

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have dealt with certain general issues about cancellability of explicatures and modularity of mind in part 1, while in part 2 I have dealt with propositional attitudes, 'de se' attitudes, which is a sub-issue of propositional attitudes, knowing-how, which is also a sub-issue of propositional attitudes, Immunity to error through misidentification, which is related to 'de se' attitudes, and indirect reports and quotation, which deal with the way we communicate what other people said (the issue is more generally about how we transmit knowledge of what other people said). Since part 1 is about the theory of explicature and modularity of mind, those notions were applied to specific issues in part 2. The notions of explicature, cancellability and modularity of mind are central in this dissertation and interact with the issue of propositional attitudes and transmissibility of knowledge (of what was said by a different person). Part 1 and Part 2 reinforce each other, given that the issues dealt with in part 2 are a testing bed for the notions (rather controversial and speculative) presented in part 1.

Having arrived at a point in which it is clear that a number of topics can be dealt with in terms of pragmatic intrusion, one may go on reflecting on what other topics could be dealt with in the same way. It is clear that it is a matter of patience to arrive at a theory in which pragmatic intrusion figures prominently. This thesis has been unorthodox in casting some doubts on some cases which, according to main theorists constitute cases of indubitable pragmatic intrusion, and in seeking other possible and less controversial cases. Should we arrive at the conclusion that pragmatic intrusion is a substantive characteristic of human languages? This is a point on which I do not have very firm ideas. Presumably I am in favor of a dialectics whereby semantics and pragmatics are involved in a tension. Cases of pragmatic intrusion, including 'ad hoc' concepts and extensions of senses

(modulation à la Recanati) are the points in which the tension between semantics and pragmatics is more visible and tangible. However, I am contented with accepting that there are things such as semantics and pragmatics, which are pretty delimited, and that intrusive constructions are those in which synchronic and diachronic facts clash and language is visibly renovated through pragmatics. Pragmatic intrusions serve to enhance the semantic resources of language, which are amplified through pragmatics, before pragmatic new senses become consolidated and become part and parcel of a new state of a language. Since this is not a linguistic but a philosophical dissertation, I did not concentrate on the tension between semantics and pragmatics (a topic which is of considerable interest and which was suggested to me by Tullio De Mauro). Now, that I have examined a number of intrusive constructions which are of sure theoretical significance and are not likely to be or become controversial cases, one can move on to the second stage of writing on the tension between semantics and pragmatics. But this is clearly a topic for the future, if this research is lucky enough to find the conditions for continuation, deepening and expansion. We have vague ideas on how we should go on researching the issue of the tension between semantics and pragmatics, but it is possible that a number of ideas have been put forward and can be useful in future research. Modularity of mind could certainly be of use in constraining this research. The points of tension should be limited and confined to those cases when speakers are not satisfied with the semantic resources available to them so far and need new semantic resources to be provided by pragmatics in ways that satisfy the Modularity of Mind story. In the same way in which we posited net-throwing on the use of contextual information in inferential pragmatics, we postulate net-throwing on the possible number of cases of pragmatic intrusion, these being confined only to those in which the cost of activating pragmatic inference is inferior to the advantages one obtains by creating new senses by pragmatics. In other words, the new expressive possibilities created through pragmatics should themselves assure that they constitute large enough cognitive advantages compared to the cost of pragmatic inference.

How should the topic of the tension between semantics and pragmatics benefit from the discussions presented in this dissertation? On the one hand, I have departed from a rather conservative theory, and <I have accepted Minimalism*, the asterisk being a reminder that we ultimately think that Merger Representations

à la Jaszczolt are responsible for the final truth-conditional contents of utterances. The asterisk, in other words, indicates that minimal meanings can and in some cases must be merged (with information coming from pragmatics, or with socio-cultural defaults). So the semantics we have in mind is not autonomous, even if we have assumed that it has been designed with a view for verification, given that at least in the most simple cases we aim to express a thought which has truth-conditions (however minimal) by uttering a linguistic expression. Our requirement that, despite not being autonomous, our semantics has a format that matches a design whose aim is to make it verifiable (so, in the simple cases, the aim of semantics is to enable human being to express facts about the world, this function being included in the format and the design features of language) is important, as we want it to be clear that semantics arises for a reason, which is to express thoughts and help human beings communicate such thoughts in a non-miraculous way. This concession to formal theories of semantics, however, does not prevent us from saying that we accept Minimalism* , that is with an asterisk, in other words we include the possibility of combinations with pragmatic bits at the level of Merger representations in the design features of language. In other words, pragmatic compositionality at the level of Merger Representations must be included in the design features of language because language has a potential for expansion and allows gaps to be filled by pragmatics in cases the semantic resources are not sufficient or would limit the expressive possibilities of a language. Since we accept that everything that can be thought can be said, it is a consequence of this Searlian principle that pragmatics and pragmatic compositionality at the level of Merger representations must appear among the design features of language.

The topics I have dealt with in this dissertation and the way I have dealt with them have represented an intersection between theory of knowledge and belief and a theory of communication. I suppose that after this dissertation, scholars will definitively recognize that it is impossible to separate a theory of knowledge (of other minds, of what other people have said, of facts in the world as represented through one's own and others' minds) from a theory of communication. Thus, it is necessary to deal with epistemological topics armed with pragmatic notions. The idea that pragmatics and philosophy intersect at various points was pointed out originally by Grice and pursued recently by people like Igor Douven and myself.

Ultimately, the project is to make use of the resources of pragmatics and linguistics with a view to subdue difficult or thorny philosophical topics.

There is no doubt that this thesis opens a new path in pragmatics, since once we have thought that we have provided answers to various up to now mysterious issues, we are now immediately after new answers to other questions to reply to which we must embark on another difficult journey. But this is for another day.