

In the Mind and across Minds

In the Mind and across Minds:
A Relevance-Theoretic Perspective
on Communication and Translation

Edited by

Ewa Wałaszewska, Marta Kisiielewska-Krysiuk
and Agnieszka Piskorska

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P U B L I S H I N G

In the Mind and across Minds: A Relevance-Theoretic Perspective on Communication and Translation,
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INTRODUCTION

A RELEVANCE-THEORETIC PERSPECTIVE ON COMMUNICATION AND TRANSLATION

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This volume is a collection of selected essays which were first presented at the fourth international conference *Interpreting for Relevance. Discourse and Translation*, which took place in Kazimierz Dolny, Poland in June 2008. The contributions address a wide range of issues related to communication and translation that have arisen in relevance-theoretic pragmatics, for example: types of meaning encoded by words and communicated by speakers using these words, the notion of context, the role of metarepresentation in communication, irony, untranslatability, interpretive resemblance, to mention just a few.

Relevance Theory, which is a pragmatic theory of communication rooted in human cognition, was developed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, and first fully described in their book *Relevance: Communication and cognition* ([1986] 1995). Nowadays it is regarded as one of the most influential pragmatic theories, which can be seen from the amount of research carried out within the relevance-theoretic framework, testing and developing various assumptions of the theory, and from the wealth of areas to which the theory has been applied (for details, see e.g. Yus 1998; Wałaszewska et al. 2008).

The book is divided into six parts. Part I concentrates on the relationship between mental concepts encoded by words and occasion-specific concepts ('ad hoc concepts'), which are communicated by the use of the same words as lexicalised concepts, but which have to be constructed pragmatically by hearers in the process of utterance

interpretation and may depart from the literal meaning of the words used. The chapters in part II focus on the distinction between conceptual meaning and procedural meaning, with procedures being understood as constraints on the processes of pragmatic inference involved in the interpretation of an utterance. Part III is devoted to mental constructs such as context and the human ability to metarepresent, but also to the role of metarepresentation (i.e. representation of a representation) in such phenomena as indirect complaints and banter. The phenomenon of irony is the focus of the chapters in part IV. The two chapters in part V contain analyses of Norwegian and Polish language data, comparing them with English expressions and structures used to convey similar meaning, while those in part VI examine the applicability of Relevance Theory to the domain of translation.

Part I: Concepts and Ad Hoc Concepts

The paper “**Free Enrichment and the Over-Generation Problem**” by Yuji Nishiyama and Koji Mineshima deals with the problem of clearly unintended interpretations which could be allegedly generated by the pragmatic process called ‘free enrichment’ involved in the derivation of the proposition expressed. Such an unwanted explicature might be, for example: *John is a painter living in this village* as a development of *John is a painter*. According to Yuji Nishiyama and Koji Mineshima, ‘free enrichment’ is not completely free, but in fact there exist two restrictions on that process: first, it is blocked for property concepts, i.e. those concepts that are expressed by property expressions such as predicate nominals and adjectives, as in the example above, and second, when free enrichment applies to referential expressions, i.e. expressions used to pick out referents in the world, it must be a narrowing process. This is what the authors call a “semantic constraint on free enrichment”, which, motivated on independent grounds, makes it possible to avoid the problem of generating impossible interpretations. The explanation why property concepts do not undergo free enrichment is that, unlike referential concepts, they are not used for picking out objects in the world so it is enough for the hearer to understand what the concept means without the necessity of supplying additional information. Accepting the semantic constraint on free enrichment results in the reformulation of the schema representing the inferential processes of utterance interpretation. Now they are believed to operate in two stages: the stage of concept determination, which is common for referential expressions and property expressions and includes disambiguation, saturation, and ad hoc concept construction, and

the stage of reference determination, which applies only to referential expressions and comprises free enrichment and reference assignment. Accepting such a classification of pragmatic processes entails another revision of the standard RT approach, in which what was traditionally termed reference assignment is considered a subtype of saturation, and therefore the development of *John's book* into *a book written by John* and of *John* to *John_x* are considered to be both cases of saturation. On Nishiyama and Mineshima's approach, the two processes have to be considered distinct as saturation proper belongs to the stage of concept construction and is applicable both to property concepts and referential concepts whereas reference assignment is applicable only to expressions used referentially. Yuji Nishiyama and Koji Mineshima's semantic constraint on free enrichment is an alternative to the proposal by Hall (2006) to solve the over-generation problem on purely pragmatic grounds.

Agnieszka Solska, in **"Metaphors and Approximations in Zeugmatic Structures: A Challenge for the Relevance-Theoretic Continuity View of Metaphor?"**, is concerned with the impact of the phenomenon of zeugma, a punning effect causing the word to be interpreted in two distinct ways simultaneously, on the deflationary account of metaphor (cf. Sperber and Wilson 2006). In the relevance-theoretic model of utterance interpretation, metaphors, approximations and hyperboles are all viewed as varieties of loose use of language with no clear boundaries between them, and consequently, they are all interpreted in the relevance-driven process of concept broadening, where the encoded sense of a linguistic expression is modified in the inferential process of meaning adjustment (i.e. constructing an occasion-specific, 'ad hoc concept'). In view of the homogenous account of the phenomena mentioned above, Solska finds it surprising that unlike metaphors and hyperboles, approximations fail to produce zeugma in parallel constructions and tries to discover why they behave differently in zeugmatic structures. She also looks at the consequences of such a discovery for the continuity view of metaphor. Having discussed the relevance-theoretic account of zeugma, which predicts that in the process of interpreting zeugmatic structures two propositions, equally prominent at the cognitive level, are constructed (cf. Solska 2008), the author claims that the factors responsible for triggering or blocking the punning effect are both the concepts encoded by the pivotal expression in a parallel construction and the concepts encoded by other words in the context of its use. First, if the pivotal word is ambiguous, it will trigger the punning effect, and if it is merely vague, as is the case with approximations and narrowings, it will block the punning effect. Second, in order for zeugma to arise, the multiple senses of a

potentially ambiguous expression must be made equally salient by the information made available by other concepts active in the structure. These findings lead Solska to the conclusion that the presence or absence of zeugma depends on the relevance-driven mutual adjustment of linguistic content, contextual assumptions and cognitive effects and thus “a revision of the deflationary account of the metaphor and other types of concept broadening is not necessary.”

In her contribution **“Narrowing and Taboo Contamination: Relevance Theory and Euphemisms”**, Ewa Wałaszewska focuses on the ad hoc concept formation as discussed in the relevance-theoretic approach to lexical pragmatics in order to give a plausible explanation of the phenomenon of taboo contamination, which affects euphemisms, leading to the gradual weakening of their euphemistic value and ultimately causing its evanescence. For the author, the formation of euphemisms and their taboo contamination can be adequately described and explained in terms of lexical pragmatic processes of ad hoc concept formation, since, as observed by relevance theorists, such processes pervade human communication. Thus, there is no reason to assume that these processes (or at least one of them) do not apply in the case of euphemisms. Basing on this assumption, Wałaszewska claims it is the process of narrowing that underlies the creation and use of euphemisms since they involve the pragmatic construction of ad hoc concepts narrower in denotation than their lexically-encoded counterparts, which means that a word used as a euphemism does not convey the concept it encodes, but a context-dependent ad hoc concept whose meaning is more specific than that of the corresponding lexically-encoded concept. The subsequent lexicalisation of such an ad hoc concept involves transfer of some associations, connotations, etc. from the encyclopaedic entry of the lexicalised concept to its logical entry, where logical properties amounting to a proper definition of a concept are stored. In the case of euphemisms, it is negative taboo associations, which are more salient than other associations, that are transferred to the logical entry. As a result, the meaning of a word employed as a euphemism narrows to the taboo sense alone and thus contaminated word becomes regarded as a taboo term.

The chapter **“The Use of Shape-Related Ad Hoc Concepts by Blind Children”** by Agnieszka Piskorska describes how a group of blind children coped with a collection of objects which were approximations of ideal shapes such as circles, triangles, rectangles. The objects were presented to the children both in the form of cardboard cut-outs and tactile graphics. The idea was to examine whether the impoverishment in the conditions of cognitive development caused by visual impairment inhibits

the ability to form ad hoc concepts standing for shapes. The results showed no such tendencies as the children were capable of using the names of geometrical figures proper to refer to their approximations whenever the context suggested that a loose use was intended.

Part II: Concepts and Procedures

In their paper “**The Procedural and Conceptual Meaning of *they***”, Kaja Borthen and Heidi Bröseth focus on the lexical meaning of the English pronoun *they*. They examine Hedley’s (2007) relevance-theoretic proposal that the meaning of *they* is so general that it can only involve the procedural information: “Find something with the feature ‘plural’”. The authors find Hedley’s reasoning faulty and list three problems with his suggestion. The first problem is that on his account the difference in meaning between the definite plural pronoun *they* and its indefinite counterpart *some* becomes obliterated. Following Gundel, Hedberg and Zacharski (1993), Borthen and Bröseth assume that pronouns and determiners can be analysed as involving cognitive statuses of their associated referents. These statuses are implicationally related and arranged in the Givenness Hierarchy from the highest to the lowest: in focus > activated > familiar > uniquely identifiable > referential > type identifiable (each status entails all the statuses to its right). For Borthen and Bröseth, the plural pronoun *they* signals the status ‘Uniquely identifiable’ for its referent, whereas the referent for *some* is only ‘Type identifiable’. The second flaw in Hedley’s account is that he apparently assumes that *they* does not encode the information about the speaker/hearer exclusion from the set of entities referred to by means of the pronoun, which, for Borthen and Bröseth, is necessarily part of the meaning of *they* just like the information about speaker/hearer inclusion is part of the meaning of *we*. The third problem with Hedley’s suggestion is related to his assumption that pronouns combine the information about grammatical gender which is conceptual in nature with the information about grammatical number which he regards as procedural. While endorsing the claim that pronouns may combine conceptual and procedural information, Borthen and Bröseth strongly disapprove of the ascription of procedural meaning to grammatical number, convincingly arguing, among others, that unlike procedures, this piece of information can be brought to consciousness (Wilson and Sperber 1993). Instead they suggest that grammatical number is conceptual information that will not contribute to the truth-conditions of the proposition expressed. Thus, for Borthen and Bröseth, the lexical meaning for *they* is a combination of

conceptual information (grammatical number) and procedural information (the cognitive status of the referent and the speaker/hearer exclusion from the set of entities picked out by the pronoun).

In her contribution **“Different Degrees of Manifestness, Accessibility or Possible Inferences? A Critical Analysis of the Cognitive Status of the Assumptions Triggered by *but*”**, Susana Olmos offers a careful overview of the relevance-theoretic approaches to the English connective *but*, with a view to indicating flaws in these approaches and suggesting an alternative relevance-theoretic account. Within the relevance-based framework, the first analysis of *but* as a constraint on relevance has been offered by Blakemore (1987), according to whom this discourse connective does not encode a concept, but a procedure constraining the hearer’s inferential computations involved in the derivation of implicit meaning. On Blakemore’s (e.g. 2002) account, all the uses of *but* are inseparably associated with the cognitive effect of contradiction and elimination – the interpretation of the statement introduced by *but* stands in contradiction with an assumption which is manifest to the hearer (he can represent it mentally and accept its representation as true or probably true (Sperber and Wilson ([1986] 1995)) and triggers its elimination. A competing analysis of *but* comes from Iten (2000, 2005), who basically subscribes to Blakemore’s analysis, suggesting only minor revisions. Basing on some uses of *but*, she finds the notion of ‘manifestness’ too strong and thus inadequate for the description of the cognitive status of the eliminated assumption. Consequently, Iten argues that the cognitive status of the contradicted assumption is weaker – such an assumption is only “accessible in the context” (Iten 2000) or “weakly manifest” (Iten 2005), the latter description being the result of her redefinition of the cognitive status in terms of a somewhat relaxed notion of manifestness. Another type of objection is levelled at Blakemore’s analysis by Hall (2003, 2004, 2007), who though accepts a procedural account of *but*, modifies it with respect to the cognitive effect the connective yields. In Hall’s view, *but* does not produce the cognitive effect of contradiction and elimination, but that of suspension, which leads to the weakening of the cognitive status of the assumption in question. Not being fully convinced by any of these approaches, Olmos puts forward an interesting suggestion that *but* does not serve the purpose of eliminating or suspending assumptions; it is used as a procedure for the hearer to attend to the contrast relation between the proposition expressed by the *but* statement and its alternative assumptions whose accessibility to the hearer is dependent on the content of the *but* statement and the search for optimal relevance. The speaker uses this contrast relation, explicitly marked by *but*, to constrain the hearer’s

interpretation of the speaker's attitude to the proposition expressed by the *but*-statement. Since the speaker's propositional attitude is part of higher-order explicatures, *but* can be regarded as contributing, not to implicit, but to explicit meaning.

Keiko Abe's chapter **"Pragmatics of Negative Imperatives: A Relevance-Theoretic Approach"** proposes an original solution to the problem of explaining the meaning of negative imperatives. After pointing out syntactic and semantic peculiarities of negative imperatives, concerning their formation and verb-selection, the author examines the existing approaches to the problem within syntax, semantics and Speech Act Theory to find them inadequate, which motivates a reanalysis from a pragmatic, and in particular relevance-theoretic, perspective. Abe argues that negative imperatives involve a distinct type of negation from propositional negation (imperative negation) and produces some linguistic evidence to support her claim. She also postulates that *don't* should be regarded as a pragmatic marker involving a direction how to process an utterance, or in other words, a procedural meaning that the speaker considers the content of the proposition as potential and undesirable and attempts to forbid its realization. The author, furthermore, shows contrasting sets of expressions involving, among others, 'achievement' verbs and verbs of cognition, where affirmative and negative imperatives behave differently. The acceptability or unacceptability of particular negative imperatives is explained by the compatibility or incompatibility with the proposed procedural meaning of *don't*. Finally, it is shown how this procedural meaning guides the hearer in understanding the meaning and relevance of negative imperatives.

Part III: Context, Metarepresentation and Communication

Maria Jodłowiec, in her contribution **"How the Context Emerges"**, re-examines the notion of context as defined and discussed in Relevance Theory, pointing to the strengths and weaknesses of the relevance-theoretic approach (Sperber and Wilson [1986] 1995; Wilson and Sperber 2002, 2004). Within the relevance-theoretic framework, context is a mental construct, which is a "subset of the hearer's assumptions about the world" (Sperber and Wilson [1986] 1995, 15) and "the set of premises used in interpreting an utterance" (Sperber and Wilson [1986] 1995, 15), whose source are long-term memory, short-term memory and environment. In her attempt to explore the nature of such context, Jodłowiec illustrates context-sensitivity in inferential communication with a number of *I'm*

sorry-utterances communicating a wide range of meanings and describes the relevance-theoretic utterance interpretation process, with the focus on the hearer's role in selecting contextual assumptions in order to arrive at the speaker-intended relevance-oriented interpretation. Although the deflationary model of context (classified after Andler 2003) predicts when communication will be successful, when it may break down and how it can be repaired, thus solving a number of problems that other researchers have been unsuccessfully trying to deal with, it is claimed by Jodłowiec to have some weak points. First, as in the relevance-theoretic framework context is dynamic, i.e. it is constructed by the hearer in the search of relevance and therefore "open to choices and revisions throughout the comprehension process" (Sperber and Wilson [1986] 1995, 137), the risk of miscommunication increases. The potential problem lies in the hearer's accessing the set of assumptions different from those envisaged by the speaker and leading to the interpretation beyond the speaker's communicative intent. Second, context in utterance interpretation is probably represented in the human mind in the language of thought, which is a symbolic level of representation, not accessible to consciousness (Carston 2002). Finally, as a consequence of the solipsistic nature of context, whose accessing is hardly available to analysis other than via the researcher's intuitions, it is virtually impossible to specify the principle for context construction.

As Aoife Ahern's title indicates, her article "**Speaker Attitude in Relevance Theory: An Overview**" deals with the relevance-theoretic notion of propositional attitude, which is the speaker's stance or judgment towards the explicitly communicated propositional content, contributing to the higher-level explicature of utterances. Ahern claims that "the expression and identification of propositional attitudes is an essential aspect of communication" since, first, they provide information about how an utterance will achieve relevance and, second, they facilitate categorizing our mental representations. To substantiate her claims, she presents a detailed overview of the different means of expression of propositional attitude information, focusing on Wilson and Wharton's (2006) "showing-meaning continuum," introduces a typology of attitudes, categorizing the content of higher-level explicatures into emotional, speech act and "epistemic stance" attitudinal information, and examines the influence of Sperber's (1997) distinction between intuitive and reflective beliefs on the communication of propositional attitudes and the classification of attitudinal information. Having described procedures for identifying higher-level explicatures, Ahern concludes that higher-level explicatures operate by a mechanism of 'epistemic vigilance' as they guide

the hearer in identifying whether the propositional content being expressed constitutes an intuitive or reflective belief, with intuitive beliefs making up our mental “database” based on perception or inferences from perception, and reflective beliefs being held as metarepresentations. She maintains that if the propositional content is identified as a reflective belief (and it is usually marked as such by speech act and epistemic stance information), it will alert the addressee’s ‘epistemic vigilance’ and will be treated with great caution in the process of arriving at contextual effects. If, on the other hand, it constitutes an intuitive belief, which usually correlates with emotional attitudinal information, it is more likely to modify the addressee’s beliefs.

Manuel Padilla Cruz’s chapter **“Metarepresentation and Indirect Complaints: A Relevance-Theoretic Approach”** deals with indirect complaints, defined as complaints about the third party, as means of creating the feeling of solidarity and rapport among speakers. The author examines two cases: one, in which interlocutors are strangers and the other, in which interlocutors know each other. In the first case, the hearer to whom an indirect complaint was addressed attributes to the speaker a set of assumptions which are manifest to himself and which make the interpretation of the complaint relevant. In the other case, the speaker anticipates which assumptions are manifest to the hearer. In both situations, it is essential that the attitude is conveyed and recognized of endorsing the complaint and at the same time being frustrated, dissatisfied etc. with the object of complaining. The difference between the first situation and the second one lies in the fact that, when interlocutors are strangers, creating the solidarity effect may be coincidental but when they are acquainted with each other, the effect is produced intentionally by the speaker. The speaker predicts which assumptions and with what attitudes are entertained by the hearer and produces an utterance that metarepresents those assumptions and endorses the attitude the hearer has. The effect and mechanism are similar to phatic communication, when speakers actually do not contribute any new information but create a social bond by commenting upon facts that are already manifest to them.

The focus of Marta Kisielewska-Krysiuk’s contribution **“Banter – A Case of Phatic Communication?”** is on banter, a sociolinguistic phenomenon defined by Leech (1983) as mock-impoliteness, an apparently offensive way of being friendly and showing solidarity with the hearer (e.g. *Here comes trouble!* uttered to greet a friend). The notion of banter has been underrepresented and underdiscussed in linguistic literature and remains open to re-analysis from a variety of perspectives. In the paper, an attempt is made to re-examine banter as a case of phatic

communication, which originated as “phatic communion” defined by Malinowski (1923, 476) as “... language used in free, aimless, social intercourse.” What is typical of phatic expressions exemplified by *How are you?* or *You’re welcome* is that they are relevant at the social/interpersonal level rather than at the level of what is said and their function is to promote sociability, solidarity, harmony and personal communion between interlocutors. Kisielevska-Krysiuk’s goal is to assess against data whether instances of banter fulfil the conditions on being classified as instances of phatic communication and show the interrelations between the two phenomena. The approach adopted in the analysis is the cognitive, relevance-theoretic, approach to communication (cf. Sperber and Wilson [1986] 1995; Wilson 2000; Wilson and Sperber 1993, 2004), with the focus on phatic communication (cf. Žegarac 1998; Žegarac and Clark 1999a, 1999b; Padilla Cruz 2007). Having explored the nature of banter, Kisielevska-Krysiuk concludes that banter words, phrases or utterances, like phatic ones, are of low relevance at the level of what is said and direct the hearer’s attention to the social or interpersonal aspects of communication in order to satisfy the expectations of relevance. She points out that banter utterances also resemble phatic utterances in that they are manifestations of positive politeness strategies, perform similar social functions and suggest something about the nature of the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer.

Part IV: Irony

Katarzyna Bromberek-Dyzman’s contribution “**Irony Processing – One Stage or Two?**” is a voice in the ongoing discussion about the quantity and quality of cognitive phases of irony processing. Its main goal is to establish the place and role of the relevance-based echo theory of verbal irony in the empirical paradigm of recent research on irony and to render it more empirically verifiable since, as Bromberek-Dyzman notices, it has been disregarded in the empirical research on irony as it does not specify how to measure irony processing effort. In order to reclassify the relevance-theoretic approach, on which irony represents an interpretive attributive use of language with the speaker’s dissociative attitude towards the propositional content of the utterance, she presents a comparison of one-stage and two-stage theories on irony processing, the former advocated by Sperber and Wilson ([1986] 1995) and Gibbs (1986, 1994, 2001, 2002), and the latter traced in Grice (1975) and Giora (1995, 1997, 2002). Whereas one-stage models assume the direct computation of the ironic, non-literal, meaning without the need to access the literal meaning

first, two-stage theories opt for the sequential approach to the processing of literal and non-literal meaning. Bromberek-Dyzman challenges a commonly held view that the relevance-theoretic account represents a one-stage theory and attempts to show that it allows for a ‘multiple stage’ processing for both literal and figurative language. In order to determine the number of processing stages involved in on-line irony comprehension and to specify how to measure irony processing effort, she investigates the psycholinguistics of irony processing and focuses on the processing differences resulting from the positivity or negativity of the contextual priming (Ivanko and Pexman 2003) and on the varying degrees of incongruity manifestness. Following Colston and O’Brien (2000), Bromberek-Dyzman claims that incongruity between context and the propositional content of the comment utterance is “the necessary and sufficient condition for a dissociative attitude attribution and irony detection” and the greater manifestness of incongruity in terms of processing assumptions, the faster the processing of irony. She also points to the fact that in the case of interpreting irony only negative context condition should be applied as “the most prototypical context for featuring literally positive utterances to enhance ironic, critical attitude” (cf. Utsumi 2000).

Mihaela Popa’s chapter **“Ironic Metaphor: A Case for Metaphor’s Contribution to Truth-Conditions”** examines the phenomenon of ironic metaphor and focuses on the rational and empirical evidence for the ‘metaphor’s priority thesis’ (henceforth MPT), which predicts that in the case of ironic metaphors, metaphor is computed first and only then interpreted ironically. In order to prove that metaphor is prior to irony both logically and psychologically, Popa points to the weaknesses of the irony-first approach and presents a detailed overview of the arguments for four versions of MPT (weak psychological MPT, weak logical MPT, strong psychological MPT and strong logical MPT), eventually opting for the strong versions of the thesis, which assume that in **all** cases of ironic metaphor, the metaphor **has** to be computed before the irony. The arguments for strong MPT are supported by experimental studies (Colston and Gibbs 2002) and come, for example, from the echoic account of irony (Sperber and Wilson [1986] 1995), which treats irony as an instance of interpretive use of language, as opposed to metaphor, which is used descriptively, and from the scope differences of irony (sentential) and metaphor (sub-sentential), which determine the order of interpretation. Although Grice (1989) was the first to advocate logical MPT, Popa rejects the Gricean account of ironic metaphors on the grounds that it excludes metaphorical meaning from truth-conditional content and uses the account

of ironic metaphors and four standard contextualist claims to argue that it is metaphorical, not literal, meaning that determines truth-conditions and contributes to what is said, which constitutes the grounds for computing the ironical interpretation as an implicature. The contextualist arguments for metaphor's directness include psycholinguistic evidence (Coulson and van Petten 2002; Gibbs 1994; Glucksberg 2001; Recanati 2004), embedded metaphors (Wearing 2006), reports of and responses to metaphorical utterances (Hills 1997; Wearing 2006) and the Availability Criterion (Recanati 2004). As Popa points out in conclusion, the metaphor directness thesis supports the metaphor priority thesis: "if metaphor is (i) truth-conditional, and (ii) embeddable, and IM is not (i) truth-conditional, and (ii) embeddable, then metaphor is processed first and irony second."

Part V: Across Minds and across Languages

In his paper "**Indefinite *such* and Definite *these/those* in Source Texts and Targets Texts**", Thorstein Fretheim challenges a commonly held belief that in the case of nominal referring expressions, the difference between 'definite reference' and 'indefinite reference' is systematic and follows from the "semantic difference between definite and indefinite noun phrases," which is claimed to be universal. The author correctly observes that in a number of languages, the difference between 'definite' and 'indefinite' is not part of the semantics of a referring expression, but a result of a pragmatic analysis. While endorsing the position that an indefinite NP is used to represent a general concept, Fretheim critically examines the view that a definite NP represents a singular concept. Basing on his thorough investigation of the data from the Oslo Multilingual Corpus (a bidirectional translation corpus), Fretheim argues that definite NPs are used to represent either type of concept. Indeed his findings have shown that definite and indefinite demonstrative phrases can be used interchangeably in both English and Norwegian if they are used to represent a general concept. In the analysed translations, the English indefinite plural demonstratives (*such*-phrases) and definite plural demonstratives (*these/those*-phrases) typically preserve the form of the corresponding Norwegian demonstratives. However, in some cases, there is a preference for the use of plural demonstratives with a definite determiner *those* or *these* in the English translations of Norwegian plural demonstrative phrases containing the indefinite determiner *slike* (*sånne*), corresponding to the English determiner *such*, and vice versa – Norwegian translations sometimes substitute English definite forms for Norwegian indefinites. According to Fretheim, the change from the definite in the

English source text to the indefinite in the Norwegian target text must be related to a non-referential reading of the source text definite NP. Consequently, he challenges the claim that definite demonstratives are ‘directly referential terms’ in Recanati’s (1993) sense, equipped with a semantic feature REF, which makes it impossible for them to have a non-referential (descriptive) interpretation, or in other words, to represent a singular concept. Instead he suggests that definite demonstratives may represent either a singular concept or a general concept, pointing out that this duality has nothing to do with ambiguity and should be analysed in terms of underdeterminacy (see Carston 2002). Indefinite demonstratives like *such*-phrases in English or *slike*-phrases in Norwegian are used to represent a general concept (a property), thus they are always interpreted as non-referential. In the case of *these/those*-phrases, two interpretations, referential and non-referential, are possible – the hearer may choose a non-referential reading when it is consistent with the Principle of Relevance.

Daniel J. Sax’s contribution entitled **“Predictability, Non-Final Focal Stress and Word Order in English and Polish”** has two major aims: to revise the relevance-theoretic approach to focus proposed by Breheny (1998) and to apply the new apparatus to Polish data. The range of data is deliberately limited to simple sentences consisting of at most three basic constituents (subject, verb, object), so as to clearly contrast the interaction of focal stress and word order in the two languages. The point of departure is provided by the procedural approach to focus proposed by Sperber and Wilson ([1986] 1995), based on two scales operating during utterance processing: a focal scale, which is a set of ordered logical implications; and a scale of anticipatory hypotheses, which assumes the form of questions about each successive constituent. The Principle of Relevance determines the placement of the focal stress and the division of an utterance into ‘background’ and ‘foreground’ (which replaces the distinction between old/given and new information). Breheny (1998) formalizes Sperber and Wilson’s approach by postulating that constituents following non-final focal stress (post-nuclear material) be predictable, with predictability being defined in terms of their accessibility before the ‘ultimate hypothesis’ (the anticipatory hypothesis formed immediately before processing the focally stressed constituent). Sax notices that this theory works for utterances with non-final ‘narrow’ focus but fails for utterances which as a whole present new information (all-new utterances). Consequently, the author refines Breheny’s proposal by distinguishing between strong and weak predictability, depending on the moment the ‘ultimate hypothesis’ is formed: immediately before or during the processing of the element bearing the focal stress. Strong predictability

accounts for ‘narrow focus’ interpretations, while weak predictability applies to ‘all-new’ utterances, and this distinction is further described in terms of foreground and background; among post-nuclear elements, those strongly predictable form part of the background, whereas those characterised by weak probability belong to the foreground, being relevant in their own right. Then the refined theory is applied to Polish, a language classified by van Valin (1999) as having ‘flexible syntax’ and ‘flexible focus structure’, unlike English, where the ‘flexible focus structure’ is to compensate for ‘rigid syntax’. It is observed that in Polish, focus is determined not by the position of the focal stress alone but by the type of a constituent on which the focal stress is placed. The author claims that the mechanism of strong/weak predictability operates also in Polish and can serve as the basis for a comprehensive account of Polish word order, superior to the prevailing approaches within the Functional Sentence Perspective, or thematic-rhematic structure.

Part VI: Translation

In the chapter **“Relevance and Translation: On the Value of a Good Theoretical Foundation of Translation”**, Ernst-August Gutt shows how an approach to translation based on a general theory of communication and cognition can explain the alleged untranslatability of some texts into other languages. The problem that some renderings fail to communicate the meaning of the original has received much attention in the literature but usually the discussion was in the spirit of ‘what went wrong with the translation’. Occasionally, some authors such as Eric Dickens, cited by Gutt, recognized the facts that minority languages and cultures may have a limited appeal to audiences abroad, and that the local colour associated with such languages and cultures may not attract enough interest. Adopting the relevance-theoretic model of communication and information processing entails a different view on the ‘untranslatability’ problem. Utterance interpretation is seen as a process involving three factors: the stimulus (utterance), the context, and the interpretation consisting of the explicature and implicatures, and the three factors are mutually interdependent.¹ It follows that the greater the similarity, or as Gutt calls it ‘congruity’, between the context envisaged by the original

¹ Note that in Relevance Theory we talk about the interdependence of the three factors, and not on the dependence of the interpretation on the other two factors, i.e. on the stimulus and context. In fact, the stimulus is given a priori to comprehension, and context is selected in the process so that the interpretation is consistent with the Principle of Relevance.

author and that of the target text audience, the greater the chance that the translation will give rise to similar interpretation as the original. Besides, the RT comprehension procedure, which requires that people stop the interpretation process once their expectations of relevance are satisfied, also comes into play. Although we could potentially explore the context more extensively and look for more contextual implications, we do not do it in spontaneous comprehension. That means that whenever the audience arrives at an interpretation satisfying their expectations of relevance, they accept this interpretation. Translators and theorists have been long aware about the possible solutions to the problem that the interpretation constructed by the target text audience in their cognitive environment may diverge from the one intended by the author. Such solutions involve modifying the text, modifying the cognitive environment of the audience, or the mixture of the two in various proportions. As Gutt puts it, Relevance Theory is not primarily interested in classifying these solutions, but in recognizing the conditions that follow from the inferential natural of communication and that have to be met in order for a text to be interpreted by the target text audience in a way similar to the primary audience.

In the paper **“How Much Interpretive Resemblance to the Source Text Is Possible in the Translation of Parables?”**, Regina Blass discusses the notions of the interpretation and translation of biblical parables, concentrating on the example of the parable of the sower (Mk 4: 14-20). This particular parable includes its allegorical interpretation within the texts, so at least some general guidelines how to read the parable are given. However, there still remains some freedom of the interpretation of the text, since recipients will draw inferences to fulfil their expectations of relevance. Blass claims that the relevance-theoretic analysis of the interpretation of the parable based on lexical pragmatics helps explain how the author’s intentions can be arrived at. She proposes that the overall allegorical interpretation forms an ad hoc discourse thereby providing a constraint on the construction of ad hoc concepts in the sense that the way particular ad hoc concepts are constructed has to be consistent with the ad hoc discourse. As far as the translation strategy is concerned, Blass considers both possibilities offered by RT: the translation in I-mode, in which the translator aims at communicating a particular interpretation to the audience by supplying some contextual information in the text itself, and translation in S-mode, in which the translator does not make any such additions and concentrates on expressing the structural clues present in the original. Out of the two possibilities, Blass seems to favour the latter – the S-mode translation, although she admits that it is always the target community’s decision what type of translation they would welcome.

Kirsti Sellevold, in **“Communication and Cultural Translation in the Early Modern Period: Montaigne’s *Essais* and Florio’s *Montaigne*”**, discusses John Florio’s translation of Michel de Montaigne’s essays into English. First she devotes some space to recounting selected ideas Montaigne dealt with, such as education, written and spoken register, and communication. These considerations enable the author to draw the conclusion that Montaigne’s views were in many respects quite ahead of his times and from the perspective of a present-day relevance theorist, the ideas put forward by the Renaissance philosopher may seem to be valid. Analysing the translation method employed by Florio, Sellevold comes to the conclusion that the notions traditionally applied to early modern translation such as equivalence and domestication are not adequate. To prove the point, she mentions some practices typical of Florio’s translation, which clearly are not examples of literal rendering or domestication. These practices include adding a familiar element next to the foreign one, rather than replacing a foreign element with a domestic equivalent, adding extra words, or even larger chunks of language in order to explicate the message and to ensure the right interpretation, or in order to simply embroider the original. Occasionally, Florio also used some foreign words. In view of these observations, it seems to be more plausible to analyse Florio’s translation in terms of interpretive resemblance to the original. Such approach highlights the fact that the various techniques employed by the translator served the purpose of conveying the communicative intention of the original.

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