BOOK REVIEWS

***Pragmatics and Non-Verbal Communication* by Tim Wharton. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 219pp.**

Reviewed by
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Readers will certainly find in this recent volume a most timely work that stresses the importance that non-verbal phenomena and elements lying between the linguistic and non-linguistic, the coded and non-coded, have in communication. Thus, Wharton undoubtedly redresses the balance in their favour after decades in which they have been incomprehensively relegated to a second plane in linguistics and other neighbouring disciplines. By exploring what and how such phenomena and elements contribute to communication, he brings to the pragmatic arena a wide range of items that have often met controversial accounts or escaped systematic linguistic description but, particularly, missed pragmatic unitary explanations. The following sections summarise each of the chapters this volume comprises, after which follows a critical evaluation.

The book opens with this introductory chapter—"Natural Pragmatics" (1-17), where Wharton starts by clearly explaining the reasons that encouraged him to write this most interesting work: controlled or unconscious vocal, facial and bodily gestures—which he refers to as "natural non-verbal behaviours"—are omnipresent in human communication and largely contribute to or bias our understanding of discourse. Although they have been approached from different frameworks, such as functionalism, conversational and discourse analysis, sociology or anthropology, they have not been approached from a cognitive perspective that unveils how they might interact with linguistic properties of utterances. Such an approach must answer the following questions:

a) What is the relation between natural non-verbal behaviours and intentional communication?
b) How are non-verbal behaviours interpreted?
c) What do they convey?
d) What is the relation between natural non-verbal behaviours and those non-verbal behaviours that are not natural? (3-4)

The answers to these questions depend on the definitions of notions such as *natural*, *language*, *pragmatics*, and *communication*, so Wharton explains his conceptions thereof. Based on Grice (1957), he applies the term "natural" to the way in which non-verbal communication means, and takes "natural meaning" to be synonymous with "naturally indicates", as opposed to "non-natural meaning", often used to refer to arbitrary or conventional meaning. By "language", he understands an Internal, Individual, Intensional object consisting of a mentally represented grammar governed by innately determined principles, so he adheres to the cognitive, Chomskyan view. Finally, as regards "pragmatics" and "communication", Wharton adopts the relevance-theoretic approach to language use, which centres on ostensive-inferential communication and the processes taking place in comprehension (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995).

The second chapter—"Natural and non-natural meaning" (18-37)—begins with a section dedicated to Gricean meaning$_{NN}$. Wharton argues that, for Grice, cases of meaning$_{NN}$ contain a basic layer constituted by information pointed out, which cannot be derivable without a second layer of information that amounts to the intentional pointing of that first layer of information. He also comments on the tests devised by Grice to distinguish between cases of meaning$_N$ and meaning$_{NN}$— paraphrasing and directly quoting (21-22). Next follows a section where Wharton challenges the Gricean description of meaning$_{NN}$ as requiring an intended response from the audience, the audience's recognition of the intention to produce that response, the communicator's intention that the audience recognises the intention to produce that response and the audience's recognition of the communicator's intention to produce a desired response. He also characterises intentional communication as "deliberate and open" (29) in the sense that the communicator lets the audience know something and encourages them to think that she has done so for some reason. Thus, he distinguishes it from mere cases of showing, in which there is no real intention or reason on the part of the communicator to communicate anything, although the audience may draw their own conclusions. Wharton concludes this chapter by claiming that behaviours that can be regarded as cases of meaning$_N$ can be deliberately shown and "recruited for use in overt intentional communication" (33).

The third chapter, "Pragmatics and the domain of pragmatic principles" (38-69), opens with a section that summarises some of the basic tenets and fundamental claims of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995): the cognitive principle of relevance, the notions of relevance, informative intention, cognitive environment, strong and weak communication and strong and weak implicature. As a consequence of the different ways wherewith communicators make manifest their informative intention, Wharton proposes the existence of a continuum of cases between showing and meaning$_{NN}$, at one extreme of which are cases of purely spontaneous showing, while at its other extreme are cases of authentic

linguistic coding. In between lies a wide variety of cases in which more or less direct/'natural' and indirect/'coded' evidence mix to various degress (43-47).

Then, Wharton addresses the problem of the semantic underdeterminacy of utterances and explains the relevance-theoretic notion of explicature and its implications for pragmatic theory. Since the conceptual structures obtained by decoding may be so imprecise not only at the sentence level, but at word level too, they must be inferentially developed, adjusted or "fine-tuned". Openly shown natural behaviours, like shivers, intonation or gaze direction, Wharton argues, may affect the outcome of the processes of lexical adjustment taking place when explicatures are developed, thus contributing to explicit truth-conditional content and guiding hearers to certain conclusions (51). In other cases, such behaviours convey attitudinal information, which may also be conveyed in a more explicit way by recourse to linguistic elements, such as sentential adverbs, which involve encoding. For this reason, natural behaviours also contribute to higher-level explicatures, but in a less explicit way.

Finally, Wharton introduces the distinction between *translational* and *non-translational* activation of concepts, parallel to the relevance-theoretic distinction between *conceptual* and *procedural* meaning/expressions/encoding (cf. Blakemore 1987, 2002), and reminiscent of the speech-act-theoretic distinction between *describing* and *indicating* (Austin 1962; Searle 1969). Translational activation of concepts is based on the existence and usage of a code, and amounts to triggering off a concept when decoding takes place. However, whereas the notion of procedural meaning/expressions/encoding amounts to instructions constraining the comprehension process by reducing the search space for relevant interpretations, non-translational activation "does contain a coded element that points the hearer in a direction they would not reliably take unless they knew the code" (61). This new distinction suggests a reinterpretation of procedural encoding in terms not just of instructions, but of "the management of levels of activation (e.g. of conceptual representations, computations or expectations" (65), and of procedural expressions as involving different activations: inferential rules, conceptual representations (e.g. contextual assumptions or classes of candidate referent), or expectations of particular types of cognitive effects (65).

Wharton applies some this new distinction and his showing-meaning$_{NN}$ continuum to the analysis of interjections in Chapter 4—"Interjections and Language" (70-106). His major aim in this chapter is to answer these three questions:

a) What do interjections communicate?
b) How do interjections communicate?
c) Are interjections part of language?

The author starts by mentioning the controversy between the conceptualist and the non-conceptualist views of interjections, describing the major types of

interjections—*primary* and *secondary*—and suggesting two general criteria to characterise them. Then, he discusses the problems he finds in the conceptualist approach: (i) difficulties to find satisfactory definitions for interjections, (ii) their vagueness, (iii) their context-dependence, (iv) their naturalness and spontaneity, (v) their lack of appropriate synonymous conceptual counterparts, and (vi) their non-truth-conditional nature. These problems lead him to claim that interjections are not conceptual elements.

In the following sections, Wharton reviews anthropologist Erving Goffman's (1981) description of interjections as *response cries*, his classification of them and his proposal concerning a continuum between properly linguistic and non-linguistic response cries, or between "displaying" and "saying"— similar to Wharton's showing-meaning$_{NN}$ continuum—although Goffman's differs in that it seems "to be based on the assumption that all communication involves at least some element of coding" (83). Even if Wharton assesses Goffman's contribution positively, he criticises Goffman for not addressing how interjections communicate or not presenting a clear alternative to the conceptualist approach (84). For this reason, he then explores the possibility that interjections are analysed as non-truth-conditional indicators of "higher-level explicatures containing the type of speech-act or propositional-attitude information the hearer is expected to infer" (85). Thus, he seeks to find an answer to the question about what interjections communicate.

However, this analysis also poses some problems and seems quite restrictive, for interjections do not always appear in discourse with adjacent propositions that could yield the lower-level explicatures to be subsequently embedded under higher-level explicatures (87-88). Based on Rey's (1980) work on emotional states, feelings and sensations, he states that the question about what interjections communicate requires different answers: in some cases, they would convey information exploitable for higher-level explicatures; in other cases, emotional attitudes to propositions and not propositional-attitude or speech-act descriptions, and, finally, in still other cases, feelings or sensations (88-89).

Next, he turns to the question about how interjections communicate. Since interjections do not pass the tests about conceptuality, he suggests a procedural analysis, according to which interjections "encode procedural information which "points" in the general direction in which relevance should be sought" (90). The procedures interjections encode, Wharton says, activate "various attitudinal concepts or classes of concepts, but not in the standard translational way" (90). Accordingly, *wow* might activate attitudinal descriptions having to do with delight, surprise or excitement; *eh* a variety of interrogative propositional-attitude descriptions; *huh* dissociative attitudes, etc. Prosodic information and paralinguistic information would determine the particular attitude involved and its intensity. With this proposal Wharton both resolves the problems the conceptualist account has and preserves the intuitions that interjections have a coded element and

are more than natural displays (91).

In order to answer the question whether interjections are part of language, the author takes into account their "paralinguistic" nature, which places some of them close to gestures; their phonological atypicality, which prevents some of them from being reported by verbs of saying, and their syntactic independence and non-productivity. He concludes that interjections constitute such a heterogeneous category, that a satisfactory answer cannot be given. Finally, Wharton closes this chapter by examining the naturalness of interjections. Quoting from Goffman, Darwin (1872), Sapir (1970), he shows that interjections occupy different positions along a continuum of naturalness, just as they occupy different positions along the showing-meaning$_{NN}$ continuum. Since some of them are instinctive and seem to be caused by certain states of mind, they may be viewed as developments of natural behaviours and, hence, as more natural (99). Other more stylised, iconic interjections, on the contrary, combine elements of coding and showing, which separate them from both proper cases of showing and saying, respectively (100-101). After this, Wharton very accurately and clearly summarises his answers to the questions about interjections.

After introducing what semiotics and the social sciences understand by *code*, in the fifth chapter—"Natural codes" (107-138)—Wharton discusses two examples of such codes—those used by honeybees and vervet monkeys—and compares them to some human natural behaviours—smiles, crying and shivering. He contends that some of these behaviours—smiles—carry "factive" meaning, as they indicate something about their producers, and may convey messages without reference to their producers' intentions. This does not exclude that in some cases their producers monitor them and may consciously produce, fake or exaggerate them, which is possible thanks to "the adaptive functions of the behaviours themselves" (113). Wharton then explains the difference between *signs* and *signals*—the latter's communicative function—and argues that some human natural behaviours, e.g. smiles, have evolved as signalling activities because they carry or indicate some meaning, whilst others, e.g. shivers, do not work in the same way and are just natural signs (114-115). Whereas human natural signs must be interpreted in inferential terms, human natural signals involve a certain element of coding, for they trigger off specific mental or emotional states corresponding to communicators' mental or emotional states (115). However, human natural signals are special in that their interpretation is also supplemented by inferential processes.

Next, Wharton reflects on the type of information natural codes convey. In order to do so, he comments on the distinction between *digital* and *analogical* coding, and illustrates that many human behaviours are interpreted analogically on the grounds of subtle discriminations of some of their features. Moreover, he states that analogue encoding lines up with the Peircean notion of *index*, i.e. a representation related to an object in a proportional or causal way. Nevertheless, he

also acknowledges that, in addition to the notions of analogue encoding and index, something more is necessary to account for "what the information conveyed by human natural codes looks like in cognitive terms" (122).

His next step is to review the conceptualist approach to facial expressions, more specifically, Wierzbicka's (2000) analysis in terns of a "Natural Semantic Metalanguage". Although he finds points of agreement between this author's work and his view, he finds the same problems mentioned in his review of interjections, which stem from Wierzbicka's basing her analysis on the coding-decoding model and relegating inference to a secondary or minor role. He firstly admits that "there may be a coded elements to some facial expressions" (124), but he contends that, for these expressions to communicate, they do not necessarily have to encode anything but to be exploited inferentially. Secondly, Wharton considers that the conceptual structures with which Wierzbicka characterises facial expressions are entirely digital and fall short of capturing what natural codes convey, their context-dependence and analogicity. Thirdly, he finds it hard to account for what facial expressions communicate on the grounds of encoded universal concepts, as, from a relevance-theoretic standpoint, not all concepts are lexicalised and, in the case of those lexicalised, they must always be narrowed or broadened.

Finally, Wharton concludes this chapter arguing that, although natural signals such as facial expressions and affective tones are not part of a linguistic code, they are coded and may be best analysed in non-translational terms, as they do not contribute to the truth-conditional content of utterances, do not combine compositionally with other elements and are extremely context-dependent. Thus, as in the case of interjections, natural signals contribute to the construction of higher-level explicatures and convey attitudinal or emotional information (128-131). Therefore, there would be different types of both linguistic and non-linguistic devices encoding non-translational information (133). Furthermore, he suggests that some natural behaviours may make more implicit or explicit contributions to communication, so they would also be placed along a continuum of explicitness/implicitness, and that they are interpreted by "specialised, perhaps dedicated, neural machinery" (132).

The sixth chapter—"Prosody and gesture" (139-154)— is dedicated to two phenomena indispensable to understand what we say and our attitudes: exactly prosody and gesture. As regards the former, Wharton says that prosodic inputs range from the natural to the linguistic and interact with information from different sources. Although their effects highly depend on context, prosodic inputs convey information about emotions or attitudes, create impressions or alter the salience of some interpretations. Accordingly, prosody interacts with lexical items so as to fine-tune their meaning (141-142), and unexpected stress patterns, costlier in terms of processing effort, divert hearers from expectable interpretations towards alternative ones (142). Discussing Gussenhoven and his colleagues' ideas about

increased articulatory precision, he argues that this is a natural sign exploitable in ostensive-inferential communication inasmuch as the saliency of the speaker's effort may attract the hearer's attention towards some assumptions and departures from expected pitch ranges, although increasing processing effort, may decrease effort to arrive at intended interpretations (143-144).

As in the case of interjections or face expressions, Wharton also puts forward in this chapter that both natural and properly linguistic prosodic signals—lexical stress, lexical tone and grammaticalised aspects of sentence stress and intonation—encode procedural or non-translational information "facilitating the retrieval of certain types of syntactic, semantic or conceptual representation" (146), and jointly interact with other linguistic signals, natural signals and natural signs. Nevertheless, he also concedes that all prosodic inputs may not be coded and that some of them may only stabilise in some languages or cultures, thus becoming *emblems*, which accounts for cross-cultural variations in their interpretations.

Concerning gesture, Wharton finds clear correspondences with both the verbal and prosodic continua he discusses in previous chapters. On the basis of "Kendon's continuum", which he takes from McNeill (1992), he shows that gestures may range from more to less natural too. Thus, we have *gesticulation*, spontaneous movements accompanying speech; *language-like gestures*, which are integrated into speech and contribute to its interpretation; *pantomimes*, which resemble objects or actions; *emblems*, which are culture-dependent gestures conveying positive and negative meanings, and *sign languages*, which are rule-governed languages (149-151). Regretting that pragmatics has greatly ignored the role of gestures in communication, Wharton argues that the distinctions he traces in the book can be extended and applied to the study of gesture from a pragmatic viewpoint, as they can be used overtly. Accordingly, he concludes this chapter by suggesting that gesticulations are natural *signs* aimed to help the hearer and, therefore, are interpreted inferentially. They may be exploited in ostensive-inferential communication because they may convey information if the speaker uses and shows them intentionally (153).

The seventh and penultimate chapter—"Mindreaders" (155-170)—underlines the importance that the attribution of mental states to other individuals has in both cognition and communication, and reviews the extensive literature evidencing mind-reading. Wharton devotes some pages to summarise contributions on the consequences that impairments in mind-reading abilities have on, e.g. autistics (156-158). He also underlines Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson's proposal that verbal comprehension might be carried out by a mechanism or module forming part of our mind-reading ability and specifically dedicated to the interpretation of ostensive stimuli (159-160). After this, he addresses some criticism against relevance-theoretic claims about the role of mind-reading by Breheny (2006) and Recanati (2002), and provides evidence supporting that in both very basic acts of

ostensive-inferential communication, in which communicators give direct evidence of their intention to inform to their audience, and other acts of ostensive communication in which the evidence provided is indirect, attribution of mental states is essential to recognise what has been shown and why, as well as what has been said and why, respectively.

Since mind-reading plays such a crucial role in communication, Wharton concludes that people having problems reading other individuals' minds will also have problems understanding gestures and other non-verbal behaviours intentionally employed in interaction (163-164). For this reason, he next reviews some experiments that show that autism and right hemisphere damage result in problems to understand emotional, attitudinal, inarticulate and intrinsic prosody and contrastive stress (165-167), and suggests two test cases aimed at investigating the prosodic difficulties arising in autism, Asperger's syndrome and right hemisphere damage (168).

Finally, Wharton rounds up his work with the last chapter—"The showing-meaning$_{NN}$ continuum and beyond" (171-194). He starts by remarking that the continua proposed by Goffman, Gussenhoven and Kendon are based on the code model, whilst the continuum he proposes in this book is based on the role played by the inferential attribution of intentions. For this reason, he calls the former types of continua "Code-continuum" (C-continuum) and his "Ostensive behaviour-continuum" (O-continuum) (171-172). Both continua represent the evidences used in communication, which range from cases of display to those of linguistic coding. However, the C-continuum cannot explain how communicative behaviours are used and the varied ways in which different behaviours can be exploited to convey information. On the contrary, the advantage of his O-continuum is its applicability to the elements included in the C-continuum, as it can account for the ostensive uses of language to display and of display to mean$_{NN}$ (173). Besides, the O-continuum captures diachronic evolution of some phenomena, as "it can represent the fluidity and constant change that results in expressions coming to form part of language" (174). Nevertheless, as Wharton acknowledges, more research is needed so as to elucidate if it "has an evolutionary-diachronic as well as a historical-diachronic dimension" (175).

The author goes on to deal with the debate between those who contend that communication began as a coding-decoding activity and those who argue that it required metarepresentational abilities, and gives sound reasons about why metarepresentational abilities might have developed before, independent of communication (176-179). After this, he also addresses the problem about why communication might have stabilised, following Dan Sperber, who argues that this might have happened in a panorama in which factors such as the development of the human ability to present arguments for conclusions the audience is intended to draw or the ability to evaluate the argument of others concurred and laid the

foundations for the development of complex metarepresentational abilities and a logical vocabulary (180-183).

Owing to the manifold uncertainties about the emergence of language, he states that we can only account for it in terms of myths, so he then reviews one suggested by Grice himself. This myth portrays the evolution of language and communication as a sequence of stages in which human beings were able to attribute and recognise intentions behind certain behaviours in which they used progressively less direct evidences of their intentions until they reached a point at which communication did not need to depend on natural connections between ostensive stimuli and intended meanings (184-190). Finally, Wharton closes this chapter summarising how he has answered the initial questions that motivated this book and suggesting that his ideas may be extended and applied to other disciplines, such as cognitive science, psychology, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, aesthetics or music.

Turning towards a more general assessment, written with a good style, *Pragmatics and Non-Verbal Communication* is easily readable and enjoyable. Wharton illustrates his main ideas and claims with pertinent examples, most of which are contextualised in such a manner that readers can easily visualise what would be happening in the situations the author alludes to. But, more importantly, he evidences a sound and deep scholarliness not only in relevance-theoretic pragmatics and its implications for the analysis of intentional communicative phenomena, but also in many of the most influential linguistic models and their approaches to interjections, gestures and prosody. This enables him to detect weaknesses and inconsistencies in previous analyses and look for alternative, more reasonable answers to the problems those linguistic, non-linguistic or paralinguistic elements have posed over the history of linguistics. And, honestly, not only does Wharton achieve an innovative, brave and systematic re-analysis in coherence with the cognitive theoretic pragmatic paradigm he endorses, but also he raises many intriguing and stimulating questions, and suggests new and challenging directions for future work which will spark off much discussion and research.

With a good layout and organisation, the book takes readers step by step with expositive clarity, concision and precision. Wharton follows a good argumentative thread and guides them throughout at every moment by reminding some key notions and previous proposals by means of adequate summaries at the end of most of its sections and chapters, and by relating ideas when necessary. It could be pointed out, however, that the two last chapters, although offering very illuminating and clarifying explanations about mind-reading abilities and their consequences for communication, as well as a complete survey of the vast literature on this topic, may make readers lose track of the general purpose of the book, as they centre on these issues a bit excessively and do not relate them very much to the usage and understanding of the phenomena analysed. These two

chapters might have benefitted from (a) section(s) that showed in a more explicit way the implications of mind-reading for non-verbal communicative behaviours, even if the author lets readers glimpse them in some of their sections.

One of the remarkable aspects of this book is its simplicity as regards the theoretical apparatus with which the author seeks to answer the problems that the phenomena under scrutiny pose. Apart from major postulates and concepts of relevance-theoretic pragmatics, he relies on the notion of procedural or non-translational meaning, on the one hand, to account for what interjections, gestures and prosody encode and to show how they contribute to the recovery of information about attitudes, emotions and feelings. Even if there may not be complete agreement about issues such as the procedures that interjections encode, their (lack of) conceptual content, or how prosody interacts with interjections and lexical items (cf. Padilla Cruz 2009a, 2009b, this volume), and although Wharton does not address why the items under scrutiny acquire(d) procedural meaning or how such meaning arises, readers with some background in phonetics and phonology will discover in this book many challenging insights into the workings of the not-to-be-despised suprasegmental features of verbal communication which will significantly contrast with previous explanations based on the code model of communication they might be acquainted with. On the other hand, Wharton's proposals are based on a continuum he envisages as an alternative to other continua. The explanatory capacity of this new construct will certainly be welcome by scholars and researchers interested in historical linguistics, for it can help to gain a better and more complete understanding of the reasons why certain lexical items might (have) undergo(ne) semantic change or why certain items evolve(d) in different directions over history.

It is undeniable that a work like Wharton's will have to be subsequently taken into account not only in pragmatics, but also in other linguistic and non-linguistic disciplines because of its implications for a the study of human interaction. For example, as regards sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics, practitioners in these fields must certainly go a step beyond and consider "the minds of the individuals who create […] discourse" (193). Maxim-based models of politeness like, for instance, Robyn Lakoff's (1973, 1977) and Geoffrey Leech's (1983), postulated the existence of a number of social maxims that would regulate interaction and complete those initially put forward by Grice (1975) in his seminal work. Similarly, Fraser and Nolen (1981) and Spencer-Oatey (2000, 2008) have argued that interaction is greatly determined by the interlocutors' rights and obligations, among other factors. Although issues such as the origin of those maxims, rights and obligations, their ethnocentrism or cultural relativity, how individuals internalise them or to what extent they are in fact aware of their existence and negotiation may be controversial, those authors' proposals certainly suggest the existence of a pool of cultural or idiosyncratic beliefs that individuals

entertain, which certainly determine when to say something, what to say, to whom and how to say it. The idea that communication is an intentional activity governed by beliefs and intentions is not absent from most models of linguistic (im)politeness. Indeed, to name probably the best known model, Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), following Grice (1975), already characterised communication as a rational activity or behaviour. However, many practitioners of politeness theory and sociolinguistics, overwhelmed by the never-ending richness of linguistic data and their situation- and individual-specificity, as well as their cross-cultural variation, may have a bit excessively focused on the utterance- and discourse-level manifestations of communicative behaviour to the neglect of what really lies behind: intentionality. If instead of centring on linguistic clues and evidences in analyses of the (im)politeness of some (communicative) behaviours, attention is paid to the attribution of beliefs interlocutors may make when interacting, many descriptions and analyses might drastically change. It is only by asking individuals about intentions and reasons that a true and complete understanding of the underpinnings of (im)politeness can be gained.

To conclude, Wharton has made a more than commendable exercise of application and extension of relevance theory to an area of communication that, with the exception of a few papers and chapters, has received little attention from relevance-theory practitioners and pragmatists in general. It is true that relevance-theoretic pragmatics has many adherents, but also detractors, who might find in this book radical claims and extreme positions. Suffice it to mention that a notion like procedural meaning has met the opposition and criticism of some authors, for whom the very fact that Wharton has based his account on it may be but objectionable and censurable. Using the Hegelian conception of history, we might be now in an antithesis, in which many communicative phenomena are accounted for on the basis of the inferential model of communication and in terms of distinctions like the conceptual-procedural one, the thesis being previous, more traditional explanations based on the code-model. Other works may follow and review Wharton's; the history of linguistics will go on and there might arise a new antithesis that will turn Wharton's work into a questionable thesis, but his contribution will certainly remain as an obligatory reference, as it proves the validity of a pragmatic paradigm like relevance theory to satisfactorily account for a wide array of communicative phenomena, shows a profound commitment with academic rigour and a serious attempt to unveil what underlies the rich expressive potential of non-verbal communication.

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The Primer of Humor Research by Victor Raskin. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008, 673 pp.

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The Primer of Humour Research is a long-awaited handbook on humour, whose objective is to summarise multidisciplinary research conducted over the last few decades. The volume will most certainly prove to be a stimulating read for not only students or researchers unfamiliar to humour studies but also scholars who already have experience in the study of humour.

In his witty introduction, Victor Raskin explains his underlying rationale for the book, claiming that he invited "the major, leading author in each major discipline contributing to humor research" (2), who was to present a broad, unbiased picture of his/her field. However, while some of the contributors are seasoned scholars, others are emerging researchers. As the editor himself admits, the choice of contributors is not free from nepotism, which may also explain the absence of a few big names. Regrettably, a few of the contributions can scarcely be considered objective.

The editor also brings to light the facts about the beginnings of his scholarly career, notably the teething problems he will have experienced at the dawn of linguistic humour research. The problems related to the alleged lack of seriousness are by no means unfamiliar to fledgling researchers pursuing their studies among

academics oblivious to the body of multifarious research on the nature of humour as a philosophical, psychological, sociological or linguistic problem.

Chapter topics in the primer are of diversified prominence and are placed at different levels of generality. Besides those presenting broad outlooks of chosen areas of study, there are those focusing on narrower topics. Also, a number of issues and strands intertwine, which testifies that there do exist core theories lying at the heart of humour phenomena, theories relevant to studies conducted from multifarious theoretical vantage points. Below, I will give an overview of the volume, focusing on each chapter in isolation and paying special attention to chapters of importance to linguists representing various subdisciplines, primarily pragmatics and cognitivism.

As regards minor technical issues, the volume is not free from typos, e.g. "linguists have show" (104), "Thomas Schultz" (228), "waysì" (363), "Norrick, Neill" (396), "2.2" (582). More importantly, referencing problems can be found, such as "Coulson in press" (129) or "McGhee 1977" (559), neither of which are mentioned in the respective reference sections; or faulty references, e.g. "O'Connor" (149) rather than "O'Connell", Shultz and Horibe (639), whose article was actually published in *Developmental Psychology* 10: 13-20, and Coulson's alleged 2001 publication (634), which has never been released (cf. Coulson's online CV). Moreover, some contributors (especially Raskin and Attardo) provide references to their unpublished presentations or manuscripts, unavailable even to the most enterprising students (or young researchers) willing to expand their knowledge.

Willibald Ruch provides an extensive solid introduction to the psychology of humour, accounting for a wide array of issues relevant for psychologists and cognitive linguists. Among the topics covered there are cognitive processes, manifestations of humour appreciation (smiling and laughing), motivational processes, mood and personality traits in humour perception, as well as humour-related pathologies, development of a sense of humour over one's lifespan, cross-national and cross-cultural perspectives, and heritability of humour. In his multifarious account, the author draws on a variety of theories and research data. From a linguistic perspective, assumed by the target reader of *Lodz Papers in Pragmatics*, of most vital importance is the section on cognitive processes, in which the author concentrates primarily on the notion of incongruity and the incongruity-resolution framework, which complements other psychological and linguistic accounts of the models (see e.g. Forabosco 1992, 2008; Martin 2007; Dynel 2009).

Salvatore Attardo's focus of interest is the linguistics of humour. Attardo opens his literature review with a brief introduction to the main three groups of humour theories, i.e. superiority, relief and incongruity theories, after which, for an undisclosed reason, he introduces the concept of pun, a linguistic category of

humour. Then, after a short section on the structural on-line analysis of jokes, viz. the isotopy-disjunction model, he proceeds to elaborate on the semantic script theory of humour (SSTH) and the general theory of verbal humour (GTVH), which are applicable to jokes and longer humorous texts. This part of the chapter is essentially an overview of Attardo's postulates, with the GTVH being the only approach described at length, which is bound to instil in the naïve reader's mind the idea that this one must be the "best" one or even the sole theoretical framework if it is paid so much attention. Even though it may be the prevailing framework for the analysis of jokes and longer humorous texts, there are numerous descriptive/explanatory approaches to diversified categories of verbal humour, which deserve to be mentioned in such a general section.

In the short section on the pragmatics of humour, Attardo, repeats his claim that humour violates the Gricean maxims and Cooperative Principle, asserting that "the consensus is that this position is correct" (115), without quoting any references testifying to this claim. It is primarily Attardo that persistently repeats in his publications the same postulates, oblivious to critiques, which argue that humour subscribes to the Gricean model of communication (e.g. Kotthoff 2006b; Dynel 2008, 2009).

In the section on discourse analysis of humour, Attardo surveys research on the functions of humour, concluding that "none of these studies goes beyond the four general functions of humor listed in Attardo (1994: 323): social management, decommitment, mediation and defunctionalization" (117). Attardo thus accuses other authors of anecdotal observations with little theoretical value. In discourse analytic studies, however, the objective is not to propose general theories on the functions of humour, but to account for its roles in particular discourses. If, on the other hand, a given discourse exploits a particular function, the latter may be officially added to the list of potential functions. After all, as Attardo also concedes, humour is a multifunctional phenomenon. Furthermore, the four categories Attardo is known to have postulated enjoy a number of recurrent sub-manifestations, which deserve to be discussed. In the section on discourse analysis, the author also perceives aggressive (vis-à-vis co-constructed) humour in the context of the disruption it may cause, diverting the flow of conversation, rather than in the light of the threat it carries to the interlocutor (cf. e.g. Veale et al. 2006; Holmes and Marra 2002a,b; Schnurr et al. 2008), which would interweave also with the next section on responses to a humorous utterance, which Attardo dubs "joke-situation" (119). This term may be regarded as misleading, given that the joke is not the sole manifestation of humour, while more general terms are known in topical literature, viz. the *humorous mode/key/frame* (cf. e.g. Bateson 1953, 1972; Fry 1963; Goffman 1974; Norrick 1993; Coates 2007; Kotthoff 1999, 2007). In the paragraphs on sociolinguistics of humour closing the first part of the chapter, Attardo provides references mainly to gender studies.

In the second major part of the chapter, titled "Issues in the field", Attardo addresses the issue of laughter, longer texts, irony, computational approaches to humour, corpus approaches, neurolinguistics of humour, translation of humour, humour and language learning, cognitive linguistics, and relevance theoretic accounts. The structure of the chapter may provoke misgivings, given that sections devoted to major approaches to the analysis of humour (neurolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, translation) are entwined with humour types (irony, longer humorous texts, puns). The overview is not free from terminological confusion, either. For instance, the author writes about "humor and irony" (118), while irony is a separate phenomenon, a rhetorical figure, which partly overlaps with humour, being one of its types. It may be hardly possible to explore the body of linguistic humour research in one article, but this does not mean that a very general overview could not be carried out in a more coherent and orderly fashion, without bias to any of the approaches.

In his chapter, Christie Davies presents a broad picture of comparative studies of humour, notably jokes. The chapter has a discursive character, but two main intertwining strands can be distinguished. The first one embraces methodological problems in comparative studies, which will be very significant for prospective researchers. The second one, whereas, is topical groups of jokes manifesting themselves similarly/differently across cultures, exemplified by stupidity jokes. In reference to those, Davies claims that in Western democracies, in contrast to regimes of old socialist countries, "It is difficult to make stupidity jokes about a democratic leader with a popular mandate because it would imply that the people rather than the system were stupid since they put them there" (171), while stupidity jokes pertain solely to those elected in an "unusual" way. However, it might be argued that if a candidate wins, whether hands down or only by a slim majority of votes, there is still a proportion of the population who will voice their discontent by ridiculing the candidate. Also, grass roots' choice of a given candidate does not mean that they cannot later joke about the latter's actions, especially if such joking does not carry a severe derogatory force.

Elliott Oring aptly surveys research on humour within anthropology and folklore, revisiting a number of core concepts, which appear to have influenced other disciplines, e.g. psychology, sociology and linguistics. Oring revisits joking relationships, ritual humour, folk genre, jokes and jokes cycles as well as humour contexts (cultural, social, individual and comparative).

The topic of John Morreall's first article is the treatment of humour by religious thinkers and philosophers. In the bulk of the paper, the author meticulously conducts a historical overview of humour theories, superiority, relief and incongruity theories, primarily in the light of philosophical literature. Even if the topic per se may be regarded as a repetition of the overview conducted by Ruch or Attardo, it is not thus, since each of the authors approaches the issues differently,

drawing on different literature. It is worth mentioning that all the three authors unduly credit Aristotle for having heralded the notion of humorous incongruity. Aristotle's "deformity not productive of pain" appears to have been overinterpreted (Forabosco 1992) as the grounds for the incongruity approach. Morreall, however, reports that in a short passage of his Rhetoric, Aristotle wrote about setting up an expectation in the hearer and then subverting it with something unexpected. However, this claim is still insufficient to consider Aristotle as the forefather of the incongruity-resolution approach, since not all forms of humour capitalise on this defeated expectations pattern (cf. Dynel 2009), while the philosopher's observation as such is too general be considered the groundwork for the incongruity-resolution model.

In the second part of the chapter, Morreall confronts a number of vexing issues, such as the (in)compatibility between the religious world and a sense of humour, the interdependence of humour and emotions as well as rationality and the ethics of humour. Yet another problem is whether there exists a theory providing all requisite conditions for humour. Rightly, Morreall rejects superiority and relief theories as inapplicable to all instances of humour, arguing the capture-all theory of humour is the enjoyment of incongruity, inasmuch as incongruity alone can also give rise to negative emotions (e.g. fear, anger, disgust, sadness, etc.). However, it must be observed that this definition is overburdened with a methodological problem concerning the idiosyncratic perception of humour. To put it simply, what one person enjoys need not be enjoyable to another, which means that no stimulus can be unequivocally deemed as humorous. Additionally, Morreall maintains that resolution does not have to be resolved, whether in non-verbal humour or in verbal humour. This extrapolation is based on an ill-advised premise as to the nature of resolution, e.g. that seeing a cloud in the shape of Nixon's profile necessitates explaining the underlying reasons for the coincidence, that dropping ice-cream on a dog's ear does not require accounting for why this took place, or that the stand-up joke "This is my brother Darrell, and that is my other brother Darrell" (234) might demand an explanation as to why two brothers should have the same name. Arguably, resolution in these cases entails acknowledging the uncanny incongruities, i.e. the coincidence of a cloud in the shape of the former president's profile, the dog's ear being caked with ice-cream, and the fact that two brothers bear the same name, respectively. Most linguists and psychologists are unanimous that incongruity will normally be resolved, at least in the form of the recipient's cognitive control of a stimulus (Forabosco 2008; cf. Dynel 2009).

Alleen and Don Nilsen, with the help of nine scholars, expand on the discussions of humour in literary studies. The authors open the article with a definition of humorous literary works and their genres, steering a clear course through concepts, such as types of comedies, satire, and parody. The following sections of the article constitute a survey of works on humorous literature and

various authors' approaches and foci of interest, highlighting the significance of multidisciplinarity. The article abounds in, and boils down to, references to the whole gamut of works, both scholarly and non-scholarly.

Lawernce E. Mintz approaches the issue of humour in popular culture, narrowed down to popular art and entertainment, which does not appear to have been widely investigated, as the author claims. After providing a few relevant scholarly sources, the author briefly presents a number of mocking characters, stand-up comedians, film comedians, comedy serials and comic strips. In the final section of the essay, Mintz recapitulates research on American humour. A major difficulty readers encounter here is that no reference section is provided, which obstructs their further literature search.

Amy Carrell elaborates on historical views of humour in the light of philosophical, sociological and linguistic literature, quoting a variety of loosely connected tenets. Again, as three other authors in the volume, Carrell revisits superiority, relief and incongruity theories, yet not repeating the tenets mentioned in the preceding chapters. Therefore, upon a perusal of the book, the reader can generate a rich picture of humour theories, as long as he/she does not feel overwhelmed by the multiplicity of approaches and can organise them coherently. Contrary to the title of the chapter, viz. "Historical views of humor", Carrell views the three groups of theories also in the context of more recent literature. Surprisingly enough, revisiting the contemporary incongruity(-resolution) theories, the author fails to mention Suls (1972, 1983), to whom the model is largely credited. On the other hand, most commendable is her observation that Raskin's Semantic Script Theory of Humour and Raskin and Attardo's General Theory of Verbal Humour are neutral to the three main theoretical groups of humour. The issue of whether the GTVH is an incongruity model is a bone of contention between the two co-authors (see Dynel 2009). Additionally, Carrell enumerates other contemporary research, grouped into topics, such as gendered humour, children's humour or bilingual humour, all of which are centred on multifarious methodological approaches and represent various realms of study. The final three sections focus on Carrell's own Audience-based theory of verbal humour, psychological inquiry into humour (a decidedly inexhaustive, and perhaps redundant section, given Ruch's contribution) and the work of the International Society for Humor Studies.

Christian F. Hempelmann's focus of attention is computational humour, punning and non-punning. After an approachable introduction to Computational Linguistics and Natural Language Processing as well as computational humour, the author focuses on puns. As he does earlier (Hempelmann 2004), Hempelmann handles the category of imperfect puns (based on sound similarity, not exactness) within the terms of the SSTH and the GTVH. He thus repeats his earlier claim that script opposition without an overlap even "of the feeblest kind imaginable" is

conducive to wordplay rather than humour in the form of punning. A query arises as to how this gradable overlap can be measured. The plausibility of this tenet aside, it should be acknowledged that wordplay, such as rhyming, is frequently subsumed under humorous, even if not laughable, forms (cf. e.g. Nash 1985; Apte 1985). Hempelmann, nevertheless, claims that aesthetic enjoyment should not be mistaken for humorous enjoyment. The final part of the chapter centres on computational humour in an NLP system with the use of ontological semantics. It is noteworthy that while discussing Raskin's canonical joke, Hempelmann changes the script opposition originally proposed, i.e. doctor vs. lover, for (indeed, a more plausible one) patient vs. lover as the Text-Meaning-Representation (349). This manifests the elusiveness of some of the tenets of the script-opposition model (cf. Dynel 2009).

Giselinde Kuipers gives a reliable overview of sociological perspectives on humour, relevant also for sociolinguists and pragmaticists, starting with the presentation of pre-disciplinary history, i.e. relevant philosophical literature. Further, she sheds light on social maintenance (under the heading "functionalist") and conflict approaches, which could perhaps together be subsumed under functionalist approaches, given that, albeit divergent, both groups of postulates concentrate on social functions of humour. Other sections summarise symbolic interactionist, phenomenological, and historical-comparative approaches, mentioning also topics such as humour in politics or gendered humour. Finally, Kuipers analyses a number of issues germane to the sociological perspective, i.e. the dark side of humour, humour and laughter, as well as genres and mediated forms of humour.

Tarez Samra Graban's contribution sheds light on humour within the study of rhetoric. The essay appears to be a collection of loosely based strands. It opens with the presentation of humour in traditional rhetorical studies, after which the focus is moved to women's works. The second subchapter is devoted to humour in composition, raising issues such as parody, use of humour in writing texts, or humour in business, technical and professional writing. In the final part of the paper, Graban examines literature on humour in contemporary political discourse. The reading process is impaired by inconsistent referencing methods, which is perhaps the effect of the elision of footnotes.

In his second chapter, John Morreall elaborates on the psychology of humour from the perspective of health, workplace and educational issues. First, the author conducts a review of semi-scholarly literature and practical manuals on each of the three topics, as well as on general benefits of humour. Later, he revisits a number of research findings in each of the three strands.

One of the strands of the abovementioned chapter is further pursued by Rod A. Martin, who expounds on the impact of humour and laughter on physical and psychological health. The author first presents theoretical mechanisms accounting

for the beneficial influence of humour, and explains a sense of humour in the light of diversified research. In the second part of the chapter, Martin concentrates on a number of parameters pertaining to the positive impact of humour and laughter on physical health (immune system, pain threshold and tolerance, blood pressure, longevity, and illness symptoms), after which he relates humour to psychological health (mood and psychological adjustment, coping with stress, and interpersonal relationships).

Katrina E. Triezenberg tackles the issue of humour in literature, the topic which already emerged in the chapter by Nielsen and Nielsen. (*Nota bene*, a question may nudge at the reader's mind as to why two topically overlapping papers are embraced in the volume, and why they are not adjacent if they complement each other.) The author first presents a historical sketch of humorous literary works and then compiles an alphabetical glossary of relevant terms, a number of which are also prevalent in linguistic studies. Regrettably, the author chooses not to provide any references, thereby failing to substantiate the definitions and simplify the reader's more advanced research. In the section on the study of literary humour, the author touches upon the SSTH and the GTVH as tools for the analysis of humour in literature, venturing a very bold and unsubstantiated claim that "Most theories of humour, in fact, can be boiled down to something like the Script Semantic Theory of Humor" (535), simultaneously showing that there are literary devices which are anchored in script opposition but are not inherently humorous. Further, Triezenberg introduces her own proposal of literary enhancers, a number of techniques increasing the humorousness of a text.

The last section of the chapter aims to answer the question why mysteries are not funny, based on the assumption that mystery novels operate on lies, exploiting logical mechanism and script opposition (and other knowledge resources), and thus belong to the non-bona-fide mode of communication, standing vis-à-vis "Grice's maxims of bona-fide communication" (539). Firstly, Grice (1989 [1975]) is not the author of the concept of "bona-fide" humour, the term coined by Raskin (1985), and secondly, cannot be equated with lies, their motivation and workings being entirely different (cf. Dynel 2008, 2009), not to mention the fact not all mystery novels are pivoted on lies. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the GTVH can be employed to describe the workings on non-humorous texts as well. The author's explanation is that stories, and lies therein, develop slowly, which is why "humour is lost" (541). This appears to suggest, admittedly wrongly, that all mystery stories are humorous at heart.

Dineh Davis aims at presenting humour as a vehicle for human communicative needs and desires. After a long introduction geared towards reaching an understanding of the concept of "humour", the author presents, not really a literature survey (as the heading suggests), but her viewpoint on a number of global factors bearing relevance to the process of humour comprehension and enjoyment,

i.e. sender, receiver, environment, surroundings, situational characteristics, time of day, opportunities, channel of communication, message, and context. In the second part of the chapter headed "Issues", the problem of humour and gender are introduced. Unfortunately, the author does not capitalise on the extensive research in the field, drawing on only a few works, and not even the recent ones (e.g. Hay 2000; Crawford 2003; Ardington 2006; Davies 2006; Kotthoff 2006a; Holmes 2006; Lampert and Ervin-Tripp 2007; Bing 2007). The next section presents the author's views on humour communicating frailties.

Delia Chiaro focuses on verbally expressed humour in the context of translation studies. Firstly, the author surveys literature on humour in translation and discursively addresses the problems humorous language poses for translators. Further, Chiaro discusses equivalence and translatability/untranslatability and sociocultural issues, primary in Translation Studies on the whole, with special emphasis placed on humour. The next subsection is devoted to punning, the problem peculiar to humour. A question arises, however, if the section may not be extended to cover also other linguistically-based humour, i.e. wordplay in general, not only that couched in linguistic ambiguity. The third subchapter tackles the problem of multimedia translation, notably screen translation. The rationale left unexplained, Chiaro chooses to pinpoint the problem of puns, proposing fourfold taxonomy of their interlingual rendition. One of the strategies is the replacement of the SL text with an idiomatic expression. However, one may find it surprising that the replacement strategy should be so narrow, and cannot entail, e.g. other wordplay. The chapter closes with a number of general observations on the position of translation in humour studies.

The last chapter, co-authored by Christian F. Hempelmann and Andrea C. Samson, examines visual cartoons, in particular humorous cartoons, conceived of as pictorial jokes with punchlines. The authors first position studies on cartoons in humour literature and give an overview of multifarious research on the topic. In addition, cartoons are defined (vis-à-vis comics and caricatures) and presented from a historical perspective. The authors pay marked attention to the issue of visual pun, in which one visual element activates two meanings simultaneously. Further, Hempelmann and Samson distinguish between verbal and visual humour along a few criteria. There is, however, one which may provoke misgivings, i.e. that in verbal jokes "There is no room for semantic ornament as the listener is paying close attention to any clue hinting at the expected incongruities or helping them with their playful resolutions" (617). Is it not so that the humorousness of a joke can be partly contingent on the speaker's rendition, both verbal (colourful style with witty vocabulary) or non-verbal (voice modulation, facial expression and gestures) contributing to the main humorous effect engendered by the punchline (cf. Norrick 2004)? Additionally, Hempelmann and Samson explore research on cartoons, succinctly presenting authors' methodologies, aims and results. The final

two sections are devoted to aesthetic aspects and cognitive mechanisms by means of which cartoons can be analysed.

On the whole, the summary above corroborates that humour researchers from all disciplines will find chapters of interest to them. A few articles may also be used as set reading for students familiarising themselves with humour research. Therefore, the volume will most certainly be an invaluable library asset.

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