a predicate "dominates" its attributive or descriptive particulars. Textually, this often will involve a *precedence* relation: in many of the examples we have analyzed above, the first and the second sentences may not simply be commuted, even though they do not describe temporal or conditional relations. The ordering rules involved are rather complex and not yet fully understood.[6] On the one hand, specification requires that the "dominating" proposition precedes, whereas generalizations usually follow. The criterion in probably the *topicality* of a given sentence, which is the sentence contributing to the actual

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[6] See van Dijk (1977) for a discussion of ordering rules in discourse.

theme or topic of the discourse fragment, e.g. the first sentence in (7).

Another characteristic property of the sequences we have been analyzing so far is that their functional coherence is not signalled by *connectives*. As we have seen earlier connectives express connection relations between propositions, which in turn are based on relations between facts in some possible world, e.g. conditional relations. Most of the connectives in natural language can at least partly be interpreted in terms of various kinds of modal "strictness" of such conditional relations between facts: enabling, making probable and necessitate. Now, our next question is the following: above we have discussed functional relations based on *hierarchical* meaning relations, do we also have functional relations based on e.g. conditional relations, which means on referential relations between denoted facts? To illustrate, consider again an earlier example:

(2) John can't come. He is sick.

Clearly, there is a conditional relation between the respective propositions, viz. of reason/cause and consequence, which may also be expressed by connectives like because and since within one complex sentence. In that case the cause may be denoted by the second clause if that clause is in subordinate position. In (coordinated) sentence sequences, however, the normal ordering would require having conditions first and consequences second. In (2), however, this is not the case. We surmise that this fact has "functional" reasons: the second sentence of (2) gives an explanation of the fact denoted by the first sentence. In terms of the specification function discussed above, we could say that a reason or cause of a fact is specified in such an explanation. So far so good. The problem however is that we could also give a pragmatic account of the relation of explanation: although two assertions are involved, the second assertion functions as an "explanation" of the first one, by backing this up, grounding it, etc. Notice though that strictly speaking the second assertion only explains a denoted fact, not the earlier assertion itself, as would for instance be the case in the proper pragmatic relation between the next two speech acts:

(19) You have acted stupidly. You asked for my opinion.

We will come back to these functions below. It may however be provisionally assumed that we also have a proper kind of semantic explanation, viz. in those cases where in a sequence a subsequent sentence denotes a reason or cause of a fact denoted by a previous sentence. A similar case is the *conclusion* relation, as in:

(20) John is sick. He can't come.

Again a conditional is involved, now having the consequence in final position. Also here a pragmatic relation, viz. of making or drawing a conclusion may be observed, which may be signalled by the sentence initial pragmatic connective *So*. Yet, again we take the last sentence also in a proper semantic way as having the conclusion function of the sequence.

If this reasoning is correct, it might be the case that also the other conditional connections underlie further semantic functions: in a conjunction the second sentence may function as an *addition*, in a disjunction the second may function as an *alternative*, whereas *but, yet, nevertheless* and *though* may introduce *contrastive, exceptional* or similar functions, and *if... (then)* a non-factual condition, as in the following sentence sequences, respectively:

(21) I am going home. And you, you stay here!
(22) I am going to the movies. Or, perhaps it will be a concert.
(23) He was very clever. But, he didn't make it.
(24) I will take a vacation. That is, if I get that money.

In all these cases the precise distinction between connection relations and functional relations at the semantic level, and between these and the functional relations at the pragmatic level seem rather subtle. At the semantic level the distinction is that connection is a relation between propositions, based on fact relations, mostly of a conditional nature. A function however is assigned to a sentence or proposition on the basis of its role in the sequence. Such functional properties may be signalled by position in the sequence, occurrence in an independent sentence, the absence of connectives (at least the interclausal ones), and so on. The pragmatic functions are defined in terms of specific functions of speech acts in sequences. In order to further analyze the difference, let us therefore now have a closer look at these pragmatic functions.

5. Speech act sequences and functional pragmatic coherence

One of the prominent aspects of meaningful behavior is its coherence: our actions may follow each other conditionally, an act may be accomplished in order to be able to perform other acts, actions are performed as executions of intentions which result from processes of motivations and the setting of goals, represented as mental purposes. The same holds for speech acts and speech act sequences. To be sure, we also are sometimes incoherent, but in many cases this incoherence is the marked case, something which requires specific interpretation, which is or should be noted and which eventually may be sanctioned.

In the account of pragmatic coherence, then, we in principle follow a way of analysis which is parallel to that given above for semantic relations between sentences. Whereas in the semantics this means an inquiry into the nature of the connections between propositions and the semantic role of given propositions in a sequence, the pragmatic analysis formulates the problem in terms of relations between speech acts.[7]

The most obvious coherence relation at this pragmatic level is again that of conditional connection, as we suggested above: acts are carried out which make following acts possible, more plausible or even, socially necessary. This is particularly clear in dialogues where conditioning exhibits itself sometimes in the form of rights or duties, as e.g. in:

(25) A: Where are you going?
     B: I don't know.
(26) A: Congratulations!
     B: Thank you!
(27) A: I can't pay my rent this month.
     B: You want to borrow some money from me?

But also in monological discourse, speech act sequences may be conditionally linked. This is of course "trivially" the case, if we take speech acts as "wholes", i.e. involving the form and the meaning of the utterance as part of or even the basis of the illocutionary act, because in that case for instance the semantic relations of coherence are at the same time conditions for coherent speech acts. But also at the level of illocutionary force, or pragmatic "meaning" alone, viz. on the level of the acts being performed by producing such an utterance, conditional coherence plays a role: some speech act, as such, makes another possible, probable or necessary:

(28) I am hungry. Do you have a sandwich for me?
(29) I am busy. So, shut up!
(30) Yes, it was wrong what I did. I apologize.
(31) That was very good. Congratulations!
(32) He is really dangerous. So, stay away from him.

In all these cases, the first speech act changes the pragmatic context in such a way that a condition is established or confirmed which is an appropriateness condition for the second speech act, or which at least makes the second speech act more meaningful, plausible or effective. In the first case, proper pragmatic conditioning takes place, in the second case a more strategic (stylistic or rhetorical) use of speech act sequences. Notice that the coherence relations are

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[7]For studies of speech act sequences and their coherence relations, see van Dijk (1977, 19796), Ferrara (1980a, 1980b).

not or not only semantic: the speech acts do not condition a proposition or a fact of another speech act, but that other speech act itself. Thus, a request may require previous accomplishment of a speech act which represents a motivation for that request, and an apology may require a statement about the act which I admit to be wrong. It may even be the case that the conditioning speech act (often an assertion) would not be completely appropriate in a given pragmatic context when it would occur in isolation:

(33) Excuse me. Could you tell me the time please?
(34) Excuse me. I forgot my watch. Could you tell me what time it is please?

Clearly, the excuse in (33) is pointless without the following request, but even in (34) the assertion about the watch only makes sense, e.g. for a stranger, if performed as a condition for a request about the time (strangers are not usually interested in whether T forgot my watch or not).

From our few examples of conditional coherence relations between speech acts in sequences, we also see that the resulting interpreted structure is so to speak *hierarchical*: the request is the *main* speech act, and the other speech acts are only subordinate conditions, sometimes optional, sometimes usual, sometimes obligatory. In fact, we here also find the basis for the application of *pragmatic macrorules* yielding a pragmatic macrostructure, or in other words, a *global speech act* (macro-speech act), being performed by a sequence of speech acts as a whole.[8] As we did for semantic structures, however, we will here neglect this global analysis of speech act sequences, and focus on the local coherence properties.

Our problem, then, is in what respect local pragmatic coherence also has a *functional* nature. Earlier in this paper we have met some examples where semantic and pragmatic functions seem to mingle. Thus, an explanation is not only adding a sentence mentioning a cause or reason, but at the same time may be viewed as a particular act-of-explaining. In that case, we even might speak of a particular speech act, or perhaps rather about a particular *function* of a speech act since the speech act in question was an assertion and because explanations may also be given by performing other speech acts. Thus, especially in changed orderings of sequences, as in

(35) Can you tell me the time please? I forgot my watch.
(36) Do you have a sandwich for me? I am hungry.
(37) Shut up! I am busy.

[8] See van Dijk (1977, 1979a).

we witness the fact that postponed speech acts which are intended to represent conditions of previous speech acts, function as pragmatic *explanations*: they show why the previous speech was performed. In the same way, we may take the second speech act of (27) as a *conclusion*, or even the first speech act of that dialogue, taken now as a strategic move (by indirectness), as a *preparation* of the offer of the other person.

Before we look for other examples of functional coherence, it should be noticed that the most general functional categorization, e.g. in dialogue, is for instance the *action-reaction* pair. More in particular, a question and its answer form such a pair, in which the answer is *not* a particular speech act, but a function of any speech act which satisfies the question - or which is appropriate in that case. In other words, a functional analysis of speech acts and speech act sequences requires a definition of appropriateness of speech acts with respect to other speech acts. But *not* at the level of specific content, as we saw above, but at the level of more general functional categories: an explanation, a motivation, a preparation, a conclusion, an answer, etc. are all only defined as specific functions of a speech act with respect to other speech acts. Of course, this function often has a semantic basis: an answer will often be an assertion with semantic constraints set by the question, an explanation will mention causes or reasons for some act or fact, and so on.

Given the semantic functions discovered above, such as specification, generalization, illustration, etc., perhaps similar functions can be discovered at the pragmatic level. It should be borne in mind though that all kinds of hierarchical relations of intensions may be different from relations between speech acts. Thus, there is no straightforward way in which we can say that a given speech act type is more general or more specific than another, unless the set of appropriateness conditions of the one is a subset of that of the other. Let us try to find some examples where this might be the case:

(38) I'll be there tomorrow. I promise that I'll come.
(39) I promise that I will come. That is, I will try.
(40) That is not bad at all. My compliments.
(41) Jones, can you please shut up for a moment? I warn you.

In these examples we have tried to give examples of speech act sequences where either the first or the second is more specific than the other. Thus in (38) the promise is more specific than the asserted announcement about a future action, its specificity being defined in terms of social commitments. Of course, this is not the case when already the first sentence is interpreted as a promise. In that case we have a form of *explicative* function: the speaker more expli-

citly shows the particular speech act he is making. Such explications are at the same time a form of *repetition*. In (39) the speaker "takes back" a specific condition, that is generalizes to a simple announcement of intent to try, which may be taken as a "weaker" form than a clear promise. In (40) we find a positive evaluation in the first speech act, which is either reinforced or explicated in the more specific compliment given after that evaluation. The same holds in (41), this time in the combination of a request and a warning, e.g. of a school teacher. The authority based request for an action (or forbearance thereof) is again reinforced, more specifically, by the warning following it. We may conclude, then, that also in speech act sequences it is possible that speakers "redefine" the pragmatic context by becoming more specific or more general with a next speech act.

Earlier we noticed that this kind of "redefinition" typically takes place in *corrections*:

(42) You want a sandwich? Or, aren't you hungry?
(43) Congratulations. Or, aren't you happy about it?
(44) I'll be there. That is, if you would like me to come.
(45) He is really stupid. Oh well, I don't know. He is also quite clever
     sometimes.

Corrections, as we see, may take different forms. In (-12) and (43), a correction rather has the form of a momentary *suspension* of the earlier speech act, by *making sure* that the necessary conditions are satisfied. In a dialogue the hearer then has the obligation to react to that "making-sure" move, and if positive, the earlier speech act will count as appropriate. Corrections may also be quite proper redefinitions of the situation (e.g. in [45]) in those cases where the speaker believes that a speech act is too strong, semantically or pragmatically, after which he takes back some implication. The inverse of course also happens:

(46) He is not too clever. In fact, I think he is stupid.

Of course, the reinforcement of an earlier speech act in this case is at the same time semantic.

Notice that corrections as in (42) through (-15) are often signalled by specific connectives or particles. Sentence initial Or thus not only signals semantic alternatives, but also a pragmatic correction or suspension. The same holds for *that is*, *well, though*, *in fact, on the contrary*, etc.

In a similar way, we also have other pragmatic connectives which may signal specific pragmatic functions in speech act sequences:

(47) I don't want to go to that party. And (moreover) I have no time. (48) A: Congratulations!

      B: But, I flunked!

(49) We are late. So, hurry up!

(50) That is a miserable paper. If you want my opinion.

As we observed for examples (21) through (24) above, normal conditional relations here are close to functional roles of constituents. Yet, we may take the second speech act of (47) as an *addition*, that of (48) as a *protest*, that of (49) as a *conclusion*, and that of (50) as a *condition*, with respect to the first speech act.

Although many of the examples we have been studying above were (constructed) monologues, we take it that similar examples may be given from dialogue: a next speaker may specify, generalize, repeat, correct, explicate, conclude, explain, condition, add, etc. with respect to the speech act of the previous speaker. However, there are further pragmatic functions which seem characteristic for the interactive nature of dialogues in general or conversations in particular. In (27) and (48) above we already saw that *helping* or protesting may have these dialogical pragmatic functions. More in general, speech acts, or the interactive moves they represent in a strategic interaction, may be assigned various functions, such *opposing, facilitating*, *reducing, objecting*, *(dis-)agreeing, (dis-)approving*, etc., as in:

(51) A: Stay here!

      B: I do what I want!

(52) A: I got problems...

      B: Your son again?

      A: Yea.

(53) A: I'll pay your trip to Italy.

      B: Are you kidding?

(54) A: I tell you to stop smoking!

      B: Who are you to...

      A: OK, you better stop smoking.

(55) A: That was a lousy party.

      B: I liked it. (56)

      A: Oh, fuck you! B: Why are you so rude?

These few simple examples clearly show that speech act sequences, taken as moves in the respective turns of a conversation may also he categorized functionally. Again we witness that functional properties of speech acts must be defined in terms of the role a speech act has with respect to another, often a previous, speech act. In this case, these 'roles' are defined in terms of interaction categories, such as, the contribution to the realization of a goal of the other speaker (helping, facilitating, approving), or a negative reaction or

interference with respect to the intentions or purposes of the speaker (protesting, disapproving, objecting, etc.).[9]

6. Conclusions

After a more general discussion about the specific status and about some assumed properties of pragmatic theory, we have chosen a specific issue at the boundary of semantics and pragmatics, viz. *functional relations* in discourse. In a more or less informal and exploratory way we have mentioned examples of propositions and speech act sequences which cannot only be accounted for in terms of the usual coherence conditions of discourse, such as conditional connection, but which seem to require such a functional approach.

At the *semantic* level we observed that subsequent propositions expressed by a textual sequence may exhibit various kinds of hierarchical intensional links, i.e. ranging between the specific/ particular and the more general, between the class/set and the element, and links of repetition and paraphrase, contrast and correction. Instead of a characterization of the relation itself, as it is the case for connection, a functional analysis takes a certain proposition as such and tries to systematically characterize its role in the sequence in terms of certain recurrent categories. It appeared however that also the connective relations themselves admit certain functional categories. Thus, the function of an explanation or a conclusion involves the usual conditional connection which determines local coherence.

Certain semantic functions of propositions in texts appeared to occur also at the *pragmatic* level: we have repetition, paraphrase, correction, explication/ specification, contrast/ protest, etc. also as functions of speech acts within a monological or dialogical speech act sequence. In certain cases, e.g. that of explanation, the distinction between a "pure" semantic and a "pure" pragmatic function seems to be blurred, and possible only in the theoretical differentiation of propositions and speech acts, respectively.

Finally, it was shown that besides the functions appearing in monological sequences, *dialogue* may involve functions which are typical for interaction: we may promote or obstruct the realization of the intentions and purposes of the previous speaker, e.g. by agreeing or disagreeing, approving or protesting, etc. In the same way as we saw that semantic and pragmatic functions often have a *rhetorical* nature, we here observed that pragmatic functions in conversation may have a *strategical* function.

[9]For discussion of the interactional nature of speech act sequences and strategic moves in conversation, see the papers in Schenkein (ed.) (1978).

Besides the tentative contribution to further developments in semantics and pragmatics proper, the linguistic relevance of our inquiry also appeared in the fact that certain semantic functions do not admit connectives, and require separate sentences in a sequence. On the other hand, both semantic and pragmatic functions appeared to be signalled by all kinds of expressions, such as connectives, adverbs, particles, fixed phrases, and so on.

Needless to say at the end of our discussion: our inquiry has not only be informal, but also the exploration was hardly systematic, except for a few distinctions made between different kinds of functions involved. We first of all should investigate what further functions might be involved at each level. Secondly, it should be attempted to establish a system of such functions. Third, the precise links between semantic and pragmatic functions should be made explicit. Fourth, the stylistic, rhetorical and interactional aspects of the functions need further attention. And finally, the precise grammatical signalling of the functions should be accounted for. It could only be our modest purpose to show that there are phenomena of language, discourse and language use for which further extension of semantic and pragmatic theory seems necessary. After ten years of pragmatics, most of the more substantial work is still ahead of us.

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