AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE
IN LINGUISTIC PRAGMATICS

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Foreword

Pragmatics, or, to be more exact, linguistic pragmatics, is a branch of linguistics concerned with the use of language in the situation. Many a work has been written on general and specific problems of pragmatics since the time of C. W. Morris, the father of modern pragmatics. The same can be said about textbooks: they seem to be in abundance. However, the textbooks available are, as a rule, designed for students whose first language is English; no attention is paid to those whose first language is not English. In this textbook, where relevant, an attempt is made to contrast the linguistic means of realization of the speaker’s meaning in English and Lithuanian. Such an approach, though relatively sporadic, is two-way useful: it enhances the understanding of the problems being examined and contributes to the optimization of the learning of English as a second language.

This textbook makes no claim of completeness: it focuses on the major topics in pragmatics: deixis, reference, presupposition, implicature, speech acts, politeness, conversation structure, and the informational structure of the sentence.

The theoretical information has been drawn from a large number of sources. As the present work is a textbook (it contains generalized information), we found it inexpedient to make regular reference to the sources used. The sources, referred to and not referred to in the text, are given at the end of each chapter.

The textbook is intended for advanced students majoring in English, i.e. for students who have completed a course in general linguistics.

We would like to thank all those who helped us with their constructive criticism and valuable suggestions. Special thanks are due to our colleagues at the Department of the English Philology and the Department of the English Language, the reviewers – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Janina Buitkienė and Dr. Jurga Cibulskienė, and our copy editor – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Linas Selmistraitis.

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Introduction

Language is a tool of human interaction. Via language the speaker conveys his or her intended information to the addressee who receives it and responds to it by providing the requested information and asking the speaker, now the addressee, for the information he or she is interested in. Communication, then, is a two-way interaction: it involves the speaker and the addressee. This holds good for both dialogues and monologues, the only difference being that the addressee in a dialogue turns into the speaker while in the monologue the addressee is the reader or the listener, only: this type of addressee never turns into the speaker.

For a long time language was treated as an autonomous system, a system detached from its manifestation in the actual situation. So, for instance, traditional linguistics was concerned with the functions of language units: the functioning of language as a means of communication in the actual situation was not considered. True, traditional grammarians spoke of the four communicative (pragmatic) functions of the sentence: they distinguished declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences – sentences which expressed the corresponding direct speech acts. However, traditional grammarians did not know the term *speech act* and did not go any further. Linguistic pragmatics, which is concerned with the use of language in the situation, was still on the horizon: it had to wait until the 20th century, when Morris (1901–1979) introduced the term *pragmatics* defining it as the study of the relation between signs and their interpretants. However, *linguistic pragmatics* is associated with another language philosopher, Austin. Austin (1911–1960) put forward an original theory of speech acts in his monograph *How to Do Things with Words* (edited posthumously, in 1962). This work marked the beginning of linguistic pragmatics, a radical change in the traditional approach to linguistic studies. However, in the meantime linguists continued to busy themselves with the ‘internal’ problems of language: the functions of the linguistic units (traditional linguis-
tics), the structure of language (structural linguistics), and the generation of linguistic structures – word-combinations and clauses or clauses only (transformational-generative grammar). But do we have the right to blame the linguists for ignoring speech, language in action? This question can be answered by another question: can we study the manifestation of language if we have not made a thorough study of language? The study of language makes it possible to see better what belongs to language and what does not. What does not belong to language as a system, but is expressed by it in a situation, belongs to speech, or pragmatics. To paraphrase Yule’s words, pragmatics is the wastebasket of linguistics.

Pragmatics, as a branch of linguistics, came into existence as a reaction to an autonomous language approach, an approach initiated by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1917) and carried to extremes by linguists in the United States. Linguists gradually came to understand that language cannot only be studied as a closed system: time came to look at language from the outside, i.e. to see what the speaker does with language.

Linguistic pragmatics focuses on the speaker, his or her intended meaning, and the addressee and his or her interpretation of the speaker’s meaning. Paul Grice (1913–1988) distinguished between two types of meaning used by the speaker: literal (propositional) and implicative (non-propositional). The scholar was interested in how the addressee understands the speaker’s meaning. His discovery of the Cooperative Principle paved the way for such an understanding.

Through language the speaker achieves his goals. In doing it, the speaker must see to it that the addressee’s public image is not to be threatened. Pragmaticists’ interest in this aspect of communication brought about illuminating research on the principle of politeness by Brown and Levinson (1978), Leech (1983), and others.

Other areas of pragmatics were focused on conversation structures (Atkinson and Heritage (1984), Craig and Tracy (1983), Sacks (1974, 1992)), discourse and culture (Blum-Kulka, House, Kasper (1989), Gumperz (1982), Wierzbicka (1991)).
Linguistic pragmatics is a relatively new branch of linguistics and judging from the large number of works published and problems they raise, holds great promise for the future. We do hope that those who will familiarize themselves with the problems of linguistic pragmatics will not remain indifferent to this fascinating subject and will contribute to it by doing their own research into the subject: what can be more fascinating than research into how language works in an actual situation?

Sources


1. Deixis

1.1 General aspects of deixis

The process of communication, which involves the speaker and the addressee, occurs in a specific spatio-temporal situation. The speaker, who organizes the interaction, wishes to convey to or/and obtain information from the addressee. The addressee is not only the receiver of information; the addressee is also the giver of information. In this respect the speaker and the addressee enjoy a similar status: both are partners in this informational exchange. However, it is the speaker who ‘commands the parade’. His or her duty is to present a situation. Any situation necessarily involves the identification of entities, processes and circumstances, or, to use a more familiar term, the process of reference. The addressee must know what and which entity or process the speaker has in mind. To help the addressee, the speaker resorts to the use of specific linguistic forms called deixis, or indexicals, i.e. structures whose meaning is relative to a specific situation. Metaphorically speaking, these structures act as road signs to speakers in a spatio-temporal area. They, as it were, localize or ‘set the situation in a frame’.

Deixis is a word borrowed from the Greek verb meaning ‘pointing’ or ‘indicating’. In pragmatics, deixis is a term used to denote a word or a phrase which directly refers to entities (objects, processes, attributes, and circumstances). In other words, deictic expressions are used by the speaker to refer to or identify entities in both non-linguistic and linguistic situations. When the speaker and the addressee are in a non-linguistic situation, the identification of the referents is easy. So, for instance, if we are in a lecture-room, the entities there are visible to both the speaker and the addressee, e.g. when the speaker says I, the addressee knows that I is the person speaking now; when the speaker says this book, the addressee knows that this book
means the book close to the speaker; when the speaker says yesterday, the addressee knows that yesterday means the day before the time of the utterance. As can be seen, deixis gets its meaning from the situation. This type of situation is called deictic. What are the features of the deictic situation? It will be obvious that every language utterance is made in a specific place, at a specific time, and by a specific person addressing a specific person. The speaker is the reference point, or the deictic centre. The speaker is the ruler; he or she ‘leads the parade’.

The situation just described is the most typical. However, an act of communication may involve the speaker only. In a monologue, for instance, the speaker is talking to himself/herself (‘the most intelligent addressee’). If one is speaking on the telephone, the addressee will not be in the same spatio-temporal situation. Cf.:

A.
A. I’m in London now.
B. What are you doing there? Cf. What are you doing here?

Cf. Lith.
A. Dabar aš Londone.
B. Ką tu ten veiki? Cf. Ką tu veiki čia?

B.
A. What are you doing now?
B. I’m at home. Watching a football match on TV.
A. Not at work?
B. It’s already evening here.
A. Oh, yes, I forgot. In Tokyo it is noon.
In an interaction, the speaker's role is not fixed: it passes from person to person. Sometimes, however, the speaking person will not give (yield) the floor (his or her turn) to another person. When this happens, the principle of turn-taking is violated. Typically, participants in an interaction take turns at holding the floor.

There are four types of deixis: 1) person; 2) spatial; 3) temporal (time); 4) social.

1.2 Person deixis

As already said, each person shifts from being I (the speaker) to being you (the addressee). English children have to learn this distinction. Before they do it, they often use you to mean me, e.g. Read you a story instead of Read me a story.

Person deixis is based on a three-part division: first person, second person, and third person (neither speaker nor addressee). In some languages (e.g. in Lithuanian, Russian, German, French), second person pronouns have two forms: one used to refer to the addressee with a lower social status, and the other used to refer to the addressee with a higher social status: tu: jūs, тв: ви; du: sie; tu: vous. The deictics I: aš, you: tu/jūs are pure deictics: they refer to the speaker and the addressee respectively without conveying other information. The deictics he: jis; she: ji; it: jis, ji are impure deictics: besides the third person meaning, they include information concerning gender.
Third persons (he, she, it, they) differ from first and second person in several respects: the speaker and the addressee are necessarily present in the situation while the others may be absent or if they are present they are not active in the communicative act, i.e. they are listeners, or the audience. Of course, they may be drawn into the act of communication, and thus they may become speakers and addressees. Cf.:

A. Who is “he/she”?
B. He/she is our teacher.

Cf. Lith.
A. Kas yra “jis/ji”?
B. Jis/ji yra mūsų mokytojas/mokytoja.

In this interaction, he/she are used without their antecedents, i.e. the way the deictics are used in a non-linguistic situation. Cf.:

A. Who is this man?
B. He is our teacher.

Cf. Lith.
A. Kas šis žmogus?
B. Jis yra mūsų mokytojas.

If he/she are used as exophoric deictics, the speaker will use some para-linguistic features: a nod of the head, a gesture with the hand, stress, and intonation. However, this use of third person pronouns is not very common. More common is the use of the pronouns in a linguistic situation where they function as anaphoric deictics. Consider:

I saw an old man. He was begging for food. Cf. Lith. Aš mačiau seną žmogų. Jis prašė maisto.

The anaphoric (discourse) deictics make it possible to abbreviate the text; they act as shortcuts by by-passing anaphoric noun phrases (the man → he); they affect the addressee’s memory: he or she has to look back and find the referent of the pronouns. On the other hand, the text becomes more cohesive: he/she/it function as cohesive elements that join two clauses.
If we understand the essence of deictics – it denotes words that get their meaning from the situation (non-linguistic and linguistic) – third person pronouns should have to be assigned to deictics as well: they also have a pointing function. They point backward and forward. Besides, historically third person pronouns derive from demonstrative pronouns, whose deictic status is not called into question. To deictics we should also assign the definite article which, as you well know, derive from the distance neutral pronoun that. Such being the case, deictic expressions fall into two groups: non-linguistic and linguistic.

1.2.1 Exclusive and inclusive we

As a rule, when we say we, we mean ourselves and other people, e.g. We live in Vilnius. The other people may be my addressees. Sometimes, however, we mean ourselves only. Hence inclusive and exclusive use of we. Consider: Let’s go (inclusive) or Let us go (exclusive). As for English, we is generally inclusive. Another use of exclusive we is illustrated by:

How are we feeling today? (a doctor to a patient) Cf. Lith. Kaip mes jaučiamės šiandien?

1.2.2 Exclusive and inclusive you

It may include the addressee only (e.g. Have you seen the boss today? Cf. Lith. Ar matei viršininką šiandien?) and it may include the addressee and the others (e.g. Did you have your house valued? Cf. Lith. Ar įvertinai savo namą?).

In both English and Lithuanian person deixis is realized by the use of person pronouns: first person deictics are expressed by I: aš and we: mes; second person deictics are expressed by you: jūs, and third person deictics
are expressed by he: jis; she: ji; they: jie, jos. Generally speaking, English has fewer person deictic forms than Lithuanian. So, for instance, the English us, depending on the co-text, stands for the Lithuanian mūsų, mus, mums, su mumis, mummyse. The same holds good for tu (tavęs, tavo, tave, tau, su tavimi, tavyje); jis (jo, jį, jam, su juo, jame); ji (jos, jai, ją, su ja, joje); jie (jų, jiems, juos, su jais, juose); jos (jų, joms, jas, su jomis, jose). This is but natural since English is a predominantly analytic language and Lithuanian is a synthetic language.

Unsimilar to English, Lithuanian has two 2\textsuperscript{nd} person deictics: tu and jūs. Those deictics are used in different situations: tu is used by the speaker to express familiarity while jūs is used to express non-familiarity (non-distance and distance, respectively). Besides, in Lithuanian person deictics can be suppressed since their function can be performed by the inflections of the verb: the category of person is grammaticalized in Lithuanian. In English only the third person singular present tense form (with the exception of the modal auxiliaries) is grammaticalized.

Neither English nor Lithuanian have formalized (morphologized) means of expressing the inclusive-exclusive distinction. The English constructions Let’s go and Let us go, which are said to realize the distinction, are syntactic constructions. Thus, when the speaker says We must go to the library, the addressee may think, if there are no appropriate clues, that this sentence is an injunction that holds for both the speaker and the addressee: typically we is inclusive. Here we do not mean such examples as How are we feeling today, Mr. Robson? This use of we is clearly exclusive: it excludes the speaker. Consider another example: We could lend you a couple of hundred dollars. It will be obvious that we cannot include the addressee.

Another feature that should be mentioned is the order of person deictics in the sentence. When the English speaker uses two person deictics, he or she arranges the pronouns or their substitutes in the order third person + first person, e.g. He (John) and I, not I and he. In Lithuanian, however, we generally begin with ourselves and move to the other person, e.g. Aš ir jis
(Jonas). In this respect Lithuanian is more ego-centric than English under the circumstances.

1.2.3 Second person vs. third person deictics

In speech, we can replace second person with third person deictics. Consider:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Lithuanian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would you like some coffee?</td>
<td>Ar norėtumėtė kavos?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would his/her highness like some coffee?</td>
<td>Ar jo/jos šviesybė norėtų kavos?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like some coffee?</td>
<td>Ar Jūs (tu) norėtumėte kavos?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This use communicates (expresses) non-familiarity or distance. Third persons can be used to express an indirect accusation. Cf.:

Somebody (i.e. he/she) didn’t clean the blackboard. vs. You did not clean the blackboard.

If the speaker used he or she, instead of somebody, he or she would mean a particular person (e.g. John or Mary). The indefinite third person pronoun somebody makes it possible to replace the third person pronouns and thus avoid direct reference. Indefinite pronouns and nouns are in fact third person noun phrases. Transformationally, they are the deep (underlying) forms of third person pronouns, e.g. Why don’t you ask Beth? She’s got plenty of money. Cf. Lith. Kodėl neprašai Betės? Ji turi daug pinigų. But, as has been pointed out by Huddleston (2002: 14(4)), “3rd person NPs do not explicitly exclude reference to the speaker or addressee”. Consider an example drawn from Huddleston:

A. Ann is going to volunteer.
B. *Ann* (i.e. *I*) is going to do no such thing.

To give just a few more examples drawn from the same source:

*The writer* (i.e. *I*) has to admit that he cannot see the logic of this argument.

*Your reviewer* (i.e. *I*) is unable to find any merit in this film.

*The reader* (i.e. *you*) no doubt recalls that this issue also arose in chapter 2.

*Does Madam* (i.e. *you*) require anything further?

The same situation can be observed in Lithuanian:

*Ann is going to do no such thing.*

*Cf. Lith.*

*Onutė (t.y. Aš) šito nedarys.*

*The reader* (i.e. *you*) no doubt recalls <...

*Cf. Lith.*

*Skaitytėjas, be abejonės, prisimena <...>.*

This use of NPs makes it possible to express 1\(^{st}\) and 2\(^{nd}\) person without the use of the corresponding pronouns.

To conclude this section, we must say that person pronouns are not always deictic in the proper meaning of the word, i.e. they do not necessarily have a demonstrative force. Cf.:

*We have lived here for three generations.*

*Cf. Lith.*

*Mūsų jau trys kartos čia gyvena.*

*We have many more problems than other primates.*

*Cf. Lith.*

*Mes turime daug daugiau problemų negu primatai.*

In the first sentence *we* is deictic proper: it includes the speaker and his/her family; in the second sentence *we* means the human kind in general. It could be paraphrased as *People (humans) have more problems than other primates.* The same analysis can be extended to *you*, e.g. *You can get fined for crossing the street here.* *You* is in fact ambiguous: it may refer to the addressee or to people in general (*one can get fined for crossing the street here).*
Even third person deictics can be used in a similar way. Now consider the following texts:

A. Isn’t she lovely?  
B. Why’s the meal so late? Isn’t he home yet?

In text A, *she* is used deictically: it means the person present in the situation; in text B, *he* means the father of the family. To quote Huddleston (2002: 1469), “if the regular family routine is for the meal to be served when the father returns from work, the delay suggests that he may not have returned yet, and in this context the content of *he* (male one) is sufficient to make clear who I’m talking about”. In some parts of Great Britain *he* is used by women to refer to their husband. Similarly, in an appropriate situation *she* may refer to the mother of the family or the wife. Consider another example presented by Huddleston:

[Pointing at a painting]. *He certainly knows how to paint.*

Here *he* refers to the author of the painting. This use of *he* has been called indirect ostension. *Ostension* is indicating by pointing; it is *indirect* in that what I am pointing at is not the painter, but his painting (Huddleston, 2002: 1469). The analysis shows that person deictics can also be used non-deictically – at least in the traditional sense. Such being the case, we have two distinct functions of person deictics: primary and secondary.

1.3 Spatial deixis

Spatial deixis is related to the concept of distance. It identifies an entity by relating it to its place which is established with reference to the deictic centre. So, for instance, when the speaker says, *the book here*, he or she means the
book close to him or her. When he or she says *that book*, he or she means the book further away. Spatial deixis also concerns the direction of motion, e.g. *She has come* (motion towards the deictic centre) or *She has gone* (motion away from the deictic centre). Location from the speaker’s perspective can be fixed not only physically; it can be fixed mentally, too, e.g. *I will come later*. In this utterance, the speaker projects himself/herself into his or her home location, i.e. when he or she says *I will come later*, he or she, as it were, visualizes himself or herself in the location which is treated as the deictic center. Consider the following situation: before leaving for work, I put the following information into the recorder of my telephone answering machine: *I am not here now*. When someone calls me later, the machine says *I am not here now*. *Now* is the time someone calls me later, and not the time of my recording of the words. This shift of the deictic centre is referred to as *deictic projection*.

As already said, spatial deixis is related to distance. Entities can be placed close to the speaker or further away from the speaker. Hence there are two types of spatial deixis distinguished: proximal and distal. Consider:

*I don’t like this stuff.*  

*I don’t like that stuff.*  

However, entities can be close to the speaker physically but distant psychologically. *That stuff* may denote an entity close to the speaker. Yet it may be distant psychologically – the speaker, as it were, wants to distance himself or herself from it. In view of this, the pronoun *that* acquires its meaning in the context: it may refer either to a physically distant entity or to a psychologically distant entity.

To identify an entity with respect to its place in the non-linguistic situation, the speaker can use corresponding deictic words: 1) deictic adverbs *here* and *there*; 2) demonstrative pronouns *this*/*that* – *these*/*those*. In older texts, we can find a much larger set of deictic expressions:
hither (in this direction): čionai/ čia; šen ir ten;
yonder (over there; distant from the speaker): anas/ tolimenis; tenai;
thither (in that direction): ten/ į ten; šen bei ten;
hence (from this place): iš čia;
thence (from that place): iš ten.
Consider a few examples:

We went to London, and thence by train to Oxford.

Go hence!

Coloured fish darted hither and thither.

Can you see the fresh blooms on yonder tree?

How is spatial deixis realized in Lithuanian? We find the same means:
1) deictic adverbs (čia 'here', ten/tenai/šičia 'there/hither/thither'); 2) demonstrative pronouns (šis, šitas 'this one here'; tas 'that one there', anas 'that one there'; šitoks 'of this type'; anoks 'of that type'; čia 'here', ten 'there'). Similar to English, we can distinguish two types of spatial deixis: proximal and distal. Consider a few examples drawn from Lithuanian Grammar (1997: 195):

Ar dar tebėr ta troba, kur seniau gyvenom?  
Does the house where we lived earlier still exist?

Geriau pirkim šį paveikslą, anas man nepatinka.  
We had better buy this picture. I don’t like that one.

As already indicated, deictic expressions can be pure and impure. Pure deictics are used independently, i.e. they are not followed by words naming entities, e.g. What is this/that? Impure deictics are deictics followed by words naming the entities, e.g. What is this thing? Who is this man? It will be obvious that children begin with pure deictics; only later do they learn to use impure deictics. To impure deictics also belong he, she, it, which, beside their deictic meaning, additionally express gender distinctions.

Similar to person deictics, spatial deictics can be subjected to recycling. Cf.:
This lady is my friend’s mother.

Ši dama/ ponia yra mano draugo mama.

There is this lady in Iowa.

Ajovoje yra tokia dama.

In the first sentence, this is a deictic proper: it denotes the person near the speaker; in the second sentence, this denotes an unspecified person. Cf. There is a lady in Iowa. This usage is colloquial. The same analysis can be extended to here, there. Cf.:

Come here for a minute.

Ateik čia minutei.

Go there!

Eik ten.

I spent the weekend driving the kids here, there, and everywhere. Cf. Lith. Aš praleidau savaitgalį, vežodama vaikus visur.

In the first sentence here means the place of the speaker; in the second sentence here, there are not deictic proper: they mean different places. However, the two deictics still preserve their original meaning to a certain extent and cannot be attributed to fully recycled deictics. Better examples could be the following:

He’s neither here nor there.

Jo nėra nei čia, nei ten.

There was a man in the street.

Gatvėje buvo žmogus.

1.4 Temporal (time) deixis

Temporal deixis identifies entities and processes with respect to the temporal deictic centre, which is the speaker’s time of utterance. Consider: the present government: dabartinė vyriausybė; the then government: tuometinė vyriausybė; the coming winter: ateinanti žiema. Processes are also identified
in this way: processes that correspond to the speaker’s time are present processes; processes that occurred before the speaker’s time are past processes, and processes that occur after the speaker’s time are future processes. If grammaticalized, present, past and future processes have appropriate forms: present, past and future tense forms. In English, however, we have only two tenses: present and past. The present tense is unmarked both semantically and morphologically: it can be used to express past processes and future process, too. Morphologically it has no markers (an exception is taken by the third person present tense ending). The present tense is temporally proximal. The past tense is marked semantically and morphologically: it refers to the past in the indicative mood and it has morphological markers. The past tense is temporally distant. Temporally distant are also processes that are treated as unlikely or impossible, e.g. *I could be in Florida now if I had money.* Cf. Lith. *Galėčiau būti Floridoje dabar, jei turėčiau pinigų.* The situation presented here is not close to the present situation; it is deictically distant from it. The past tense form, then, can be used “to communicate not only distance from current time, but also distance from current reality or facts” (Yule, 1996: 15).

As already known, entities and processes can be identified only by referring them to the deictic centre, i.e. the time of the speaker’s utterance. Consider a case when a professor left a note on the lecture room door: *Back in an hour.* Students who came to his lecture were at a loss: they did not know if they had a short or a long wait ahead. If the words had been tied to the deictic centre, the students would have known when the professor would return, e.g. *Back in an hour [Professor Smith. June 10, 2008. 10 a.m.].* June 10, 2008 10 o’clock in the morning is the deictic centre, the time of the said utterance.

Grammatical temporal deictics (tenses) are generally used with lexical deictics, e.g. *Free beer tomorrow/ yesterday/ this week/ last week.* What would happen if we used only grammatical deictics or lexical deictics? Consider:

*He arrived.* vs. *He arrived yesterday.*
The use of lexical deictics is obligatory when the process expresses past time. Cf. *He arrived. vs. He has arrived. The utterance *He arrived requires a time circumstance: without it the situation is felt to be incomplete (cf. *He arrived yesterday). It must be for this reason that one-word predicates are shunned in English and “there is a preference for expressing simple present or past actions or states by some other, circumlocutory means” (Quirk et al., 1972: 968). The use of lexical temporal deictics or temporal circumstances makes it possible to concretize the process, to render it more specific: the notions present, past, future, if expressed by tenses, are too general to be useful communicatively. Cf. *He worked at the Ministry. vs. He worked at the Ministry then/ two years ago. However, the process of communication involves more: the speaker has to express more temporal meanings: habituality vs. temporariness; anteriority with respect to the speaker’s time or some other time. Languages which have a highly developed system of temporal adjectives (e.g. Chinese) can manage without grammaticalized time or aspect. English does not possess an adequate set of temporal adjuncts. The existing temporal adjuncts would not allow us to express the said temporal meanings as elegantly as we do now. Cf. *I write letters yesterday (write + yesterday = past time). vs. *I write a letter when she come then.

In English, unsimilar to Lithuanian, deixis is related to the form of the verb. More definitely, it affects the sequence of tenses. Consider:

[I am asking] Are you planning to be here this evening?
I asked her if she was planning to be there that evening.

The form was planning is used to adjust the process to a new deictic centre, which has shifted from the present (I am asking you now) to the past (I asked then), i.e. was planning is now tied to a new deictic centre, a secondary deictic centre. As the time of the processes coincide, we should have had been planning instead of was planning. The use of there instead of here and the use of this evening instead of that evening are also the result of the process of adjustment to the new deictic centre. Tense forms determined
by the primary deictic centre are called *absolute tenses*, and tense forms determined by the secondary deictic centre are called *relative tenses*.

In Lithuanian, processes used relatively are expressed in a different way: if the process is simultaneous with the time of the process in the main clause, it is expressed using a present simple form, e.g. *Jis pasakė, kad yra mokytojas*. Cf. Engl. *He said he was a teacher*. The sentence can be interpreted as follows: *when he said this he was a teacher*. The use of the past tense would be more logical than the use of the present tense. However, language has its own logic. It would be more logical if the present tense form referred to the present, i.e. if the person in question is still a teacher. This type of situation is not impossible: the clause *yra mokytojas* may also refer to the moment of speaking. This use of tenses could be called relative-absolute, i.e. relative processes expressed by absolute tense forms.

A similar situation is observed in English: if the process was true at the moment of uttering it and is still true at the speaker’s time, it may be expressed in the present tense form. Consider:

A.
A. I’m leaving now.
B. What did you say?
A. I said I’m leaving now.
B.
A. London is the capital of the United Kingdom.
B. What did you say?
A. I said that London is the capital of the United Kingdom.

But if the process in the subordinate clause occurred before the process of the main clause (the secondary deictic centre), it will be expressed in English by the past perfect form and in Lithuanian by the past simple or the past perfect. Cf.:
He said he had finished the job.  Cf. Lith.  Jis pasakė, kad baigė darbą.
He had finished the job when she arrived.
Cf. Lith.  Jis buvo baigęs darbą, kai ji atvyko.

Both forms – baigė and buvo baigęs – express a process that is prior to the process expressed by atvyko. Baigė, owing to the co-text, expresses precedence (unmarked precedence); buvo baigęs expresses precedence, too (marked precedence). However, if baigė does not need a perfect form in the first case, it obligatorily requires a perfect form in the second case. Cf. Jis baigė darbą, kai ji atvyko which means that he finished the job after she arrived. As for English, the use of a past tense form is determined by the time the reporting takes place. Cf.:

A. Did they write the essay?
B. He asked if they wrote the essay (immediate report).
   He asked if they had written the essay (much later report).

Temporal deictics can lose their status (i.e. they can be recycled) and turn into ordinary epithets. Cf.:

They arrived yesterday.  Cf. Lith.  Jie atvyko vakar.
What you say is yesterday’s news: this information is old and no longer interesting.
Cf. Lith.  Tai, ką tu sakai, yra vakarykštė naujiena: ši informacija pase-nusi ir niekam neįdomi.

1.5 Social deixis

Pragmaticists also speak of social deixis. What is it? The role of deictic expressions is to help the speaker to identify the referent. The role of social
deixis is to identify the social status of the addressee. It will be obvious that
the speaker identifying the social status of the addressee also often identifies
the person, e.g. Professor (Smith), may I ask a question? As there may be only
one person having the title, the honorific professor acts as a particularizing
identifier. On the other hand, this honorific is often used with a proper name,
e.g. Professor Smith. A proper name functions as a particularizing identifier
on condition it refers to one such person, i.e. if it has unique reference.

What English honorifics do we know? The most commonly used honorifics include Mr, Mrs, Miss, Sir, Madam ['mædəm], Ma'am [mæm]. Some
women prefer Ms [miz] to Mrs or Miss, especially if they have married but
have not changed their surname, e.g. Ms Fox. Titles and names of profession
also function as honorifics: Doctor, Coach, teacher, Father (for a priest). It is
interesting as well as important to note that titles are not always associated
with particular names. To quote Collins Cobuild English Usage (1992:
418), “however, in formal or business situations, you can put “a” in front of
someone’s name when you do not know them or have not heard of them
before”:

Just over two years ago, a Mr. Peter Walker agreed to buy a house from a
Mrs. Dorothy Boyle.

Social contrasts may be encoded within person deixis. Pronouns can
be used to indicate the social status of the addressee. Consider: jūs: tu; 逶:
мы; Sie: du; vous: tu. English has no such distinction. The choice of one
form rather than the other will communicate (not directly say) about the
speaker’s view of his or her relationship with the addressee: socially un-
equals vs. socially equals; familiarity vs. non-familiarity; social solidarity
vs. social distance. When the speaker is socially equal to the addressee, he
or she may or may not use appropriate honorifics: all depends on the social
situation. In formal situations, the speaker will use appropriate honorifics
which in informal situations he or she will not use. Cf. Professor Smith Cf.
Lith. Profesorius Smitas or John: Džonas. It will be obvious that children
addressing adults will have to use appropriate honorifics, e.g. Mr. Smith,
may I ask a question? However, it would be strange if the wife or the child referred to her husband and father using some honorific, or a friend of Mr. Smith’s. But in a formal situation, a friend of Mr. Smith’s will have to use an honorific. How do the Lithuanians behave? Similarly: they adhere to the same pragmatic principles. Honorifics in Lithuanian include: ponas/ponia/ponaitis/panelė; daktaras (-ė), profesorius (-ė), docentas (-ė), etc.

The rule is simple: if we are socially equal, we do not have to use honorifics; we may use first names; if we are not socially equal, we must use an honorific. To finish it off, consider the following situation: a student comes into the Department of English Philology; he wishes to see the head of the department and says: “May I see Fox?” It will be obvious that such a student misbehaves pragmatically. A much worse pragmatic error would be to use the person’s first name under the circumstances: “May I see John?” What he should have used was “May I see Prof. Fox”, if, of course, the person in question holds the title.

1.6 Discourse deixis

The function of discourse deixis is to identify the entity (concrete or abstract) within a situation created by the text. The identification involves reference to some part of the text – preceding or succeeding the entity expressed deictically. Expressing a co-reference relationship, discourse deixis is one of the most important cohesive devices used in the text. Consider:

Now listen to this. I won’t marry her. Cf. Lith. Dabar paklausyk manęs. Aš jos nevesiu.

I won’t marry her. This is my last word. Cf. Lith. Aš jos nevesiu. Tai mano paskutinis žodis.

Discourse deixis is typically expressed by demonstrative (this: šis; that: tas) and third person pronouns (he, she, it, they).
To discourse deixis we should also attribute the definite article. Lithuanian has no article. The function of the English definite article is expressed in Lithuanian by word order and the demonstrative pronouns. Consider:


versus


The definite article (as all *the-words*) typically has anaphoric reference, or, to put it otherwise, it is used with entities of second mention. As already said, in Lithuanian, such entities are realized either by placing them in sentence-initial position or by using personal or demonstrative pronouns with such nouns. In English, second mention entities can be signaled by the definite article, personal and demonstrative pronouns. The definite article is the most general deictic: it merely signals a second (previous) mention of the entity, it does not help the addressee to identify (localize) the entity. Consider:

A. *Bring me the book,* please.
B. *Which book?*

Cf. Lith.

A. Atnešk man knygą, prašau.
B. *Kurią knygą?*
A. Oi, atsiprašau. Tą, kuri ant stalo.

Personal pronouns are more informative. Consider:

_John was late. He had overslept again._

Cf. Lith.

Džonas pavėlavo. Jis vėl pramiegojo.

Person deictics as discourse deictics are very common in English and Lithuanian. But as Lithuanian has no article, person deictics in Lithuanian
have greater potential as discourse deictics: what is expressed by the definite article in English will be generally expressed by person or demonstrative deictics in Lithuanian. Cf:

This is a book of London. The book is mine.

Čia knyga apie Londoną. Ji (ši knyga) priklauso man.

As for demonstratives, English and Lithuanian use them nearly in the same way. The only difference concerns the demonstrative *tas*: *that* which is replaced by the pronoun *tai*: *it/this* when it refers to a previous text segment. Cf. *Tai labai svarbu*, not *Tas labai svarbu*. Cf. Engl. *This is of great importance*. The point is that *tai* is a neuter gender pronoun and, consequently, it agrees with a neuter gender adjective. But this is not the main reason: *tai* represents the preceding segment of the text as a whole. Cf. *Ateik į susirinkimą*. *Tai labai svarbu*. Cf. Engl. *Come to the meeting. It is very important*. But: *Jis pasiūlė padėti vargšams*. *Tam* (i.e. *tam pasiūlymui*) *visi pritarė*. Cf. Engl. *He suggested helping the poor. All agreed to it*. Similar to *tai*, *tam* also refers to a whole segment of the preceding text. The dative form *tam* is used to show its dependence on the verb *pritarė*, a verb that requires the dative. In English, we find either *this/that* or *it*. Consider:

1) New machines are of course more expensive and this is something one has to consider.
2) ‘My God’ I said. This is awful.
3) She was frightened, but tried not to show it.

Discourse deixis is used in two patterns: anaphoric and cataphoric. Consider:

1) Many students never improve. It’s a terrible shame. (anaphoric)
2) This should interest you. The world heavyweight championship is going to be held in Chicago next June. (cataphoric)

We use *this/these* to refer to entities or events that have just been mentioned or will be mentioned. Entities or events mentioned earlier in the discourse are generally expressed via *that/those*. Cf.
1) He’s from Institute of English Language in Bangkok. This institute has been set up to serve language teachers in the area.

2) You say there was a public meeting about the future of the university. What did you decide at the meeting?

It should be observed that the use of the discourse deictics this/these and that/those is not quite clear: this question needs further research. This also holds for the corresponding deictics in Lithuanian. Very illuminating would be a contrastive study of discourse deixis in the two languages: it would reveal both similarities and differences in the use of the deictics and thus contribute to the optimization of the teaching process.

1.7 Deixis and the production of the text

The text is an organized whole. Physically, it may consist of a single sentence (e.g. a notice on the board) which does not require an explicit response by the addressee. Texts are of two types: dialogic and monologic. In a dialogue, we have two acting parties: the speaker and the addressee. The others, if they are present, are the audience (the listeners). In this type of text the speaker is the deictic centre: the speaker’s task is to organize the discourse: the speaker says something, the addressee responds to it. Then the addressee takes the floor and does the same. In an exchange the speakers have to refer to entities and processes. To do it, they make use of deictics, or indexicals. In a monologue, the role of a discourse organizer is performed by the writer and the characters acting in the situation. Unsimilar to a dialogue when the speakers can see each other and can refer to entities directly, monologues require ‘more language’. Here the speaker will use deictics to refer to the segments of the preceding sentence and also show the reader which part of the preceding sentence is related to the succeeding sentence (the discourse centre). The deictics used so are discourse deictics. They include such items as this/that, these/those, here/there, he/she/it/they, etc.
Besides being referential, these deictics are cohesive elements. What about deictics used in a face-to-face exchange? Are they cohesive, too? They are. They are cohesive in the sense that they establish the relation of the deictic centre (the speaker) to the entity being referred (identified) to.

Summary

As a linguistic process, deixis is pointing via language. Deictic expressions, or deictics, can only be interpreted in the situation. Cf. this and John/mother, father. When the child says “Give me this”, we may not know what this stands for. To know it, we must be in the same environment as the child.

Deictics fall into two groups: 1) non-textual (I, you, we; this, that; these, those); 2) textual (he, she, it, they). Some non-textual deictics, e.g. this/that; these/those, can also be used in the text. Textual deictics can be used as non-textual deictics (e.g. Who is she?). In philosophical logic, the two types of deictic expressions are called indexicals.

Languages show a two-way referential distinction in their deictic system: proximal (close to the speaker) and distal (far from the speaker). In other languages (e.g. Korean, Japanese), the distinction is three-way: proximal (close to the speaker), medial (close to the addressee), and distal (far from both).

Check yourself test

A. Discuss the following:
1. It is often said that deictic expressions are demonstratives. Is that correct? Give examples to prove it.
2. What is meant by pure and impure deictics?
3. Deixis is said to be related to distance. Explicate it.
4. What is the recycling of deictics? Give examples.
5. Tense is a deictic category. Could you comment on it?

B. Discuss deictics used in the following sentences; describe the situations in which the sentences may be used:

1. That/ this is a nice cottage.
2. This book was published last year.
3. The theatre is on the left.
4. We’re going to New York next week.
5. We’re coming to New York next week.
6. I don’t like that man.
7. The student there is a friend of mine.
8. John looked up when she came in.
9. She is an actress.
10. What’s that? What’s that thing?
11. Who’s that? Who’s that person?
12. My friend here will show you the way.
13. Here’s the money you lent me.
14. I was born in London and have lived here/there all my life.
15. Hey, you over there! Get out of here!
16. You have to be 21 to buy alcohol in Florida.
17. How are we feeling today, Mr. Robson?
18. Shall we stop for a coffee?
19. I like this movie today better than that concert last night.
20. It was quite a large fish – about that long.
21. There was an accident there.
22. John’s uncle died last week.
23. John’s grandmother had died the previous week.
24. That’s true. I agree with you there.
25. He missed hitting the car in front by that much.
26. Do come in / Do go in.
C. Discuss the function of the deictics:

1. New cars are much more expensive, and this is something one has to consider.
2. She was terribly afraid of snakes. That’s right.
3. How about natural gas. Is that an alternative?
4. Did you see him? No? That’s a pity.
5. Where unemployment and crime are high, it can be assumed that the latter is due to the former.
6. I’ve met him before on two previous occasions.
7. I had met her the previous day.
8. He was sick in the evening, but the following day he was better.
9. I just missed my flight to Chicago. When is the next one?
10. She called me and we arranged to meet the next day.

D. Discuss the following sentences and say which italicized word/phrase is used deictically and which non-deictically:

1. When did the last train leave? I don’t know. I only know when the last train leaves.
2. He had broken his promise again, and it was the last straw.
3. I’ll see you at tomorrow’s meeting.
4. He’s spending money like there’s no tomorrow.
5. What are you doing here?
6. The house just needs a lot of paint here and there.
7. Florida? I have always wanted to go there.
8. They were all laughing when there came a knock at the door.
10. Now, now, don’t worry.
11. Just then she heard the noise.
12. He wanted the money then and there.
13. This man is getting on my nerves.
14. I met this really wicked man last night.
15. My! Look at his face!
16. I discovered that Mel wasn’t a he, but a she.

Sources

2. Reference as the Identification of an Entity for the Addressee

2.1 General aspects of reference

In the previous section our attention was focused on the system of deictics, the function of which is to help the addressee to identify or to localize the entity referred to by the speaker. In the process of communication, the speaker refers to an entity in such a way that the addressee may identify it successfully. To this end, he or she uses corresponding deictic devices (morphological, syntactic or lexical). But the process of identification involves more than the simple use of deictics: it is wider and calls for a more thorough analysis. In what follows our attention will be confined to the theoretical and practical aspects of reference, or, to be more definite, referencing in a situation.

The term *reference* has two senses in modern linguistics: 1) it may mean the relation between a part of the sentence and an entity that it identifies; 2) it may mean the process of identifying an entity via assigning a name to it. Consider the utterance *That man is my boss*. Cf. Lith. *Tas žmogus mano viršininkas*. The noun phrase *that man* is used as a referring expression whose referent is a specific person whose identity the addressee knows. Between the phrases *that man: tas žmogus* and *my boss: mano viršininkas* there exist co-reference relations: *that man* and *my boss* have the same referent, or refer to the same entity. This is a traditional approach to reference, where reference is treated as a static phenomenon. In linguistic pragmatics, however, reference is an act in a situation whereby the speaker refers to an entity using linguistic forms which enable the addressee to identify the entity. Reference, or, to use a clearer term, referencing, is a two-way process: the speaker selects an entity, then he or she selects appropriate linguistic forms which
help the addressee to infer what or which entity the speaker had in mind. In other words, we have two participants in the situation: the speaker, or the participant who does the referring, and the addressee, or the participant who does the inferring (the decoding of the reference). Referential meaning is an actualized dictionary meaning, or a situational meaning.

In referring to an entity, the speaker expects the addressee to be in a position to identify the entity he or she is referring to, i.e. the speaker thinks that the addressee shares the information concerning the entity being presented. Consider, for instance, the sentence The singer is coming on Saturday. Cf. Lith. Dainininkas atvyksta šeštadienį. The speaker using the phrase the singer thinks that the addressee can identify the referent of the noun phrase the singer. However, the addressee may have difficulty doing it. Seeing this, the speaker comes to his/her rescue by giving him/her relevant information, e.g. The singer who gave a remarkable performance at the university last year is coming on Saturday. Cf. Lith. Dainininkas, kuris nuostabiai pasirodė universitete praėjusiais metais, atvyksta šeštadienį. Reference is successful if the addressee is able to identify the entity referred to.

In the process of communication, however, the speaker has to refer to entities, processes or circumstances the addressee does not know yet. Such entities may be: 1) known to the speaker and the addressee only (e.g. I bought the car yesterday) 2) known to the speaker only (e.g. I bought a car yesterday), and 3) known to neither (e.g. I can see a dog). Entities of the first type are called definite, or particular, and entities of the second and third types are called indefinite, or non-particular. Logically, if the entity is not known to the addressee, the speaker should start the discourse by introducing the entity, e.g. There is a dog under the table. It is only after the initial introduction that the entity becomes known to the addressee. Now we can refer to the entity as the dog or it, i.e. we can use a definite or particularizing expression. However, the speaker may start the discourse by presenting a particular entity despite the fact that this entity is not shared information. This usage is more characteristic of literary language. Consider the following text:
At the lake shore there was another rowboat drawn up. The two Indians stood waiting.

Cf. Lith. Ant ežero kranto buvo kita valtis. Du indėnai stovėjo ir laukė. (Ernest Hemingway, Indian Camp)

These sentences start the discourse; they are, in other words, discourse-beginning sentences. The addressee cannot know which lake shore it was. Nor can he/she know which two Indians stood waiting. The information about the entities is revealed only later. The addressee has to read on to find it out. This ‘marked’ use of definite noun phrases is a tactic designed to puzzle the addressee, stimulate his or her interest in the narrative. On the other hand, this use makes it possible to abbreviate the narrative by saving an introductory text.

We generally refer to existing entities in the real world. But we may also refer to entities that ‘exist’ in the world of our imagination (e.g. in fairy tales) or in the world of abstract entities. Consider:

I wanted to marry a woman with lots of money. Beauty is rare.


The first sentence speaks of the past intentions of the person. There are two interpretations here: 1) the speaker knew of the existence of such a woman; 2) the speaker did not know of her existence but thought that such a woman existed. If he did not know the woman, any woman that fits the description was good for him. In linguistic philosophy, this type of use is called attributive (meaning: whoever/ whatever fits the description), or non-referential.

In language philosophy, names, then, are divided into two categories: referential (specific) and non-referential (non-specific). Such a division is...
conventional (traditional). But we can treat names as referential if we use the term widely: all names are referential in the sense they have a referent (existing or fictional, concrete or abstract).

In this textbook, we treat all names as referential: we understand reference widely, i.e. as a process whereby the speaker tells the addressee what or which entity he or she means. In short, reference is the identification of an entity for the benefit of the addressee.

As already indicated, entities referred to can be specific and non-specific. In the conventional analysis of reference, non-specific reference is attributive. Both types of reference, in their own way, can be particular and non-particular. Particular reference is realized via definite referring expressions (in English, the article and its substitutes are used to mark the definiteness; in Lithuanian, the substitutes and the co-text); non-particular reference is realized via indefinite referring expressions (via the use of the article and its substitutes in English and the substitutes and the co-text in Lithuanian). Cf.:

A.
I saw a dog in the street.
The dog was very friendly.
I needed a dog.
I like dogs.

Cf. Lith.
Mačiau šunį gatvėje.
Šuo buvo labai draugiškas.
Man reikėjo šuns.
Man patinka šunys.

Reference (particular and non-particular) can be distributive and non-distributive. Cf.:

A.
Dogs are animals.
The dog is an animal.
These dogs are friendly.
This dog is friendly.

Cf. Lith.
Šunys yra gyvūnai.
Šuo yra gyvūnas.
Šie šunys yra draugiški.
Šis šuo yra draugiškas.
The term *distributive* means reference to each individual member of a set, and the term *non-distributive* means reference to the set as a whole. Consider one more example:

*The students brought a present* (the students as a group) or
*The students each brought a present.*

*This family is large* (the members of the family as a group).

*This family are early risers* (the members of the family taken individually).

In the process of communication, we need to identify not only concrete entities; abstract entities need identification, too. Cf.:

A. John is working in the garage.

B. He has been working there since morning.

Cf. Lith.

A. Džonas dirba garaže.

B. Jis ten dirba nuo ryto.

or:

A. He promised to marry her and marry he did. Yet, not the one he had been dating.

B. He promised to come, and come he did.

Cf. Lith.

A. Jis pažadėjo vesti ją ir vedė. Tačiau ne tą, su kuria draugavo.

B. Jis pažadėjo atvykti ir atvyko.

In the first sentence, the process of working has been introduced into the discourse for the first time; in the second sentence, the same process is mentioned again. The distinction between initial reference and subsequent reference of the process is formalized here through inversion in the second clause. Consider now another example:
Columbus discovered America. His discovery changed the world.

In this text, *his discovery* is clearly a particularized (given) process. Nominalizations present subsequent (given) processes even though the finite process is not made explicit in the text, e.g. *Pragmatics is the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the users of these forms*, where the initial use of the process (*new*) would be expressed by *pragmatics studies*. This use of *given* processes reminds us of the use of definite entities occurring in text-beginning sentences. Recall the cited text by Hemingway: *At the lake shore there was another rowboat drawn up. The two Indians stood waiting*. As for the identification of circumstances, the speaker uses the same mechanism: *initial (first) mention → subsequent (second) mention*. Subsequent mention circumstances are *given (particular)* circumstances and generally present pronominalized forms, e.g. *She lives in a town. Her parents also live there*. In linguistics, the relation between the two uses of the same entity is called *anaphora*: the entity occurring in the preceding clause is called the *antecedent* and the same entity, used in its non-pronominalized or pronominalized form, occurring in the succeeding clause is called the *anaphor*.

### 2.2 Reference in the non-linguistic situation

All reference is made in a situation (non-linguistic and linguistic). The situation guarantees successful reference. Let us discuss the definite referring expression *Shakespeare*. When used out of the situation, *Shakespeare* will, most likely, have conventional reference, i.e. it may refer to the famous English poet and dramatist. In a situation, however, *Shakespeare* may have pragmatic reference, i.e. it may be used to refer to a book by the dramatist (e.g. *Can I borrow Shakespeare? Yes, it is over there on the table*), to books
written by Shakespeare (e.g. *Shakespeare takes up the whole bottom shelf*),
to a play by Shakespeare (e.g. *We saw Shakespeare in the Globus Theatre*) or
to the characteristic qualities of the dramatist (e.g. *He is a Shakespeare*). The
last example shows that proper nouns can be recycled as common nouns,
similar to common nouns, may be associated with both the definite and the
indefinite article. Consider more examples:

*He was the Byron of his age.* Cf. Lith. *Jis buvo savo laikmečio Baironas.*
*He has the humor of a Dickens.* Cf. Lith. *Jo jumoras – dikensiškas.*
*Virgil was Homer of the Romans.* Cf. Lith. *Virgilijus buvo romėnų Homeras.*

It should be noted, however, that proper names are not necessarily par-
ticularizing (given) names, i.e. they may not be necessarily unique names.
So, for instance, there may be other people bearing the name of Shakespeare,
e.g. *There’s a Shakespeare on the phone.* Such being the case, to render the
name particular, the speaker will have to use anaphora: *a Shakespeare → the Shakespeare.* Consider:

A. *There is a Shakespeare at the door. What should I tell the Shake-
speare?*

B. *Tell him to come in.*

Entities being referred to are generally expressed by noun phrases – con-
ventionally and non-conventionally (pragmatically). In other words, if
the speaker refers to a human being as a woman, he or she refers to the
entity conventionally. However, in a situation the speaker may refer to the
woman non-conventionally (pragmatically) as, for instance, *the hat.* If he
or she did so out of the situation, the addressee would look for a hat, not
for a woman. Non-conventional reference is situational reference when the
referring expression is successful only in the situation. Here the entity is
referred to by pointing out its characteristic feature, or by naming it but
not by giving a ready-made name. Let us discuss more examples. If you are
in the library, you can refer to the person working there as *the Library.* If
you are in a hospital, you may hear the doctor say *Don’t move the heart-attack*. All these uses communicate more than they say literally. Why does the speaker resort to describing rather than using a name? This can be accounted for by several reasons. The main reason is the speaker’s wish to render the process of identification easier. Another reason is stylistic: the speaker wishes to do it more expressively. And lastly the speaker often uses such vague expressions as *what’s his name, the blue thing*, etc. relying on the addressee’s ability to infer what entity is meant (Yule, 1996: 18). This suggests that reference is not only the business of the speaker; it is also the business of the addressee: both of them take part in the process. It will be obvious that the so-called situational names are names for the nonce, i.e. one-occasion names. But, if used on more than one occasion (when they catch the other people’s imagination) they may ‘take root’ and turn into nicknames (i.e. additional names).

As the entities in a visually shared situation are visible to both the speaker and the addressee, the identification of such entities is a straightforward process: the speaker can simply point to the entity using the deictics *this/that*, e.g. *Give me this/that*. It will be obvious that entities in a visually shared situation are to a large extent particular (given) or generally present shared information. Yet, in this type of context, entities may not necessarily be familiar to the addressee, i.e. there may be more than one entity of the same description, which may present a problem for both the speaker and the addressee. If the speaker refers to a unique entity, he or she may do it with the general deictic *the*, e.g. *Go to the blackboard!* But if there are more such entities, the speaker will have to use deictics, which are more specific in meaning – *this/that* or *these/those*. Cf.:

- *Go to the window!*  
- *Go to this window!*  
- Eik prie lango!  
- Eik prie šito lango!
Reference in the first sentence may be unsuccessful: the addressee may not be able to identify the window since there may be more than one window in the room, but reference in the second sentence will be successful since this, which is usually attended by an appropriate gesture, shows the addressee which entity is meant.

As already said, the deictic expression the cannot identify the entity by itself; it merely invites the addressee to identify the entity by considering other features of the situation. One way to help the addressee is to point to the entity at the same time. Another way is to refer to the entity he or she is close to. In other words, the speaker may resort to a secondary deictic centre. Such pure deictics as the; this, that; these, those have no descriptive content and therefore contain nothing which can help the addressee to identify the entity. They need the support of gestures or a secondary deictic centre: the primary deictic centre (the speaker) alone cannot refer successfully. Sometimes the addressee may be involved in the process of negotiating the meaning:

A. Bring me that book, please.
B. Which book? There are three books there.
A. Bring me the one with a yellow cover.
B. Okay.

Cf. Lith.
A. Prašom atnešti man tą knygą.
B. Kurią knygą? Ten yra trys knygos.
A. Atneškite tą su geltonu viršeliu.
B. Gerai.

Both English and Lithuanian use nearly the same types of linguistic means to identify the entity (the deictics this: šis; that: tas; these: šie; those: tie). The only difference concerns the article. But in a visually shared situation the use of the article alone cannot help to achieve the desired result: to identify an entity, we must use a secondary deictic centre (e.g. the man standing near the window). In this respect, then, the article is not a great asset here. The
same feature can be attributed to the remaining deictics which, as has been indicated, cannot identify the entity by themselves: successful identification needs either the use of gestures or a secondary deictic centre.

2.3 Reference in a linguistic situation

We have already mentioned the fact that the speaker, although he or she may be familiar with the entity, first uses an indefinite referring expression. After the initial introduction of the entity, the speaker uses a definite referring expression. As already known, the initial referring expression is called the antecedent and the subsequent referring expression is called the anaphor. The usual pattern is the antecedent → the anaphor. However, for stylistic purposes (to create suspense) this order may be reversed: the anaphor → the antecedent. The first pattern is called anaphoric (forward reference), and the second cataphoric (backward reference). This type of the relationship between the entities is called co-reference, or an anaphoric relationship. In a visually shared situation, the speaker does not have to resort to initial introduction: he or she simple by-passes it by referring directly to the entity, e.g. The window is open or The cat is having kittens.

In a linguistic situation, the speaker generally creates a situation with a view to helping the addressee to identify the entity he or she is presenting. Consider:

A. A man and a woman were sitting on a park bench. The man was forty and the woman was somewhat younger.

B.

I turned the corner and almost stepped on it. There was a large snake in the middle of the path (Yule’s example).


Sometimes the addressee may find it difficult to identify the antecedent, e.g.:

I just rented a house. The kitchen is really big.


To identify the referent of the anaphor kitchen, the addressee has to make the following inference: “it is a house; a house has a kitchen. Hence it is the kitchen of the house mentioned in the first sentence”. The addressee makes the inference from assumed knowledge – a house has a kitchen.

It should be observed that not all entities used in the text have to be identified in this way: many entities expressed by the speaker are ‘ready-made’ given information. So, for instance, entities expressed by proper nouns present identified entities both to the speaker and the addressee1, e.g.:

The Nile flows into the Mediterranean.

Australia is the smallest of the six continents.


It should be noted that entities expressed by proper nouns may not be identified successfully since they may have more than one possible referent. In other words, such referring expressions may have a range of reference. The identification of the speaker’s referent, then, must be negotiated. Consider:

\footnote{1 For more information concerning the so-called ‘ready-made’ given items, see Chapter 8.}
In the first interaction, speaker A was not familiar with the person on the phone. Hence the indefinite article was used: *an Alice Mills: kažkokia Alisa Milz*. In the second interaction, however, speaker A was familiar with the person named *Mary* and thought that speaker B was also familiar with the person (shared information), which is borne out by the use of the zero article.

Reference occurs in a situation (non-linguistic and linguistic) which greatly affects the interpretation of the referring expressions. Besides a situation, mention should be made of the linguistic context (the linguistic environment of the referring expression), the local knowledge of the speakers, their familiarity with the local socio-cultural conventions: successful reference means social closeness, social connection (Yule, 1996: 22, 24).

As already known, to identify entities, we can use two patterns: anaphoric and cataphoric. The anaphoric pattern can be used in two sub-patterns: independent clause pattern and dependent clause pattern. Cf.:

*There is a man in the room. The man is standing at the door.*

*Cf.*: *Kambaryje yra žmogus. Žmogus stovi prie durų.*

*You gave me a pen which won’t write.*

*Cf.*: *Tu man davei plunksnakotį, kuris nerašo.*
As for the cataphoric pattern, English seldom uses it. In English, the more common is the cataphoric pattern used in attributive (restrictive) clauses in which the noun referent being identified is used within a noun phrase. Consider:

The man standing near the window is our teacher. Cf. Lith. Žmogus, stovintis prie lango, yra mūsų mokytojas.

As has been pointed out, the speaker refers to (names) an entity with the aim of informing the addressee what entity he or she wishes to introduce into the discourse: entities introduced may be given or new. Discourse, then, is a sequence of given and new entities or processes. Reference, or to use a clearer term, referencing, is a process whereby the speaker organizes a discourse. In this process the speaker makes use of appropriate means of reference, which are collectively called indexicals: the article, the pronouns, the pronominal adverbial, and the attributive adjuncts. Consider:

1. There is a dog in the yard. The dog looks very sad.
2. Where is the dog? The dog is in the yard.
3. He lives in London. He was born there.
4. Mary went to Paris yesterday. The day before yesterday Mary was in London.
5. Unemployment and crime are related phenomena: the latter is due to the former.
6. She laughed, and her laugh was good to her.

Jis gyvena Londone. Jis ten gimė.
Merė išvyko į Paryžių vakar. Užvakar Merė buvo Londonė.
Nedarbas ir nusikalstamumas susiję reiškiniai: pastarajį sukels pirmasis.
Ji nusijuokė, ir jai jos juokas patiko.
In sentence (1), the speaker uses the indefinite article since the addressee is not yet familiar with the entity: *a dog* is a specific non-particular entity. When the entity is mentioned again, it acquires the status of shared (given) information and is therefore used with the definite article. In sentence (2), the presence of the definite article tells the addressee that the speaker refers to the dog they both are familiar with. In sentence (3), the entity presents shared (given) information; the pronominal adverbial adjunct *there* refers back to *London* and functions as a discourse deictic. In sentence (5), the adjective *latter* refers to *crime* and the adjective *former* refers to *unemployment*; they function as discourse deictics. In sentence (6), *her laugh* refers back to *she laughed*, where *her* (laugh) functions as a discourse deictic.

**Summary**

Reference is made by the speaker for the addressee: the speaker selects an entity and tries to present it in such a way that the addressee can identify it. The identification of the entity takes place in two types of situation: non-linguistic and linguistic. The entities referred to are either particular (known to the speaker and the addressee) or non-particular (known to the speaker, only) or unknown to either. Particular entities are marked in English by the definite article, demonstratives, possessives, proper nouns, i.e. by definite determiners – grammatical (the definite article), semi-grammatical (the pronouns), and lexical. Non-particular entities are marked by the indefinite article, indefinite pronouns, common nouns, adjectives, i.e. by indefinite determiners – grammatical (the indefinite article), semi-grammatical (the pronouns), and lexical. In Lithuanian, we find the same types of linguistic means. An exception is the article whose role in Lithuanian is played by the co-text, word-order, and the pronouns.

Reference takes place in two types of situation: 1) non-linguistic; 2) linguistic. In a non-linguistic situation (a visually shared situation), reference is
effected through the use of deictic expressions. Deictics present the simplest way of reference: they direct the addressee’s attention to the entity being referred to directly. In a linguistic situation, we use discourse deictics. Unsimilar to deictics used in a non-linguistic situation, discourse deictics cannot be used directly; their use must be preceded by the creation of an appropriate situation (e.g. A student came into the room. The student looked very happy.).

Reference is a process involving two parties: the speaker selects an entity, then uses an appropriate referring expression with the intention of helping the addressee to interpret the expressions as the speaker intended (Yule, 1996: 24). If the addressee can identify the intended entity, the process of reference is successful; if he or she cannot, the interpretation of the referring expression is effected by the meaning negotiation procedure. Reference is a process whereby the speaker organizes a discourse.

Check yourself test

A. Discuss the following:

1. Compare reference in a visually shared situation and reference in a visually non-shared situation. Does the speaker use the same devices?
2. Comment on the following sentence: “For successful reference to occur, we must also recognize the role of inference” (Yule, 1996: 17).
3. What is attributive reference? Should we distinguish it as a type of reference? Should reference be concerned with specific entities only? What do you think of the so-called non-referential entities?
5. The role of the co-text and situation in reference. What is a range of reference? Compare conventional and non-conventional (pragmatic or situational) reference.
B. Discuss the italicized words from the point of view of their reference:

1. Can I borrow your *Shakespeare*?
2. Where’s the *heart-attack* lying?
3. *The cheese sandwich* left without paying.
4. *The student* over there is majoring in English.
5. Where is *my book*? *It’s* on the table.
6. *John* left. *He* said he was ill.
7. *The wedding* must not be a fiasco. *It* must not.
8. *The roof* is leaking. Go and mend *it*.
10. He did not see a *car* coming round the bend – *it* nearly hit him.
11. Mary wants to buy a *Ford*. *It’s* a good car.
12. Where is *the cat*? *It* is on the sofa.
13. John wants to catch *a fish* and eat *it* for supper. vs. John caught *a fish*. *He* is going to eat *it* for supper.
14. No-one drives when *he* is drunk.
15. I need a *car*. Buy *one*. vs. I have a *car*. *It* is old.
16. *Sue* is coming over later; we are having lunch together.
17. Those who know *him* say John is a kind man.
18. No-one put *their* hand up.
19. *The automobile* has changed our way of life.
20. A *student* should work hard.
21. He walked into *the house* and hung his coat in the closet.

N.B. For more practice, return to Chapter 1, where reference effected by deixis is discussed.
Sources

3. Presupposition

3.1 General aspects of presupposition

As already indicated in Chapter 1, communication via language involves processes, participants, and circumstances. In the process of communication, they undergo actualization or concretization. The process of reference is in fact the process of actualization whereby the speaker ‘localizes’ the said components of the situation, i.e. he or she must tell the addressee which or what process, participant or circumstances are meant. To localize the situation, the speaker makes use of deictics. It will be obvious that deictics merely ‘set the situation in a frame’ and do not say why the speaker uses one or another type of ‘frame’. Consider, for instance, the utterance *Mary is a student*. *Mary* presents given information and the rest of the utterance, new information. Before framing the situation, the speaker assumes that the addressee knows the person called *Mary* and what he or she does not know is that *Mary is a student*. This prior information that the speaker uses in making an utterance is presuppositional information or presupposition.

The term *presupposition* derives from the verb *presuppose* meaning ‘assume beforehand’. In works on pragmatics, *presupposition* is generally defined as “something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance” (Yule, 1996: 25). In point of fact, the speaker may presuppose two types of information: *shared* (given) and *non-shared* (new). Consider the sentence *He did it again*. In uttering the sentence, the speaker knew already that the person in question *did it*. He also assumed that this is what the addressee knew. Thus the fact that the person *did it* is known to both the speaker and the addressee. On the other hand, the speaker also assumed that the addressee did not know that the person had done it again. This suggests that we have two types of information: *shared* and
non-shared. Any sentence, then, has two parts: presuppositional and assertive. The assertive part conveys the most important information. It is for this type of information that the speaker constructs a sentence. Assertive information is a tool by which he or she expresses this information. Shared information is the basis for the sentence; it is the common ground of an interaction. Although a presupposition is generally defined as the information shared by both the speaker and the addressee, the so-called background belief (i.e. the speaker believes that what he or she knows is also known to the addressee), there seems to be nothing that prevents us from giving it a wider interpretation, i.e. from including the ‘negative type’ of information, i.e. the information that is known to the speaker but unknown to the addressee. The logic of this is that prior to making an utterance the speaker is guided by shared information and by the information familiar to the speaker but unfamiliar to the addressee. If a presupposition is the speaker’s assumptions, then this latter type of information (i.e. unshared information) is also the speaker’s assumption. In this course, however, we will adhere to the classical treatment of presupposition, according to which a presupposition is information mutually known by the speaker and the addressee. Consider:

*John’s sister works at the* university.

What is the shared information in this sentence? The speaker and the addressee know (i.e. the speaker thinks that the addressee knows) that there exists a person named *John*, that *John* has a sister. What the addressee does not know (but the speaker does) is the fact that she works at the university. Such are the presuppositions of the speaker and the addressee.

As already said, presuppositions underlie all sentences: it is impossible to utter a sentence without first making some kind of assumption. The assumption(s) the speaker makes are supposed to be true, i.e. they should
correspond to the truth conditions\(^2\). Consider this sentence: *The sun shines.* Cf. Lith. *Saulė šviečia.* The speaker assumes that the addressee knows that there is a sun; he or she then says that one of the attributes of this entity is that it shines. This information is hardly new to the addressee (but it is presented as important), but it is important for the expansion (development) of the text. The fact that there is an entity called *sun* is true. Such being the case, the presupposition made in the sentence is fair (accurate, factual). Now consider another sentence: *Why did you tell me a lie?* Cf. Lith. *Kodėl tu man melavai?* The speaker (falsely or rightly) assumes that the person in question told him a lie. If the person did not tell him a lie and the speaker knows it, the presupposition is unfair (inaccurate, non-factual). Such presuppositions (they are also called counterfeit) are also used by the unscrupulous for purposes of propaganda, deceit and the general subtle manipulation of the addressees. In the process of communication, the addressee has very little time to analyze the speaker’s presuppositions and is thus forced to accept them. Owing to the way the human brain processes information, it is difficult or even impossible for the addressee not to accept the speaker’s presuppositions: the addressee cannot refute counterfeit presuppositions in time and thus may face appropriate consequences.

A presupposition can be treated as an underlying proposition. A proposition in Aristotelian logic is a particular kind of sentence, one of which affirms or denies the predicate of a subject, e.g. *All men are equal.* Cf. Lith. *Visi žmonės lygūs.* If so, then a sentence made by the speaker is based on a certain number of presupposed propositions. To understand this better, let us discuss the following sentence: *Where did you put the book?* Cf. Lith. *Kur tu padėjai knygą?* Before making this sentence, the speaker assumed the existence of a book and that someone (‘you’) put it somewhere. We can now form the assumptions into respective propositions: 1) *There is a book there;* 2) *There is a person there;* 3) *The person put the book somewhere.*

\(^2\) The conditions under which a proposition is true, e.g. *He lives in Spain* is true under the condition that he in fact lives in Spain.
should be stressed here that these underlying propositions, or presuppositions, are the speaker’s: they can be right and they can be wrong. Let us examine an example presented by Yule (1996: 25): *Mary’s brother bought three horses.* In producing this sentence, the speaker must have had the following presuppositions: 1) *There is a person called Mary*; 2) *Mary has a brother*; 3) *Mary’s brother did something.* Besides these, the speaker may also hold more presuppositions: 1) *Mary has only one brother*; 2) *Mary’s brother has a lot of money.* This suggests that presuppositions may not be directly derived (inferred) from the utterance. In this way they are the opposite of presuppositions based on entailment. *An entailment* is a proposition that logically follows from what is asserted in the sentence. Returning to the sentence *Mary’s brother bought three horses,* we can derive the following propositions: 1) *Mary’s brother bought something*; 2) *Mary’s brother bought three animals*; 3) *Mary’s brother bought two horses*; 5) *Mary’s brother bought one horse,* etc.

Presuppositions based on entailments are always true: they (i.e. logical presuppositions) logically follow from the sentence. The speaker’s presuppositions may not be true. Let us discuss another example: *John threw a brick at the window.* We can derive the following entailed presuppositions: 1) *Someone threw a brick at the window*; 2) *John threw something at the window*; 3) *John threw a brick*; 4) *John did something*; 5) *John threw a brick at something*; 6) *Something happened.* All these entailments can be used by the speaker as presuppositions. Depending on the logical stress (i.e. the stress that gives prominence to new information (in the following examples indicated by bold print)), the sentence *John threw a brick at the window* is based on the entailment *Someone threw a brick at the window; John threw a brick at the window on John threw something at the window; John threw a brick at the window on John threw a brick at something; John threw a brick at the window on John did something.* The entailment, thus given prominence, is a foregrounded entailment; the other entailments are backgrounded entailments. As can be seen, entailments are *underlying pre-
supposed propositions or simply presuppositions. Presupposed propositions are ‘invisible’ structures: they underlie ‘visible’ structures. So for instance, when somebody says *John threw a brick at the window*, he or she assumes that *Somebody threw a brick at the window*. However, in the text we may observe a situation when utterances are accompanied by their presupposed propositions. Consider:

*We spoke about Columbus.*

*The teacher said that he had discovered America.*

*She also said that his discovery of America had changed the world.*

vs. *We spoke about the discovery of America by Columbus.*

The presupposition of ‘his discovery of America’ is ‘he discovered America’. However, more often than not, the underlying proposition (i.e. presupposition) is not realized in the text. The suppression of underlying propositions contributes to language economy and thus makes it possible to abbreviate the text. If underlying presuppositions were realized at the surface level, the texts would become long and ineffective.

Presuppositions based on entailments are semantic presuppositions; presuppositions not based on entailments are pragmatic presuppositions.

To sum up, presuppositions are a wide category: they include both semantic and pragmatic presupposed or underlying propositions. Semantic presuppositions may be true or not true; entailment presuppositions are always true.
3.2 Presupposition triggers

In producing a sentence, the speaker may use certain linguistic structures that ‘set off’ or ‘activate’ the presuppositions. The role of presupposition triggers is to help the addressee to interpret the meaning of the sentence, and the understanding of the meaning contributes to the efficiency of communication. In the pragmatic literature, we come across the following types of presuppositional triggers:


2) Factive verbs. They presuppose facts (i.e. that which has occurred). So, for instance, in *John realized that he was in debt*. Cf. Lith. Džonas suprato, kad įklimpo į skolą the verb realized presupposes the fact that John is in debt. Consider: *John thought that he was in debt*. Cf. Lith. Džonas manė, kad jis įklimpo į skolą; where thought does not presuppose that he was really in debt. Other factive verbs and verb phrases include know: žinoti; be aware: žinoti, suprasti; regret: gailėtis, apgailestauti; be odd: būti keistam; be sorry: gailėtis; be proud: didžiuotis; be indifferent: būti abejingam; be sad: liūdėti; be happy: būti laimingam, etc. Consider a few examples:

*Mary knows that her husband is gravely ill.*

Cf. Lith. Merė žino, kad jos vyras sunkiai serga.

The presupposition is ‘her husband is gravely ill’.

*He regrets having said so.*

Cf. Lith. Jis apgailestauja, kad taip pasakė.

The presupposition is ‘he said so’.
She was proud that they had agreed to publish her novel.

The child felt sad that Christmas was over.

3) Non-factive verbs. They presuppose non-facts. So, for instance in *I dreamed that I was a millionaire*. Cf. Lith. Sapnavau, kad esu milijonierius the verb *dreamed* means ‘I am not a millionaire’. To non-facts belong: *dream: sapnuoti; imagine: įsivaizduoti; pretend: dėtis (apsimesti); think: manyti*, etc. Non-factive triggers are subjunctive mood forms, e.g. *I wish I were rich*. Cf. Lith. *O kad būčiau turtingas. / Norėčiau būti turtingas.*

4) Phasal verbs. These verbs express different phases of the process: beginning, continuation, cessation, and end. Consider:

*She continued to work.* Cf. Lith. *Ji dirbo toliau*, where *continued* triggers the presupposition ‘She had been working before’.

*The President arrived in London yesterday*. Cf. Lith. *Prezidentas atvyko į Londoną vakar*, where *arrived* triggers the presupposition ‘he was not in London the day before yesterday’.

*He began to work on the 1st of January*. Cf. Lith. *Jis pradėjo dirbti sausio 1-ąją*, where *began* triggers the presupposition ‘he did not work before the 1st of January’.

5) Expression of repetition. Repetition is expressed by the verbs: *return: grįžti; restore: atnaujinti; repeat, recapitulate: pakartoti*, the adverbial phrases *again: vėl; another time: kitą kartą; once more: dar kartą; any more: dar kartą* (in negative sentences). Consider:

*He returned to power.* Cf. Lith. *Jis grįžo į valdžią*, where *returned* triggers the presupposition ‘he held the power before’.

*The student was late again.* Cf. Lith. *Jis vėl pavėlavo*, where *again* triggers the presupposition ‘The student was late before’.

*You can’t get it any more.* Cf. Lith. *Tu daugiau to negausi*, where *any more* triggers the presupposition ‘You once could get it’.
Expressions of temporal relations. The triggers include when: kada, kai; while: kol; after: po, po to; as: kai; before: prieš, prieš tai; during: per; since: nuo. Consider:

While Mary was cooking an evening meal, John, her husband, was watching TV. Cf. Lith. Kol Merė virė vakarienę, Džonas, jos vyras, žiūrėjo televizorių, where while triggers the presupposition ‘Mary was cooking an evening meal’.

Cleft clauses (clauses in which the copula is preceded by it and followed by a noun phrase and a relative clause), e.g. It was Henry who won the lottery. Cf. Lith. Tai buvo Henris, kuris laimėjo loteriją / Henris laimėjo loteriją. This cleft clause triggers the presupposition ‘Someone won the lottery’, which in the surface structure is actualized as ‘(It was) Henry who won the lottery’. A variety of cleft clauses are pseudo-clefts, e.g. What he did was marry my sister. Cf. Lith. Ką jis padarė, tai vedė mano seserį. This clause triggers the presupposition ‘He did something’.

Comparative structures, e.g. Jane is a better cook than Ann. Cf. Lith. Džeinė geresnė virėja negu Anna, which triggers the presupposition ‘Ann is a cook’.

Counterfactual conditions, e.g. If he were rich he would find a wife. Cf. Lith. Jei jis būtų turtingas, susirastų žmoną triggers the presupposition ‘He is not rich’.

Questions. Consider:

Is John in England or in Canada? Cf. Lith. Ar Džonas Anglijoje, ar Kanadoje? The question triggers the conjoined presupposition ‘John is in England + John is in Canada’. The speaker does not know where exactly.

Who is the professor of linguistics at the University? Cf. Lith. Kas yra kalbotyros profesorius universitete? Who triggers the presupposition ‘Someone is the professor of linguistics at the University’.

When did you go there? Cf. Lith. Kada tu ten ėjai/važiavai? When triggers the presupposition ‘You went there at some time in the past’.
3.3 Features of presuppositions

Presuppositions have the following features:

1) **Presuppositions remain constant under negation.** Consider:
   - *John’s wife is a teacher.* Cf. Lith. *Džono žmona yra mokytoja.* *John’s wife* presupposes John has a wife.
   - *John’s wife is not a teacher.* Cf. Lith. *Džono žmona ne mokytoja.* John’s wife expresses the same presupposition as in the first sentence despite the negation.

2) **Presuppositions can be projected (inherited).** Consider:
   - *Mary did not realize that John’s wife is a teacher.* Cf. Lith. *Merė nežinojo, kad Džono žmona mokytoja.*

   The presupposition ‘*John has a wife*’ is projected to or is part of the whole sentence. In other words, the presupposition of the sentence *John’s wife is a teacher* survives upon its inclusion in the matrix clause *Mary thinks*, i.e. the clause that accepts (embeds) another clause. It should be noted that not all matrix clauses are thus ‘friendly’ toward the presupposition, i.e. they may not allow presuppositions to pass up to the subordinate clause – they may block them. Consider:

   *Mary said that John’s wife was a teacher.* Cf. Lith. *Merė pasakė, kad Džono žmona yra mokytoja.*

In this sentence, the presupposition ‘*John has a wife*’ is not necessarily carried by the sentence (Cf. *Mary imagined that John has a wife*): Mary might have been deliberately trying to misinform her audience or simply she might be mistaken that John has a wife. Whether the presupposition survives or not depends on the meaning of the verb in the matrix clause and the context. Verbs that allow presuppositions to pass up to the whole sentence are called *holes* (e.g. realize, regret, know); verbs that block the projection of presuppositions are called *plugs* (e.g. dream, imagine). There
are many more verbs which are neutral (e.g. think, say, believe, suggest, etc). Their actual behavior is determined by the context: they may function as holes. Consider:

A. Mary’s cat has kittens.  
B. What did you say?  
A. I said that Mary’s cat had kittens.

Cf. Lith.  
A. Merės katė atsivedė kačiukų.  
B. Ką tu pasakei?  
A. Aš pasakiau, kad Merės katė atsivedė kačiukų.

The verb said is clearly a hole: it does not destroy the presupposition Mary has a cat. In another context, this presupposition can be destroyed by an entailment. Consider:

A. You said that Mary’s cat had kittens, didn’t you.  
B. Yes, I did.  
A. But Mary has no cat.

Cf. Lith.  
A. Tu pasakei, kad Merės katė atsivedė kačiukų, ar ne?  
B. Taip, pasakiau.  
A. Bet Merė neturi katės.

Mary has no cat is an entailment of There is not a cat of Mary. Even whole clauses may act as holes and plugs: they may block some presuppositions and allow others to project. These are called filters. Consider:

If I have a wife then my wife is blonde. Cf. Lith. (literal) Jeigu turiu žmoną, mano žmona yra blondinė.

Here, the presupposition triggered by ‘my wife’ is blocked (i.e. it does not survive), because it is destroyed by the antecedent clause: the person has no wife. This type of conditional sentence sounds strange at least at first sight. The conjunction if (on condition that, in case that, supposing that) marks a process which has not taken place yet, i.e. it is not real. It is a prediction only. How could we contextualize the sentence and then make it sound more natural? The speaker might have used it in the context where the participants
are engaged in some speculation concerning their present status: “Supposing I have a wife, then my wife is blonde”.

But:

If it’s already 6 o’clock, then my wife is probably at home. Cf. Lith. Jau šešta valanda, todėl mano žmona tikriausiai jau namuose.

In this sentence, the antecedent (conditional) clause does not destroy the presupposition ‘I have a wife’. In view of this, this type of real condition clause can be regarded as a filter.

Pragmaticists are trying to understand when and how presuppositions project: a significant amount of current work in pragmatics is devoted to this very problem.

3) Accommodation of presuppositions. As already known, presupposition is what the speaker and the addressee assume prior to making an utterance. As already indicated, the speaker’s assumptions involve two types of information: shared and non-shared. Formally, shared information is the more important; it is the so-called common ground for the sentence. If it is not the common ground, the utterance is not felicitous, i.e. unsuitable to the occasion. Consider: The man is my deadly enemy. Cf. Lith. Šis žmogus yra mano mirtinas priešas. The utterance, if made without any pre-text, will sound strange since the addressee does not know anything about the person. Sometimes, however, such a presupposition may be adjusted, or accommodated to the situation. In other words, the addressee may accept and treat it as shared information. So, for instance, in a situation where you are introduced to someone at the party, after the introduction you could say out of the blue ‘My wife is a dentist’. By saying my wife the speaker makes the addressee assume that the presupposition is true, even in the absence of explicit information. The term accommodation means that the speaker saves the addressee the trouble of participating in the generation of shared information, which is presented here as a ready made product. The point of introducing new information in the form of a presupposition, rather than an explicit assertion, is simply brevity and convenience.
4) Presuppositions can be cancelled. As presuppositions are the speaker’s assumptions (the speaker may be wrong), they can be cancelled (denied). Suppose I say ‘The King of France is bald’. Hearing the utterance, the addressee can deny (cancel) it by saying ‘The King of France doesn’t exist’, which presumes (entails) ‘There is not a King of France’. Thus ‘The King of France’ (which presupposes ‘There is a King of France’) is destroyed by the proposition ‘The King of France does not exist’, which entails ‘There is not a King of France’. According to some scholars, however (e.g. Lyons, 1977: 606), this feature (cancellability) is attributed to implicature only. But, as pointed out by the scholar, this difference between presuppositions and implicatures has been challenged by several scholars (cf. Wilson, 1975).

3.4 Types of presuppositions

Semantically, presuppositions fall into three categories:

1) Existential, e.g. The man is calling again. Cf. Lith. Šis žmogus vėl skambina.
2) Factive, e.g. He regrets marrying her. Cf. Lith. Jis gailisi, kad vedė ją.
3) Non-factive, e.g. He pretended to be happy. Cf. Lith. Jis dėjosi laimingu. Or: I wish I were rich. Cf. Lith. Norėčiau būti turtingas. O, kad būčiau turtingas!

Linguistically (i.e. from the point of view of their expression), presuppositions fall into lexical and syntactic. In the case of lexical presupposition, “the use of one form with its asserted meaning is conventionally interpreted with the presupposition that another (non-asserted) meaning is understood” (Yule, 1996: 28). To put it in more simple English, the use of a particular lexeme presupposes another (unstated) meaning. Consider:

She managed to persuade him. Cf. Lith. Ji sugebėjo įtikinti ji.
The lexeme *manage: sugerbėti* has two meanings: *assertive* and *non-assertive*. The assertive meaning is ‘succeeded in doing something difficult’ while non-assertive meaning is ‘tried to do something’. Other examples of lexical presupposition include the verbal lexemes *stop: nustoti, liautis; start: pradėti; arrive: atvykti; rewrite: perrašyti*, etc. Consider:

It is starting to rain.  
I stopped reading and looked at her.  
The police arrived on the scene in time.  
I have rewritten most of my essay.

What presuppositions are expressed by the said lexemes? The lexeme *start* triggers the presupposition ‘It was not raining before’: ‘Anksčiau nelijo’; the lexeme *stop* triggers the presupposition ‘I was reading before’: ‘Skaičiau iki to laiko’; the lexeme *arrive* triggers the presupposition ‘The police were not on the scene before’: ‘Policija nebuvo toje vietoje anksčiau’ and the lexeme *rewrite* triggers the presupposition ‘I had written the first version of the essay’: ‘Aš buvau parašęs pirmąjį rašinio variantą’.

As already said, the sentence is built on two types of presuppositions: *non-assertive* and *assertive*. So, for instance, questions contain non-assertive information, i.e. information shared by both the speaker and the addressee, and assertive information, i.e. information not shared. Consider:

*Is John a student?*  
*Ar Džonas studentas?*

It presupposes ‘*John is a student* or *John is not a student*’: ‘Džonas yra studentas ar Džonas nėra studentas’ (a conjoined presupposition).
Where have you been all this time? Cf. Lith. Kur tu buvai visą šį laiką?

It presupposes ‘You have been somewhere all this time’: ‘Tu kažkur buvai visą šį laiką’.

When did you meet her? Cf. Lith. Kada tu sutikai ją?

It presupposes ‘You met her’: ‘Tu sutikai ją’.

How does this system work? Cf. Lith. Kaip ši sistema veikia?

It presupposes ‘The system works’: ‘Sistema veikia’.

Summary

Presupposition is something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to forming a sentence. But the speaker does not talk to himself or herself: he or she speaks to the addressee who must decode the assumed (presupposed) information in the speaker’s sentence. Are there any clues the addressee may be guided by? The answer is ‘yes’. First of all, specific referring expressions (i.e. noun phrases) carry presuppositions of existence, e.g. London is the capital of Great Britain. Cf. Lith. Londonas yra Didžiosios Britanijos sostinė. This sentence contains three definite (particular) referring expressions: London, the capital, and Great Britain. These expressions stand for definite entities. London gives rise to an existential presupposition ‘There is a city called London’. The referring expression the capital of Great Britain encodes two existential presuppositions: the presupposition ‘There is a capital’ and the presupposition ‘There is a country called Great Britain’.

So far we have been concerned with definite referring expressions. Can indefinite (non-particular) referring expressions encode presuppositions? We
should think they can since the speaker may presuppose the existence of a specific entity not yet identified by the addressee, e.g. *I saw a man in the street.* The referring expression *a man* gives rise to an existential presupposition ‘*There was a man on the street*’. This suggests that indefinite noun phrases presuppose the existence of a non-particular entity. English and Lithuanian practically use the same markers of definiteness (an exception is taken by the article). Besides referring expressions, mention should be made of the syntactic structures, such as questions, conditional, cleft and comparative clauses. These structures also give rise to various presuppositions (factive and non-factive). And, last but not least, we should mention lexical devices (*realize: suprasti, suvokti; manage: galėti, sugebėti; stop: sustoti, nustoti, baigtį; start: pradėti; continue: tęsti, etc.*). Here again we see more similarities than differences between English and Lithuanian: we come across the same types of lexemes. Differences mostly concern the syntactic patterning of the lexemes. Cf. *He regretted saying so* vs. *Jis gailėjosi, kad pasakė taip* or *Jis gailėjosi taip pasakė*.

Presupposition is closely related to the production of a connected text: a non-assertive presupposition is used by the speaker as the point of departure, or the Theme. Having selected the Theme, the speaker asserts something about it and thus forms a sentence, a tool of communication. On the other hand, presupposition, as already said, contributes to language economy and is a means of abbreviating the text.

**Check yourself test**

A. Discuss the following:

1. What types of presupposition do you know? What is the difference between fair and unfair presuppositions?

2. What is the relationship between presupposition and entailment?

3. How do presuppositions behave under negation?
4. What is the projection of presupposition? What is the accommodation of presuppositions?
5. Presupposition triggers: what is their role in the process of communication?
6. Define the role of presuppositions in the production of the text.

B. Say what presuppositions the following sentences are based on; what semantic and linguistic types they present.

1. John’s wife is a teacher.
2. London is the capital of Great Britain.
3. I suddenly realized that the boy was crying.
4. He was beginning to regret that he’d come along.
5. He was aware of a tall dark figure watching him.
6. It seemed odd that he wanted a picture of me.
7. We’re so glad you came.
8. How did you manage to solve the problem?
9. It started raining.
10. Do you want to do it again?
12. How fast was the car going then?
13. She lost her motivation.
14. He pretends to be deaf.
15. I was sure I posted the letter but I must have dreamt it.
16. When did he leave school?
17. I imagined he was ill.
18. It was Peter who broke the window.
19. Did you remember to write the letter?
20. He stopped visiting Mary.
21. He used to go (went) to church regularly.
22. He’s sorry he can’t come.
23. The boy was scolded for being late.
24. We’re delighted you can come.
25. He was trying to understand her.
26. Who left the door open?
27. If John discovers that Mary is in New York, he will get angry.
28. They accused him of robbing the bank.
29. Kepler died in misery.
30. She died before she finished her novel.

Sources

4. Implicature

4.1 General aspects of implicature

The process of communication is a process whereby the speaker conveys his or her meaning to the addressee. The speaker’s situation is much easier: he or she puts his/her meaning into a code, i.e. gives it appropriate linguistic expression. The addressee has to decode the linguistic structure. The task of the addressee is often made more difficult when the speaker’s linguistic structure means more than it says literally. To put it in pragmatic terms, the decoding process is made more complicated by implicature, which is generally defined as a meaning a sentence may have that is distinct from what the sentence says literally. Of such sentences we say that they communicate more than they actually say. In other words, implicature is a meaning imposed by the speaker on the literal meaning of the sentence. Consider:

A. Are you going to Paul’s party?
B. I have to work.

Cf. Lith.  A. Ar eisi į Polo vakarėlį?
B. Turiu darbo.

Speaker B implies that he or she is not going to Paul’s party. However, the sentence I have to work does not say it, i.e. speaker B does not say he or she is not going to Paul’s party. He or she only says he/she has to work. Thus the implicature that we can derive from the co-text is ‘I am not going to Paul’s party’. Of course, speaker B could have responded directly by “No, I am not”, but he or she gave preference to an indirect response. Why so? An indirect response is a more considerate one; psychologically it is more acceptable than a direct one.
Language philosophers argue that implicatures can be dependent on conversational context or context in general and can be part of sentence meaning, e.g. *Even John came to the party*. The sentence implies that John’s coming to the party was unexpected, a surprise. Figures of speech (e.g. metaphor, irony, sarcasm) are examples of sentence implicature: they also communicate more than they actually say, e.g. *She was besieged by suitors*. Cf. Lith. *Ją supo garbintojai*. Instead of directly saying *She had many suitors* the speaker says *She was besieged by suitors* using a war term which implies that she had a lot of suitors trying hard to win her heart. Here the choice of a metaphor (an indirect way of expressing the situation) helps the speaker to describe the situation vividly and thus impress the addressee.

The term *implicature* was coined by the language philosopher Grice. He classified implicatures and developed an influential theory to explain and predict conversational implicatures and described how they are interpreted in the sentence. A central role is played here by the *Cooperative Principle* and associated *Maxims*. Let us return to the dialogue discussed:

A. Are you going to Paul’s party?  
B. I have to work.  

The implicature *’I am not going to Paul’s party’* is said to be conversational: it depends on the conversational context whose key feature is the question *’Are you going to Paul’s party?’*.

Grice distinguished between a *conversational implicature* and a *conventional implicature* by which he meant one that is part of the meaning of the sentence used. Consider an example:

*He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave.*
The discourse deictic *therefore: taigi* creates the implicature ‘*His being an Englishman means that he is brave*’. If an implicature is conventional, we say that the sentence carries that implicature irrespective of the context in which it is used. Consider another example: *It’s an old car but it’s very reliable*. Cf. Lith. *Tai senas automobilis, bet labai patikimas*. According to the classical theory of implicature, *but: bet, besides: be to*, expressing a connection between two propositions, communicate an additional meaning, viz. a contrast, unexpectedness or surprise. The same analysis can be extended to *Even John came*. The particle *even* means *in addition/too/as well*. The conventional implicature is ‘*John’s coming was the least expected*’. If we consult a dictionary, we will find that all these additional meanings are dictionary ones, not situational (pragmatic). A dictionary includes all non-situational meanings. Only meanings that are generated in the situation by the speaker are the object of pragmatics proper – the field of linguistics concerned with the situational meanings of linguistic structures. Such being the case, the so-called conventional implicature should be the object of clause semantics, not sentence (a contextualized clause) semantics.

4.2 Conversational implicature

As already known, the author of the implicature theory is Grice (1913–1988), an Anglo-American philosopher who developed a theory of meaning based on the communicative intentions of the speaker. His most substantial contribution was a series of lectures on ‘Logic and Conversation’, delivered in 1967, which proposed a theory of implicatures and maxims of conversation to account for them. They were not published fully until the end of his life (only in 1989). According to Grice, effective communication requires cooperation (joint effort, willingness to do what one asks you to do) between speakers: any answer the speakers make should be interpreted on the basis of the Cooperation Principle. Grice showed how people ‘cooperate’: people
generally follow rules for efficient communication. These rules he named maxims. He distinguished four such maxims:

1) Maxim of Quality: Make your contribution true; so do not convey what you believe false or unjustified.
2) Maxim of Quantity: Be as informative as required.
3) Maxim of Relation: Be relevant.
4) Maxim of Manner: Be perspicuous (clear in expression); so avoid obscurity and ambiguity, and strive for brevity and order.

Implicatures arise when speakers violate (flout or show a disregard for) the maxims. The violation of a maxim, however, does not mean that the speaker does not cooperate; he or she does, only he or she does it indirectly. Consider a dialogue:

A. Are you going to Paul’s party?
B. I don’t like parties. vs. No, I am not.

Cf. Lith.

A. Ar eisi į Polo vakarėlį?
B. Man nepatinka vakarėliai. vs. Ne, neisiu.

If we know that speaker B likes parties, we could reason that if he or she meant what he or she said, it would be a lie and then the maxim of quality would be violated. So he or she must have meant (implied) something else. What the speaker really must have implied is that he or she is not going to Paul’s party, or he or she must have implied that he or she is going (irony): all depends on the speaker’s intentions. In view of this, the Cooperative Principle is not violated: the speaker only answers indirectly. Grice uses the term *flouting* instead of *violating* when the speaker expresses irony. Other language philosophers (e.g. Grundy, 2000: 75) use this term for any violation of the maxims.

The most influential alternative to Grice’s theory is the “Relevance Theory” developed by Sperber and Wilson (1995). Grice’s maxims, according to the said theory, can be replaced by a single principle of relevance: in
interpreting or decoding the message contained in a linguistic structure, the addressee takes into account information relevant to the message. Consider an example:

*Have you seen my book?* (an example drawn from Grundy, 2000: 102)

To understand this structure, the addressee must use certain information (knowledge) which would enrich the propositional content of the utterance. The information that does it is called *an explication*. An explication is, as it were, the full (extended) propositional form of the utterance. So what is or are the explications relevant to the propositional meaning of the said utterance? The addressee may have been the speaker’s friend; he may have been in the habit of taking books from the speaker without his or her permission, etc. These are relevant explications; their role is to help the addressee to recover *an implicature* in the situation. To sum up, implicatures are recorded on the basis of explications which are formalized as explicating propositions, the motivation for which is the indeterminacy of language (Grundy, op.cit., 103).

But let us return to Grice’s Cooperative Principle and his Maxims. Conversational implicatures that arise on the basis of Grice’s four maxims are called respectively: 1) quality implicatures; 2) quantity implicatures; 3) manner implicatures; and 4) relevance implicatures.

Consider:

**A.**

A. *I hope you brought bread and cheese.*

B. *Ah, I bought bread.*

Cf. Lith.

**A.**

A. *Tikiuosi, kad atsinešei duonas ir sūrio.*

B. *Na, duonos nupirkau.*

Speaker B may appear to be violating the quantity maxim: he or she did not give full information. The implicature is ‘*I did not buy cheese*’. Speaker B conveyed more than he or she said.
B.

A. Can you cook?  
Cf. Lith.  
A. Ar moki gaminti valgi?  
B. I’m French.  
B. Aš – prancūzas.

‘I’m French’ seems to be irrelevant. But B is cooperative. The implicature is ‘I can cook’ (all Frenchmen can).

C.

A. Who broke the vase?  
Cf. Lith.  
A. Kas sudaužė vazą?  
B. It was one of your two children.  
B. Vienas iš tavo dviejų vaikų.

The maxim of manner is violated. The implicature that is then generated is ‘I don’t want to answer this’.

D.

A. Tell me, how that car crashed into the bus.  
Cf. Lith.  
A. Papasakokit, kaip automobilis atsitrenkė į autobusą.  
B. Well, the traffic was very heavy. A child was crossing the street. The car was turning left. The bus was in front of the car. It was turning right.  

The maxim of manner is violated. The implicature: Speaker B did not see all of the event.

Conversational implicatures also include implicatures based on linguistic structures, such as the article, tense forms. Consider:
A. What’s he doing over there?  
B. He’s talking to a woman.

Cf. Lith.  
A. Ką jis ten veikia?  
B. Kalbasi su moterimi.

The indefinite article used with the noun woman may imply that the woman is not the person’s wife. The inference of the implicature does not require any special background knowledge of the context of the utterance: any phrase of the same structure is capable of generating an additional meaning, or an implicature.

Tense forms can also give rise to an implicature. Consider:
A. Where does he live now?  
B. He used to live in London.

The past tense form says that he lived in London. If the person in question no longer lives in London, speaker B should have said so. But speaker B does not say so. Consequently, the sentence He used to live in London carries the implicature He no longer lives in London.

Implicatures that do not require a special context are called generalized conversational implicature. To generalized conversational implicature we could also attribute the so-called scalar implicatures, e.g.

A. Do your students smoke?  
B. Some do.

Cf. Lith.  
A. Ar tavo studentai rūko?  
B. Kai kurie rūko.

Some, as a dictionary unit, means ‘a number of entities’. In this interaction, some has the additional meaning of ‘not all’. A scale is a whole range of values, from the highest to the lowest: all, most, many, some, few; always, often, sometimes. The essence of scalar implicature is that, when any form in a scale is asserted, the negative of all forms higher on the scale is implicated (Yule, 1996: 41).

Conversational implicatures that require specific contexts are called particularized conversational implicatures, e.g.:
A. Hey, coming to the party?  
B. My parents are visiting.

The implicature is *I am not coming to the party.*

The only difference between generalized and particularized implicatures lies in the amount of contextual information needed to derive the implicature from the speaker’s speech act. Generalized implicatures are conventionalized, i.e. they are associated with certain linguistic items serving as triggers for the automatic process of implicature generation.

Before we go on to the other problem of implicature, let us discuss the terms used. We think that the term *conversational implicature* is not a happy one: it is limited to implicatures that are generated on the basis of interaction. Implicatures arise in the context or situation – in dialogues and monologues. Of course, the more productive context is the context of a dialogue. Consider an example drawn from Grundy (2000: 71):

*I looked at my watch after two hours and realized that only twenty minutes had passed* (Today, BBC Radio 4).

The sentence implicates (but does not say) that the show was boring, which is suggested by the opposition of the two spans of time – two hours vs. twenty minutes: twenty minutes was equal to two hours. If so, the show was far from being interesting.

The best term to describe implicatures should be *discourse implicatures.* But as they all arise in the discourse, we should call them *implicatures* without adding any modifier.

### 4.3 Features of implicatures

Implicatures have the following properties:

1) Conventional implicatures cannot be cancelled: they are not determined by the speaker. Consider:

Yet (dar) implies that the present situation is to be different at a later time.

2) Conversational implicature, or more generally, contextual implicature, is cancelable. Consider:

You have won five hundred dollars (only five hundred and no more). In fact you have won six hundred dollars!

Cf. Lith. Tu laimėjai penkis šimtus dolerių. Iš tikrųjų tu laimėjai šešis šimtus!

Conversational implicatures can be both cancelled and reinforced, e.g.:

He used to live in London, and he still lives there (cancelled).
He used to live in London, but now he lives in Oxford (reinforced).

Cf. Lith. Jis gyveno Londone ir dabar ten tebegyvena.
Jis gyveno Londone, bet dabar gyvena Oksforde.

3) Implicatures (conventional and conversational) are not detachable: implicatures are not lost by substituting synonymous structures, i.e. any other structure which expresses more or less the same content will generate the same implicature. Consider:

A. Did John pass the exam?
B. Actually he failed.

The implicature of actually is Although it is hard to believe.
A. Has John got a girlfriend?
B. He has been a regular visitor to Cambridge recently / He has been paying a lot of visits to London lately. The implicature is John has got a girlfriend.
Only manner implicatures may be detachable. It stands to reason since the use of synonymous constructions may render the meaning clearer and, consequently, cancel the implicature.

### 4.4 Hedges

In the process of communication, the speaker often wishes to avoid being categorical and thus evade direct responsibility for what he or she says. The linguistic structures that help the speaker to do it are called *hedges*. Hedges are classified according to the maxims, i.e. they are tied to the maxims of the Cooperative Principle:

1) **Quality hedges**, e.g. *as far as I know: kiek man žinoma; I may be mistaken: galbūt aš klystu; I guess: aš manau*, etc. They indicate that what we are saying may not be totally accurate.

2) **Quantity hedges**, e.g. *as you probably know: kaip turbūt žinote, I won’t bore you with all the details, but <…>; Cf. Lith. Nenorėčiau jūsu varginti smulkmenomis, bet <…>; to cut a long story short: trumpiau tariant, etc.* The speaker, using these hedges, indicates that his or her information may be incomplete.

3) **Relation hedges**, e.g. *oh, by the way: o, tarp kitko; anyway: bet kuriuo atveju; well, anyway: na, bet kuriuo atveju; I don’t know if it’s important, but <…>: nežinau, ar tai svarbu, bet <…>; not to change the subject, but <…>: nekeičiant temos <…>; As for/to: kas dėl; speaking of/talking of: kalbant apie, etc.* The speaker using these hedges indicates that he or she is aware of the maxim of relevance, but wishes to go over to another subject.

4) **Manner hedges**, e.g. *this may be a bit confusing, but <…>: tai gali truputį trikdyti, bet <…>; I’m not sure if this makes sense, but <…>: Nežinau, ar tai prasminga (turi prasmės), bet <…>; I don’t know if this is clear at all, but <…>: Nežinau, ar tai aišku, bet <…>.*
According to Yule (1996: 39), the speaker using hedges shows that he or she is not only aware of the maxims, but he or she wants to show that he or she is trying to observe them.

Hedges are a cautious language; they ‘protect’ the speaker against something unpleasant or unwanted that may result from being categorical. However, the use of hedges is not always an advantage. There are situations when the speaker cannot use the hedges: he or she must be categorical. Imagine a situation where a speaker wishes to tell his/her addressee that the house they are in is on fire. The speaker would sound strange if he or she informed the addressee using the following text: “As far as I know, this house is on fire”.

Hedges must be a universal feature of languages. The actual use of hedges is culture-specific. English and Lithuanian are culturally similar; therefore, we can expect to find more similarities than differences. Hedges are a promising field of study: it can be extended to all functional styles. The description of hedges (hedging) in texts belonging to different registers and genres would contribute to a better understanding of this pragmatic phenomenon. And the description of hedges in different languages would contribute to the general theory of language.

Summary

As already indicated, presupposition is what the speaker presupposes prior to forming the sentence, and implicature is what the sentence implicates apart from what it says literally. For example, if one says ‘The Queen of England is very popular’, one presupposes the existence of the Queen of England; the presupposition is the proposition ‘There is a Queen of England’. If one says ‘It is cold in here’, one may imply that ‘the heating should be turned up’. The implicature is the proposition ‘You should turn up the heating’.

According to Lyons (1977: 606), the difference could be worded in the following way: “what is presupposed is what the speaker takes for granted
and assumes that the addressee will take for granted as part of contextual background, what is implicated is what the addressee can reasonably infer from what is said or not said. There is nothing in this pre-theoretical account of the difference between them, it will be observed, to prohibit the possibility of one and the same fact being both presupposed and implicated. Hence the various attempts that have been made recently to subsume presuppositions under the notion of implicature and to account for their presence in terms of Grice’s maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner”.

Language philosophers argue that presuppositions cannot be cancelled while implicatures can. Cf. *He tried to telephone John yesterday*. We can infer from this sentence that the person had failed to contact John. But what is implied here can be cancelled, e.g. *Did you try to telephone John yesterday? Yes, and I got through straightaway* (Lyons’s example, 1977: 595). But according to Yule (1996: 26), presuppositions are the speaker’s assumptions and can be wrong; therefore, they can also be cancelled. So, for instance, one can say ‘*The King of France is French*, presupposing the existence of ‘the King of France’. But the presupposition can be cancelled by using the proposition ‘*But the King of France does not exist*’. In the proposition ‘*But the King of France does not exist*’ there is an entailment proposition of the form ‘*There is no King of France*’, an existential proposition that cancels the existential proposition contained in ‘*The King of France*’.

Despite the fact that presupposition and implicature have been given considerable attention by language philosophers, the problem remains unresolved: the difference between the two categories remains vague. It calls for more research. In the absence of such research, we can only say now that presuppositions pertain to how the speaker constructs his/her sentences while implicatures pertain to how the addressee interprets the speaker’s sentences.

Implicature is an invisible meaning: it sponges on the literal meaning of the sentence. Being ‘invisible’, it substantially contributes to language economy and, consequently, helps to abbreviate the text. It is not hard to
Imagine what may happen if the speaker expressed all his meanings explicitly. Implicature can be said to be a means of conveying meaning without extra linguistic resources. Although normally we make use of implicature in the process of communication, there are occasions when we express our meanings explicitly. So, for instance, when we talk to children, we will avoid implicatures. We may avoid implicatures when talking to strangers. The reason for this is that children generally learn to speak implicitly later in life. As for strangers, they may have difficulty decoding our implicatures: implicature is a universal category but its manifestation is speaker-specific. This suggests that people who know each other will rely on implicature more heavily than people who do not know each other.

Check yourself test

A. Discuss the following:

1. Do you agree that there is a conventional implicature? What reasons would you give if you denied the existence of conventional implicature?
2. How are conversational implicatures generated in the discourse?
3. What types of conversational implicatures do you know?
4. What are the properties of conversational implicature?
5. What role is played by hedges?
6. What is the relationship between presupposition and implicature? Are the two terms synonymous?
7. Implicature and the production of the text.

B. Discuss the so-called conventional implicatures:

1. He is Chinese; therefore, he uses chopsticks.
2. John is poor, but he is honest.
3. Even his wife did not think that John would win by-elections.
4. He can read German. Moreover, he can write poems in the language.
5. Mary is taking driving lessons. So her husband has bought her a car.
6. You already told me that.
7. John used to live in London.
8. He was already two days late.
9. When he came home, she was reading a book.
10. John remembered to lock the door.
11. Do you still play tennis?

C. Discuss the following conversational implicatures:

A. Do your students smoke?  
B. Some do.

A. Are you going to invite John to the party?  
B. I'm inviting nice people.

***

A. Do you believe in marriage?  
B. Most/ some people do.

A. Where is Peter?  
B. The light in his office is on.

***

A. Did you get your jacket back from the cleaners?  
B. You're not borrowing it?
A. No. I just wondered if you got it back.
B. You just wondered?
A. Well, I haven't got anything decent to wear.
A. Let’s have a drink.
B. It’s not one o’clock yet.

A. How did the lecture go?
B. Some of the students left before it ended.

A. Where’s my penholder?
B. A school bus is leaving in a minute.

A. Is John married?
B. He is sixteen.

A. Smith doesn’t seem to have a girlfriend these days.
B. He has been paying a lot of visits to New York recently.

A. Can you help me with the dishes?
B. The weather is fine today.

A. It’s raining cats and dogs.
B. It’s really a nice day today.

A. How did yesterday’s guest lecture go?
B. Some of the faculty left before it ended.
D. Discuss the functions of the following hedges. Which maxims are they related to?

1. As far as I know; I may be mistaken; I am not sure; I guess.
2. I don’t know if this is important, but; not to change the subject, but <…>.
3. This may be a bit confusing, but <…>; I am not sure if <…> but <…>.
4. As you probably know, we <…>; I can’t give you full details of the incident, but <…>; to cut a long story short, <…>; in short, <…>.

Sources

5. Politeness as Consideration of the Addressee’s Public Image

What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.
Confucius. The Confucian Analects.

5.1 General aspects of politeness

To communicate with other people, we need to have linguistic and communicative competence. Linguistic competence is concerned with the knowledge the speaker possesses that enables him or her to understand the sentences in that language (Lyons, 1977: 573). However, important as it may be, to be successful, the process of communication requires another competence, viz. communicative competence. The scholar Hymes (1971), according to Lyons (ibid., 573), speaks of four questions relevant for language and other forms of communication:

1. whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;
2. whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;
3. whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;
4. whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails”.

Politeness is a considerate social behavior, an effective way to achieve one’s goals. In communicating with the addressee, the speaker tries to take care of the addressee’s face, or his/her public self-image. On the other hand, all of us want others to respect us. To use pragmatic terminology, all of us want others to save our face.
The term face was initiated by Goffman in 1963. It first appeared in his article called “On Face Work”. The scholar speaks of two types of face: positive and negative. Positive face is the desire of being seen as belonging to a group, as the desire of being a well-wisher. Negative face is the desire of respecting the addressee’s freedom of action, his or her autonomy. Consider:

A. I think we should go and see that new play by Smith. It should be interesting to you since Smith, according to the critics, is an innovator.
B. Okay. Let’s go.

A. Manau, kad turėtume nuėti ir pamatyti naująją Smito pjesę. Tau turėtų būti įdomu, nes, pasak kritikų, Smitas yra novatorius.
B. Gerai. Eime.

Depending on the situation, the speaker may use one or another politeness strategy. Brown and Levinson (1987) present four main types of politeness strategies: 1) bald on record; 2) positive politeness; 3) negative politeness; 4) off-record.

Using a bald on record strategy, the speaker makes no attempt to minimize the threat to the addressee’s face. Consider:

A. Bring me a glass of water.
B. Okay.

A. Atnešk man stiklinę vandens.
B. Gerai.

This strategy is most often used by the speakers who closely know each other. However, there may be a situation when this strategy is used by the speakers who are not on familiar terms with each other. Consider:

The house is on fire! Get out of here! Quick.


Under the circumstances the addressee will not feel disrespected. In other words, the addressee will not lose his or her face; his or her face will be saved
despite the absence of mitigating devices (e.g. please: prašau/ prašyčiau; would you, could you: gal galėtumėte, etc.) since the addressee knows that ‘there is no time to stand on ceremony’, the time is for action, not for words.

The second strategy is positive politeness. Using this strategy, the speaker attempts to minimize the threat to the addressee’s face by sharing his/her interest in the addressee’s well-being, by acting as if he or she were the addressee’s friend. Consider:

A. I think it’s raining outside. You had better take an umbrella.
   B. Thanks for reminding.

   B. Ačiū, kad priminei.

Positive politeness, then, is the desire of being liked and appreciated, the desire of showing concern for the addressee. Using a positive politeness strategy, the speaker resorts to the familiar forms of language, swear words, just to show that the speaker belongs to the same group. One of the situations of the use of positive politeness is when the speakers have different social status. The speaker of higher status will use language which is informal (e.g. Hi: Labas, sveiki instead of Nice to meet you: Malonu jus matyti), unassuming (e.g. I hire people: Samdau žmones rather than I’m Personnel Director: Esu personalo direktorius), self-mocking (e.g. I’m always to blame: Aš visada kaltas rather than It’s my responsibility: Aš esu už tai atsakingas) or inclusive (e.g. we instead of I). The aim of this strategy is to reduce social distance (Cf. Akimceva, 2003: 15).

The third strategy is negative politeness, which means that the speaker will try to minimize the threat to the addressee’s face. To put it more definitely, the speaker will do his or her best not to impose his or her will on the addressee; he or she acts as if the addressee is free to make a decision. Consider:
A. Could you lend me 5 pounds?
B. I could if I had. Unfortunately, I haven’t a penny on me.

The use of the past form of can, which expresses a respectful distance, focuses on the addressee’s freedom of action: could you if you would: ar galėtum, jei norėtum. Negative politeness is more likely to give positive results because requests that show a respect for the addressee’s freedom to act the way he or she chooses are more pleasant to grant than direct requests. Consider more examples: Can you lend me 5 pounds? / Could you lend me 5 pounds? Cf. Lith. Ar gali paskolinti man 5 svarus? / Ar galėtum paskolinti man 5 svarus? Language has means to express negative politeness. In English, negative politeness can be realized by the use of the following devices:

1) Indirect speech acts (e.g. What’s his name? vs. I’d like to know his name.)
2) Inclusive constructions (e.g. Give me a beer. vs. Let’s have a beer.)
3) Verbal hedges (e.g. I wonder if you could wash the dishes.)
4) Apologetic language (e.g. Sorry to bother you, but what was the address again?)
5) Honorifics (e.g. Dr.); various variants of thanks (e.g. Thank you; Thank you very much; That’s very kind of you; I’m grateful for the information you’ve given me, etc.).

As already said, a negative politeness strategy is used to avoid imposing on the addressee’s freedom of action. This strategy necessarily presupposes some social distance between the speaker and the addressee. Negative politeness behaviour is typically used by speakers of lower social status. It includes making elaborate apologies before making requests, the use of indirect speech acts, which have the effect of minimizing imposition.
The last politeness strategy outlined by Brown and Yule (1987) is an off-record (indirect) strategy. For example, the speaker using the off-record strategy might merely say “Wow, it’s getting cold in here” Cf. Lith. “O, čia darosi šalta” suggesting that it would be nice if the addressee got up and closed the window without directly asking the addressee to do it.

Pragmaticists generally assume that speakers and addressees present a homogeneous group. Therefore, they think that there is no special need to examine politeness by taking into consideration age and gender needs. Although it is well-established that women and men communicate differently, politeness theory has largely ignored this fact. Politeness is also linked with a social class. Politeness is also linked with culture: what is polite in one culture may be impolite in another culture. Cf. the use of 2nd person singular pronoun in Lithuanian and Russian. In initial encounters the Russians (the Americans and the British) insist on first names being used as quickly as possible. For the Lithuanians, in most cases, this strategy of first name use produces embarrassment caused by seeming overfamiliarity.

Politeness can be treated broadly as keeping a respectful social distance. For instance, students and professors have different social status; the same can be said about people belonging to different age groups or to people unfamiliar to each other (we do not know which social status the addressee belongs to). Consider:

Student (to a professor): Excuse me, professor, but can I talk to you for a minute?
Student to student: Hey, John, got a minute?

Cf. Lith.
Studentas (profesorui): Atsiprašau, profesoriau, gal galėtumėme minutę šnekteleštį?
Studentas studentui: Ei, Džonai, turi laisvą minutę?

In the first interaction, the student does not threaten the addressee’s (negative) face: he keeps a respectful social distance. In the second interaction, the student does not threaten the addressee’s (positive) face either: he
enjoys the same social status and can keep a minimal distance. However, if he/she used the same words to address the professor, he/she would threaten the professor’s face. It should be observed that the social distance may change in the process of interaction, and the face wants (the expectations concerning their public self-image) may or may not appear to have changed. That is, the speaker, depending on the addressee’s reactions, may think that he or she can go on to a closer relationship, i.e. he or she may try to keep a minimal social distance (be familiar) between himself or herself and the addressee:

A. Close the door.
B. I’m not a servant to be ordered about. Go and close it yourself.
A. Sorry. I can’t do it myself: I’m in the bathroom now. Would you mind closing the door for me?
B. Okay. Sure (Not at all, Certainly). Yeah.

Sure and certainly clearly respond to the pragmatic meaning of the clause vs. Certainly/sure I do mind closing it.

In interacting with each other, the speakers should do their best not to threaten each other’s face. For this reason they can resort to face-saving acts, i.e. they can use words or phrases that lessen the possible threat to their face. In other words, they can use structures that express their wishes indirectly. To give an example drawn from Yule (1996: 61):

Cf. Lith.
A. Uždaryk duris.
B. Aš ne tarnas. Eik ir pats užsidaryk, jei reikia.
A. Atleisk, aš negaliu, aš dabar vonioje. Gal galėtum uždaryt duris?
B. Taip, žinoma/ Aišku.
Wife: I’m going to tell him to stop that awful noise right now!

Husband: Perhaps you could just ask him if he is going to stop soon because it’s getting a bit late and people need to get to sleep.

Sometimes, however, the best way to achieve one’s goal is not to speak at all. This strategy enables the speaker to avoid losing his or her face. Imagine the following situation: you get on a bus and suddenly discover you have no ticket. You start rummaging in your bag, search through your pockets with the intention that your problem will be recognized by your friend. If it does not work, you could say “Hmm, I wonder where I might have put my ticket” Cf. Lith. “Hmm, įdomu, kur aš tą bilietą nukišau”. Such a strategy is called an off-record strategy: the statement is not directly addressed to the addressee. The addressee may or may not take the hint. If he or she does, the addressee, we can say, grasped the implicature.

In the process of communication, the speaker continually has to take care of the addressee’s face and his or her own face, for if he or she does not do anything about it, the addressee may say something that may be interpreted by the speaker as a face-threatening act. To forestall it, the speaker may use the so-called pre-sequences (pre-request, pre-announcement, pre-invitation). Pre-sequences help the speaker to “sound the addressee out” as regards the possibility of granting his or her wishes. When the addressee’s intention becomes clear, the speaker decides which way to behave: go ahead with his or her request or stop. Consider a few examples:

A. Are you busy?
B. Oh, sorry. [stop]

A. Užsiėmės?
B. Deja, taip. [stop]
5.2 Means of expressing politeness

What speech is polite? For instance, is it polite to use the so-called bald on record structure such as “Close the window”? Such requests, expressed by imperatives, are direct and may be treated by the addressee as impolite. But all depends on the relationship between the speaker and the addressee, the situation, and, last but not least, on the intonation used, loudness, speech rate. As for the paralinguistic means, they are used in all languages. What is culture-specific is the actual manifestation of the means. For instance, the Germans are said to speak rather loudly; the Russians are said to speak rather fast; the Lithuanians are said to speak rather slowly. To foreigners, who use a different style, the Germans may sound aggressive and, consequently, impolite; Russians may also sound aggressive and, of course, impolite. The
same can be said about the Americans. As for the Lithuanians, they may bore
a faster speaker and may be treated as being shy but not impolite. Linguistic
structures by themselves are neutral with respect to politeness: their status
is determined by the culture the speaker belongs to and how he or she uses
the structures. So, for instance, the bald on record “Come to the blackboard”
may be pronounced in more than one way: it may be considered impolite
and polite. Besides, as already indicated, the status of such structures is
determined by the situation: in case of emergency, “Get out of here, quick”
will not sound offensive.

As is pointed by Yule (1996: 64), in most situations, a face-saving act is
more commonly performed via a negative politeness strategy. What structures
are used to realize this strategy? Most typically, the speaker uses a question
containing a modal verb in the present or past form. Preference is given
to past forms. It stands to reason: past forms are more polite than present
forms. Here are some examples expressing indirect requests:

*Can/could you tell me when the last train arrives? Cf. Tell me when the last train arrives.*

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*May I have another apple? Cf. Give me another apple.*
*Ar galėčiau paimti kitą obuolį? Cf. Duok man kitą obuolį.*

***

*You couldn’t give me a lift, could you? Cf. Give me a lift.*
*Tu turbūt maneš nepaveši? Cf. Pavežk mane.*
I would like you to read this to me. Cf. Lith. Norėčiau, kad tu man tai perskaitytum. Cf. Perskaityk man tai.


To use a speech act term, these indirect requests are indirect speech acts whose motivation is politeness or tact.

To attenuate (or weaken) the utterance, i.e. to sound polite, the speaker may resort to the use of mitigating devices (diminutives, honorifics, euphemisms, and hedges):


Can you give me a little more water? Cf. Lith. Gal galėtumėt duoti man šiek tiek vandens? vs. Duok(it) man dar vandens.
Mr. Smith, you can now go to the next room. Cf. You can now go to the next room.


The nurse was a cheerful plump woman.
Cf. Lith. Sėselė buvo linksma, apkūni moteris.

Cf. Seselė buvo linksma, stora moteris.

He died yesterday. vs. He passed away yesterday.
Cf. Lith. Jis mirė vakar. vs. Jis iškeliavo anapilin vakar.

You could work for me, if you like.
vs.
You could work for me.
Summary

Politeness is the realization of one’s communicative competence. In interacting with each other, speakers avoid face-threatening acts (words or deeds). Of the two polite strategies, negative politeness is the more polite: it keeps a respectful distance between the speaker and the addressee. Positive politeness is based on the common ground and similarity of interests. Speakers using this strategy try to speak the language of the addressee, use the language of intimacy showing that the speaker is like the addressee.

Politeness is culture-specific: what is polite in one culture may be impolite in another. Cultural differences affect the choice of a politeness strategy. The Americans are said to prefer the positive politeness strategy. So do the British, although to a lesser degree. As for the Lithuanians, they seem to give preference to the negative politeness strategy: the Lithuanians seem to be more cautious; they seem to take greater care of the addressee’s face. The greater use of pre-announcements in the language of the Lithuanians bears it out. However, these are only hypothetical statements. Research is needed to find out the real situation in both languages. Another interesting problem concerns politeness strategies used by women and men. This problem has been little studied. Finally, politeness is a competence acquired. An interesting area of research could be the acquisition of politeness in children.

Check yourself test

A. Discuss the following:

1. Politeness reflects social relationships; politeness and social distance.
2. Negative and positive politeness: similarities and differences.
3. Face-saving and face-threatening acts.
4. How can the speaker avoid losing his or her face (getting a dispreferred response)?
5. What is meant by the statement “Politeness is culture-specific”? Can you expand on it?

B. Specify the politeness strategies used in the following interactions:

A. You must be hungry. It’s a long time since breakfast. How about some lunch?
B. That’s great.

***

A. Hi! How are you? I hear you like dancing. I suggest going to a club tonight.
B. I’d love to.

***

A. Hey, buddy. I would appreciate if you’d lend me a fiver.
B. Oh-eh-I’d love to, but I – you see – I haven’t got a penny on me.

***

A. Do you think we could eat a little bread and cheese to keep our body and spirit together?
B. Sure.

***

1) Could I use your computer?
2) I just wanted to ask if I could use your computer.
3) Could you get me a glass of water?
4) I wondered if you could give me a cup of coffee.
5) You won’t let them take me back, will you?
6) It’s cold in here.
7) I’m dying of thirst.
8) I wish I had a car.
9) Turn your headlights on. Quick! We have entered Channel Tunnel!
10) Go into the kitchen and give Sam a hand.
11) You must have some of this cake / You may have some of this cake.
12) We forgot to tell you that you needed to be here at nine o’clock to-
morrow.

C. Evaluate the following interactions from the point of view of politeness
strategies:

Waiter: What do you want?
Customer: I hate eating cold soup.
Waiter: It’s not my fault.
Customer: Well, take it away.
Waiter: If you don’t like our food, you needn’t come here.

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Customer: Excuse me, waiter!
Waiter: Yes, sir?
Customer: I’m afraid this soup is quite cold.
Waiter: Oh, I’m sorry, sir.
Customer: Would you mind taking it back to the kitchen?
Waiter: Certainly, sir. I’ll try to make sure it doesn’t happen again.
Sources

6. Speech Acts

6.1 General aspects of speech acts

Language is a means of communication. By means of language the speaker conveys information to the addressee. To be more precise, language is used by the speaker to convey his or her meaning. In pragmatics, the speaker meaning is referred to as the speaker’s intention. The process of communication is, then, the expression of the speaker’s intention. So, for instance, when the speaker intends to ask a question, he or she will use appropriate words and turn them into a question. To put it otherwise, the speaker ‘will do a question’ by using the words. In the process of communication, the speaker ‘does many more things’ with language, or the speaker expresses many more speech acts via language. In fact, what the speaker says is a speech act unless he or she uses language as a linguistic exercise.

The theory of speech acts is associated with John Austin, a British language philosopher, whose book *How to Do Things with Words*, published posthumously in 1962, marked the beginning of a new approach to the study of language. In this book, Austin attacks the view that the function of language is to state facts. According to this account, which was predominant at the time, sentences are based on the truth or falsity of those facts. Austin’s analysis of sentences used in situations revealed that such sentences form only a small part of the sentences. So, for instance, the sentence *I name the ship the Titanic.* Cf. Lith. *Aš pavadinu šį laivą „Titaniku“* is not truth-evaluable, i.e. such sentences are not true or false: they can only be analyzed in terms of being felicitous or infelicitous. “They are used to do something, rather than to say that something is or is not the case” (Lyons, 1977: 726). However, as was pointed out by Searle (1969), speech acts, expressed by declarative sentences can be true or false because they are directly statements,
but only indirectly promises, apologies, etc. In other words, speech acts are based on the propositional content of the sentence, and the proposition is truth-evaluable.

To Austin, speaking is acting via language. The action that sentences ‘perform’ when they are uttered is an illocutionary act, or a speech act, a term used later by John Searle (1932), an American philosopher. To return to the sentence *I name the ship the Titanic*, by saying this, the speaker names the ship *the Titanic*. When the speaker says *Go!*, he or she orders the addressee to go. By uttering the words *Hi, John*, the speaker performs the act of greeting, or greets.

John Austin divided the sentences of English into constatives and performatives. To illocutionary acts, Austin attributed performatives while constatives were not speech acts proper: they were statements having a truth value. However, he came to understand later that not all declarative sentences are truth-conditional: many such sentences function as performatives (i.e. illocutionary acts) (e.g. *I name the ship the Titanic*). Besides, “saying (or asserting) that something is so is itself a kind of doing”. Therefore, constative sentences are one kind of performatives.

Austin drew a distinction within performative sentences (i.e. illocutionary acts) between primary (inexplicit) and explicit performatives. So, for instance, to perform the act of promising, the speaker can use two ways:

*I’ll be there at two o’clock* (primary (inexplicit) performative, or primary illocutionary act). 
*I promise to be there at two o’clock* (explicit performative).

Cf. Lith.  
*Aš ten būsiu antrą valandą* (primary (inexplicit) performative, or primary illocutionary act).  
*Aš pažadu ten būti antrą valandą* (explicit performative).

An explicit (marked) performative is expressed by a performative verb (e.g. *promise: pažadėti; state: pareikšti, tvirtinti, konstatuoti; order: liepti,*
įsakyti; ask: (pa)prašyti, etc.). Such speech acts are more specific in meaning than primary (inexplicit) speech acts: when the speaker says I promise to be there at two o’clock, he or she can hardly deny later that he/she has not made a promise. But if he or she says I’ll be there at two o’clock, he or she might say that no promise was made; the speaker may say that he or she was only predicting, rather than promising (Cf. Lyons, op. cit., 728). It is important to say that explicit performatives have the form of declarative sentences with a first-person subject and the verb in the simple past tense. Cf. The earth is round. vs. I tell you that the earth is round. Cf. Lith. Žemė apvali. vs. Aš sakau, kad žemė apvali.

The theory of speech acts has been further developed by John Searle, who has introduced the notion of an indirect speech act. Using an indirect speech act, the speaker communicates to the hearer more than he/she actually says. Consider an example: Can you wash the dishes? This structure has two meanings: literal (direct) and non-literal (indirect). The direct meaning is ’Are you able to wash the dishes?’ while the indirect meaning is ’Wash the dishes!’ In view of this, the addressee may deliberately concentrate on the direct meaning of the sentence saying, for instance, ’Of course, I can. I can also wash the shirts.' My wife has taught me many things to do’. To give one more example:

Passer-by to a boy: Can you tell the time?
Boy: Of course, I can (and walks away).
Cf. Lith.
Praeivis berniukui: Gal galėtum pasakyti, kiek dabar valandų?
Berniukas: Aišku, galėčiau (ir nueina).

Searle has set up the following classification of illocutionary acts:
1) assertives (speech acts that state what the speaker believes to be the case or not), e.g. The earth is round;
2) directives (speech acts that the speaker uses to get the addressee to do something), e.g. Come here!;
3) commissives (speech acts that the speaker uses to commit himself or herself to some future action), e.g. I’ll marry you;
4) expressives (speech acts that the speaker uses to state what he or she feels), e.g. *I’m sorry*;
5) declarations (speech acts that the speaker uses to change the reality), e.g. *I now pronounce you husband and wife*.

### 6.2 Speech-act dimensions

A speech act is a complex act: it consists of three related dimensions. Austin distinguishes the act of producing a meaningful utterance, the act of saying something by the utterance produced, and the act of affecting the addressee. The first act is called an *locutionary act*; the second act is called an *illocutionary act*, and the third act is called an *perlocutionary act*. Let us examine an example:

*It is very cold in the room.*

*Cf. Lith. Kambaryje labai šalta.*

To realize his or her intention, the speaker has to form a meaningful utterance – *It is very cold in the room*. The utterance formed will act as a vehicle used to realize the speech act ‘*Close the window, please*’ *Cf. Lith. *Prašau uždaryti langą*, which is a request. This speech act is addressed to the addressee who must respond to it in an appropriate way – at least the speaker expects the addressee will go and close the window. To quote Yule (1996: 48), “we do not, of course, simply create an utterance with a function without intending it to have an effect”. These three dimensions or levels are mutually related. Of these, the most discussed in the literature is the dimension of illocutionary act.

In examining linguistic structures, pragmaticists use the term *illocutionary force*, which is the same as a speech act. So, for instance, when somebody says ‘*The coffee is ready*’, we know that the illocutionary force (meaning) of the construction is a request; it has the force of a request. The question may
arise here: how does the addressee know which speech act is meant by the speaker? What are *the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices* (IFIDs)? The addressee will find little difficulty if the construction contains a performative verb (i.e. a speech act – naming verb), e.g. *I invite you to come tomorrow.* Cf. Lith. *Aš kviečiu tave ateiti rytoj.* To performatives belong: admit: sutikti, pripažinti; bet: lažintis; congratulate: sveikinti; postulate: sąlygoti, reikalauti; swear: prisiekti; advise: patarti; claim: tvirtinti, pareikšti; entreat: maldauti; promise: (pa)žadėti; thank: (pa)dėkoti; apologize: atsiprašyti; command: įsakyti, liepti; estimate: įvertinti; repudiate: atsisakyti, Atmesti; urge: raginti, skatinti; ask: prašyti; name: pavadinti; resign: atsisakyti, atsižadėti; warn: įspėti; beg: prašyti, maldauti; concede: nusileisti; order: liepti; suggest: patarti, pasiūlyti; welcome: (pa)sveikinti; declare: pareikšti; state: pareikšti, pranešti, etc. Speech acts that contain such verbs are marked. However, more often than not, we have unmarked speech acts, e.g. *I’ll be there tomorrow.* The addressee generally knows which act is expressed even if it does not contain a performative. The additional devices include word order, stress, and intonation. The most powerful device is the situation. Consider:

*You’re going!* (the speaker orders the addressee to go)

*You’re going?* (the speaker wants the addressee to tell him/her if he or she is really going)

*Are you going?* (the speaker wants the addressee to tell him/her if he or she is going)

We can hypothesize by saying that in interpreting a construction, the addressee resorts to the corresponding explicit (marked) speech acts. Thus, when the speaker says *‘Clean the blackboard!’* Cf. Lith. *‘Nuvalyk lentą!’*, the addressee can easily transform the structure into *‘I hereby order you that you clean the blackboard’* Cf. Lith. *‘Aš tuo liepiu tau nuvalyti lentą’*. Pragmaticists think that any implicit (unmarked) speech act has a corresponding explicit (marked) speech act at the semantic (deep) level. This hypothesis is known as *the performative hypothesis*. The implicit speech act, then, is a surface speech act, i.e. an act derived from the corresponding explicit speech act.
6.3 Felicity conditions

Speech acts are used by the speaker and are addressed to the addressee. The aim is to affect the addressee, or, to use a more general construction, to change the world, i.e. to bring about a new situation or to change the addressee’s views, etc. Speech acts, if they were to be appropriate or successful, must meet certain conditions, i.e. they must be performed felicitously. For instance, when the speaker says *I pronounce you man and wife*, this speech act will be effective (it will change the world) in marrying the people only on condition the person uttering it is qualified to solemnize marriages. If not, the speech act has no validity: the man and the woman will not become wife and husband. The conditions that qualify an utterance as a speech act are called felicity conditions. They were introduced by Austin and elaborated by Searle, who referred to them as *constitutive rules*. So what are they? Five conditions are distinguished:

1) general conditions: the speaker and the addressee must understand the language being used; they are not play-acting or being nonsensical;

2) content conditions: the content of the utterance must agree with the intention of the speaker. So, for instance, a promise and a warning can only be conceived of as such if the speaker’s utterance can express a future event since promises and warnings refer to the future. Cf.: *I promise to do it tomorrow.* vs. *I promise to do it now*;

3) preparatory conditions: the speaker is able to carry out the speech act; he or she has the authority to carry it out. There may be other conditions, conditions the addressee must meet. The actual preparatory conditions are determined by the type of speech act. For a promise, there are two preparatory conditions: a) the event will not happen by itself: it will have to be carried out by the speaker; b) the event will have a beneficial effect on the addressee. For a warning, the preparatory conditions include: a) the addressee does not know the event will occur; b) the event will not have a beneficial effect on the addressee;
4) sincerity conditions: the speaker genuinely intends to carry out the future action. For instance, if the speaker tells the addressee that he/she will do it tomorrow, the sincerity condition is that the speaker believes that it is tomorrow that he/she will do it;

5) essential conditions: the speaker, in uttering a speech act, changes his or her state – from non-expressing the intention to expressing the intention. For instance, when the speaker says *I will come tomorrow*, he or she assumes an obligation, an obligation that did not exist before.

Let us now discuss the act of ordering someone to do something, e.g. *Bring me a glass of water!* To use the sentence as an order, the speaker must observe the following felicity conditions. First, the speaker must be sure that the addressee understands the language being used. Second, the speaker must have the authority to order the person to bring water. Third, the speaker believes (sincerely) that the addressee can do the action or he or she has the obligation to do the action. If any of these conditions is ignored, the sentence will not be conceived of as an order.

Last but not least, felicity conditions should be culture-specific: they should vary from culture to culture. But this is only a hypothetical statement which can only be confirmed by contrastive research into the problem.

To sum up, speech acts must be situationally appropriate, or felicitous. The sentence may be ungrammatical, but it must be situationally appropriate. If not, the speech act expressed by it will not be valid.

### 6.4 Direct and indirect speech acts

To be precise, the notion of speech act is not the discovery of Austin or Searle. In fact, it has been known in traditional syntax since the rise of descriptive syntactic studies (the beginning of the 20th century). Those who have studied traditional syntax must remember the communicative (pragmatic) classification of sentences into *declarative* (constative), *inter-
rogative, imperative, and exclamatory. The term declarative derives from the verb declare whose one of the meanings is to make a statement. Thus declarative sentences are statement-expressing sentences, or speech acts. The term interrogative derives from the verb interrogate which means to ask questions, and interrogative sentences are question-expressing sentences or speech acts. Imperative sentences are sentences expressing requests, orders: the term imperative derives from the Latin term imperare which means to command. Exclamatory sentences express exclamations: the term exclaim means to speak or say something suddenly and vehemently.

The said speech acts are basic or typical speech acts. However, the syntactic structures they are based on can be used by the speaker to express other speech acts. For instance, the pattern S+V+O+Adv., a pattern typically used to express a statement, a state-of-affairs (e.g. The earth is round), can be used to express other speech acts, e.g. questions, promises, requests, etc. Consider the sentence You will report to the Head Office. It is not a constative speech act; it is a directive: the speaker tells the addressee to report to the Head Office. The same can be said about the interrogative and imperative patterns: they can also be used by the speaker to express other speech acts. Consider:

Can you open the window?  
Cf. Lith.  
Ar gali atidaryti langą?

Don’t tell me you’ve passed your driving test.  
Nesakyk, kad išlaikei vairavimo egzaminą.

The first sentence, when taken out of context, may be treated as ambiguous: it may be a question proper, i.e. the speaker wants to find out if the addressee is able to perform an action; it may be a request. As for the second sentence, it is also ambiguous: it may be a request proper, and it may be a speech act expressing disbelief (I don’t believe you’ve passed your driving test). As for the exclamatory pattern, it is restricted to exclamative speech acts.

Speech acts typically expressed by the said syntactic patterns (declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory) are direct speech acts, or
basic speech acts. As already said, these patterns can also be used to express other speech acts. The particle also implies here that these patterns can be used to express direct speech acts, too. To put it more definitely, the said patterns can be used to express both direct and indirect speech acts. Let us now consider each syntactic pattern.

6.4.1 The declarative pattern and the speech acts expressed by it

As already known, a declarative structure is typically used to express a statement. If it expresses a statement in the context, it is a direct speech act. In the context, this structure can be used to express other speech acts:

1) If spoken with a rising intonation, it will be interpreted as a question, e.g. It's raining? Cf. Lith. Lyja?
2) If spoken with a falling intonation, it can be interpreted as an exclamation, e.g. It’s raining! Cf. Lith. Lyja!
3) If the finite element is a modal auxiliary, the structure can be interpreted as a directive, e.g. You might close the door. Cf. Lith. Galėtum uždaryt duris.
4) If the structure has a first person subject and a modal, it can be interpreted as a promise or as an obligation, e.g. I’ll meet you at the entrance at about nine / I must rush off now to my English class. Cf. Lith. Susitiksim prie įėjimo devintą / Dabar turiu skubėti į anglų kalbos pamoką.
5) The structure can include performative verbs, such as promise: pažadėti; warn: įspėti; advise: patarti; beg: maldauti; request: prašyti; thank: dėkoti; order: užsakyti, įsakyti, liepti; acknowledge: pripažinti; apologize: atsiprašyti; name: pavadinti, etc. If it contains a first person subject and a present tense verb, it expresses the speech act indicated by the said verbs. Consider:
   I promise to do all I can to help you. Cf. Lith. Pažadu padaryti viską, ką galiu, kad tau padėčiau.
   We warn you that anything may happen if you are not careful. Cf. Lith.
Mes tave įspėjame, kad, jeigu nepasisaugosi, gali atsitikti bet kas.
I advise you to see a doctor. Cf. Lith. Patariu apsilankyti pas gydytoją.
We request more information. Cf. Lith. Prašome daugiau informacijos.
Thank you for taking such trouble! Cf. Lith. Ačiū, kad pasirūpinote!
I’m ordering a taxi now. Cf. Lith. Dabar užsakinėju taksi.
I acknowledge the need for change. Cf. Lith. Pripažįstu, kad reikalingi pokyčiai.
I name him John. Aš duodu jam Džono vardą / Aš jį pavadinu Džonu.

Speech acts are acts performed by the speaker (1st person singular or plural) at the moment of the utterance. Therefore, the verb must be in the present tense (present simple or present progressive). Besides, the clause must be declarative if the speaker wishes to express an explicit speech act. The subject of the clause must be agentive: he or she ‘takes the responsibility’ for the speech expressed by the structure. But we can report the act and, consequently, say what speech acts the speaker performed in the past. Cf. I promise to return the key tomorrow or I promised to return the key the next day / I said I promised to return the key next day. Cf. Lith. Aš pažadu grąžinti raktą rytoj or Aš pažadėjau grąžinti raktą kitą dieną / Aš pasakiau, kad pažadėjau grąžinti raktą kitą dieną. It will be obvious that only I promised to return the key next day that the speech act does not change its character.

Let us return to the sentence I promise to return the key tomorrow. The sentence has the structure of an implicit statement. To render it explicit, we must use the performative verb say or its synonym: I say that I promise to return the key tomorrow. Using the performative say, we explicate the fact that this is a statement (I state that I promise), a statement of a promise. According to Huddleston, a natural interpretation of the sentence I promise to return the key tomorrow would be both a statement and a promise, but

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3 For a more detailed analysis of the speech acts expressed by the declarative pattern, see Downing and Locke (2005).
a promise is more important than a statement, the promise being primary and the statement secondary (Huddleston et al, 2002: 851).

6.4.2 The interrogative pattern and the speech acts expressed by it

Interrogative sentences are typically used to seek information, i.e. they express questions. In the context, when they are used to elicit information, they present direct speech acts. However, the speaker often uses the structure to express other speech acts:

1) Exclamation, e.g. Isn’t it a lovely day! Cf. Lith. Kokia graži diena! Argi ne?
   
   When polar interrogatives acquire an exclamatory force, they are typically pronounced with a falling intonation.

2) Statements, e.g. Who would believe it? Cf. Lith. Kas tuo patikėtų?
   
   Such statements are traditionally referred to as rhetorical questions, questions being asked for effect, as to emphasize the point. The answer to such questions is so obvious that they do not require it.

3) Directive, e.g. Why don’t you apply for that job? Kodėl tu nesikreipi dėl darbo / neiieškai darbo?
   
   Such directives as Why don’t you apply for that job are indirect ones. Cf. Apply for that job, please (a direct directive, or a bald on record directive) vs.

   Why don’t you apply for that job? (an indirect directive).

   Consider more examples:

   Could you pass me the salt? Cf. Lith. Gal galėtum paduoti druskos?
   Would you mind passing me the salt? Cf. Lith. Ar negalėtum paduoti druskos?
   Must you speak so loudly? Cf. Lith. Ar būtina kalbėti taip garsiai?
If interpreted correctly, the response would be to the pragmatic meaning. Cf. Could you pass me the salt? Yes, I could (the response is to the literal meaning). Certainly/sure; Yeah, sure (the response is to the pragmatic meaning). Consider now the directive Would you mind passing me the salt? If one responds saying Sure I mind passing, one treats it as a direct speech act. As is pointed out by Downing and Locke (2005), sometimes the speaker asks himself or herself a question and then proceeds to answer it. This frequently occurs in public speaking and in academic writing, e.g. And what have we achieved in the last 18 months? I think we can truly say we have achieved a great deal. Cf. Lith. Ir ką gi mes pasiekėme per pastaruosius 18 mėnesių? Manau, galime drąsiai sakyti, kad pasiekėme labai daug.

6.4.3 The imperative pattern and the speech acts expressed by it

Typically, the imperative pattern expresses a directive. In other words, a directive is its direct speech act. The speaker uses this construction to give orders, e.g. Get out of here! In pragmatics this type of directive is called bald on record: the addressee is directly asked to do something. These bald on record forms may be followed by such structures as please, would you? whose function is to soften the directive. The word please changes the status of the speech act: from a direction (order) it changes to a request. However, it is still a direct speech act despite the addition of the mitigating please. The indirect speech acts include:

1) Disbelief, e.g. Don’t tell me you know this man! Cf. Lith. Nesakyk, kad pažįsti šį žmogų.
2) Threat, e.g. Do that again and I’ll smack you! Cf. Lith. Dar kartą taip padaryk ir aš tavę priplosiu (aš tau trenksiu).
3) Promise, e.g. Pass your exam and I’ll buy you a motorbike. Cf. Lith. Išlaikyk egzaminą ir aš tau nupirksiu motociklą.
4) Advice, e.g. See a doctor then! Cf. Lith. Tada nueik pas gydytoją!
5) Permission, e.g. *Feel free to take as many as you wish.* Cf. Lith. *Imk tiek, kiek širdis geidžia.*


7) Encouragement, e.g. *Come on now, don’t cry.* Cf. Lith. *Nagi, neverk.*

8) Good wishes, e.g. *Have a safe journey!* *Geros (saugios) kelionės!*

9) Rejecting thanks, e.g. *Think nothing of it.* *Nėra už ką. / Nieko tokio.*

10) Offer, e.g. *Try one of these!* *Pabandyk (paragauk) šitu.*

6.4.4 The exclamative pattern and the speech acts expressed by it

Exclamative sentences typically have the force of exclamatory statements, e.g. *How wonderful that would be!* vs. *That would be wonderful.* Cf. Lith. *Kaip tai būtų puiku!* vs. *Tai būtų puiku!* However, exclamatory statements are not typical statements: they have a strong subjective quality, expressing the speaker’s strong emotional reactions to the situation.

Emotions are of two types: positive and negative. Cf. *What beautiful weather!* (positive) Cf. Lith. *Koks gražus oras!* vs. *What nasty weather!* (negative) Cf. Lith. *Koks bjaurus oras!* In using an exclamative sentence, the speaker ‘makes words fit his or her emotions’. Exclamations expressed by the patterns beginning with *how* and *what* are direct speech acts. These patterns cannot be used to express indirect speech acts. We can only speak of other syntactic patterns capable of expressing exclamations. As already indicated, the declarative and the interrogative pattern can also be used to express an exclamation, e.g. *It’s raining! Wasn’t it a disaster?*

Let us now analyze some of the texts and see what speech acts are used and how they are expressed. The texts and the comments were taken from Cook (1990). The following text exhibits a dialogue between a sergeant and a private:

1) S: *I think your boots need cleaning, Jones!*

2) Pr: *Don’t you think having a well-oiled rifle is more important?*
3) S: I’m bloody sure you can get your boots cleaner than that, Jones!
4) Pr: I’ve been scrubbing all morning and they won’t come any cleaner.
5) S: You’re supposed to come on the parade with clean boots, Jones! I order you that!
6) Pr: I didn’t see that in the standing orders!
7) S: It’s my job to see you’ve got cleaner boots than this!
8) Pr: The captain told it was all right.
9) S: Jones. Clean your boots!
10) Pr: No, sergeant.
11) S: Right, you’ve had it now. Trying to undermine my authority? You’re on a charge! (Cf. Cook, 1990: 38)

This dialogue is a good illustration of how directives are expressed: directly and indirectly, explicitly and implicitly. The dialogue begins with a declarative sentence (1) and outside the context it would be understood as a statement expressing one’s opinion. However, here the sergeant implicitly issues a directive. The syntactic form does not coincide with the pragmatic function: the private uses a negative interrogative question ‘Don’t you think having a well-oiled rifle is more important?’ (2) and indirectly refuses to fulfill the order. The explicitly expressed utterance ‘I order you that’ and the imperative ‘Clean your boots!’ are bald on record statements that directly express the order issued by the sergeant. The last statements produced by the sergeant implicitly express a threat of punishment for disobedience though formally they represent a question and a statement: [Are you] trying to undermine my authority? You’re on a charge!

The next dialogue is taken from a short story, Masculine Protest by Frank O’Connor:

“Had a row?” [on the lake]
“Yes, Dad.”
“And how did you get there?”
“On the bike.”
“All the way? But you must be dead.”
“Just a bit tired,” I said modestly.
“Tell me, did you ever get a meal?”
“The savings bank was shut.”
“Oh, Blazes! And what are you going to do now?”
“I don’t know, Dad. I thought you might tell me.”
“Well, what about coming home?”
“I don’t mind, Dad. Whatever you say.”
“Hold on now till I see what buses are like... Hullo! You can get one in forty minutes’ time – seven ten. Tell the conductor I’ll be meeting you and I’ll pay your fare. Will that be all right?”
“That’s grand, Dad.”

This dialogue demonstrates that grammatical structures not always coin-cide with communicative functions and shows how the context contributes to the decoding of these functions. The text opens with a question “[You] had a row?” which is indicated by a question mark (rising intonation) though the grammatical structure is that of a statement. There is a sentence which illustrates the combination of two structures – imperative (direction) and interrogative: “Tell me, did you ever get a meal?” The illocutionary force is that of inquiry. The boy’s answer contains implicature, which is a pragmatic category and can only be perceived in the context: “The savings bank was shut.” From the context we assume that the boy must be very hungry. Further on, the father indirectly urges his son to go home using the interrogative structure “Well, what about coming home?” which, outside this context, would sound as a suggestion or an offer. In this case the utterance indirectly conveys a directive, which is identified by the child’s answer: “Whatever you say.” At the end of the dialogue a request is expressed directly through the imperative structure “Tell the conductor I’ll be meeting you and I’ll pay your fare. Will that be all right?” The interaction naturally involves more than one person, and it does not consist of a single sentence. When we examine the interaction, we may notice that the sentences function as minimal complete texts, or speech events. A speech event is an activity leading to some
outcome. So, for instance, a request is typically a speech event that leads to the granting or turning down of the speaker’s wish.

The analysis of the conversation has demonstrated that the speakers use different speech acts, the most common being a question. We come across both direct and indirect speech acts.

The surface form of the sentence taken in isolation cannot tell us which speech act is performed. We discover the functions of the sentences only in a context. The examples above show that act-identification is determined by function, not by form, which makes it more complicated because functions are less explicit and more open to variant interpretation.

Speech acts have not yet been the object of research in Lithuanian linguistics. Yet this circumstance does not preclude contrastive research in the field of the realization of speech acts in the two languages: it would be interesting to compare the expression of direct and indirect speech acts, the use of speech-act indicating devices, etc.

Summary

More often than not, we express illocutionary force (our intended meaning) indirectly rather than directly. An indirect speech act is an act when the propositional context (the literal meaning) differs from that which the speaker wishes to express. A preliminary analysis shows that some speech acts tend to be expressed directly, others indirectly. So, for instance, statements are generally expressed directly. Cf. *The English article is a hard nut to crack.* vs. *I say that the English article is a hard nut to crack.* Questions also tend to be expressed directly. Cf. *Can you help me?* vs. *I wonder if you can help me.* As for requests, they are more often expressed indirectly than directly. Cf. *Open the window, please!* (direct) vs. *Could you open the window?* (indirect). Speech acts expressed indirectly are more polite than speech acts expressed directly. The motivation for indirect speech acts is politeness and tact.
How can we study speech acts? The simplest way to describe speech acts expressed by the linguistic structures used in the text is to study the speech acts of the four types of predicative structure: declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamative. Another way is to postulate the deep and the surface structure (textual) level of the sentences. The deep level is the propositional meaning which is realized by the syntactic deep level, viz. a clause whose constituents are arranged in the order $S + V + O + Adv$. This default pattern, depending on the speaker’s intention, may be preserved without change (e.g. in realizing statements of speech acts) or may be rearranged and subjected to other transformations (e.g. in expressing questions, requests, and exclamations). This is a transformational-generative account of speech acts, or, to be more exact, a generative semantic account. As this is a technically complicated account, pragmaticists generally base their descriptions on the four syntactic patterns.

Speech acts are the speaker’s meanings, or the contextual meanings of the sentences. In studying speech acts, we study the meaning potential of the language. Also, in studying speech acts, we study the relationship between the propositional content of the sentence and the pragmatic function the sentence performs in the context.

**Check yourself test**

**A. Discuss the following:**

1. Define a speech act. What is a direct and an indirect speech act?
2. What is an explicit and an inexplicit speech act?
3. Comment on the following: a speech act is a sum total of three linguistic acts – a locutionary act, an illocutionary act, and a perlocutionary act.
4. Felicitous and infelicitous speech acts.
5. How can speech acts be classified?

6. Discuss the following speech acts from the point of view of felicity conditions:
   I name the ship the *Queen Elisabeth*.
   Don’t be late for school, Johny.
   I declare a state of emergency in the country.
   Chomsky is a talented linguist.
   Congratulations!
   Give me a cup of coffee. Make it strong.
   I will never do it again.

7. Sentence types and speech acts. What is their relationship?

B. What speech acts can the following structures express? Try to give some of the situations in which each structure may be used and say what speech act it expresses.

1. Sorry / Pardon / Excuse me.
2. I will come later.
3. Shall I pick you up at ten?
4. May I go out and play?
5. It’s a bit cold in here.
6. The earth is round.
7. I now pronounce you husband and wife.
8. I agree with you.
9. John, close the window.
10. Why not go there?
11. Who can understand her?
12. Don’t you think the weather is too nice to stay indoors?
13. Don’t tell me you knew it.
14. Try to do this again.
15. For God’s sake keep quiet!
16. What’s the time? It’s seven forty-five.
17. You are going to get all you ask for.
18. Do you expect me to stand here all day?
19. If I were you, I wouldn’t go there.
20. Congratulations!

C. What speech acts are used in the following dialogues drawn from Ernest Hemingway’s “A Day’s Wait” and “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber”?

A.
“What’s the matter, Schatz?”
“I’ve got a headache.”
“You better go back to bed.”
“No, I’m all right.”
“You go to bed. I’ll see you when I’m dressed.”

***
I took his temperature.
“What is it?”
“Something like a hundred.”
“It was a hundred and two”, he said.
“Who said so?”
“The doctor.”
“Your temperature is all right,” I said. “It’s nothing to worry about.”
“I don’t worry,” he said, “but I can’t keep from thinking.”
“Don’t think,” I said. “Just take it easy.”
“I’m taking it easy,” he said and looked straight ahead.

B.
“Where have you been?” Macomber asked in the darkness.
“Hello,” she said. “Are you awake?”
“Where have you been?”
“I just went out to get a breath of air”.
“You did, like hell”.
“What do you want me to say, darling?”
“Where have you been?”
“Out to get a breath of air.”
“That’s a new name for it. You are a bitch.”
“Well, you’re a coward.”
“All right,” he said. “What of it?”

***

“What does he say?” asked Margot.
“He says the first bull got up and went into the bush”.
“Oh”, said Malcomber blankly.

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“Can we go in after him now?” asked Macomber eagerly.
“No, we’ll give him a while.”
“Let’s please go into the shade,” Margot said.

Sources


7. Conversation and Its Pragmatic Features

7.1 General aspects of conversation

What is a conversation? Conversation is a social interaction. The term social interaction is applicable to a number of different social encounters: a teacher talking to a student in a classroom, a doctor talking to a patient in a clinic, individuals taking part in courtroom proceedings, attending a committee meeting, buying stamps at the post office, people engaged in a discussion, etc. Conversation is a natural manifestation of language: language has been devised by people to exchange information; it is a form of language we are all first exposed to; it is the foundry of language. The term conversation presupposes the presence of at least two participants who take turns in speaking.

There are two categories of conversation: 1) spontaneous (unprepared) and 2) non-spontaneous (prepared). Spontaneous conversation is conversation not prepared in advance and therefore not edited. As a result, it is not as fluent as prepared conversation. On the other hand, conversation is more disfluent than monologue. Spontaneous conversation is a face-to-face interaction: the participants can see each other and observe each other’s reactions. Hence, the presence of deictics, elliptical sentences, a lot of repairs, backchannels, overlaps, pauses – more than in non-spontaneous conversation, which is meant for the reader who is not present in the situation. This implies that the conversation must be orderly, contain fewer disfluencies. Linguistically, it will not contain the deictic expressions interpretable only in a visually shared situation. Despite the differences, spontaneous and non-spontaneous conversations practically have similar structural features. In
what follows we shall focus on the structural features of conversation common to both spontaneous and non-spontaneous conversation.

### 7.2 The structural features of conversation

Conversation is characterized by turn-taking: one participant, A, talks, stops, then another participant, B, takes the floor, stops. Thus we obtain an A-B-B-A distribution of talk across two participants. This is an ideal conversational pattern. Practically, however, a considerable amount of speech stream is delivered in overlaps, i.e. the speakers are talking at the same time especially when they are excited or impatient. Normally, intervals (gaps) between one person speaking and another starting are very short (a few micro-seconds). Longer pauses suggest that the addressee does not know the answer or that he or she does not approve of the speaker’s opinion. Silence, then, is meaningful.

Conversation is a kind of puzzle to the analyst: it raises many questions. One of the questions concerns orderly transition from one speaker to another: how do they manage to do it? Another question: why does this orderly transition operate equally well both in face-to-face interaction and in the absence of the visual monitoring of the floor?

Conversation, then, can be monitored (regulated) and non-monitored. The monitor may be the teacher in the classroom, the Speaker in the parliament, the moderator at the conference or seminar, the chairperson, the director, the manager, etc., i.e. any person who is in charge of the discussion: he or she gives the floor or denies the floor, i.e. asks the person to speak, stops the speaker and asks another person to speak. However, not all conversations are monitored, i.e. there may not be a monitoring person: all the participants have the same rights. In such conversations they are self-appointed speakers. Despite this, conversations of the type are not chaotic: they proceed in accordance with an implicit system of monitoring called a *Local Management*
System (LMS) which is conventionally known to the speaker. To put it in simple language, the speakers are guided by certain implicit rules and thus know when they must take the floor; they know how long they must hold the floor and when to give the floor to the next speaker. This next speaker knows when he or she must take the floor, i.e. he or she knows the point at which the turn changes. The point at which the speaker gives the floor to the next speaker (the addressee) is called a Transition Relevance Place (TRP). According to Yule (1996, op.cit., 72), the speakers “accomplish change of turn smoothly because they are aware of the local management system for taking those turns at an appropriate TRP.” As the TRP is a point at which the speaker completes his or her turn and is ready to give it away, we call it a completion point.

### 7.3 The monitoring of the floor in detail

As already known, conversation involves two or more participants who take turns at holding the floor. Orderly transition from one speaker to another is achieved through the observation of a set of implicit turn-taking rules: 1) priority is assigned to the rule that the next turn goes to the person addressed by the speaker; 2) if the speaker does not indicate who is to take the next turn, the second rule is that it goes to whoever speaks first (self-selection); 3) if no-one speaks, the third rule is that the current speaker can speak again.

In an ideal conversation, only one person speaks at a time. The other participants wait until the speaker indicates that he or she has finished, usually by signaling a completion point. People do not simply stop talking when they are ready to yield the floor. There are particular linguistic signals, which enable speakers to get out of a conversation and to pass the turn to somebody else. In many formal situations, such as committee meetings and debates, there are often explicit markers showing that a speaker is about to
yield the floor, and indicating who should speak next (e.g. *I think Mr. Smith will know the answer to this question*). This can happen in non-formal situations, too (e.g. *What do you think, John?*). But more often than not, the current speaker does not indicate who should speak next. How does the other speaker know that he or she can start speaking? Such signals could be: 1) the pitch level of the voice: a gradual reduction of the level, a ‘winding down’; it may signal that a turn is coming to a close, and the next speaker is invited to take the floor; 2) eye contact. It is a strong means of signaling; while speaking the speaker looks at and away from the addressee in about equal proportions, but as he or she approaches the end of a turn, he or she looks at the addressee more steadily, thus indicating to the addressee that he or she is finishing; similarly, when the speaker is talking to a group of people, he or she often looks longer at a particular person to indicate that it is his or her turn to speak. The body itself may signal a transition point: a relaxing posture, a gesture with a hand, etc. The actual body language is culture-specific. So, for instance, the Americans are apt to end their turn with a droop of the head or hand, a lowering of the eyelids. It is also determined by gender, social class and character traits (Hirasawa & Markstein, 1974: 103). It will be obvious that such visual clues as eye contact and body movement are possible only in face-to-face conversation (visually shared situations) and not, for instance, in telephone conversations. However, the addressee may be impatient and may not wish to wait for the signals: he or she may wish to be given the floor. How does the addressee behave under the circumstances? There are several options: 1) he or she may overlap with the current speaker; 2) simply interrupt the current speaker. Normally, the next speaker (the addressee) should choose the first option, i.e. he or she should wait for the current speaker to complete his or her utterance, or his/her turn. In reality, however, the next speaker often does not wait for the current speaker to complete his or her utterance, or his/her turn. Such being the case, the next speaker either overlaps with the current speaker or interrupts the current speaker.
Overlapping is one of the features of conversation. Overlapping does not always indicate that the next speaker is impatient to speak; it may also indicate solidarity with the current speaker: it may indicate the closeness of opinion. Consider:

_Dan_: Yeah, it’s a good idea to take a few basic things in the hand baggage, isn’t it?

_I think._

_Roger_: Yeah, well it’s usually the things you require first, you see, sometimes. You don’t have time to unpack your luggage when you arrive.

One of the features of turn-taking is that speakers have the ability to predict one another’s utterances and often complete them for them. However, as already indicated, the addressee may also interrupt the current speaker. Interruption is stopping the speaker from continuing, while overlapping is speaking before the current speaker has finished. Interruption is of two types: 1) with overlapping; 2) without overlapping.

A.

_Ben_: And there – there was at least ten miles of traffic bumper to bumper

_Roger_: - because a’t that. (interruption without overlapping)

B.

_Louise_: No… it was generally quiet and the weather was…what did it do, it just

_Agnes_: It was quite sunny a couple of the days. (interruption with overlapping).

Apart from the solidarity or the desire to complete the speaker’s turn, overlaps may signal: 1) annoyance, 2) urgency, 3) a desire to correct what is being said. There are a number of conventional phrases for interrupting such as ‘Can I interrupt for a moment?’, ‘If I may, Mr. Chairman’, ‘Shut up, will you, I can’t get a word!’, ‘Hang on a moment, I’ve got something to tell you’, ‘Sorry to butt in, but …’ etc. The choice of one or another of these
phrases depends greatly on two factors, namely who one is talking to and in what circumstances.

The speaker may be reluctant to give up his or her turn. He or she may employ a variety of devices to keep it: 1) avoidance of eye contact with the addressee; 2) stringing sentences together; 3) avoiding the kinds of utterances or adjacency pairs that require others to speak; 4) employing gestures and a posture that tell the addressee that he or she has not finished speaking. In addition, speakers can avoid pausing at the end of sentences and place pauses at points where the message is clearly incomplete. Consider:

That’s their favorite restaurant because they…enjoy French food and…when they were… in France they couldn’t believe it that … you know that they had … had better meals back home.

The speaker can also make their sentences run on by using connectors and, and then, so, but, however, which turn a complete sentence into an incomplete one. Besides, the speaker can use prestructures (signals to the other participant(s) that he or she is going to speak long) such as ‘I’d like to make two points’, ‘I’ll try to be brief, but there are a number of things…’, ‘Just two things, Mary,…’. If the speaker chooses not to yield the floor, he or she may avoid being interrupted by speaking more loudly, more quickly and in a higher pitch.

The addressee is a potential speaker: he or she turns into a speaker when the need arises. There are several ways of signaling that someone wants to talk next: 1) one can start to make short sounds, usually repeated, while the speaker is talking, and 2) one can use body shifts like leaning forward, or producing a sharp audible intake of breath, or facial expressions to signal that one has something to say, or 3) one can simply interrupt, which may be tolerated, if one wishes to clarify what the speaker is saying, otherwise it is frequently considered rudeness. Consider:

Mary: they keep money in the bank and their policy
John: look can I just come in on this?
Mary: YES IN A MOMENT IF YOU MAY AND WHEN I’VE FINISHED then you’ll know what the point is
John: yes I’M SORRY.

There are means of not taking the turn when one has the opportunity: a) the addressee may simply remain silent or b) produce minimal response to confirm, agree or show an interest in one or another way. These are usually referred to as back channel responses (vocal indications of attention), and consist of vocalizations such as mm, ah-ha, uh-huh, and short words and phrases such as yeah, no, right, sure, okay, so, well. They also function as signals showing that the addressee is listening. For instance:

Mother: I’m not sure what she’s been saying
Father: not at all darling
Tom: ah ah ah ah
Mother: well at least well I’ll need to know when she comes in for
Father: Tom: ah ah ah ah.

Listenership may also be signalled by frequent nodding. When the addressee uses few such signals, the speaker can think that the addressee is not listening or that he or she is being rushed along. Besides the said listener feedback, the listener usually resorts to eye contact: he or she may look at the speaker nearly continually or intermittently, the actual behaviour of the addressee being determined by his or her character traits or culture: “in our normal conversation, each eye contact”, point out Hirasawa and Markstein, “lasts only a second before one or both individuals look away. When two Americans look searchingly into each other’s eyes, emotions are heightened and the relationship becomes more intimate” (Hirasawa & Markstein, 1974: 104). Such being the case, response by body language which is culture and person-specific, should be well-balanced: insufficient response on the part of the listener may tell the speaker that something is wrong and he or she has to slow down, repeat, or explain.
Structurally, a conversation is a sequence of utterances made by the speakers. In pragmatic literature, these sequences are called *adjacency pairs*, also called *moves* or *parts*. A notable feature of adjacency pairs is that one utterance often predicts another utterance. To adjacency pairs we can attribute *question-answer, greeting-greeting, invitation-acceptance (rejection), complaint-denial, request-assert/denial*. They are organic parts of an exchange. Speaking of the types of response (i.e. second parts of the adjacency pairs), they can be divided into *preferreds* and *dispreferreds*. A *preferred response* is a response expected by the speaker:

A. *Can you help me?*

B. *Sure* (a preferred answer).

A *dispreferred response* is a response not expected by the speaker:

A. *Can you help me?*

B. *Sorry* (dispreferred answer), *I’m busy*.

Acceptance is a preferred response and refusal is a dispreferred response. It goes without saying that the speaker expects preferred responses. Dispreferred responses require more time and more language. As a rule, speakers try to avoid getting a dispreferred response. One way to avoid it is the use of *pre-sequences* or *pre-speech acts*. Pre-sequences help the speaker to learn which response is the more likely – acceptance or refusal. Consider:

A. *What a beautiful day! It’s a good time to go to the country!*

B. *Yes. If not for the essay which I’m supposed to hand in by Tuesday, I would get into my car and drive to the lake.*

The speaker does not always present his or her refusal explicitly. Sometimes he or she does not say anything. Silence may be an indication of a potentially dispreferred response. If the speaker keeps silent, the other speaker may try to revise his part in order to get a preferred response. Consider:

A. *Could you help me, John?*

B. *[Silence]*

A. *Not now. Meant tomorrow, when you are less busy.*
Silence may also indicate that the speaker is not in a position to provide any response. However, silence as a response is an extreme case. The speaker does not generally like silence: it disrupts the conversation; it may be treated by the speaker as the reluctance to participate in the conversation.

Apart from silence proper, dispreferreds may be indicated by words expressing hesitation – *erm, ummm, well*. These vocalizations fill the pause and thus function as backchannel signals – they tell the speaker that the addressee is participating in the conversation.

To finish this section off, let us now say a few words about getting into and out of conversation. How does the speaker begin a conversation? The initiation of conversation does not cause much difficulty to the speakers, especially when they belong to the same social status. In English, a conversation often begins with the word *well*, which has a contact-establishing function (a phatic function), e.g. *Well, how are you John? I haven’t seen you for ages.* Besides, the speaker can use the structures *now then*. However, the two structures can also be used to end conversation. Mention should also be made of the structures *right, okay, so*, e.g. *Okay, let’s have a look at you* (in a doctor-patient exchange); *okay, the boy will show you to your room* (checking in at a hotel); *right, if you just follow that gentleman, he’ll show you where the car is* (hiring a car). The structures discussed are called *framing words* or *framing phrases* since their function is to act as a ‘frame’ for a conversation, and what is between them is called *transaction*. We have discussed the contact words and phrases that are often used by the speaker. However, to begin a conversation, the speaker can use other structures: all depends on the situation, social status. Consider one more example: (Chairman) *And now we can open the floor to the questions from the students. Yes. Here at the front.* Or: *Hi, Jack, I wasn’t expecting to see you here. Nothing wrong, I hope* (at a doctor’s).

To sum up, conversations are generally introduced using so-called *contact-establishing structures*. These may be special structures such as *well, now then*, etc. or greetings, such as *hello, hi, morning*, etc. The subject of
the initiation and ending a conversation needs further research, especially in languages of different cultures.

The last question to discuss is how the speaker gets out of a conversation. Again, this is also culture-specific. In American culture, the speaker talking can receive certain cues from the addressee suggesting he or she should end the conversation. The addressee can:

1) give less frequent response (feedback) and eye contact;
2) sigh, cough, shift gaze away, glance at his or her watch, behind;
3) shift intonation;
4) indicate urgency (e.g. We are both busy people);
5) say “Gotta go” or “bye-bye”, but add that he or she intends to continue the conversation, saying “See you soon!” or “Call me sometime”.

The cues, however, do not guarantee a success: there are people (especially aged ones) who will not take the hints, and the conversation may draw out for a long time if the addressee is very polite.

7.4 Conversational style

There are two styles of conversation: 1) a high involvement style; 2) a high considerateness style. Speakers using the first style will be very active; their speaking rate will be relatively fast, with almost no pausing between turns, and with some overlap or even completion of their turn. Speakers of the second style will be less fast; they will make longer pauses between turns, will not overlap, avoid interrupting or completing the other’s turn (Yule, op. cit., 76).

An ideal situation is when the speakers use the same conversational style. When speakers representing different styles participate in a conversation (fast – slow), there may appear problems: the rapid-fire speaker may think that the slower-paced speaker does not have much to say or is shy, boring or even stupid while the rapid-fire speaker may be regarded as noisy, pushy, domineering, selfish, and even tiresome (Yule, ibid., 76).
Conversational style is culture and person-specific: some nationals and some people speak faster than others. It is also gender-specific: men speak more slowly than women. Age is also relevant here: younger people speak faster than older people. Last but not least, conversational style is also determined by the speaker’s psychic state: when excited, he or she will speak louder, faster, make more overlaps (interruptions), more cases of the completion of the other’s turn. These are questions of great interest to the scholar: their examination could reveal interesting information concerning the conversation and its styles in different cultures, age groups, genders.

To finish this chapter off, let us analyze and compare two conversations. Both conversations are spontaneous; they were taken from McCarthy (1991).

1. A transcript of a conversation between speaker A and speaker B who are discussing domestic pets (deep brackets indicate overlapping speech).

A: (1) Well, of course, people who go to the vet’s are
B: (2) Mm
A: (3) interested in the cats and dogs, ain’t they?
B: (4) Yeah, but the people that first
Have pets kit – pets er don’t realize what’s involved, do they?
A: (5) care
Well it sorts them
out, you know, those don’t care that’s it so … but
B: (6) Mm mm
A: (7) if you wanna, you know, somebody that’s keen on having a pet
B: (8) Mm Mm
A: (9) and what it in good order.
B: (10) Done… done properly, that’s right, yeah.

As already said, this is a spontaneous conversation. The feature that is common to such conversations is the presence of disfluencies such as ehm, um, mm, ah, er used to indicate attention on the part of the addressee, or such lexical items as like, actually, so. Other disfluencies include pauses, hesi-
tations, repairs, overlaps. Though they occur naturally, they affect the flow of the conversation. Speaking of pauses, not all pauses are disruptive – only those that occur in the middle of words and phrases. The same can be said about hesitations (hhhe was going to the park). Repairs include repetition, lexical and grammatical corrections. Overlaps are of several types: overlaps designated to break up the conversation, overlaps designated to break into the conversation, overlaps designated to seek clarification (e.g. Excuse me! Pardon me!), overlaps designated to complete the speaker’s turn (a solidarity strategy). So much about the structural peculiarities of spontaneous conversations. Let us now return to the above conversation. This conversation includes two speakers; the turns occur relatively smoothly. However, the speakers are not in the same position: speaker A is a dominant one; speaker B is listening and is expressing agreement, which he signals by the so-called backchannel structure mm. Speaker A is not willing to give the floor to speaker B: this can be seen from the use of the connector but which informs speaker B that speaker A will add more information before completing this turn. The presence of checking tags (ain’t they, do they) shows that speaker A (3) and speaker B (4) are ready to yield the floor. Despite the fact that most of the talking is done by speaker A, the conversation has a few overlaps. What are their functions here? In (4) speaker B overlaps to oppose speaker A. In (10) speaker B pauses after done, then repeats it and completes the turn by expressing agreement with the words that’s right, yeah (double agreement). The pause shows hesitation: speaker B does not seem to know how to complete speaker A’s turn adequately.

2. A transcript of a conversation between a mother (Anna) and her teenage daughter (Jess) speaking about money.

Anna: (1) How much is it going to cost you tomorrow?
Jess: (2) Tomorrow? A couple of pounds. Nicola said just take a fiver and you probably won’t have to use it at all.
Anna: (3) Well you’ll have to find it.
Jess: (4) Yes well what am I going to spend tonight?
Anna: (5) I can’t afford for you to go to the pub, and I’m not going to
Jess: (6) Yeah well I’ll give you the money back once I’ve spoken
  to Dad
Anna: (7) I don’t want you to spend this money on sitting in a pub
drinking.
Jess: (8) Well drinking ...
Anna: (9) Fifteen pounds you’ve spent already and you’ll
  spend another five pounds
Jess: (10) I haven’t spent fifteen pounds mum. OK just
  Give me a pound then
Anna: (11) What for?
Jess: (12) God, you don’t listen at all!

This conversation is relatively smooth: only one speaker talks at a time; the
speakers take turns at the end of a sentence. Still, it contains a few disfluencies:
ordinary overlaps (7) and interrupting overlaps (9, 11). The overlap in
(7) indicates urgency on the part of the speaker. The interruption in (9) is a
natural act of behavior: Jess has not managed to fully word her response: she
had to pause, and Ann made use of this pause by starting speaking herself.
The interruption in (11) indicates that Jess breaks in before a completion
point so that she may deny her mother’s reproach.

Summary

Conversation is a process in which one person speaks and another listens.
The mechanism that governs turn-taking is called a Local Management
System (LMS). The end of an utterance is a point at which speaker may
exchange turns – it is a Transition Relevance Place (TRP). The exchange of
turns or ‘floors’ is signaled by such means as intonation, pausing, and phrasing.
Conversation, if it is spontaneous (unprepared), is often disorderly or
disfluent. Typically, the disfluencies include unfilled pauses, filled pauses
(backchannels), hesitations, repairs (repetition, false starts or grammatical corrections), and overlaps.

Conversation is both speaking and listening. How do the addressees show the speakers that they are listening? Listenership may be signaled in different ways. It may be signaled by frequent nodding as well as by listener feedback such as mhm, uhuh, and yeah or by eye contact. The way the listener responds may change how we speak. If the speaker finds that the listener is not interested or unable to understand, he or she will speak more slowly, repeat and explain.

Conversation is a sequence of utterances which are called adjacency pairs. Of great importance is not only the speaker’s utterance; the addressee’s response is also very important. We have distinguished two types of response: preferreds and dispreferreds.

There are two styles of conversation: 1) a high involvement style and 2) a high considerateness style. Conversational style is culture and person-specific. It is also gender-specific.

**Check yourself test**

_A. Discuss the following:_

1. What conversation features can you point out?
2. How is transition from one turn to the next effected in a conversation?
3. How does the speaker show that he or she is ready to yield the turn?
4. Are there any ways of holding the turn?
5. What disfluencies occur in a conversation?
B. Analyze the English conversation drawn from Grundy (2000: 179). It involves a customer (C), a travel agent (TA) and a manager (M). The beginning and end of each overlapping utterance is marked by deep brackets, inaudible contributions are marked by square brackets enclosing empty spaces, and pauses are indicated in tenths of a second in brackets. Very short pauses are indicated by a stop in brackets, roughly equivalent to a pause of one syllable length.

C: can you help me I have to go to Edinburgh (.) somebody told me it was cheaper to go by plane than by train (.) is that right
TA: (1.5) well we’re not British Rail agents so I don’t know the difference
C: oh I see
TA: I can tell you what it is to go to Edinburgh
C: yes (1.0) by plane
TA: by plane
C: yeh (1.7) thanks very much
TA: (13.0) well there’s a shuttle service (0.4) um (.) £60 one way (2.5) er (2.3) when do you want to go
C: I want to go at the weekend
TA: (0.3) what weekend=
C: =next weekend (3.5) how does that work you just turn up for the shuttle service
TA: (0.8) that might be cheaper then (1.8) that’s 50
C: 50
TA: that’s a saver (0.7) burit it’s a standby
C: a st[endby]
TA: [you ha]ve to book it in advance but um (.)
C: are you guaranteed a seat
TA: (8.0) I don’t think you are
C: so you buy a ticket be[fore but]
TA: [Ron] with the shuttle saver
M: (0.8) yeh
TA: um (.) are they guaranteed seats
M: (3.5) er
TA: this is a new one that Marie’s just added in here (1.7) oh
        hang    on see    ↘
M:                      British Airways↓
TA:                                   see see stop press [ ]
M: (0.3) British Airways
TA: yeah
M: er yeah the flight’s standby guarantee (.) yeah you you turn up and
    you’ve got to er (1.0) if they can’t get on one flight they’ll put on the
    next any of the next two

C. Record a spontaneous conversation in Lithuanian. Transcribe it and
   compare it to the above English conversation. Get ready to discuss the
   following questions:

1) Do you find any backchannels? What role do they play in the inter-
   actions?
2) Are there any overlaps? Interruptions? Pauses? What are their func-
   tions?
3) Where does the speaker select the next speaker? How does he or she
   do it?
4) Is there a place where the next speaker self-selects?
5) What speech acts are the conversations based on?
6) What politeness strategies are realized?
7) Can you point out the similarities and differences in the pragmatic
   structure of the conversations?
Sources

8. Given – New Information, Theme – Rheme

8.1 General aspects

As already known, in referring to an entity, the speaker uses two types of referring expressions: definite and indefinite. Definite referring expressions express information known to the speaker and the addressee while indefinite expressions express information known to the speaker only or information unknown to both. Consider:

*I bought a car yesterday*, where *a car* expresses information known to the speaker but unknown to the addressee. But if the speaker goes on and says *The car cost me a lot of money*, *the car* turns into information known to both. Consider another example:

*There is a man at the door*, where *a man* expresses information unknown to both the speaker and the addressee.

*Given information* is presupposed shared information; *new information* is another type of presupposed information: the speaker, prior to forming a sentence, thinks (presupposes) that the addressee knows of the existence of the entity but he or she does not know the information he/she is going to convey about it. Consider:

*The sun is shining now.*

Prior to saying *The sun is shining now*, the speaker knows that the entity *sun* is information known not only to him or her but also to the addressee. However, the speaker thinks that the addressee does not yet know what he or she knows, i.e. that the sun is shining now. Hence we have two types of presupposed information – *shared* and *non-shared*. As indicated in Chapter 3, this treatment of presupposition clashes with the classical approach
whereby presupposition is said to be the common ground, i.e. the information known to the speaker and the addressee. Right or wrong, but such an approach makes it possible to account for the production of the sentence better than the classical approach to presupposition.

The sentence, then, expresses two types of information – given and new. Given information is information known to the speaker only: it is the news the speaker wishes to convey. It should be observed that new information could be based on entities that are known to the speaker and the addressee, e.g. *John loves Mary*, where *Mary* is part of the most important information despite the fact that both the speaker and the addressee know the person. What the addressee does not know is the relationship between *John* and *Mary*, i.e. that *John loves Mary*. Such being the case, the new information, as expressed in this sentence, involves the process of loving and the object of the process which in semantic terms presents *the Phenomenon* while *John* presents *the Recipient Experiencer*. Both given information and new information constitute the basis of the sentence as a communicative unit.

To paraphrase Halliday (1985: 274), the sentence is a process of interaction between what is already known or predictable and what is new or unpredictable. In an idealized form, given information is information recoverable: it may be recoverable from the speaker’s and the addressee’s information stored in their long-term memory or recoverable from the speaker’s and the addressee’s information stored in their short-term memory. Consider:

*I like Shakespeare*, where *Shakespeare* expresses information stored in the long-term memory of the interlocutors. But:

*I see a dog. The dog is chasing a cat*, where *the dog* expresses information stored in the short-term memory of the interlocutors. Hence we have two types of givenness: ‘old’ givenness and ‘new’ or ‘fresh’ givenness. Such a treatment of givenness makes it possible to understand why entities conveying given information can convey communicatively important information, e.g. *I saw your father yesterday*. To quote Chafe (1976: 30), “but a speaker who says *I saw your father yesterday* is unlikely to assume that the addressee
had no previous knowledge of his father, even through by the usual criteria your father would be considered new information”. The scholar explains this “illogicality” in psychological terms as follows: “the point is that the speaker has assumed that the addressee was not thinking about his father at the moment. Terms like “already activated” and “newly activated” would convey their distinction more accurately, but are awkward; we will probably have to live with the terms “given” (or “old”) and “new”” (ibid., 30).

As already suggested, to construct a sentence, the speaker needs two types of information: given and new. However, some linguists (e. g. Mathesius; Quirk et al.) argue that sentences may be not always based on the two types of information. So, for instance, according to Mathesius, in such text-beginning sentences as Once upon a time there lived a king, there seems to be nothing that is shared by the writer (the speaker) and the addressee (the reader). But if we admit that any sentence is based on a presupposition (or presuppositions), the above sentence does contain given information, and this information is expressed by the time adverbial once upon the time. This sentence must have had a pre-text, e.g. You want to know what happened a long time ago, so I will tell you. Listen. If a child asks his/her father to tell him/her a story, the story will be about the past. Such being the case, it is but natural to begin with the time adverbial, which presents information recoverable from the previous context. It should be observed that the previous context is not necessarily an explicit context; it may be inexplicit (deep or underlying). Consider:

A. What has happened?
B. A car has run over a man.

The sentence A car has run over a man does not seem to contain any given information. But the event did not take place in the void: the participants were in the street then. Therefore, the street is the implicit given information. Besides, the constituent has run over is related to has happened, and, consequently, can be treated as given (at least potentially given) information. Given information is often suppressed for stylistic considerations. This
helps the writer to create the *in medias* effect: the reader is plunged into the midst of things, e.g. *At midnight the café was crowded*. Here the café appears in the text for the first time. Typically, the writer would have introduced it into the discourse, e.g. *There was a café in the town*. However, to cut the long story short, the writer by-passed this stage and made the addressee accept the presupposition *There was a café in the town*. We discussed this phenomenon under the rubric “Accommodation of presuppositions” and would not like to go into particulars here. We can only point out here that the so-called accommodated presupposition enables the writer (or the speaker) to increase the informational volume of the text without increasing its length. This use of given information is characteristic of Hemingway’s style in particular. Consider:

*He came into the room to shut the windows while we were still in bed and I saw he looked ill* (A Day’s Wait).

This sentence initiates the text; therefore, the reader does not know anything about the person who came in; nor does the reader know anything about *the room*. We should include the writer and other people whose identity is not known to the reader. Such being the case, the reader is intrigued to know who the persons were and what place it was. Accommodated presuppositions are not culture-specific. As far as fiction is concerned, some writers resort to them more often than others. However, it will be obvious that this device must be used sparingly: an overuse of the device makes a story disrespectful to the reader who may feel that his or her patience is being tried unduly.

### 8.2 The generation of given information

Given information is generated in an appropriate environment: a non-linguistic (physical), a linguistic (textual), and a culturally shared (epistemic) environment.
8.2.1 Givenness in a non-linguistic environment

8.2.1.1 Givenness in the environment of the home (in a visually shared environment)

What is a non-linguistic environment? It may be any place the speaker, the addressee and others act (the environment of a classroom, a house, a stadium, a theatre, etc.). A notable feature of the environment is that entities in it are visible to both the speaker and the addressee. In other words, all these entities present potentially given (or shared) information: the furniture, the walls, the ceiling, the windows, etc. The entities acquire the status of given information simply by the speaker’s pointing to them via deictic expressions. This is the most straightforward (direct) and the most economical way of generating given information. Consider:

*Give me that book, please!*

The use of the noun phrase *that book*, if not attended by a gesture, does not guarantee that the addressee will be able to identify the book: there may be several books further away from the speaker. Pointing here performs the same functions as linguistic structures in a linguistic environment. Cf.:

*Give me that book, please!*

There is a book on the shelf. *Give me that book!*

Givenness in the environment of the home can also be signaled by the definite article. Consider:

*Just give the shelf a quick wipe.*

The addressee will not fail to identify the entity on condition the speaker shows him or her by a gesture or there is only one shelf in the room. The same analysis holds for the following examples, where entities also have the status of *given*. Consider:

*Give me the hammer, please!*

Open the window.

Switch on the television.
Look at the dog. It is eating your meat.

How is the type of givenness realized in a non-linguistic environment? It will be obvious that under the circumstances the speaker will use deictic expressions (person, spatial, and temporal). At the present we cannot say which deictics exhibit the highest frequency. We can only say now that the person deictics I and you are very common in a visually shared environment. The same should be said about the demonstratives (place and time expression), but special research is needed to form a clearer picture of the situation concerning the use of the said deictics in a non-linguistic situation. The difficulty of such a research is obvious: it is field work, and the researcher must have a possibility to observe the interaction of the speakers. A replica of such a situation is a drama or a play, but the study of a drama or a play cannot be as revealing as field study. It is only the study of a spontaneous interaction that could reveal the actual situation.

Thus far we have analyzed givenness generated in a visually shared situation. However, visibility is not an obligatory condition for the generation of givenness: the obligatory condition is the shared knowledge of the participants. The addressee may not see an entity but this entity may be given information. Consider:

Have you seen the cat?  
Cf. Lith.  
Ar nematei katės?

The roof is still leaking.  
Cf. Lith.  
Stogas dar teka.

The garden needs weeding.  
Cf. Lith.  
Sodą reikia ravėti.

The car is in the garage.  
Cf. Lith.  
Automobilis yra garaže.

The addressee, who is himself or herself part of the home environment, will not have any difficulty identifying the entities the cat, the garden, the roof, the car: the entities, though may not be visible at the time of speaking, are given by the home environment: the cat is the cat that lives in the house; the roof is the roof of the house; the garden is the garden next to the house, the car is the car that belongs to the family living in the house.
8.2.1.2 Givenness in the environment of the town, the country and the world (givenness in a visually non-shared physical environment)

Givenness in this type of environment is mostly realized by the use of proper nouns. Proper names have unique reference if they refer to sole entities. The speaker using a proper name expects that the addressee can identify the entity. However, the addressee may not have the same knowledge as the speaker. Recall the Lithuanian TV program “Klausimėlis“ (“The little question”), where the people addressed often fail to identify the entities expressed by proper nouns. Such being the case, the speaker’s expectations, or presuppositions, may clash with the addressee’s knowledge.

It will be obvious that it is easier to identify entities that are closer to us. We can expect fewer failures when talking about the town the addressee lives in than when talking about the country and the world at large.

It should be emphasized that all proper names are unique. To unique proper nouns we could attribute geographical names (England, The Great Lakes, France, The State College of Washington, etc.). As for person names, they may refer to unique persons (Hitler, Stalin, Lenin) and they may refer to non-unique persons (e.g. Mary, Smith, etc.). When they refer to non-unique persons, the speaker will have to help the addressee to identify the persons. In other words, the addressee will ‘negotiate’ the meaning. Recall the dialogue discussed in chapter two:

A. There is Alice Mills on the phone.
B. Is that the Alice Mills you told me about?

Speaker A thinks that the person is unique to the addressee and introduces the person straightaway. But, as can be seen from B’s response, the speaker is mistaken: speaker B is not sure which Alice Mills is on the phone. Even geographical names may have to be negotiated, i.e. they may not be given information to the addressee. Consider an example:

A. John lives in Paris.
B. In France, you mean.

A. No. It’s not the Paris I am talking about. I’m talking about the Paris in Texas.

To conclude, we must say that givenness generated in the environment of the home, the town, the country and the world (the physical environment) differs from givenness generated in a linguistic environment: here given entities are ‘ready-made’, i.e. givenness is not generated but taken for granted.

8.2.3 Givenness in a linguistic environment

In a linguistic environment, the speaker is more friendly: he or she generally introduces an entity into the discourse. An entity introduced turns into given information. Consider:

Here’s an apple and an orange. Eat the apple and leave the orange for your sister.

As already known, the speaker can use two syntactic patterns to generate givenness: anaphoric and cataphoric. Of the two patterns, the more common is the anaphoric pattern. As for the cataphoric pattern, the more common is the pattern in which givenness is generated within a noun phrase, e.g. The man standing near the window will be our guest speaker tonight.

8.2.4 Givenness in a culturally shared environment

People sharing the same culture are expected to be in a position to identify entities more or less successfully. So, for instance, in European culture, Shakespeare is given information. However, this name can refer to another person, e.g. The Shakespeare who lives next door is friendly. Besides, when we mean the famous British playwright, we may use the name to refer to
his works, e.g. *I saw Shakespeare* (i.e. a play by Shakespeare) *in London.* If the addressee can identify the entity referred to, he or she is a member of the same cultural community as the speaker.

Givenness involves both the speaker and the addressee: an entity is given only when it is shared information. If the addressee cannot identify the entity, the entity is not given in the proper sense of the word. Thus, if the speaker says *Dickens* meaning the writer Dickens, the addressee may not be familiar with the writer and therefore may treat it as *new,* not *given* information. Besides, the addressee may have forgotten the entity and, to render it given, the speaker will have to give the addressee appropriate information, e.g. *I mean the writer Dickens, the author of the novel “David Copperfield”.*

### 8.3 New information

As already known, the sentence includes two types of information: given and new. Given information is shared information and new information is what the speaker thinks the addressee does not know about the given entity. However, the information the speaker is conveying is given (known) to him or her. It is only to the addressee that it is not given. Consider:

(1) *I bought a car this morning.*

(2) *I bought the car this morning.*

In (1), *a car* is given to the speaker and new to the addressee. If so, why does the speaker say *a car,* not *the car?* To quote Lyons (1999: 2), “*the car* here is in some sense more ‘definite’, ‘specific’, ‘particular’, ‘individualized’ etc. than *a car,* but, as noted above, *a car* certainly denotes a particular or specified car as far as the speaker is concerned. The difference is that the reference of *the car* in (2) is assumed to be clear to the hearer as well as the speaker”. The scholar adds that “one would typically utter (1) where the car in question has no place yet in the hearer’s experience, and is being newly introduced to it, (2) would be used where the hearer knows or has seen the speaker’s new car” (ibid., 3).
In constructing a sentence, the speaker takes given information and asserts something about it, e.g. Napoleon was a famous general. The word Napoleon expresses information shared by both the speaker and the addressee. What is new to the addressee (but given to the speaker) is Napoleon’s being a famous general. It is just for this information that this sentence has come into existence. New information may be expressed by given information entities. There is no contradiction in this statement since given information entities can be important information, e.g. I have not been to London yet, where London, which is given information, carries the most important information. In view of this, the term new information could be replaced by the term the most important information, or rhematic information.

8.4 Given – new information, theme – rheme

Given information is generally used by the speaker as the starting point, or the point of departure for the sentence. Having chosen such an entity, the speaker says something about it, i.e. says what he or she thinks the addressee does not know yet about the entity. The entity which serves as the point of departure for the message is referred to as the Theme (sometimes called the Topic) and what is said about it is referred to as the Rheme (sometimes called the Comment). Logically, sentences should start with the Theme and end with the Rheme. We witness such a situation in Lithuanian, where the morphologization of the noun creates favorable conditions for the use of a thematic constituent in sentence-initial position. In English, however, where the noun is not inflected (an exception is taken by the genitive case), thematic constituents may not always be used in sentence-initial position. Cf.:

Į kambarį įėjo žmogus. vs. A man came into the room.

In the Lithuanian sentence, the Theme (the place adjunct kambarį) occurs in sentence-initial position while in the English sentence the Theme occurs in sentence-final position. As English is predominantly an analytic language, the
position of the Theme is generally determined by the grammatical principle (S + V + O + Adv). The Theme takes initial position if it is the subject of the sentence, e.g. They examined each case very carefully. Speakers or writers who are anxious to construct their sentences in the pattern Theme-Rheme may resort to the syntactic process called subjectivization, e.g. Each case was carefully examined by them. As can be seen, the passive voice is used here to turn the constituent each case into the subject of the sentence. As for Lithuanian, the passive voice is generally used for other purposes – to eliminate the agent. As already indicated, Lithuanian speakers or writers can front any sentence constituent without disrupting the semantic ties in the sentence. Thus, the said English sentence can be translated into Lithuanian using the active voice, e.g. Kiekvieną atvejį jie rūpestingai išnagrinėjo. The passive voice could also be used but the agent preserved could be treated by the addressee as awkward, e.g. Kiekvienas atvejis jų buvo rūpestingai išnagrinėtas. The subjectivization of a constituent in English can be effected without the aid of the passivization process. So, for instance, we can subjectivize place and time adjunct without resorting to the passive voice. Consider:

Four people can sleep in the cabin. vs. The cabin sleeps four people.
Chomsky published his monograph “Syntactic structures” in 1957. vs. 1957 saw the publication of Chomsky’s “Syntactic Structures.”

It should be noted that this type of subjectivization is much less common than the subjectivization via the passive voice. As for Lithuanian, it is seldom used: being a synthetic language, Lithuanian can rearrange sentence constituents without resort to the said transformation, a transformation which creates a participant out of a non-participant (e.g. circumstance or an attribute). Halliday (1985: 321) calls the type of transference grammatical metaphor.
Another means of fronting the Theme is the use of *converses* (reversals). Converses, such as *be, lie, rest, sit, hover, stand*, etc. can be used to front the Theme, e.g. *John is the teacher here. vs. The teacher here is John*. To converses we should attribute such paired verbs as *like-please, fear-frighten, forget-escape, notice-strike, believe-convince, understand-puzzle*. According to Halliday (1985: 107), these pairs make it possible to express two-way processes, or to ‘reverse’ the sentences by shifting the rhematic constituent to initial position. Consider:

*He does not fear the threat of prison.*  
*The threat of prison does not frighten him.*  
*Mary forgot his name.*  
*His name escaped Mary.*  
*I don’t believe his story.*  
*His story does not convince me.*

As was pointed out by Halliday (ibid., 107), English goes on creating such pairs. However, not every mental process verb can be paired this way. By the way, such a process can also be observed in Lithuanian, e.g.:

*Jis nebijo kalėjimo.*  
*Kalėjimas nebaugina jo.*  
*Aš netikiu jo pasakojimais.*  
*Jo pasakojimai neįtikino manęs.*

It will be obvious that the type of subjectivization is rather restricted in English and Lithuanian. Apart from the process of subjectivization, the speaker of English can simply front a constituent leaving the order of the rest of the sentence constituents undisturbed. Consider:

A. *Don’t you know this book?*  
B. *This book millions of people have read.*

***

A. *I have a lot of problems with the computer.*  
B. *I think that most of your problems a computer can take in its stride.*
To front a constituent, we must satisfy one requirement: the constituent being fronted must be presented in the preceding sentence, i.e. its fronting must be motivated textually. If it is not presented, the fronted constituent will be rhematic, not thematic. Cf.:

A. Do you want John?
B. No. Peter I want! John I don’t want.

Thus far we have been concerned with the thematization of participants and circumstances. Nothing has been said about processes. First of all, mention should be made of sentences of existing (existential sentences) where thematic predicates of existing precede rhematic subjects. Consider:

There came a long and cold winter. Cf. Lith. Atėjo ilga ir šalta žiema.
There stretched a vast plain below the castle. Cf. Lith. Prie pilies driekėsi didelė lyguma.

Marked thematization of other processes is unlikely. Consider:
A. What did John write?

However, in fiction the thematic process can be fronted if the writer uses it as “a means of assuming the truth of the proposition expressed” (Hud-dleston, 2002: 1376). Consider a passage from Charlotte Brontë’s Shirley (Moscow, 1956):

No human evidence would ever have been able to persuade Martin Yorke that he blushed when thus addressed; yet blush he did, to the ears.

Under the circumstances the logical stress falls on the auxiliary verb, which suggests that the process presents given information. As for the auxiliary verb, it carries the logical stress and is, consequently, rhematic or “the

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4 Semantically, the sentence is based on participants, processes, and circumstances, e.g. Mary (participant) wrote a letter (process) yesterday (circumstance). For more information, see Halliday (1985).
news”. This strange symbiosis of given and new information expressed by the process presented in an analytical way allows the writer to incorporate a ‘new’ element into the old one. Cf. As for blushing, he did (blush), where did (blush) expresses the most important information.

To front the process, we can nominalize it and use it as marked Theme of the sentence. Cf.:

_Columbus discovered America in 1492. His discovery ushered in a new era in the history of the world._  Cf. Lith.

_Kolumbas atrado Ameriką 1492 metais. Jo atradimas pradėjo naują pasaulio istorijos erą._

To this end, the speaker can also use gerundive and infinitival constructions. Cf.:

A.

A. _Should she clean the house every day?_  
_B. Her cleaning the house every day is not necessary._  Cf. Lith.

_Kasdien valyti namų jai nebūtina._

B.

_It was such fun to play with him!_  
_Cf. Lith._

_Buvo taip smagu žaisti su juo._  
_Cf. Lith._

_That’s rather difficult to explain it._  
_Cf. Lith._

_Gana sunku tai paaiškinti._  
_Cf. Lith._

_It was a pleasure to work with her._  
_Cf. Lith._

_Buvo malonu dirbti su ja._  
_Cf. Lith._
In transformational grammar, the thematic fronting of a sentence constituent is referred to as the raising of a constituent.

Even whole finite predicative units can be raised to the rank of the Theme:

A. Will he accept the proposal?
B. Whether or not he will do it remains to be seen.

Cf. Lith.

Ar jis priims ar nepriims pasiūlymą, lieka neaišku.

It will be obvious that such sentence constituents sound more natural in sentence-final position.

We seem to have said enough about the thematization of sentence semantic constituents. It is time to say something about the rhematization of constituents. Ideally, the Rheme should be placed in sentence-final position. However, in English this is not always possible. Even existential sentences may not follow the Theme-Rheme sequences. Cf.:

There was a stranger in the room. vs. A stranger was in the room.

Although linguists generally frown upon such sentences as A stranger was in the room, writers do use them. As for the other types of sentence (sentences of doing, happening, mental perceptions, saying, relation (see Halliday, 1985)), the Rhemes typically occur in sentence-final position. Consider:

Mary is writing a letter (The Rheme is a letter).
The old man is dying (The Rheme is dying).
She does not understand her husband (The Rheme is her husband).
He always tells the truth (the Rheme is the truth).
Jane is a teacher (the Rheme is a teacher).

The Rheme is the most important part of the sentence. Being the most important, it is often fronted to give it greater prominence. Any fronting of the Rheme adds a new shade to it. Consider:
Mary was writing a letter. vs. A letter Mary was writing!

It was a letter that Mary was writing.
What Mary was writing was a letter.

As can be seen, fronting a rhematic constituent is associated with a contrast (emphasis): A letter [not an essay] Mary was writing. English, unsimilar to Lithuanian, has two special contrast-expressing patterns: the it-cleft pattern and the what-cleft (or pseudo-cleft) pattern.

Thus far our analysis has been concerned with the Rheme expressed by a non-predicative unit. Rhemes can also be expressed by finite predicative units, i.e. full clauses. Cf.:

It’s a nuisance having to get up that early on a Sunday morning → Having to get up that early on a Sunday morning is a nuisance.
It’s strange that we’ve never met before. → That we have never met before is strange.
It’s horrifying to see how much poverty there is here. → To see how much poverty there is here is horrifying.

Such sentences exemplify the process of the thematization of a predication, or the thematic extrapolposition of a predication. According to Downing & Locke (2005: 260), “certain types of long subject clauses are usually avoided in English because they violate the end-weight principle, and sound awkward”. Therefore, such clauses are more natural in sentence-final position, i.e. when they function as Rhemes. When used in this position, they “satisfy the principles of end-weight and end-focus, thus ‘packaging’ the information in a way that is easier to process” (ibid., 200).

Summary

Communicatively, the sentence falls into two parts: one part expresses given information, which is used as the Theme; the other expresses new in-
formation, which is used as the *Rheme*. Given information can be recovered from the preceding text or may not (recall the now famous sentence *Once upon a time there lived a king*, where *once upon a time*, although presenting given information is not recoverable from an explicit text). New information is information not generally inferable by the addressee from the preceding text. However, there are cases when new information is expressed by given information. This paradoxical situation can be accounted for by the fact that the speaker often ‘recycles’ given information by telling the addressee what new relationship the entity expressing given information enters into the sentence, e.g. *Mary is getting married to John*. This sentence tells the addressee that *John* is entering into a new relationship with *Mary*: *John* is becoming Mary’s husband. When given information is recycled into new information, it always tells the addressee something important about it.

Given and new information is related to the position of the constituents of the sentence: *given* constituents, if used as the point of departure, generally precede *new* constituents. English, being a predominantly analytic language, cannot always begin sentences with the *Theme*. To do it, English uses several strategies: the *passive voice*, *reversals*, *fronting*. As for new information, it is generally (but not always) placed in sentence-initial position. To give it greater prominence, the speaker can front it or use the *what-cleft* and *it-cleft* constituents. Given information is directly related to language economy: “the more the two speakers have in common, the less language they’ll need to use to identify familiar things” (Yule, op. cit., 8). Given information in a visually shared situation can be identified by the mere use of demonstratives, e.g. *Show me this (that), please*. In a visually non-shared situation, given information is either pronominalized or suppressed, e.g. *Who is absent today? John* (the given information *is absent today* is suppressed). As can be seen, the economy of language is achieved here in three ways: 1) by the use of the so-called pure deictics; 2) by the pronominalization of given information; 3) by the suppression of linguistic structures expressing given information.
Check yourself test

A. Discuss the following:

1. What is given information? How is it generated by the speaker?
2. Given and new information as the informational basis of the sentence.
3. The relationship of given information to the Theme of the sentence.
4. Fronting of the Theme in English and Lithuanian.

B. Segment the following texts into Given-New and Theme-Rheme units.

High above the city, on a tall column, stood the statue of the Happy Prince. He was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold, for eyes he had two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby glowed on his sword hilt.

He was very much admired, indeed. “He is as beautiful as a weathercock”, remarked one of the Town Councillors who wished to gain a reputation for having artistic tastes, “only not quite so useful”, he added, fearing lest people should think him unpractical, which he really was not. (Oscar Wilde, Fairy Tales).

But now they came to the mouth of the harbour and Mrs. Macphail joined them. The ship turned sharply and steamed slowly in. It was a great landlocked harbour big enough to hold a fleet of battleships, and all around it rose, high and steep, the green hills. Near the entrance, getting such breeze as blew from the sea, stood the governor’s house in a garden. The Stars and Stripes dangled languidly from a flagstaff. (W. Somerset Maugham, Rain and Other Short Stories).
C. **Arrange the following in the correct order. Introduce other elements if necessary. Translate the sentences into Lithuanian and compare them from the point of view of the word order.**

**Thematic constituents**

1. Tallinn, capital of Estonia, a three day conference of musicologists be held
2. The musicologists of the three Baltic states get together, discuss urgent problems of musicology
3. The State Publishing House of Tallinn, capital of Estonia devote one of its first Jubilee publications to Lithuania include articles and essays on Lithuania’s economic and cultural achievements
4. The volume end here, in Vilnius

5. The traditional conference of psychologists of the Baltic states

6. Attending it, be guests from other countries

7. Lithuania play host to a group of Translators of Lithuanian Literature into foreign languages, recently

8. Among the guests, be well-known translators of foreign literature

**Rhematic constituents**

- a three day conference of musicologists
- get together, discuss urgent problems of musicology
- devote one of its first Jubilee publications to Lithuania
- include articles and essays on Lithuania’s economic and cultural achievements
- end here, in Vilnius

D. **Segment the following sentences into the Theme and the Rheme. Translate the sentences into Lithuanian. Compare the sentences from the point of view of word order.**

1. Next come pears, plums and cherries.
2. Here appears the great limitation of the book.
3. An old woman stood in the doorway.
4. Beyond the fields
stood the forest. 5. Inside on a wooden bunk lay a young Indian woman. 6. In the morning there was a big wind blowing. 7. There comes the moon. 8. Outside it was getting dark. 9. Outside the station a car was waiting for us. 10. Deep in the forest, hidden behind the trees, lay several men armed with rifles. 11. Taking part in the conference were representatives of all the Baltic states. 12. It was early morning. 13. Day was breaking when we set out. 14. Evening came. 15. John has arrived. 16. Two Indians stood waiting there. 17. Ahead there was a bridge. 18. In the five minutes a man came in. 19. Shots rang out. 20. A detachment of German soldiers entered a Russian village. On a cart pulling a field kitchen behind it, sat a tired looking lieutenant. 21. There are no people here. 22. The shooting began. 23. Once upon a time there lived a woman. 24. A tiger came out of the forest and got her spade back for her. 25. Seated in a row close to one another were three ladies. 26. In the centre of the room stood the head of the family old Jolyon himself. 27. Among the lace in the bosom of her dress was shining a five pointed star made of eleven diamonds. 28. There have been a number of raids on private houses in Surrey, Sussex and Hamphire during the past three months.

E. As a rule, the first part of the text developing sentence contains given information supplied by the context; this given information is usually the Theme of the sentence and constitutes the communicative point of departure for the rest of the sentence. Underline the Theme in each sentence. Translate the sentences into Lithuanian.

1. This book I haven’t read.
2. What annoys me is his behaviour towards me.
3. Her hair was hanging down her back.
4. As for John, he did not know anything about it.
5. Mel Gibson, he is a great actor.
6. He is a great scholar, John Smith.
7. His face, I am not fond of.
8. The poor children had nowhere to play.
9. In the centre of the grass plot was standing a beautiful rose tree.
10. What I did was leave the building.
11. It is the children Bob takes out every Saturday.
12. Every Saturday, Bob takes out the children.
13. Those bushes, the gardener wants to cut down this spring.
14. When the gardener wants to cut down those bushes is this spring.
15. In the evening we would sit by the fire.
16. Out of the room he marched.
17. In Rome I met you, and in Rome I shall marry you.
18. Into the heap of snow he fell with all his luggage.
19. In Spain people live on agriculture.
20. A beautiful girl came out on the balcony with her lover.

F. Change the communicative function of the constituents by changing the voice of sentences.

1. A man broke the window.
2. A big lorry hit the girl.
3. An unknown singer sang the song.
4. That anyone would try to lie to her annoyed her.
5. That there was so much to talk about the film astonished them.
6. The police caught George when he was trying to escape.
7. Somebody has stolen my car.
8. People always admire this picture.
9. Some people dress their children very badly.
10. No one has opened the box for the last hundred years.
11. People formerly used the Tower of London as a prison.
12. Somebody built this bridge last year.
13. They say he is a genius.
14. They report that a new planet has been discovered.

What is the communicative function of the Agents (if they are present) in the passive sentences? How can you explain their frequent omission?

G. To thematize a rhematic constituent, we can use converses. Change these sentences so that the rhematic constituent may become the Theme. Translate the sentences into Lithuanian.

1. A red sports car was behind the bus.
2. My house is next to the hospital.
3. John married Jane last Saturday.
4. A microscope was in the box.
5. George is different from my mother.
6. My old love letters were under other papers.
7. This story is very similar to the other one.
8. There are fifty maps in this atlas.
9. He forgot her name.
10. He does not fear the threat of prison.
11. I never noticed it.
12. I don’t believe his story.
13. I don’t understand her.
14. The idea appealed to him.

H. Cleft-sentences and pseudo-cleft sentences give rhematic prominence to a particular element of the sentence. For each sentence, write corresponding cleft- and pseudo-cleft sentences. Translate the sentences into Lithuanian.

1. John wore his best suit to the party last night.
2. She gave me a book on hypnosis yesterday.
3. We spent the last two years in Canada.
4. We put the parcel on the window sill.
5. George dyed his hair pink.
6. George does not like your being angry.
7. Jane has lost her keys.
8. He broke his leg while skiing.
9. In summer many people go to the seaside.
10. You need a good sleep.

I. Extrapolate the infinitives in the following sentences and compare the communicative functions of the non-fronted and fronted infinitives.

1. To teach her is a pleasure.
2. To convince him is really hard.
3. To understand her way of reasoning seems difficult.
4. To listen to him for longer than five minutes is unbearable.
5. To explain this phenomenon is quite a riddle.
6. To do this work in such a short time is impossible.
7. To go there today will be dangerous.
8. For you to marry that blonde would be madness.
9. To have done that would have been a suicide.
10. To have missed the train would have been a shame.
11. To take risks is foolish.
12. To please her is impossible.

J. Rephrase each sentence, first as an existential sentence with there + be and then as an existential sentence with have. Translate the sentences into Lithuanian.

1. Several friends of his are in China.
2. Some troubles are bothering me.
3. Many things are left for her to do.
4. About 200 names and addresses are in his notebook.
5. Some symptoms are worrying me.
6. Many ways of explaining her behaviour exist.
7. I do not doubt that he is honest.
8. Two buttons are missing on his coat.
9. A few supporters were helping him.
10. A brother of his is in the navy.
11. Loads of apples were on the trees.
12. Thirty-one days are in June.

K. Compare the following pairs of sentences. What influence does the extraposition transformation have on the distribution of the Theme and the Rheme? Translate the sentences into Lithuanian.

1. a) Whether you go there or not doesn’t really matter.
   b) It doesn’t really matter whether you go there or not.
2. a) How you do it is your problem.
   b) It is your problem how you do it.
3. a) To make a fool of yourself is a pity.
   b) It’s a pity to make a fool of yourself.
4. a) What you do doesn’t matter to me.
   b) It doesn’t matter to me what you do.
5. a) To hear him say that surprised me.
   b) It surprised me to hear him say that.
6. a) To see others enjoying themselves makes her happy.
   b) It makes her happy to see others enjoying themselves.
Sources

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