

Reviewing Why Language?

What Pragmatics Tells Us About Language and
Communication

By Jacques Moeschler

Overview of the review

It took a very long time to complete this review. I was distracted several times with other activities. The long interruptions made the review hard and painful – I needed rereading previous content at every restart to recall what I have read before.

Overall the book was very useful for me as a freshman in pragmatic studies. It is a very good starting point for anyone new in the field.

It is important to recognize the “cultural gap” – see quote from Foreword on p.8 below. Theoretical linguistics along with Empirical linguistics is a *part of linguistic*. Very much like physics: Theoretical linguistics is based on logic, mathematics, and computer science, while Empirical linguistics is what now evolved into corpus linguistics.

The book mainly is easy to read, however, occasional sloppy definitions, foggy remarks, in some cases misconceptions become annoying. It is somewhat typical for linguistic literature not differentiating ‘thing’ from process and, sometimes, tool from product: language is not speech, speech is not speaking; mouth is not eating, eating is not mouth. The same term can be used for a ‘thing’ and for ‘process’, e.g. communication. However it is important explicitly and precisely identify the usage, because it is not always clear from context; and it takes time to understand even then it is clear from the context.

The book’s second topic is the assumption that communication is not language and language is not communication, as will be demonstrated in chapter 2.

If you define language and communication precisely, then you do not need to write a book, proving that *communication* is not *language*. It becomes “ломиться в открытую дверь” (knock at an open door). The source of confusion the double meaning of word *communication*: 1) it is the name of a *process* of sending information from source to target (see in Հաղորդակցային համակարգ in Hayrapetyan, 2025b) and 2) the *event* (thing) of the process happening. You need about 25 words to clearly explain this difference – after that no need to write a book.

Another issue is stating the facts correctly, but ignoring them at deducing conclusions: siding either with the mainstream opinion or with idea that “you like”. See examples of such reasoning on phonetics (p.150 comment below) or discussion of thought-speech in ([Chafe, 2018](#)). Books on theoretical linguistics – a deductive science - should be less “belletristic” (Hayrapetyan, 2026).

The quotation from the book are indented; my comments are not and they are in *italics*.

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FOREWORD 8

p.8

My book originated through concerns about the new orientation of the professorship I held at the Department of Linguistics at the University of Geneva. The issue was the scope of French linguistics, which was defined by my literary colleagues as the history of ideas in linguistics — from Saussure to Benveniste — and not as an empirical field, which implied that domains and methods developed over the past century were not worthy of notice. The discovery

of this cultural gap was unexpected, and confirmed that those working in the humanities are

unaware of the most important discoveries in linguistics

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The book's second topic is the assumption that communication is not language and language is not communication, as will be demonstrated in chapter 2.

The thought is clear, but the language (lexicon or grammar) is not. "Language" is a "thing", while "communication" is a process. The "communication system" should be used instead of "communication". Or "speaking" is not "communication" (Հայրսպետյան, 2025b).

p.14, footnote

Recursion is the property of clauses to contain or embed other clauses, such as in complex sentences: [Mary said to me [that Paul confessed to her [that he was guilty]]]. Noun Phrases are also a recursive category: [the son of [the neighbour of [my daughter]]].

What we got here is use of recurrence (Հայրսպետյան. 2022 : 359-360) in a very narrow area of linguistic constructs namely, clauses. The most generic case of recursion is the fundamental combinatorial process of merger. All units of speech – syntactic structures - are tree like structures (if we consider single morpheme as a degenerate tree – usually named leaf or rather branch). Tree is a recursively defined and build structure. Any language that allows gradual building of a phrase "lady", "beautiful lady", "extremely beautiful lady", "extremely beautiful lady of my dreams" (note: the latter addition is also built the same way), "extremely beautiful lady of my vivid dreams", and so on ad finitum.

p.14-15

On the other hand, if language is not communication, this is mainly because of its function. Language is certainly used in verbal communication, but assuming that language is communication is the same as defining language as a system of communication in the strong sense (Reboul 2017a), which evolved *for* communication. However, this conception of language should be able to explain, for example, how principles of grammar are motivated by communicative constraints. This is not always the case, however, as in interrogative sentences containing an interrogative pronoun like *who, what, when, where*. Some languages, like Romanian, require the mandatory anteposition of the interrogative marker (*who have you seen?*); other languages, like Chinese, leave the interrogative pronouns in their origin position (in situ), as in *you have seen who?*, whereas French allows for both forms. If the forms of interrogative sentences depend on their function, they should be homogeneous: the only thing we can say about languages which put their interrogative markers at the beginning of the sentence is that they allow the hearer to anticipate the interrogative meaning; one cannot say, however, that a relationship between form and function exists.

This paragraph makes no sense (specially the two initial sentences), because, even if we put up with the notion of "evolution for <something>" (italicizing the "for" and other words are per original text) and assume that by "communicative constraints" the author means specific rules for locating WH words, it is very hard to follow the inference and the logic of reasoning. It is due to confusion, or rather not discerning, the surface structure from the deep structure.

Another issue is not specifying the concept of language: it identified (or contrasted) with an object – communication system - and process – communication – at the same time. I would guess that in this context the 'language' is used for ability of speak.

Definitions and reasoning problems might be due to inadequate translation into English. However, the second sentence makes the whole paragraph irrelevant because of “[language] evolved for communication”. This is, I think, the source of the sentiment (Reboul, 2017 : 59):

As we saw in Chapter 1, most theories of language evolution see language as a communication system in the strong sense that it has evolved for communication. Rather naturally, given that communication is the epitome of a communication system, this has led them to propose social scenarios for language evolution.

Unfortunately, in the available copy of the book Chapter 1 is missing. It is not clear which the “most theories” that really see that language “has evolved for communication”. Initially, I thought that the italicized “for” is for highlighting the figurative meaning, however, in the text that follows it seems that the meaning is literal, real. It is a reflection of wide spread misunderstanding of how evolution works. Evolution, biological or cultural have no goal, species biological or cultural does not evolve ‘for’ anything. The people who understand Darwinian evolution deeply (very few despite almost 200 year history) can use ‘evolved for’ to point to the environmental pressures that they think shaped a trait. Despite the ‘fog’, I am sure that the authors use the ‘for’ figuratively.

p.15

If this kind of communication works, it is because our cognition is able to compute, in a non-random manner, what the speaker means.

A trivial, uninformative, strange proposition about “non-random computation”, which is hard to comprehend: what does it mean?

p.15-17

What the “slips of the tongue” has to do with language evolution as communication is not clear.

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In Jackendoff’s approach to language, pragmatic or contextualized meaning includes linguistic semantics (Jackendoff 2002: 283; Zufferey, Moeschler, and Reboul 2019: 40). And last but not least, in Levinson’s theory of generalised conversational implicatures (Levinson 2000), clear cases of pragmatic intrusion, going beyond classic cases of indexicals, show that some pragmatic meanings are included in semantic meaning.

Pragmatic is identified with “contextualized meaning”. A much cleaner approach (Հայրապետյան. 2025b) is that language: syntax + lexicon produces speech - a code that encodes meaning and intention. There are several layers or types of context from lower to higher: a.) grammatical (syntactic), b) semantic (propositional), and pragmatic (intentional). In general, all three types of context affect grammatical (how it is said? – narrow down grammemes ambiguity), both: semantic and pragmatic context affect meaning, and pragmatic context affect intentionality. Typically, single structure (code, speech) can encode several meanings and intentions – it is ambiguous. All contexts help disambiguating meaning and, consequently, intention.

Along with types of context it is beneficial to distinguish 3 levels of syntactic context: 1) lexeme, 2) phrase, 3) sentence (Հայրապետյան. 2022 : 200).

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However, the Swiss German language was considered by my family to be a dialect, a sublanguage when compared to the German spoken in Germany.

A much cleaner approach is that language is an abstraction of a concrete instances (սոյնությամբ) – the dialects (Հայրասպետյան. 2022 : 336). No one speaks French: they speak a dialect of French. Moreover, everyone speaks its own dialect. This is an instance of language – the rest are abstractions. A set of dialects is called language. No one speaks a language. People speak a dialect of a language (versions of the dialect evolve also in time), even there is currently only one dialect in the language. More accurately everybody speaks a specific, individual dialect of a language (Հայրասպետյան. 2025a : xosagen).

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I chose the example of a garden-path sentence to show that the speaker’s and hearer’s tasks are already complex enough — even with a sentence of just five words — without complicating things with issues linked to word origin. Etymology plays no role whatsoever in sentence production or in grammatical analysis.

Very strange passage that uses a very strange term – “garden-path sentence”. Agrammatical sentence in native language is not complex neither for speaker, nor for listener. However, it is a common knowledge that grammatical sentence can be hard to parse – if the speaker selected to use complex or obscure grammar with multiple center embeddings, and understand, because any lexeme, phrase or sentence is typically ambiguous

9 CONCLUSION 55
 p.55-56

The conclusion of this chapter is simple. The eight questionable assumptions we have examined can be replaced with the following alternatives:

- 1) non-written languages are real languages;
- 2) there are no languages that are more important than others;
- 3) logic, clarity, and beauty are not properties for defining languages;
- 4) languages do not change solely because of the influence of other languages;
- 5) there is no “one country, one language” equation;
- 6) children acquire their mother tongue naturally rather than by imitation, because they are programmed (AH. A better word is “wired”, which sounds more like hardware) to do so;
- 7) the number of words in a language is higher than the number of words in the dictionary;
- 8) the main topic of linguistics is studying the processes of linguistic change rather than etymology.

All 8 are trivial, commonplace. The selection is random and unjustified. It would have been much better defining and clarifying terms like language, speech, communication, communication system, linguistics, semantics, pragmatics, etc. in the text.

The 1) could have been a stronger proposition: Spoken language is natural language, while written is a technology. Why? Because spoken language can be acquired naturally, while the written is always learned (Հայրասպետյան, 2025a : Բարբառի եւ ստանդարդ լեզվի հարաբերությունը).

The correct 4) statement is: “Languages by replication where mutation can occur internally (vertically, when the information goes from parents to children) or laterally (external loans: pier to pier).

Why 5) is important in this context?

The 8) is a random statement. Maximally linguistics studies lexicography (etymology included), phonology, orthography, syntax (grammar), semantics, pragmatics, philology, and much more – language acquisition, teaching, etc. Minimally – first three.

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1 WHAT IS COMMUNICATION? 57

Chapter 2: Why is language not communication, and why is communication not language?

Although this is a simple question, the answer is complex: what is language used for?

Try asking your family. You will get a practically unanimous answer: to communicate. The main function of language, if not the principal one, is indeed communication. However, as soon as the answer is given, further questions arise: what is the relationship between language and thought? Does language allow thinking or not? Moreover, if language is used for communication, what is the difference between language and other animal communication systems? Do other species have a language? If they do, why don't humans understand them, and why can't we learn these languages?

It is really a simple question that has a simple answer – “a practically unanimous answer: to communicate”, if you clearly define terms. See definitions and explanations in (Հայրապետյան. 2025b), where, unlike in the above excerpt, the role of thought is also defined

p.59

The sharing of a common code is therefore not a necessary condition for communication to succeed.

Finally, we got the definition: communication is a process of transferring a (any) code. ... and it is extremely hard to agree on the “not a necessary condition”.

Why does our speech transmit our thoughts and our intentions imprecisely? The answer is simple, but unfortunately rather hopeless: we do not communicate our thoughts explicitly, and if we did, we would make others' lives unbearable.

Most likely we think in images and explicit communication via “video”, rather than “audio”, will be precise. This passage is also an important message to neo- and paleo-Whorfian's: language can only corrupt thoughts, rather than shape them.

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3 ANIMAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS 64

4 INTENTIONAL SYSTEMS AND NON-NATURAL MEANING 66

5 TWO MODELS FOR COMMUNICATION 69

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Verbal communication is unusual because it uses not one, but two models of communication.

The first is a code model*: a natural language is a code that associates messages with signals.

What is the second model?

The classic view of language entertains a semiotic conception of communication: in communication, several codes are used. Let's return to the example with my son:

(73) Jacques: Nat, go brush your teeth.

Nathanel: Dad, I'm not sleepy.

Could not we say that, beyond the linguistic code, which assigns a meaning to every word spoken by Jacques and Nathanael, there is another code, a social one, the social code of the Moeschler family, according to which one goes to bed after having brushed one's teeth?

Obviously the author is not a programmer (☺). Instead of referring to example (59) he repeats it as (73). The second code is Searle's "network and background" (Հայրսույնդան. 2025b : Եզրույթներ), which can be interpreted as pragmatic context – see the comment to p.17 above. In the following sentences the term "background" is used.

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My definition of a language is very simple: it contains a phonology*, a semantics*, and a syntax*. Let's look for the moment at a lighter version of what language is. Chapter 3 will explore a more complex version.

What we call a language is a combination of a string of sounds and a string of meanings.

A language is made up of a lexicon, and every word of a lexicon has a form (a string of sounds) and a meaning. A sentence is also a string of words yielding a string of meanings. A sentence is ambiguous when some words have several meanings, which results in multiple representations of its meaning, called polysemy*. But a sentence can also be ambiguous because word groups inside a sentence, called phrases, give rise to different semantic representations.

The author follows Chomskian definition of language, which is an "umbrella" for lexicon, syntax, speech (sentence, discourse), and semantics. Also, if we are talking "a language", then instead of phonology we need to use something else, e.g. alphabet, or talk about "a spoken language".

p.75

Semantic organisation, on the other hand, does not only occur at the level of the lexicon* — that is, in a language's repertory of words. It also occurs at the level of the sentence.

See a more detailed analysis in (Հայրսույնդան. 2022 : 200),

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But if language is the externalisation of thought, it follows that there is a language of thought* — known as mentalese — which every human being masters, and which allows for the representation of states of affairs, events, and situations, as well as reasoning about propositions and facts. As such, the language of thought is made up of the words of thought, called concepts*, and propositions. The propositions are made up of concepts and operators, called connectives*, which allow complex propositions such as conjunction, disjunction, conditional, and negation to be built (Reboul 2017a).

A very good explanation of mentalese. The only issue is the first sentence – it does not seem obvious and no justification is offered.

CHAPTER 3: LANGUAGE STRUCTURE AND USAGE	
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1 LINGUISTIC RULES FIRST	
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Chapter 3: Language structure and usage
p.80

Distinguishing between language structure and usage has been one of the most important discoveries in language science in recent decades, along with the difference between language and communication. The structural dimension of language is related to its properties as part of a system, while the usage dimension shows that language is an activity of communication. The necessity of separating language from communication was mentioned above: as we have seen, the main function of language is not communication, and communication can take place without language. That said, I will now expand on the reasons why the main function of language is not communication, demonstrating that the rules governing language structure are not the same as those that govern its usage.

Even if we replace language with speech, the message of the paragraph remains unclear. Language (speech) is the message that is getting communicated. If we use the term “communication” to denote the object of communication, the thing that gets transferred then language (speech) is the communication. Still, for clarity refer to the Communication system diagram in (Հայրապետյան. 2025b). The main (the only!) function of language is communication of thoughts.

1 Linguistic rules first

Since the emergence of what is now known as pragmatics*, the research field that investigates language usage in communication (and particularly speaker meaning*) rather than language itself, it has been acknowledged that language rules are not rules of usage.

This is matter of definition. More accurately the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic rules are of different nature. We have a pretty good grasp of the syntax. It is a combinatorial system that can be described as a set deduction rules. The rules for the other 2 areas are obscure or rather unknown.

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Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist who is recognized as the founder of European structuralist linguistics, gave priority in the study of language to the langue* — a system of signs, defined by social conventions — as opposed to the parole* — the individual usage of the langue. In the mid-20th century, Noam Chomsky, the founder of generative grammar, distinguished between competence* and performance*, and prioritized the study of competence

Both were sensing something fishy about using the same word for language and speech. Both are specifying attributes of different things: competence is related to knowledge (or rather command) of langue, performance - to using parole, but they did not identify the two absolutely different essences: a set of production rules – language, and the product of those rules – speech (sentence, syntactic structure). They failed to see the difference between the rules that define the syntactic structure, and the syntactic structure itself (Հայրապետյան. 2025ab),

p.82-83 The relevance of examples 86-89 discussion is doubtful.

2 PRINCIPLE OF LINGUISTIC ORGANISATION	83
3 FLN AND FLB	87

Extensive discussion of animal communication in this and other sections seems unjustified. Animal communication is a trivial signaling system (Hayrapetyan, 2023) and can provide little or zero insight.

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p.91-94 This section is interesting and informative.

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Here is another example. A client in a restaurant is hesitating between two menus:

(137) Menu at 30€: Cheese and dessert.

(138) Menu at 25€: Cheese or dessert.

The head waiter sees the client hesitating and suggests:

(139) If you take the Cheese or dessert menu, I will give you both.

How is this possible? The client understood that if he chose cheese OR dessert he could not have both. But this conclusion has no logical foundation: it is a cancellable conclusion, because it is an implicature, and implicatures are defeasible.

I did not understand this example at all. Why “the main property of implicatures is cancellability” and what this particular example has to do with it?

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We now know that rules governing language structure are not the rules that govern its usage. This conclusion confirms the conclusion of chapter 2: language and communication are two different things. These two chapters have insisted upon the cognitive nature of language and communication. It is now time to investigate their social dimension in chapter 4.

Why “now”? The conclusions specified above this excerpt are about human behavior and have nothing – on surface – to do with language.

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In terms of the two main approaches that fashioned language science in the 20th century — Saussure’s structuralism and Chomsky’s generative grammar — only Noam Chomsky explicitly raised the cognitive and social issue by distinguishing between I- and E-language. That said, his definition of external language has always been more negative than positive: “It’s [E-language] a study of how that language faculty is put to use — which makes it external to Ilanguage by definition” (Andor 2004: 101).

I am not familiar with I- and E-language concepts, but Saussure for sure considers language as social phenomena, while parole – individual. The first develops (evolves) in social history (diachronic), while the latter – in now, the present time (synchronic); see the discussion that follows and also see (Հայրապետյան. 2025b).

p.113

A paradox arises here: the social part of language, la langue, is passive — it is merely a principle of organization, not a set of rules for usage — whereas the active part of language, speech (la parole) at the origin of the speech acts, is individual.

Artificially created paradox disappears when you establish the essence of language, speech, dialect, speech act (Հայրապետյան. 2025ab). Every speaker has an individual, unique instance of a language

instantiated in the brain (Հայրապետյան. 2025a:xosagen) exactly like human genome. In other words everyone talks in its own dialect (see the definition in Հայրապետյան. 2022 : 336 and comment to p.27 above). The individual's dialects are closes in the family, social group, and so on. In linguistics a geographically separated group of people whose dialects are very similar typically is assigned a name – Van, Gavar, Gyumri, Vanadzor, Arcax, etc. All this are the dialects of an abstract language (similar to abstract human genome). It is important to note that only individual's dialect is concrete – it is a substance, haecceity (Հայրապետյան. 2022 : Եզրայթանք): Community, social group, family dialects are abstract. Via the change of the individual's dialects during 100 years of an individual's life the language la lange evolves in social history. At any moment of individual's life the person produces parole according to the individual's la lange. Speech acts are usages of paroles performed (uttered) by individuals.

Thus we have the Saussurian paradox: the social aspect of language is studied by observing any one individual, but the individual aspect only by observing language in its social context. The science of parole never developed, but this approach to the science of language has been extremely successful over the past half-century.

“The science of parole” is called syntax or grammar. The science of speech act is pragmatics and sociolinguistics

2 THE SAPIR-WHORF HYPOTHESIS AND LINGUISTIC RELATIVISM114 p.114

A commonplace about the relationship between language and culture stems directly from ethnolinguistic research, and particularly from the work of linguists Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941), who made a major impact on 20-century language studies.

The impact was (is) major and unfortunate, because the culture - the set of ideas or thoughts shapes language. More accurately language is a part of culture, like kingdom in life forms. This is opposite to their hypothesis. Their hypothesis is kind of Lamarckism of cultural evolution.

p.115

According to Sapir, cultures are differentiated by their lexicons, and the difference in the lexicons of languages can be explained by their cultures. At this point the obvious circularity between language and culture becomes apparent: language determines culture and culture determines language.

Slopy logic or, rather, lack of evidence, examples. What is the methodology for establishing the claimed fact? Also, circularity is not between language and culture, but in reasoning. It is amazing that after multiple rebuttals that 1) no “fact” pointed out by Whorf is true, and 2) ultimate circularity in “reasoning” about the nonexistent facts

3 THE REASONS FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE RELATIVIST THESIS119 p.119

English contains black, white, red, yellow, green, blue, brown, purple, pink, orange, and grey.

Accurate analysis (Հայրապետյան. 2025c) reveals that scholars of English color system ignore the fact that “orange” is not a basic color term (native root) – it is derived from a fruit name.

This thesis is an extreme formulation of the code model, which is known as autonomy of meaning*

This thesis – “words contain meaning within themselves, and this meaning does not vary from one speaker to another or from one context to another” - is so obviously wrong that even mentioning is a waste of time.

p.121

The theory of ad hoc concepts is a version of Relevance Theory that expands ideas about the relationships between language and communication. The vision of meaning it advocates is radically contextualist — it differentiates between linguistically encoded concepts and contextually inferred concepts — and also tells us something important about language: that the value of a word only makes sense in its usage in context.

I think I am getting it now: communication in a majority of cases is what I call message and in some – the sending of message too. I need to study the “theory of ad hoc concepts” and Relevance Theory (Grice?).

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6 A QUESTION OF POLITENESS	132

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A major area of research in language science focuses on the phenomena of politeness*, which stems from sociolinguistics.

Some contemplation is needed to fully understand the importance of selecting politeness in discourse analysis. Why for example not study anger, bullying, insult: are these just degrees of politeness?

7 FACE AND FACE-WORK	136
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The sociologist Erwin Goffman (1922-1982), who initiated the micro-sociological approach to human interaction, greatly influenced dialogue and conversation analysis by introducing the notions of face* and face-work*. Here is his definition of face (Goffman 1972: 5): “The term face may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact.” The notion of face is commonly used in a non-technical way to describe the position of a participant to an interaction: to lose face means “to be in wrong face, to be out of face or to be shamefaced” (Goffman 1972: 9). To save one’s face on the other hand means not losing face; that is, “the process by which the person sustains an impression for the others that he has not lost face” (Goffman 1972: 9). In a more general way, face-work “designate[s] the action taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face” (Goffman 1972: 12) and refers to all of a participant’s actions that aim at not losing face.

These are interesting and new to me concepts (+ FTA) that need study from the point of linguistic implementations, toolkits and possible formalization for automatic discourse analysis.

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In this chapter, we have seen that, no matter which theory of language is adopted and no matter which theory of communication is employed to understand language usage, the social dimension of language must be taken into account. The central question is whether this dimension I anchored in the linguistic code or whether this dimension is linked to language usage.

Sociolinguistic answers tend to adopt the first alternative, while recent research in pragmatics goes in the other direction. I will go in the second direction myself for the remainder of this book.

Need to clarify what are the “theories of language”? Chomskyan approach, Pinker and Jackendoff’s, Sapir-Whorf? Also what are the “theories of communication”? I think the latter refers too the “theories of linguistic communication”. To me there is only one scientific theory on communication – Shannon’s. Any type of communication can be represented and analyzed using abstractions of that theory – that the beauty of real, scientific, not refuted yet theory vs. refuted (like Lamark, Sapir-Whorf, Skinner [linguistic theory], etc.). Same is true for linguistic theory – there is one currently accepted scientific theory that can be loosely named Chomskyan, because the syntactic structure analysis suggested by Chomsky is the basic theory on top of which current semantics and pragmatics is build. It is the current stage of cultural evolution of science of language – the best explanation we have. It is very similar to physics – Einstein’s “approach” is a single “correct” theory at this stage of evolution of science about matter in space-time. People confuse the use (application) or representation (e.g. Phrase structure, Universal Dependencies, etc.) of the theory with the theory itself.

CHAPTER 5: LANGUAGE AND DISCOURSE 144

p.144

Everyone has experienced strong contrast between linguistic competence and discursive competence.

I am not sure about “everyone”, but whoever has, should have immediately recognized that the former is a competence in area of producing discourse, while the latter – in area of discursive description thoughts. Such observers should recognize that distinguishing “competence” from “performance” is not equivalent to distinguishing language and speech. Language vs. speech – two different essences. One it is about knowing a C++ (Python, Java, YoFavorite) programming language and being able to write programs(code) of any level of complexity, the other – about writing an accurate C++ program that works correctly. For latter one needs an adequate competence in C++, but being a competent C++ programmer is not guarantee of writing an accurate C++ program.

The rest of the paragraph is about a completely different topic: conversational and writing skills. Rare people are good at both at the same time. That tells me that the assumption here is that linguistic = writing, while discursive = speaking, which is a reflection of another common example of slopy terminology: written text is language, lecture in auditorium is speech.

Besides these belletristic detours and destructions I would wonder if this is a reflection of the fact that conversation is handled by System 1, while writing – by System 2 (Hayrapetyan, 2026)? At the moment it looks pretty obvious and evolutionary justified.

p.145

On the other hand, the insertion of a connective does not make things clearer in the following examples:

(194) # John fell. His car broke down. 116

(195) # John fell because his car broke down.

(196) # John fell but his car broke down.

(197) # John fell; therefore, his car broke down.

These examples show that connectives do not play a role in discourse quality: if the connected sentences do not make sense, connectives are incapable of improving anything. As filmmakers say, you can’t save a movie during the editing process: if the rushes aren’t any good, the editing won’t improve anything.

But if rushes are good, the editing can assemble them into a masterpiece. For example:

John fell: he have got a headache

John fell, because he has got a headache
John fell, therefore he has got a headache

These counterexamples show that even when something seems ubiquitous it does not mean that it is always true. There are cases that connectives resolve ambiguity and provide clarity.

p.144

Pratiques, asked me for a research article on philosophy papers written by high school students before and after they attended classes on discourse connectives such as *mais* 'but', *parce que* 'because', *donc* 'therefore', and their roles in written discourse (Moeschler 1994).

Do you also have classes on discourse connectives in Armenian schools and Universities? It is hard to imagine that classes on supposedly naturally acquired skills of basic language can improve (drastically) writing skills

1 SOME CONVERSATIONAL RULES 145
2 IS DISCOURSE A LINGUISTIC FACT? 149

Discourse is a generalization of the notion of a conversation to any form of communication]

Discourse is a major topic in social theory, with work spanning fields such as sociology, anthropology, continental philosophy, and discourse analysis. Following work by Michel Foucault, these fields view discourse as a system of thought, knowledge, or communication that constructs our world experience. Since control of discourse amounts to control of how the world is perceived, social theory often studies discourse as a window into power. Within theoretical linguistics, discourse is understood more narrowly as linguistic information exchange and was one of the major motivations for the framework of dynamic semantics. In these expressions, 'denotations are equated with their ability to update a discourse context (Wikipedia).

p.149

All linguistic approaches to discourse share a strong presupposition: discourse is a linguistic unit, and language must be understood from the perspective of discourse. Discourse is the principal unit of language, rather than sentences, as syntactic approaches to language — those inspired by the Chomskyan paradigm — claim.

Discourse is the principal logical unit of speech (Հայրույկանյւն. 2025b), while sentence is the principal syntactic unit of speech.

p.150

First of all, phonemes cannot be decomposed into smaller units, except into their distinctive features, which are not linguistically realised. A phoneme is therefore a linguistic unit. Second, the combination of phonemes enables the construction of morphemes, but can only explain their form, not their meaning. Therefore phonemes have no causal power over the meaning of morphemes. A morpheme, which is decomposable, but which cannot be explained by the causal relations among its parts, is therefore a unit. And finally, combining morphemes results in sentences, whose syntactic and semantic rules are defined in terms of morphemes. The sentence may therefore be decomposed, and can be explained by the causal relationships between its parts. A sentence is therefore not a unit.

No, phonemes are not linguistic units. They are phonetic (sound) units that can be used for information encoding. In particular they used by Homo Sapiens Sapiens for encoding abstract linguistic symbols – morphemes. Morphemes can encoded differently: 1) phonetically, 2) graphically (abstract graphemes that can represent phonemes, pictograms (hyeroglyphs) that represent lexemes or combinations of

phonemes – syllables, cuneiform that represent lexemes or combinations of phonemes – syllables), 3) gesturally – combinations of hand movements and facial expressions that represent lexemes or phonemes.

The fact that phonemes are used to encode abstract linguistic symbols has nothing to do with linguistics: neither phonetics has a “knowledge” or dependency on linguistic rules, nor linguistics has a “knowledge” or dependency on phonetics rules. These are two absolutely independent systems. Human (natural) speech brings them together but it is accidental.

Why phonemes “selected” for encoding morphemes? 1) human can produce and identify phonemes, 2) relatively small number of phonemes (about 20 – 50) are enough to combine them into sequences that make morphemes (from several thousands to couple of millions: ordinary speakers use couple of thousands).

Smallest linguistic unit is **morpheme**. They are combined into **lexemes**. The lexemes are combined into **phrases** and **clauses**. The lexemes, phrases and clauses are combined into **sentences**. The lexemes, phrases, and sentences are combined into **discourse**, which is a unit of **text** (see (Հայրապետյանի. 2022, Hayrapetyan, 2025) for more details on this hierarchy).

p.151

If a discourse is not made up of sentences, what does it consist of? My answer, developed in Reboul and Moeschler (1998b), is that discourse is made up of utterances* rather than sentences. An utterance is a sentence that comes into being in a context. It implies a speaker, an addressee, and a time and place of speech. But the context also contains information that can be inferred from the cognitive environment shared by the speaker and her addressee. So, if a discourse is made up of utterances, can it be explained by the causal relationships between utterances? The second question to be asked is whether an utterance can be explained by the sentence that makes it up.

Discourse is made up of sentences. Utterance can be a part of sentence (ellipsis), sentence, or several sentences. Utterance can be corrupted or, rather, elliptic – incomplete, partial – sentence or sentences. See comment to p.250 below. I think discourse as well utterance contains both: locution and illocution.

3 ARE THERE DISCOURSE RULES? 152

p.154

Both discourses are clear illustrations of what a discourse is: *a sequence of non-arbitrary utterances that seeks a global interpretation*. This definition allows us to conclude that discourse is neither a linguistic nor a pragmatic unit. Discourse comprehension is thus not only compositional, but is also driven by the search for a global interpretation. As we observed above, when you leave a lecture after ten minutes, it is because you quickly accessed the global interpretation, too soon in terms of the speaker’s discourse planning; in the soap opera example, you understood the overall intentions (characters) in five minutes, primarily because they were easily inferable.

Hard to follow. General linguistic rule: the meaning of a linguistic unit is defined by both: 1) the structure of the unit, and 2) the context.

4 COHESION AND COHERENCE 154

p.158

Connectives and other pragmatic markers are underlined:

(217) ...

[So, to begin with, we realise that our colleagues are right: we never should have written this book, we should have talked about such and such topics we didn’t even mention (because they seem to us entirely without interest), we should have... But we have only one argument in our defence: we hope that this book

will amuse, instruct, and above all make the interest of the topic known and, more generally show why scientific research may be a pleasure, and a passion, and how one can find as much adventure in an armchair with a book as alone in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.]

After reading this paragraph several times I realized that the criterion for identifying pragmatic connectives is that their removal from the text does not affect the meaning, connectiveness, or coherence of the text. The previous version of the text (216) should have given me a quick clue, but, for some reason, it did not. [I also realized that in my writings I tend to remove them after editorial (second, third, etc.) reading.] Topics to study: a) is the set of all connectives part of a set of all pragmatic connectives? (in other words, are there connectives that cannot be pragmatic connectives?), b) opposite of a): Can any pragmatic connective be used as regular, logical connective, c) what kinds of grammatical tools are used to construct pragmatic connectives (what to begin with, and above all grammatically are, e.g. the former looks like NP, the latter – AP (adverbial)).

p.159-160

That said, for a theory of cohesion markers to work, these markers must play a role in discourse. The function which is generally assigned to them is coherence*. Coherence is the property of discourses that corresponds to grammaticality in sentences: in other words, coherence is to discourse what grammaticality is to sentences. With this analogy in mind, we can now talk about discourse rules in the same way we address grammatical rules for sentences...

If we stop here then it might sound like somewhat contradicting my previous observations. However, further reading confirms them. So, I stick to my guns.

5 DISCOURSE RELATIONS AS LIFE BUOYS? 161

p.161

The most popular approaches to discourse relations take a variety of forms, but they are only notational variants, as they were called in the 1970s; or alternative versions of the same scientific paradigm: Rhetorical Structure Theory, Discourse Relation Theory, and

Segmented Discourse Relation Theory. From the standpoint of these approaches, discourse units are semantic in nature, and represent what utterances describe; that is, events and states. These concepts belong to our natural metaphysics. Here is how Nicholas Asher describes these entities (Asher 1993: 7-8): “Many linguists and philosophers have distinguished between states and events, or activities and accomplishments. Events have often been described as ‘punctual’ or as ‘containing their initial and final endpoints’, while states and activities have been described as ‘open-ended’ or ‘not containing their initial and final, temporal endpoints’”.

Definitely I need some time to understand why this description of the “world” is better than mine or, rather, is this a case of denoting different things with same term or same things with different terms. However, in my version of “natural metaphysics” (Հայրասպետյան. 2022 : 16-18), states are durations, that are represented with verbs (grammatically) and, sometimes, with nouns (semantically), while events are boundaries of the states that are [always] nouns. [«Դասարանների սկիզբը եւ վերջը մենք ընկալում ենք որպես պատահույթներ» (Հայրասպետյան. 2022 : 24)]

p.161-163

Discourse relations are therefore relationships that states and events described in sentences entertain with each other. But which is the set of discourse relations? They must have a certain generality in order to be applicable in a variety of settings. In SDRT, the set of discourse relations is limited to relationships between events and/or states such as NARRATION, EXPLANATION, ELABORATION, RESULT, and BACKGROUND:

- (223) NARRATION: relation of temporal succession between two events
Max stood up. John greeted him.
- (224) EXPLANATION: an event explains why the previous event happened
Max fell. John pushed him.
- (225) ELABORATION: an event is a part of another event
The council built the bridge. The architect drew the plans.
- (226) BACKGROUND: a state is the backdrop in which another event occurs
Max opened the door. The room was completely dark.
- (227) RESULT: the described event causes an event or a state
Max turned the light off. The room was completely dark.

This approach yields rather impressive results on discourse structure. Let’s take another look at the earlier excerpt from Airframe (Michael Crichton), which appears again in (228):

- (228) (1) Emily Jansen sighed in relief. (2) The long flight was nearing an end. (3) Morning sunlight streamed through the windows of the airplane. (4) In her lap, (5) little Sarah squinted in an unaccustomed brightness (6) as she noisily sucked the last of her bottle.

Discourse relations between events and states can be described quite simply: the implied discourse relations, as seen in this excerpt, are BACKGROUND, ELABORATION, and NARRATION.

- (229) (2) is the BACKGROUND of (1)
- (3) is the BACKGROUND of (2)
- (5) is the ELABORATION of (4)
- (5) follows (1) via NARRATION
- (6) is the BACKGROUND of (5)

The idea is that discourse relations are the ingredients of discourse on which its coherence is based.

This looks pretty reasonable. Study further to elaborate in the (Հայրապետյան. 2025b : ԲԾ-ն դրսև եւրքի կողմ).

p.163

Every French speaker knows that mais does not have the same usages as but, and that en effet can be translated by indeed only in certain contexts.

This is why I introduced the notion of signature (Հայրապետյան. 2022, Hayrapetyan, 2025) as a formalization of contexts.

Let us consider the example of causal connectives, which have been described in many ways for French (Zufferey 2012, Moeschler 2011, and 2019, Degand and Fagard 2012), English (Sweetser 1990), Greek (Chrysovalantis 2012, 2014), and Dutch (Stukker, Sanders, and Verhagen 2009).

Note, that 1) the list does not contain Armenian and 2) why don’t start writing articles for casual and other types of connectives evolution from Grabar to EArmenian and WArmenian (this can be considered as Armenology (for getting funding), even though it is definitely not)? The pp. 163-165 are worth studying before publishing the “Relative connectives in Eastern Armenian”.

6 DISCOURSE PRAGMATICS 165
p.168

However, in order to produce an overall picture of the relationship between language and discourse, two questions must be addressed: How can we explain that a discourse can affect the

hearer's emotional state? And how can we explain that a discourse can affect his beliefs? In Relevance Theory, these two types of effects are traditionally known as non-propositional* and propositional*.

Why we are interested in a purely psychological issues?

7 NON-PROPOSITIONAL EFFECTS, EMOTION AND ADHESION 168
p.169

This vision of language, which clearly separates information and emotion, can legitimately be questioned.

The information and emotion are very different things by definition (which by the way no one does give). Clear separation is inherent in essence of these things.

8 PROPOSITIONAL EFFECTS, ARGUMENTATION AND PERSUASION 173
9. CONCLUSION 176
CHAPTER 6: ORDINARY AND NON-ORDINARY USAGES OF LANGUAGE177
1 ORDINARY AND NON-ORDINARY USAGES OF LANGUAGE 179
p. 180-181

Metonymy* is traditionally described as a correspondence relationship: the meal corresponds to the client, the author to his book, and the means to the result:

(245) The ham omelette jumped into a taxi = the client who ordered the ham omelette jumped into a taxi.

(246) Agatha Christie is on the left hand shelf = Agatha Christie's book is on the left hand shelf

(247) Peles head was unstoppable = the goal scored by Pele with his head was Unstoppable

How can this be formalized? For sure background is necessary. However, is it sufficient. Irony is another similar problem.*

p. 182

And finally, zeugma* does not involve grammar, simply because zeugma contains syntactic parallelism but not semantic parallelism. (249) contains both syntactic and semantic parallelisms, whereas in (250) the parallelism is only syntactic:

(249) Mary arrived with John, Sophia with Mark and Lucy with Peter.

(250) Mary arrived with John, Sophia with Mark and Lucy with a sad face.

To me the (249) is simple ellipsis.

2 FIGURE OF SPEECH: THE CLASSIC VERSION 182
3 METAPHORICAL THOUGHT 185
p. 186

The concept of prototype emerged in response to apparently absurd questions such as "is a sparrow more a bird than a chicken?". According to the traditional model of necessary and sufficient conditions*, chickens as well as sparrows are birds, and equally qualify as members of this category.

I am not sure that "prototype emerged in response to apparently absurd questions such as "is a sparrow more a bird than a chicken?" like that. Categories are fuzzy. I am sure that Rosch were perfectly aware of the "fuzzy sets" theory, suggested by her colleague Zadeh (Հայրապետյան. 2022 : 260). The

whole theory is based on the observation that there are no absolute, clear cut boundaries of categories, for example, "big". How would you determine membership to the class of "Big animal"? The solution is that you assign "weight" for being "Big animal": sperm whale - 7, elephant - 6, gorilla - 5, human - 4, ant - 1, infusoria - 0.01, etc.

For birds, you assign weights to attributes. For example, [has] feathers - 7, bipedal - 7, have wings - 7, have beak - 6, can fly - 6. In more complex approach the attributes can be weighted. For example, multiply 6 by average length (time or distance) of fly. If you prorated attributes of other animals, for example, having wings - 7, hands - 2, flippers - 3, legs - 1, then you can include into "who is more a bird?" contest everyone.

4 WEAK IMPLICATURES AND NON-PROPOSITIONAL EFFECTS 190 p. 191

This creates a real dilemma: if literary works are acts of communication, how can we make the assumption that they are essentially ambiguous? No communication acts seek to be ambiguous.

Unless the ambiguity is the point of communication (like in case of politicians and other tricksters).

5 NARRATION AND TEMPORAL ORDER BETWEEN EVENTS 197 p. 203

Temporal order, therefore, corresponds to what is known as the NARRATION discourse relation, whereas reverse temporal order corresponds to an EXPLANATION.

Study formalization of narration and explanation representation by grammar or semantics.

6 THE REPRESENTATION OF SPEECH AND THOUGHTS 203 p. 204

I am actually a very selfish writer. I write for myself. I write to try to understand the world, to understand human nature, to better understand my country. And if in the process of doing that I tell a story that maybe helps to share something I discovered myself, that's great (Jonathan Coe).

Me 2.

Ann Banfield is one of the first scholars who has attempted to use linguistic arguments to understand what literary fiction is. Her point of departure can be summarised in two strong theses. First, fiction, and particularly narration, is not communication; second, some sentences in literary fiction have no speaker. These are known as unspeakable sentences. These two claims, which are rejected by polyphonic approaches to semantics in linguistics (Ducrot 1984) as well as by narratology in literary studies (Genette 1980), are at the heart of the theses I have developed on language and communication in this book. It is now time to expand them further.

... what literary fiction is. <- typo.

Her point of departure can be summarised in two strong theses. First, fiction, and particularly narration, is not communication; second, some sentences in literary fiction have no speaker. These are known as *unspeakable sentences*. These two claims, which are rejected by polyphonic approaches to semantics in linguistics (Ducrot 1984) as well as by narratology in literary studies (Genette 1980), are at the heart of the theses I have developed on language and communication in this book. It is now time to expand them further.

In this context communication is definitely not a process, but rather the object that is passed in the act of communication. However, the difference is so subtle that is very hard to articulate. In any case, opposition of narration and communication is not very convincing, because narrative, question, command, etc. can be a subject of communication.

A very strange, oxymoron term: unspeakable sentence.

The “polyphonic approaches to semantics in linguistics” is also a very strange name for an approach that might reject Banfield’s claims.

The [Examples](#) to me are “bellevistic” and subject of philological study.

7 CAUSALITY IN NARRATION	207
p.207	

Exclamations, for example, are a type of Expression* that differs from ordinary sentences.

They are not syntactic categories – they are linguistic. Syntax is about building sentences and units (parts, constituents) of sentences. Exclamations are not sentences – ordinary or other. They can be classified as presentences.

8 CONCLUSION	210
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The Acrobat AI assistant summary of the importance of discourse figures:

Discourse figures, such as metaphor, metonymy, irony, and zeugma, are common elements of everyday language rather than extraordinary usages. They serve specific communicative purposes, enriching communication by enabling the expression of complex ideas and emotions that might not be easily conveyed through literal language. These figures are understood through general strategies used in utterance comprehension and contribute to the style of communication, expressing the speaker's or author's mental or emotional state. They evoke emotional or mental states, creating a sense of mutual understanding or shared feelings between the speaker and the audience. Discourse figures are better described as indeterminate rather than ambiguous, as they invite multiple interpretations. Additionally, they play a crucial role in shaping meaning, emphasizing certain aspects, and influencing the interpretation of texts or speech, contributing to the richness and depth of language.

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1 BEYOND MEANING	214
p. 216	

Understanding an utterance therefore amounts to accessing different types of content, which vary in accessibility and strength. The assumption is that semantic contents such as entailments and presuppositions are stronger than pragmatic ones, whereas pragmatic contents are more accessible than semantic ones, because the latter are covert, or invisible in the communication process. These observations are shown in the following scales (from Moeschler, 2019: 41):

(301) Strength scale

Entailment > conventional implicature > presupposition > explicature > conversational implicature.

(302) Accessibility scale

Explicature > conversational implicature > conventional implicature > presupposition > entailment.

Need a better understanding of terms (много новых слов).

2 THE ROLE OF PRESUPPOSITION IN COMMUNICATION	217
3 THE ROLE OF IMPLICATURES IN COMMUNICATION	218

4 ANTI-DECIPHERMENT, FOR EPISTEMIC VIGILANCE 223
 5 TO BE OR NOT TO BE CHARLIE 224
 p.225

(320) Je ne suis pas Charlie ‘I am not Charlie’ IMPLICATES

- a. “I am not in solidarity with Charlie”.
- b. “I am not in mourning for Charlie”.
- c. “I am not devastated by this attack”.
- d. “I do not condemn terrorism”.
- e. “Freedom of expression is not the most important value of the republic”.
- f. “Violence will overcome intelligence and thought”.

This hypothesis immediately encounters a difficulty: the implicatures of a negative utterance are not the opposite implicatures of its positive correspondent.

I would emphasize the difficulty more: it is not necessarily support for violence – 320.f. I am not sure that the people who can mean 320.f will circulate the 320 – they will just go and crash Charlie. Unfortunately, our current environment backs and justifies (or at least ignores) the actions of “the powerful and violent”. One of the most vivid examples is the Emperor Trump of the Evil Empire of our times. He gets “justice” for the powerful by bullying the weak and presents the results as justice and peace. I would list 50/50 sentiments like a-d and e: “I am against provocations”, “I am against hearting religious feelings”, “I am against wokeism”, etc. This argument would have been stronger, if the messages appear before the violence.

I remember absolutely disgusting [introduction](#) of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the President of Iran by the president of Columbia University in 2007. I am definitely not a fan of Islamic, totalitarian leaders, but if you invite such a person to have a talk have a dignity of host and do not insult your guest. This is a trademark of woke: extreme political correctness in criticizing (rather glorifying) leftist “sins” and completely forgetting politeness at criticizing opponents “sins”. The insults at political debates are equally disgusting.... and all of these were not implicatures.

p.227

Hypothesis 3: Je ne suis pas Charlie ‘I am not Charlie’ is the metalinguistic negation of Je suis Charlie ‘I am Charlie’. What is the meaning of metalinguistic negation? In studies on metalinguistic negation (Horn 1989, Moeschler 2018c), a negative utterance not-p with a metalinguistic negation means “I cannot affirm p”, and not “it is false that p”; in other words the ordinary or descriptive meaning of negation. The meaning of Je ne suis pas Charlie, therefore, would be the meaning given in (327):

(327) Je ne suis pas Charlie
 ‘I am not Charlie’
 MEANS “I cannot affirm I am Charlie, I refuse to say I am Charlie”

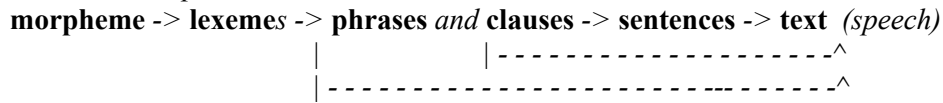
This is the closest to my understanding and interpreting.

6 CONCLUSION 229
 CONCLUSION: WHAT WE DO AND STILL DO NOT KNOW ABOUT LANGUAGE231
 1 WHAT WE KNOW: FROM SYNTAX TO PRAGMATICS, THE INTERFACE ISSUE231

p.231

The most interesting point about recent language research, however, does not stem from a particular domain that contrasts with others — traditional approaches reinforce subfields and their institutional and scientific legitimacy, as in phonology as opposed to morphology and syntax, and semantics as opposed to pragmatics. No, the striking thing about the new approaches is that they proceed in terms of *interface*. In other words, the complexity of phenomena related to language is so great that no one discipline can single-handedly explain even its best-defined objects

Yes, that's why you adopt a layered view on speech, but phonetics should be excluded as a linguistic layer – see comment to p. 150:



It would be great to find, understand, and define the interfaces of the arrows.

p.232

Imagine that the speaker says (330). You probably think the interpretation of this utterance is unambiguous, and that it corresponds to the reading shown in the corrective clause (331). But things can change, and your interlocutor may say (332) in response to your assertion in (333):

- (330) It is not raining.
- (331) It is not raining; the sun has appeared.
- (332) It is not raining; it's raining cats and dogs.
- (333) It is raining.

(331) and (332) have different entailments:

- (334) The sun has appeared
ENTAILS "it is not raining"
- (335) It's raining cats and dogs
ENTAILS "it is raining"

Which clues allow one to choose between the descriptive reading and the metalinguistic one? The easy answer is to say that it depends on the context. But is there something in an utterance that allows us to anticipate one reading rather than the other? The answer is prosody. A metalinguistic reading would insist on raining, since the word choice is inappropriate: for the speaker, raining is insufficient to qualify what is happening, because what is falling from the sky is "cats and dogs".

I can easily imagine different prosody in pronouncing (331) and (332) and obviously they have different entailments, but why we might need prosody and metalinguistic reading "to anticipate one reading rather than the other?"

p.234

The territories of semantics and pragmatics are, therefore, complex, and are similar to the borders of the Swiss cantons represented in Figure 7.

Need to study Figure 7 table.

2 WHAT WE STILL DO NOT KNOW: EMOTION, ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE, MACHINE TRANSLATION, AND MAN-MACHINE COMMUNICATION235

p.234

As we observed earlier, no machine has ever passed the Turing test, and thankfully we do not yet spend our evenings chatting with Siri, Google or Alexa. Several perspectives about topics that will become trends in linguistic and pragmatic research over the next decade are listed below.

True for the time of writing, however, ChatGPT, has passed.

p.234

Briefly stated, traditional techniques of linguistic analysis have been replaced with computational techniques that use a great deal of data, and with machine learning methods.

Syntactic analysis of speech can be perfectly done by deterministic methods. On the other hand semantic and pragmatic analysis is currently possible only through statistical methods (“great deal of data, and with machine learning”). Unfortunately, people nowadays completely disregard deterministic methods out of hype to look technologically advanced (or something) and waist unnecessary resources on syntactic analysis by “great deal of data, and with machine learning”. This is especially harmful for low resource languages where a lot of effort is waisted on the attempts create “great deal of data” to artificially (manually). You cannot create enough data manually to achieve satisfactory quality.

3 A CONCLUSION FOR THE BOOK 239
AFTERWORD 241
p.241

The sudden increase in Internet interactions, via Zoom for Web Seminars or Skype for private chats, has given language an even more important role than before: things that formerly seemed like limitations in certain contexts have become an essential social and emotional link to others.

No, it did not. It gave “more important role” to the Internet and remote conferencing technologies such as Zoom and Skype.

Before the results were in, I imagined adding a section on Trump’s discourse manipulation. The outcome of the election has given me hope that the time of fake news and post-truth is behind us, and that a new era of truthfulness, sincerity, and honesty in speech will arise¹⁸³, although there is

no real reason for such optimism, mainly because the result of an election cannot change the beliefs of more than seventy million voters.

“Fake news and post-truth” are not Trump specific. These are “bullets” of the political weaponry of propaganda or social engineering. Trump is just the most disgusting politician of recent years who is on par with Alexander the “Great” and other “Greats”: Hitler, Stalin, Putin, etc.

However, there is still good reason for hope. First, more than seventy-eight million Americans made the choice of reason. None of them believe the earth is flat, that there is an Illuminati plot, or that the 2020 American presidential election results were the result of massive fraud.

There is no hope, because the other “seventy-eight million American made the choice of reason” to vote for Trump. Many of “them believe the earth is flat (there is an analog of linguistic “flat-earth” – the Sapir-Whorf” hypothesis), that there is an Illuminati plot, or that the 2020 American presidential election results were the result of massive fraud”. The masses are not real scientists that dare to think outside the box.

In other words, they are all aware that brain manipulation begins with language manipulation.

No, they are not. Both “seventy-eight millions” are the result of social engineering – we all are (see Myside bias in Glossary). There is no rational, absolute, “objective” truth outside of mathematics (or abstract structures).

GLOSSARY 243
p.243

Autonomy of meaning: assumption according to which meaning is located in words.

A strange assumption maybe because of imprecisions or ambiguity of the “located in words”.

Biolinguistics: theory of language based on the assumption that the faculty of language is recorded into genetic material.

Probably more informatively and accurately: theory of language based on the assumption that the faculty of language is a neural (or genetically determined) structure..

Code model: system of communication based on the sharing of a common code, and the transmission of signals from a source (communicator) to a recipient (addressee).

Any system of communication IS “based on the sharing of a common code, and the transmission of signals from a source (communicator) to a recipient (addressee)”. Unclear: what is the purpose of this definition.

Cognitive principle of relevance: principle explaining the tendency for human cognition to be geared to maximize relevance.

Incomprehensible.

Communicated (conveyed): what is said + what is implicated.

This is a definition of message.

Communication: system allowing for a transfer of information from a source to a destination.

Should have been: a process of transferring “of information from a source to a destination” (Հայրապետյան, 2025b). Here again the distinction between communication as a ‘thing’ and a ‘process’ is blurred.

Concept: word of the language of thought, with logical, encyclopaedic, and lexical entries.

Concept has nothing to do with logic, encyclopaedia, or lexicology. It is a unit of the language of thought, that we (human beings) decompose the images of reality into. Typically we assign lexemes to concepts.

Context: set of contextual assumptions allowing a contextual implication to be drawn.

Circular and incomprehensible. Context is the surroundings, the environment beyond the borders of an object. It might influence the functions, the behavior of the object.

Contextual dependency: assumption according to which meaning depends on context.

If you accept the definition of Context above (which I hope Chomsky will approve), then this definition is a tautology.

Creole: pidgin that has become a mother tongue, consisting of a syntax, a morphology, and a considerable lexicon.

Creole: pidgin that acquired grammar and has become a mother tongue.

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Dialect: variety of a standard language.

Theoretical linguistics is a deductive science. From this “belletristic“ definition follows that before establishing standard language there were no dialects in a given language. See (Հայրապետյան. 2022 : 335) for a much better definition.

Discours analysis: field of linguistics that defines discourse as a linguistic unit.

Discourse competence: speaker knowledge about discourse structure, which is the foundation of discourse coherence.

Extremely strange definitions. Is Discours a typo?

Garden-path sentence: sentence whose grammatical parsing leads to a dead end.

A very strange definition of ungrammatical sentence

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Inferential model: system of communication based on the contextualisation of transmitted signals and the deduction of a contextual implication.

Convolutated, incomprehensible.

Information: modification of a cognitive system’s state.

Information is commonly understood as news, which is a thing, rather than a action.

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Information: modification of a cognitive system’s state.

This is a very provocative definition of information, which on surface looks like nonsense: information is a ‘thing’, while modification is a ‘process’. On the other hand information is king of modification – it is a ‘change’, ‘modification’. Worth further pondering and comprehension.

Interface: locus of cognitive systems interaction.

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Intonation: melodic dimension of language.

Melodic dimension of utterance (or speech).

Language: system of information representation defined by a phonology, a syntax, and a semantics.

This is Speech. Language: system of rules and morphemes (codes) to create more codes of concepts.

Langue (Saussure): system of linguistic signs shared by a linguistic community.

Yes, if the word 'system' includes manipulation and parsing rules. However, the word 'system' allows to include everything related to 'signs' in language: speech (set of sentences), semiotics, phonology, traffic signs, etc.

Lexicon: repertory of lexical units that define a natural language.

They are part of natural language – why 'define'? (sloppy)

Linguistic code: system that enables the matching of messages and signals as well as their transmission from a source to a recipient.

Linguistic code: system that enables the matching of messages to concepts. Transmission is a function of communication system. Code is transmitted, rather than enables transmission.

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Negative face: personal territory of a speaker/hearer.

?

Phoneme: minimal speech unit without meaning, but which produces a change of meaning by commutation.

Phoneme: minimal speech unit without meaning, whose sole function is distinction of linguistic units that have meaning. Phonemes has nothing to do with meaning.

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Pragmatics: study of the usage of language in communication.

There is no other usage of language, but in communication

Production procedure: speaker's heuristics, which facilitate the treatment of her utterances by an addressee.

?

Recursion: property of grammatical constituents to be embedded in themselves. For instance, a relative clause is embedded in a matrix sentence.

1) This is not a definition of a term; 2) recursion is not a property – it is a process, 3) this is a description of a specific application of recursion for embedding grammatical constituents. See an accurate definition in (Հայրապետյան. 2022 : 359-360).

Reductionism: scientific method that aims at determining, via successive reductions, the minimal units of analysis.

No, reductionism is a scientific method that aims at describing the system behavior via structure of the constituent parts.

Schwa: central vowel that may or may not be pronounced in French language.

From Oxford Dictionary: the unstressed central vowel (as in [a] mom[e]nt [a]go), represented by the symbol /ə/ in the International Phonetic Alphabet.

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Speaker meaning: what the speaker's utterance means

What the speaker is intended the utterance to mean (?)

Theory of Mental Space: semantic theory that connects entities belonging to connected mental spaces that are grammatically constrained.

?

Utterance: sentence used in context.

The accepted in linguistics definition is "sentence used in conversation". This is the original definition: "any stretch of talk, by one person, before and after which there is silence on the part of the person" (Harris, 1951)

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