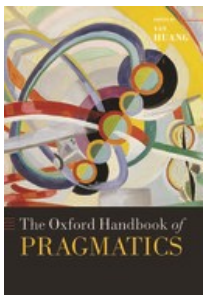

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CHAPTER

7 The Sociological Foundations of Pragmatics

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Abstract

This article shows how a purely descriptive view of language cannot account for what happens to the speaking individuals on the social plane. Approaches inspired by the sociology of language and by sociolinguistics have, each from their own perspectives, endeavoured to introduce an interpretive take on language use and language users. In parallel to this, but not always coterminous with it, developments in linguistics itself have led to the establishment of what has become known as 'pragmatics', or the study of human communicative means (especially language), as they are being used in the context of society. Some practical applications of this view are discussed, and the emancipatory potentials of a pragmatically oriented sociology and sociolinguistics are outlined.

Keywords: Societal pragmatics, commodification, cooperation, power, critical discourse study, habitus, speech acts, conversation analysis, emancipation

Subject: Pragmatics, Linguistics

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7.1 Introduction: Manipulation in the *agora*

PRAGMATICS, as a science, may be among the youngest developments in the study of language and human behaviour. As a practice, however, it goes back several thousands of years. Thucydides the historian tells us how the Athenian statesman Pericles addressed the mourners for the heroes of the first Peloponnesian War against Sparta. In his famous address in the winter of 431 BC, Pericles was keen to point out the merits and greatness of those who had made the ultimate sacrifice in defending the homeland (Thucydides, *Hist*. II: 35–46).

In addition, however (as is the case for all of the public speeches that are interspersed throughout Thucydides' account of the wars—which he simply called 'Histories'), it is altogether evident that the speeches were part of a sociological technique, intended to keep the Athenians in line, despite the deprivations of the Spartan blockade and the losses of their beloved. What Pericles did, in his speech, was to

use certain speech acts such as ‘praising’, ‘remembering’, ‘eulogizing’, ‘comforting the bereaved’, ‘expressing compassion’, ‘inciting to heroism and perseverance’, ‘appealing to eternal glory’, and so on, in order to generate and sustain enthusiasm for the disastrous adventure that was to spell the end of Athenian hegemony, after the wars finally came to a conclusion in 403 BC. In the same spirit, Thucydides had elsewhere (*Hist*. I: 22) coined the famous, everlasting phrases *ktêmá te es aeí*, ‘and a possession [acquired] for eternity’, rather than ‘a listening specimen for immediate consumption’, *agónisma es tò paraxrêma akoúein*, with reference to the recorded glories of the heroes, both ancient and modern, and to the services they had rendered to their city-state.

p. 133 As to Pericles’ own acts of speech, they not only deliver a linguistic/rhetorical message, but stand out as early instances of societal manipulation with the aid of language. Chiefly, his speech was intended to move the audience and encourage them to greater and continued sacrifices; in this, Pericles’ purported intentions coincided with the historian Thucydides’ own motivation for embarking on his writing project. Thus, there is a clear correlation between the author’s professed interest in *describing* the happenings of the war (which appeared to be of unique interest, a kind of ‘historical first’, as Thucydides remarks in his introductory chapters) and the hidden agenda of the politician, who seeks to move the wheels of history in the direction of his own preferences, and takes a value-laden *stance* towards those same happenings. As we will see in the sequel, what happened on that cold December day of 431 BC in the Athenian *agora*[1] is emblematic for much of what people, millennia later, came to focus on under the label of ‘societally relevant linguistic practice’, aka. pragmatics.

7.2 Drama in Innsbruck, 1974

I have referred to the work of Thucydides, not to lecture my readers on Greek history or literature, but in order to make a point that I deem of relevance for the question of what counts as societal pragmatics today, and how it relates to earlier sociologically and sociolinguistically based traditions. Let me start by recounting a personal experience.

In 1974, I was lecturing as a guest professor at various Austrian universities. During my stay at Innsbruck, I gave a talk on the aims and methods of pragmatics, which was then still a relatively young branch of the language sciences, and in which I had become increasingly interested after moving back to Europe from the USA a few years earlier. I had come to realize that the true value of linguistic studies was not in the exact description of languages—however meritorious an effort in itself—but in the way linguistic knowledge could be put to use in a social context, among other things by situating the users of language, and the texts produced by them, within a wider societal framework.

At one point during the first part of my lecture, a gentleman on the second row to the left jumped to his feet, and shouted (in German, which was the language of the lecture): ‘Aber das ist keine Linguistik, sondern angewandte Soziologie!’ (‘But that is not linguistics but applied sociology’)—upon which he stormed out of the auditorium, slamming shut the door behind him. As I recall it, the reaction of the audience was mild consternation and a certain measure of embarrassment at this rather unexpected and unacademic
p. 134 behaviour on the part of one of their faculty. Following the ↳ interruption, I picked up where I had left off, and afterwards had a lively and fruitful discussion with the remaining professors and their students in a nearby pub.

I have often thought back to this incident as a defining moment in my career, a watershed, one could say. I became aware of what had been my problem with linguistics all along, even when I still was being taught the trade and its tricks. What was missing was the ‘applied’ element, or more precisely, the human factor involved in language and its use. In those early days, when I was a student of the celebrated Louis Hjelmslev (1899–1965) at Copenhagen, I was given to understand that linguistics should stay away from any socially

oriented interests and problems, and concentrate on the task at hand: describing languages and writing grammars, in the tradition of the great Danish philologist Rasmus Rask (1787–1832). As it was once pithily expressed by my late Swedish linguist friend Bengt Loman (1923–1993), professor at Åbo University: 'Linguists should write grammars, and do nothing else; that's the way they earn their keep.'

Any explanatory trends in language studies were thus kept strictly within the confines of linguistics itself (defined as an 'immanent science' by Hjelmslev, in the Saussurean tradition). Any 'outside' explanations of linguistic behaviour, such as people's motivation for using a particular expression, or the possible influence of developing users on the evolution of the spoken language, a question that had already fascinated the French comparativist Antoine Meillet (1866–1936) in the early years of the past century ('every time a child learns to speak, innovations are being introduced'; Meillet 1937 [1922]: 19),[2] had been outlawed by most contemporary philologists and were considered to be strictly outside the pale of linguistic descriptive endeavour. As the American Romanist Robert Hall, Jr (1911–1997) remarked some fifty years later, if one has obtained a complete description of a language, covering its phonology, morphology, and syntax (with some semantics thrown in for good measure), then to ask for further explanation is not only misguided but outright 'childish' (in Hall's own words; see the *Language* article he published in 1978, reviewing Pizzorusso 1975). In other words, my Austrian colleague's utterance (though perhaps not his 'extralinguistic' behaviour) was completely rational and understandable: I wasn't preaching to the linguistic choir, but rather inserting a dissonant motif in the discourse of my colleagues and—who knows—perverting their young students' tender minds.

7.3 A Tale of Two Brothers: Of Cooperation and Power

The split between a pure theoretical way of doing science and a more 'applied', even humanistic, way is of course not restricted to the language studies. And this is where the two brothers come into the picture. I was
p. 135 raised in a family of economists, where ↳ the brothers Abraham and Jacob Louis (II) not only had gained their doctorates in economics more or less at the same time, in the mid-forties of the past century, but also each had secured a chair in economics at their respective universities within years of each other. Given this parallel development, one would perhaps assume that the brothers had some properties in common, or some subjects of mutual interest they could discuss. But nothing could be farther from the truth. According to student ear-witnesses, the brother-professors spent much of their teaching time trying to undo the other's ways of practising science; they did this principally by making defamatory remarks about what the other brother was doing in the common area of business economics.

There may be more at stake here than a family feud, fired and fueled by brotherly envy. The split between a pure descriptive science, such as business economics, and a science that aims for explanations, as does its sister counterpart, the 'dismal science' of social economy—the expression is due to the nineteenth-century philosopher-author Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881)—is iconic for much of what has happened in the humanities in general, and in the study of language in particular. Brother Jacob's[3] attitude towards his science reminds one of Robert Hall's: just give us the facts, don't ask for more. In studying economic phenomena, Jacob prefers to focus on the organizational and technical aspects of the production process; 'human' considerations having to do with labour (like considering the workforce as more than just a cost factor) are foreign to him, as are the consumer aspects of economy in general. In remarks made in 1963, at a conference in honour of the ninetieth birthday of the Genevan emeritus professor and renowned socialist thinker, Edgard Milhaud (1873–1964), Jacob observed that he will only deal with the theme of the conference, 'cooperation', in terms of production; consumption and its related problems are purposely left out (Mey 1963: 235). In his reply, the person who had been the target of Jacob's remarks, Gerhard Weisser (1898–1989), professor in the University of Bonn, observed that 'purely economic attitudes simply don't

exist', and that 'extra-economic objectives' have to be recognized as legal (1963: 303; Weisser's contribution was called 'Cooperative Planning').

In contrast to this, consider brother Abraham's[4] career path. Over time, in addition to his economic and artistic interests, Abraham developed a distinctly social consciousness (something for which brother Jacob saw fit to ridicule him, as on the occasion of Abraham's joining the Oxford Movement in the late thirties). It irked Jacob that his brother (who by now had taken the proto-biblical name of Abram) had obtained a position at the more prestigious, established university of Amsterdam, while he himself had to work hard to
p. 136 get the newly founded Department of Economics ↳ at Groningen University off the ground, and later to create what was to become the Dutch Graduate School of Economics at Rotterdam.

The brothers' diverging activities were reflected also in the books they wrote. While Abram co-published a three-volume treatise on 'Man and Society' (Heymans and Mey 1946), Jacob at about the same time became the author of a successful textbook (Mey 1946), again illustrating the difference between his brother's approach to their common science and his own. As to Abram's work, this was carried out in cooperation with an expert on organizational theory and practice, Ernst Heymans (sometimes spelled Hymans or Hijmans), a person who, despite his technical-economic background and formation (he had a doctoral degree in engineering), was likewise interested in the problems surrounding the human use of technology and economics.

Abram's 'unscientific' approach to science was the subject of much scorn and ridicule from Jacob, who opined that any such interests only reflected his brother's insufficient grasp of economic theory and its applications. Contrary to this, Abram wrote in his introduction that he had been taught by the events of the recent years (he was writing during the last months of WWII) that a purely economic approach to economic problems would not be able to solve the human problems involved in economic behaviour, in particular those involving cooperation (which also was to be the subject of Jacob's somewhat bellicose intervention at the 1963 conference, while commenting on its general theme).

Cooperation is a theme that is well known to pragmaticists, beginning with the work of the Oxford/Berkeley philosopher/linguist Paul Grice (1913–1988) in the sixties and seventies (Grice 1989a). Another main issue that is key in current pragmatic thinking (as opposed to purely descriptive approaches to linguistic issues) is that of *power* as a socially meaningful feature. As Abram Mey sagaciously (and much ahead of his time) opined in January 1945: 'Power is a socially useful factor, but its function is apt to become societally damaging when it is maintained unchanged under changing social conditions and the evolving infrastructures of society' (Heymans and Mey 1946: 145; my trans.). In this view, which is also the present author's, the study of human activities, as it is practised in the social sciences (economics, linguistics, and all the others), needs to be grounded in the realities of human social life. Just as social power loses its meaning when it is not framed within the human condition, so too does a description of social phenomena that is not firmly anchored in our everyday life-world.

In the following sections, I will reflect on the general implications of the two notions, cooperative behaviour and societal power, in a wider sociological and economic context.

7.4 Cooperation and its Discontents

From the very beginning of the human race, cooperation has been a condition *sine qua non* for our existence. The weaver can only consume so much of his own product (and in addition, since linen isn't edible, except to certain animals), he cannot survive directly off the output of his labour. Cooperation is necessary, so he
p. 137 finds somebody ↳ who will trade him some bread for a certain quantity of broadcloth (Karl Marx's classic example from *Capital*, Bk. I, 1; Marx 1946). However, even this simple cooperation is not without its problems. For one thing, it is difficult to arrive at a fair evaluation of the commodities offered for exchange. Here, Marx (re)introduced a much refined version of the classic 'labour theory of value', which had been around for many centuries (embryonic forms of the theory have even been ascribed to Aristotle and St Thomas Aquinas in early formulations). In this perspective, the value of the thing produced is directly related to the human producer and the efforts he or she has expended in its production; but subsequently, the product is turned into a commodity, destined to be exchanged in the market place, where "the value of the thing/is the price it will bring" (Marx, *Capital*, Bk. I, 1, fn. 16).

As I have observed elsewhere, this 'commodification' of human labour (Mey 1985: 321–322) is not without serious consequences, both for the producer and for the eventual consumer of the product. When 'value' is uniquely considered as 'value-in-the-market-place' ('exchange value', in Marx's terminology), the users of the product tend to establish a direct relation between 'value' and 'price', by endowing the commodity with an instant, almost natural, evaluation procedure: 'How much is it worth?' (meaning 'How much can it be bought or sold for?'). Such 'commodified' thinking subsequently extends to other spheres of the human activity as well; thus, 'How much is s/he worth?' is a common query, intended to establish a person's financial and general reliability. In our thoughts, we tend to attach a numerical, 'marketable' quality to everything we are dealing with, including our social, educational, and personal relationships. We are asked to judge our successes or failures in terms of five- or ten-point scales, all the way from kindergarten to university, in questionnaires and applications, and everywhere we are liable to be compared with others, publicly or privately.

The pragmatic impact of all this is considerable. If words express the 'practical consciousness' of a society (Marx and Engels 1974: 51), it should be clear that our thinking about the world in terms of saleable commodities, to be exchanged in some kind of marketplace, will affect our speaking, our use of words, our language. As my old comrade-in-arms, the Yale University emeritus professor of the philosophy of religion, Louis Dupré once wrote: 'consciousness is not an independent factor; it is determined by language, and language arises out of social relations, which themselves depend on the material production' (Dupré 1966: 155). Again, the dangers inherent in splitting between a quantitative, 'description only' approach and a holistic, qualitative attitude to human production (material or spiritual) become evident; I will come back to this aspect of a sociological concern with human activity in the next section.

7.5 The End(s) of Sociology

A common sociological approach to describing human linguistic activity is to establish a relationship between social class as defined by, say, income and varying uses of languages or dialects. To do this
p. 138 properly, one has to undertake a thorough analysis ↳ of what actually transpires when humans interact; to this end, researchers like the late Japanese Takesi Sibata (1918–2007) or the American William Labov charted their subjects' behaviour in the minutest of fashions, using all available recording and analysing devices and methods. Well known is Sibata's '24-hour' method, in which he observed language users in their natural habitat for lengthy stretches of time and subsequently analysed the film and audio recordings of the interaction to establish patterns of speech, choices of words, use of dialects and specialized terminology, and so on (Sibata 1951). Labov, using his famous 'fourth floor' method, elicited responses from workers in a New York department store in order to figure out to what degree and under what conditions they would 'sound' their [r]s in a word like 'floor' (pronounced [floah] vs [floar]; Labov 1972). Here, too, the idea was to have the observed be 'unobserved', so as to guarantee the authenticity of the observations, and to be able to deduce valid, objective conclusions about the social differentiation of certain pronunciations.

In these and similar experiments, the emphasis is on an accurate and meticulous description of the phenomena; the analysis will go no further than pointing out the correlations (if any) that can be found between, say, a person's social standing (low, middle, upper class, as measured by family income) and his or her ways of speaking. What is left out in this kind of approach is the perception of the speaking subject as a social being. Sociality here is a matter of registration, not of understanding or interpretation; especially the latter was considered taboo by many of the classic sociologists, against whom the German Max Weber (1864–1920) had to defend his 'interpretive' sociological method (on which below). How the subjects would handle a situation where their speech could possibly 'betray' them, or where their command of the spoken word turned out to be insufficient (due to the speakers' low social stance and/or lacking education), and other related problems are not even touched upon in this purely descriptive sociology, or in a sociolinguistics that takes its cues from there. As in the case of social economics referred to earlier, it is not enough to describe the phenomena, one must also 'save' them (to borrow an expression dear to Greek and other philosophers since Plato); that is to say, the phenomena must be given an interpretation that makes them make sense in the context in which they occur—in our case, where speech is being exercised.

My use of the term 'interpretation' undoubtedly will remind many readers of the work of Max Weber, one of the most insightful sociologists of the two centuries his lifetime bridged. Weber's notion of 'understanding' (*Verstehen*) social phenomena rejects an appeal to intuition as a way of interpreting; on the other hand, Weber also shuns the automatism by which certain theoreticians concluded from societal categories to individual social phenomena such as language use. Fortunately for Weber, he did not live to see the extremes to which this latter line of thinking could lead, as in the case of early Soviet Marxism; he was lucky, too, not to have to witness the infamous thirties' and forties' Soviet debates on the 'homespun' Marxist theories preached by the linguist Nikolaj Ja. Marr (1865–1934), according to whom the only
p. 139 acceptable social 'interpretation' of language was as a superstructure of society—an error which no one ↳ less than Josef Stalin himself had to put down in his well-known diatribes on language and society, published in the Moscow newspaper *Pravda* a few years before the dictator's death in 1953.

For Weber, in order to understand a cultural artifact (e.g. language), one must be able to connect it—not just to the objective societal context of production, but also to the subjective context of the individual users: to their intentions, beliefs, purposes, and desires. Weber's notion of 'understanding' (*Verstehen*, as the term is mostly quoted, in the original German) implies a 'seeing things from the perspective of the person' (Bainbridge 1998: 915), and thus contains the implicit answer to a question often raised in connection with debates on the societal status of language: 'How to include the subjective nature of the humans' condition in

a consideration of the same humans' objective positions in society, and their being limited, indeed to some degree determined, by the societal conditions of their life-world?'

Irrespective of how one answers this question, the influence of Weber's thoughts has put the matter on the agenda and redefined sociology's goals, specifying a new 'end' of sociology, while at the same time signalling the 'end' of classical, purely descriptive social science (Weber 1949). Years later, the eminent linguistic anthropologist Dell Hymes (1927–2009) argued similarly, and successfully, against the sterile descriptivism in linguistic matters preached by Noam Chomsky and his followers (Hymes 1984); Hymes underscored the need to include the social functions—the same functions that Weber originally had defined as essential for his view of understanding, and by the same token saving, the social phenomena.

7.6 Sociology and Sociolinguistics

It is customary to partition the intersecting areas of social and linguistic theories according to whether they consider themselves as linguistic theories informed by a social point of view, or as theories of social phenomena, envisioned under a linguistic angle. In the first case, we usually refer to these theories as belonging to *sociolinguistics*, while in the second case, we talk about the *sociology of language*. I think that the distinction, while practically motivated as a division of labour, does not hold water, theoretically: the social and linguistic phenomena can be distinguished, but not partitioned; that is, they cannot be separated or defined, and certainly cannot be studied, in abstract isolation. All language presupposes a social formation both for its origin and for its use; conversely, human social formations cannot be imagined without the use of language (at least not as far as we are able to ascertain with the aid of history).

As we have seen, the early sociologists of language concentrated on the descriptive aspects. In the words of the American sociologist Joshua Fishman, what is needed is 'a reliable and insightful description of any *existing* patterns of social organization in language use and behavior toward language' (Fishman 1972: 47; emphasis original); such patterns are displayed in attitudes and policies towards phenomena such as (stable
p. 140 or ↳ unstable) bilingualism (Fishman 1972: 52–53), and in debates on the need to govern language use through language policies of various sorts, including aid to be given to endangered varieties or languages (such as Fishman's own Yiddish). Similarly, in an early article, the British linguist John R. Firth (1890–1960) stressed the need to study what he termed the 'context of situation' (Firth 1964b: 66)—a term that originally goes back to the Polish-British anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski (1884–1942), and was to echo in the work of sociologists, sociolinguists, and pragmaticists throughout the decades to come; the British-born Australian Michael A. K. Halliday comes to mind as a prime instance (see Halliday 1989). Firth himself, however, did not follow up on this early conceptualization; still, his notion of 'serial contextualization' was a prelude to much of the later work in what Fishman came to call 'the dynamic sociology' of language (1972: 51).

One researcher who devoted his entire life to creating a synthesis of the two aspects mentioned above was the Frenchman Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002). Starting out from his personal experiences in Algeria during the independence wars, he gradually embraced a comprehensive view of human practice. According to Bourdieu, one should be careful not to take human activity as a deterministic reaction of individuals to pre-established conditions and emerging stimuli: 'it is necessary to abandon all theories which explicitly or implicitly treat practice as a mechanical reaction, directly determined by the antecedent conditions and entirely reducible to the mechanical functioning of preestablished assemblies [or] models' (1977: 73). Individual activity does not, by itself, lead to societal organization; the fact that people act in some kind of collectivity does not automatically index the presence of interaction.

In order to coordinate the activities involved in social practice, humans have to communicate; the development of language is related to this practice, in particular the tool-making and tool-using processes

that are specific for human activity (Mey 1985: ch. 3.3). What is needed is communicative *interaction*: individuals acting with (or against) one another and communicating against the backdrop of the 'equalities and inequalities' that are the primordial parameters of any society, as stated by the French philosopher Jacques Rancière (1995: 19). Again, we see how the purely descriptivist model of studying human activity is superseded by an interpretive way of looking at the ongoing action. But how does one get from *action* to societally oriented *inter*action?

For interaction to happen, and to be intelligible both to the interactants and the observers, one has to suppose something more than just activity. Conversely, 'the truth of the interaction is never entirely contained in the interaction' (Bourdieu 1977: 81), but points to the conditions of society that vouchsafe and sanction the ongoing action, which always occurs in a climate of opposing tendencies (cf. Rancière's 'equalities and inequalities'). When these oppositions are resolved in human interaction, a 'common-sensical' system of values, 'a commonsense world' is established. This system is 'taken for granted' by all, 'endowed with the objectivity secured by consensus on the meaning of practices and the world' (Bourdieu 1977: 80).

p. 141 Bourdieu is here up against the same dilemma that had plagued Weber: how to establish an objective way of interpreting social phenomena that are the 'property' of individuals? For Bourdieu, objectivity is not the objective quality of experiments in the natural sciences, which may be repeated ad infinitum with the same invariable results. Human 'experiments' are founded in human experience, and as a result, they can never be the same. Because humans learn from experience, their past experiences colour that which is experienced at a later date, and thus never replicate, but either reinforce or diminish the experience of the original experiment. The objectivity that Bourdieu talks about is located in the 'objective intentions' of the interactive process, and should not be confused with the subjective intentions of the interactants; what he calls the *habitus* is conceived of as a 'picking up' of the objective intentions without necessarily reactivating the lived intention of the individual human agents (1977: 80).

Neither should the habitus-forming processes be linked exclusively to the ontogeny of the subjects, although it is in a person's upbringing that the habitus is formed; the habitus transcends the individual's personal history as an unwritten, inborn law, without which any upbringing would be inefficient and indeed gratuitous. Upbringing, in Bourdieu's view, is nothing but the 'internalization of … objective structures as dispositions' (ibid.) which, because they are not bound to a particular place or time or individual, are called 'transposable' ('portable', as one would say, in the parlance of the computer, of a programme that is not bound to any particular configuration or machine).

As a principle governing societal interaction, the habitus is dialectically placed between the objective conditions encountered as 'nature' or 'world', and the subjective categories through which we interpret the world. The human activity aims at overcoming contrary societal tendencies such as: fact vs representation (or 'view'), personal preference vs the common good, equality vs inequality, immigrants as threatening aliens vs immigrants as indispensable workforce, and so on and so forth. The point to focus on here is that these oppositions are neither objective (in the sense that one can 'prove' them experimentally, as we discussed earlier), nor are they created purely in the mind of the beholder, as it is often argued in today's public debates when it comes to discussing problems of integration and assimilation with reference to the immigrant population.

By stressing the role of activity and interaction in the production and reproduction of society, Bourdieu has laid the groundwork for an objective evaluation of the societal formation, whose 'sexual division of labour, domestic morality, cares, strife, tastes, etc. produces the structures of the habitus which become in turn the basis of perception and appreciation of all subsequent experiences' (1977: 78). Consequently, the habitus is needed to guarantee an effective practice of communication through language, using the linguistic structures that are given us by our nature and culture. In Bourdieu's pithy formulation, '[habitus is]

structured structures turning into structuring structures' (1977: 73), 'history turned into nature' (ibid.: 78), our *natura secunda*, to borrow a term originally due to Aristotle and St Augustine. In the next section, I will show how this view reflects itself in contemporary studies of human linguistic behaviour.

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7.7 Ethnography and Context

In contrast to 'armchair' sociologists such as Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) and Weber, Bourdieu was thrust into the middle of events through his forced presence at the upheavals surrounding Algeria's transition in the 1950s from French colony to an independent Islamic state. His burgeoning ethnographic interest was later solidified and anchored in the sociological traditions still lingering in Paris after the great Durkheim's much too early demise—traditions which Bourdieu vigorously and successfully set out to revitalize. At about the same time, as we have seen earlier, the American linguistic anthropologist Hymes started publishing his seminal works on the 'ethnography of speaking' (1962), later expanded by himself and his collaborator, the late John Gumperz, into the 'ethnography of communication' (Gumperz and Hymes 1964, 1986 [1972]).

It was especially John J. Gumperz (1922–2012) who built a bridge from ethnographic observation to sociological interpretation to sociolinguistic explanation of the phenomena in the borderland of language, culture, 'habitus', and society. And this is also how the label 'speech' came to be replaced by that of 'communication' in Gumperz's (as well as in Hymes's later) works. Central to Gumperz's thinking is the notion of *contextualization*, where 'context' is not just seen as some textual material surrounding a given word or phrase, but rather comprises the entire gamut of possible features that influence the 'speaking' (including the use of gestures, gaze, mouth and other body movements, and so on). Contrary to the methods of certain sociologists and sociolinguists who construed a possible sentence and then inquired about the ways it could be spoken, or be given meaning, Gumperz, in the descriptive tradition of ethnography, set out to observe what was going on in real interaction, and only then took up residence in the famous armchair to distill and concentrate his findings in written form, as in the celebrated 1972 article, co-authored with the Norwegian sociologist Jan-Petter Blom, on the use of socially determined linguistic forms in the Northern Norwegian dialect of the village of Hemnes (Gumperz and Blom 1986 [1972]). Even though the conclusions drawn in this early article have been partially impugned since then (see Mælum 1996), the fact remains that we are dealing with a landmark in the history of sociolinguistics (and indirectly, pragmatics). For the first time, one was witnessing an *ad oculos* demonstration of the influence of social factors on language choice—as an objectively established phenomenon which, in the Bourdieuian tradition, could even be thought of as 'automatic' (Bourdieu 1991).

But speech is not the only (or even sometimes the major) component of the communicative situation. As Gumperz observes, 'communicating is not just a question of individuals translating their ideas into lexically and grammatically meaningful utterances' (Gumperz 1996: 379). Rather, the communicative agents must learn to interpret their utterances in accordance with the *context* in which they are speaking. This
p. 143 interpretive contextualization depends on 'online assessments' made by the ↳ speakers, trying to adjust their expectations to what they have heard so far, and to what they might anticipate as a result of that hearing. Here, Gumperz says, 'we are always faced with an array of potentially situated interpretations such that the significance of what happens at any one point can only be understood in relation to what precedes and what follows' (Gumperz 1996: 375).

To choose intelligently from an array of situations, we need what Gumperz calls 'contextualization cues', verbal and non-verbal signs that tell us how to interpret the utterances we are confronted with; such cues are indispensable elements in our communicative interaction (Gumperz 1992a). Among the contextualization cues that Gumperz discusses are mainly those of the prosodic type (Gumperz 1996: 366):

for instance, they can be loudness or pitch, when used to mark off a segment of speech rhetorically, or emphasize its content. One may also think of the rules for taking turns, as they have been described in conversation analysis (on which see section 7.8); other cues may be so-called 'parentheticals' or discourse markers of the type 'you know'. Here, again, there are huge differences from culture to culture, language to language; one need only think of the ordered sequences of turns in British or American conversation, as compared to the 'polyphonic' (or should we say cacophonic?) *mêlées* that are common in other cultures. The US linguistic anthropologist John B. Haviland has provided us with some delightful examples from Zinacantan, a Mayan language spoken in the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico (Haviland 1997: 548), where speakers claim their turns simultaneously; at the end of several bouts of such a conversational 'tug-of-war' one speaker emerges at the top of the roost (see Mey 2001: 270–271).

In order to understand the mechanisms governing such 'unruly' behaviour, one should expand the notion of context of situation, referred to earlier, to also comprise the 'unknown unknowns', the invisible invisibles present in every human encounter. Erving Goffman (1922–1982), the American sociologist, tried to do this by replacing 'situation' with 'setting', a concept that incorporates those invisible elements that steer and determine the conduct of the interactants, even without their knowing it; their 'tacit' knowledge of those features is incorporated in their behaviour, and does not always lead to what Goffman called 'writable statements' (1972: 65)—in fact, many of the properties defining or changing a particular setting are manifested as 'extralinguistic acts' (such as changing one's body posture or voice intonation; cf. Goffman 1972: 66).

Among the invisibles that are most often overlooked in interaction are those that can be attributed to what I have called the context's 'unseen, but by no means sleeping partner', viz., the 'invisible hand' of society (Mey 1985: 336). Using a current (perhaps more adequate) formulation, one could speak of the interaction's contextual embedding in a particular 'social field' (a term originally due to Bourdieu). As the contemporary American anthropologist and linguist William F. Hanks remarks, 'to study context is to study embedding; … context *is* embedding relations' (2006a: 120–121; emphasis original). Context is not to be regarded as an 'add-on' feature; rather, it is there all the time, but as a truly invisible embedding. (See further, section 7.10.)

p. 144 As to the social field itself, it determines the scope and relevance of what our interaction can be about, and how we structure and realize it; compare such social fields as the hospital, the university, a professional office (a doctor's, a lawyer's, etc.), the courtroom, the religious gathering (such as a Quaker Friends' meeting), and so on. There, embedding is at work *socially*, but it is not recognized as such until a breach in the interaction occurs and sanctions are imposed, whose seriousness depends on the nature of the contravention and on the (il)legitimacy of the participant(s) in question (whether they are 'ratified' or not, to use Goffman's terms). To put it as a slogan (*pace* Hamlet): there is more to context than is thought of in your context.

7.8 Embedding in Action: Conversation Analysis

It has often been remarked (e.g. by Levinson in his 1983 magisterial treatise *Pragmatics*) that conversation is the matrix of human linguistic endeavour, 'the prototypical kind of language usage' (1983: 284). To fathom the importance of that remark, one has to situate the beginnings of conversation analysis (CA) where they historically belong: in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Those were the heady times of Chomsky's super-structuralism, when language was thought of as a system of rules, installed in the native speaker and manifested through the 'performance' of his linguistic 'competence'. Little thought was given to the speaker (or hearer) himself: he (never a she!) was merely an idealized, mostly male, embodiment of the language's structural system. Questions of context were thought to disturb the process of analysing the 'language' (which itself was a pale reflection of how people really spoke in their daily encounters, aka. conversation).

Having its roots in sociology, CA has always been true to its sociological origins (cf. Hutchby and Wooffitt 1997: ch. 1), even though in many ways, and in the work of many researchers, it has come close to being identified with either applied linguistics, pragmatics, or even communication theory. The truth of the matter is that conversation analysts, in the wake of the groundbreaking work done by Harvey Sacks (1935–1975) and his collaborators, are working with *real* linguistic data, in contrast to (and often conflicting with) the armchair theories of the official linguists and the sanitized pieces of linguistic material that were their mainstay. Sacks had been inspired by the work of the American sociologist Harold Garfinkel (1917–2011), the founder of the 'ethnomethodological method' in social sciences (Garfinkel 1967; Heritage 1984), by which social phenomena are supposed to be explained based on the actions, decisions, and viewpoints of the 'members' rather than by 'grand theories' and universal social categories. Sacks' own work on telephone conversations brought him to the idea that humans organize their social world through 'talk', that is, by establishing the speech categorizations they need on an ad hoc but motivated basis. Applied to ordinary conversation, Sacks found that ordinary talk never was just that, but served to delimit and categorize the social world in which we live (Sacks 1995).

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Conversation analysis is best known for its meticulous rendering of 'talk-in-interaction', by making use of a sophisticated transcription technique, chiefly due to Gail Jefferson (1938–2008), one of Sacks' earliest co-workers, and for laying down the ground rules for an ordered conversation, which always takes place in well-defined turns. As a corollary, the value of a conversational contribution cannot be determined on the basis of the given 'input' alone: what is important is the outcome, the way the turn is taken up by the co-conversationalists.

An important element in this thinking is the concept of *adjacency*, by which a turn's first part 'expects' a suitable second part, or if such a part is not available, immediately will construe the available half-turn as being suitable. This great flexibility in interpreting human linguistic behaviour is a feature that ethnomethodologists and conversation analysts share with a pragmatic approach to interaction. Still, it would be wrong to overlook the conversation analysts' theoretical disdain for the influence that the 'organized segment' of society in which interaction takes place, exerts on the interaction, in favour of the members' own 'construction of reality'—a term originally due to the German-US sociologist Alfred Schütz (1899–1959), in works such as *The Meaningful Construction of the Social World* (1932/1967). Typically, recent trends in CA tend to adopt a more pragmatically oriented view by emphasizing the institutionalization of conversation in the form of 'talk-at-work' (Drew and Heritage 1992), where both the interaction and the institutional setting are respected as dialectical partners in such a construction.

7.9 Discourse Analysis

Early on, the Chomskyan postulate that human language use is best described in terms of well-formed sentences had been discredited both by sociologists and by linguists working in the sociolinguistic tradition. Similarly, the notion of a 'grammar' as the unique criterion for people's appropriate use of language fell into disrepute in the wake of the critique that was voiced against the strict codification of linguistic structure due to Chomsky and his followers. The Russian sociologist and semiotician Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975) argued that the proper unit of study for linguists and semioticians had to be the situated *utterance*, not the sentence: utterances express a language user's situatedness in the world, whereas sentences are mere abstract and incomplete representations of the same. Moreover, utterances are unique, while sentences may be repeated ad infinitum, as in the exemplifications of many linguists of the 'armchair' kind. 'Sentences are repeatable. Sentences are repeatable', as Bakhtin himself illustrates his point (1994: 108). By contrast, utterances are not repeatable: they always depend for their use and meaning on who says them and in what circumstances; and this is where *discourse* comes into the picture (Mey 2001: 199).

As pointed out by the Austrian sociolinguist and pragmaticist Martin Reisigl in a recent survey article (Reisigl 2011), the term 'discourse analysis' itself can be 'traced back to the American structuralist and
p. 146 distributionalist Zellig Harris' (1909–1992). ↳ In his influential work *Methods in Structural Linguistics* (Harris 1951), followed by an eponymous article in *Language* (Harris 1952), Harris distinguished between discourse analysis as dealing with linguistic description beyond the limits of a single sentence at a time, and discourse analysis as dealing with the relation between 'non-linguistic and linguistic behavior', or 'between "culture" and "language"' (Harris 1951: 1; Reisigl 2011: 11). As Reisigl further observes, Harris stuck to the first part of the alternative; as a result, discourse analysis was for a long time confined to the domain of 'text linguistics', whereas the second part did not gain proper traction until the 1970s and 1980s, when people like Bourdieu and Foucault managed to turn the discussion around.

The term 'discourse' gained in popularity as the emphasis shifted from the individual utterances to the (con)text in which the utterances were situated. Any analysis of discourse in this sense had to take into account that entire context, 'the ensemble of phenomena in and through which social production of meaning takes place, an ensemble which constitutes society as such' (Mumby and Stohl 1991: 315). Discourse is therefore not just a concatenation of sentences beyond the level of the individual sentence, a 'macro-sentence', to be analysed using the well-known methods of linguistics, where the text is seen as a structured complex of interdependent units, much like the sentence is built up as a connected whole of noun phrases, verb phrases, adverbs, prepositions, and so on (a conception defended by early text grammarians such as van Dijk 1977). Neither can discourse be conceived of as a kind of 'macro-speech act', or a sequence of such entities, where the governing principle is the intention of the speaker as expressed in speech acts in the Austin–Searle tradition (Austin 1962a; Searle 1969). If discourse, in the conceptual framework due to Michel Foucault (1926–1984), is the practice of making sense of signs (linguistic or otherwise), discourse is concerned with the active creation of meaning: it represents 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault 1972: 44).

The practice of discourse is the practice of society; in discourse, we 'word' societal matters, and conversely society 'words' itself in our common, social discourse. We saw how this view of discourse articulated itself in the very discourses that I referred to at the beginning of this chapter, viz., the type of public speeches that the Greek historian Thucydides puts in the mouths of his protagonists: their discourses were the voices of society, pronounced and diffused by its emblematic orators (in our case, Pericles). Consider also that the French term *discours* is eminently used for exactly this type of linguistic activity (see Roman 2006 on the typical Thucydidean *discours*).

7.10 Critical Pragmatics and Critical Discourse Analysis

Looking at the broader, societal context of discourse, we see that an analysis of discourse cannot be
p. 147 undertaken in the narrow context of the individual speakers/hearers. ↳ What is needed is an understanding not only of the motives that lie behind the single speaker's or hearer's activities, but first of all of the societal conditions that motivate, and make possible, the particular stretch of language that we are looking at in our analysis (or hearing in conversation, as the case may be). This is why discourse analysis, in the sense outlined here, naturally blends into what is often called 'critical' linguistics, or more aptly in the present connection, 'critical discourse analysis'. The way this 'critique' is exercised has much to do with what Kant already in the eighteenth century established as the right way to investigate our conditions of knowing and forming judgment: one has to look behind the phenomena and try to discover what allows us to make a statement, pronounce a judgment, express a view, and so on. Such 'phenomenal' activities have to be related to the categories that we both establish and are bound by; and we establish this relation by applying a critical perspective (as also Foucault was to teach us two centuries later).

The term 'critical' indicates a reflexive, examining stance towards the phenomena of everyday life. Building on the neo-Kantian tradition, the concept was reintroduced and expanded in the intellectual ambiance of the 'Frankfurt School' of sociology, which included not just sociologists like Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Walter Benjamin, but also philosophers like Jürgen Habermas. These thinkers, despite their different starting points and perspectives (some were psychoanalytically oriented, others Marxian-inspired), all had this in common that they considered the world and its phenomena (including human activities) from a point of view that I will call a 'considered subjectivity': the facts as such are not interesting unless they are 'filtered' through a subjective, participant-bound lens of interest.

For Habermas, this interest was grounded in the (academically inspired) notion of 'communicative action', and based on the concept of an 'implicitly shared and immanent rationality', common to all humans (Habermas 1981). This rationality is the basis of the civic 'public sphere' (Habermas 1989: 27), in which egalitarian discussions take place in a democratic milieu that is participatory (where discussion is encouraged and decisions are consensus-based), rather than representative (where we leave the discussions and decisions to our elected parliamentarians). Habermas's influence was, and still is, significant, especially since he, in later years, has reached out from what some have called the 'ivory tower' of Frankfurt, by engaging in debates with people as different as Jacques Derrida and (since emeritus Pope Benedict XVI) Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger. By contrast, his direct influence on the development of pragmatic thinking has not been equally significant. Habermas has always been more oriented towards the philosophical aspects of the questions under debate (even though he was one of the first among European intellectuals to publicly denounce George W. Bush's 'war on terror' and the invasion of Iraq).

With regard to critical pragmatics, and critical discourse analysis in particular, an early beginning was the publication of my essay 'Toward a critical theory of language' (in German; Mey 1979). Here, a theoretical Marxian-oriented approach to a variety of social problems, in particular with relation to language as an
p. 148 educational medium, was tentatively set forth (to be followed some years later by a full-volume treatment ↳ of these issues; Mey 1985). At about the same time, the late Roger Fowler (1939–1999) and his colleagues at the University of East Anglia (among these Robert Hodge and Gunther Kress) launched their own project of a 'critical linguistics', in which they likewise incorporated a Marxian approach to sociological and pragmatic issues, among other things with the intention of demonstrating the oppressive role of the socially powerful in establishing the 'ruling language', and in order to emancipate people from such oppression (Kress and Hodge 1993).

In a further development, critical linguistics and its successors, critical discourse analysis and critical pragmatics, examine the societally given conditions of use that determine, by affording as well as

restricting, the opportunities that are available to the individual user. We never use language in a vacuum, but always in a social situation; this premier sociological observation turns out to be of the utmost importance for a correct reception and evaluation of what is uttered, by situating it as the product of a live user, rather than as an abstract statement proffered in an academic environment (as I noted earlier when comparing the two economist-brothers, Abraham and Jacob, and their diverging views on how to deal scientifically with economic activities). In important works by Teun van Dijk (e.g. 2008) and in contributions by his associates, published in the influential journal *Discourse and Society*, as well as in recent publications by Norman Fairclough (e.g. 1989, 1995) and his followers of the 'Lancaster School', these questions are intimately bound up with the (partially Habermas-inspired) debates on 'power' in society: those who are in power have the right to determine what is appropriate discourse by defining the societal contexts in which words may be properly used.

In a thoughtful study of a different setting, viz., the sixteenth-century Spanish *conquista* of Mexico and its profound effects on the indigenous Mesoamerican communities of the Maya, the earlier mentioned Berkeley linguistic anthropologist William Hanks has shown how the diffusion and repartition of power between the conquerors and the conquered has led to an obligatory reanalysis of both the Spanish and Mayan societal discourses (Hanks 2010). The process of converting the Indians to the Catholic faith and their concomitant or subsequent subjugation to Spain was made possible via the discursive interpretation of powerful 'converting words', as Hanks calls it. The discourse of the Franciscan missionaries circumvented and penetrated the discourse of the Maya, to the degree that not only were the Maya Christianized, but their very language was, uncritically, 'converted' (not to say subverted) to a '*Maya reducido*', a reduced Maya —'reduced' not only quantitatively speaking, but also taken in the qualitative, sociological sense of 'belonging to the *reducciones*', the settlements ('reductions') where the natives were brought together under the aegis of the Church, but otherwise kept to their own Christianized, yet still partly authentic, pre-Columbian conditions of life. As Hanks expresses it, 'the new *lengua reducida* made its way to the deepest corners of the Indian communities—even, I will argue, those that were unsubjugated.... Over time, and across the main genres of colonial discourse, the doctrinal roots of *Maya reducido* would contribute to a process of semantic and grammatical reanalysis of Maya. It is this process that I refer to as the linguistic
p. 149 conversion ... the ↳ joining of two languages already turned toward one another, adapted to the task of producing the semantic universe of *conquista pacífica*' (Hanks 2010: 16). And, it needs to be added, this subjugation was not just semantic, but exercised in living discourse, as it informed everyday usage and practice. Unfortunately, neither the Maya nor the Spanish at the time were in the possession of the tools necessary to deconstruct this conversion—which in the end proved to be much more than just semantic.

7.11 Towards an Emancipatory Pragmatics

When we speak of the sociological 'bases' of pragmatics, it behooves us to consider its sociological 'ends' as well. The connecting link in the chain is the social subject par excellence, the human user of society's communicative resources, first of all of language. In recent times, while linguists were busy defining language 'immanently' from the descriptive point of view, trying to model and formalize its grammatical structures, others (among these the philosophers, sociologists, sociolinguists, and linguistic anthropologists that we discussed earlier) were interested in what one could use those resources for in a societal context. In Oxford, the philosopher John L. Austin (1911–1960) hoisted the pragmatic banner and, in his famous posthumous treatise *How to Do Things with Words* (1962a), raised the perennial Shakespearean question of how we may effect world changes by our use of 'words, words, words' and 'pregnant replies' (*Hamlet* Act II, Scene ii). At the same time, sociologists and sociolinguists, in the wake of people like Erving Goffman, were broaching the issue of what settings were allowed for a particular use or, more generally, which constraints govern the human use of language. Ethnolinguists and linguistic anthropologists responded by assigning functions to utterances 'on the basis of the social situations that the task is conducted within', as the influential British anthropologist and linguist Stephen C. Levinson had described it (Levinson 1983: 279); see also his earlier 1979 seminal work on 'activity types', now reprinted in Drew and Heritage (1992). Pragmaticists discussed in particular what role language should be understood as playing in human intercourse; Austin's theory of speech acts, later expanded to comprise indirect speech acts and pragmatic acts, incorporated these findings in the 'new' science of pragmatics (Mey 2001: ch. 8; 2010).

In all these discussions, one main theme that keeps cropping up is that of *power*. Who has the right and the power to define such a thing as a 'correct' or, as Fairclough (1992) calls it, 'appropriate' use of language? Clearly, one (often the only) way to access society's goods is by using language, by 'doing things with words', using speech acts such as offering or asking for help, requesting permission or declining a request, offering and returning a favour or a greeting, identifying wrongdoing and evildoers while defending oneself
p. 150 in the case of real or perceived impingements on one's territory, ↳ establishing social compacts as in marriage or business—all of these acts are subject to the 'power of words', a power that is not inherent in the words themselves by some kind of poorly understood magic, but can be referred to the respective societal positions of the speaker and the audience. Using language can furthermore be a means of defining oneself societally; in Japanese society, the appropriate polite use of language is one of the distinctive features of class; for instance, the wrong use of honorifics would place the speaker in an undesired category of people who do not use what the Japanese sociolinguist Sachiko Ide has called 'discernment' (Ide 1989).

In our own society, that is, in Western cultures, the use of dialects and the presence of (foreign or domestic) accents are often decisive for one's access to society's goods. When it comes to command of the spoken and especially the written word, we distinguish sharply between qualified, 'literate' users and those who are deemed 'illiterate', either due to lack of access to, or by forceful exclusion from, the 'hegemonic culture' (the expression is the Italian sociologist and linguist Antonio Gramsci's (1891–1937; Gramsci 1928). Historically, many cultures have denied the lower classes access to literacy, lest they become uppity; and many religions teach the poor to remain happily in their lowly societal positions ('O let us love our occupations/Bless the squire and his relations/Live upon our daily rations/And always know our proper stations', as a popular nineteenth-century English ditty had it; Dickens 1844: 'Second Quarter'). Even the Jesuit order had a ban on developing literacy and bookish learning when it came to its *coadiutores temporales* (the lay brothers, literally called 'wordly helpers', as opposed to the majority of the Order's priests, who were called 'spiritual helpers'); the idea was that the lay brothers would be content with performing the menial functions associated with the lot of the biblical Martha, who was busy making dinner, while her sister Mary indulged in higher things, spiritually communing with the Lord (Luke 10:38). The flip side of

this somewhat suspect coin is of course that by denying people the right to better themselves by using language, we also thereby condemn them to perpetual economic and social slavery.

In contrast to this, by critically examining the possible uses of language and what makes such uses effective for, and accessible to, people, we may be able to remove some of the barriers that are responsible for the division of our world into its two main strata of well-educated, well-trained, well-paid, and well-fed denizens vs those who just perform their daily chores without much hope for personal betterment other than the infamous 'pie in the sky', as promised to the slaves of yore. However, speech acts, taken by themselves, will not do the job, just as a 'good' accent will not land you employment if you cannot document the educational basis of that accent and the cultural stance that goes with it (pronouncing English beautifully didn't help Eliza Doolittle much at the Ascot races, either, as George Bernard Shaw has amply demonstrated; 1914). But how to realize this *emancipatory* aim of pragmatics?

By way of illustration, let me take an example from a sphere of activities that has become rather controversial lately. To qualify for citizenship by naturalization, certain countries have started instituting a language requirement that places the burden of proof on the would-be immigrant: he or she must convince
p. 151 the authorities that s/he ↳ is a *bona fide* prospective citizen, and to confirm this good faith, the immigrant must document linguistic abilities of a certain standard. The problem is that such abilities can only be achieved through some kind of schooling—something that most immigrants, due to their limited social stance and economic status, are not able to obtain, or had been unable to obtain even in their native countries. As a result, many of these potentially capable workers spend their lives in low-qualification jobs, even though their professional capabilities would allow them to rise on the social ladder, if only they had the necessary wherewithal in the form of what Bourdieu has called 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu 1991), in this case, command of the language.

To sum up and conclude: what a pragmatic approach could contribute in cases like these is to 'deconstruct' the societal power structure that prohibits access to education, e.g. by establishing free training centres for immigrants, where language is taught in ways that are commensurate with the immigrants' needs. That is to say, rather than force-feed the students anecdotes and tidbits about life in middle-class suburbia, we should take care to instruct workers in safety routines; employees should be given access to the tools for negotiating wages and working conditions; access to higher education should be furthered by offering specific training courses for particular professions that can serve as entry steps to the world of better employment; and so on (see Mey 1985: ch. 2.2, 'Immigrant language education', for more detailed suggestions). Immigrant workers should be taught the art of 'native (or native-like) speech acting' in situations where it matters most for them (encounters with authorities such as the judiciary, the police, the township administration, hospital and health workers, the school authorities, and so on); in these courses, emphasis should be placed on the 'awareness raising' through language teaching and linguistic training that is a necessary (albeit, unfortunately, not a sufficient) condition for a conscious and effective use of one's linguistic repertoire. In the final analysis, the aim of our societal concern with language, its *end*, should be to bring about the *end* of linguistic and other bondage, by promoting the emancipation of the
p. 152 language user. ↳

Notes

1 The Greek term *agora* is most often translated as 'market place'. In keeping with the Greeks' original intentions and practices, it seems more appropriate to translate it as 'place of gathering, commons' (which also reflects the etymological connection with the Greek verb *ageirein* 'to gather').

2 *à chaque fois qu'un enfant apprend à parler, il s'introduit donc des innovations*.

3 Jacob Louis Meij (II), 1900–1965, professor of economics at various Dutch universities (i.a. Groningen and Delft) and founder of the Graduate School of Business Economics at Rotterdam.

4 Abraham (later Abram) Mey, 1890–1983, was professor of economics at the University of Amsterdam. (NB: The varied spellings of the brothers' last names are intentional, and were the source of yet another festering quarrel between the two.)