

*Lecture notes by Edward Loper*

*Course: Ling 591 (Pragmatics II)*

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*Tuesday, January 16, 2001*

Start project soon. Ideas:

- pick a construction that isn't the normal way of saying things (.e.g, "chocolate I like" or "chocolate, I like it", etc.). Under what discourse conditions are they used?

## 1 Form/Function

Is there a deep/meaningful/hardwired relationship btwn form & function? If so, what is it?

### 1.1 Theories

#### **Theory: Function is a reflex of form**

Form is the basic notion e.g., new info comes at end of the sentence.

#### **Theory: Form is a reflex of function**

Function is the basic notion

#### **Theory: Relationship btwn form & function is arbitrary**

This has traditionally been Ellen's position The relationship is learned and language-dependant. Nothing hardwired about it.

#### **Theory: Form is "motivated" but not "determined" by function**

This theory is not (yet) very well articulated. c.f., construction grammar (Zwicky, Goldberg, etc.) e.g., there may be a good processing motivation to put new info at the end of the sentence.

### 1.2 Consider these theories from perspective of various issues:

- given/new info
- topic/comment
- centering
- discourse function of (non-cannonical) syntax
- point of view/discourse structure
- language contact: what happens when 2 languages interact?

What are the rules for placing different kinds of info structurally? Can we find statistical correlations? What are their implications?

## 2 Discourse

discourse – coherent linguistic output (or interaction). (not necessarily spoken, but spoken is primary).

stylistic conventions may make written text have unusual patterns of language use.. e.g., peoples' use of complementizers in text is different. esp. for edited text/speech

Macro-level stuff in discourse:

- turn taking, etc.
- stuff that doesn't require parsing

Micro-level discourse:

- patterns of use
- ways specific propositions are expressed

We'll be looking at micro-level discourse. In particular, any proposition can be expressed in many different ways. Why? What do we use to choose which way to express something? What function do these variations play?

What types of meaning \*can\* syntax have? What meanings can lexical items have? Is there a meaning that can't be expressed lexically?

E.g., we take into account what a hearer knows about an entity.. discourse new/old, hearer new/old, etc..

Information structuring – giving (hierarchical) structure to propositions.. e.g., in "john ate the bannana," difference between stress on john, ate, bannana.. and "it's john that ate the bannana" and "the one who ate the bannana is john"...

### 2.1 On structure-preserving transformations

Emonds looked at various transformations. He divided them into structure-preserving (basically source→source transformations) and non-structure-preserving (called them "root"). The structure-preserving transformations can be input to further transformations, and can occur in non-matrix clauses. The root transformations mainly just occur in the matrix clause, and can't be further transformed.

It's much easier to figure out the function of root transformations than structure-preserving transformations. So we don't have as much hope of (easily) figuring out the function of structure-preserving transformations (such as passivization).

### 2.2 On derivation vs. surface structure

From what we've seen so far, it seems that what matters in examining the function of a form is its surface structure, not its derivation. This is good, because there's not much agreement on how all these forms are derived. :)

### 2.3 Types of Anaphora

coreferentiality (it) set-membership (the groceries/the milk) functional-dependancy (the house/the door) script-relation (we were going there/we honked the horn)

### **3 Class Format**

same as ling 590: class presentations and final conference with 15+5 minute presentations.

## 4 Clark & Marshall 1981: Definite Reference and Mutual Knowledge

Mutual Knowledge Paradox: definite reference requires speakers to check a list of facts or beliefs that is infinitely long. But definite NPs are selected in a finite amount of time.

Central questions:

- What type of shared knowledge is needed for language use?
- How is shared knowledge assessed & secured in practice

Define:

|| **t = term:**        The definite NP  
|| **r = referent:** The definite referent

Conditions for felicitous definite reference:

1. Mary must know that t is R
2. Mary knows that John knows t is R
3. Mark knows that John knows that Mary knows that t is R
4. etc...

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*Tuesday, February 6, 2001*

## **5 Lambrecht 1988**

A man {who} met my brother went to the store. vs. A man {who} I met went to the store.

So we decide we can drop 'who' for non-subjects, but dropping for subjects causes unacceptable ambiguity, so we eliminate it..

## **6 Ward and Birner 1995**

## 7 Gundel, Hedberg, Zacharski 1993

Questions:

- How do speakers choose a form for a referent?
- How do hearers correctly identify the referent?

Theory:

- forms signify different cognitive statuses
- allows hearer to restrict possible referents

Propose a hierarchy:

in focus >	(it)
activated >	(that)
familiar >	(that N)
uniquely identifiable >	(the N)
referential >	(indef this N)
type identifiable	(a N)

Inferrable from activated/in focus usually is uniquely identifiable..

|| I threw a ball at the SUV, and the river scowled at me.

## 8 Horn 1986

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*Wednesday, February 28, 2001*

## **9 Centering! Whee!**

- How you process discourse
- discourse complexity
- topichood

## **10 Ward 1990**

What is the function of VP preposing?

1. Affirm belief in a salient proposition
2. Suspend belief in a salient proposition

## **11 Kuno 1976a**

Formalism vs. Functionalism

- Formalists (e.g., chomsky) say that language facility is modular, with syntax module operating in isolation from outside information, etc.
- Functionalists say that it's not so modular, and that many features affect the syntax module, etc.
- Moderates...
  
- Atonomy of syntax?
- We only have access to acceptability, not gramaticality..

### **11.1 Gapping**

John likes rice, and Mary [likes] apples. John showed me a bowl, and Harry [showed me] a cup.

### **11.2 NAC (No-Ambiguity Condition)**

blocks gapping in acses where there could be structural ambiuity as to the location of the "gap"..

## 12 Relative Clauses

### 12.1 Kuno 1976

|| \*This is the man that Mary knows a girl jealous of t  
|| This is the man that I read a statement about t  
in terms of elementary trees?

go vs. come – empathy difference.. bring vs. take

### 12.2 Akmajian

|| He said that the book was bought by young women.

We can extract from [that..]

|| Those are the young women that he said the book was bought by.

But if we change it to:

|| He said about the book that it was bought by young women.

Then we can't extract anymore:

|| Those are the young women that he said about the book that it was  
|| bought by.

### 12.3 Antohny Kroch: Resumptive Pronouns

|| John said about the car that the engine had to be replaced

|| Rest def: The man that (\*he) has 2 heads| ...

|| Nonrest def: George|, who (he) has 2 heads, ...

|| Rest indef: A man| that (he) has 2 heads ...

|| Nonrest indef: A man| named George, who (he) has 2 heads, ...

We have a unique card constructed/retrieved at the point marked "|". We can't refer back until we have a single card..

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*Wednesday, April 11, 2001*

**13 Ward 1998**