

Enrichment and loosening: complementary processes in deriving the proposition expressed*

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Abstract

Within relevance theory the two local pragmatic processes of enrichment and loosening of linguistically encoded conceptual material have been given quite distinct treatments. Enrichments of various sorts, including those which involve a logical strengthening of a lexical concept, contribute to the proposition expressed by the utterance, hence to its truth-conditions. Loosenings, including metaphorical uses, do not enter into the proposition expressed by the utterance or affect its truth-conditions; they stand in a relation of 'interpretive resemblance' with the linguistically encoded concept used to represent them. This asymmetric treatment is questioned here, arguments are given for an account which reflects the complementarity of these processes and several alternative symmetrical treatments are explored.

1 Introduction

One important consequence of the relevance-theoretic view of cognition and communication is the following: we can think many thoughts that our language cannot encode, and we can communicate many thoughts that our utterances do not encode. Strictly speaking, virtually no sentence encodes a complete thought; certain processes of contextual filling-in are required before anything of a propositional nature emerges at all. However, that more basic point is not my primary concern in this short paper. The idea is that, even given such processes of propositional completion, a great many of our thoughts are of a much finer grain than that of the minimal propositions which result from these processes. It follows that there are many more concepts (construed as constituents of thoughts) than there are words in the language.

*Many thanks to Deirdre Wilson whose communicated thoughts on these matters have, as always, given me many (positive) cognitive effects.

One way of trying to account for this would be to suggest that words are multiply ambiguous, many of them encoding a vast number of discrete senses. This is not, of course, the way a relevance-theoretic approach to communication would explain this fact. Most other inferential pragmatic approaches to communication and interpretation would not take the ambiguity line either. The relevance theory view (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, 1995) is that our powerful inferential capabilities enable us to construct ad hoc concepts out of lexically encoded concepts during our on-line interpretation of utterances, on the hoof as it were. This process is both driven by and constrained by the inevitable considerations of processing effort and cognitive effects. The two main varieties of ad hoc concept construction that Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson have discussed in various lectures and seminars over the past decade are the **narrowing** of a lexically encoded concept and its **loosening** (leaving aside the echoic or quotational use of concepts for the time being). Other terms are sometimes used: narrowing is sometimes called enrichment or strengthening; loosening is sometimes called broadening or weakening. It is these processes which I want to consider here, particularly loosening or broadening, and their contribution, if any, to the proposition expressed by an utterance.

2 Enrichment

This term covers a variety of cases, some of which have been discussed extensively elsewhere, for instance:

- (1) a. Everyone got drunk.
- b. I've got nothing to wear to the party.
- c. He handed her the scalpel and she made the incision.
- d. The police hit the suspect and she had to go to hospital.
- e. He begged her not to jump.

In the first two examples a domain for the quantifier to range over has to be contextually inferred, thereby narrowing down the interpretation. In the two conjunction examples, the encoded assumption that there is some connection or other between the events is further specified by the inference of a temporal relation in (1c) and a cause-consequence relation in (1d), these relations being supplied perhaps by highly accessible general knowledge schemas concerning relevant ways in which events connect up. Note that in (1c) the second conjunct is further narrowed by the obvious assumption that the incision was made

with the scalpel mentioned in the first conjunct. Similarly in (1e), a further constituent may be supplied so that, in an appropriate context, this could be taken to communicate that he begged her not to jump off the ledge of a high building. I will be focusing on a slightly different type of enrichment in this paper and won't return to these examples (for detailed discussion of them, see Carston 1988, 1993; Recanati 1989, 1993; Wilson & Sperber 1993).

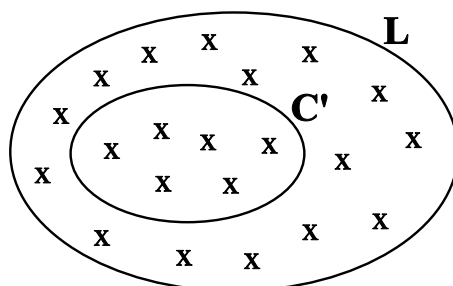
The examples of primary interest here are of the following sort:

- (2) a. He wears rabbit.
- b. I want to meet some bachelors.
- c. Mary cut the cake.
- d. She has a brain.
- e. The cinema is some distance from the restaurant.
- f. Something's happened.

What distinguishes these from the previous set is that, rather than adding a conceptual constituent, the enrichment targets a particular lexical item and strengthens the concept it encodes. For instance, in (2a) the noun 'rabbit', which encodes something like *rabbit stuff*, is narrowed to *rabbit fur/skin*. One possible narrowing of the *bachelor* concept in (2b) would take place in a context in which the speaker had made it clear that she wants to settle down and have children; then the denotation of the relevant *bachelor* concept would be a subset of the set of unmarried men. A crucial component of the narrowed concept would be *eligible for marriage*. In the case of (2c), it is not any old severing of the fibres of the cake that would be communicated in most contexts but rather a particular mode of cutting; comparison with different objects of cutting makes this apparent, for instance *grass, hair, cloth, flesh*, etc. The last three examples have in common that their linguistically encoded content is a truism: all human beings have a brain, there is inevitably a measurable space between two locations, etc. Some pragmatic narrowing down is required, of the sort of brain she has in (2d), of the distance involved in (2e) and of the nature of the event in (2f).

In short, there is a subset relation between the extension of the concept actually communicated in these examples and the extension of the lexical concept from which it has been derived, shown schematically in (3), where L is the extension of the lexical concept and C' is the extension of the narrowed ad hoc concept, the relevant concept in each case.

(3)



Now one of the features of relevance theory which distinguishes it quite sharply from standard Gricean theory is the view that these strengthenings, of both the types exemplified in (1) and (2), may contribute to the explicit level of communication, specifically to the propositional form of the utterance. On the Gricean approach they have the status of implicatures, communicated assumptions which are independent from, external to, the core proposition communicated by the utterance ('what is said', for Grice). Relevance theorists favour the former view because, in many instances at least, these appear to contribute to the truth-conditional content of the utterance, to what makes it true or false. Various arguments and tests have been put forward in support of this view (see Carston 1988; Recanati 1989, 1993; Wilson & Sperber 1993). For the purposes of this paper I am going to assume that it is correct, so that the proposition expressed (and communicated) by (2b) is as in (4), where *bachelor'* represents the new narrowed *bachelor* concept.

(4) S_x wants at t_i to meet some *bachelors'*

It is the interaction of this propositional form with a set of contextual assumptions that will give rise to contextual effects and some of those contextual assumptions will be derived from the encyclopedic entry of the narrowed concept, *bachelor'*, (for instance, that the people in question should be heterosexual, youngish, interested in marriage, etc). Finally, it should be emphasised that this narrowing is a local process; it doesn't necessarily follow that the proposition derived will always be logically stronger than the proposition before that strengthening took place, as is obvious in the case of narrowings within the scope of negation and certain quantifiers.

3 Loosening

The other, putatively opposite, process of loosening or broadening, is exemplified by the following, where the loosely used concept is the one encoded by the highlighted lexical item:

- (5) a. France is **hexagonal**.
b. I love **bald** men.
c. This steak is **raw**.
d. Have you eaten my chocolate **heart**?
e. Here's my new **flatmate**. [referring to a newly acquired cat]

This relaxing of a linguistically encoded meaning has been pretty much ignored outside the relevance-theoretic framework, though a general unease with any process of pragmatic loosening has been expressed. When discussing words which seem to have several related meanings, one stronger than the other, Grice (1978, 119) says:

If one makes the further assumption that it is more generally feasible to **strengthen** one's meaning by achieving a superimposed implicature, than to **make a relaxed use** of an expression (and I don't know how this assumption would be justified), then Modified Occam's Razor would bring in its train the principle that one should suppose a word to have a less restrictive rather than a more restrictive meaning, where choice is possible.
(my emphasis)

Atlas (1992), who works within a Gricean view of pragmatics, refers to this passage and says:

The 'strengthening' assumption can be justified by discovering that there is an intelligible inference that brings about the strengthening of a speaker's meaning — intelligible in the sense that such inferences can be formulated and rationalized — but no intelligible inference that brings about the relaxation of a speaker's meaning. Loose uses of words don't seem particularly rule-governed.

But, then, what about the examples in (5)? It seems pretty clear that we do not want the concepts encoded by the lexical items 'heart' and 'flatmate' to include in their extension confectionery in the one case, nonhumans in the other. The same holds for 'hexagonal', 'bald' and 'raw', though this might need more argument to convince everyone (not, however, Grice or Atlas, who keep their semantics as minimalist as possible). Loose use is a fact and has to be accounted for by an adequate pragmatic theory. With a few notable exceptions, neo-Griceans have tended to steer clear of it.¹

The standard relevance theory account of loose talk, including metaphorical talk, has been around for some time (see Sperber & Wilson 1985/6), so I'll give just its bare outline here by way of reminder. The idea is that in some instances a speaker chooses to produce an utterance which is a less-than-literal (that is, loose) interpretation of the thought she intends to communicate. This will arise when she judges that communication of her thought is facilitated by such a non-literal utterance in that it makes that thought more accessible to the hearer than a literal one would. The process of interpreting loose uses is as follows: the hearer decodes the lexically encoded concept, thereby gaining access to certain logical and encyclopedic properties; he treats the utterance as a rough guide to what the speaker intends to communicate, and, in effect, sorts through the available properties, rejecting those that are not relevant in the particular context and accepting those that are, as reflections of the speaker's view. For instance, in the case of 'raw' in (5c), the definitional property of *not cooked* would be rejected while the encyclopedic property of, say, *difficult to eat*, when applied to meat, would be maintained. The idea is that the lexical concept *raw* is in a relation of **non-identical resemblance** with the concept that figures in the speaker's thought regarding the state of the steak; that is, they share some logical and contextual implications. So also for a metaphorical statement such as 'Bill is a bulldozer', where the lexical concept *bulldozer* is used to represent the non-lexicalised concept that figures in the speaker's thought about Bill; it represents it by non-identical resemblance.

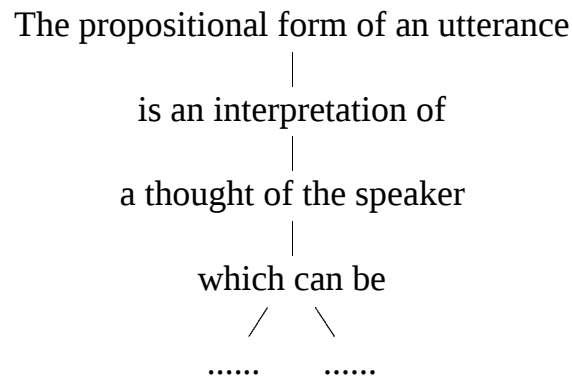
As is well known, the relevance theory account of metaphor is very different from the Gricean account — differences that I won't go into here — and considerably more explanatory. However, there is one respect in which it stays close to the Gricean account, at least in the existing published work, and that is that utterances involving metaphorical uses of words and, in fact, loose uses quite generally, do not communicate the proposition

¹The exceptions are Bach (1994a, 1994b) and Recanati (1995), who both discuss a range of cases of non-literality, within broadly Gricean frameworks. A comparison of their accounts with one another and with the relevance theory account remains to be done.

they express. The propositional form is not an explicature of the utterance but just a vehicle for the communication of a range of implicatures. The same is so for Grice. When he wants to maintain that 'what is said' has, as part of its definition, that it must be meant by the speaker (in his technical sense of speaker meaning), he moves to a different term altogether in discussing metaphorical utterances. He writes of 'what a speaker makes as if to say', precisely because the proposition literally expressed in a metaphorical case is not part of speaker meaning; only the implicatures of the utterance are meant (communicated, in relevance theory terms).

What I want to question here is the prevailing relevance theory adherence to this position. It is reflected in the upper part of the diagram which summarises the Sperber/Wilson view on the descriptive and interpretive dimensions of language use:

(6)



(Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995, 232)

In this diagram the concept of 'interpretation' (or interpretive resemblance) is intended to accommodate not only literal interpretations but also the cases where a concept in the thought the speaker intends to communicate departs in certain ways from a concept featuring in the proposition expressed by the utterance, that is, cases of loose use, including metaphor.

This then marks a clear asymmetry between the two pragmatic processes of enrichment and loosening. Cases of enrichment contribute to the propositional form of the utterance; the result of strengthening a lexical concept gets built in as a new ad hoc concept; enrichment is taken to be one of those pragmatic processes, along with reference assignment and disambiguation, that are involved in arriving at the proposition expressed. Loosening on the other hand has no such role; the lexical concept, which provides the

point of departure for the loose use, stays in place in the propositional form of the utterance which simply resembles the one the speaker has in mind. My question is simple: why is there this asymmetry?

This question first arose for me when I heard a talk by Dan Sperber in 1989 (to appear in revised form in Sperber & Wilson forthcoming). There he discussed the narrowing and broadening of lexically encoded concepts as if they were symmetrical processes, the one adding material, the other subtracting it. In that talk he did not address the issue of why they do not both appear in the proposition expressed. If they are just two opposite processes of concept building, as they seem to be, strengthening vs. weakening, narrowing vs. broadening, i.e. a move away from strict literalness in both cases, albeit in opposite directions (above and below literalness), wouldn't we expect that either the results of both processes should figure in the proposition expressed by the utterance or that the results of neither should? This issue has now been in the air for a few years, discussed informally at our summer relevance seminars and with students at UCL working on metaphor. I think it is time to take a careful look at what the implications of moving to a symmetrical account would be. The merest beginnings will be made here.

4 Symmetrifying enrichment and loosening

There are two ways, in principle, of symmetrifying: bring narrowing into line with the existing account of loosening or bring loosening into line with the propositional boosting account of enrichment. I'll look at these in that order.

To bring narrowing into line with the established relevance theoretic account of loosening would entail not building a denser concept in the enrichment case, but using the lexical concept as a jumping off point to contextual effects, as it is for loose and metaphorical uses. That is, at the level of the proposition expressed the lexical concept would remain and the enrichment of that concept or its effects would emerge as implicatures. This would, of course, involve a move back in the direction of the Gricean concept of what is said. It would maintain the section of the diagram given in (6) and in fact extend the number of cases which would fall within the concept of non-literal interpretive resemblance: enrichment cases could be seen as a particular type of interpretive resemblance where the logical implications of the propositional form of the utterance would be a proper subset of those of the thought of the speaker.

This may be workable for lexical concepts with encyclopedic entries, such as *bachelor*, with its various bachelor prototypes, bundles of features comprising chunks or units

within the overall encyclopedic entry. For example, in (2b) the lexical concept *bachelor* might give access to a bunch of prototypical properties of bachelors: youngish, heterosexual, free to marry, childless, etc. (along with the logical property *unmarried*), from which various implicatures regarding the sort of person the speaker wants to meet would follow. A relevance-driven sorting process, similar to that assumed in the loose use cases, would ensure that other possible bachelor prototypes, e.g. that of the fussy, old, misogynous type of bachelor, would be bypassed, as would the pope and various others who are technically bachelors but do not have the relevant properties.

However, there are a number of cases of enrichment for which this just won't work. While a range of implicatures can be easily derived from a lexical item used loosely, this is not so for at least some instances of enrichment. What a loose use entails is that, in effect, the original (lexical) concept makes available more information than you need, so you can simply disregard whatever does not contribute to relevance (cognitive effects), on the particular occasion. But, of course, the opposite is the case in many instances of narrowing/enrichment; here what the lexical concept makes available is often rather less than one needs to derive the intended effects. Examples (2e) and (2f) are such cases: nothing follows from these literal and trivial truths; the concepts of *some* and *something* simply do not give access to a rich set of specific assumptions from which the intended concept is built. These enrichments are effected in some other way, relying on contextual information from a wider range of sources, perhaps information from the perceptual environment.

Trying to treat these enrichment cases, where the lexical concept lacks anything much by way of an encyclopedic entry, as cases of interpretive resemblance would give a very odd result within relevance theory: the relevance of the utterance, its effects, would seem to derive from an interaction of contextual assumptions alone, with the proposition expressed playing no role. This is exemplified in (7), where it can be seen that the effects follow from the implicature (an implicated premise), which represents the strengthening of 'some distance', together with other accessible assumptions concerning such a situation:

(7) Proposition expressed:

There is a distance between the cinema and the restaurant.

Implicature: The distance between the cinema and the restaurant is longer than you may think.

Effects: We shouldn't plan to walk from the restaurant to the cinema, we should call a taxi to get to the cinema, etc.

On the general account of contextual effects within relevance theory this is not possible: cognitive effects follow from an inferential interaction of the proposition expressed and contextual assumptions. I conclude that this tack, a partial retreat back to Grice, as it might be seen, is not a possible way of symmetrifying the treatment of narrowed and loosened ad hoc concepts within relevance theory.

So let's consider the opposite possibility: bringing loosening into line with narrowing. This involves building into the proposition expressed an ad hoc concept, which is a weakening of the encoded lexical concept. In parallel with the representation in (4) of the propositional form of an enrichment case, we'd have the following propositional form for (5c):

- (8) *[This steak]_y is raw**.
 (where *raw** indicates a loosening of the lexical concept *raw*)

From this, as on the original account, would follow a bunch of implicatures, communicated with varying degrees of strength: the steak is insufficiently cooked, the steak is inedible, the speaker is very unhappy with the state of the steak, the speaker wants this steak replaced by another which has received more cooking, etc.

So let us suppose this is the version of the symmetry thesis we would opt for, if we went for one at all. I shall now briefly consider some possible objections to making this move; that is, to incorporating into the proposition expressed those ad hoc concepts which are loosening, along with those that are strengthenings, of lexical concepts.

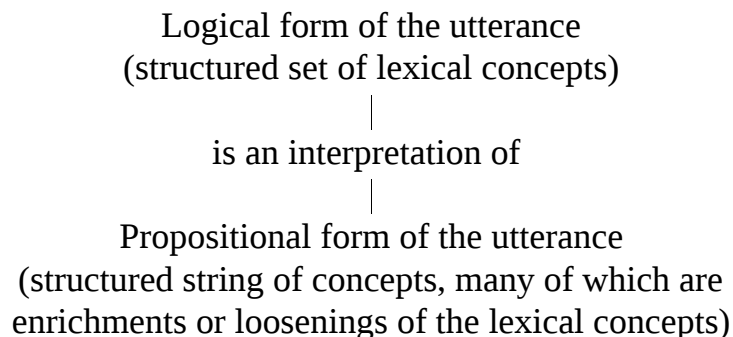
First, someone might object that one upshot of this view of things is that some word meanings (lexical concepts) are virtually never used literally; for instance, 'bald' (meaning *totally hairless*), 'silent' (which would strictly speaking apply only to a soundproof chamber), 'hexagonal' (a property of a perfect abstract form not actually found in nature), etc. The objection would depend on the assumption that it is very implausible that words are not used literally at least some of the time. But this assumption is not very compelling; it seems quite clear that we simply do have concepts of geometrical perfection and that we use these as a point of departure in entertaining other concepts, that are approximations to them. That this might extend to quite a range of the concepts encoded in natural language should not be seen as troublesome but as a downright useful feature of language, given our undoubted capacity to recognise resemblances.

Suppose one were in the business of designing a public representation system for human communicative purposes, given that the general cognitive capacities of the species were already in place: the ability to attribute complex mental states (such as higher order

beliefs and intentions) to conspecifics, the ability to draw inferences from newly impinging stimuli by placing them in a context of existing assumptions, and the ability to recognise conceptual and other resemblances from a range of points of view. I think a designer might well opt for a public representation system with quite minimal and even generally uninstantiated encodings (in the sense that little, if anything, in the actual world falls under the concept), given that these more fundamental abilities can be relied on to make the appropriate adjustments, with relative ease, in a number of directions. Perhaps then, more often than not, our communication is nonliteral in just this way.

Here's a second, this time rather theory-internal, objection. If both strengthenings and broadenings are taken to contribute to the propositional form of the utterance, then won't the propositional form of the utterance always be identical to the propositional form of the thought of the speaker, so that the distinction caught in the diagram in (6) falls away. The question really concerns the concept of 'interpretive resemblance', which is arguably one of the most constructive innovations of relevance theory. But there would be no diminishing of its importance as a result of the move being considered. Apart from its fundamental role in the account of irony and other cases involving the attribution/echo of a thought, the relation of interpretive resemblance would continue to be the key relation between lexical concepts and communicated concepts: the concepts in the logical form or semantic representation of an utterance would be in a relation of interpretive resemblance with those in the propositional forms of both the thought of the speaker and the utterance expressing that thought. The diagram would need to be adjusted and one of those adjustments might be as follows:

(9)



Of course, there may well be a disparity between the thought of the speaker and the propositional form derived by the hearer on the basis of his contextual resources and guided by his search for optimal relevance. So THE propositional form of the utterance

is somewhat of an idealisation here, but so it was under the original conception (diagram (6)), where the propositional form admitted only ad hoc concepts which resulted from enrichment. This issue of the propositional form of, or proposition expressed by, an utterance is taken up again briefly in the final section.

The third potential objection is related to the second: wouldn't we be slipping a maxim of literalness or truthfulness back into the picture? It seems that even in the case of metaphorical utterances we would be saying that the propositional form of the utterance is a literal interpretation of the thought the speaker intends to communicate. Statements such as the following, which have been quite central to the relevance theory picture, would seem to no longer carry much weight:

- (10) ...the hearer is not invariably entitled to expect a literal interpretation of the speaker's thought, nor is such an interpretation always necessary for successful communication to take place. A less-than-literal interpretation of the speaker's thought may be good enough; may indeed be better on some occasions than a strictly literal one (Sperber & Wilson 1985/6, 158)

But this is very different from the concept of literalness or truthfulness at issue in the Gricean maxim, which concerned the relation between the linguistically encoded (or conventional) meaning and that which the speaker meant or communicated. On the proposed symmetrical treatment of loose use cases, it would indeed follow that the speaker always endorses the proposition her utterance expresses, but the point is that this proposition is now going to depart even more radically than before from the literal linguistic content in the logical form of the utterance, so that the first maxim of Quality 'Do not **say** what you believe to be false' (my emphasis) is hopelessly inapplicable.

Of course, if we move to the Supermaxim of Quality: 'Try to make **your contribution** one that is true' (my emphasis) where we take 'contribution' to include both the proposition expressed and the implicatures, then it would appear that cases of loose use and metaphor conform with this. I won't argue it here but in fact this simply follows from the presumption of optimal relevance (specifically from what constitutes a contextual effect) and no separate maxim or principle is needed (see Ifantidou 1994 and Wilson 1995).

Tangentially, it should be noted that the propositional form of the utterance will now always be communicated, hence an explicature; the only level in the whole process of utterance interpretation that is not communicated is the logical form. This seems just fine to me; there was always a kind of redundancy in the standard account of loose use and

metaphor in that there were two representational levels (logical form and propositional form) that were mere tools or vehicles for getting at what was in fact communicated. There is a technical point to be attended to concerning the definition of an 'explicature' as a communicated assumption which is a **development** of a logical form of the utterance; the need to spell out what the possibilities are for developing a logical form would seem even more pressing if we could in effect knock out bits of encoded linguistic content, which is what this symmetry thesis entails.

The fourth objection questions the concept of THE truth-conditional content of the utterance. First, it is not clear that we really want such a notion in our pragmatics at all, especially if, as relevance theorists tend to argue, the proper domain of a truth conditional semantic theory is thoughts/assumptions (or, at least, their propositional forms). However, suppose we did think there was good reason to maintain that concept, then wouldn't we be a bit alarmed that now an utterance of 'Bill is a bulldozer' could come out as true, provided Bill had certain properties that appear in the encyclopedic entry of the lexical concept *bulldozer* and which are central to the new non-lexical concept *bulldozer**? Surely, the one thing we do have in this area is relatively robust intuitions that 'Bill is a bulldozer' is false and 'Bill is not a bulldozer' is true (and these intuitions are to be explained by the presence of the literal encoded concept in the propositional form of the utterance). We would be having to turn these clear intuitions right around.

Well, just how robust are these intuitions and what is their source? We can, after all, agree or disagree with someone who utters 'Bill is a bulldozer', as in (11), or even say 'that's **true**' or 'that's **not true**':

- (11) A: Bill's a bulldozer (or: a bit of a bulldozer).
 B: He certainly is; let's not have him on the committee.
 C: He's not really a bulldozer; in fact he's quite insecure.

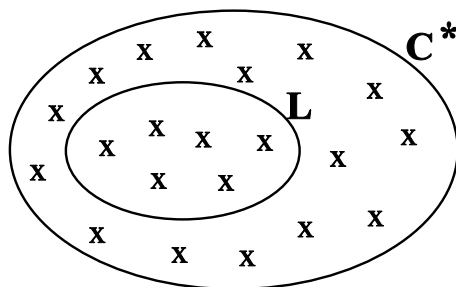
It could be that 'true' is being used loosely in such a response, that what we have is loose use all the way (first the predication of bulldozerhood and then the confirmation or denial of it). But I don't see any reason to suppose that; surely what is being denied by C at the explicit level is that the ad hoc concept *bulldozer**, formed from the loosely used lexical concept, applies to Bill. Examples of conditionals with loose or metaphorical uses of concepts in their antecedent point in the same direction:

- (12) a. If Bill is a bulldozer he'll be ideal on the committee.
 b. If Mick is a loose cannon we better keep him out of the negotiations.

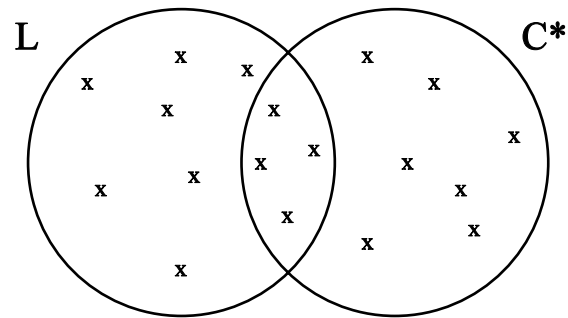
It seems pretty clear that what is being communicated by (12a) is that if Bill is of a particular aggressive disposition, unmoved by the views of others, etc, he'll be ideal on the committee. If the arguments based on these various examples are right, the source of the original intuition that 'Bill's a bulldozer' is false might simply be the conceptual content of the logical form of the utterance rather than its propositional form (that is, our knowledge of word meaning).

It does not look as if there is anything in these various considerations to decisively deter us from symmetrifying the picture by building both sorts of ad hoc concepts into the proposition expressed. However, let's take a look at the process (or processES) of loosening a little more closely. In some lectures on this a year or two ago, Deirdre Wilson drew the diagram given above in (3) to illustrate the relation between a lexical concept and an enrichment of it: I interpret this as showing that the set of entities falling in the denotation of the lexical concept *L* contains as a proper subset the set of entities in the denotation of the strengthened ad hoc concept *C'*. One might think that if we are dealing in symmetrical processes then the corresponding diagram for loosening will look as in (13), where *C** is the result of loosening the lexical concept. In fact it came out as in (14), where the picture is one of a kind of concept shift or transfer rather than a simple broadening, where the denotations of the lexical concept and the concept which results from the 'loosening' process merely intersect:

(13)

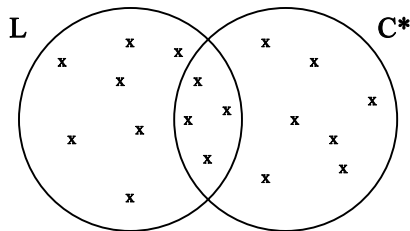


(14)



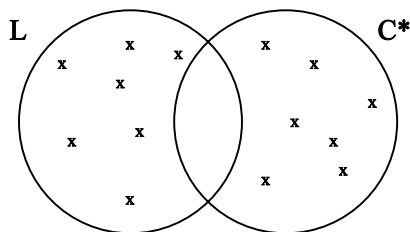
In fact, when we come to look at particular cases it looks as if there may be three subcases of loosening, only one of which seems to be the true counterpart or complement of enrichment:

(15) a.



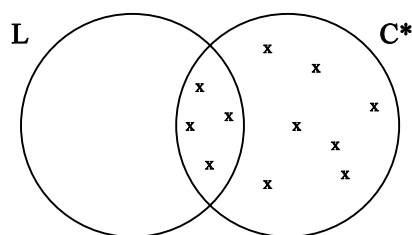
The room is **rectangular**,
The room was **silent**,
John's a real **bachelor**

b.



Where's my plastic **duck**?,
Bill is a **bulldozer**,
The fringed **curtains** of
thine eyes advance

c.



I love **bald** men,
I need a **silent** place to work,
The steak is **raw**

Taking *rectangular* in (15a), for example: this is a loose use since the room in question might have all sorts of little irregularities that render it not strictly rectangular (i.e. not having four right angles). The extension of the loosened concept would, however, include some cases of strict rectangles while excluding others; it might, for instance, exclude those with two of their sides a mile long and the other two only a few inches long. Now consider (15b); the idea here is that there is actually no extensional overlap of the two concepts. Metaphors which involve sortal or categorial incorrectness, as in the examples in (15b), are candidates here. Among the properties of the lexical concept that are discarded are, crucially, logical or definitional ones. For instance, in the 'plastic duck' cases the property of belonging to a biological species is dropped. The picture in (15c) represents the case where the extension of the new loosened concept does in fact encompass the entire denotation of the original lexical concept, indicated here by the emptiness of the non-intersecting part of the lexical concept; this could and should be redrawn as the picture in (13). This is broadening in a strict sense, the symmetrical counterpart to the narrowing cases. For instance, the extension of the *bald** concept would include all the entities which fall within the extension of the lexical concept *bald*, i.e. all the hairless entities (assuming this is the right semantics for *bald*²) and a further group which depart to some degree or other from complete hairlessness but which are relevantly low on hair.

²Reboul (1989) supports Sperber & Wilson in their advocacy of this precise semantics for the lexical concept *bald* and discusses the apparent paradox that arises as a result for phrases like 'very bald' and '... balder than ...' which would appear to have an anomalous linguistic meaning given the imposition of scalar modification on an absolute concept. I think the account in terms of ad hoc concepts resulting from a quite standard practice of using 'bald' loosely can explain these satisfactorily but I leave that for another time.

Setting aside the (15b) cases for a moment, let us consider the relation between (15a) and (15c). The sort of loose use exemplified in (15a) could be thought of as one that involves both broadening (as in (15c)) and narrowing; for instance, the concept *bachelor** might include married men who behave in a certain stereotypic bachelor-like way (individuals in the non-intersecting part of C*) and it might exclude some men who are in fact UNmarried but do not have the particular stereotypical bachelor properties (individuals in the non-intersecting part of L). Note that the concept *silent* occurs in examples given for both types of case; depending on the particularities of the context, the new ad hoc concept might be either a strict broadening, hence include in its extension all that the original lexical concept includes or might involve, in addition, some degree of narrowing (excluding perhaps unnatural, manmade instances of utterly noiseless spaces such as soundproof chambers). Doubtless, these two possibilities also arise in the loose use of other lexical concepts.

The fact that both processes might be required in forming a communicated ad hoc concept makes it look all the more likely that they both contribute to the proposition expressed. It would be very hard to find a principled reason for supposing that the result of narrowing the concept of *rectangular* in the example in (15a) figures at this level while its simultaneous widening is registered only at the level of implicature. It follows then that those cases of broadening which are the true counterpart to narrowing, that is, those in (15c), also contribute a new concept to the proposition expressed.

Briefly, let us reconsider the examples in (15b). On reflection, it is far from clear that this category of concept construction really arises. What it would require is not just the dropping of the logical or definitional properties of the lexical concept from which the ad hoc concept is derived but the inclusion of the negation of these properties among its own defining features. For instance, this view requires that a defining feature of *duck** would be 'not a living creature' and a defining feature of *bulldozer** would be 'not a manmade machine', etc. This is both unnecessary and counterintuitive; the relevant loosened concept of *duck** might as well include in its extension some biological ducks and some artefactual ducks, the common properties concerning physical appearance being all that the new concept has retained from the lexical concept *duck*. Of course, in the case of 'plastic duck' the modifier whittles down the set to exclude living creatures. If this is the right way to view these examples then they are just further instances of the type of concept construction in (15a); that is, they involve broadening (for instance, to include certain artificial ducks) and narrowing (for instance, to exclude members of the biological species of ducks which do not have a particular stereotypical appearance). As with the

other cases given in (15a), on the symmetry view the new concepts so formed would contribute to the proposition expressed.

5 Categorical falsehoods and trivial truths

It is often pointed out that positive metaphorical utterances such as (16) are category mistakes (sortally incorrect), clearly flouting Grice's first maxim of truthfulness. Their negative counterparts, as in (17), are naturally obvious truths, a point made long ago by Wilson & Sperber (1981) in their catalogue of the short-comings of Grice's account of metaphor and other tropes, the point being that there is no violation of any maxim of truthfulness.

- (16) a. Bill is a bulldozer.
b. Losing Jane is losing the sun.
- (17) a. Bill isn't a bulldozer.
b. Losing Jane isn't losing the sun.

Johannes Flieger has recently discussed some further examples of obvious falsehoods that he takes to be metaphorical; he calls them metaphorical negations, the idea being that a phrase consisting of a negated term is used metaphorically as a whole (these examples are all taken from Flieger 1996):

- (18) a. Ari isn't a lion; he's a pussycat.
[where Ari is, in fact, a lion]
b. Englebert isn't a surgeon; he's a butcher.
[where Englebert is a surgeon by profession]
c. Huckleberry isn't a butcher; he's a surgeon.
[where Huckleberry is a butcher by profession]
d. Engelbert isn't a human being; he's a wild beast.
e. Huckleberry isn't a human being; he's a buddha.

In each case the referent does in fact have the property (taken literally) that the speaker is denying he has and does not have the property (taken literally) that the speaker predicates of him in the next clause, and this is mutually manifest to speaker and hearer.

These are very interesting examples in the context of a discussion of pragmatic processes of enrichment and loosening, because while Flieger sees these as cases of metaphor (hence of loosening, in relevance-theoretic terms) they can just as well be described as cases of negated enrichments. Take (18d) for instance: while Engelbert is in fact a member of the human species, what the speaker is denying is that he belongs to a narrower category which consists of (perhaps) thoughtful, compassionate, civilised human beings. It is unsurprising that such examples can be seen as either cases of metaphorical (loosely used) negatives or cases of negated strengthenings; it follows from the concept of negation, the complementarity of the two processes of enrichment and loosening, and their local nature.

From a processing point of view I think the enrichment account looks more promising than the loosening account; it would require less effort to, as it were, dive into the encyclopedic entry for *human being*, pull out a positive stereotype and negate that than to form the concept *non-human-being* and then loosen that to include some actual human beings. In fact the latter would not give quite the right result since the vast category *non-human-being* would have to be drastically narrowed (to exclude tables, trees, trumpets, theories, etc, all of which are, after all, not human beings) in addition to being widened to include such humans as Engelbert. The local enrichment account meshes well with the widespread recognition that negations are more complex to process than their corresponding positives (negation being the **marked** member of the positive/negative opposition) and that the processing of a negative in some sense presupposes the availability of the corresponding positive (see Horn 1989, chapter 3).

What these examples bring home to me, then, is that we must surely go for an account which offers parity of treatment of enrichment and loosening as regards the ad hoc concepts they result in and their role in representations built by the hearer. A representation of the base explicature of (proposition expressed by) utterances of (18d) and (18e) would be something like the following:

- (19) a. *E. is not a human being'; he's a wild beast**
 b. *H. is not a human being''; he's a buddha**

where the double prime in (19b) is meant to indicate that the ad hoc concept in (19b) derived by a process of enriching the linguistically encoded concept *human being* is distinct from the ad hoc concept in (19a) also derived by a process of enriching that linguistic encoding.

We could go on from here and consider cases of obvious truths, whether positive or negative, where clearly the speaker is not intent on predicating of the referents a property that they are known by all concerned to have or denying that they have a property which it is well known they do not have (examples from Flieger 1996):

- (20) a. Caroline is our princess.
 b. Uncle Bob is a sergeant-major.
 c. Tom is a human being (not a machine).

I repeat the examples in (17) for convenience since they are cases of negations which are obvious truths:

- (21) a. Bill isn't a bulldozer; (he's a juggernaut).³
 b. Losing Jane isn't losing the sun.

The idea with (20a) is that, while the Caroline in question is in fact a princess, the intention of the speaker does not concern her status in a royal family but rather such properties as her haughty, spoilt ways. The same goes, *mutatis mutandis*, for (20b). Are these cases of metaphorical loosening or of enrichment? Flieger sees them as all cases of metaphor, all having a 'figurative' feel. A bid for parity of treatment with the account above of (16) and (18) would suggest that while the examples in (21) are indeed negated metaphors (negations of ad hoc concepts constructed through loosening), the examples in (20) should be enrichments, so that the propositions expressed in each case are, respectively, that Caroline belongs to a particular proper subset of the set of princesses, that Uncle Bob is a certain type of sergeant-major (perhaps the authoritarian, humourless, etc, stereotype), and that Tom has the frailties of human flesh. It seems to me that here it could go either way; the ad hoc *princess* concept formed from the lexical concept might or might not include the logical (definitional) property of the lexical concept (female member of royal house) and the same holds, *mutatis mutandis*, for the ad hoc *sergeant major* concept. Whether these are technically loosening or enrichments hinges on

³This example has an echoic feel to it and would be most natural in the context of a previous utterance of 'Bill is a bulldozer'; it looks like an example of what has been traditionally termed metalinguistic negation (Horn 1985, 1989) and more recently analysed in terms of the relevance-theoretic concept of echoic use (Carston 1996). As far as I know, examples of negated metaphors have not yet been discussed in this context.

whether or not logical (definitional) properties are dropped. The case for a symmetrical account of enrichment and loosening cases is further supported by these considerations. What matters here, at least from a communicative point of view, is that the relevant concept is constructed out of the logical and encyclopedic information which is made accessible by the encoded lexical concept; whether the construction process is strictly speaking a loosening or an enrichment does not seem consequential and certainly should not lead to two utterly different ways of treating the resultant concept.⁴

6 Economy of effort and enrichment/loosening symmetry

The considerations of the last two sections make quite a strong case, I think, for the appearance of ad hoc concepts in the proposition expressed, whether the process that the original lexical concept has undergone is one of strengthening/narrowing or weakening/widening, or a combination of both. But the question that comes to mind now is what is achieved by lodging the loosened ad hoc concept in the propositional form? Is this just symmetry for symmetry's sake?

At this point I'd like to turn to some recent work by Anna Papafragou (see in particular Papafragou 1995). Her main concern has been to give an account of metonymic expressions, as in (22a), which are standardly used referentially,⁵ but she also looks briefly at metaphorical expressions used referentially (as opposed to the predicational cases I've concentrated on so far), such as the one in (22b):

⁴Flieger outlines an account of metaphor understanding which involves a pragmatically driven process of choosing a particular property complex from a set of property complexes which form a semilattice structure which itself is a representation of the set of properties made available by the original lexical concept. He proposes to run a model-theoretic semantics over the resulting representation, thereby capturing intuitions of metaphorical truth (and falsehood).

⁵The essence of Papafragou (1995)'s account of metonymy is that metonymic expressions involve the (implicit) echoic use of concepts and they are instances of naming (rather than direct referring). However, in Papafragou (1996), a revised and cut version of the previous paper, she recognises that echoic use is too narrow to cover all metonymies and instead employs the concept of interpretive (or loose) use of a concept, though the interpretive relation in the case of metonymy is not one of resemblance, as in the case of metaphor, but one of association (or accessibility, in relevance-theoretic terms), between elements of encyclopedic knowledge.

- (22) a. The burgundy hat left in a hurry.
 b. The wilting violet has finally left.

Here the description 'the wilting violet' is being used to refer to a particular woman, let's call her Jasmine Jones (JJ), known to both the speaker and the hearer. As Papafragou says, our account of the interpretation of this utterance has to address the fact that part of what is communicated at the explicit level is that the particular woman, JJ, has left, this being just an instance of reference assignment, which is one of the subtasks involved in arriving at the proposition expressed (on anyone's conception of the proposition expressed). She proposes for this sort of case, as for metonymic cases, that the hearer *MUST* construct an ad hoc concept from the encoded *wilting violet* concept in order to derive the referent Jasmine Jones; that is, reference assignment proceeds via this concept (of a certain sort of shy, retiring person, let us suppose) in whose extension JJ could be reasonably supposed to fall. Although Papafragou does not say so, I assume that the final propositional form of the utterance is something like (23), where the individuating (de re) concept of JJ and the loosened descriptive concept *wilting violet* both appear:⁶

- (23) JJ[wilting violet]* has finally left.

The ad hoc concept, like any concept in a referentially used definite description, gives easy access through its encyclopedic entry to contextual assumptions: JJ is shy, reticent, uncommunicative, delicate, sensitive, makes everyone feel uncomfortable, can't take robust treatment, etc. These interact with the proposition expressed, shown in (23), to give an array of effects: the speaker is relieved that JJ has gone, they can all relax now, they can tell bad jokes now, etc.

Interestingly, Papafragou does not extend this treatment, in which the propositional form registers the ad hoc concept, to cases of metaphorical predication, and her reason for this is that it is not necessary to do so. The classical relevance theory account of these cases works just fine: the propositional form with the literal encoded concept in it gives the hearer easy access to all the intended implications (implicatures), the derivation of which, after all, is what is required in order to arrive at the intended interpretation.

⁶I follow here the relevance-theoretic position on definite descriptions developed by Rouchota (1992). She argues that both the referent of a referentially used definite description and the conceptual content of the description feature in the proposition expressed by the utterance and so affect the truth conditions of the utterance.

Predication is a means of ascribing a range of properties to a referent and these can simply be read off the lexical concept without any intermediate step of setting up an ad hoc concept. The underlying principle here seems to be: make only those moves, set up only those representations, which are necessary in order to arrive at the intended interpretation. If you can get there without setting up new conceptual addresses/labels (which are generally going to be of an evanescent nature anyway) then don't set them up. This seems entirely in keeping with the principle of relevance according to which we expend as little processing effort as possible in deriving a satisfactory yield of effects.

Furthermore, as Deirdre Wilson has pointed out, there are cases of sustained metaphor where it seems to be not only not necessary but probably impossible to build ad hoc concepts into the proposition expressed:

- (24) a. Love is the lighthouse and the rescued mariners.
(example from Oshar Davico)
- b. Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more; ...
(*'MacBeth'* V, v, 24-26)

Building in ad hoc concepts at the explicit level looks equally problematic for the following examples which, while less poetic, involve whole sentences being used metaphorically:

- (25) a. The cracks are beginning to show.
- b. The lion is roaring again.
- c. The patient has yet to leave his sick-bed and take a few tottering steps in the sunshine.

The treatments of metonymy and metaphor are different in certain crucial ways; after all, there is not a relation of resemblance between the conceptual content of 'ham sandwich' and 'person who ordered the ham sandwich' or 'burgundy hat' and 'woman wearing the burgundy hat'. I won't look here at the interesting account of the particularities of metonymy that Papafragou gives, but focus instead on the respects in which the two phenomena behave the same. Consider the following pairs of examples, the (a) cases involving metonymy and the (b) cases metaphor. The two pairs differ in that the figuratively used expressions are referential in (26) and predicative in (27) (examples from Papafragou 1995, p.149):

- (26) a. The pretty face just went out.
 b. The pretty doll just went out.
- (27) a. Maria is a divine voice.
 b. Maria is a nightingale.

In both the metonymic and the metaphoric referring expressions in (26) an ad hoc concept has to be constructed if the referent is to be located. Both involve kinds of interpretive use of concepts through which the speaker gives a new name to an individual enabling both reference assignment and, in many instances, particular cognitive effects. This is akin to nicknaming and other spontaneous dubbings, as in 'Nosey has just left' and 'Prince Charming is laying it on thick'.

In both the metonymic and the metaphoric predications in (27) it is not necessary to construct a new concept: the properties whose predication of Maria the speaker endorses can be accessed directly from stored information concerning divine voices and nightingales (the choice constrained, of course, by relevance considerations). An array of implicatures is thereby constructed and a fully propositional form at the explicit level need never be entertained. The classical relevance theory account of loose use and metaphor seems, after all, entirely satisfactory for these examples. However, another asymmetry, that between referring and predicating,⁷ has to be taken into account. When it is, it seems that the classical story works well for the predicational cases while referring by means of a figurative use requires a process of constructing an ad hoc concept which enters into the proposition expressed.

Lastly, continuing to pursue symmetry in the accounts of the processes of enrichment and loosening, this 'ad hoc concepts only when necessary' position has to be extended to the enrichment cases. Recall that in the discussion in section 4, it was pointed out that some enrichment cases COULD work the same way as the classic loosening account, e.g. the *bachelor* case with its rich encyclopedic entry which includes certain assumptions which cluster together to delimit a stereotype. So an utterance of 'John's a bachelor' in the context of a discussion of Mary's desire to get married could implicate that John is heterosexual, youngish, eligible for marriage, etc, without the setting up of a new address/label for the narrowed ad hoc concept *bachelor*'. Other cases of enrichment could NOT work this way; these are the linguistically encoded concepts that do not have much encyclopedic information attached, such as 'some distance' in (2e).

⁷This has been long recognised by philosophers of language; see, for example, Strawson (1974).

So there is a **third symmetry position** which deserves serious consideration: (a) SOME cases of enrichment and SOME cases of loosening have to be built into the propositional form of the utterance; a hearer/reader won't arrive at the intended interpretation if they are not; (b) other cases do not need to appear in the propositional form of the utterance, in that the intended interpretation can be derived without them (by an encyclopedic sorting process), and therefore they should not be. This way of viewing the matter gives processing effort primacy and meshes well with the quote in (10) in that (paraphrasing and modifying the final sentence) 'a non-literal interpretation of the speaker's thought may be better on some occasions than a strictly literal one', 'better' in the sense that, for those cases where it is possible (the (b) cases) the hearer derives the intended interpretation with less processing effort than it would take to first derive the propositional form of the speaker's thought and then derive the intended effects from that.⁸

Returning to the question at the beginning of this section, the idea that any departure from the lexically encoded concept requires the building in of the new communicated concept at the level of the proposition expressed might well be a case of symmetry for symmetry's case and so be poorly motivated. The third symmetry position, on the other hand, is grounded in fundamental facts about cognitive processing: we want effects, so we are prepared to expend effort to get them, but we want them as cheaply as we can get them, so we do just that work, build only those representations, that are necessary in order to achieve them.

7 Loose (but rich) end

What I have been calling the proposition expressed throughout this paper is an explicitly communicated proposition which may have among its constituents non-lexicalised concepts which have been pragmatically constructed out of the concepts encoded in the logical form (or semantic representation) of the utterance. It is an explicature, in relevance

⁸Incorporating an ad hoc concept into the proposition expressed in such cases would in fact be an 'after the event' sort of move. It has been suggested to me (guess who by!) that the ad hoc concept might be formed 'later' in this way, after the derivation of implicatures, when the hearer wants to store what was communicated in a manageable form. This does indeed seem likely in some instances, but it would not be a case of constructing an ad hoc concept in pursuit of an interpretation consistent with the second (communicative) principle of relevance. Rather, it would be a process which follows from the more general first principle of relevance alone, according to which all our cognitive activity, including memory organisation, is geared towards maximising relevance.

theory terms; it is a base level explicature as it does not involve any embedding into assumption schemas such as 'the speaker believes that ...', 'the speaker says that ...' which give higher-level explicatures.

It should be clear that this is a very different entity from the one that certain philosophically oriented pragmatists refer to as 'the proposition strictly and literally expressed'. The proposition strictly and literally expressed is how many people, including Grice, I believe, characterise 'what is said' by an utterance; it is the minimal proposition that can be constructed from the semantic representation of the utterance, something which departs as little as possible from encoded content and yet which has a determinate truth-condition. It is usually assumed that fixing the referents of referring expressions and selecting among the senses of ambiguous linguistic expressions will be sufficient to transform the logical form into something minimally propositional. However, there are many uncertainties around, and reconstructions of, the concept of what is said: Wilson (1995) discusses an equivocation in Grice's own use of the term, turning on whether 'saying' does or does not entail meaning/ communicating; Bach (1994a, 1994b) construes the concept so that it does not entail speaker meaning (communicating) and need not even be fully propositional (so as to accommodate phrasal utterances); on Recanati (1989, 1993)'s reconstruction it has become more or less equivalent to the concept of the proposition expressed that I have been advocating in this paper and it would help to reduce terminological confusion if he adopted another label.

Is there any role for a proposition literally and strictly expressed (a 'what is said') in the account of utterance interpretation that I have been setting out here? If there is, I am unable to see what it is. Language users' intuitions seem to discriminate quite readily between explicature and implicature and not between what is (strictly and literally) said and explicature (see Recanati 1989; Gibbs & Moise 1996). There is no evidence that they naturally (pre-theoretically) pick out a level of minimal propositionality, though with the requisite (philosophical) training they can learn to do so. However, these intuition tests all used examples in which the explicatures concerned contain conceptual enrichments only; so far such tests have not been run on utterances involving loose use. My guess is that the results here would be less clearcut but not because there is an extra level of minimal propositionality. We have fairly strong intuitions about what the words of our language refer to so competent speakers of the language will generally agree, for example, that 'hexagonal' refers to the property of being 'six-sided', 'raw' is a property of things that have never been cooked, 'lion' refers to a certain biological species, etc. Asked whether it is true or false that France is hexagonal or whether John, who everyone agrees has behaved bravely and nobly, is a lion, some people (I predict) would say 'true' and some

would say 'false'. I don't think this would be because they have different views on the shape of France or on John's character, but rather their responses would be grounded in intuitions coming from distinct sources; the 'true'-sayers would be considering the proposition they take the speaker to be expressing and endorsing, while the 'false'-sayers would be tapping their knowledge of linguistic meaning, the literal encoded conceptual content of the utterance. The split in responses would be caused by the inescapable fact that with loose use some element of the core linguistic meaning is lost, while with enrichment linguistic meaning is simply augmented so that when the enriched concept is true of a referent so is the unenriched lexical concept.

Intuitions aside, it is difficult to see what a level of minimal propositionality would be for, given linguistic meaning (logical form), on the one hand, and the basic explicature, on the other hand. More generally, a theory of utterance interpretation has to acknowledge two quite distinct sorts of things: (a) linguistic content, which is not communicated; it is not the sort of thing that can be communicated, but is rather a vehicle for communicating (some might say, a function from contexts to propositions), and (b) what is communicated, which is a set of assumptions with propositional forms.

The set of communicated assumptions can be partitioned into explicatures and implicatures, but this is not a distinction which is of great importance for a hearer, at least if it is viewed as a representational distinction which is supposed to have some impact on the way he views the set of communicated assumptions. It is really no more than a reflection of the undoubted fact that there are two ways of **deriving** communicated assumptions: (a) developing the linguistically encoded logical form (semantic representation) and (b) inferring whole new assumptions. What does play an important role in the final interpretation of the utterance is the strength with which individual assumptions in the set have been communicated; a hearer has to register the relative degree of backing the speaker gives to any derived assumption if he is to arrive at the intended interpretation.

Implicatures may be communicated relatively strongly or relatively weakly (see Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995, chapter 4); a strongly communicated implicature is one whose particular propositional form is a member of the set I, the assumptions which fall within the speaker's communicative intention; a weakly communicated implicature is one whose particular propositional form does not fall in the set I but which is one of a range of possible propositional forms falling under a more abstract and general propositional schema that falls within the set I. As Grice originally pointed out, the implicatures of an utterance are often indeterminate. A speaker encourages exploration in a certain conceptual region but the hearer bears the main responsibility for the particular

propositional forms within this region that he constructs. The metaphorical types of loose use typically give rise to a range of weakish implicatures; the more creative or unusual the metaphor the wider the range of possibilities and the weaker the speaker's endorsement of any specific implicated propositional form.

The strong/weak continuum has not generally been applied to explicatures⁹ but if either of the symmetry positions considered above turns out to be correct, in which ad hoc concepts resulting from loosening of linguistic content contribute to the proposition expressed (basic explicature), the property of indeterminacy will have to be extended to explicatures as well. Just exactly what concept is the hearer of (16a) 'Bill is a bulldozer' expected to construct out of the lexical concept *bulldozer*? The construction process is constrained by the information stored in the individual hearer's encyclopedic entry for *bulldozer* and by his bid for an interpretation consistent with optimal relevance. But this leaves a degree of leeway so that the ad hoc concept actually constructed is to that degree the hearer's responsibility. The ad hoc concept intended in more creative cases is more indeterminate, leaves more to the hearer, and so the concept which he does build receives less endorsement from the speaker, is less strongly communicated. This is essentially parallel to the indeterminacy of implicatures. Explicatures are communicated with varying degrees of strength; a conceptual range is endorsed by the speaker without any specific concept in that range being given full endorsement. Different hearers construct different possible ad hoc concepts within this range, just as different hearers construct different implicatures within the propositional range endorsed by the speaker.

On the third symmetry position where the ad hoc concept is incorporated into the proposition expressed only if it is necessary for the derivation of effects there will be cases where there simply is no complete proposition expressed by the speaker or constructed by the hearer. For instance, from the logical form of 'Bill is a bulldozer' or indeed of 'Bill is a bachelor' (that is, an enrichment case) a propositional schema with reference assigned may be formed:

(28) Bill_x is []

on the basis of which implicatures, endorsed to varying degrees by the speaker's use of the lexical item 'bulldozer' or 'bachelor', are derived by the hearer. If this, as yet very

⁹In fact the idea that the concept of weak communication might be extended to explicatures has been proposed before, by Gurkan Dogan (1992), as a result of his analyses of poems in which reference assignment indeterminacies were clearly intended by the author/speaker.

roughly sketched, picture turns out to be viable it may require some further technical changes, for instance, to the way in which contextual/cognitive effects are defined. It would be premature to pursue that line here.

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