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THE NOTION OF LITERAL MEANING IN SPEECH ACT THEORY

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During the twenty or so years that preceded the publication of Austin's constative-performative distinction, among those philosophers of language who were particularly concerned with the distinction between meaningful and meaningless discourse, literal meaning was the preeminent philosophical notion.[1] Austin challenged its centrality; the fortunate result of his redirecting analytical attention away from the so-called descriptive function of assertorial statements and toward a set of utterances that he, and subsequently others, contend are performatives, has been a fairly coherent and comprehensive body of literature on speech act theory. Whether they are aware of it or not, scholars writing within the framework of speech acts have been working toward a formulation of a theory of meaning that contains certain assumptions about the characteristics that have been said to define literal meaning. That is, their reaction to an earlier pre-occupation with the notion of literal meaning reflects an explicitly or covertly held understanding about what constitutes literalness. What I shall argue is that no unitary notion of literal meaning exists within this theory. In fact, the notion of literal meaning occurs in at least four senses, only one of which has been discussed in the literature.

The widely exposed sense of literal meaning as direct meaning occurs within the context of the literal meaning hypothesis, an analytical approach to the problem of indirect speech acts. This hypothesis has been argued for by Searle (1979) and by Gordon and Lakoff (1975); it has been adopted in a modified form by Sadock (1974), accepted implicitly by many others who have written within the performative verb hypothesis of generative semantics, and rejected by Levinson (1979, 1980) and by Gazdar (forthcoming). In addition to literal meaning as direct meaning, three other senses of literal meaning occur in speech act theory. I shall show that Austin employs literal meaning in the senses of truthconditional meaning and of nonmetaphorical meaning. Moreover, a third sense occurs in the early work of Searle (1968, 1969), in which the notion of literal meaning is used in the sense of idealized meaning. This sense is different from one appearing in Searle's later works: here, the notion of literal meaning is used in the sense of direct meaning, the sense that I have said is to be associated with indirect speech act theory.[2] Although this latter sense is shared by a number of writers, I have chosen to focus, at least initially, upon its expression in Searle, for historical and for expository reasons. Those who write about Searle's theory sometimes accept one and sometimes the other of his interpretations. Anyone reading in this scholarly area should keep two possible interpretations in mind; indeed, one can find both interpretations confusedly assumed in the same exposition.

Among all the senses of literal meaning in speech act theory, the sense that is associated with indirect speech acts is the easiest to characterize because the data that are defined as nonliteral are the subject of extended discussion. This discussion provides a rich source of data from which one can infer assumptions about literal meaning. But in the cases of the other three senses of literal meaning, the nonliteral data are <u>excluded</u> from discussion, and they are dismissed summarily.

They are swiftly labelled 'nonserious' and 'nonliteral' phenomena that will not therefore be included in the subject under discussion. Alas, the label that serves as an effective strategy to clear the ground quickly so that an argument may proceed is insufficiently precise to provide us with a clear definition of literal meaning. Both Austin (1968) and Searle (1969) employ this strategy. In the case of Searle, we can construct a sense of literal meaning that is consistent with his overall purpose. But in the case of Austin, I cannot identify a set of data that conforms to any interpretation that I have hitherto discovered for literal meaning or any interpretation that seems to define the kind of data upon which Austin centers his theoretical discussion. That is, any definition of literal meaning that we may construct that seems appropriate, given the ground clearing expression. is in conflict with the description of the data that is the subject under discussion. I shall offer a plausible explanation for this terminological dilemma, but I propose this explanation as informed speculation rather than as proposing persuasive and explicit evidence that I have discovered in Austin's own writing.

Austin's uses of the notion of literal meaning.

In the literature written after Speech Acts (1969), the expression 'the serious and literal use' of language or of sentences or of utterances occurs with noticeable frequency. Sometimes one discovers only 'the literal use of x' or 'the serious use of x'. So far as I have been able to discover, these expressions are not defined in any of these later publications; one can, however, trace their origin to Austin (1968) and to Searle (1969). Austin says:

> ...[T]here is another whole range of questions about 'how we are using language' or 'what we are doing in saying something' which we have said may be, and intuitively seem to be, entirely different - further matters which we are not touching upon. For example, there are insinuating (and other non-literal uses of language), joking (and other non-serious uses of language)...We can say 'In saying x I was joking' (insinuating..., expressing my feelings, etc.)
> (1968:121) (Italics are Austin's)

The function of this brief and parenthetical reference to non-literal and nonserious data is to acknowledge, in passing, that Austin does not intend to discuss these phenomena. In addition, we are implicitly asked not to construct counterexamples from this excluded data. Certainly such expository caveats are legitimate and essential, but they present us with a problem in determining whether Austin considers the phenomena that are the main subject of his text-performative utterances to be literal phenomena. Unfortunately, his texts do not help us very much to make this decision. Apart from the above reference to non-literal uses of language, the lexeme 'literally' occurs four times in *How to do things with words*, three of these being repeated occurrences of the same collocation. 'Literal meaning' and its cognate expressions do not occur at all in any of the shorter articles written by Austin on the subject of speech act theory.

I should like to think that the infrequency with which these expressions appear in Austin is significant and that the infrequency can be explained by Austin's intuition that an incompatibility exists between a received interpretation of literal meaning and the overriding purpose of his thesis. I do not suggest that Austin consciously avoided the lexeme 'literal'. I should like to say, rather, that it is entirely plausible that he should have done so; although he did not have a definition of literalness as his purpose, he did have a thesis that asked us to reassess our entrenched beliefs about truth-conditionality, a subject that, at the time, was associated with literal meaning. During the time when Austin was writing, the prevailing philosophical interpretation of literal meaning was one that identified it not merely with propositional, truth-conditional meaning but with verifiability. In fact, given the influence of ordinary language philosophy and of logical positivism, the properties of truth conditional language had become the philosophical subject, other language being regarded as nonsense. Since I have not discovered an interpretation of literal meaning that associates it with the notion of nonsensical language, it is plausible that Austin should have associated literal meaning with truth conditional meaning.

Nevertheless, it is in reaction to this prevailing preoccupation with truth conditional language that Austin formulates his theory of speech acts. In *How to do things with words*, Austin observes that we have spent a disproportionate amount of philosophical labour on the set of sentences that can be employed to make assertions. He argues that we have established this philosophical priority on a mistaken belief that the principal use of a declarative is to ' "describe" a state of affairs, or to "state some fact" which it must do either truly or falsely' (1). He points out that there is an utterance type that has, at first sight, all of the apparent grammatical properties of a declarative, but that does not have the functions traditionally associated with declaratives. Most significantly, these utterance types, which he calls performatives, are not truth conditional. What I should like to emphasize here is Austin's initial and well-understood point that these performative utterances are not truth conditional, but that the truly descriptive statement, which Austin renamed 'constative', is.

Having made this constative-performative distinction, Austin devotes the remainder of the text to blurring the contrast. He begins by assigning the notion of felicity condition to performative utterances - these conditions he says,serve an evaluative role that is analogous to the role that truth conditionality serves for constatives. He continues by arguing that these two evaluative functions are similar in many ways; so much so, in fact, that he concludes that truth and falsity, felicity and infelicity are members of a 'dimension of assessment'. He points out that even the constative - the hitherto unassailably true or false statement - is not always strictly true or false in some objective sense. Often we ask whether it is fair statement, whether the evidence adduced in its support is good. Similarly, in evaluating certain performative utterances such as verdictives, we ask whether the phenomena are 'estimated' rightly or wrongly, whether the accused are 'found guilty' correctly or incorrectly. He concludes:

> It is essential to realize that 'true' and 'false', like 'free' and 'unfree', do not stand for anything simple at all; but only for a general dimension of being a right and proper thing to say as opposed to a wrong thing, in these circumstances, to this audience, for these purposes and with these intentions (1968:144).

But in the course of arguing for a range of evaluative procedures, Austin does not argue for a range of literalness, nor does he explicitly apply the lexeme 'literal' to performative utterance types. In fact, he clearly associates one occurrence of 'literal' with assertorial statements. In establishing criteria that might help one to decide whether or not a certain expression is a performative utterance, Austin places his examples in three columns (79). In the first column, he includes what he regards as clear cases of performative expressions, among which there occurs, among others, 'I apologize'. In the second list, he places expressions that appear to be half descriptive: in this list there occurs the expression, 'I am sorry'. With respect to the expressions in the second list, he asks whether we might suggest any tests to help us decide whether they are being employed performatively. He replies:

> A fourth test would be to ask whether what one says could be literally false, as sometimes when I say 'I am sorry', or could only involve insincerity (unhappiness) as sometimes when I say 'I apologize': these phrases blur the distinction between insincerity and falsehood (1968:80). (cf. pp. 84 and 86).

The point that Austin makes here is that if the statement can be false, then it is a constative, rather than a performative utterance. It seems, further, that the term 'literally' is added to intensify the association between truth and literalness. Notice that he does not say that 'I apologize' could be literally insincere. What are we to conclude from this association with truthconditionality and literalness? Has Austin simply slipped into an old habit of speaking of assertorial statements as literal statements? Having established an evaluative range so that it includes performative utterances, has he failed to extend the notion of literal meaning to the term 'felicity'? Without making this extension for ourselves, however, we are obliged to conclude that performative utterances are nonliteral expressions, an absurd consequence even given the sketchily worded ground clearing expression. That is, without making the extension for ourselves, we would have to conclude that the text is a discussion of the very phenomena that Austin said he would not discuss - nonliteral uses of language.

Austin's second use of 'literally' does not provide us with a way out of this conclusion, for it appears to be another instance in which he accepts a popular notion of literal meaning. Here, he seems to intend 'literally' to exclude all metaphorical interpretations, especially when they may appear covertly within the language. In a discussion of a type of infelicity which he calls a Misapplication, Austin states that one is not entitled to appoint a horse as Consul. Appointing a horse Consul would constitute a misapplied procedure because it would involve appointing a being that has one status (that of a horse) to another status (that of a human) since the second status is a precondition of being a Consul. To take the appointment literally is to apply the lexeme 'appointment' correctly, i.e. nonmetaphorically:

> ...[I]f we take the question of appointment literally (position as opposed to status) we might class the infelicity as a matter of wrongly executed rather than as misapplied procedure... (1968:35).

That is, in the case of a horse being appointed, the lexeme 'appointment' is misapplied; hence, the only way we can understand such an act at all is under a metaphorical interpretation.

Since the subject under discussion is a felicity condition, we must conclude that Austin wants us to regard the sentence that is employed to perform the appointment act as constituting a performative utterance. It is also clear that he wants us to regard this as a nonmetaphorical utterance act. But if, as we have just concluded, performative utterances are not truthconditional, it would also seem that we may not assume that the criterion that distinguishes metaphorical expressions from literal expressions is that the latter are truthconditional.

One might wonder whether an analysis of Austin's terms 'locutionary act' and 'illocutionary act' might help to define the notion of literal meaning. Unfortunately, it does not. In describing (and objecting to) Austin's distinctions between a locutionary act and an illocutionary act, Searle (1968) states that Austin's definition of 'locutionary act' is that of a sentence with a certain meaning, where meaning is to be defined as comprising sense and reference. Searle rejects this distinction on the grounds that, although some sentences such as 'I am going to do it' can be uttered with their literal meaning in any number of illocutionary acts, the sentence 'I hereby promise that I am going to do it' must always be a promise.[3] Searle goes on to argue, rightly or wrongly, that illocutionary force is always present (even if minimally) in the meaning of a sentence; therefore one cannot maintain that illocutionary acts and locutionary acts are separate classes of acts.

In speculating upon what Austin might have meant by locutionary and illocutionary, Searle proposes that Austin may have had in mind a distinction between an illocutionary act and a propositional act. Such a distinction, he suggests, might be represented symbolically as F(p), where the 'range of possible values for F will determine the range of illocutionary forces, and the p is a variable over the infinite range of possible propositions' (1968:273). The propositional content (p) is conveyed by those portions of the sentence which do not include the indicators of illocutionary force. However, this formula does not further our understanding of a possible definition of literal meaning more than did the data we extracted from Austin's text: we still have no way of determining how the term 'literal meaning' is to be applied to the formula (p). In 'I hereby promise to x', the explicit meaning may be represented as Promise (x), but Austin does not identify explicitness with literalness. Moreover, he has not told us whether another interpretation of this sentence, such as Threat(x) has a nonliteral meaning. We can determine the explanation that Searle (1979) would give from his analysis of indirect speech acts, but we cannot attribute that explanation to Austin.

The difficulties we have experienced in interpreting the notion of literal meaning so that it can extend sensibly to performative utterances that are not assertions may be part of a larger problem of definition described by Cohen (1975). Cohen argues that Austin did not appear to have a clear idea of what he meant by defining 'meaning' in terms of sense and reference. If that is so, and it seems to me that Cohen's account is both plausible and persuasive, then one could not expect to find a considered use of 'literal meaning' in Austin's works either. Nevertheless, we are left with an unsettling terminological dilemma. It would appear that both occurrences of 'literally' are to be interpreted by the roughly equivalent expressions that are philosophically current. The two instances are consistent with the prevailing interpretations which associate truthconditional language with propositional language, propositional language with nonmetaphorical language, and nonmetaphorical language with literal language. According to Austin, however, performative utterances are nontruthconditional, and yet it does not seem sensible that we also regard them as nonliteral. Either Austin expected us to extend the notion of literal meaning to include the entire range of evaluative criteria - felicitious as well as truthconditional - or he inadvertently accepted an interpretation of literal meaning that undermines his entire thesis.

Searle's notion of literal meaning before 1975

Although Searle's *Speech Acts* (1969) expresses the view that sentence meaning always (at least partially) determines sentence use, but also that a speaker may use a sentence with a communicative intention that cannot be explained solely in terms of the meaning of the sentence he employs, it is only after 1974 that Searle develops a notion of nonliteralness sufficiently so that one can infer a reasonably precise definition of 'literal speech act' from a definition of literal types of expressions. In the article entitled 'Indirect Speech Acts', published first in 1975, one can directly identify literal and nonliteral uses of sentences from a logically prior notion of literal sentence types. Earlier, however, in *Speech Acts*, such expressions as 'literal uses of language' and 'literal types of utterances' are employed with an informal and rough sense of literalness in mind. We shall turn now to a discussion of this early formulation of literalness.

In *Speech Acts*, at the beginning of his analysis of the structure of the act of promising, Searle associates the expressions 'nonliteral' and 'nonserious' with one another. His purpose is, as was Austin's, to employ these expressions to restrict the selection of data under discussion, but not to use them to provide a considered definition of literalness. In fact, Searle relegates his informal definition of 'literal' to a footnote which follows this sentence:

> I use the terms 'input' and 'output' to cover the large and indefinite range of conditions under which any kind of serious and literal linguistic communication is possible.
> (1969:57).

The footnote which follows states:

> I contrast 'serious' utterances with play acting, teaching a language, reciting poems, practicing pronunciation, etc., and I contrast 'literal' with metaphorical, sarcastic, etc.
> (1969:57).[4]

The function of this definition is to exclude from discussion any promises that can be made by hints, metaphors, and elliptical turns of phrase (55-56). We are to understand that the type of speech act that Searle is about to describe is a deliberately constructed, idealized model.

Throughout the text of *Speech Acts*, Searle employs 'literal' and its cognate expressions in a uniformly informal way. In each instance, one can substitute 'nonmetaphorcial' or one of its cognate expressions and preserve Searle's intention of restricting the analysis to an idealized set of data. I shall not tediously cite and then provide the substituted expression in each of the following uses, but I shall provide one instance of each cognate to which the reader may apply the appropriate substituted phrase. In that way, he will be able to appreciate that the substituted expression is uniformly acceptable and that it is a plausible interpretation, given the definition in the footnote of *Speech Acts*.

My including these examples may call for an explanation insofar as they only confirm Searle is employing the lexeme 'literal' in the way that he says he is going to do. I have two reasons for presenting the data. First, authors have assumed so much understanding on the part of a reader whenever the term has appeared, that in tracing its history of use, I have become sensitive to the possibility that more, or less, may be being conveyed by its use than is being said (to adopt the phrasing of the theory under discussion).

Second, since Searle's use of 'literal' becomes stricter in later publications, and since this use is not explicitly defined there, I should not like to misunderstand him by failing to see that he was being very strict in his usage all along but that the earlier content somehow concealed that fact from me. I include the data, therefore, with the intention of exposing how I arrived at my understanding of what I think he means by 'literal' in *Speech Acts*.

My conclusion is that in each of the following contexts, one may substitute 'nonmetaphorical' or one of its cognates for the given expression 'literal' or one of its cognates.

1. 'speaking literally'

Therefore, it is in principle possible for every speech act one performs or could perform to be uniquely determined by a given sentence (or set of sentences), given the assumptions that the speaker is speaking literally and that the context is appropriate (18). (See also p.45 for 'using words literally').

2. 'a literal utterance of <u>x</u>'

For just as it is part of our notion of the meaning of a sentence that a literal utterance of that sentence with that meaning in a certain context would be the performance of a particular speech act, so it is part of our notion of a speech act that there is a possible sentence (or sentences) the utterance of which in a certain context would in virtue of its (or their) meaning constitute a performance of that speech act (17-18). (See also 19, 20-21, 45, 94, 126, 138).

3. 'literal occurrences of'

Now, if someone offers an analysis of the meaning of a word, then what he offers must hold true of all literal occurrences of the word where it has that literal meaning, or else it is not an adequate analysis (140). (Other instances of the same expression occur on this page).

4. 'literally characterize'

Now when you say that the evaluative element enters in when we literally and unreservedly characterize something as a promise, that can mean one of two things:
    1. The statement 'He made a promise' made literally and unreservedly entails the evaluative statement...(195).

5. 'a literal utterance'

So what I shall do on my analysis of illocutionary acts is unpack what constitutes understanding a literal utterance in terms of (some of) the rules concerning the elements of the uttered sentence and in terms of the hearer's recognition of the sentence as subject to those rules (47-48). (See also p.48 and the plural form on p.48 and on p.138).

6. 'meaning literally' and 'means literally'

Similarly, I might say 'I'll come' and mean it as a promise to come, i.e. mean it as I would mean 'I promise that I will come,' if I were uttering that sentence and meaning literally what I say (19). (See p.49 for 'means literally').

Example 6 seems to me clearly to illustrate that in *Speech Acts*, Searle does not identify literal meaning with what is later referred to as a 'direct speech act'.[5] For 'I promise that I will come' is later defined as an example of a direct speech act; therefore, if Searle expected us to understand it as such in this early context, he would not have added 'meaning literally'. Such a qualification would be obviously redundant. It is possible, of course, that Searle is inadvertently redundant, but external evidence that I present shortly, confirms that in 5, when Searle tells us that he will explain what constitutes a literal utterance in terms of some set of rules, he does not mean that he will describe direct speech acts. Rather, he means that he will describe an idealized speech act.

External confirmation of my conclusion that Searle uses 'literal' only to restrict the discussion to idealized acts can be found in an article published in 1971, two years after the publication of *Speech Acts*. In the article, 'What is a speech act?', Searle includes a description of how to promise, a description that is almost identical to the same description in *Speech Acts*. But in this article, the lexeme 'literal' or any of its cognate expressions does not appear. Where, for example in 1969, Searle says:

> I use the terms 'input' and 'output' to cover the large and indefinite range of conditions under which any kind of serious and literal linguistic communication is possible. (57).

in 1971, he says:

> I use the terms 'input' and 'output' to cover the large and indefinite range of conditions under which any kind of serious linguistic communication is possible (1971a:48).

Moreover, the extended reply to the question, 'What is a speech act?' is in every way consistent with the description and analysis given in *Speech Acts*, where 'literal' and its cognates occur frequently.

I conclude, then, that in *Speech Acts*, the function of the expression 'literal' and its cognates is that of an intensifier. Searle wants to remind us that we should understand clearly that the speaker who is employing the language that enacts the speech act under discussion is employing language in a standard way and that the speech act so analyzed is an idealized model. In fact, one could substitute 'standard' and its cognates in the place of 'literal' in the preceding quotations and also preserve what seems to be Searle's meaning.

Searle's notion of literal meaning after 1974

In his article entitled 'Indirect Speech Acts', Searle (1979) draws a distinction between 'literal' and 'indirect speech acts', and he links these two broad types of acts with literal and nonliteral uses of language respectively. The notion of indirect speech acts had been referred to cursorily in *Speech Acts*, but there, Searle discussed these phenomena only incidentally under the general rubric of 'meaning more than we say' (19) and within the context of an account that maintained that the same sentence might be used to perform several different illocutionary acts (70).[6] The name 'indirect speech act' came to be attached to these phenomena by other researchers who proposed various mechanisms for their analysis. In 'Indirect Speech Acts', Searle replies to some of these proposals and offers an explanation of his own, the key to which is a distinction between 'literal' and 'indirect meaning'.

In the introductory sentence to this article, Searle writes: 'The simplest cases of meaning are those in which the speaker utters a sentence and means exactly and literally what he says' (30). This sentence sounds very similar to those that we have just considered from *Speech Acts*, sentences in which he employs such expressions as 'literally mean' and 'speaking literally'. But here, the context of the discussion that follows establishes a new sense of 'literal', one that is to be interpreted in a much stricter sense than that which appears in *Speech Acts*. I shall propose that this new sense of 'literal' can be paraphrased by 'direct' and not by 'nonmetaphorical'. The two interpretations are related in that a 'direct act' is a nonmetaphorical act, but 'direct' is more precise in the sense that we can construct a partial definition for 'direct' from the data we are given about 'indirect speech acts'. Earlier, on the other hand, we were not provided with sufficient data with which to construct a definition for 'nonmetaphorical'.[7]

What are indirect speech acts? Searle defines them broadly as one of a species of acts in which 'the speaker's utterance meaning and the sentence meaning come apart in various ways' (1979:30). By inference, and in contrast, literal speech acts are those which are effected by a coincidence of speaker's utterance meaning and sentence meaning: in literal speech acts, the two types of meaning do not 'come apart'. What, one might ask, constitutes 'sentence meaning'? In earlier publications (1968, 1969), Searle says that sentence meaning is determined by the meanings of all its meaningful components and that the meaningful components of a sentence

> include more than words (or morphemes) and surface word order. The meaningful components of a sentence include also its deep syntactic structure and the stress and intonation contour of its utterance. Words and word order are not the only elements which determine meaning (1968:269).

Furthermore, Searle tells us that the meaning of some sentences restricts their use to a greater extent than does the meaning of others: 'The illocutionary forces of utterances may be more or less specific' (1968:269). In addition, he says:

> Every sentence has some illocutionary force potential, if only of a very broad kind, built into its meaning. For example, even the most primitive of the old-fashioned categories of indicative, interrogative, and imperative sentences already contain determinants of illocutionary force (1968:267).[8]

Whereas in this earlier publication, Searle accepts the notion of deep syntactic structure as a representative of sentence meaning, he later rejects a performative analysis of sentences formulated within generative semantics. The result of this rejection (and also undoubtedly of the questionable validity of the then current notions of underlying structure) is that Searle seems to select candidates for literal speech acts solely on the basis of the surface syntax of sentences.

However, Searle retains the earlier stated idea of relative degrees of specification of illocutionary force by sentence meaning. Those sentences whose surface meaning restricts their use to a greater extent than is the case with other sentences are sentences that have literal meaning. A 'literal speech act' is that speech act (or those speech acts) performed whenever these sentences having literal meaning are employed by a speaker without any intention of communicating anything other than that sentential, literal meaning. These literal acts represent the 'simplest cases', i.e. those where sentence meaning and speaker's utterance meaning do not 'come apart'.

These are the acts which Searle has described in 1968 and 1969 as those where the speaker does not mean more than he says. But in these earlier publications. we could not establish just which type of sentence could be described as one which had literal meaning. We could derive the idea of an 'exact' expression from Searle's Principle of Expressibility, and we could relate the notion of 'explicitness' to 'exactness' via a corollary to the Principle., but we could not identify 'literal' with 'exact'. As it occurs in *Speech Acts*, the Principle of Expressibility is stated thus:

> We might express this principle by saying that for any meaning X and any speaker S whenever S means (intends to convey, wishes to communicate in an utterance, etc.) X then it is possible that there is some expression E such that E is an exact expression of or formulation of X. Symbolically: (S) (X) (S means X → P(∃E) (E is an exact expression of X)
> (1969:20).

Of the relationship between exact expressions and explicitness he writes:

> Whenever the illocutionary force of an utterance is not explicit it can always be made explicit. This is an instance of the principle of expressibility, stating that whatever can be meant can be said (1969:68).

One statement that directly associates literalness with exactness occurs in an article first published in 1968, in another rendering of the Principle of Expressibility, but in this article 'literal' is defined by the same footnote that defines it in *Speech Acts*, where 'literal' is roughly contrasted with metaphorical and sarcastic uses of language:

> ...[I]t is possible to utter a sentence the literal meaning of which is such as to determine that its serious literal utterance in an appropriate context will be a performance of that act.,.
> [W]henever one wishes to make an utterance with the force F, it is always possible to utter a sentence the meaning of which expresses exactly force F, since if it is possible to mean (intend) that force it is possible to say that force literally.
> (1968:271).

Within the context in which this latter statement appears, Searle seems to mean that any language has sufficient resources so that a speaker may select an expression from it which will serve his communicative purposes and which will convey that purpose so clearly that the addressee will understand the purpose if he also understands the meaning of the constituents of the expression. Here, as in *Speech Acts*, the function of the footnote that roughly defines 'literal' in contrast with metaphorical and sarcastic is to rule out cases where the speaker employs lexemes inappropriately, or roughly speaking, where the appropriate feeling conveyed by the sentence meaning is not held by the speaker. Apart from this rough statement, however, we cannot define 'literal' by reference to a specific type of sentence.

But with the definition of an indirect speech act, we can identify such literal types. Moreover, we can establish 'exact' 'explicit' and 'literal' as equivalent expressions. Among the species of acts where speaker's utterance meaning and sentence meaning 'come apart', indirect acts are those in which 'the speaker utters a sentence, means what he says, but also means something more' (1979:30). We therefore infer from this definition that literal speech acts are those in which the speaker means what he says and nothing more. Hence, the speaker says exactly what he means. We thus conclude that the expression 'exactly and literally' (which appears in the opening sentence of '*Indirect Speech Acts*') is composed of redundant constituents: to 'mean exactly' is to 'mean literally' and to 'mean literally' is to 'mean exactly'.[9]

We can infer from these equivalences that literal expressions are of two general types. We shall discuss these now and for each type, I shall include a corresponding strong objection that this type does not reflect a typical communicative strategy. These objections, it should be pointed out, are not submitted by their authors as efforts to redefine literalness; they are proposed as objections to the theory of indirect speech acts. Interestingly, however, they reflect attitudes toward literal meaning. Therefore, I shall comment upon the objections as part of our general analysis of literal meaning, but not assess their success in refuting Searle's claims in his theory of indirect speech acts.

(i) Sentences which contain an 'explicit performative verb' in their matrix clause.

Searle does not define literal expressions explicitly in '*Indirect Speech Acts*', but we can infer two categories of examples. The first are sentences which contain an 'explicit performative verb' in their matrix clause. We are to interpret 'explicit' as in the expression 'explicit illocutionary force indicator', an indicator which 'shows how the proposition is to be taken' (1969:30). These indicators include word order, stress, intonation contour, punctuation, the mood of the verb and performative verbs - those verbs that occur at the beginning of a sentence and that indicate kinds of illocutionary acts: 'I apologize', 'I warn', and 'I state' are typical examples. These are the explicit performative verbs described by Austin (1968). The rationale for calling them explicit is that they not only perform an action through being uttered, but they also simultaneously tell the addressee which action is being performed.

Austin says of these explicit performatives:

> All we can really say is that our explicit performative formula ('I promise...', 'I order you...', etc.) serves to make explicit, and at the same time more precise, what act it is that the speaker purports to perform in issuing his utterance...
> The other forms of expression, those that have no explicit performative formula, will be more primitive and less precise, one might almost say more vague.
> (1971:16).

This is not to say that a sentence containing an explicit performative verb can perform only one illocutionary function, but only to say that it must perform that function on some occasion of its use, even though it may simultaneously perform other illocutionary acts as well (Searle, 1968). Searle makes the point about the explicit performative 'I hereby promise':

> Its serious and literal utterance must be a promise. It may on occasion be other illocutionary acts as well, but it must at least be a promise - that is, an illocutionary act of a certain type (1968:263).[10]

Therefore, if the addressee understands the meaning of 'hereby' and of the performative verb when it is used with that performative function, the addressee cannot misunderstand the nature of the act that is being performed. Whenever a sentence with an explicit performative verb is employed to perform only the act signalled by the meaning of the explicit performative verb, the speech act so enacted is a literal speech act.

At least one strong objection has been directed towards these putative types of literal expressions. First if, in principle, any act may be made a literal act by employing an explicit performative verb in its matrix clause, then we should expect speakers to avail themselves of this facility easily and frequently. That is, it is intuitively unsatisfying to uphold a theoretical principle that is only true in principle, but that does not reflect a typical communicative strategy that a speaker actually employs. In fact, it does not appear that it would be practical for speakers to use explicit expressions in utterances that contain more than one illocutionary force. Taking an example from Lakoff (1974), Levinson (1979) points out that a sentence that is being used to convey more than one force in virtue of its form, as 'Why don't you become an astronaut?', would require the following explicit paraphrase: 'I ask you why you don't become an astronaut and if you can think of no good reasons, I hereby suggest that you do'! The explicit rendering is so cumbersome, lengthy and inefficient that one cannot imagine ever using it. Gazdar (forthcoming) makes the same point, but more generally:

> ...[T]ry sustaining an otherwise everyday conversation with someone who is neither a linguist nor philosopher in which each sentence you utter spells out in a performative prefix the illocutionary force of the speech act you intend.

The objections we have just discussed were advanced in contexts that reject the theory of indirect speech acts, but they might well have been offered as objections to Searle's definition of literalness. Definitions of literal meaning consistently express an empirical bias that links the literal with that which is communicatively practical, in the sense of being easily understood and easily formulated. In contrast, that which has been described as metaphorical is thought to be recondite, statistically infrequent and the province of those who have special facility with language. The semantically and statistically rare expression is unlikely to be described as a literal expression, except, perhaps by those such as the early Stoics who identify the literal with the true and who then have difficulty in discovering it.

(ii) <u>Traditional sentence types.</u>

The second type of expression that belongs to the class of literal speech acts are the three major sentence types of English when they are paired with a traditionally assigned semantic function and when they are employed by the speaker with the intention of being understood with that function. These pairings consist of a declarative type with an assertorial function, an interrogative type with a questioning function and an imperative type with a commanding function. As we have seen, Searle describes these pairings in 1968, but there, he does not call them literal speech acts. In '*Indirect Speech Acts*', however, although he neither describes nor defines them as literal acts, whenever such a pairing does not occur, he describes the ensuing act as indirect. So we conclude that whenever these traditional syntactic types are paired with these semantic functions and when they are uttered by the speaker with that semantic function in mind, they constitute a literal speech act.

I do not know why Searle should believe that these pairings should represent a class of sentences that express 'what the speaker means and nothing more'. Within the discipline of linguistics, grammarians have traditionally associated these major syntactic sentence types with the characteristic function that I have described. This correlation has been based in part on phonological evidence, but I am not aware that anyone has argued that these correlations are statistically the most frequent or that they are theoretically basic in the sense that, for each syntactic type, we should derive other semantic functions from the one traditionally assigned. Therefore, in assigning these syntactic-semantic pairings, it would seem that Searle (among others) accepts a correlation made by grammarians and attributes literal status to it. He does not provide any justification for this ascription.

Levinson (1979; 1980) rejects this correlation as lacking statistical justification. He points out that the interrogative form is used for purposes other than posing questions in a vast number of cases and that the imperative form is rarely used in issuing commands. More frequently, the imperative is employed in giving directions. I should add that Levinson does not argue for a different definition of literalness, but if these statistical objections are warranted and if Searle were nevertheless to adhere to the syntactic type: semantic function correlation as part of a definition of literal meaning, then he would attribute to literalness a characteristic that it has not been said to have heretofore. Other definitions of literal meaning have associated it with high frequency use: literal meaning as opposed to metaphorical meaning, where the dichotomy has been used to describe our intuitions about the appropriate application of a lexeme, is a distinction that expresses a prediction about lexemic use,a prediction typically made from frequency. Similarly, definitions of literal meaning as opposed to idiomatic meaning, where the dichotomy is used to describe our intuitions about the way that complex meanings are constituted of the meanings of constituent meanings, also reflect the expectation that nonidiomatic meanings occur less frequently than do idiomatic ones.[11] Thus, our intuitions have very often led us to want to say that whatever is literal is also whatever is frequently expected.

If Searle's notion of literalness cannot be said to satisfy empirical criteria or statistical expectations, then what justification could it be said to have? Many contemporary linguistic theoreticians have been especially preoccupied with the search for a fundamental theoretical construct in terms of which other constructs may be explained efficiently; this search has led to the postulation of a basic, or underlying type, such as Chomsky's (1957) notion of kernel sentence or of his early notion of deep structure. These constructs often do not satisfy statistical criteria, but they meet criteria of another sort, those of explanatory simplicity or elegance. In the early days of speech act theory, Searle advanced the Principle of Expressibility as part of an argument to justify the study of illocutionary force as a proper part of the semantic analysis engaged in by linguistic philosophers. Within the context of that justification, explicitness was not directly associated with literal speech acts. It was only after speech act analysis became an academically respectable subject, and in the process of entending speech act theory to account for a larger range of acts, that the notion of literalness became associated with a <u>basic</u> type, and not with an ideal type. This is not to say that Searle does not employ idealized sentences in his later works. Given a type-token distinction, he always discusses the type, but the literal type is now a basic type as well. The theoretical objections that I have cited against Searle's theory of indirect speech acts have argued that a theory of language <u>use</u>, such as Searle's, should make theoretical statements that coincide with the kinds of statements that speakers actually employ. Perhaps it should. Putting that objection to one side, however, we shall see that where a literal act is understood in the limited sense of a theoretically basic act, indirect speech act theory accounts for nonliteral characteristics of language that have been associated with other kinds of nonliteral meaning. It is to four of these characteristics that we now turn.

(a) Violations of expectations of use based on a correlation between an expression's phonological form and its meaning.

In most theories of metaphor, whenever an expression is said to have a predictable meaning, where predictable might be interpreted variously as 'normal', 'standard', 'usual', or 'historically attested', the expression so employed is defined as having a literal meaning. In Levin's (1977) theory and in the theory of Cohen and Margalit (1970), although a metaphorical expression is said to be composed of literal meanings, one arrives at those meanings by altering construal rules (in the case of Levin) or by qualifying the hypotheses employed to interpret nonanomalous expressions (in the case of Cohen and Margalit). In all theories of metaphor, a metaphorical expression is said not to conform to expectations that are based on some interpretation of normal use or nonanomalous construal. Yet the metaphorical expression is always said to be syntactically acceptable.

Idioms, another type of nonliteral expression, share this characteristic. Weinreich stresses that although the theoretical possibilities of deformation are very great, idioms having syntactic deformities are rare and are confined to a very few types (1969:34). Similarly, indirect speech acts are composed of syntactically acceptable expressions, but they are said not to meet our expectations with respect to predictions made on the basis of their phonological form and constituent meaning. Needless to say, this expectation is defined antecedently for us by Searle: indeed, I should like to emphasize this point. If one were to ask a native speaker to explain what is odd about saying 'Jane is a morsel for a monarch', the forthcoming reply might be that 'morsel for a monarch' is a funny thing to say about someone. But if one were to ask another to pass the salt by asking. 'Would you pass the salt?' and then ask, "What is funny about that expression?', one might be met with considerable pause. As others have pointed out, speakers do not appear to recognize indirect speech acts as being different from direct acts (Gazdar, 1976b).

Nevertheless, if one begins with Searle's literal speech act assumption, then indirect speech acts can be said not to conform to these literal form: meaning: use expectations. How, then, does one interpret these acts? A speaker's understanding of indirect acts is said to depend upon his understanding of a number of principles. First, he understands the literal illocutionary point - the purpose of the illocution - by understanding the literal meaning of the sentence. To this understanding he brings principles of conversational cooperation, factual background information and the capacity to make inferences. The inferential strategy is used both to establish that the indirect speech act differs from the literal speech act, and to establish that the meaning of the indirect speech act is to be based on the meaning of the literal speech act.

But the way in which indirect meaning is parasitic upon literal meaning in indirect speech acts is not in terms of the notion of a paraphrase relationship, as is the case with literal explications of metaphorical expressions. Rather, it is in terms of the notion of illocutionary point. In the case of the indirect speech act, the addressee realizes that the speaker cannot intend him to understand the literal meaning as conveying the primary illocutionary point; thus the addressee rejects the literal meaning as being the primary point, even though he has implicitly acknowledged the literal speech act. For example, when one asks another to pass the salt by asking, 'Would you pass the salt?', the addressee is said to process the literal meaning as being a question about his hypothetical willingness to pass the salt, to reject that literal meaning as being the primary illocutionary point, and then to construct an indirect meaning as a result of this rejection.

Many theorists of metaphor have argued in a similar way for the interpretation of metaphorical expressions. They have maintained that a metaphorical expression is either obviously false or obviously anomalous in context. The addressee nonetheless believes that the speaker is trying to communicate seriously (rather than simply to emit confusing vocables); therefore, the speaker infers that the expression is to be understood metaphorically. Whereas this kind of explanation has been advanced for a number of years, it may now be included within and sanctioned by a wider explanatory framework, that of Grice's conversational principles (1975). In fact, Grice cites metaphor as an examples which flouts the maxim of Quality: 'Do not say what you believe to be false' (46, 53). He says that typically, examples of metaphors such as 'You're the cream in my coffee' involve categorical falsity, but since the speaker's utterance is held to have some point, the addressee supposes that the 'speaker is attributing to his audience some feature or features in respect of which the audience resembles (more or less fancifully) the resembled substance' (53). One can see that Searle's appeal to conversational principles in the interpretation of indirect speech acts is a similar explanatory strategy; indeed, his indebtedness to Grice's work is acknowledged.

One difference between these two types of nonliteral meaning - the metaphorical and the indirect - is that a metaphorical expression typically includes a lexeme that is so employed that the resulting predication is deviant.[12] In contrast, the constituent lexemes of an indirect speech act are not said to be deviant in this way; rather, their nonliteralness is a result of a nondeviant sentential meaning being unacceptable given the primary illocutionary point of the utterance in context. One might conclude that the metaphor is unacceptable given the notion of a literal predication; whereas the indirect speech act is unacceptable given the notion of a primary illocutionary point and the literal meaning of the sentence.

(b) Violations of predictions from the meanings of constituents to the meaning of the whole expression.

Uniformly throughout linguistic literature, any theory which accepts a notion of a compositional function also defines one type of non-literal meaning, the idiomatic, as a violation of compositionality. In addition, metaphorical expressions can be said to be irregular with respect to compositionality as well; that is, in most theories of metaphor, the meaning of a metaphor is said to be not merely a compositional function of its literal paraphrase(s). There is also a sense in which the meaning of indirect speech acts can be said to voilate compositionality. If the term 'meaning' is extended to include speaker's utterance meaning as well as sentence meaning, one can say that the meaning of the indirect speech act is not a compositional function of the constituents of the sentence that is employed to enact it. This recognition of noncompositionality has resulted in two types of explanations for indirect speech acts. Predictably, perhaps, Sadock has described some kinds of indirect speech acts as speech act idioms and other kinds as speech act metaphors (1974:102). Searle, on the other hand, rejects this explanation: he claims that these expressions are not idioms; rather, he says, they are 'idiomatic'.

Both Sadock and Searle endeavour to account for the recurrence of certain expressions that are constituents of a large number of indirect speech acts. These expressions contain modal verbs and are of the form, 'Can you...', 'I would like you to...', 'Would you be willing to...', etc. Searle claims that a number of these expressions are 'idiomatically used as directives' (1979:36-39, 41). However, a problem lies in interpreting what he means by 'idiomatically used'. We obtain clues from the title of the section: 'Some

Sentences "Conventionally" Used in the Performance of Indirect Directives', and from a sentence which follows, in which he refers to these expressions as ones that could 'quite *standardly* be used to make indirect requests...' (1979:36) (Italics mine). In another passage, he associates the notion of standard idiomatic forms with 'conventional uses':

> The theory of speech acts and the principles of conversational cooperation do, indeed, provide a framework within which indirect illocutionary acts can be meant and understood. However, within this framework certain forms will tend to become conventionally established as the *standard* idiomatic forms for indirect speech acts. While keeping their literal meanings, they will acquire *conventional uses*...(1979:49) (Italics mine).

Further, he emphasizes that the term 'conventions of use' is to be distinguished from 'conventions of meaning', but then he adds, confusingly:

> ...'[C]an you', 'could you', and 'I want you to'... are conventional ways of making requests (and in that sense it is not incorrect to say that they are idioms), but at the same time they do not have an imperative meaning (and in that sense it would be incorrect to say that they are idioms) (1979:49).

It would appear that Searle defines an idiom in terms of conventions of meaning rather than in terms of conventions of use, but that he defines an idiomatic form in terms of conventions of use rather than in terms of conventions of meaning. In this sense, then, an idiomatic form need not be an idiom. If my understanding is correct, then the terms 'conventional meaning' and 'standard meaning' which have hitherto been associated with literal meaning are similarly employed here, but additionally, we are to associate the terms 'idiomatic use', 'conventions of use' and 'standard use' with nonliteral, i.e. indirect meaning. One might conclude with this contrast: the meaning of an idiom (a convention of meaning) is never a compositional function. Whenever 'kick the bucket' is interpreted as an idiom, it cannot simultaneously mean both 'to die' and 'to strike the pail with one's foot'.[13] But an idiomatic form (a convention of use) has two meanings simultaneously, one which is always a compositional function and another which never is. Whenever 'Would you open the door?' is interpreted as an idiomatic form, it has the literal (compositional) meaning of a question and the nonliteral meaning of a request.

An alternative to Searle's analysis of indirect speech acts is that of Sadock's, who analyzes these sentences which contain modal expressions as speech act idioms, and who describes other sentences which do not contain these expressions, but which are nevertheless employed to perform indirect acts, as speech act metaphors (1974:102). The explanation by idiom alternative holds a certain benefit for Sadock's theory of speech acts. It allows him to justify including more sentences in the set of sentences whose meaning encodes their force than in the set of those whose use determines their force.

While remaining within a generative-semantic framework, Sadock offers the speech act idiom hypothesis as a partial alternative to Gordon and Lakoff's (1975) analysis of indirect speech acts. Sadock believes that their model relegates too much explanatory power to the function of conversational postulates (1974:81). Gordon and Lakoff define literal speech acts in the same way as does Searle, but they employ conversational postulates as interpretive devices which map literal meanings onto indirect meanings. Sadock's idiom analysis makes it possible for him to represent the meaning of sentences that contain these idioms in their underlying structure, thereby obviating the need for interpretation by postulate.

But terminological problems accompany Sadock's theoretical proposal. An immediate difficulty that one encounters with his term 'speech act idiom' (quite apart from the question of its validity) is that one cannot be sure whether those acts which were formally called indirect speech acts, but which are now called speech act idioms, are to be regarded in a new light as literal speech acts. If they are still to be regarded as indirect acts, then ascribing idiomatic meaning to them will not involve a conflicting use of terminology hitherto associated with nonliteral meaning. So regarded, the speech act idiom will be nonliteral in virtue of the association of idiomatic meaning with nonliteral meaning. But if we are now to regard these formerly described indirect acts as literal acts, then they will be confusedly nonliteral in virtue of their idiomatic (nonliteral) meaning. In addition, since Sadock postulates two underlying illocutionary forces in the semantic structure of sentences containing these speech act idioms, we can no longer maintain that a distinction between a literal and an indirect act is that the former contains one illocutionary force and the latter contains two.

There is evidence to suggest that speech act idioms are not to be thought of as indirect acts. Sadock refers to these phenomena as 'apparently indirect' in one passage which criticizes Gordon and Lakoff:

> There are numerous other criticisms that can be levelled at the theory that illocutionary force and surface form are closely allied, all based on the failure of this theory [i.e. Gordon and Lakoff's] to distinguish truly indirect force from apparently indirect force (1974:88).

But in another passage, in his conclusion, he says (in apparent contradiction to the earlier statement):

> The illocutionary force of a sentence, in all cases, has reflexes in surface structure, although these reflexes may be quite subtle and often ambiguous. The relationship between meaning and form is as intricate and *indirect* in this case as it has been found to be in the case of nonpragmatic aspects of meaning (1974:147-148) (Italics mine).

It is very difficult to know what conclusions to draw about the classifications of these idioms; a similar difficulty arises with indirect speech acts that are to be understood as metaphors. These do not fall within the category of 'apparently indirect'; they are genuinely indirect. If they are to be defined consistently as nonliteral in virtue of being both metaphorical and indirect, then we encounter no terminological conflicts. But in an entirely puzzling statement about metaphor, Sadock says:

> It does not really make sense to speak of an expression's being <u>vague</u> between a literal and a metaphorical interpretation. Vagueness is a matter of lack of specification of meaning. But metaphors, by definition, have the literal meaning (1974:108).

Since he does not explicitly subscribe to any particular theory of metaphor, we might suppose that he would accept one in which metaphorical meaning is said to be composed of literal meanings. Given such a theory, then, he might conclude that a metphor has a literal meaning. But if that is to be the case, then an indirect speech act will have two literal meanings: one in virtue of its being parasitic upon a direct act and another in virtue of its being so defined as a metaphor.

One might ask how the interpretation of an indirect speech act will be different from that of a direct act. Sadock says that these metaphorical acts will be interpreted by conversational postulates. But Gordon and Lakoff's conversational postulates are not sufficient to interpret all metaphorical expressions, if we are to understand 'metaphorical expression' in any of the senses usually ascribed to it. It would seem that the theoretical gain that Sadock sought with his theory of speech act idioms is exchanged for his analysis of speech act metaphors. While the former may have reduced the number of so-called indirect expressions that need interpretation by postulate, the latter will allow a much larger number of expressions to qualify in virtue of being metaphorical.

(c) Degrees of nonliteralness.

In his exposition of the defining characteristics of idioms, Weinreich discusses three variables whose values specify the selection of sense of a particular lexeme in a linguistic context. Whenever all three variables limit the selection of sense, the result is the highest degree of idiomaticity. He describes this ultimate degree as one in which 'there are no limits to the differences between its [the idiom's] semantic structure and the semantic structure of its paraphrase' (1969:41-42). He, and others, conclude that some idiomatic meanings are closer than are others to their literal meaning counterparts.

It is not only in discussions of idiomaticity that one discovers the notion of degrees of nonliteralness; one also finds it in discussions of metaphorical meaning. In this type of nonliteralness, the notion of degrees is discussed with respect to a metaphorical meaning that has not been incorporated (through historical acceptance) into the lexicon and also with respect to one that has. For example, Levin, argues for the feasibility of his metaphorical construal rules by pointing to the vestiges of netaphoricity among the senses of lexemes that are considered part of an ordinary language lexicon. In this case, one might describe the meanings of these so-called literal entries as ones that retain evidence of the principles of construal that we thought to operate upon them when they were metaphors (1977:49-59). Informally, we call these dead metaphors, even though they retain a degree of metaphoricity for us in virtue of their history.

But there is another sense in which degree of metaphoricity can be understood and that is in an evaluative sense. Black (1962) and Katchadourian (1968) argue that we need more than one theory of metaphor because the semantic structures of metaphorical expressions are so diverse. They claim that a comparison theory will explain some types adequately, the substitution theory will explain others, the interaction theory still others, and so on. But the real point behind this catholicity is that the theory that the author advocates is the one that explains the most complex type of metaphorical expression, a type that is thought to be the most metaphorical of all. For the addressee/reader, such a metaphor is one in which the relationship between the metaphorical expression and its literal explication is not obvious. In fact, the relationship between the metaphorical sense and the literal sense paraphrase is said to be so distant that one cannot hope to render the metaphorical meaning.

Just as we are said to need a variety of explanatory strategies for metaphor, so Ross (1975) claims that we may need a more complicated set of rules than we have envisaged for analyzing derived illocutionary force.[14] In describing the kinds of expressions that may be used to convey requests: 'I want you to...', 'could you (please)...', etc., Ross states that some sequences are less acceptable than others in conveying requests, the criterion of acceptability resting on the ease with which one can insert preverbal 'please'. For Ross, the significance of this variation is not only that some expressions are more or less grammatical, but that some can be more or less easily construed as, and hence employed as, requests. He concludes:

> While we need not inquire in detail as to what the conditions are under which it is less than completely possible to achieve the derived force of a request, the mere fact that 'quasi-requests' ...exist is of considerable interest for it suggests that no discrete treatment of the problem of derived illocutionary force is likely to be viable. To account for such quasi-requests as these, it will eventually be necessary to construct formal rules that will assign DEGREES of requesthood, declarativeness, hortatoriness, and so on (245-246) (Uppercase convention is Ross's).

Ross adds that the rules that assign derived illocutionary forces will give graded outputs. These grades will state that some sentences can only partially attain a certain force. He further suggests that the grade assigned to a sentence will be lowered whenever that sentence occurs in an embedded context. A value might be sufficiently lowered by embedding so that the embedded sentence would no longer qualify as having its original (unembedded force). For example, the string, 'Do you think you could tell me when dinner will be?' qualifies as a derived request. When embedded, as in 'Archie asked Edith whether she thought she could tell him when dinner would be', it has the force of a report of an indirect request. A similar claim has been made about metaphorical expressions. Whenever a metaphorical expression is embedded in a matrix clause that contains a psychological predicate, the complex expression is no longer interpreted metaphorically.

My account of degrees of indirectness is necessarily brief since Ross does not develop the notion here. Even so, such explanation as he does provide is in intriguing parallel to other descriptions of degrees of nonliteralness. Such parallels as these contribute to the conclusion that literal meaning does not admit of degrees.[15]

(d) Ascriptions of affectiveness.

The most extreme position that has been taken with respect to metaphorical meaning is that of emotive theorists who deny that a metaphorical expression has cognitive content; rather, its meaning - if that term can be applied here - is emotive. More typical, however, is the view that the meaning of a metaphorical expression is highly affective and that its communicative impact depends upon connotative associations. Whereas the subject of affectiveness does not enter into discussions of idiomatic meaning in linguistic literature, it does occur in stylistic analyses. There it is agreed that contexts that contain idioms are characteristically informal.

Several explanations of the affective characteristics of indirect meaning have been advanced. Brown and Levinson (1978), R. Lakoff (1973) and Searle (1979) claim that they are typically polite expressions. Davison (1975) states that in the case of indirect statements and questions, the speaker anticipates a conflict between his intention to say something and the reaction he anticipates from his interlocutor. The speaker thus employs an indirect expression to forestall this anticipated criticism or resistance. Heringer (1977) claims that some kinds of indirect acts, called 'pres', allow a speaker to determine whether his speech act will succeed without committing himself to performing the act. Here the 'pre' functions as a face-saving device.

Whichever alternative one chooses, the same contrast is made. Given two speech acts with an identical illocutionary force, the indirect act will contain a greater affective component than will its literal counterpart. Finally, from the point of view of the class of nonliteral expressions, the class of literal expressions will be those that are affectively the most neutral.

The theory of speech acts can only be said to be disappointingly deficient if one evaluates it with the intention of discovering a unitary definition of literal meaning. But if one applies a less rigorous measure, one unexpectedly discovers, in the theory of indirect speech acts, characteristics that this type of nonliteral meaning shares with other types of nonliteral meaning. Hence a pattern of definition emerges.

Literal meaning defines our expectations with respect to correlations we may make between a given phonological form and its meaning. It defines our expectations regarding our ability to predict the meaning of an entire expression from the meanings of its constituents. It provides us with an absolute standard of meaning, one that does not admit of degrees. Within the confines of this standard, we can formulate affectively neutral expressions.

FOOTNOTES

1. I am very grateful to John Lyons and Gerald Gazdar for comments on an early draft of this paper.

2. Searle (1968) is listed in the bibliography as Searle (1971b). I have used the earlier date throughout the text because it aids in preserving chronology of definition; unfortunately, I have had to use the pagination of the reprinted version in Rosenberg and Travis.

3. The use of 'literal meaning' here is Searle's. That is, Austin does not define 'illocutionary act' with reference to literal meaning. Searle's use here is to be interpreted in the rough sense of 'nonmetaphorical' - in the sense I describe below as being pre-1975.

   One might rightly object that 'I hereby promise that I am going to do it' must always be a promise. The sentence may be used metalinguistically.

4. This phrasing is repeated exactly in a footnote in Searle (1968:263).

5. A 'direct speech act' is a theoretical term employed by Gordon and Lakoff (1975) and others writing within the theory of indirect speech acts. It is not employed by Searle in his article, 'Indirect Speech Acts'. I have applied the term to his theory because the awkward alternative that is strictly precise is 'not indirect'. Searle appears to accept the equivalence of 'not indirect' with 'direct' in 'Literal Meaning' (1979:133).

6. Austin also refers, in passing, to a notion of indirectness: 'Thus in the example: "By saying 'I bid three clubs' I informed him that I had no diamonds", I use the performative "I bid three clubs" as an indirect means to informing him (which is also an illocutionary act)' (1968:129). John Lyons has commented that it might be worth investigating whether the notion of indirect meaning in speech act theory results from a contamination of two senses: one occurs in Frege's distinction between direct and indirect discourse; the other arises from an everyday English notion of achieving a goal through indirect methods.

7. Searle's definition of a metaphorical speech act is published in 1979. It was first presented at a conference on the subject of metaphor at the University of Illinois in 1977.

   John Lyons has commented that it is in principle possible simultaneously to have a direct and a metaphorical act. For example, one might say, 'I hereby bind myself to pay you ten dollars', in which 'hereby' is an explicit performative marker and 'bind myself' is a metaphor. I believe, however, that any metaphor selected for such a function would be one that has come to have a standard interpretation. Some would argue that as soon as a standard interpretation is associated with a metaphorical expression that the metaphor ceases being metaphorical. The issue is by no means clearcut: we have no decision procedure for identifying metaphors.

8. The categories Searle refers to here are the traditional distinctions of mood: declarative (not indicative), interrogative and imperative.

9. I am aware that earlier, I argued from discovery of redundancy to reject a possible interpretation. There, however, my discovery of redundancy confirmed a conclusion drawn from a large set of data. Since one expects consistency and concision in a theory, one assumes that a theoretician tries to avoid pointless repetition. Hency, my earlier decision was based on the assumption that Searle did not set out to be redundant. Here, if I have argued correctly, one cannot escape a redundant interpretation.

10. 'Literal' is to be interpreted in my pre-1975 sense. 'Hereby' is a reflexive expression that refers to what one is doing when one is uttering the sentence.

    One might object that the utterance may be intended metalinguistically.

11. I refer here to the distribution of idioms in an entire lexicon; but where a given expression may be interpreted both idiomatically and non-idiomatically, the idiomatic interpretation occurs in texts more frequently than does its nonidiomatic counterpart (Chafe, 1968:123).

12. Our exposition would be facilitiated if we could say that a metaphorical expression is unacceptable semantically; whereas an indirect speech act is unacceptable pragmatically. But the distinction between sentence and utterance level theories of metaphor and the disagreement over the boundaries of pragmatics and semantics obstruct this simplification. For recent useful critical analyses of synchronic theories of metaphor, see Searle (1979) and Scheffler (1979).

13. I do not subscribe to this view. The use of a phonological form with a simultaneously intended literal and nonliteral meaning is commonplace in literature.

14. Ross's terms 'basic' and 'derived' correspond to Searle's and to Gordon and Lakoff's terms 'literal' and 'indirect'.

15. I base this conclusion on theoretical, not empirical, accounts. If one investigates ordinary language use of, say, the lexeme 'literally', one discovers that native speakers interpret literal meaning with varying degrees of strictness. Such collocations as 'quite literally', 'very literally' and 'too literally' express a range of interpretations within what is regarded as a literal reading.

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IRONY AND PARODY AND THE USE-MENTION DISTINCTION

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1. Introductory remarks

There are three observations about verbal irony which are generally asserted or assumed by both literary critics[1] and linguists[2] who have treated the subject. First, no sentence is ironical per se but is made so by its deliberate utterance as such in a particular context. Second, the meaning that is conveyed by someone speaking or writing ironically is different from the literal meaning of the sentence. Third, the relation between the literal and ironical meanings is one of antonymy.

However, this latter claim is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the interpretation of an utterance as ironical, as is evident from a consideration of both the wellknown literary example of irony in (1) and the instances of colloquial irony in (2) and (3):

(1) I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked or boiled...
(Jonathan Swift, *A Modest Proposal*)[3]

(2) A: Do have a scone!
(said to someone who has just voraciously consumed the whole plateful).

(3) A: She's not altogether overjoyed at the news.
(said of someone who is in a furious rage over 'the news').

Clearly a process of inverting meanings has little to do with the intention of the ironist here or the process of interpretation of the reader/hearer. Even in cases in which there is a relationship of antonymy between the literal and ironical meanings the precise nature of the relationship is unclear. Consider the following example which Samuel Johnson used in his dictionary to exemplify irony:

(4) Bolingbroke was a holy man.

Given the appropriate beliefs about the conduct of the Bolingbroke in question this utterance will win the concurrence of a large number of readers/hearers from those who consider him the very embodiment of evil to those with a milder view of him as a little given to excesses. The antonymy view cannot account for the conveyed meanings in (1), (2) and (3) or for the range of meanings which different hearers with different opinions about Bolingbroke will derive in their interpretation of (4). An adequate theory of verbal irony must account for these examples. It must also account for the attitude of wryness or, at the least, lack of commitment to the literal meaning of the utterance on the part of the speaker, and thus the detection of the same by the hearer in interpreting the ironical utterance.

In this paper I outline a theory developed by Sperber and Wilson (forthcoming) which is able to meet these requirements. In the next section some modifications of details are suggested and comments made on its adequacy as a theory of irony. Finally, its extension to the related phenomenon of parody is considered.

2. Ironical utterances as mentioned propositions

Grice (1975, 1978) initiated a pragmatic approach to ironical meaning thus dispensing with a semantic ambiguity between the literal and ironical interpretations of a sentence. Within his general framework hearers are taken to assume on the part of speakers compliance with the maxims of informativeness, truth and relevance, and in order to preserve this assumption hearers will draw 'conversational implicatures'[4] from what speakers say. His proposal and the fairly considerable problems with it are discussed in Wilson and Sperber (1981) and in Sperber and Wilson (forthcoming). As well as creating severe inconsistencies internal to his theory of maxim assumption and preservation in utterance interpretation, Grice's approach simply cannot account for the sort of message conveyed by the ironical utterance in (5) in the given context:

> (5) A to B: Yet another miserable failure in the logic course, huh? (Context: B has just done very well in the logic exam, B always does very well in her exams, but had been very pessimistic about her achievement in the logic exam. A and B share and know that they share knowledge of these facts.)

(5) is false in the context and both A and B know it is false. Presumably, on Grice's account, the proposition conversationally implicated is 'You did very well in the logic exam' which is certainly not a new piece of information to B. It seems more likely that what is going on here is that A is implying B was foolish to have had such doubts and fears as she had; possibly, in an indirect way, A is congratulating B on her success. Grice's approach cannot account for this. He begins to recognise in the 1978 paper that implicatures alone do not hold the answer for an account of irony:

> "irony is intimately connected with the expression of a feeling, attitude or evaluation. I cannot say something ironically unless what I say is intended to reflect...a feeling such as indignation or contempt."
> (Grice, 1978, p.124)

This marks a move from the view that irony can be accounted for strictly in terms of logical relationships between propositions; the expression of feeling and attitude sounds nebulous but its importance in human communication is undeniable. The approach outlined by Sperber and Wilson (forthcoming; hereafter S-W) is an important innovation in a number of ways, one of which is that it gives a place to attitude expression in a pragmatic theory of verbal communication.

S-W dispense with the traditional distinction between literal and figurative meaning, and introduce a different distinction: between the _use_ of propositions and linguistic expressions on the one hand, and the _mention_ of these on the other; figurative meaning will be accounted for in the latter category. Their approach is motivated by the recognition that many ironical utterances quote or echo an utterance or opinion expressed earlier. This recognition is shared with almost all literary critics who have explored irony or satire (e.g. Booth 1974: 57), Muecke (1969) and with the linguist Cutler (1974) who briefly mentions a category of 'provoked irony' which she defines as "the speaker's repeating back to her audience something which the audience has previously held, or said." (Cutler, 1974: 119). She gives examples like:

(6) A: Sure, Sue, you locked the door.
(7) A: At least it won't rain, she says.
(8) A: The cops won't give us any trouble. May'll handle them.

each uttered in a context in which things have turned out otherwise. Quoting a well-known line or passage in altogether inappropriate circumstances gives rise to a more complex irony in which the point is not only, or even primarily, its literal falsity. For example:

(9) A: The hills are alive with the sound of music.

uttered (or sung), probably grimly, in a context in which A (and others perhaps) are trudging miserably up a steep hill with heavy packs on their backs in pouring rain hoping to reach a hut before nightfall. Cutler considers this only one kind of ironic utterance and is more interested in examining a category which she calls 'spontaneous irony'. The basic innovation in the S-W approach is the claim that all ironic utterances can and should be treated as quoting in some sense, that all ironic utterances involve the echoic mention of a proposition.

The following extract from the writing of the modern essayist, Joan Didion, will serve to illustrate in a very obvious way what is meant by the echoic mention of propositions:

(10) To read even desultorily in this literature was to recognise instantly a certain dolorous phantasm, an imagined Everywoman with whom the authors seemed to identify all too entirely. <u>The ubiquitous construct was everyone's victim but her own. She was persecuted by her gynæcologist, who made her beg in vain for contraceptives. She particularly needed contraceptives because she was raped on every date, raped by her husband, and raped finally on the abortionist's table. During the fashion for shoes with pointed toes, she, like "many women", had her toes amputated...Should she work she was paid "three to ten times less" than an (always) unqualified man holding the same job, was prevented from attending business lunches because she would be "embarrassed" to appear in public with a man not her husband,</u>...

The half-truths, repeated, authenticated themselves...
(Joan Didion, 1972: 114-115)

The first and last sentences express propositions which are directly stated as Didion's own opinions and which contain clues and in fact explicit directions as to her own attitude to the propositions expressed by the underlined sentences. She is quite clearly attributing the holding of the views literally expressed here to some group of people with whom she is out of sympathy, feminist writers, who are thus the victims of her ironical thrust. There is also direct quoting here which involves mention not only of propositions but of actual linguistic expressions so there is an element of parody (the close relationship of irony and parody is considered below).

The following examples illustrate the use/mention distinction in the broadest sense (i.e. I am not implying that any of these is ironical).

(11) A: I will meet Sara here tomorrow.
(12) A: Mary said, "I will meet Sara here tomorrow."
(13) A: Mary said (that) she would meet Sara there the next day.
(14) A: She would meet Sara here tomorrow, Mary said.
(15) A: She would meet Sara here tomorrow.

(11) is a use by A of a linguistic expression and of the proposition it expresses; (12) includes an explicit mention by A of a linguistic expression used by Mary and thus of the proposition expressed by Mary; (13) and (14) include explicit mentions of propositions, explicit by virtue of the 'Mary said'; (15) is an implicit mention of a proposition, implicit by virtue of the absence of any overt attribution to another person such as 'Mary said', as are all the underlined passages in (10). The S-W claim is that ironical utterances fall into the class of propositional mentions, usually implicit, but not necessarily so as (7) shows. This is a necessary condition for an utterance to be ironical, but patently not a sufficient one as (15) shows; (15) could be simply an indirect reporting of someone else's proposition.

S-W specify a little further by insisting that the mention be 'echoic'; that is, the mentioned proposition must involve attribution of its serious consideration, its use, to some other source (it could be the speaker herself at some time other than the time of utterance), as is very clearly so in (10). We still have here only a set of necessary, not sufficient, conditions for an utterance to be ironical. The point is that recognizing this category of utterances, echoic mention of propositions, is the basis for the interpretation of a wide range of utterances in which a speaker expresses a particular reaction/opinion/attitude to that proposition. In the case of an ironical utterance that attitude is one of a fairly limited but difficult to define range including mockery, scorn, wry amusement, (possibly) resignation, lack of sympathy or agreement with the proposition perhaps being the common core.

3. Comment on this approach to irony

A. Mention as a linguistic notion

S-W are proposing a great extension to the notion of mention. It is a term employed hitherto by logicians to distinguish the use of an expression from the use of the name of an expression, where 'use of the name of X' is equivalent to 'mention of X'. (16) is true when the expression 'Boston' is being mentioned (usually indicated by its being put in quotes) in that sentence and false when it is being used; hence the importance of the distinction in logical argumentation.

(16) Boston is a noun.
(Quine, 1940)

S-W have extended this to include the implicit mention of propositions (where propositions are neutral mental entities which may be thought, stored in memory, or verbally expressed). They claim that an account of mention in natural language must be developed, and that many of the traditional 'figures of speech' such as metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, irony and puns involve the mention of a proposition.

A number of questions arise, none of which undermines the present state of S-W's account but all of which will have to be tackled if this semantic distinction is to attain the status in linguistic theory which they envisage. For instance, what counts as a mention of a proposition, and what sort of criteria distinguish uses and mentions? S-W say that a mentioned sentence "does not have the illocutionary force it would standardly have in a context where it was used" (S-W, p.12) so in the case of (12) above, the speaker, A, is not asserting that 'I' (or 'Mary') will meet 'Sara'. If this is extended to propositions by some kind of translation of them into utterances which express them the illocutionary force associated with the use of that sentence would not be present in the mention case. So in the case of (15) the illocutionary force of this sentence when it is used is that of assertion, but when it is mentioned there is no assertion of it by the speaker. Perhaps the problem becomes one of recognizing when a particular illocutionary force is present or not: consider the dotted underlined sentence in (10) where it is difficult to tell whether this is a case of assertion by Didion, the speaker/author, or not.

A further problem with this illocutionary force test is that it would include cases such as the propositions expressed by the underlined linguistic expressions in (17) and (18):

(17) If it is raining we'll stay indoors.
(18) When Mary has gone I'll go to bed.

I do not know whether S-W would want to treat these as mentions or not. They certainly seem to be processed by a hearer very differently from (6), (7), (8) and (10) in that a hearer suspends her processing as units of the propositions expressed by the 'sentences' immediately following 'if' and 'when' and interprets the whole 'if...then...', 'when...then...' construction as a single pragmatic unit, drawing implications from it as a whole.

That characterizing the use/mention distinction is problematic is evident from the rather arbitrary line S-W draw at one point. They claim that examples such as (13) above and (19) below cannot be treated as cases of mention since the indirectly reported proposition, (20), is part of a larger proposition, and there is no demarcation line, explicit or implicit, to set if off as a case of mention. But surely the mentioned propositions in (19) and (21) are as marked off as that in (22) which they definitely do wish to see as a case of mention:

(19) A: She says that she will come at five.
(20) She will come at five.
(21) A: She says she will come at five.
(22) A: She will come at five, she says.
(23) A: May wondered why Sue was unhappy.
(24) A: Trish asked whether Jane had come home.
(25) A: Julie ordered Anne to go.

(23) - (25) are parallel cases to (19); it is unclear whether S-W want to see them as mentions or not. All these cases pass the illocutionary force test if it is extended to instances of putatively mentioned propositions. There seems to be no evidence in favour of ruling out (19) as a case of mention.

What seems to be going on when a speaker mentions a proposition is a suspension of these implications which, according to Urmson (1952), and others, standardly accompany uses of linguistic expressions and propositions, implications by the speaker of the truth (in the case of assertion), reasonableness and appropriateness of her words, and of her personal commitment to/belief in the literal words. Thus when a hearer recognises a mention she does not draw that group of inferences which standardly follow from the fact of A's using a proposition, p: 'A believes p'; 'A thinks that p is a relevant comment at this moment', 'A thinks that p is true', 'A wants B, the hearer, to believe p', etc. In the case of irony in particular, it is inconceivable that the speaker wants to convey these implications since it is certain that her actual beliefs are incompatible with the proposition expressed by the literal utterances and that the speaker and hearer share and know they share these beliefs. So these inferences standardly drawn from the asserting of a proposition (extensions of this to questions, orders, etc. are straightforward) are simply inconsistent with the hearer's set of assumptions, and in particular with a subset of her assumptions, those concerning the speaker's assumptions. The hearer's rejection of these implications, because of their inconsistency with her readily accessible assumptions, is the basis of her recognition of the literal proposition as a mention, and the signal for embedding the proposition under a propositional attitude. In the case of irony the context will provide the indicators of attitude which will lead to embeddings of the following sort in place of the rejected implications: 'A thinks that p is a ridiculous comment in the present circumstances', 'A does not want me to think that p', etc.

B. Covertness of the mention - another necessary condition

Ironical utterances are not just mentions of propositions, they are echoic mentions of propositions. The notion of echo is stretched to include very distant sources and imagined sources (S-W: 20). The utility of the notion echo is very doubtful, since it seems that to mention a proposition is to 'echo' in their use of the word. Consider the following example, generally accepted by literary critics as an ironical remark by Voltaire:

(26) When all was over and the rival kings were celebrating their victory with Te Deums in their respective camps...
(Voltaire: *Candide*, chapter 3)

This entails a proposition that nobody can accept: 'Both sides can win a war' or perhaps 'God can give victory to both sides in the same war' and it is evident in the context of the book that Voltaire rejects it. These then are mentioned propositions, but they do not seem to be echoic; it is difficult to see whose point of view they might express. However, if one wants to maintain that there is a vague suggestion of an echo - after all S-W allow for 'a point of view that someone might hold' - surely any proposition I can think of is a view that someone might hold, and if I mention it rather than use it I am automatically 'echoing' in their sense. It was the noticing of the truly echoic nature of many ironic utterances which gave rise to S-W's analysis, examples such as (6) - (8), and which probably accounts for their holding on to the notion. It seems, however, in its extension to all cases of irony to be a notion that does no work.

I would like to mention a distinction which does do some work in the description of ironical utterances. In S-W's analysis and in the observations of Booth and other literary critics a crucial element in recognizing an utterance as ironical is recognizing the expression of an attitude of dissociation from/ rejection of the proposition. The speaker could choose to be verbally overt about her attitude, as in (27) and (28):

(27) A: What lovely weather would be a bloody ridiculous thing to say.

(28) A: Anyone who thinks Joe's a genius is crazy.

The underlined parts of these utterances mention propositions and are as 'echoic' as S-W require them to be. They express overtly the kind of attitude we associate with ironical expression, but they are not ironical utterances (and here I must simply assume that native speaker intuitions are agreed). Why are they not ironical? It seems to be simply because of this overt verbal expression of attitude. So we need a distinction between covert and overt mention of a proposition. For the mention of a proposition to be ironical it must be covert (i.e. there is no overt verbal expression of speaker attitude to the proposition); this is another necessary but not sufficient condition for an utterance to be ironical.[5]

C. The rhetorical power of irony

Why is ironical expression so much more powerful, more highly valued than direct literal expression? Why do we do it? Critics are unanimously agreed that Swift's *A Modest Proposal* is a stronger denunciation than any overtly angry or despairing outburst on the same subject could be. Effective satire tends to be ironical rather than invective. Irony is a powerful critical tool because the assumption behind it is that the truth is self-evident; i.e. something is so bad, so stupid, so irrelevant, etc. that ironies about it will be perfectly clear. To state directly that something is bad, stupid or irrelevant carries with it the assumption that the hearer/reader may not already know it, i.e. it is not a totally obvious fact.

Allied to this is the assumption of knowledge shared by the speaker and hearer(s), and often at the expense of others; irony is a great creator of solidarity, of group alignment. The following example is intended to show that the mention analysis provides a basis for explaining this peculiar power of irony and the way in which a speaker can exploit what she knows of the capacity of her addressees in a particular context to recognize the mention of a proposition:

(29) A: Go on, Nancy, you're nearly there!

A can intend the underlined proposition of (29) to be taken by Nancy as a use, i.e. as sincerely believed by A, while simultaneously intending it to be taken as a mention by some third party. A may know very well that Nancy will process the utterance as a use, for whatever reasons (Nancy is very confident of her own abilities, she assumes A's support and good-will, etc.), and that a group of onlookers standing at the side near A will process it as a mention, having amongst their current set of beliefs: 'Nancy is nowhere near finishing', 'A knows that Nancy is nowhere near', etc. The relative physical positions of the participants may allow for the speaker to indicate an attitude to the onlookers by a wry smile or raising of eyebrows, or 'I don't think' muttered in a much lower voice, none of which could be perceived by Nancy to cause alteration to her assumptions. The result, of course, is that the onlookers who interpret the utterance as ironical feel drawn into collusion with the speaker, i.e. they all know something that Nancy does not know and what is more their knowledge is of a failure, a weakness, an ineptitude on Nancy's part.

There is a direct relationship between this kind of exploitation of verbal irony in daily human interchange and the contrivance of dramatic irony which is a staple of the theatre and a source of great pleasure to audiences. One example should make the connection clear: King Duncan, about to enter the castle of Macbeth, speaks the following lines:

(30) This castle hath a pleasant seat: the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.
...
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.
(*Macbeth*, I, vi)

We, the audience, are drawn into collusion with Shakespeare because we have knowledge (a set of propositions) that Duncan does not, and that we know that Duncan does not have, namely that Duncan is to be given little chance to continue his graces to anyone, that Macbeth hates him and plans to kill him, etc. The situation is similar to the one above where A and the onlookers share assumptions, a point of view that Nancy is excluded from. The obvious difference is that here the words are spoken by the victim himself; Duncan uses the propositions expressed in his speech, but we recognize that Shakespeare expects us to interpret them as mentions in the context of our knowledge and simultaneously to understand them as uses for Duncan.

4. Parodic utterances as the mention of a linguistic expression

S-W note that their analysis is successful in accounting for the similarities and differences between irony and parody, in that they are both cases of mention but while ironical utterances are mentions of propositions, parodic utterances are mentions of linguistic expressions; the attitude is one of dissociation and mockery in both cases. Structualist approaches to parody and irony have made similar observations in different terms; Culler (1975: 152) groups irony and parody together at his fifth level of text naturalization, by which is meant the way in which a hearer/reader understands a text by bringing it into contact with and defining it in relation to another text which is already known to her (text here seems to mean any coherent set of consistent interrelated propositions). Very briefly, what happens is that an utterance or literary work cites another as its basis or point of departure but the current point of view must be understood as undermining the original (strong hints of the idea of mention here). In this respect parody resembles irony although, he says, in other respects they are different, irony relying on semantic rather than formal effects (parallel with the S-W proposition/linguistic expression dichotomy).

In fact, his vaguer notion of 'imitation of formal effects' seems preferable to S-W's notion of 'mention of a linguistic expression' when one comes to consider actual cases of literary parody. (31) is an extract from a well known and very successful parody of T.S. Eliot's writing:

(31) As we get older we do not get any younger.
Seasons return, and today I am fifty-five,
And this time last year I was fifty-four,
And this time next year I shall be sixty-two.
And I cannot say I should like (to speak for myself)
To see my time over again - if you can call it time:
Fidgeting uneasily under the draughty stair,
Or counting sleepless nights in the crowded tube.
(Henry Reed '*Chard Whitlow*')

Critics seem generally agreed that what Reed does here is reproduce "the literary mannerisms and the modes of thought and feeling characteristic of T.S. Eliot in *Four Quartets*" (Jump, 1972: 26). Yet they do not point out any particular 'linguistic expression' that has been mentioned, and when one scours *Four Quartets* in order to find explicit parallels one finds, at most, individual words and occasionally a phrase, never a line or a sentence that has been mentioned by Reed. What seem to be crucial here are a certain measured rhythm, a use of parallel grammatical structures in consecutive lines, simple prosaic assertions almost always free of adjectives and similes, an urbane tone of voice:

(32) The moment in the arbour where the rain beat,
The moment in the draughty church at smokefall.
'*Burnt Norton*' II.

(33) ... As we grow older
The world becomes stranger,....
'*East Coker*' I.

(34) And what you do not know is the only thing you know
And what you own is what you do not own
And where you are is where you are not.
'*East Coker*' III.

Reed's first line is clearly echoing (33), but apart from that it is difficult to point out one to one mappings of uses and mentions of linguistic expressions, although the above (32) - (34) are sufficient to show that something is being echoed. At this point one wonders whether the linguistic/pragmatic use of the term mention has anything much to do with the philosophical notion at all. Even in the one reasonably clear case (33), the mention distorts the linguistic expression it recalls and this process of distortion seems to be essential to parody.

This is rather different from the direct mention of someone else's words as in the following example:

(35) The nymphs are departed.
Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song
The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed.
And their friends, the loitering heirs of city directors.
(T.S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*, II. 175-80)

Here Eliot mentions a line from Spenser's '*Prothalamion*', which is a set of lyrical verses written to celebrate an Elizabethan marriage. It gives a loving description of the silvery waters of the Thames, abundant flowers, gentle zephyrs, birds with silken plumage and (inevitably) a flock of garlanded nymphs pouring blessings on the happy couple, each verse ending with the line:

'Sweete Thames! runne softly, till I end my song!'

Eliot's satirical thrust is directed at the river as it is today and at the people associated with it, its sordidness pointed up by contrast with the Elizabethan Thames of Spenser's poem. There may be some irony directed at Spenser too, at his idealized and artificial depiction of the river, but it is certainly not parodying Spenser. It seems to be a standard use of allusion in English literature to mention a linguistic expression which the reader is expected to recognize, thus evoking very economically a whole set of propositions which are her knowledge of the original work. Parody tends to mention aspects of a number of factors of the original work, certain memorable phrases, certain grammatical constructions, certain principles of versification and certain propositions, in order to recall the earlier work. Parody is truly echoic, the echo keeps on coming, and identifying its real world source is basic to understanding it, while with irony this is not ecessarily so. A parody also mentions ironically a number of propositions not used in the earlier work and usually of a patently absurd sort. So the crucial difference between those factors as they were used initially and as they are mentioned in the parody is the change of context. The tautological, false or banal nature of the propositions in the new context (consider (31) above) conveys the authorial attitude of mockery to those aspects of the original work which are mentioned.

5. Conclusion

S-W's account of irony has been shown to deal with a much wider range of cases of subtle qualification of literal meaning than any meaning-inversion approach can. It accounts not only for colloquial irony but also for authorial irony in literary texts despite certain obvious differences between the two, and it recognizes the speaker/author's attitude of dissociation from and mockery to the literal words.

The requirement that the mention be echoic does not seem to be crucial while a requirement that it be covert does. The use/mention distinction as used here is very different from the philosophical notion and needs a great deal more work before it can be integrated fully into linguistic theory. This approach does indicate the close relationship between irony and parody, but what exactly counts as a mention of a linguistic expression and whether this is an adequate notion anyway to account for what is going on in a parody is much less clear.

FOOTNOTES

1. Amongst the literary critical discussions of irony consulted are Booth (1974), Muecke (1969), Muecke (1970), Vulliamy (1950) together with investigations of the meaning and use of the word 'irony' in Abrams (1971) and Knox (1961).

2. Amongst the few linguistic discussions of irony are Amante (1975), Cutler (1974) and Schofer and Rice (1977). Grice (1975, 1978) is responsible for the movement away from a semantic analysis to a pragmatic one in which the importance of context is recognized.

3. Very many of the literary examples in this paper are taken from Booth (1974) where an abundance of tried and tested written ironies is to be found.

4. The following is an example of the standard conversational implicature:

    A: What do you think of Charlotte?
    B: I'm sick to death of griping feminists.

   Here, if A is to preserve her assumption that B has responded to her question and not opened up a new topic of conversation altogether, she must attribute to B the belief that Charlotte is a griping feminist. It is this belief that is tacitly implied by B's utterance, i.e. conversationally implicated.

5. There is one apparent exception to this and that is the use of the phrase 'I don't think'. But this is pretty much of an idiom in English, conventionally understood as an irony indicator and very restricted in its operation. It must always occur after the proposition mentioned and with heavy stress on 'don't', and no other verb in place of 'think' will do, so of the following only (1) is ironical:

(1) A: Jill's a real genius, I don't think.
(2) A: I don't think Jill's a real genius.
(3) A: Jill's a real genius, I don't (believe)
(hold)
(say)

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POLARITY, ELLIPTICITY AND PROPOSITIONAL DEVELOPMENT, Their Relevance to the Well-Formedness of an Exchange (A discussion of Coulthard and Brazil's Classes of Move)

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1. Introduction

Coulthard & Brazil (1979, henceforth CB) develop the concept of the exchange proposed by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975). In this paper, I shall concentrate my discussion on two sections of CB's monograph: pages 40-44, in which they set out their proposals for classes of move; and pages 10-11, in which they come to the conclusion that the sentence must still be regarded as the highest unit of grammar. Other aspects of their proposals have already been discussed in this journal, in Stubbs' review of their work (Stubbs 1979. See also Stubbs, in press).

1.1 Coulthard and Brazil's proposals for classes of move

My main concern will be with CB's proposals for classes of move. These proposals are put forward in the context of a view of the exchange as 'the unit concerned with negotiating the transmission of information' (CB:43) and in the context of a claim that a limit can be set on the amount of information whose transmission is negotiated by a single exchange. CB say:

> We now want to argue that the exchange only carries one (potentially complex) piece of information and its polarity, and that the information and the polarity can only be questioned and asserted once... the power of the exchange is that as one progresses the available options decrease rapidly.
> (CB:43. Original emphasis)

Three particularly interesting points would seem to arise from this:

(i) that there is a oneness, a unity, about the information transmitted in an exchange;

(ii) that the need to conform to this unity imposes constraints on the later moves in an exchange;

(iii) that the constraints lead to an observable progression through the exchange in terms of the options available.

If the conditions for unity and the nature of the constraints and the progression can be sufficiently precisely specified, this approach offers hope to the describer-of-texts of more reliable criteria for the assignment of exchange boundaries - my own experience does not accord with CB's that 'In the earlier, Sinclair & Coulthard version of exchange structure...exchange boundaries were rarely problematic' (CB:43) - and hope to the theoretical linguist of more accurate predictions relating to the well-formedness or otherwise of exchanges.

Coulthard & Brazil do attempt to formalise their insights and in some respects their proposals are admirably precise. They commit themselves, for instance, to the view that each of four classes of item can be represented only once in an exchange and they claim that the four classes must occur in a particular sequence:

> we must subdivide the eliciting and informing moves each into two subclasses:
> el eliciting moves which seek major information
> e2 eliciting moves which seek polarity information
> il informing moves which assert major information
> i2 informing moves which assert polarity information
> We will now show that all these moves can occur once only in a single exchange and also that they must occur in the sequence el il e2 i2.
> (CB:43)

However there are other respects in which CB's proposals still need refining if they are to be as valuable a contribution to discourse analysis as they promise to be. I shall demonstrate that, in their present form, CB's proposals are unsatisfactory both from the point of view of the coding of texts and from the point of view of the prediction of well-formedness. I shall suggest a number of modifications to their proposals.

1.2. Coulthard & Brazil's claim that the sentence must still be regarded as the highest unit of grammar

My secondary concern will be with CB's conclusion regarding the status of the sentence as the highest unit of grammar. CB argue as follows:

> The unit at the highest rank in a particular level is one which has a structure that can be expressed in terms of smaller units, but which does not itself form part of the structure of any larger unit. Any attempt to describe structure assumes implicitly that there are certain combinations of units which either do not occur, or if they do occur, are unacceptable - within grammar such structures are classified as ungrammatical. The corollary is that a potential unit upon whose structure one can discover <u>no</u> constraints in terms of combinations of the unit next below has no structure and is therefore not a unit in the rank scale. It is for this reason that <u>sentence</u> must be regarded as the highest unit of grammar, for, despite many attempts to describe paragraph structure and despite the obvious <u>cohesive</u> links between sentences, it is impossible to characterise paragraphs in terms of permissible and non-permissible combinations of classes of sentence.
> (CB: 10-11)

It is strange, given that the subject of their monograph is <u>exchange</u> structure, that CB should have chosen to argue this question from the point of view of the <u>paragraph</u>. Surely the crucial question for CB is not whether the paragraph can be characterised in terms of permissible and non-permissible combinations of classes of sentence, but whether the <u>exchange</u> can be characterised in this way.

There will not be room in this paper for a full consideration of this issue (I continue the discussion in Berry, in preparation), but in the course of my revisions to CB's proposals for classes of move I shall present some evidence that the exchange <u>can</u> in fact be characterised in terms of permissible and non-permissible combinations of classes of sentence. By CB's reasoning, this should mean that the sentence can no longer automatically be regarded as the highest unit of grammar and that the exchange now becomes a candidate for this position.

This would not necessarily be to deny the desirability of postulating a new, specifically discourse, level, a point which CB go on to discuss immediately after the passage which I have quoted. It would merely be to suggest that more can be accounted for within the formal level of grammar than has previously been thought, before it becomes necessary to postulate a new level.

2. Polarity

CB do not explicitly define 'major information'; nor do they explicitly define 'polarity information'. I shall discuss these two points together as CB's implicit definition of 'major information' seems to depend on their implicit definition of 'polarity information'.

One begins by thinking that one knows what is meant by 'polarity information seeking' and 'polarity information asserting'. Caution, however, would appear to be necessary as it seems from the discussion of the examples on page 44 that anything can count as anything; form is evidently no guide to function. Who wouldn't?, I'll be there by nine and Are you kidding? look respectively like e1, i1 and e2 moves, but in their discussion of their example (60a) CB suggest that these should all be coded as i2.

It is, in fact, in their discussion of example (60a) that CB provide the only clue which they give to what they really mean by 'polarity information'. Their grounds for coding the three utterances all as i2 are that 'they are all interpretable as paraphrases of the basic i2 realisation "yes"'. CB do not mention "no", but presumably this too would count as a basic i2 realisation. The only clue to the meaning of 'major information' is that the categories 'major information' and 'polarity information' appear to be mutually exclusive, though even this is not explicitly stated.

It would seem then that CB would wish to define their four classes of move as follows:

- i2 - moves which assert information which is expressed as/paraphrasable as yes/no;
- e2 - moves which seek information which is expressable as/paraphrasable as yes/no;
- i1 - moves which assert information which is not expressed as/paraphrasable as yes/no;
- e1 - moves which seek information which is not expressable as/paraphrasable as yes/no.

If this really is the way in which CB would wish their four classes to be defined, then their specifications for exchange structure lead to undesirable results both when one is coding texts and when one is attempting to predict ill-formedness.

When coding texts one finds that CB's specifications for exchange structure lead one to place exchange boundaries in positions which fail to account satisfactorily for the internal coherence of the discourse. (I would agree with Stubbs that accounting for the perceived coherence of discourse must be a major aim of discourse analysis (Stubbs, in press: 18)). For instance, according to CB's specifications, (1) would presumably be coded as one exchange, as it has the structure e1 i1 e2 i2. (The implication of CB's proposals seems to be that one does code a stretch of text as a single exchange unless there is something in the proposals that explicitly rules this out).

(1) A. What's the time?
B. Six o'clock.
A. Is it?
B. Yes.

(Stubbs discusses a similar example (Stubbs, in press:17-21)). But (2) would have to be regarded as two exchanges, as it has two polarity information seeking moves and two polarity information asserting moves and CB permit only one of each to occur in a single exchange.

(2) A. Is it six o'clock yet?
B. Yes.
A. Is it?
B. Yes.

Thus the internal coherence of (1) would be accounted for by CB at the rank of exchange, but the internal coherence of (2) would have to be accounted for at a higher rank. Surely the second half of (2) coheres with the first half of (2) in exactly the same way as the second half of (1) coheres with the first half of (1). It is undesirable therefore that one should have to account for the coherence of the two examples in different ways.

Similarly (3) would presumably be coded by CB as one exchange as again it has the structure el il e2 i2, though this time with an additional follow-up move.

(3) Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire?
Contestant: Salisbury.
Quizmaster: Sure?
Contestant: Yes.
Quizmaster: Right.

But (4) would have to be divided into (at least) two exchanges.

(4) Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire?
Contestant: Salisbury.
Quizmaster: Sure?
Contestant: Yes.
Quizmaster: Quite sure?
Contestant: Yes.
Quizmaster: Right.

(Teasing quizmasters do indulge in such interchanges!)

The fifth and sixth moves in (4) are as closely linked to what has gone before as the third and fourth moves in (3). Again it is undesirable that one should have to account for the coherence in different ways.

Then again (5) would have to be coded as two exchanges, this time because it has two major information (i.e. non-polarity information) seeking moves and two major information asserting moves.

(5) Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire?
Contestant: Salisbury.
Quizmaster: Which?
Contestant: Salisbury.
Quizmaster: Right.

This analysis would fail to account for my intuition that, although (5) is not exactly the same as (3), it is nevertheless very similar indeed in its degree and kind of coherence. Either (3) and (5) should both be coded as a single exchange or both should be coded as two exchanges.

Another pair of examples, rather different in form from those already cited but posing a similar problem, are (6) and (7). Presumably CB would code (6) as el e2 il and would consequently regard it as a single exchange. But (7) would have to be regarded as two exchanges as it has two polarity information seeking moves. This would entirely fail to reveal the parallelism between the two examples.

(6) Teacher: What kind of clause is the first clause?
Student: A main clause?
Teacher: Right.

(7) Teacher: Is the second clause a main clause?
Student: Yes?
Teacher: Right.

(Schoolchildren may not use Yes with rising intonation in these circumstances, but university students certainly do).

So far my discussion has been from the point of view of the coder of texts. However, the same kind of problem arises if one tries to use CB's specifications to make predictions about well-formedness.

CB correctly predict, for instance, that (1) is a well-formed interchange since it conforms to their sequencing rule but that (8) is ill-formed since it breaks this rule.

*(8) A. Is it?
B. Yes.
A. What's the time?
B. Six o'clock.

However, they have no way of predicting the ill-formedness of (9).

*(9) A. Is it?
B. Yes.
A. Is it six o'clock yet?
B. Yes.

(9) could not be regarded by CB as a single exchange as it has two polarity information seeking moves and two polarity information asserting moves. The sequencing rule is therefore not applicable to the interchange as a whole, only to the two separate halves. The rule thus becomes inapplicable at exactly the point at which the ill-formedness is located; consequently some other method would have to be found of accounting for this ill-formedness. Yet (9) is surely ill-formed in exactly the same way as (8), so the ill-formedness of the two examples should be accounted for in the same way.

Similarly CB correctly predict the ill-formedness of (10).

*(10) Quizmaster: Sure?
Contestant: Yes.
Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire?
Contestant: Salisbury.
Quizmaster: Right.

But they are unable to predict the ill-formedness of (11).

*(11) Quizmaster: Which?
Contestant: Salisbury.
Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire?
Contestant: Salisbury.
Quizmaster: Right.

(In all these examples I am assuming that the first two moves are not a continuation of a previous exchange).

Then again, CB correctly predict the ill-formedness of (12), but cannot predict the ill-formedness of (13).

*(12) Teacher: A main clause?
Student: Right.
Teacher: What kind of clause is the first clause?

*(13) Teacher: Yes?
Student: Right.
Teacher: Is the second clause a main clause?

(Again I am assuming that in each case there is no previous exchange of which the first two moves can be considered to be a part. They must thus be taken to be opening the exchanges here and as such are surely ill-formed).

(For the purposes of this discussion I have assumed that one first uses CB's one-occurrence rule to assign moves to exchanges and then applies the sequencing rule to predict whether the exchanges will be regarded as well-formed. There are, of course, other ways of using these rules. But as far as I can see none of the other ways get one even as far as this when it comes to predicting ill-formedness).

Examples (1) to (13) seem to show that, in their distribution and in the constraints on their distribution, polarity information seeking/asserting moves are very like major (i.e. non-polarity) information seeking/asserting moves. For instance, examples (2) and (1) show that polarity information moves can occur at the beginning of an interchange just as well as non-polarity information moves and that they can equally well be followed by polarity information moves. And examples (5) and (3) show that non-polarity information moves can occur later in an interchange just as well as polarity information moves and that they are equally capable of following non-polarity information moves.

Is there really a progression from non-polarity information moves to polarity information moves which is so regularly observable that CB are justified in making this opposition the basis of their proposals? Is it really true that the options relating to this opposition can be observed to decrease? In spite of CB's promise that they 'will now show that all these moves can occur once only in a single exchange and also that they must occur in the sequence e1 i1 e2 i2' (CB:43), they do not really demonstrate these points at all. They merely assume them in the discussion of the following examples. This makes it difficult to assess the evidence in favour of their proposals.

Certainly there are constraints on distribution, as examples (8), (10) and (12) show, but maybe there are other ways of specifying these constraints which would at the same time allow us to take account of the constraints operating in examples (9), (11) and (13). Maybe what we need is not just a more explicit definition of 'major information' but a differently based definition, a definition which would not depend on an opposition with polarity information.

3. Ellipticity

Stubbs implies a different definition of 'major information', based on a different type of opposition, when he says:

> This definition of ±initial suggests a way of defining the exchange as an information unit, in which major information is introduced and then supported by elliptical syntax in the rest of the exchange. (Stubbs, in press:19-20. My emphasis).

The basic opposition is between elliptical syntax and non-elliptical syntax. Non-elliptical suntax is equated with, or at any rate associated with, 'major information'. Both are associated with a potentiality for occurring in initial position in an exchange.

Developing Stubbs' approach I shall attempt to distinguish different degrees of ellipticity. I shall then reformulate CB's proposals in terms of these distinctions, with a view to seeing whether this new approach assists with the problems discussed above.

On the basis of their ellipticity, the moves in examples (1) to (13) seem to fall into three classes:

(i) those with no ellipticity, or ellipticity in respect of only one of the components of the proposition being transmitted in the exchange;

(ii) those with ellipticity in respect of all but one of the components of the proposition being transmitted in the exchange;

(iii) those with ellipticity in respect of all the components of the proposition being transmitted in the exchange.

I count as a component of a proposition anything which Halliday would regard as a process, a participant or a circumstance in the ideational structure of a clause (e.g. Halliday 1967, 1968, 1970). I regard as an instance of ellipticity any total absence of reference to a component or any representation of a component solely by means of grammatical items such as pronouns or substitute verbs. (In a more detailed study I would wish to distinguish between reference, substitution and ellipsis after the manner of Halliday and Hasan (1976). For the purposes of this paper, however, I am using the term ellipticity as a cover term for all three).

(I intend the definitions I have just given to be taken as temporary working definitions. In Berry (in preparation) I discuss more rigorous ways of formalising the facts to which I am drawing attention here. Lane (1981) discusses in more detail the extent to which grammatical items and lexical items can be said to differ in their behaviour in this connection).

Each of the ellipticity classes will include any move which has the relevant degree of ellipticity, regardless of whether it is eliciting or informing and regardless of whether the information concerned is polarity information or non-polarity information. This kind of distinction cuts across the kinds of distinction proposed by CB.

(i) Thus ellipticity class I may be exemplified by Which English cathedral has the tallest spire? or Is Salisbury the English cathedral with the tallest spire? or Salisbury is the English cathedral with the tallest spire.

(ii) Similarly ellipticity class 2 may be exemplified by Is it Salisbury? (in reply to Which English cathedral has the tallest spire?) or Salisbury (in reply to the same question) or Yes (in reply to Is Salisbury the English cathedral with the tallest spire?)

Is it Salisbury? and Salisbury fairly obviously qualify for inclusion in ellipticity class 2 as this is defined above. Each makes explicit reference to one component of the proposition being transmitted, but is elliptical in respect to all the other components. Salisbury makes no reference at all to the other components. Is it Salisbury? acknowledges the other components, but only via a pronoun and a substitute verb.

It is perhaps more surprising to find Yes assigned to ellipticity class 2. I am here agreeing with Halliday and Hasan who say:

> It is possible to consider yes and no as clause substitutes. But they are not really substitutes;...They are realizations of a single clause feature, that of polarity, which is being expressed on its own instead of in association with the verbal group...
> (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:209)

yes and no do not in fact pass Halliday & Hasan's test for substitutes; they cannot therefore be regarded as analogous to pronouns and substitute verbs. As Halliday & Hasan suggest, they should be regarded rather as explicit realisations of a single clause feature, a single component of a proposition, in circumstances in which the other components of the proposition are left implicit. This brings them within the scope of my definition of ellipticity class 2. Certainly, as we shall see, they have the same districution and constraints on distribution as the other items from ellipticity class 2.

(In actual fact the situation is not as simple as Halliday & Hasan and I have so far been making it appear. In a future paper (Berry, forthcoming) I hope to argue that contrastive yes/no, of which all the instances of yes in this paper are examples, can be formally distinguished from yes/no meaning simply 'I agree'. While continuing to agree with Halliday & Hasan over contrastive yes/no, I shall disagree with them over agreement yes/no. I shall argue that agreement yes/no do have the function of clause substitutes rather than the function of explicit realisation of component of proposition and I shall accordingly assign them to ellipticity class 3. Again function will be found to be reflected in distribution).

(iii) Ellipticity class 3 may be exemplified by Is it? (as in (1)), Which? (as in (5)), Sure? (as in (3)) and Right (again as in (3)).

The last two examples are perhaps the most surprising here as both look as if they are making explicit reference to a component of a proposition and, what is more, doing so by means of a lexical item rather than by a grammatical item. However, neither is referring to a component of the original proposition of the exchange, the proposition whose transmission the exchange as a whole is negotiating. I am assuming that the original proposition, begun in the first move and completed in the second, is 'Salisbury is the English cathedral which has the tallest spire'. Presumably Sure? is short for 'Are you sure that Salisbury is the English cathedral which has the tallest spire?'. And presumably Right is short for 'You are right to say the Salisbury is the English cathedral which has the tallest spire'. In both Sure? and Right the original proposition is left totally unexpressed. The two examples thus meet the conditions which I laid down for ellipticity class 3.

I will now reformulate CB's proposals:

(a) For their four classes I shall substitute the three classes outlined above. I shall refer to these simply by their numbers: ellipticity class 1 as 1, ellipticity class 2 as 2, ellipticity class 3 as 3.

(b) For the moment at any rate, I shall retain CB's two rules: that each of the classes can be represented only once in an exchange; that the classes must occur in a particular sequence. The sequence for the ellipticity classes is 1 2 3.

(c) I will further stipulate that 1 is obligatory; every exchange must contain a class 1 move. A class 2 move occurs if, and only if, the class 1 move is an eliciting move. (There are certain circumstances under which a class 3 move is obligatory, but I shall not be able to specify these until after I have discussed CB's eliciting/informing distinction. See section 4).

(d) Like CB I assume that, in addition to the moves covered by (a), (b) and (c) above, an exchange may also contain a follow-up move. As its name suggests, this when it occurs, must follow the moves covered by (a), (b) and (c). In terms of ellipticity classes, a follow-up move will be found to be an (extra) ellipticity class 3 move. (I differ from CB over exactly what I allow to count as a follow-up move. Again see section 4).

As will be evident from my parentheses, it is not yet possible to be totally explicit about the claims that I am making. However, already these reformulations of CB's proposals in the light of Stubbs' approach solve the problems discussed in relation to examples (6) and (7), and examples (12) and (13).

Under CB's original proposals (7) would have contained two occurrences of one class of move; the first two moves would both have been coded as e2. Under the revised proposals these two moves would be coded differently - the first move as class 1 and the second move as class 2; there are no longer two occurrences of the same class. This means that there is now no bar to regarding (7) as a single exchange - just as (6) is a single exchange. In fact (6) and (7) can now be shown to contain the same sequence of classes - 1 2 3. The parallelism between the two examples can now be indicated by the coding.

That the recurrence of class indicated by CB's original coding was more an illusion that real is shown by example (13). Yes? is not really the same class of item as Is the second clause a main clause?, as the former cannot take over the position of the latter. The revised proposals provide us with an explanation of just why Yes? cannot take over the position of Is the second clause a main clause?. It has the wrong degree of ellipticity. In (13) a class 2 item is occurring before a class 1 item, which breaks the sequencing rule for ellipticity classes. Exactly the same explanation can be provided for (12). A main clause? is too elliptical to occur before What kind of clause is the first clause?. (12) and (13) can now be shown to contain exactly the same sequence of classes - 2 3 1 - and consequently to break the sequencing rule in exactly the same manner. The ill-formedness of the two examples can now be accounted for in the same way.

We have not yet solved all the problems relating to the other examples discussed above, but we have made some progress. (2) can now be shown to contain the same sequence of classes as (1) - 1 2 3 2 - and (5) can now be shown to contain the same sequence of classes as (3) - 1 2 3 2 3. This means that when we do decide on a solution to the remaining problems, whatever we decide is best for (1) will also be applicable to (2) and whatever analysis we decide is best for (3) will also be applicable to (5). We shall no longer be forced to account in different ways for what is essentially the same kind of coherence.

Similarly (9) can now be shown to contain the same sequence of classes as (8) - 3 2 1 2 - and (11) can now be shown to contain the same sequence of classes as (10) - 3 2 1 2 3. When we eventually decide what is the best way of accounting for the ill-formedness of (8) the explanation will also be applicable to (9), and when we eventually decide what is the best way of accounting for the ill-formedness of (10) the explanation will also be applicable to (11). We shall no longer be forced to account in different ways for what is essentially the same kind of ill-formedness.

I will return to the remaining problems in section 5.

4. Elicitation

So far I have discussed CB's opposition between polarity information and major information and suggested that this might be replaced in their proposals by Stubbs' opposition between elliptical and non-elliptical syntax. I will now turn my attention to the second opposition on which CB's proposals are based: that between eliciting and informing.

Again there is a problem with definitions. Judging by their discussion of Sinclair & Coulthard's classes of exchange (CB:26), CB seem to mean by the term eliciting 'requesting a verbal response' and by the term informing 'providing new information'. These definitions are very difficult to apply in practice. CB themselves admit this; they have great difficulty in deciding whether their examples (65) and (66) are eliciting or informing moves and, although they finally come down in favour of informing, they observe ruefully that 'there are still doubts' (CB:46-47).

The trouble would seem to be that the definitions are notional definitions, and notional definitions generally are rather difficult to apply. I will suggest that it is possible to retain the spirit of CB's proposals and yet at the same time to work with formally defined classes.

I will begin by distinguishing two classes of sentence:
question (henceforth Q), which I will define as a sentence with interrogative syntax and/or rising intonation;
statement (henceforth S), which I will define as a sentence with neither interrogative syntax nor rising intonation.
(I take a sentence to have interrogative syntax if it includes a wh-word and/or subject-aux inversion).

(At the point in their monograph at which they put forward their proposals for classes of move, CB are confining their attention to exchanges which Sinclair & Coulthard would class as eliciting and informing exchanges, leaving out of consideration those exchanges which Sinclair & Coulthard would class as directing exchanges (i.e. exchanges 'whose initial moves function...to... require a non-verbal response' (CB:26)). In order to keep the discussion in this paper within manageable bounds I am following them in this. Hence the absence of any reference to imperatives in my definitions; the data which I am considering will simply not contain any).

Let us now consider the possible distribution and constraints on distribution of questions and statements as I have just defined them. The following three examples are intended to represent a cross-section of different types of exchange. This is, I am aware, a very small amount of data on which to base the claims which I am about to make but unfortunately there is no room for more in the present paper. (In Berry, in preparation, I discuss the claims in greater detail and cite more data in support of them).

(14) Teacher: What are eight twelves?
Pupil: Ninety-six.
Teacher: Right.

(15) Casual acquaintance A: Was it your daughter you were telling me the other day had just gone to Oxford?
Casual acquaintance B: Yes.

(16) Guide (showing party of tourists around the Tower of London):
The White Tower is the original Norman keep.

These examples represent respectively the configurations Q S S, Q S, and S. Must the positions filled here by statements always be filled by statements? Must the positions filled by questions always be filled by questions? What are the possibilities for substituting a Q for an S or an S for a Q?

I would argue that the third move in (14) must be a statement if the exchange is to remain well-formed and complete in itself.

*(17) Teacher: What are eight twelves?
Pupil: Ninety-six
Teacher: Right?

(From now on in this paper, a question mark will be used to indicate rising intonation in a sentence which does not show interrogative syntax. Other punctuation will be omitted).

Notice that I am not saying that Right? could not occur in this position. The teacher might be wishing to involve the rest of the class and consequently asking them to evaluate the answer before confirming it herself. But in this case more talk would be necessary - at least two more moves - before the interchange could be regarded as complete. The introduction of a question at this point would have the effect of lengthening the interchange. (17) can not be regarded as well-formed <u>as it stands</u>.

Similarly the first move in (14) <u>must</u> be a question. There would be nothing ill-formed about a statement in this position, but the substitution this time would have the effect of cutting short the exchange. The most likely response of the class to (18) would be simply to listen in silence.

(18) Teacher: Eight twelves are ninety-six

Effectively the substitution has changed the exchange from the type of exchange exemplified in (14) to the type exemplified in (16).

However, a question <u>could</u> be substituted for the statement of the second move in (14) without any change whatsoever to the length of the interchange. The exchange would still remain basically the same type of exchange.

(19) Teacher: What are eight twelves
Pupil: Ninety-six?
Teacher: Right

In (15) a statement <u>could</u> be substituted for the question of the first move, but a question could <u>not</u> be substituted for the statement of the second move. Thus (20) is perfectly well-formed, but (21) is distinctly odd.

(20) Casual acquaintance A: It was your daughter you were telling me the other day had just gone to Oxford
Casual acquaintance B: Yes

*(21) Casual acquaintance A: Was it your daughter you were telling me the other day had just gone to Oxford
Casual acquaintance B: Yes?

(The statement of the first move in (20) is, of course, an example of a statement about a B-event being heard as a request for confirmation. (Labov 1972:124, Labov & Fanshel 1977:100). See Berry, in press, for further discussion of such examples.

Then again, a question could <u>not</u> be substituted for the statement of (16).

*(22) Guide: Is the White Tower the original Norman keep

Setting aside contextual considerations such as the surprise that the tourists would feel if the guide did produce such a question, a more important point in the context of the present discussion is that (22) could not be regarded as well-formed and <u>complete in itself</u>.

The possibilities, then, for the types of exchange exemplified by (14), (15) and (16) would appear to be respectively:

Q Q/S S
Q/S S
S

It would seem that *every* eliciting or informing exchange of whatever type *must* contain a *statement*. The statement *may* be preceded by a move for which *either* a question *or* a statement is possible. If such a Q/S move is present, this in turn *may* be preceded by a move which *must* be a question.

All this can, of course, be summarised as (23).

(23) $\text{Exchange} \rightarrow \left((Q) \quad \begin{matrix} Q \\ S \end{matrix} \right) \quad S$

One further possibility needs to be mentioned. Under certain circumstances, the obligatory statement may be followed by a further move of a type which CB refer to on some occasions as a *follow-up* move (e.g. CB:39) and on other occasions as an *acknowledge* (e.g. CB:44). For instance

(24) A. Is it six o'clock
B. Yes
A. Oh

There is no room in this paper for a full discussion of what items other than *Oh* can occur in this post-statement position - Sinclair and Coulthard (1975:42) also cite *Cor* and *Wow!* - or of the circumstances under which such a move is possible/impossible, optional/obligatory. Since these questions do not affect the main lines of my arguments, I will simply refer to the items as *Oh*-class items and mark them as optional. Thus a fuller version of (23) would be (25).

(25) $\text{Exchange} \rightarrow \left((Q) \quad \begin{matrix} Q \\ S \end{matrix} \right) \quad S \quad (Oh)$

(It should be noted, however, that not all the moves which CB regard as follow-up moves would for me be *Oh*-class moves. For instance, it would appear from CB's discussion on page 39 that they would wish to regard the *Right* of (14) as a follow-up move. This for me, as I have indicated, would be an instance of an obligatory S; *not* an *Oh*-class item. For some of the differences between *Right* and *Oh* which make it undesirable to code them in the same way, see Berry, in press).

I will now translate the claims that I have just been making into CB's terms. In effect, I shall be retaining their view of an eliciting move as a move which functions to 'request a verbal response', though I shall be differing from them in other respects.

I will define classes of move as follows:

e1 - a move represented by a *question* for which a statement can *not* be substituted;

e2 - a move represented by a *question* for which a statement *can* be substituted *or* by a *statement* for which a question *can* be substituted;

i - a move represented by a *statement* for which a question can *not* be substituted;

a - a move represented by an *Oh*-class item.

(e = eliciting, i = informing, a = acknowledge)

The structure of an exchange would then be as shown in (26).

(26) Exchange → ((e1) e2) i (a)

In Berry, in preparation, I discuss the relative merits of (25) and (26) as phrase structure rules. For the purposes of the present paper, however, I shall treat them simply as notational variants.

(CB's example (60a) might at first sight appear to be a counter-example to these proposals. However, see section 6).

If we now return to the problem examples discussed in section 2, we find that the proposals in this section, considered on their own, produce the same results as the proposals in section 3. They solve the problems relating to examples (6), (7), (12) and (13), and they pave the way for solutions to the other problems though they do not themselves actually provide solutions.

(6) and (7) can each be coded as e1 e2 i. Each can unproblematically be regarded as a single exchange. The coherence of the two examples can be accounted for in the same way. (12) and (13) can each be coded as e2 e1 i, which breaks rule (26). Their ill-formedness can be accounted for in the same way.

Like the proposals in section 3, but unlike CB's original proposals, the proposals in this section can show the similarity between (2) and (1), which would be coded as e2 i e2 i; between (5) and (3), which would be coded as e1 e2 e1 e2 i; between (9) and (8), which would be coded as e2 i e2 i; between (11) and (10), which would be coded as e1 e2 e1 e2 i. We still cannot account for the coherence of the first four of these examples or for the ill-formedness of the last four, but when solutions to the problems <u>are</u> provided there will be no bar to treating alike the examples of each pair. This represents a gain over CB's original proposals.

(My coding of examples (1) and (2) perhaps needs justifying. I will cite (27) as evidence for my view that the questions in these examples <u>can</u> be replaced by statements, and (28) as evidence that the statements can <u>not</u> be replaced by questions.

(27) Husband and wife are sitting reading on opposite sides of the fireplace. Husband is wearing his watch. Wife is not wearing hers. Wife can just about see the hands of husband's watch from where she is sitting, though not to be sure.

Wife: It's six o'clock (now)
Husband (absentmindedly going on reading): Yes
Wife: (insistently, not being really sure whether he took in what she was asking): It is
Husband (rather more convincingly): Yes

*(28) Wife: Is it six o'clock yet
Husband: Yes?
Wife: Is it
Husband: Yes?

Two points should be noted here:

(i) When I say that a statement can be substituted for a question or vice versa, I am not claiming that the question and the statement will be equally appropriate in any given context - any more than linguists who use passivisability as a syntactic test are claiming that an active sentence and its passive counterpart will be equally appropriate in any given context. Usually they will not. The contrast is rather between an item for which substitution is possible in some contexts and an item for which substitution is never possible without altering the length of the interchange in terms of the number of moves.

(ii) The same statement can be used to replace the first question in (1) as can be used to replace the first question in (2). In the case of (1) an adjustment will then be necessary also to the second move, but the overall length of the exchange in terms of numbers of moves will still remain the same and so too will the information whose transmission the exchange is negotiating. (For more on the relation between the propositional content of a question and that of its nearest statement counterpart, see section 7)).

We have seen, then, that the proposals in section 3 and the proposals in this section can each, on their own, account for more data than can the original CB proposals, but that neither set of proposals on its own can solve all problems. Now let us see what happens when we put the two sets of proposals together.

5. Ellipticity and elicitation

First of all I will tidy up some loose ends that I left at the end of section 3. The claims that I was making there about possible sequences of ellipticity classes can be summarised as (29).

(29) Exchange $\rightarrow$ 1 (2 (3)) (3)

I hinted that these possible sequences of ellipticity classes could be explicitly related to possible sequences of eliciting/informing classes. I will now make the following claims:

If an exchange begins with an e1 move; the sequence of ellipticity classes will be 1 2 3 (3);
If an exchange begins with an e2 move, the sequence of ellipticity classes will be 1 2 (3);
If an exchange begins with an i move, the sequence of ellipticity classes will be 1 (3).

These claims are certainly supported by all the examples of well-formed exchanges introduced in section 4:

(14) and (19) begin with an e1 move and have the sequence of ellipticity classes 1 2 3;
(15) and (20) begin with an e2 move and have the sequence of ellipticity classes 1 2;
(24) begins with an e2 move and has the sequence of ellipticity classes 1 2 3;
(16) and (18) begin with an i move and in fact consist of just an ellipticity class 1 move.

What happens if we return to the problem examples of section 2?

As we have seen, examples (6) and (7) have ceased to be problematic. Each consists of a permissible sequence of ellipticity classes and of a permissible sequence of eliciting/informing classes. Furthermore, each has the right sequence of ellipticity classes to go with its sequence of eliciting/informing classes; each begins with an e1 move and has the sequence of ellipticity classes 1 2 3. All the evidence converges to favour an analysis of each example as a single complete exchange.

However, the position is not so simple with regard to other problem examples of section 2.

Examples (1) and (2), for instance, would now each be given the following two analyses:

e2	i	e2	i
1	2	3	2

From the point of view of eliciting/informing classes, each example falls neatly into two exchanges. However, from the point of view of ellipticity classes, each example looks like one-and-a-bit exchanges. How can we account for this discrepancy, since other evidence has suggested that the two types of analysis are closely related?

At this point I will make a number of assumptions about resemblances between the organisation of exchanges and the organization of sentences:

(i) that for exchanges as for sentences there is a basic phrase structure onto which other types of patterning can be mapped by e.g. transformational rules or semantic interpretation rules;

(ii) that exchanges can be embedded in other exchanges just as sentences can be embedded in other sentences;

(iii) that in exchanges as in sentences the rules that map other types of patterning onto the basic phrase structure may apply cyclically, first to the lowest exchange in a structural tree, then to the next one up, and so on up to the highest.

These are, of course, very large assumptions. As always one just has to make assumptions and then see where they lead. If one can show that making a particular set of assumptions assists with the solving of not just one but a number of problems, the assumptions are usually regarded as justified. It will not be possible to adduce as much evidence in this paper as is customary in discussions of sentence grammar, for the simple reason that not as many facts are known yet about exchanges as are known about sentences. However, I do hope to show in this section that assumption (i) assists with the solving of not just one but <u>two</u> sets of problems. The most that can be said about the other assumptions at present is that intuitively they seem reasonable assumptions to make. The facts with which I am concerned <u>do need</u> to be accounted for and, in the absence of other workable proposals, it seems sensible to account for them in ways that have already been tried and tested in sentence grammars.

Assuming (i) above, the first decision to make is what I am going to allow to count as the basic phrase structure of an exchange. I have so far in this paper produced two rules - (26) and (29) - which could be regarded as candidates for the position of basic phrase structure rule. Of these I will choose (26)

(a) because from the point of view of (1) and (2), the examples which I am currently discussing, it looks the more promising - it does at least appear to divide these examples into whole exchanges rather than leaving a bit left over;

(b) because the phenomena for which it accounts look more like the type of phenomena which usually are accounted for by phrase structure rules - in fact (26), or at any rate (25) to which it is related, looks remarkably like the kind of rule which Moravcsik (1980:6) calls 'a syntactic statement par excellence';

(c) because the phenomena for which (29) accounts, on the other hand, look more like the type of phenomena which are usually accounted for by transformational rules, such as deletion under identity rules, or by semantic interpretation rules.

Assuming, then, that (26) is the basic phrase structure rule for exchanges, I will now look more closely at the analysis which I have assigned to examples (1) and (2) in terms of this rule - e2 i e2 i. The trouble with this analysis is that it does not solve the problem with which I began my discussion in this paper; it does not account for my intuitions about the coherence of these examples as wholes. It simply divides each example into two quite separate exchanges.

Assumption (ii) above would now allow me to analyse an example as a matrix exchange in which another exchange was embedded. An analysis of this kind for (1) and (2) certainly would account for their overall coherence. Is there any justification for such an analysis? As I have shown elsewhere (Berry, in press, and Berry, in preparation), there are certain restrictions on the occurrence of <u>oh</u> which are shared by exchanges such as the second exchange in (1) and the second exchange in (2). This similarity of distribution would need to be accounted for by some means. One way of accounting for it would be to assume that the exchanges in question were embedded exchanges attached to their matrix exchanges in the position normally occupied by <u>oh</u>-class items.

This analysis becomes really interesting when we find that it not only solves the problems of accounting for the overall coherence of certain examples and of accounting for the similarity in distribution between <u>oh</u> and certain types of exchange, but that it also solves another problem: the sequence of ellipticity classes of (1) and (2), which at first sight looked so strange, <u>now become entirely predictable</u>.

It will be remembered that I am now assuming that the rules which map different types of patterning on to the basic phrase structure may be applied cyclically. (For reasons of lack of space I will not discuss here how the mapping rules in question might best be formalised. It may be worth noting, however, that if a transformational approach were adopted - and I am at least implying such an approach in this section, if not adopting it explicitly - then normal rules such as deletion under identity rules and pronominalisation rules could be expected to play a large part in the operation. In fact, it could be argued that such rules are sensitive to exchange boundaries rather than to sentence boundaries). I am further assuming that at the stage before the mapping rules have applied every move will be an ellipticity class I move. The mapping rules will first apply to the lowest exchange, assigning to it the sequence of ellipticity classes appropriate to its structure in terms of rule (26), then to the next exchange up and so on, in each case operating over as many moves as are necessary to exhaust the sequence of classes appropriate to the structure of that exchange.

On this basis the predictions which could be made for (1) and (2) are as follows:

The embedded exchange of (1) and (2) begins with an e2 move and contains no <u>oh</u>-class item. The expected sequence of ellipticity classes would therefore be I 2. This would be imposed on the initial I I I I sequence of the example as a whole to give I I I 2. The matrix exchange also begins with an e2 move and we are now assuming that it contains the equivalent of an <u>oh</u>-class item.

The expected sequence of ellipticity classes would therefore be 1 2 3. This would be imposed on the 1 1 1 2 sequence of the earlier stage to give 1 2 3 2.

1 2 3 2, then, is the sequence of ellipticity classes which would be predicted for examples (1) and (2), given the analysis which I have just assigned to them, and 1 2 3 2 is exactly what these examples do have.

Notice that in order to exhaust the sequence of ellipticity classes appropriate to the matrix exchange, ellipticity class 3 status had to be assigned to the first move of the embedded exchange in place of the class 1 status assigned to it on the basis of its position in its own exchange. The approach which I am outlining here not only allows an analysis which reflects the overall coherence of each example. It also sheds some light on exactly how this coherence is achieved. The first move of the embedded exchange, while participating in the eliciting/informing structure of its own exchange, at the same time participates in the ellipticity class patterning of the matrix exchange. The apparent discrepancy between these two kinds of patterning which we noticed at the beginning of this section turns out to be the explanation of the overall coherence.

Similar arguments can be applied to (3) and (5). I will again begin by taking another look at the analysis which I provisionally assigned to these examples on the basis of rule (26) - e1 e2 e1 e2 i. The problem with this analysis is that although we seem to have the makings of two exchanges here they only have one informing move between them. And rule (26) says that <u>every</u> exchange must contain an informing move. In any case, if we analysed each example as two exchanges, we should again be failing to reflect their overall coherence.

Both these problems could be overcome if we analysed each example as a matrix exchange in which another exchange had been embedded. The last three moves would form the embedded exchange, which would be attached to the matrix exchange in the position normally occupied by the obligatory informing move. This would certainly account for the absence of one of the obligatory informing moves, as the embedded exchange would now be seen as substituting for the obligatory informing move of the matrix exchange. Since we would now be analysing each example as a whole as a single matrix exchange, this would reflect its overall coherence.

Although this analysis solves both the problem of the missing i move and the problem of reflecting the overall coherence (and there is in fact some pragmatic justification for it - see section 8), it might still seem a little arbitrary and ad hoc, were it not that it also solves another problem. Once again an apparently strange sequence of ellipticity classes becomes entirely predictable.

Assuming we start with the sequence 1 1 1 1 1, the mapping rules apply first to the embedded exchange, giving 1 1 1 2 3, since the embedded exchange begins with an e1 move and includes no a move. The matrix exchange also begins with an e1 move and includes no a move, so the sequence 1 2 3 should now be imposed on the first three moves, giving 1 2 3 2 3. Which is exactly what we do have in each of these two examples.

Once we have accounted for examples (3) and (5), it becomes easy to account for example (4). We simply assume an extra layer of embedding and an extra cyclic application of the mapping rules. The resemblance between this example and examples (3) and (5) now becomes clear.

We also now have a way of accounting for the ill-formedness of examples (8), (9), (10) and (11). (It will be remembered that the originally problematic ill-formed examples (12) and (13) had already been accounted for by the end of section 3).

(8) and (9) are versions of (1) and (2) in which the embedded exchange has been moved forward. But we are now seeing this exchange as the equivalent of an acknowledge move and rule (26) shows that an acknowledge move must come at the end of its exchange. Examples (8) and (9) break this rule.

A similar explanation can be given for (10) and (11), though in this case it is not even a whole constituent that has been moved forward, which breaks a more general constraint on movement rules.

The approach which I have been outlining here, which incorporates a development of Stubbs' approach via ellipticity, a revision of CB's proposals relating to eliciting and informing moves, and a number of general assumptions from sentence grammars, makes it possible to analyse all the problem examples of section 2 in such a way that they cease to be problematic. The coherence of the well-formed examples can be reflected and, indeed, explained. An account can also be given of the ill-formedness of the ill-formed examples.

6. Deviant ellipticity and deviant elicitation

A further advantage of Stubbs' approach via ellipticity over CB's approach via polarity is that the former offers one way of measuring brevity in connection with Grice's third maxim of manner (Grice 1975:46). (I emphasise that it would be only one way of measuring brevity). At present this term, like others of Grice's seems rather ill-defined (though see Gazdar (1979) for discussion of his own proposals and others for formalising Grice's observations).

Presumably to be brief one must not say more than is necessary. On the other hand, if one is to conform to the co-operative principle in other respects, one must not say less than is necessary. Saying more than is necessary could be defined as using an item from a lower ellipticity class than is necessary: using an item from ellipticity class 1 when class 2 or class 3 are expected; using an item from ellipticity class 2 when class 3 is expected. Saying less than is necessary could be defined as using an item from a higher ellipticity class than is necessary: using an item from ellipticity class 3 when class 2 or class 1 are expected; using an item from class 2 when class 1 is expected.

For instance, speaker B in (30) means exactly the same as speaker B in (31). Exactly the same proposition is recoverable.

(30) A. Is John coming
B. Yes

(31) A. Is John coming
B. John is coming

But speaker B in (31) says more than speaker B in (30). He says in fact more than is necessary, as an ellipticity class 2 move would have been expected in this position rather than a class 1 item. The extra explicitness would probably be accompanied by a dramatic form of delivery. The extra explicitness and the dramatic delivery together would probably be implicating that the news was unexpected or perhaps that it was particularly welcome or unwelcome. We cannot predict on the basis of the degree of ellipticity exactly what a speaker will be implicating, but we can predict that he will be implicating something over and above the propositional content of his utterance.

We should, of course, have to set bounds to this. Even taking Gricean implicatures into account, I would not agree that anything and everything is possible in discourse.

We should, in fact, need two sets of rules. We should need a set of rules such as those proposed in this paper, rules which capture the most general patterns of discourse. We should also need a further set of rules, a set of rules to specify permissible ways of breaking the most general rules.

This would yeild a three-way classification of exchanges in terms of well/ill-formedness instead of the usual two-way classification. Exchanges would be: (a) regular - those that in all particulars obeyed the most general set of rules; (b) deviant - those that broke the most general set of rules but broke them in a permissible way; (c) ill-formed - those that broke the most general rules and broke them in a way that was not permissible.

Thus (30) would be regular since it conforms to all the most general rules set out in the earlier sections of this paper. (31) would be deviant since it breaks these rules but breaks them only in the permissible way of substituting a class 1 item for a class 2 item. (32) would be ill-formed since it breaks the rules in a way which is not permissible; it substitutes a class 3 item for a class 2 item.

*(32)	Quizmaster:	In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire
	Contestant:	Is it
	Quizmaster:	Right

(I am not yet in a position to specify exactly what form the second set of rules would take, but I would hazard a guess that, whatever possibilities there are for substituting one ellipticity class for another, one such substitution which is not possible is class 3 for class 2).

It could be predicted that:
Regular exchanges would be understood as transmitting information in a quite straightforward way;

Deviant exchanges would be understood as transmitting information with the addition of Gricean implicatures;

Ill-formed exchanges would be perceived as a form of breakdown in communication.

I have suggested this approach, two sets of rules yeidling three-formedness classes each class carrying an associated prediction about the way in which it would be understood, in order to account for the differing effects of different ways of breaking rule (29) relating to the sequencing of ellipticity classes. Would such an approach be useful in any other connection?

There is some evidence that it might also be useful in connection with elicitation. So far all the examples given in this paper which have obeyed rule (26) have been straightforwardly well-formed (regular) and all the examples which have broken rule (26) have been straightforwardly ill-formed. All the regular examples, provided that they have not broken some other rule such as (29), would be heard as transmitting information in a quite normal and uncomplicated manner. All the ill-formed examples, if they occurred at all, would be heard as breakdowns in communication.

However, here too there would appear to be a middle band of examples which are neither straightforwardly well-formed nor sufficiently ill-formed to be impossible discourse. It is into this category that I would put the two versions of CB's example (60a) which break rule (26):

(33) A. Would you like to come round for coffee tonight
B. Who wouldn't

(34) A. Would you like to come round for coffee tonight
B. Are you kidding

It would be totally against my own intuitions to give these examples the same -formedness rating as example (35), though this is what CB themselves seem to be assuming.

(35) A. Would you like to come round for coffee tonight
B. Yes Thanks

(33) and (34) are not straightforwardly well-formed. They are deviant. Though not so deviant as to be impossible discourse.

According to the predictions which I made above, if these examples really do fall into the middle -formedness class, then they should be heard as transmitting information with the addition of Gricean implicatures. And (33) and (34) surely would be heard in this way. As CB say, speaker B's contribution could in each case be paraphrased as Yes. But in each case speaker B is surely implicating something over and above the simple Yes.

It would seem then that for rule (26) as for rule (29) it is possible to predict that any example which obeys the rule will be heard as straightforwardly transmitting information, but that any example which breaks the rule will be heard either as deviant in such a way as to convey additional implicatures or as ill-formed in such a way as to constitute a breakdown in communication. Once again it will be necessary to provide a second set of rules to specify the boundary between the merely deviant and the truly ill-formed. Once again, however, further investigation will be necessary before such a second set of rules can be provided.

I related the implicatures which resulted from deviant sequences of ellipticity classes to Grice's third maxim of manner. The implicatures which result from deviant sequences of eliciting/informing classes could, I think, be explained on the basis of the maxim of quantity. However, I will not attempt to provide such a explanation here as it would need a separate paper to argue this point.

(In connection with the points I have been making in this section see also Stubbs' remarks on the ways in which deviance may be used in discourse (Stubbs, in press:4)).

7. Propositional development

CB's proposals, modified in the ways I have suggested, do seem to capture two important kinds of progression which operate in the exchange, together with their associated sets of constraints. (See section 1.1 of the present paper). However, there is another kind of progression with an associated set of constraints which CB's proposals do not even begin to capture. Ironically this third kind of progression is the kind most directly related to CB's observation about the oneness, the unity, of the information in an exchange.

If, as CB seem to be claiming, an exchange must be unified in its information, then presumably we should be able to (i) distinguish intuitively between exchanges which show the necessary unity and are consequently ill-formed;

(ii) propose rules which would distinguish formally between the well-formed and the ill-formed examples.

It does indeed seem to be the case that we can distinguish intuitively between unified and disunified exchanges. There would presumably be general agreement that (36) was unified and well-formed, but that (37) and (38) were disunified and ill-formed.

(36) A. Where is the next test match
B. Perth
A. Is it
B. Yes

*(37) A. When is the meeting
B. In the Council Room
A. Is it
B. Yes

*(38) A. Who killed Cock Robin
B. Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
A. Have you seen the muffin man
B. Yes sir yes sir three bags full

(38), in spite of the common nursery rhyme origin of the utterances, is so disunified and so ill-formed that it would be unlikely ever to occur. (37) is very likely to occur, but would be perceived as ill-formed. A could with justification claim that B had not answered the question asked, in other words that B had not obeyed the rules relating to unity of information.

The fact that it is possible to distinguish intuitively between well-formed and ill-formed exchanges in this way suggests that CB are on the right track in their informal observations. However, we then need explicit specifications of the rules underlying such well-ill-formedness.

CB's formal proposals are apparently set up expressly to provide such specifications. But they totally fail to achieve their purpose. If the proposals were doing their job, they should be able to distinguish formally between the well-formed (36) and the ill-formed (37) and (38). But CB's original proposals ascribe exactly the same analysis to all three examples. All three have the necessary qualifications to be coded, in CB's terms, e1 i1 e2 i2. Consequently all three are predicted to be well-formed!

Even the proposals in the modified form I have been suggesting in this paper do not capture the particular set of constraints that are operating here. (38) could no longer be regarded as well-formed, as it does not have the appropriate sequence of ellipticity classes to go with its sequence of eliciting/informing classes. But on the basis of rules (26) and (29), (37) has all the right qualifications to be analysed as a matrix exchange in which an embedded exchange is substituting for an oh-class item - just like (36). Once again it is predicted to be well-formed.

The problem seems to be that CB, having raised semantic issues, then shy away from the term semantic as if it were something to be ashamed of (CB:43). They were right to raise semantic issues, but since the constraints with which they were concerned were semantic constraints these should have been specified in semantic terms. Clearly, in addition to the syntactic rules which I have been discussing in the earlier sections of this paper, we also need rules specifying semantic well-formedness conditions for exchanges.

Once again there will be room in this paper only to sketch the barest outline of a way in which I think such well-formedness conditions might be specified.

The normal propositional development of an exchange could, I think, be captured by the formula:

(39) Exchange $\rightarrow$ (P^{-1}) P (P^{emb}) ($P^{emb/c}$)

In Berry, in press, I claimed that every exchange must transmit a completed proposition. It is this completed proposition to which I am here assigning the value P.

The move which completes the proposition may be preceded by a move which provides a basis for the completed proposition in that it predicts the form of the completed proposition. The relationship between the propositional content of the predictive move and that of the move that completes the proposition could be specified by reference to Wilson & Sperber's semantic skeleton (as reported in Smith & Wilson, 1979:161). Smith & Wilson themselves comment on the semantic relationship between Who stole three horses? and Someone stole three horses. If we assume that Someone stole three horses is the propositional content of Who stole three horses? and that similarly John stole something is the propositional content of What did John steal?, then in each of examples (40) and (41) the propositional content of the predictive move is one step down on a particular focal path of the semantic skeleton from the propositional content of the move which completes the proposition. Hence the value P^{-1} which I have assigned to the propositional content of the optional predictive move.

(40) A. Who stole three horses
B. John (stole three horses)

(41) A. What did John steal
B. (John stole) some horses

(Special provision would need to be made in the semantic skeleton for Yes/No questions. Either a new focal path would have to be added, to include John did/did not steal three horses, or a whole new plane, making the skeleton three dimensional).

I am claiming, then, that for an exchange to be semantically well-formed, if the speaker of the first move does not immediately commit himself to a completed proposition, then the relationship of the propositional content of the second move to that of the first move must be P to P^{-1}. In other words, the propositional content of the second move must entail that of the first move and must be one step up from it on an appropriate focal path of the semantic skeleton.

(Once again, though there is no room to discuss the question fully here, I would expect that examples that broke this rule would divide into those that were truly ill-formed and constituted breakdowns in communication and those that were merely deviant and by being deviant conveyed Gricean implicatures. Wilson & Sperber's semantic skeleton would again be useful in drawing up a second set of rules which would distinguish between the truly ill-formed and the merely deviant).

The move which completes the proposition, whether this is the first move or the second, may be followed by either one or two moves supporting the proposition. A supporting move may be either something like Right, which is presumably expandable to something like You are right to say that P, or something like Oh, which might be said to be expandable as It is news to me that P. If one accepts these expansions, then in each case a new proposition has been introduced but one that embeds the original proposition as an argument. This analysis is perhaps less happy in the case of Oh than in the case of Right, as Oh does not retain even a single lexical item from the expansion which I have ascribed to it. It might be better therefore to regard Oh as contentless. In rule (39) I have accordingly assigned moves such as Right the value P^{emb} and moves such as Oh the value $P^{emb/c}$, where emb stands for embedded and c stands for contentless.

I am claiming then that any stretch of discourse which obeys rules (26) and (29) must also obey rule (39). In other words I am saying that the three rules are all sensitive to the same boundaries.

I would further claim that the three rules can be explicitly related to each other:

If an exchange begins with an e1 move, its propositional development will take the form P^{-1} P P^{emb} $(P^{emb/c})$;

If an exchange begins with an e2 move, its propositional development will take the form P^{-1} P $(P^{emb/c})$;

If an exchange begins with an i move, its propositional developemt will take the form P $(P^{emb/c})$.

These claims relate rule (39) to rule (26). Since I have already related rule (29) to rule (26), this means that effectively I have already provided a means of relating rule (39) to rule (29) via rule (26).

(There is no room to discuss embedded exchanges in this connection, though in fact it will be found that their patterning in relation to rule (39) parallels very neatly their patterning in relation to rule (29)).

8. Pragmatic factors

Since I have discussed pragmatic factors relating to exchanges in some detail elsewhere (Berry, in press), I will not devote much space to them here. It is necessary to make a few points, however, in order to show how the formal layers of structure which I have been discussing in this paper relate to the functional layers which I discussed in the earlier paper.

I have already, in effect, discussed my third functional layer of structure under the heading of propositional development. This layer of structure probably is best regarded as a semantic layer of structure rather than as a pragmatic layer as I tended to imply in the earlier paper.

The other two functional layers of structure from my earlier paper, however, are relevant to two sets of pragmatic rules which are sensitive to the boundaries of exchanges as defined by rules (26), (29) and (39):

(i) Rules relating to turn-taking. It is within the exchange that strict turn-taking must be observed. It is only at an exchange boundary that a given speaker may take two turns following. Thus (42) is pragmatically as well as syntactically and semantically well-formed since the teacher's two successive turns come one on each side of an exchange boundary. If the teacher had spoken both the first two moves in the interchange, or the last two moves, the exchanges would not have been pragmatically well-formed.

(42)	Teacher:	What are seven twelves
	Pupil:	Eighty-four
	Teacher:	Right
	Teacher:	And what are eight twelves
	Pupil:	Ninety-six
	Teacher:	Right

(ii) Rules relating to the relative knowledge of the participants. In the earlier paper I distinguished between the primary knower, the participant who was assumed to know the information being transmitted, and the secondary knower, the participant who was being informed or whose knowledge was being checked up on. I will now point out that:
an el move or an i move must be spoken by the primary knower;
an e2 move or an a move must be spoken by the secondary knower.
Thus example (6) is pragmatically as well as syntactically and semantically well-formed, but (43), though still syntactically and semantically well-formed, is pragmatically ill-formed.

*(43)	Pupil:	What kind of clause is the first clause
	Teacher:	A main clause?
	Pupil:	Right

(Of course deliberate deviance is again possible).

Participants retain their status as primary or secondary knower throughout an exchange. At an exchange boundary they may reverse roles, provided that there are no other factors in the situation which militate against this.

(The roles in an embedded exchange may be the reverse of those in the matrix exchange, though there seems to be a special condition that the obligatory statement of any embedded exchange which is itself substituting for the obligatory statement of its matrix exchange must be spoken by the primary knower of the matrix exchange).

9. Conclusions

9.1 On predicting the well-formedness of an exchange

There would appear to be (at least) five sets of rules relevant to predicting the well-formedness of an exchange:

(i) Rules relating to the co-occurrence and sequencing restrictions on classes of sentence such as question and statement;

(ii) Rules mapping the appropriate degrees of ellipticity on to the sequences of questions or statements;

(iii) Rules relating to propositional development;

(iv) Rules relating to turn-taking;

(v) Rules relating to the relative knowledge of the participants.

The first three sets are relevant to predicting the well-formedness of an exchange per se. The fourth and fifth sets are relevant to predicting the well-formedness of an exchange in combination with the situation in which it occurs.

Since there are at least five sets of rules all sensitive to the same boundaries, it could certainly be claimed that the exchange is a well-motivated unit.

9.2 On defining the exchange

If one has provided an explicit set of rules for a unit, then effectively one has defined that unit. However, researchers attempting to recognise exchange boundaries in naturally occurring texts may well need further assistance. Rules such as those that I have been discussing in this paper define only the most regular exchanges. Naturally occurring texts usually contain a large number of instnaces of deliberate or accidental deviance. This usually means that there will be a clash between the various sets of criteria provided by the rules; stretches of discourse will be found which obey some of the rules but not others.

What does the coder of texts do when confronted with these clashes between different sets of criteria? It would seem sensible to single out one of the sets of rules and make this the crucial defining set for the exchange. Bearing in mind CB's definition of the exchange as 'the unit concerned with negotiating the transmission of information' (CB:43), I would myself make the third set of rules the crucial set, the rules relating to propositional development. (On this point see also Stubbs, forthcoming:30). In other words, if the propositional content of two adjacent moves was related as P to P^{-1}, or as P^{emb} to P, or if the second of the two moves was contentless, then I would regard the two moves as belonging to the same exchange. If none of these circumstances applied, then I would regard the second of the two moves as initiating a new exchange.

Since the kind of exercise in which I have been engaging in this paper is often misunderstood by coders of texts, I will emphasise that when one proposes rules one is <u>not</u> saying that <u>all</u> the relevant stretches of texts <u>must</u> obey these rules or be consigned to the waste-paper basket. One is simply providing an idealised norm <u>with which stretches of naturally occurring texts can be compared</u>. Without such an idealised norm for the purposes of comparison, it is, in fact, very difficult to say anything interesting about naturally occurring texts.

Assuming that we do take the third set of rules to be the crucial defining set, then the really interesting question for anyone concerned with particular texts or groups of texts is: to what extent <u>do</u> the stretches of discourse that obey the third set of rules <u>also</u> obey the other sets of rules?

9.3 On the status of the sentence as the highest unit of grammar

As far as I am aware, the kinds of fact that I have been considering in this paper have not so far been accounted for anywhere else. They would seem to be kinds of fact which are worth accounting for, at any rate from the point of view of anyone who takes seriously the language of conversation. The question then arises: how can these facts be accounted for most economically?

Since the rules which appear to be necessary to account for the facts bear a marked resemblance respectively to syntactic phrase structure rules, to syntactic transformational rules, to rules relating to semantic well-formedness conditions, to pragmatic rules, the simplest method would seem to be just to extend syntax, semantics and pragmatics upwards to cover the exchange as well as the sentence. In the absence of compelling arguemtns to the contrary, then, I am recommending that <u>the exchange rather than the sentence be regarded as the highest unit of syntax, semantics and pragmatics</u>. I cannot see that there are any grounds for assuming a cut-off point at the sentence from the point of view of any of these three levels of analysis.

There are two questions, however, that at present I would wish to leave open:

(i) I am in effect saying that it is not necessary to propose a new level of analysis in order to account for the facts that I have been discussing in this paper. However, there may well be other facts for which it is necessary to postulate a new level. Although it appears to be possible to accommodate facts relating to relationships within exchanges in syntax, semantics and pragmatics, it is not clear that relationships between exchanges could be accounted for in this way.

(ii) For the sake of simplifying the discussion, I have restricted my examples in this paper to those in which each move consists of a single sentence. The rank scale of units which I have seemed to be implying is therefore: exchange, sentence, clause, etc. It may, however, be necessary to assume that the sentences I have been discussing here are the head sentences of moves and that these can be accompanied in predictable sequences by other sentences, the combinations rather than single sentences obeying the rules which I have outlined here. The rank scale would then be: exchange, move, sentence, clause, etc.

Full discussion of these issues must await a future paper.

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OPENINGS AND PRECONDITIONS: A note on narrative

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I. A formula and its implications

There is a type of narrative that is 'realistic', or 'historic', and that deals essentially in the truth-to-life of dates, topographies, institutions, actions, etc.; and a counter-type that is 'mythic', appealing to the emblematic truths of symbol, of allegory, of the psychological world or 'inner life'. Between these types (which for all their differences need not be mutually exclusive) formulae like once upon a time and long, long ago draw a line of interesting distinction. As to meaning, such formulae are of course not in the least like the constative, time-indicating phrases they superficially resemble - e.g. once before the war, fifty years ago. If there is ever any time-reference in once upon a time it is no more than factitious; what the phrase actually does is to signal the onset of a certain kind of story. It is in effect a performative device.

By using it, the narrator declares his intentions, and frees himself from the obligations that would normally fall on him as a story-teller. For example, he evades the ordinary requirement to set his story in a convincing temporal frame (e.g. Imperial Rome, Victorian England, the 1930s), and in doing so puts off one of the shackles of likelihood; if he wants to write about bears he may do so without having to worry about the existence of zoos or game-wardens or bear-traps at the time of his narrative. Another demand conveniently by-passed by the formula is that the story should respect the physical laws of nature; with his once upon a time the narrator assumes the right to introduce all manner of 'unnatural' phenomena - speaking beasts, singing fountains, magically endowed objects, human beings with spectacularly superhuman powers. In short, the formula claims a mythic license to ignore 'reality'.

On the other hand, there are narrative laws that remain in force, formula or no formula. One of these is the law of sequence; even in the timelessness of once-upon-a-time there is a pattern of events implying earlier and later, act and result, cause and effect. In fairy tales, it is true, sequences are often repeated (ritually, three times) but this is a device with mythic force; there is no way forward, from sequence into consequence, until a power is broken or until the appointed figure - hero, prince, lucky suitor - comes along to propose the correct solution. (Shakespeare, of course, borrows the device in the 'casket' scene of The Merchant of Venice). Another narrative law concerns motive. However arbitrary and irrational, however unmotivated events may seem to be, the reader must always feel that somewhere in the story there is a key principle that explains and sanctions all absurdities. This psychological conviction is far more important than mere physical probability. Consider, for example, the story of the Frog Prince. We are ready to accept without demur the superficial magic of the tale, the proposition that a human being can be turned into a frog, because this acceptance is a precondition to the essential point of the story, i.e. that human compassion (when the Princess kisses the frog) has power to subvert the machinations of evil. The transformation of prince to frog is merely a mythic short cut leading us to the central matter, the real story. Were one to attempt a 'historic' narrative on the theme of human goodness correcting the distortions of an afflicted life, it would be necessary to invent a biography, with much realistic and corroborative detail. There would be no short cut.

2. A mythic/historic narrative

These reflections are prompted by a piece of modern fiction: Scott Fitzgerald's *The Cut Glass Bowl*, a story that actually depends, structurally and thematically, on a counterpoise of the 'historic' and 'mythic' types in narrative. The historic element is the straightforward story of a marriage, in its downward progression, step by banal step, from romance to disaster and death. At the beginning of the tale we meet its 'heroine', Mrs. Harold Piper (Evylyn), a twenty-seven year old woman who has been married for seven years. She is beautiful and, it would seem, reprehensibly capricious; but she has begun to realise, belatedly, that she really loves her husband - for which reason she would like to break free from a love-affair. Her attempt comes too late, however; ironically, on the very afternoon when she has summoned her lover to tell him that the affair is over, Harold Piper arrives home early and catches them together. The relationship between husband and wife is mutilated, but there are still the children, Donald and Julie, and there is Harold's business career. The next episode of misfortune comes when Evylyn, now thirty-five years old, gives a party at which the principal guest is a man with whom Harold is hoping to go into partnership; it is the chance of his lifetime. Harold, however, gets drunk and becomes involved in a brawl, irretrievably losing the promised opportunity. On the same occasion an even worse misfortune occurs; the Pipers' three-year old daughter Julie scratches her hand on the glass of the punch-bowl, develops blood-poisoning, and is maimed for life. To the alienation of wife and husband is now added the husband's commercial failure and the crippling of a child. The final blow falls during the First World War, when the son Donald is killed while serving with the American army in France. Demented by this ultimate loss, Evylyn herself dies when she slips and falls down the front steps of her own home.

This history is signposted by the narrator with allusions that enable the reader to establish precisely dates and intervals of time. Thus it appears that the Pipers were married in 1892, when Evylyn was 20 and Harold 29; that Donald was born in 1893 and Julie in 1904; that the episode in which Evylyn is caught with her lover takes place in 1899; that the drunken evening, and the accident to Julie, occur in 1907; and that the deaths of Donald and Evylyn herself befall in 1918. In only one case is a date explicitly given; otherwise, any reader who may be curious about the time-scheme of the story - and it has been accurately worked out by its author - is put to the detective task of scanning back and forth, comparing data, completing equations. It is almost as though Fitzgerald wished first to establish and then deliberately to blur his calendar of events. The effect is to make the story's time-span of nineteen years seem like an indeterminate age - though the termini are there for us to note, if we will.

The time-indices, then, are half concealed. On the other hand, episodes in the story are very deliberately marked by a different kind of index, i.e. by descriptions of Evylyn's changing and fading beauty:

'...the beautiful Mrs. Harold Piper...'	(1st episode)
'Concerning Mrs. Harold Piper at thirty-five, opinion was divided - women said she was still handsome; men said she was pretty no longer'.	(2nd episode)
'If Evylyn's beauty had hesitated in her early thirties it came to an abrupt decision just afterward and completely left her'.	(3rd episode)

These observations, occurring at the beginning of episodes, are a measure of the passage of time more significant and poignant (note their increasing irony) than any date could be; but then, they are a kind of 'mythic' measure.

For indeed there is a strong mythic element, without which this story would be formless, and hence pointless. Evylyn's misfortunes are associated with a large cut-glass bowl, given to her as a wedding present by an embittered former suitor:

> "You remember young Carleton Canby? Well, he was very attentive at one time, and the night I told him I was going to marry Harold...he drew himself way up and said: 'Evylyn, I'm going to give a present that's as hard as you are and as beautiful and as empty and as easy to see through". He frightened me a little - his eyes were so black. I thought he was going to deed me a haunted house or something that would explode when you opened it. That bowl came, and of course it's beautiful. Its diameter or circumference or something is two and a half feet - or perhaps it's three and a half. Anyway, the sideboard is really too small for it; it sticks way out'.

This is the accursed object of fairy-tale, ritually and (it seems) causatively present at each of Evylyn's mishaps. It is the ringing sound of the bowl, accidentally struck, that betrays the presence of her lover. It is the sharp edge of the bowl that cuts Julie's hand, and the sheer capacity of it that tempts Harold into preparing indiscreetly large quantities of punch. Into the bowl is tossed the letter bringing news of Donald's death in action, and by its very weight the bowl causes Evylyn to lose balance and fall on the front steps, when she is intent on smashing it. The bowl keeps its cold beauty through all the years while Evylyn is losing hers; but when the bowl is shattered, her life also ends.

This bowl, it appears, is the mythic object that provides the 'short cut' explanation. A curse has been put upon Evylyn; nothing she does can alter that. Indeed, it may seem that in the story notions of personal and moral responsibility are put at a distance; if you bear a curse, there is nothing you yourself can do about the matter. Fitzgerald, however, is not wholly satisfied with this as a myth for the twentieth century, and suggests a subtle reinterpretation. At the crisis of the story, Evylyn feels that the bowl is speaking to her:

> It seemed to be smiling now, a very cruel smile, as if to say:
>
> 'You see, this time I didn't have to hurt you directly. I didn't bother. You know it was I who took your son away. You know how cold I am and how hard and how beautiful, because once you were just as cold and hard and beautiful.'

At this point the bowl is true to its fairy-tale function, as the magically efficacious object, the author of all calamities. But presently Evylyn hears its voice again. It no longer <u>seems as if</u> the bowl speaks; in her near-madness she actually hears it:

> 'You see, I am fate,' it shouted, 'and stronger than your puny plans; and I am how-things-turn-out and I am different from your little dreams, and I am the flight of time and the end of beauty and unfulfilled desire; all the accidents and imperceptions and the little minutes that shape the crucial hours are mine. I am the exception that provides no rules, the limits of your control, the condiment in the dish of life.'

Here the narrative status of the bowl changes. It is no longer the simple, malignant Märchen-object that does all the damage because it has a will and a life of its own. Rather, it is the inanimate and aritrarily-elected symbol of fate - of 'how-things-turn-out' - an object tangibly representative of all the intangible wrongs and errors of a lifetime. When Evylyn makes her desperate attempt to destroy it, her action is more pathetic and human than a fairy-tale effort to break the power of a demonic object. The smashing of the faceted bowl means, symbolically, a revenge on all that is misshapen in her life; but the breaking of her life's wrongs is indissociable from the breaking of life itself.

The 'myth' of *The Cut Glass Bowl* is therefore rather different in psychological essence, from the myth of its literary models, i.e. folk tales of magically-endowed objects. In effect, Fitzgerald reverses the mythic convention; his story tells us that objects and curses do not control our lives, but that our lives, with their abitrary circumstances and our own inadequacies, may generate curses which we attach to objects - in order to have something to blame and hate. The parent-myth (as it were) is an illusion. At the same time, we need the form of a traditional myth, to serve as an explanation for our experience. The story itself exemplifies this. Were the history of Evylyn Piper to be related without any reference to the bowl and its fancied powers, the result would be a disjointed report of calamitous but unrelated incidents. (A relationship between parts, and hence a 'meaning' for the whole story, might be established - but only as a result of much authorial commentary). To make sense of what happens to Evylyn, the mythic framework is necessary; then one incident finds its natural relationship to another, and we can begin to interpret the dossier of Mrs. Piper's adversities - either in simple fairy-tale terms ('there is a curse on her, which in three steps destroys all she has') or in the subtler psychological perspective outlined above.

3. The opening of *The Cut-Glass Bowl*

Fitzgerald deals fairly with his readers; he warns them from the outset - not explicitly, but by virtue of certain linguistic and stylistic procedures - that his narrative will be an interfusion of the historic and the mythic. The story is prefaced by two paragraphs which have no episodic relationship to the main narrative, but are in fact a kind of prelude or shadow-play. Here they are, together with the first sentence of the first episode:

> There was a rough stone age and a smooth stone age and a bronze age, and many years afterward a cut-glass age. In the cut-glass age, when young ladies had persuaded young men with long, curly moustaches to marry them, they sat down several months afterward and wrote thank-you notes for all sorts of cut-glass presents - punch-bowls, finger-bowls, dinner-glasses, wine-glasses, ice-cream dishes, bonbon dishes, decanters, and cases - for, though cut glass was nothing new in the nineties, it was then especially busy reflecting the dazzling light of fashion from the Back Bay to the fastnesses of the Middle West.
>
> After the wedding the punch-bowls were arranged on the sideboard with the big bowl in the centre; the glasses were set up in the china-closet; the candlesticks were put at both ends of things - and then the struggle for existence began. The bonbon dish lost its little handle and became a pin-tray upstairs; a promenading cat knocked the little bowl off the sideboard, and the hired girl chipped the middle-sized one with the sugar-dish; then the wine-glasses succumbed to leg fractures, and even the dinner-glasses disappeared one by one like the ten little niggers, the last one ending up, scarred and maimed, as a toothbrush holder among the other shabby genteels on the bathroom shelf. But by the time all this had happened the cut-glass age was over, anyway.

> It was well past its first glory on the day the curious Mrs. Roger Fairboalt came to see the beautiful Mrs. Harold Piper.

About this opening, two things in particular are stylistically remarkable. One is the handling of a complex of time-references; and the other is a syntactic/semantic play with the notion of agency.

4. The time element

Consider the first sentence: *There was a rough stone age and a smooth stone age and a bronze age, and many years afterward a cut-glass age.* By its very form this invites comparisons with fairy-tale openings like *Once upon a time there were three bears* which similarly depend on 'existential' statements. (The grammatical character of an 'existential' sentence or clause may be expressed as THERE + BE + SUBJECT /+ PREDICATION/). But we have to note that the assertion *there were three bears* is, as it were, 'conditioned' by the formula *once upon a time*, and is hence assigned to the mythic domain. We accordingly treat *there were three bears* as a form of existential statement to be regarded as 'fictive' rather than 'factive'. Now if we compare this with Fitzgerald's opening it must appear that in his existential assertions the 'factive' and the 'fictive' are juxtaposed. To say that *there was a stone age* or *there was a bronze age* is to make a statement of the 'historic' (in the sense that there were periods of culture now generally recognized as taking their character from dominant artefacts in stone or bronze); but to say *there was a cut-glass age* is merely fictive, or mythic. Although Fitzgerald *eventually assigns his* cut-glass age to a period of 'real' time (the nineties), it is nonetheless a product of his imagination, a private and poetic interpretation of history.

But if Fitzgerald's sentence contains a 'mythic' element, where is the formula that warns us of its occurrence? The answer is that the phrase *many years afterward* here functions as the narrative equivalent of *once upon a time* or *long, long ago*. The point may be made with the help of a phrase-to-phrase tabulation on the model of *Once upon a time there were three bears:*

'historic'	'formula'	'mythic'
—	Once upon a time	there were three bears
There was a rough stone age etc...and...	many years afterward	(there was) a cut-glass age

Perhaps the most interesting thing about this opening is what it suggests about the perspective in which mythic time is viewed. In conventional fairy-tale narration, the era of the myth is seen retrospectively, from the standpoint of the present:

'MYTHIC TIME' 'NOW'

<-------------------x

'once long ago', 'once upon a time'

In Fitzgerald's opening, by contrast, 'mythic time' is viewed from the other end of the perspective, as a projection from an actual era in the past:

'PAST' 'MYTHIC TIME' 'NOW'

(stone age) (cut-glass age)

X------------------------>

'many years afterward'

Here is no link with the present time, or the 'now' of the story. In the narrative of *The Cut-Glass Bowl*, this is emotionally and psychologically significant. The events of the tale fill the gap between 'mythic time' and 'now', but thanks to the strategy of the opening, the 'cut-glass age' remains a distant, irrecoverable time, something over and done before our story really begins. Psychologically, the cut-glass age is dim and distant as the stone age, and in that respect is different from its 'factive' identity, the nineties. The contrast here between myth-time and real time is important. Though the bowl can be no more than twenty-six years old when Evylyn dies, it figures in the story as an object of ancient malignancy - a magic artefact of the cut-glass age rather than a machined product of the nineties.

The reversal of perspective which so interestingly marks the first sentence recurs in the second: In the cut-glass age, when young ladies had persuaded young men with long, curly moustaches to marry them, they sat down several months afterwards and wrote thank-you notes for all sorts of cut-glass presents ...etc. The point of recurrence is located in the phrase several months afterwards, echoing the many years afterward of the preceding sentence. Thus, several months afterwards stands in relation to when etc. as many years afterward does to stone age etc:

[stone age----many years---> [cut glass---when----several-->]]
afterward age months
afterwards

The first two sentences, linked by the words cut-glass age, thus present time as a forward drift, with a perspective standpoint in the past; the cut-glass 'age' is defined from the base of a preceding age, whilst an event within the cut-glass age is defined from the base of a preceding event. This is the dominant perspective of the first two paragraphs, until we arrive at the terminus of by the time all this had happened the cut-glass age was over. When the narrative proper begins, it is significant that the first time-orientation in the historic account is retrospective, looking back from the 'now' of the story; Evylyn refers to the year of her marriage, seven years ago, in ninety-two. In the first two paragraphs, as the matter of the story is being foreshadowed, the pointers of time are turned forward; with the onset of the 'history' they are turned back.

This retrospectiveness is a feature of the style of successive episodes, not only in allusions to time, but also in the back-shifting use of past tenses and modals:

> Her thirty-fifth birthday had been an exceptionally busy one, for they were entertaining on short notice that night, and as she stood in her bedroom window in the late afternoon she discovered that she was quite

> tired. Ten years before she would have laid down and slept, but now she had a feeling that things needed watching: maids were cleaning downstairs, bric-a-brac was all over the floor, and there were sure to be grocery men who had to be talked to, imperatively - and then there was a letter to write to Donald, who was fourteen and in his first year at school.

Everything in Evylyn's story looks back to the moment when the cut-glass bowl is presented to her; everything in the preamble looks forward to the day when it takes its place on her sideboard. There is a crucial moment when mythic time merges into historic time.

5. <u>The element of agency</u>

The opening makes certain prefigurings of character and agency. In the <u>young ladies</u>, for example, and the <u>young men with long, curly moustaches</u>, there may be a typological suggestion of Evylyn, just such a young lady, and Harold, just such a young man. Possibly, too, the <u>hired girl</u> who chips the middle-sized bowl foreshadows the careless servant Hilda (who leaves the bowl on the floor, for little Julie to cut herself) and the absent-minded cleaning woman, Martha (who cannot recall where she has left the fatal letter). Most striking of all the players in the dumb-show, however, are the cut-glass pieces themselves, which in the second paragraph emerge as actors in a drama of accident and survival. It may be tempting to think of these dishes and glasses as items actually presented to Evylyn and Harold, and to identify the bowl in the centre of the sideboard as Evylyns own bowl, <u>the</u> bowl. Certainly it is noticeable that the general allusions to 'young ladies' and 'young men', as well as to 'bonbon dishes' and 'dinner glasses', become, in the second paragraph, more specific in implication, through the use of the definite article: '<u>the</u> hired girl', '<u>the</u> bonbon dish', '<u>the</u> dinner glasses', etc., suggest a particular household.

In some sentences the cut-glass piece is the object/recipient (i.e. syntactically the object, and in semantic role the recipient or 'victim'): <u>a promenading cat knocked the little bowl off the sideboard</u>, <u>the hired girl chipped the middle-sized one</u>. The trivial act of a casual or thoughtless agent changes the fate of a prized piece, exiling it to the society of <u>shabby genteels</u> - a phrase which might characterize Evylyn and Harold in the last phase of their story:

> As in most families whose fortunes have gone down rather than up, she and Harold had drifted into a colourless antagonism. In repose they looked at each other with the toleration they might have felt for old and broken chairs.

<u>Old and broken chairs</u>; thus late in the story the image of the broken object - <u>which is the broken life</u> - is echoed.

In other sentences the cut-glass items figure as subjects and quasi-agents: <u>the bonbon dish lost its handle</u>, <u>the wine-glasses succumbed to leg fractures</u>, <u>the dinner glasses disappeared one by one</u>. Here the impression that the glass artefacts are beings with the capacity to suffer and change is even more marked. A crucial clause is <u>and then the struggle for existence began</u>. Whose existence? Is it only the existence of these cut-glass citizens in their sideboard community? Or is it by implication the existence of those human beings whose lives they prefigure - who are also vulnerable, who also lose, succumb to wounds, disappear? Once again, the mythic and the historic merge; there is a myth of the glasses which is the paradigm of 'real life' existences. The one notable absentee from this catalogue of victims and agents is the big bowl itself. There is no human image to which it can be related, no suggestion of loss, injury, or frailty that can be associated with it. The big bowl of the opening paragraphs is a survivor; and Evylyn's bowl, in the story proper, declares itself as fate, whose cold, hard presence stands immutable through a history of injuries, breakages, wrecks.

6. 'Preconditioning' as a narrative device.

The importance of a good opening is that it determines tempo and sets patterns of reference; the writing of the first page of a short story governs the speed and assurance with which the author can develop plot and theme in subsequent passages. In part, this is a matter of 'planting' information, imitating the Ibsenian principle of stagecraft which says that if you have a gun on the wall in Act I, it has to go off in Act III. Every writer makes 'plants' of this kind, which at first sight seem merely decorative but which later discharge more or less important functions. In this story of *The Cut-Glass Bowl*, Fitzgerald goes to the trouble, in his first paragraph, of specifying the kind of item covered by the phrase all sorts of cut-glass presents. This at first glance is a mere stylistic expansion; but in the second paragraph he is able to draw selectively upon the list of cut-glass objects, in order to create the animated personnel of a drama that prefigures the story itself. It is a particular example, and a good one, of the general structural rule that every detail in a short story should be a hook on which a theme can be hung.

The opening of a story may involve more than this, however. Some openings advise the reader of the constraints and liberties of his reading. There is preconditioning; so that if we are told there were men with teeth on their toes our willingness to accept an extraordinary statement without looking into its credentials may depend on whether it is prefaced by once upon a time or (say) in the 1930s. Once upon a time gives license to myth; in the 1930s presupposes history.

What Fitzgerald brings off in the opening paragraphs of *The Cut-Glass Bowl* is a rather complex act of preconditioning. On the one hand he suggests once upon a time, i.e. 'this is a myth', and on the other in America, at the turn of the century, i.e. 'this is a real-life story'. Furthermore, he quite extensively prefigures the material of the narrative. In sum, the alert reader is forewarned that he is about to read a modern history in a mythic perspective. Whether 'preconditioning' is a general principle of story-telling, and what its variants are, is a matter for research. (There is a good deal of work to be done on the typology and stylistics of openings). Intuition, that vague counsellor, suggests that some kind of 'preconditioner' lurks, if no more than vestigially, in the opening lines of any narrative; but one would no doubt go a long way to find another story as elaborately preconditioned as *The Cut-Glass Bowl*.

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CHILDREN'S WRITING: COMPOSING OR DECOMPOSING?

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Writing in the School Situation

> Taxi-Driver: That will be 70p, sir
> Passenger: Sorry, I've only got 50p.
> Can you take me back a bit?

Children's writing, at all stages throughout the primary and secondary range, tends to be seen by the teacher very much in terms of the finished product, the 'completed journey'; and not much attention seems to be paid to the actual writing process itself, the 'stages along the way'. In this respect, writing is primarily used by teachers for the purposes of assessing a 'completed' activity, with little consideration given to the learning involved during the act of writing itself (Britton, 1972 ; Britton et al, 1975).

Jack Thomson (1978), in an investigation of an eleven-year-old pupil's written output in Environmental Studies and Religious Education, shows a concern for this imbalance in a teacher's approach to writing tasks. In talking to the pupil about his written work he notes that his comments revealed:

> ...evidence of learning and understanding that the writings themselves, as products, fail to disclose, but which the writing acts as processes effected. (Thomson, 1978:22)

For instance, it was revealed that the events of the written stories were not, in fact, planned out in advance; but that it was the writing process itself that determined their outcome. From this, Thomson concludes, therefore, that it is essential to see the act of writing not primarily as a <u>product</u> for assessment but also as a <u>process</u> for learning.[1] If teachers concentrated their attention solely on the structural and stylistic features required of an 'end-product', they would, as a consequence, tend to overlook the processes of writing "as instruments of genuine learning" (Thomson, 1978:27).

For the child just coming to terms with writing, therefore, in a school situation, purposes in such a task is difficult to perceive and even harder to execute, particularly, for instance, if the writing is seen to operate in a context where speaking would, perhaps, be more powerful or, at least, equally acceptable or where communicative immediacy is to be surmised rather than experienced. This would again seem to reflect the teacher's own general reluctance to regard any kind of writing as 'thinking in process'. As such, assessment of writing is matched against the mature adult model. An approach to the language used in children's writing, therefore, which saw process and product aspects as essentially interdependent, yet constantly developing and changing, might produce a greater awareness of the differences between pupil intentions and teacher expectations.

As Kress (1979a) points out, even the most literate amongst us spend nine-tenths of our time speaking or listening, and all of us read more than we write. So, in terms of the 'real' world, the written mode of language becomes far less significant when considering the small amount of time actually spent using it. Yet, in a school situation, a large amount of time is devoted to producing written work and developing writing skills. As a result:

> It is not surprising that many children are initially very vague and confused about such purposes of written language, when we realize that many of its functions are often so specialized and particular, and mostly quite beyond children's experience.
> (Stubbs, 1980:108).

With such fundamental problems related to the purposes of written language, it is important for the teacher to consider what is particularly distinctive about writing that creates difficulties for the pupil in school where the ability to write 'well' is crucial to success.

Olson (1977) explores some of the differences between speech and writing by referring to two types of language use that he calls utterance and text.[2] Utterances present meaning which is extrinsic to language: for example, oral-language statements such as conversation and storytelling. Texts, on the other hand, present meaning which is intrinsic to language: for example, more formal explicit prose statements. Therefore, the transition from utterance to text, or from speech to writing, is one of increasing explicitness. The success of any written communication depends on all the information relevant to the transmission of authorial intention being actually present in the text.[3]

In speech, the interpersonal function of language (Halliday, 1970) would appear to figure prominently in any utterance, where the establishment and maintenance of social relations are at their most direct. In writing, however, it is, perhaps, the ideational function of language (Halliday, 1970), the expression of experience,[4] which establishes itself in greater prominence, primarily because of the indirect and 'distanced' relationship between writer and reader. There are, as a result, a whole range of meanings expressing the interpersonal function of speech which never occur in writing:

> The development of this explicit, formal system accounts, I have argued, for the predominant features of Western culture and for our distinctive ways of using language and our distinctive modes of thought. Yet the general theories of science and philosophy that are tied to the formal uses of text provide a poor fit to daily, ordinary, practical, and personally significant experience. Oral language...is a universal means of sharing our understanding of concrete situations and practical actions. Moreover, it is the language children bring to school.
> (Olson, 1977:278).

Features of speech (such as pauses, hesitations, and repetitions) reflect explicit evidence of 'thinking in process', where items are accepted, rejected, or modified as the situation develops. Writing, by its very nature a more formalised skill, shows less of a tendency to retain such items, which tend to be 'removed' by means of editing and reordering. The pupil, therefore, oriented primarily by the spoken model, faces the daunting task of coming to terms with the standardising influences of the written word which essentially 'release' the communicative features of the language from specified time and place articulation.

Yet, such a fundamental dichotomy is, perhaps, a false one (and, indeed, a dangerous one) to pursue in terms of the development of a child's mastery of writing, for it ultimately leads to a view of teaching writing skills where the teacher makes a diagnosis of the pupil's 'faults', and, on the basis of this, 'treats' them. In an effort to structure and organise a pupil's written work, one is in danger of trying to lead him eventually towards some kind of externally-imposed 'norm'. For pupils at both primary and secondary levels of education there is the need to be able to 'think in writing' as much as there is the possibility to do so in speech; a need which will, as it happens, involve children in their writing in:

> ...the creation of different and, in a sense, new sorts of meaning which involve not only the use of the 'new' systems involved in the orthographic representation of language - spelling, layout, punctuation, handwriting itself - but also a new use of the lexis and grammar to achieve these new meanings.
> (Ashworth, 1973:68).

It is essentially a question of exploiting and developing written language 'potential' in terms of such linguistic organisation (related to considerations of its purpose and its audience) that is central to the role of such language development in school; and the D.E.S. report, 'A language for life', (1975) makes very positive recommendations in this area:

> It is a central recommendation of this chapter that the teacher should take deliberate measures to improve his pupil's ability to handle (written) language.
> (D.E.S., 1975, section 11.15, p.169).

Yet, it is precisely how this might be achieved that has been a central argument in teaching for many years now; and any proposed attempt to describe the language of children's writing must be able to take into account such educational implications.

Approaches to the Description of Children's Writing

Much of the research over the past fifty years into describing and developing a pupil's written language use has concerned itself with the identification of 'norms of linguistic maturity'; and, whilst acknowledging the great diversity of approaches, many of these studies are remarkably uniform in their design: both 'counting' and 'assessing' sentence structure in children's writing:

> Most students of children's language development have been concerned not only with the quantitative approach in terms of length of responses, but they have also attempted some form of qualitative analysis to reveal the improvement in sentence structure which takes place as the child develops.
> (McCarthy, 1954:551)

Indeed, such a 'quantity-quality' account of children's work has produced developmental studies of writing that deliberately attempt to establish an approach to the teaching of such skills by relating a description of the data collected to some dubiously-determined 'norm of acceptability':

> Sentence structure in a language is a key to the logic and structure of thinking, inasmuch as the sentence is the smallest complete unit of thought. Growth in the power to form complete, concise, balanced, consistent sentences is an index of the growth in clear and accurate thinking.
> (Symonds & Daringer, 1930:50) [5]

Attempts to describe such written language development have usually been organised in terms of the classification and counting of certain language features: in particular, sentence structure. Above all, it is, however, a concentration on the syntactic development of language use that has occupied most of the researchers.

La Brant (1933) carries out an investigation into stories produced under conditions of twenty minutes rapid writing in school by children from grade four to grade twelve. In this respect she is particularly interested in their use of dependent and independent clauses; and she specifically selects 'clause unit' in preference to 'sentence unit' as her analytical base because of her belief in the central importance of predication in relation to its occurrence in dependent or independent clauses. On the basis of such an analysis, development in the children's writing is indicated by a marked increase in the percentage of subordinate predicates used, and also by the frequency of use of various kinds of dependent clause, ranging from 'most frequent' (time clauses) to 'least frequent' (condition clauses).

Schonell (1942) expands the scope of such an investigation by looking at four different kinds of writing (story; descriptive; explanatory; imaginative) produced by pupils aged between seven and thirteen. The data gathered is analysed both quantitatively (average number of words in thirty minutes; sentence length; and sentence structure) and qualitatively (content; structure; mechanical elements; and variety); and, on this basis, several developmental features emerge. Irrespective of the kind of writing used the average number of words written in thirty minutes increases from year to year, as do sentence length and the use of complex sentences. Single sentences, in fact, form a larger proportion of the total number of sentences used by children aged between seven and eight than they do for children above this age, and sentence structure characteristics remain constant for all four types of writing.

Harrell (1957) pursues a slightly different route by studying the relationship between some of the aspects of spoken and written production by pupils at four specific age levels: nine, eleven, thirteen, and fifteen. His analytical approach, however, is similar to that of La Brant in that he uses the clause as his basic unit of measurement, concentrating, in particular, on the ratio of finite predicates found in subordinate clauses. Like La Brant, he finds that almost every aspect of language use looked at increases with age (length of clause; proportional amount of subordination):

> Since these measures show an increase through the last age level included, it cannot be said that for any measure a mature level has been reached.
> (Harrell, 1957:63)

Such notions of 'maturity' in relation to language development, together with the doubtful relevance of some of the analytical devices he uses (for example, clause length), reaffirm the singular purpose of many, similar experiments: the older the child, the more 'complex' his language becomes (Strickland, 1962; Cartwright, 1969; Nemanich, 1972).

Sampson (1964) selects the data for her research (the written compositions of a group of ten-year-old children) on the basis of criteria that would appear to be decidedly suspect:

> The first sentences of a child's composition are liable to be his most controlled. Thus, the first two sentences...were examined. These, it was felt, should reveal what the ten-year-old is capable of in considerable variety. Was he aiming at a simple sentence, a compound sentence, a complex sentence, or a compound-complex construction?
> (Sampson, 1964:178)

The results of Sampson's investigation show a decisive preference for the use of the simple sentence, followed by the complex, and then the compound. On the basis of such findings she concludes:

> This suggests that it is the maturity of the children which is decisive. The advanced child uses more complicated constructions and brings them off... The more basic types of sentences are used perforce by the average and the duller. Even these prove difficult for the children and are often wrong.
> (Sampson, 1964:178-179)

It would be interesting to see how any major novelists might fare when subjected to similar data selection (the first two sentences) and description (simpler sentences used by the duller)! Certainly, such an attitude to the work produced by children would appear to misunderstand the nature of the writing process itself.

The Educational Implications of such work

Such research work, therefore, would seem to indicate that any proposed description of children's writing needs to give careful consideration to certain aspects of any such investigation: the model devised (both analytically precise and appropriate); the data selected (a wide variety of 'school-based' activities, rather than material produced under 'test' conditions); and the purpose intended (its education implications for the teacher). In concentrating exclusively on specific aspects of sentence structure, and, in particular, on the use of subordinate elements as an index of 'maturity', however, such attempts to describe the structural organisation of children's writing have inevitably created, in the educational field, textbooks concerned with actively trying to develop such language structures in children.

Fraser & O'Donnell (1968) produced a course, Control and Create, based on such principles, for secondary school pupils. Although the course concerns itself with organisation above the level of the sentence as well as below, it nevertheless, by a process that can only be described as 'sentence stretching', tries to develop the manipulation of language structure in non-contextualised situations. For example:

SWI Samson, who was a man of great strength, was the scourge of the Philistines.
This can be rewritten as
SI Samson, a man of great strength, was the scourge of the Philistines.
Rewrite the following sentence as an SI
SWI The watchman, who had been alerted by the sudden noise, switched on his torch.
(Fraser & O'Donnell, 1968:7-8)

Similar courses have, more recently, been designed for the primary school. For example:

Use and, but, or because to join each pair of sentences.
a. The harvest was poor. The summer had been cold and wet.
b. Sandra went out to play. She could not find any of her friends.
(Cleland, 1976:7)

Both approaches, like the research work previously described, concentrate exclusively on language structure. Fraser & O'Donnell offer SWI and SI simply as possible alternatives. There is no consideration, for instance, of the notion of equivalence between a coordinate clause with 'and' and a non-restrictive relative clause (Leech & Svartvik, 1975, section 387:161). Similarly, Cleland sees 'and', 'but' and 'because' only as possible alternatives of form; he ignores their employment as contrasts of meaning: for example, 'and' illustrating: simultaneous events; cause and effect; and chronological sequence (Harpin, 1976:68).

Such textbook exercises constructed to promote language development have also had their influence on designing procedures for language assessment in the classroom. In this respect, the Edinburgh Reading Tests (1972), where the consideration and manipulation of language structure is involved, reflect a similar lack of flexibility in their approach.[6]

The Description of Children's Writing: A Functional Perspective

In terms of such descriptions of children's writing, therefore, an important consideration to emerge is concerned with notions of the kind of writing used and the situation employed to elicit it. Any approach to investigating the language used by children which is intended to be potentially useful for the teacher must, accordingly, have to take such aspects of language use into consideration.

In this regard, Bruner's work (1975) on the study of language in interaction reflects similar concerns with spoken discourse. It is argued, in this case, that for the description of a text to be at all effective and useful, an important feature in the construction of a model must be a consideration of the nature of language function:

> So, whilst we have in the past decades learned much about the STRUCTURE of language, we have perhaps overlooked important considerations about its FUNCTIONS. Our oversight has, I think, turned our attention away from how language is used...the uses of language are, I believe, crucial to an understanding of how language is acquired.
> (Bruner, 1975:2)

For this reason the work of Harpin et al (1973:135 ff) on children's writing in the primary school is particularly revealing in considering the variety of options that children make use of in their writing, and in showing the relation of such choices to the kind of writing used.

However, it also seems true to say that approaches to the description of children's writing which rely solely on functional considerations are, like their structural counterparts, equally limiting, not particularly for the educational perspective that they pursue, but primarily for the 'vagueness' created by their descriptive labelling.

James Britton (1971), in an article entitled 'What's the Use', initially attempts to explore this particular kind of language description, at first from the point of view of spoken discourse:

> We shall be concerned in this article with the functions of extended discourse - a text or a piece of enteded speech (not excluding dialogue). Thus, the notion of an overall function, a function that dominates in a hierarchy of functions, must be kept in mind.
> (Britton, 1971:205)

His exploration of three functions (expressive; transactional; and poetic), which he regards as being central to language use, and their relationship to the notions of participant and spectator roles is extended in later works (Britton, 1972; Britton et al. 1975) to a consideration of their usefulness in terms of describing the development of children's writing. He uses the system to classify the writing of eleven to eighteen-year-olds by function, in terms related to the stance adopted by the writer after his selection from a stock of known choices that are culture-based. Such a framework provides an interesting and useful introduction for teachers (D.E.S. 1975, section 11.6: 164-165) to the categorisation by function of children's written work, but ultimately creates problems in the generality of description whereby each functional type is identified, particularly if the model is applied to children's writing at primary school level:

> Most of the writing in the Primary School is likely, as I suggested earlier, to be expressive or transitional between expressive and the poles of transactional and poetic.
> (Britton, 1972:180)

Harpin et al (1973), in trying to use Britton's model, encountered difficulties with the analysis of their own data:

> Children in this sample were likely, with few exceptions, to be at the stage of beginning to feel audience demands and to be experimenting with ways of meeting them. Inspection of such pieces suggested that classification on the detailed, mature scheme would be largely unproductive: younger children in particular switched disconcertingly from category to category within a piece of writing.
> (Harpin et al., 1973:60)

The categories identified did not seem to explain sufficiently well what seemed to be happening during the actual writing process, particularly when it came to having to use notions of different functional types to identify 'changes' in the language organisation.

In the light of such difficulties (also reflected in the work of Applebee (1978) and Wilkinson (1980)), any theory of language description applied to an investigation of children's written work would seem to need to consider both the form and function of the language used and their inter-relationship. Such aspects become specifically important when writing is linked to considerations of situation and purpose, and ultimately reflect on their relevance to the teacher in the classroom. In this way perhaps it is possible to extend the 'standard' description of the language of children's writing in a way that is meaningful and useful for an understanding of how such language is used.

The Description of Children's Writing: A Possible Approach Outlined

> It has, of course, long been the practice of most junior school teachers and secondary English teachers to give their pupils opportunities for 'personal writing'. This is a loose term which distinguishes the writing from those 'impersonal' uses by which knowledge is acquired and recorded, and it ranges from the autobiographical to the fictional.
> (D.E.S., 1975 section LL.3:163)

Writing, seen in terms of 'the recording of personal experience', has, for some time now, been regarded as central to the development of the child in the classroom:

> If only we would let children talk...about what they have understood, we'd learn a lot more. This is true about writing.
> (Hutchcroft, 1978:2)

Yet, linked to such a writing demand is often an accompanying desire, on the part of the teacher, for some kind of 'immediate fluency' from the child, usually either related to the organisation of the material[7] or to the spelling, punctuation, or handwriting. Any intermediate 'stages', such as rough drafts or notes on personal observations, are either completely ignored or take the form of the listing of 'sequence' headings as a memory aid.[8] The work is then evaluated in terms of its completion, not in terms of the child's attempts to learn and come to terms with a different means of communication: the new 'interactive' devices involved in the written compared with the spoken situation.

Narrative, the sequencing of events in time, is a fundamental way of organising the recounting of personal experience in both speech and writing, but the successful production of 'stories' of this kind in either situation requires a knowledge of different concepts of language use; and it is the development of an awareness of such differences that is crucial for the successful growth of a child's writing abilities. As far as teachers are concerned, accounts of persoanl experience are seen as vital to any such learning process, and the notion of 'story' is considered to be one of the most accessible ways of encouraging its development:

> Story and personal writing should form a major part of the language work done from the earliest school years.
> (N.A.T.E., "5-16", 1980:3)

> Children in the primary school are (able)...to scan, to recall, to organise their experience, and to transform it into the symbols of...language. Stories are continuous with these processes which are central to the everyday life of the child.
> (Jones & Buttrey, 1970:1)

Similarly, Applebee (1978) considers the story form to be an important enough feature of children's writing to base a complete language development proposal on its use. Neumeyer (1969), in fact, argues that children have an implicit understanding of the ways in which stories are told or how they might develop, based upon their instinctive sense of plot and the ordering of events. Because of their constant exposure to a storytelling tradition both at home and at school, children know that certain patterns of outcome will continually recur: for example, they can suggest ways in which a plot might be resolved. For this reason, Neumeyer sees the role of the teacher as actively encouraging and developing storywriting ability, founded on an awareness of such intuitions:

> Here the child is engaged, according to his own lights and at his own stage of mental development, professionally with the most basic, indispensable, potentially complex tools, talents, concepts of the most sophisticated teller of tales.
> (Neumeyer, 1969:517)

It is not surprising to discover, therefore, in the light of this, that narrative is a very common form of writing in the school situation and that the story is one of its most popular manifestations.

As a starting point, therefore, for an investigation into the organisation of such writing tasks, it would seem profitable to consider, in view of the attempts to describe children's writing previously mentioned, the specific aspects of such written work that might need to be accounted for. With this in mind two examples of 'personal' writing typically produced by children of primary-school age have been selected for detailed consideration (for the complete versions of both pieces of writing, see the end of this paper). They are each written by two girls, Becky and Jenny, aged seven and nine respectively. In only two senses are they unusual as examples of school writing. First of all, they were not written within a specified time limit; and, secondly, they are personal responses to an incident that both girls experienced when they were in Iran three years ago: the burning of the British Embassy in Tehran; and, as such, were written because the girls <u>wanted</u> to write about it. For these reasons it was thought that they would provide interesting illustrations of the ways in which two children of differing ages approached the telling of similar events that both experienced in dissimilar ways. Their accounts of a shared emotion might provide a useful basis on which to try and develop a theory for describing the way junior school children handle, and cope with, varied kinds of narrative writing. It is, therefore, proposed to examine their work in relation to several possible linguistic 'frames' which collectively might provide some kind of educational insight into the ways in which children write.

<u>Kellogg Hunt</u>

Research work initially described in this paper on the language of children's writing attempted to provide both quantitative and qualitative assessments of children's language use in the classroom, and, to this end, concentrated on describing its sentence structure. Kellogg Hunt (1965; 1966), applying some of the techniques employed by transformational-generative grammarians, likewise measures language development in the writing of your children (from the fourth to the twelfth grade) in terms of its structure. However, his research in some ways represents a major departure from previous approaches.

For instance, although he uses traditional grammar for part of his analysis, he introduces transformational-generative techniques when describing subordination in an attempt to develop what he considers to be a more precise and useful measure of syntactic maturity than those used by former researchers:

> For the last thirty years we have known at least three things about the development of language structure. First, as children mature they tend to produce more words on any given subject. They have more to say. Second, as children mature, the sentences they use tend to be longer. Third, as children mature a larger proportion of their clauses are subordinate clauses.
> (Hunt, 1966:56)

Building on such earlier findings, and in an effort to produce a unit of measurement which he would regard as being a more significant descriptive device than those using such criteria as number of words in a sentence or sentence length, Hunt introduces, for this purpose, a new measure which he identifies as a 'minimal terminable unit' or 'T-unit':

> They are "terminable" in the sense that it is grammatically acceptable to terminate each one with a capital letter at the beginning and a period or question mark at the end. They are "minimal" in the sense that they are the shortest units into which a piece of discourse can be cut without leaving any sentence fragments as residue.
> (Hunt, 1966:65)

For Hunt, therefore, a T-unit consists of one main clause along with any subordinate clause or non-clausal element that is attached to it or embedded within it. In this way, previous traditional definitions of simple or complex sentence would be regarded by him as examples of one T-unit; and a compound or compound-complex sentence would consist of two or more T-units. Hunt shows that it is not at all meaningful, particularly with children's writing, to use the definition of a sentence as 'that which occurs between a capital letter and a period' as an index of maturity simply because of the number of T-units that might possibly occur within traditional sentence boundaries. What he does indicate, however, is that as children mature in their writing they tend to produce fewer T-units per sentence.

His attempts to introduce a greater rigour and a more precise approach to the analysis of language data has had a significant influence on much of the subsequent work carried out into the developmental nature of children's writing. Yet it is particularly in the area of his notions concerning what constitues 'language maturity' that Hunt's work is perhaps rather less convincing. Analysing data independent of its context, Hunt also notes, from grade to grade, a gradual increase in the number of subordinations used by children in their written work. He compares the frequency of subordination use of 'average fourth-grade writers' with those of the eighth and twelfth grade and computes a rise in the subordinate clause index from 1.3, through 1.4, to 1.68. Thus he concludes that, by the time the children are in the twelfth grade,they are tending to use suborindate clauses six-tenths as often as main clauses, compared with a use of three-tenths as often in the fourth grade and four-tenths as often in the eighth grade. He then compares these results with what he considers to be the language of 'superior adult writers':

> If you jump now to the superior adult writers who produce articles for Harper's and Atlantic you find that they have an index of 1.78: they write about seven-tenths as many subordinate cluases as main clauses. (Hunt, 1966:58)

By this, 'maturity' of style is directly relatable to an increasing use of subordinations; the higher the proportion of subordinations the more 'mature' the style. The assumption that use of complex utterances reflects maturity and increased clarity has been effectively disputed by William Labov (1969) in 'The Logic of Nonstandard English':

> It is true that technical and scientific books are written in a style which is markedly "middle class". But unfortunately, we often fail to achieve the explicitness and precision which we look for in such writing...All too often, "standard English" is represented by a style that is simultaneously overparticular and vague. The accumulating flow of words buries rather than strikes the target. It is this verbosity which is most easily taught and most easily learned, so that words take the place of thought, and nothing can be found behind them.
> (Labov, 1969:381)

Although essentially discussing the nature of oral language ability Labov significantly highlights the dangers inherent in an approach to language development based on assumptions such as those presented by Hunt. In selecting the writing in magazines such as Harper's or Atlantic as evidence of 'superior adult writers' Hunt would appear to be suggesting that such work might well provide some kind of 'adult model' which pupils might seek to attain in their own writing. Teachers might, therefore, as with the work of Fraser & O'Donnell, be urged to help their pupils towards this increased amount of subordination in their work. Hunt's conclusions are similar to Olive Sampson's research in this respect; there is something inherently 'better' in using a greater amount of subordination.

Like others, such an attempt at describing the grammatical structure of children's writing concentrates on units of analysis below sentence level; and such a method of describing essentially the surface structure features of the language, when applied to the written work produced by Becky and Jenny, can, to some extent, produce interesting and useful results for the teacher, particularly related to noting significant development features. However, such results, when applied on this kind of individual basis, can also reveal the limitations in such an approach.

For example, Hunt's analytical approach, when applied to the two girls' work, produces the following:

1. Average Clause Length (Number of Words per Clause)

   Becky: 5.36 Jenny: 6.29

2. Subordinate Clause Index (Number of Clauses per T-Unit)

   Becky: 1.64 Jenny: 1.54

3. Average T-Unit Length (Number of Words per T-Unit)

   Becky: 8.79 Jenny: 9.68

4. Main Clause Co-ordination Index (Number of T-Units per Sentence)

Becky: 1.31 Jenny: 1.31

5. Average Sentence Length (Number of Words per Sentence)

Becky: 11.51 Jenny: 12.68

These are the five basic indexes which, for Hunt, provide what he considers to be a useful analytic measure of 'writing maturity'. He observes that "as students mature they tend to have more to say about any subject" (Hunt, 1966:66). Simply in terms of length Jenny writes much more than Becky; Jenny uses 793 words and 129 clauses; and Becky uses 397 words and 74 clauses. Both Hunt and Harpin (1976:60) use similar devices for calculating 'maturity' in three respects: average clause length (in words); average sentence length (in words); index of subordination. In terms of average clause and sentence length, Jenny shows an increase in relation to the number of words used in both respects compared to Becky's average, which would seem to be consistent with age difference. However, both have averages which, using Harpin's charts, are wildly inconsistent with their age groups:

		Harpin, 1976	
Average Clause Length (in words)			
Becky: 5.36	(aged 7)	7-year olds:	6.2
Jenny: 6.29	(aged 9)	9-year olds:	6.7
Average Sentence Length (in words)			
Becky: 11.51	(aged 7)	7-year olds:	8.7
Jenny: 12.68	(aged 9)	9-year olds:	9.8
Index of Subordination (as percentage)			
Becky: 37.8	(aged 7)	7-year olds:	16.0
Jenny: 34.9	(aged 9)	9-year olds:	22.0

In spite of the fact that it is perhaps invalid to compare Becky's and Jenny's results in terms of each other (rather than in terms of other samples of their own work) it is interesting to note the high degree of subordination in their writing. On Harpin's scale, this would place them very much at secondary level in terms of 'maturity'; and, by Hunt's criteria, would make both of them eligible for posts as reporters on Harper's or Atlantic magazine!

The 'decrease' in the number of subordinations used by Jenny is obviously only significant (if it is at all) in relation to other examples of her own work, but it does perhaps highlight the dangers involved in relying too heavily on subordination itself as an indication of development. Such indexes are interesting perhaps as 'guides' but are ultimately of only limited use for the teacher.

William Harpin

Yet there is much about the grammatical structures of both texts that is potentially much more useful, particularly if related to the 'communicative context' in which both pieces were written. For example, it is interesting to note the different kinds of subordination used by Becky and Jenny as a percentage of the total number of subordinate clauses in each text:

Subordinate Clauses

	Becky	Jenny
Contingent	67.9	53.3
Adding	3.5	2.3
Reported	28.6	44.4

Harpin (1976) observes that children show a great deal of uncertainty in their use of adding clauses right through the junior range. He concludes that:

> ...children may not feel a need for the structure until they have established other kinds of post-modification.
> (Harpin, 1976:71-72)

However, the reason perhaps for the relatively small percentage of adding clauses used in both pieces of writing might be related to the kind of writing being produced. Given that each is an account of a sequence of events, it would be expected that much of the content of the writing would concentrate on the recounting of what happened. Devices would tend to be used, therefore, that would 'carry the action forward' rather than delay it. Contingent and reported clauses tend to be used in this way: contingent (use of 'until' and 'when' to describe a time sequence); reported (used to indicate decisions made which continue the 'action'): for example, Becky, "Finally someone said we will go in a convy up to golhak" (l. 18-19); Jenny, "Daddy decided we should stay in the Ferdowni compound" (l. 50-51). On the other hand, adding clauses tend to 'hold up' the action by describing it. For this reason, children at junior school level seem to prefer to use them (if they use them at all) restrictively rather than non-restrictively (Harpin, 1976:72). In its restrictive use the clause is more specifically identified with an item in the main clause: Becky, "there was scatered glass and tires that were still burning alittle bit" (l. 7-8); Jenny, "There was splinters of glass and lots of cans that had had boms in them" (l. 11-12). Such clauses also occur in a final rather than a discontinuous position (Sinclair, 1972:39). Such a position is likewise related to the desire not to 'hold up' the action of the main event clause.

The use of contingent clauses is high in both pieces of writing, particularly in Becky's; and there is the regular occurrence of binding adjuncts indicating time sequence: for example, 'until' (Becky: "we had a normal day at school until it was time to go home", l. 2-3; Jenny: "We had a normal day untill we got on the bus to go home", l. 2-3); and 'when' (Becky: "then when daddy came we stayed there until it went", l. 12-13; Jenny: "When we had got level whith the Karim Khan Zand flyover when we saw a paylcar burning", l. 8-9).[9] It is perhaps useful to observe that both children place the potentially 'mobile' subordinate clause in its usual temporal sequence. This reflects the close association of such organisation with that found in speech:

> In discussing comprehensibility, we cannot ignore coordination, which is the kind of link most used for optimum ease of comprehension. It is notable that in spoken English, where immediate ease of syntactic composition and comprehension is at a premium, coordinate structures are often preferred to equivalent structures of subordination:
> (Subordination: Reaching for the phone, he asked for the operator.
> (Coordination: He reached for the phone and asked for the operator.
> (Quirk et al., 1972, section 11.83:795)

Events are described in the order in which they occur and this is reflected in the subordinate sequencing of both Becky's and Jenny's work. The ordering of such structures is, therefore, very similar to what might well be their spoken 'equivalents':

> we had a normal day at school until/and it was time to go home.
> We had a normal day untill/and we got on the bus to go home.
> when daddy came (and) we stayed there until it went.
> When we got level (and) we saw a paylcar burning.

The number of reported clauses used is also significant, particularly in terms of Jenny's heavy use of them compared with Becky's. Jenny's fondness for such features produces a subsequent restriction in her use of contingent clauses. Again, this relates to the kind of writing being presented:

> The preponderance of noun clauses as object over all other kinds is even more marked than the position of time clauses among adverbs. In narrative, verbs of saying, thinking, feeling (and many others) occur very frequently and often generate subordinate clauses.
> (Harpin, 1976:70)

Of the two kinds available, direct and indirect speech, it is noticeable that both children favour the direct form: Becky, "mrs abott had said keep your head lights on." (l.5-6); and Jenny, "He said 'she is at the Sims house'" (l.30). This, Harpin observes (Harpin, 1976:70), gradually changes in most children to a preference for indirect representation in the later years of the junior school. Jenny is clearly at this 'transition' stage: "Then someone advised some of us to stay with us in the Ferdowni compound." (l.49-50), where the main clause predicts indirect speech yet the reported element reflects direct speech (compare her use of 'us' (direct speech) as opposed to 'them' (indirect speech)).

Clausal elements in both texts regularly reflect a familiar SPCA ordering with Jenny showing an occasional tendency towards thematic 'adventurousness': "Eearly in the morning just after curfue daddy went home", (l.61-62), where time adjuncts are placed in an emphatic position. For both writers, by far the largest number of adjuncts used are realised by prepositional groups and refer to time and place, a feature consistent with the intention of narrative - the recounting of a sequence of events in the order in which they happened. Although Becky's work would appear to be more complex at sentence level in terms of the use she makes of subordination, it is at clause and group level that Jenny's writing reveals its intricacy, particularly in her use of adjunct theme: "At the time the McGuinnesses were stayind the Miers house" (L.23); "The next dad I wrote this story" (l.67); and in her manipulation of qualification in nominal groups in object position: "They people in the demonstration were waving black flags with Death to the Shah written on white paper and stapled on to the black flag." (l.16-18); "Then came the part when we went to bed" (l.52). Such use of qualification is in many ways similar to the use of the adding clause; it enables the writer to increase the detail of description whilst maintaining the narrative sequence.

So, a consideration of such structures can be seen to be significant when shown to be extending the range and variety of the grammatical resources of the writer (those he uses compared with those that are available for him to use); but such language 'potential' can only be of 'communicative' use in revealing how a child goes about handling the organisation of his written material if the structures chosen reflect the child's "mastery in realising meanings" (Harpin, 1976:73). Such a perspective on the description of the language of children's writing demands an awareness of what is happening both below and above sentence level; and such an insight is essentially to be found in the way a child orders and organises the recounting of his experiences: his narrative technique.

A Consideration of Narrative Organisation

The organisation of a piece of written work is perhaps one of its most important features. Even if the internal ordering of clause structure is consistent, a piece of writing can lose much of its 'communicative meaning' if the text has no coherence. As has been indicated already, there have been studies in great detail identifying and describing the structure of elements in clauses and sentences. Very little attention has yet been given, in the description of children's writing, to the structure of units in larger sequences of discourse. A writer, in some ways, needs to be aware of the sum of the text's parts before he can concentrate on developing the parts (although, as has already been suggested, children in a school situation would seem to approach such a task slightly differently).

The matching of narrative sequence to events in time is a common enough feature in children's writing and both Becky and Jenny follow this pattern in their writing. For instance, Becky clearly delimits the time boundaries of her 'memorable' experience. The title she gives to her work is "My Most Exiting November Fifth Ever" yet the events she describes actually span more than this twenty-four-hour period. She begins her account at the start of the day - "on November 5th we went to school as normal" (l.1) and ends it a day or two later - "during the holidays we sat around the Kursi and wrote this story" (l.33-34). Yet all the events described, in sequence, are 'relevant' to the experience she is describing. The inclusion of the subsequent writing of the story is important in terms of emphasising the impact that the actual incidents of November 5th had on her. The events described, however, in general, follow the sequence of events as they actually happened:

> we finally got to the Embasy. Daddy wasent there so we went to the miers house. then I cried until Daddy came. then when Daddy came we stayed there until it went. (l.10-13)

It is interesting to note that, although Becky stayed in the "miers house" throughout all the subsequent events, "stayed" in the particular context is meant as a 'limited action'; they 'stayed' in the house; then the demonstration quietened down; then they came outside the house. Even evaluative comments (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Labov, 1972) are described in terms of the sequence of happenings: "then the first demonstration past behind us, we were very frightened but it went along the road" (l.9-10).

One event, however, does occur in both pieces of writing out of its usual time sequence:

> Becky: we had got level with karim zand flyover and we met a big demonstration with a burning car. mrs abott had said keep your headlights on. then Ekra went down a side street to avoid it. (l.4-7)

> Jenny: We were going as usual untill we got south of the shahansshah expressway. When we had been in the British embassy compound Mrs. Abbot had said keep your headlights on all the time to show you don't want to fight. So we had our headlights on. When we had got level with the Karim Khan Zand flyover... (l.3-8)

Becky retrospectively[10] relates the occurrence of 'trouble' ("a big demonstration with a burning car") to 'immediate action taken to avoid trouble', in spite of the fact that the headlights had been on all the time; so that her sequencing is, in a sense, one that reflects that of the narrative order: trouble occurs - thinks how to avoid it - avoids trouble. Jenny, on the other hand, prospectively predicts the 'trouble' that is to follow, by reference to a past 'warning' of how to avoid trouble.

Both girls also make use of 'generalised' statements of action to describe a series of 'subsumed' events that are then to occur:[11]

Becky: 1. on November 5th we went to school as normal (l.1)
2. we stayed the night at the miers house. (l.20)

Jenny: 3. We started our day as normal going to school (l.1)
4. Then came the part when we went to bed. (l.52)

For Becky, 1. includes 'within it': "we got on the bus and we had a normal day"; and 2. contains: "it was fun...they sneeked out of the room...I could not go to sleep" (l.21-24). For Jenny, 3. involves: "We got on the bus and we came to school" (l.2); and 4. concerns all the events related from l. 52 to l. 63.

Cohesive Ties in Textual Organisation

Labov & Fanshel (1977) see narrative sequencing as fundamental to textual organisation, in its basic form involving the use of non-stative verbs in present or past tense. Identifying the use of such verbs in main clauses as 'narrative clauses', they propose a rule of interpretation which will account for the relationship between such sequencing of cluases and their temporal organisation:

> In a narrative, if A refers to an event with a sentence S1 that has a non-stative main verb in the preterit or present tense, and then refers to another event with a sentence S2 of the same structure, then B will hear A as asserting that the event referred to by S1 took place before the event referred to by S2.
> (Labov & Fanshel, 1977:107)

As an illustration of the 'rule' they offer: "So she rested in the afternoon, an' she got on the subway, an' met me in a restaurant" (p.108). They note that in many languages, for example, Swahili, order of events is more positively signalled by the use of certain grammatical particles, but conclude that so far as English is concerned "this information is entirely derived from the rule of narrative sequencing" (p.108).

However, what is not in fact made fully explicit by this rule is a further restriction which is perhaps inferred in "if A refers to an event"; each event must have the same thematic subject unless sequencing is signalled by other means, such as the use of an adjunct. For example, "John went to Birmingham and Sue went to London" does not imply that the second event happened after the first, but that both occurred simultaneously. This could be further emphasised by the use of an adjunct: "John went to Birmingham. At the same time Sue went to London." Yet, "John went to Birmingham and he went to Coventry" does imply that the first event occurred before the second, rather than vice versa. For consecutive temporal ordering of events to be signalled, in the absence of time adjuncts, subject reference must be held constant.

Halliday & Hasan (1976) offer similar observations on textual organisation when they classify 'conjunction' as:

> ...a specification of the way in which what is to follow is systematically connected to what has gone before.
> (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:227)

Although they admit that this is somewhat of an oversimplication of the situation (the actual 'conjunctive relations' are not tied to the same sequence of expression), it is a useful relationship to conisder when looking at the structural coherence of texts. Leech & Svartvik (1975, section 375:158), identifying the clause as the basic unit of meaning in discourse, in fact, isolate three main ways of linking such clauses together: coordination (using 'and', 'or', and 'but'); subordination (using 'when', 'if', and 'because'); and adverbial link (using 'then', 'now', and 'yet'). In the light of Labov & Fanshel's definition of narrative sequencing (1977:107), a fourth main way must be added to these: no explicit marker (where no specific link is actually present).[12]

Such considerations are important when trying to describe the wide variety of cohesive ties available in English for the construction of narrative sequences. In particular, they have been the focus of attention of recent research work into the use of 'connectives' that children make. Using such features of textual coherence as an analytical base, Crystal (1979; 1980) describes the use children make of 'explicit' connectives in their written work. In previous research (Crystal, 1976) into the language of the child in the early years of schooling, he notes:

> ..there is the whole area of sentence connectivity, for example, over which the child has so far achieved only a limited command.
> (Crystal, 1976:48)

Here, however, he is primarily concerned with the development of the child's spoken language; whereas, in an article, 'Language in Education - a Linguistic Perspective' (1979), he turns his attention to the child's written work in school.

In response to a survey of two hundred primary and middle school teachers on the language problems encountered by their pupils in writing, Crystal selected their identification of 'sentence connectivity' as a feature of language use that they considered particularly difficult for children to manage in their written work:

> An important bridging operation on the teacher's part, accordingly, is to bring home to the child how independent of context the written language tends to be, and how important it is for the writer to be aware of the demands placed upon him by the varying situations in which written communication is appropriate.
> (Crystal, 1979:19)

His contextual approach to the problem is a useful one; but his concern to establish 'typical errors' in a child's work is, perhaps, more questionable (Crystal, 1979:26).

Thirty children (aged between seven and nine) were asked to write a story about 'A Narrow Escape'. Crystal (1980) then made an investigation of their work, based on the types of connectives used, or not used. From this research, he identifies two main types of connective: those which express some sort of logical relationship ('and', 'but', and 'so'); and those which express a temporal sequence of events ('and', 'then', and 'when'). Of the 465 sentences used altogether by the children. he finds that 80% of them are linked by some kind of connective word or phrase; and, of these, 72% are 'and', and the rest 'then', 'so', 'when', and 'but'. In relating such features to the two semantic areas (logical and temporal) that the children are learning to use, Crystal makes some interesting and useful comments on the choice available to the child of using, or not using connectives. He compares, in this respect, the following two extracts from the same piece of writing by Penny:

1. He ran down stairs got hold of the telephone and rang 999. The firemen came, put out the fire.

2. We went down to the shop and bought a new plug for my tape recorder and daddy put it back on the wire and I was very happy and I sat down again and listened to my taperecorder.

In 1. he finds "the climax of the action with no connective words at all"; and in 2. there is "a more leisurely return to normality with 'and' turning up again" (Crystal, 1980).[13]

Such comments would seem, to some extent, to illustrate the dangers of looking at the operation of individual items in a text in isolation. Certainly there are problems in relating stylistic effect solely to the operation of such specific elements (particularly in the light of what has previously been described in connection with the work of Labov & Fanshel). In Crystal's case, it is, perhaps, too dangerous an assumption to relate such effects as "climax" and "leisurely return" exclusively to the presence or absence of connectives. They are obviously a contributory factor, but such textual 'impressions' can also be accounted for much more effectively by considering the selection of the events that produce the narrative sequence. For example, the 'time span' described in 1. is shorter than that described in 2.; also, if the connectives were deleted from 2., the text would not lose its sense of "leisurely return". Similarly, there is the 'interruption' of non-stative events by a stative event ("I was very happy") in 2. to consider; and the functional coherence of the two extracts as a whole must also be borne in mind: for instance, 1. contains 'complicating action' and 'resolution'; whereas 2. is devoted entriely to 'coda' (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Labov, 1972). So, in terms of investigating the textual coherence of writing, simply looking for explicit markers of cohesive ties is not enough. Such connective devices, in fact, that are there need to be seen, not only in terms of those that are not, but also in relation to the narrative structure of the text as a whole.

Indeed, Crystal (1979; 1980) would appear to be more generally concerned with what connectives the children in their written work are not using, rather than with those that they are; but such a concern is linked with the nature of his original aim: "to improve standards of language use in children" (Crystal, 1979:13). However, his wish for children to be introduced to a wider variety of sentence connectives than 'the usual' (for example. 'later', finally, and 'suddenly'), though, perhaps, understandable, smacks suspiciously of the 'sentence stretching' activities developed from the work of earlier structural investigations of children's writing mentioned previously; and, to this end, draws attention away from what must be regarded as the primary reason for considering the use of connectives in the first place: an understanding of the functional choices which a child might develop in terms of sentence connectivity for the purpose of achieving a variety of different stylistic writing effects. It would seem that an awareness of the selection and manipulation of the cohesive elements of a text might well be an aspect of the linguistic organisation of such work that would lead to the production of 'efficient' and 'effective' writing (but not by means of the 'acquisition' of 'more sophisticated connecting devices' through the kinds of isolated language exercises advocated by Crystal (1979) and Twite (1981).

However, in spite of such reservations, the cohesive elements in the pieces of writing produced by Becky and Jenny, if looked at in conjunction with the narrative organisation of the text as a whole, can be quite revealing. In Becky's case, of the 73 possible uses of connectives to join clauses in her work, 43.83% of them are linked by some kind of connective word; and, for Jenny, of the possible 128 uses, 47.65% of them are linked by connectives; with Becky taking up the option of using such links every 2.28 clauses, and Jenny every 2.09 clauses. In both cases, the percentage of connectives used is significantly lower than that found by Crystal (1980) in the writing of his seven- to nine-year-olds, Many of the links, in fact, that Becky and Jenny make between clauses would appear to be achieved without the specific use of connectives as such. One of the most frequently employed methods of accomplishing this is by indicating temporal organisation (Labov & Fanshel, 1977): Becky - "then one of the Adult went out to see if it was alright. she rushed in shouting" (1.13-14); and Jenny - "We went along a bit and saw a burning police car. We kept going down" (1.12-13). Jenny uses it for such temporal purposes much more frequently than Becky.[14]

Another effect is to produce comment on the action: Becky - "we stayed the night at the miers house. it was fun" (1.20-21); and Jenny - "Ekra said move to the front. We felt very frightened" (1.14-15). Such a use can be compared with the example that Crystal (1980) cites: "and daddy put it back on the wire and I was very happy", where the use of 'and' here is, perhaps, felt to be redundant. This partially accounts, as Halliday & Hasan (1976) observe, for:

> ...why we tend not to consider that a child's composition having and as its dominant sentence linker can really be said to form a cohesive whole. (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:233)

Becky also reveals attempts to describe events sequentially for the purpose of contrast:

> Katherine and Jonathan were very naughty because they sneeked out of the room to spy on the adults! I could not go to sleep because mummy was not there. (1.22-24)

This is reinforced by the paralleling of thematic subjects and causal subordination.

In their actual use of connectives both Becky and Jenny show a wide variety:

Becky	Jenny
and (25%)	and (24.59%)
then (21.87%)	then (39.34%)
until (12.5%)	until (4.91%)
but (6.25%)	but (8.19%)
when (12.5%)	when (6.55%)
because (12.5%)	because (3.27%)
so (3.12%)	so (6.55%)

Becky also uses 'finally' twice; and Jenny uses 'since', 'while', 'now', and 'unfortunately' once each.

Nearly half the connectives, in Becky's case, and over half the connectives, in Jenny's case, are either 'and' or 'then'. This must initially be seen in terms of the nature of the writing task as interpreted by both girls: the delineation of a series of events in sequence; and this is further supported by the fact that both Becky and Jenny use 'and' primarily to indicate temporal or chronological sequence:

> Becky: we got on the bus and we had a normal day at school...(1.1-2)
>
> Jenny: we got on the bus and we came to school[15] (1.2)

Commenting on children's use of 'and', Harpin (1976) concludes:

> The usefulness of 'and' in joining equal units seems to be realised early in speech development. By the time children come to write it is a

> powerful habit, which gives way only slowly and reluctantly to the very large number of different joining methods provided for in English. (Harpin, 1976:68)

Both girls make some use of what Harpin calls the habitual or textual 'and' most often found in speech:

Becky: then we all listened to the news and it said that all the schools and collag were closed until monday (l.30-31)

Becky: that was on November 5th and we certainly saw lots of bonfires! (l.34-35)

Jenny: Unfortunately the fire spread and the fire spread to some tanks with oil in them. (l.44-45)

In many ways these uses of 'and' may be considered as 'unconscious' links, 'pauses' in the writing process. In certain cases they indicate very clearly the writer's lack of retrospective awareness. Text is instantly created with a subsequent lack of coherence or repetition of redundant items, particularly if clausal breaks occur between pages: "...the fire spread/and the fire spread..." (Jenny, L.44-45).

Both girls also make use of subordinate adjuncts to indicate temporal sequence: 'until' and 'when'. In all instances of the use of such binding adjuncts as time links, the clauses in which they operate as initial elements are chronologically ordered. It would also appear that frequency in the use of such items is directly relatable to proximity of occurrence:

Becky: then I cried until Daddy came. Then when Daddy came we stayed there until it went. (l.12-13)

Jenny: We had a normal day untill we got on the bus to go home. We were going as usual untill we got south of the shahanshah expressway. (l.2-4)

Becky: When we went home we saw the remains of lots of riots. when we got home mummy was very pleased to see us. (l.26-28)

Jenny: When we had got level with the Karim Khan Zand flyover when we saw a paylcar burning with tyres around it. (l.8-9)

It is perhaps noteworthy that in most of these cases the proximity of the repeated adjunct is derived from the basically prospective approach to the writing task adopted. The writer thinks ahead but partially ignores what has gone before. This is particularly noticeable if Becky's and Jenny's descriptions of the reaction to their homecoming are compared:

Becky: when we got home mummy was very pleased to see us. it was six oclock in the morning. our visitors were very pleased to see us. (l.27-29)

Jenny: Mummy and our visitors were very pleased to see us. (l.64)

Becky shows a similar repetitive tendency with her use of 'because':

> it was fun because all the children slept together! Katherine and Jonathan were very naughty because they sneeked out of the room to spy on the adults! I could not go to sleep because mummy was not there. (l.21-24)

Such causal relationships are also expressed by the use of 'so': Becky (l.11); and Jenny (l.7).

Both also show a varied use of adverbial links which are interesting in terms of their positioning. Becky uses 'finally' and Jenny uses 'now' to indicate the conclusion of a specified series of events:

Becky: we finaly got to the Embasy. (l.10-11)
Finaly someone said we will go in a convy up to golhak. (l.18-19)

Jenny: Now everyone was with us and we started to make decisions. (l.46-47)

Becky's indicate: the conclusion of the journey back from school; and the gathering of everyone at the Embassy and their subsequent decision; whereas Jenny's use of 'now' serves a similar function to Becky's second use of 'finally'.

Crystal (1980) sees the use of such observations as a means of drawing the teacher's attention to the 'extension' of a child's connectivity skills, although it is a major contention of this paper that the extension of a child's connectivity skills be seen in a context wider than that of simply acquiring the ability to insert 'new connectives' in between clauses. Kress (1979b), on the other hand, relates the development of such uses to providing insight into the child's cognitive abilities. In particular, like Crystal (1979; 1980), he looks at, what he calls the conjoined sentence structures in the writing of seven- to nine-year old children, and notes discrepancies that occur between the ways in which children and adults organise language (similar to Harpin's discussion of 'and', 1976:68).

For example, the use of 'and', 'when', and 'then', for children, would appear to have similar functions - the linking of sequentially-ordered clauses:

> The point is an important one, for a teacher looking at the story might see three different conjunctions, and infer from this that the child knew these: that is, infer that the child knew the meaning of and - simple, neutral conjunction -, as against when, - conjunction implying temporal/causal priority.
> (Kress, 1979b:3)

As noted in the written work of Becky and Jenny, it is as important to be aware of the different uses of familiar items such as 'and', as it is to be aware of new kinds of connectives emerging, and both need to be consistently interpreted with reference to the specific nature of the writing process. Kress (1980) in his broader investigation of the child's understanding of sentence', re-affirms this fundamental consideration:

> Children have learned their language in interaction; the spoken texts which they construct and produce are texts constructed in specific contexts of interaction with other speakers. Hence to ask a child to produce a text outside of any such context is a new and strange task, quite outside a child's experience.
> (Kress, 1980:2-3)

Textual Organisation in Writing

Kress's investigation of how children develop and achieve the concept of sentence is indicative of more recent attempts to describe the textual structure of writing.

However, his discussions of the relationship between the co-extension and co-incidence of 'sentence' and 'line' are, perhaps, misguidedly interpreted in terms of a child's efforts to write a story on a typewriter. His failure to consider the writing constraints of such a situation leads him to generalise somewhat unwisely:

> ...the line is of primary importance for the child, as a textual, narrative unit, and the sentence is at this stage a secondary unit. The notion of coherence within the line imposes constraints on what the sentence can be, and hence, sentence-syntax derives from the line.
> (Kress, 1980:10)

Yet, what does emerge from his comments on children's writing is the need to consider the organisation of the text as a whole. The syntactic ordering of the grammatical elements is determined by the situational constraints (in this case, the demands of the story that is being typed). The text itself, Kress argues, might be said to consist of 'mini-texts' or 'mini-narratives' which themselves combine to produce a coherently-ordered sequence. In the child's organisation of typed sentences on a linear basis, he is acknowledging his awareness of the coherence of narrative form as a series of events; his knowledge, if fact, of a 'story-format' (Neumeyer, 1969). This is particularly highlighted by his choice of 'fairy story', which itself has a recognised and well-known frmaework (Propp, 1958). His problems in maintaining coherence throughout the whole text, however, relate specifically to the increasing absence of retrospective signals as the text progresses further.

The first 'stage' is indicated clearly enough with an outlining of <u>setting</u> (Rumelhart, 1975): "Once upon a time there lived two poor people. They longed to be rich." (Kress, 1980:5); and this is then followed by an <u>initiating action</u> (Prince, 1973): "One day they were in the woods looking for firewood. when they met a prince riding through the woods." (Kress, 1980:5).[16] Thematic subject is now established as 'two poor people'; but a second initiating action sets the narrative off in a different direction with the same thematic subject, albeit less explicitly identified: "One day when they were walking in the woods <u>they</u> met an old woman." (Kress, 1980:6). Yet, the 'poor people' ultimately disappear and the reader would seem to enter a different 'story' with a different thematic subject, which itself changes rapidly but 'inconventionally': "...<u>the witch</u> gave the king and queen a red apple. <u>The king and queen</u> took the apples... <u>the prince</u> found the king and queen dead...the prince went to tel the wizard... <u>The wizard</u> came and made the king and queen alive agen....and <u>they</u> live happily evry erfeder." (Kress, 1980:6). Such a description of the text would seem, perhaps, to be a very profitable one to pursue, but Kress's singular attention to the notion of 'sentence-to-line' fit prohibits any such possible development along these lines.

Writing, therefore, is as much a textual process as it is a syntactic one. The ability to handle narrative of this kind is as much a skill in organisaing discourse as it is in handling the syntactic units which make up a text. Any meaningful description of the way children organise their writing must ultimately consider both these aspects and their interrelationship. Yet only recently has the development of theories based on language as discourse allowed the description of children's writing to exploit this perspective.

Discussing a possible approach to the description of discourse structure, Margaret Berry offers the following observations:

> ...an account of discourse structure based on a single linear structure just does not, as far as I can see, allow one to take account of enough similarities and differences...different patterns of organisation are observable in the discourse at the same time.
> (Berry, 1979:3)

Such an approach is, in fact, a useful one to take when it comes to looking at, and 'understanding', children's writing. Part of the problem for the teacher is the interpretation of a written text and this can create difficulties if such an interpretation is based solely on criteria related to the organisation of adult writing:

> As a natural result of the coherence of linguistic texts, the same things and events keep on being mentioned, and languages have various devices for signalling identity, similarity or difference of reference compared with some previous item.
> (Allerton, 1979:267)

At times, children's writing shows limited evidence of textual reference of this kind. Halliday & Hasan (1976) identify two aspects to such organisational reference which they regard as being essentially interrelated: exophora (situational) and endophora (textual); items as identified in the context of the situation and items as identified in the surrounding text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976:32-33). Both features need to be taken into consideration if the writing that children produce is in any way to be regarded as part of a communicative process. The problem for children, in developing an awareness of the differences between spoken and written production, is to come to terms with the increased demands that writing itself makes on the textual aspect of such references. In particular, anaphoric (backwards) and cataphoric (forwards) reference produce differing constraints in spoken and written situations. For example, Allerton (1979) argues that:

> ...it is naturally much easier to refer to something already known to the listener, rather than something he must wait to be introduced to.
> (Allerton, 1979:268)

For the child, however, placed in a writing situation such as that of Becky and Jenny, the difficulty arises in identifying and signalling a syntactic relationship between that which is made known and that which has yet to be introduced.

The Description of Textual Organisation: A Proposed Model

An approach to the analysis of narrative syntax, therefore, which perhaps best incorporates and expands the operation of some of these basic cohesive principles is one which recognises the writing process as the development of the functional selection of linguistic items within the context of on-going textual production. To this end, any descriptive procedure must take into account three levels of syntactic organisation: 1. elements of clause structure (the relationships which exist within the event described); 2. elements of inter-clausal structure (the relationships which exist between the events described); and 3. elements of narrative organisation (the relationships that exist between the text as a whole and its situational constraints). Recent work in discourse analysis has provided a possible framework for such a model.

Joseph Grimes, in his influential work, *The Thread of Discourse* (1975), explores some of the linguistic categories that have been set up to account for the way in which discourses organise themselves, and argues that the theoretical models that have been worked out at sentence level and below can be successfully expanded to account for larger structures. Primarily concentrating on the description of the oral narrative, he initially works from the base that "different parts of a discourse communicate different kinds of information" (Grimes, 1975:33). In concentrating on simple narratives, he is recognising an approach to the study of such types of communicative act that is essential to the selection of narrative as a fundamental way of organising experience in both speech and writing:[17]

> To begin analysis with simple narratives does not, of course, imply that we stop with the study of simple narratives. Like any exploration of the complex, discourse study should begin in shallow water and only later progress into the depths. What is learned in the study of simple narratives becomes the starting point that allows progress into other areas.
> (Grimes, 1975:35)

For similar reasons, the narrative writing of personal experience commonly produced at primary school level can be regarded as an example of such simple narrative in that it is essentially the foundation on which all other types of writing must build.[18]

A distinction which Grimes makes initially about the organisation of narrative discourse is in terms of the different kinds of meaning that tend to be communicated in the surface structure of the language by forms that are, in themselves, grammatically distinctive: meanings that essentially reflect the functions of an utterance - the type of event and the role of the participant.[19]

Events (realised primarily by the verbal element)[20] are distinguished in terms of 'events' (a particular person doing something; an event taking place); and 'non-events' (the description of a scene or person). Events are then considered from the point of view of the different temporal relations shown between them when they are reported as a sequence. For example, unless specifically identified (usually by means of a temporal adjunct) time boundaries between events are seldom clear-cut. Events rarely follow one another in a uniform sequence but usually cluster into groups; what Grimes refers to as common orientation:

> A sequence of events is distinguished from a later part of the same time sequence in that all the actions in each part involve uniform relations among their participants.
> (Grimes, 1975:41)

For example, consider Becky's initial description of events:

> on November 5th we went to school as normal and we got on the bus and we had a normal day until it was time to go home. (l. 1-3)

This sequence of four events could be said to form such a cluster, the end of which is signalled by the subordinate element: "until it was time to go home" (l.2-3). The next sequence describes the events that happened on the way home show completion is signalled by "we finally got to the Embasy" (l.10-11).

Non-events, on the other hand, appear to describe the circumstances in which such actions take place. Grimes distinguishes four basic types: setting; background; evaluation; and collateral.

Settings, like events and participants, usually form part of the primary components of narrative and identify the where, when, and how of an action, mainly by means of adverbials.[21]

Becky: on November 5th we went to school as normal and we had a normal day at school... (1.1-2)

Background, however, provides information that is not part of the narrative itself, but stands outside it and clarifies actions. It provides explanatory information for some of the events described, primarily realised by sausal conjunctives such as because:

Becky: I could not go to sleep because mummy was not there. (1.23-24)

Jenny: Becky cried because she was worried about mummy and daddy. (1.24-25)

Evaluation, in the description of events, provides comments on the speaker's/writer's reaction to them:

Becky: then the first demonstration past behind us. we were very frightened... (1.9-10)

Jenny: We were very glad they did not want to hurt us...Unfortunately the fire spread... (41-44)

Finally, Grimes discusses the notion of collateral information, where events related to past or predicted time might have taken place but did not or might or might not turn out to be so. Consider the following extract from a ten-year-old boy's oral account of an accident that once happened to him: he was nearly choked by a pencil:

and it went straight into mi gum up the top and then it nearly went down my mouth and I could have choked

Future events that might have happened, but did not, are explored by means of the modal "I could have choked"; and by means of the adverbial "it nearly went down my mouth".

Participants (who or what is identified as taking part in the events) are described by Grimes in terms of their reference and their identification:

> Reference has to do with who or what is being talked about. It goes back to the speaker's assumption that the hearer knows who or what is involved. Identification, on the other hand, has to do with the linguistic means that the speaker uses to communicate to the hearer who or what is involved. (Grimes 1975:45)

It is this relationship between reference and identification that becomes problematic for children in their written work when the difficulty arises of equating their assumptions with those of their audience. A similar difficulty occurs when an English reader attempts to read an American article:

> In one set of overnight ratings last month, Real People reached an amazing 49 per cent share of the audience in Chicago. It drew 38 and 33 shares, respectively in Los Angeles and New York...McKay agrees that the show's appeal is to the heartland audience.
> (Grove, 1980:105)

The article is essentially discussing the recent reception in American of a television programme, called "Real People". The show is, as yet, unknown in England, but the writer's assumptions about his audience are very clearly reflected in his lack of any further identification of the show other than by simply naming it. Reference and identification are, for an American audience, identical. Consequently, this same article, written for an English audience, would require, among other changes, an increased element of descriptive identification.

Children, in their writing, also need to develop a sense of audience awareness and much of what they write contains illustrations of the need to equate reference with identification:

Becky: we stayed the night at the miers house (1.20)

Kenny: There had to be someone on gard duty to make sure noone else came. Daddy and his friend Kevin were going to do it together. (1.56-58)

Becky's reference to "the miers house" is an assumed one in terms of the knowledge of her audience (herself and her parents) and her identification of it is similar to that of "Real People" in the Los Angeles magazine. Jenny's 'expanded' identification of "Kevin" by "his friend" indicates one method used to adapt writing intended for a 'more distant' audience.

Grimes's description of the different kinds of information found in a text and their distribution in terms of the relations expressed by function and form are further formalised at the level of inter-clausal structure by Knapp (1976). She makes a distinction between 'events' and 'moves', where the meaning of a move can only be interpreted in terms of the relationship established between two or more events. For example, the meaning of the event, "John took the sword", can only be interpreted as a move when its relationship is established with another event, "Fred brought it back", where such a relationship is one of reversal:

> The relationship between moves within a narrative then, can be compared with the relationships between words within a sentence.
> (Knapp, 1976:10-11)

Such relationships might occur anywhere in the narrative structure, or not at all, but their identification attempts to explore the interrelatedness of the system of options available to the writer.

Longacre (1968; 1972; 1976a; 1976b and 1977) attempts to describe similar relationships between events. In contrast to Halliday & Hasan (1976), he argues that discourse structure must inevitably be more than simply a question of cohesive ties across sentences. He assumes that discourse has a grammatical structure and identifies this in terms of a series of embedded paragraphs and sentences:

> Paragraphs involve functional slots into which are distributed sentences with certain characteristics.
> (Longacre, 1977:4)

His classification of such paragraphs uses a similar approach to that of Knapp, but is mapped out in much greater detail. Paragraphs are essentially binary (having two constituents) or n-ary (having more than two constituents). He is basically concerned with identifying the notional relations that exist between constituents, whereby clauses or sentences combine into larger units. For example, binary paragraphs can be antithetical (with a medial sequence signal such as but, yet); conditional (consisting of a condition and its implications); and result and reason ("He went to bed, because he was ill").

On the other hand, n-ary paragraphs can be coordinate (essentially a list); sequence (reporting a series of events); and simultaneous (indicating various activities going on at the same time). The list of options is ambitious and exhaustive but it gives much insight into the wide variety of choices available to both speaker and writer in the construction of coherent texts. It also paves the way for a consideration of the structure of a text as a whole.

To this end, Longacre (1976a) identifies and describes four basic discourse genres,but, for the purposes of the present argument, it is sufficient to concentrate on one: his concept of narrative discourse. Narrative, being essentially the recounting of events, is usually presented in either first or third person, depending on whether the narrator sees his role as one of the participants in the action or simply as an observer. It is also fundamentally 'agent-oriented', containing many clauses where participants operate as surface structure subjects and objects. The linkage involved is chronological and events happen in 'accomplished time', the telling being in terms of past events. Such deep structure features of the genre are encoded in the form of specific surface structure features: first and third person pronouns; proper names; transitive and intrasitive clauses where the agent figures prominently; and past tense or historical present.

In terms of the overall structure of the narrative he also introduces the notion of peak or climax which accounts for 'that part of the discourse subsequent to "setting"', where the 'point' of the narrative occurs:

> It is especially crucial that we be able to recognise the peak when such a marked element occurs in the surface structure. We can then identify pre-peak Episodes and post-peak Episodes and can consequently articulate a considerable amount of the surface structure of the narrative.
> (Longacre, 1976a:217)

Such a peak in a narrative can be highlighted by the surface structure features of the language in a variety of different ways, by rhetorical underlining (the use of paraphrase or repetition); by a concentration of participants (all the characters in the narrative involved together in some action); by heightened vividness (effected by a shift of tense or person); and by a change of pace (varying the size of the units - sentences and clauses). A similar effect can be achieved by a change of orientation (the viewpoint through whose 'eyes' the narrative is perceived). On such bases the discourse can be divided into its constituent parts and the relationships between such parts can then be described.

For Becky's and Jenny's accounts of their experience in Tehran it is possible, from this basis, to postulate initially a series of six basic events that are fundamental to each narrative account, what is, in fact, an 'abstract' for the text (Van Dijk, 1972): the journey to school; the journey back to the Embassy; the events in the Embassy; the night-time experiences; the journey home on the following day; and the subsequent writing of the account. In the journey to school and the subsequent writing of the account, it is possible to identify an introductory setting and a postscript, respectively, which basically operate outside the action of the actual events. Both girls make use of these devices in almost identical ways to frame their narrative. It is in the description of the four 'internal' episodes that their accounts differ in terms of such features as peak (Longacre, 1976a). In all four cases. Jenny's narrative version is significantly expanded in comparison with Becky's.

In the journey back to the Embassy, both girls provide descriptive elaborations on the same event, "we saw the remains of a riot":

Becky: there we saw the remains of a riot. there was scatered glass and tires that were still burning alittle bit. (1.7-8)

Jenny: Then we saw the remains of a riot. There was splinters of glass and lots of cans that had boms in them. (1.10-12)

The elaborative paragraph (Longacre, 1977) in each case, is realised in terms of the use of stative verbs, complex nominal groups, and additive qualifiers. Both Becky and Jenny mention the subsequent demonstration, but it is only Jenny who provides a further elaborative paragraph:

Becky: then the first demonstration past behind us. (1.9)

Jenny: We met a demonstration going behind us...They people in the demonstration were waving black flags with Death to the Shah written on white paper and stapled on to the black flag. (1/14-18)

Jenny also produces a third identical sequence paragraph (Longacre, 1977) with similar subsequent elaborations:

Then we saw the remains of another riot. There was glass and beer cans just the same as before. (1.19-20)

A similar pattern is provided by the following three episodes: the events in the Embassy; the night-time experiences; and the journey home on the following day. Jenny, in each case, provides a description of a greater number of actual events.

However, what is perhaps more significant is the choice of emphasis or peak that each girl chooses to make in her account. The emphasis for Jenny is very much on the events in the Embassy both during the day and at night; Jenny describes 54 events in these two sections, whereas Becky describes 18. An interesting emphasis, however, for Becky (being the younger sister) is on the journey home on the following day. Jenny describes only 8 events here, whereas Becky describes 14. The differing emphases in both descriptions to some extent reflect their personal evaluation of the whole series of events. The two episodes, 'the events in the Embassy' and 'the night-time experiences', deal with 40% of the events described in Becky's narrative, and 62% of the events described in Jenny's. Yet the episode, 'the journey home on the following day', accounts for 31% of the events described in Becky's narrative, and only 9% of those described in Jenny's. As a result, it would seem that Becky's writing concentrates primarily on 'the family'; whereas Jenny's describes 'outside events'.

Such a perspective on the relationship between the formal and functional elements of textual organisation has attempted. if somewhat cursorily, to give some indication of an approach to the description of children's writing that it would seem profitable to pursue further. While emphasising the need for an investigation into the narrative structure of texts as a whole, an approach of this nature also needs to be seen very much in terms of its relationship to both clausal and inter-clausal operations. Such an account would, in fact,in considering the developmental aspects of children's written work, provide both a linguistic and stylistic viewpoint.

A Cautionary Footnote

One of the most recent investigations into the linguistic description of children's writing has been carried out by Gannon & Czerniewska (1980). In describing the written work of secondary-school children (pp.109-131), they concentrate on the syntactic patterning of such writing. However, much of what they have to say about it is couched in terms already noted in similar previous research work in this field: "In an eleven-year-old's work this whole sentence reflects considerable maturity" (p.110); "there shows a stylistic device advanced for this age" (p.115);

and "a serious grammatical error appears to have arisen because the child has attempted a sophisticated syntactic form" (p.119). Writing is matched against some kind of 'mature adult model' (Hunt, 1965; 1966); and this 'norm' is somehow presented as an 'ideal' towards which the child must inevitably aspire. Syntactic maturity is once more seen in terms of the ability to develop syntactic complexity. As noted previously, this approach to written work as the treatment of 'faults' can only lead to the devising of sterile language exercises as evidenced in the work of Fraser & O'Donnell (1968). What is even more disturbing is that it reaffirms a view of writing as 'finished product' - work that must somehow be assessed and 'corrected'. It also develops an attitude to writing that recommends 'complexity' above all else. For example, the singling-out in Anna's writing of "Out came 8 little mice" as an example of "a sophisticated syntactic form" (Gannon & Czerniewska, 1980:119) fails to take into account that this 'complex' inversions frequently occurs in many of the stories that children encounter at a very early age.

Any meaningful approach (for the teacher, that is) to the linguistic study of children's writing, therefore, must weigh both 'product' and 'process' elements in such work. From this point of view, writing needs to be seen in terms of three basic aspects of its textual organisation: form, function, and use. Such features, related to a text's referential and evaluative arrangement (Labov & Waletzky, 1967), might, as a consequence, provide some insight into the way children approach the writing task in school, and also help to develop an awareness of some of the difficulties they encounter:

> ...the teaching of writing focuses too much on product, on the written paper that the student submits, and not enough on process, on how to write.
> (Steinberg, 1980:156)

FOOTNOTES

[1]Widdowson (1979), in positing a framework for the analysis of discourse, suggests two methodological perspectives which provide an approach to language description not at all dissimilar to the attitude toward the language of children's writing suggested by Thomson (1978). He argues that any model of discourse should be able to account not only for language as 'end-product', but also for language as a genuine communicative activity:

> One can, on the one hand, deal with instances of discourse from the point of view of the third person analyst: that is to say, one can treat discourse in detachment from its instantiation, after the event, as a product. On the other hand, one can deal with discourse from the point of view of the participants caught, as it were, in the act; that is to say, one can treat discourse as a process.
> (Widdowson, 1979:148)

[2]It must be emphasised, however, that Olson's use of the terms, <u>utterance</u> and <u>text</u>, is not the interpretation given to these in this paper.

[3]It is possible, however, to 'overdo' such authorial explicitness. Kaplan (1979) produces the following dialogue from an ESL textbook:

> P Oh, Spiros, is that a new photo?
> S Yes, Philia, it is.
> P Is it a photo of your sister?
> S Yes, it is a photo of my sister.
> P Is she young?
> S Yes, she is young.
> (Kaplan, 1979:5)

Clearly the text contains a very high proportion of redundant information, and intentionally so in terms of the purpose of the language exercise; and deliberately flouts the maxim of quantity that Grice (1967) proposes: 1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange) and 2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

[4]Jakobson (1960) identifies a similar view of a major role of language function in Sapir's statement: "ideation reigns supreme in language" (Jakobson, 1960:353).

[5]McCarthy (1954), in 'Sentence Structure and Grammatical Form' (pp.551-562), gives a detailed account of many of the developmental surveys of children's writing in the 1930s and the 1940s that offered similar solutions to its 'improvement'.

[6]The Edinburgh Reading Tests (1972) provide a useful illustration of the failure to consider the functional importance of language in their attention to: vocabulary awareness; memory-retention of significant derails; and sequential organisation of sentences.

[7]For example, consider the following written comments made by a teacher on a ten-year-old's story: "A good opening to this story. Ending seems vague as either you lost interest or ran out of time."

[8]A common enough feature of teaching, particularly at secondary-school level, in terms, for example, of how to write a scientific report.

[9]In fact, Jenny's repetition of the binding adjunct, 'when', illustrates a recurring problem in children's writing, and, indeed, in the nature of the writing process itself: the need for a constant retrospective and prospective view of the text both <u>during</u> and <u>after</u> its production. In relation to both Becky's and Jenny's work, such writing will be represented, as much as possible, as it was actually written by retaining the text's original spelling and punctuation.

[10]For a more detailed consideration of <u>prospective</u> and <u>retrospective</u> relationships of language use in an educational context, see Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) and Widdowson (1978).

[11]Both Sacks (1970) and Labov (1972) identify this as a common feature of oral narratives as well.

[12]In fact, in the light of the recent research undertaken by Winter (1974; 1975; 1976 and 1977); Halliday & Hasan (1976); and Hoey (1979 and 1981), the use of such explicit or implicit connective devices would appear to present an insufficient account of such relationships, a more detailed investigation of which is more than the scope of this present work will allow.

[13]These comments are taken from a written transcript of a television lecture given by David Crystal on March 31st, 1980 under the title of 'Grammar Rules OK' as supportive material for the Open University's Language Development Course (PE 232): Block 2, 'Patterns of Language' (1979).

[14]Jenny indicates temporal relationships between clauses without the use of an explicit connective every 3.76 clauses; whereas Becky, making more use of explicit connectives such as 'and' and 'then', indicates temporal relationships without them every 4.92 clauses.

[15]These examples also provide an illustration of the need to look <u>above</u> clause level as well to supply a more satisfactory explanation of narrative writing organisation. The initial event, "we got on the bus" (Becky, 1.1-2; and Jenny, 1.2), is identical in both cases; but the selection of subsequent events differs, with Jenny's, perhaps,

seeming more 'logical' than Becky's: Jenny moves from single action to single action ("We got on the bus and we came to school.", 1.2); whereas Becky moves from single action ("we got on the bus", 1.1-2) to an action with a series of subsumed events ("we had a normal day at school", 1.2).

[16]The repetition of "in the woods" and "through the woods" is similar to some of the recurrent features noted in Becky's and Jenny's work: their uses of "until" and "when".

[17]Labov & Waletzky (1967) found the basis of their research into oral narratives of personal experience on similar principles:

> We suggest that such fundamental structures are to be found in oral versions of personal experience.
> (Labov & Waltetzky, 1967:12)

[18]Although it could be argued that there is some danger in labelling discourse in this way (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1970).

[19]Compare Halliday's notions of process and participant roles in transitivity functions (Halliday, 1970:146-149).

[20]The interpretation given to event is also based on that described by Leech & Svartvik (1975, sections 104-105:63-64).

[21]See Halliday's use of the term, circumstances (Halliday, 1970:149-150).

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Becky: Aged 7 (1978)

My Most Exiting November Fifth Ever
My most bigest bonfire night ever

on November 5th we went to school as normal and we got on the bus and we had a normal day at school until it was time to go home. Mrs. abott said there is alot of truble in town. we had got level with karim khan zand flyover and we met a big demonstration with a burning car. mrs abott had said keep your head lights on. then Ekra went down a side street to avoide it. there we saw remains of a riot. there was scatered glass and tires that were still burning alittle bit. then the first demonstration past behind us. we were very frightend but it went along the road. we finally got to the Embasy. Daddy wasent there so we went to the miers house. then I cried until Daddy came. then when Daddy came we stayed there until it went. then one of the Adult went out to see if it was alright. she rushed in shouting "ther coming into the Embasy'! the anson family and there nanny was there. we all stayed in the house until some one came and said come outside to descuss it. when we went out we saw the gate house on fire! Finaly someone said we will go in a convy up to golhak. Some care went but most stayed untill 8 oclock. we stayed the night at the miers house. it was fun because all the children slept together! Katherine and Jonathan were very naughty because they sneeked out of the room to spy on the adults! I could not go to sleep because mummy was not there. the next day daddy woke up and went home to see if it was alright. then he came back to pick us up with the car. when we went home we saw the remains of lots of riots. when we got home mummy was very pleased to see us. it was six oclock in the morning. our visitors were very pleased to see us as well. specially little Hannah! then we all listened to the news and it said that all the schools and collag were closed until monday. me and Jenny were pleased because we dident like school. during the holidays we sat around the Kursi and wrote this story. that was on November 5th and we certinly saw lots of bonfires!

Jenny: Aged 9 (1978)

My most frighteneding Adventure

We started our day as normal going to school in Teheran. We got on the bus and we came to school. We had a normal day untill we got on the bus to go home. We were going as usual untill we got south of the shahansshah expressway. When we had been in the British embassy compound (in) Mrs Abbot had said keep your headlights on all the time to show you don't want to fight. So we had our headlights on. When we had got level whith the Karim Khan Zand flyover when we saw a paylcar burning with tyres around it. Ekra turned off that road then we went on down. Then we saw the remains of a riot. There was splinters of glass and lots of cans that had had boms in them. We went along a bit more and saw a burning police car. We kept on going down and we met a demonstration going behind us. Ekra said move to the front. We felt very frightened since it was the first time we had seen one. They people in the demonstration were waving black flags with Death to the Shah written on white paper and stapled on to the black flag. Then we saw the remains of another riot. There was glass and beer cans just the same as before. Then Ekra turned on to a side road called Manouchen. We the went down Ferdowni Avenue. Then we got to the embassy but daddy was not there. At the time the McGuinnesses were stayind the Miers house so they took us home to theire house. Becky cried because she ~~was worried about mummy and~~ daddy. (The) Edmund Ramsden and his mummy came to Beck cover too. Bu then their daddy came and they went. The Ansen family a their nanny, Fiona had been there since morning. Then daddy came into sight. We ran to meet him. (He) Then we asked him "shere's mummy" He said "she is at the Sims house". Daddy decided it would be safer to stay there for a while untill it quietened down abit. They Lady Parsons came to see if we were alwright. She stayed to have a cup of tea. Then me and Katherine went up to smoke sweet cigars and play games. Then daddy saw some people coming into the embassy and we had to shut all the doors and Windows. And then Kevin and daddy pushed a table against it. But then they did not come into the houses but they went into the office block and said get out quickly, because of David Own we are going to burn down this building. David Own likes the Shah and we want to show him we want Khomeini instead of him. So they came to the miers house with us. We were very glad they did not want to hurt us. Then the rest of them burnt the gatehouse and got in. Then they put some bomb in the office block and it burst into flames. Unfortunately the fire spread and the fire spread to some tanks with oil in them. Then that caught fire to. We wached it burn in dismay. Now everyone was with us and we started to make some decisions. Some one said go in a convoy to Golhak. But not many people thought that was a very good idea. Then someone advised some of us to stay with us in the Ferdowni compound. Daddy decided we should stay (here) in the Ferdowni compound. So we had Bread, Butter, and Jam for tea. Then came the part when we went to bed. It was great fun because we all slept in the same room. Katherine and me and a Johnathan went to the front door to see what was happening. We saw the shattered gatehouse and lots of bits of glass then we went to sleep. There had to be someone on gard duty to make sure noone else came. Daddy and his fried Kevin were going to do it together. They were walking outside the burnout conference hall when they saw a create of beer. Kevin got two bottles out and took the tops off. Then they drank the beer while they were on gard duty. Eearly in the morning just after curfue daddy went home to see if it was safe enough to go home then he woke us up a we went in the car. Mummy and our visitors were very pleased to see us. Then we made the Korsi again and we sat under it. Tom and me played German wist. And then me, Ralph and Becky played it together. The next dad I wrote this story. That was my most exiting November fifth ever.

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ERRATA

We apologise for the following errata in NLC, 9, 2, December 1980

p.93 and Contents page	The subtitle of Kathleen Wales article should read: The uses of the pronoun ONE... (Not users).
p.118, ln.7.	For Chinese language read Chinese languages.
p.127, ln.20.	After 'right' one insert missing material: to use. I have heard people insist that t'ou2 in Mandarin is 'right'
p.136. ln.18 up.	For +WEAPON read ±WEAPON

EDITORIAL STATEMENT AND NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

NOTTINGHAM LINGUISTIC CIRCULAR publishes, twice yearly, articles, research reports, and reviews in linguistics. The Editors interpret the term 'linguistics' in the broadest sense, and welcome contributions on all branches of the subject. From time to time, special issues are devoted to particular topics, such as Child Language or Phonetics and Phonology. But, in general, there is no restriction on content.

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