

SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS OF HEDGES  
IN ENGLISH AND JAPANESE

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## ABSTRACT

Hedges are expressions used to communicate the speaker's weak commitment to information conveyed; i.e. by hedging, speakers may moderate the assertive force of their utterances. They include sentence adverbials such as *probably* and *technically*, adjectives such as *regular* and *typical*, particles such as *ne* and *kedo* in Japanese etc. Hedges crosscut parts of speech and therefore do not form a natural syntactic class. This thesis argues that existing analyses of hedging devices fall short of full adequacy and presents a Relevance-theoretic account.

In Chapter 1, I argue that hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon as the effect may be derived via features of the ostensive stimulus other than encoded linguistic content; e.g. the speaker can communicate her weak commitment by using certain prosodic features, facial expressions, shoulder shrugging etc. Discussions of hedging often arise in sociolinguistic contexts. However, I argue that the moderation of social relations such as the consideration of politeness is not its intrinsic function. The inadequacy of existing analyses I point out in Chapter 1 is due to the lack of a sufficiently articulated pragmatic framework, and for this reason, I turn to Relevance theory.

In Chapter 2, I outline Relevance theory which provides a cognitively based explanation of communication. The theory makes rigorous distinctions between encoded meaning and inferred meaning, between the explicit and implicit content of an utterance, between descriptive and interpretive representations, etc. which provide the concepts necessary to isolate the semantics of the hedging devices as I explain in Chapters 3 and 4.

In Chapter 3 and 4, I propose Relevance-theoretic analyses of particular English and Japanese expressions, which appear regularly in the literature on hedging. I try to capture the intrinsic semantic content of these elements and show how the familiar hedging effects arise as a result of the interaction between this encoded content, the particularities of context and considerations of relevance.

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*For Rachel*

## Chapter 1: What is it to 'Hedge'?

### 1.1 Introduction

Dictionary definitions of the English word *hedge* include; noun (i) the act or method of reducing the risk of financial loss on an investment, bet, etc. (ii) a cautious or evasive statement; and verb (intr.) to evade decision or action, especially by making non-committal statements. (tr.) to guard against the risk of loss in a bet, the paying out of a win, etc. esp. by laying bets with other bookmakers (Collins English Dictionary). Among these we are obviously interested in the definition (ii) as a noun and in the definition as an intransitive verb. Further, Oxford English Dictionary includes: to avoid committing oneself irrevocably, to secure oneself against loss on e.g. a bet by compensating transactions etc. All the senses share a common element, i.e. the reduction of a risk by not committing oneself. Much lay usage of the term, however, seems to imply a degree of insincerity or dishonesty. For example, a speaker does not give a straight answer as seen in the following example:

(0) A: Did the boss admit he was wrong?

B: He *hedged*; on the one hand he had always known it wasn't the right policy; on the other hand it would have worked if only.....

A speaker can convey her psychological state of not being able to or willing to commit herself in various ways as seen in (1)-(3) and in linguistic analyses the italicised terms are considered to be hedging devices.

(1) *I suppose* John speaks French.

(2) John *might* speak French.

(3) John *probably* speaks French.

Whether the speaker sincerely expresses her limited conviction or not, the hedging expressions (italicised) above communicate that the speaker has limited commitment to the proposition that John speaks French. Also, by hedging a speaker can secure herself from such a loss as damaging a good human relationship as seen in (4)-(6):

(4) *I suppose* you *could be* mistaken.

(5) You *might* be mistaken.

(6) You are *possibly* mistaken.

It is usually embarrassing that mistakes someone made are pointed out and it might cause offence and so damage relationship. Hedging expressions (italicised) in (4)-(6) above may help to prevent this.

In line with the dictionary definitions, the italicised expressions in (1)-(6) convey the speaker's limited conviction in the propositional content of her utterance and this may form the basis of an adequate characterisation of hedging in verbal communication. However, as we will see in Section 2, existing analyses of hedging devices are various and sometimes counter-intuitive, in the sense that their definitions are so different from our usual understanding of hedging, i.e. from dictionary definitions such as the ones given by Collins and Oxford English Dictionaries, and from the way we all use the term.

In this chapter, I am going to try to define the phenomenon of hedging in terms of its communicative effects and I will try to keep to our 'common sense' understanding of this phenomenon as far as possible.

## 1.2 Hedges: surveys in the past

The italicised expressions seen in (1)-(6) are called 'hedges'. Surveys of hedges in the past include Lakoff (1972, 1987), Fraser (1975), Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) and Prince et al (1982). However, there is not a unitary definition of hedges and it is very unlikely that hedging expressions form a natural class of linguistic expressions. That is, a psychological verb, a modal and an adverb are used in (1)/(4), (2)/(4)/(5)

and (3)/(6) respectively, which shows that hedging expressions cut across syntactic classes. Besides, an uncertain tone of voice or particular intonation patterns may convey a speaker's limited conviction, which indicates that hedging devices are not limited to lexico-syntactic expressions.

In fact, there are probably non-linguistic means of hedging such as a gesture of shrugging and facial movements expressive of doubt. In 1.3, I will discuss what kind of phenomenon 'hedging' is. Let me first turn to how Lakoff (1972, 1987) defines hedges.

### 1.2.1 Lakoff (1972, 1987)

Lakoff's (1972) examples of 'some hedges and related phenomena' include not only words which diminish the speaker's commitment to the proposition expressed but also those which intensify her commitment: examples of the former are *somewhat*, *sort of*, *perhaps* etc. and examples of the latter *very*, *really*, *a true* etc. It is obviously counter-intuitive to include expressions which intensify the speaker's commitment in the category of 'hedges', though they are arguably 'related phenomena' in that all the examples may be used to express some degree of commitment or other.

However, Lakoff (1972: 195) does not discuss hedging in terms of expression of speaker commitment to the communicated proposition. Rather, hedges are "words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy". He states that the values true or false are a matter of degree, and hedges make natural language sentences more/less true or more/less false. The underlying idea is that concepts encoded by natural language have vague boundaries and therefore utterances will very often be neither true, nor false, but rather true/false to a certain extent, or true in certain respects and false in other respects (Lakoff 1972: 183). His analysis is based on a psychological experiment by Rosch (1971) which shows that people perceive category membership as a matter of degree rather than as an absolute. For example, people perceive robins and sparrows as central members of the category *bird* while chickens and ducks are perceived as peripheral members. Lakoff (1972: 185) presents the following degrees of truth which correspond to degree of membership in the category *bird*.

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| (7)a. A robin is a bird. | (true)                                 |
| b. A chicken is a bird.  | (less true than a.)                    |
| c. A penguin is a bird.  | (less true than b)                     |
| d. A bat is a bird.      | (false or at least very far from true) |
| e. A cow is a bird.      | (absolutely false) (Lakoff 1972: 185)  |

What the hedge *sort of* does is take values that are true or close to true (e.g. (7)a.) and make them false (e.g. (8)a.) while uniformly raising values in the low truth to mid truth range (e.g. (8)b-c.), leaving the very low truth i.e. false range constant (e.g. (8)d-e.).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (8)a. A robin is <i>sort of</i> a bird. | (False -- it is a bird, no question about it) |
| b. A chicken is <i>sort of</i> a bird.  | (True, or very close to true)                 |
| c. A penguin is <i>sort of</i> a bird.  | (True, or close to true)                      |
| d. A bat is <i>sort of</i> a bird.      | (Still pretty close to false)                 |
| e. A cow is <i>sort of</i> a bird.      | (False) (Lakoff 1972: 195)                    |

The effect of *sort of* seems to provide strong support for Lakoff's 'fuzzy concept' approach, since, as he says, it is very difficult to see how these effects could be described in a two-valued system, where the proposition expressed is either true or false.

He then gives some examples of other hedges which he considers as revealing much more than degrees of category membership. For example:

(9) Esther Williams is a fish. (false)

(10) Esther Williams is *a regular* fish. (seems to be true)

(Lakoff 1972: 197)

In Lakoff's views, the use of *regular* in (10) has the affect of asserting connotations of the word *fish* which make (10) true to some degree although (9) is clearly false.

He draws a further controversial conclusion from his observations about this example: “that semantics cannot be taken to be independent of pragmatics, but that the two are inextricably tied together” (1972: 198). I will re-examine Lakoff’s examples later in this chapter and in Chapter 3 I will argue that what Lakoff (1972) calls hedged utterances such as (10) can be explained without resorting to the notion of truth being a matter of degree and that they in no way undermine the semantics/pragmatics distinction.

Concerning other hedges such as *technically*, *strictly speaking*, etc., Lakoff (1987: 122-5), following Kay (1983), gives different analyses from his earlier version (Lakoff 1972). Lakoff (1987: 124) argues that *technically* and *strictly speaking* evoke different cognitive models of the world and that the truth values of such hedged utterances are assessed against these models rather than against the world itself. The former evokes a cognitive model of some domain of expertise within which words are given particular precise definitions, and the latter, a cognitive model of the world as it is, in which words fit by virtue of their inherent meanings. For example:

(11) *Technically*, a dolphin is a mammal.

(12) *Strictly speaking*, a dolphin is a mammal. (Lakoff 1987: 123)

Lakoff (1987: 123-4) argues that these sentences have different linguistic meanings and conditions of use as the two hedges evoke different cognitive models. In fact both sentences have the same truth-conditions but for different reasons. It so happens that the domain of expertise at issue in (11) is the domain of scientific biology (within which the term *mammal* is strictly construed), which is concerned with how the world is and so meshes closely with the cognitive model evoked by *strictly speaking*. When the domain of expertise does not concern the nature of the world the truth-conditions diverge. For example:

(13) *Technically*, Richard Nixon is a Quaker.

(14) *Strictly speaking*, Richard Nixon is a Quaker. (Lakoff 1987: 124)

Richard Nixon was a member of the Quaker church and this satisfied the technical criterion of being a Quaker (i.e. (13) is true). On the other hand, he was the president when the States was heavily involved in the Vietnam War, and this shows that he did not have strict Quaker pacifist values (i.e. (14) is false).

*Technically* seems to satisfy our general understanding of ‘hedging’ as it focuses on some defining criterion of the expression but withholds some of the implications associated with the expression generally: i.e. thereby communicating the speaker’s weak commitment to them. For example, the speaker in (13) might communicate her doubt about Nixon’s having the general characteristics associated with a Quaker. *Strictly speaking* in (14), on the other hand, seems to focus more on what ordinary people might consider the essential properties of being a Quaker, i.e. having certain values, behaving in a certain way, without apparently hedging in any way.

*Strictly speaking*, however, might help to communicate a certain implicature which cancels what might otherwise be communicated. For example, (15) without the hedge might communicate that the speaker does not park there. *Strictly speaking*, however, helps to give rise to an implicature of a contrastive kind such as (16) which cancels the implicature that the speaker does not park there. In this sense, *strictly speaking* might be considered as functioning as a hedge as it withholds an implicature which otherwise might have been given rise to.

(15) *Strictly speaking*, I shouldn’t park here.

(16) (But) In fact I do park here.

Although the definition of hedging given by Lakoff (1972) is quite different from the characterisation I gave in Section 1.1, his work in (1972) and (1987) has presented some very interesting examples which any adequate account of hedging must account for. I will come back to Lakoff in 1.4.1. Let me now turn to ‘hedged performatives’.

### 1.2.2 Fraser (1975)

Fraser (1975) discusses 'hedged performatives' which involve the use of modals or semimodals, and which modify the illocutionary forces of performative verbs by stressing the inevitability or desirability of the locution. For example:

(17) I *must* advise you to remain quiet.

(18) I *wish to* forbid you to leave. (Fraser 1975: 187-8)

According to Fraser (1975: 188), (17) is a case of 'strongly performative' in that it is "easily seen as counting as the act denoted by the performative verb in the sentence" while (18) is a case of 'weakly performative' in that its performative use is not clear. His aim of this paper is to explain why certain sentences are strongly performative, and others, only weakly performative.

Fraser sets up a number of principles to account for the fact that (17) seems to communicate the performative that I advise you to remain quiet while (19) is a very odd way to communicate the performative that I invite you to my party. Further, (20) communicates the performative that I invite you to my party while (18) is a very odd way to try to communicate the performative that I forbid you to leave.

(19) I *have to* invite you to my party.

(20) I *wish* to invite you to my party.

So, for instance, according to him, an expression of desire by the speaker is tantamount to seeking the hearer's permission to perform an act but it is absurd to seek the hearer's permission to forbid him to do something, hence the oddity of (18). While this is interesting it lies outside my primary interest in hedging. What makes these cases of hedging in my sense is the speaker's avoidance of full commitment to or responsibility for performing the speech acts of advising, forbidding, inviting, etc.

By expressing 'obligation' the speaker implies that she has little choice in the matter, that if she had choice she might not perform that act, etc. By expressing her



'wish' to do something instead of doing it directly she implies that the hearer may have other wishes, that she would want to take account of, that she will perform the act only with the consent of the hearer, etc.

In other cases there is an expression of ability to perform a speech act. For example:

(21) I *can* promise you that I will not squeal.

(22) I *can* swear that no one saw me enter that building. (Fraser 1975: 201)

By expressing her 'ability' to do something instead of doing it directly the speaker might imply that she does not want to perform the act with her full endorsement (e.g. (21)). On the other hand, she might intensify her commitment to the act by expressing her ability (e.g. (22)).

Further, Fraser gives (23) in which *might* is used with a performative verb.

(23) I *might* suggest that you ask again. (Fraser 1975: 187)

(24) I suggest that you ask again.

However, Fraser (1975) does not say any more than giving the example. In (23) it is clear that the speaker does not communicate the performative (24) i.e. she gives her weak commitment to the act of suggesting. Unlike (17), (20) and (22), I cannot think of any context in which the speaker of (23) is not hedging. Even if the subject is not the speaker, utterances with the use of *may/might* seem to convey the speaker's hedging as seen in (25)-(26):

(25) He *may/might* come tonight.

(26) It *may/might* be raining now.

Lyons (1977: 799, 805) discusses that the use of *may* and *might* is a case of subjective modalisation which is to express the speaker's reservations. Therefore,

*may* and *might* seem to be genuine cases of hedges. Let me now turn to Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987).

### 1.2.3 Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987)

Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987), in their analysis of politeness, argue that 'face' is something which concerns human beings universally, i.e. across cultures. They suggest two types of 'face'-preserving strategies: 'positive' and 'negative' strategies. The former are roughly expressions of solidarity, and the latter are expressions of restraint (Brown & Levinson 1987: 2). They list hedging as one of various 'face'-preserving politeness strategies. For example, in order to avoid disagreement with the hearer (a positive politeness strategy which aims to establish solidarity) the speaker can make her own opinion safely vague by using hedges such as *sort of*, *kind of*, *in a way* etc. as in (27):

(27) I really *sort of* think/hope/wonder... (Brown & Levinson 1978: 116)

And in order not to coerce the hearer (a negative politeness strategy which aims to restrain imposition), the speaker might use hedging expressions (italicised below) which weaken illocutionary forces of e.g. commands. For example:

(28) Close the window, *if you can*. (Brown & Levinson 1978: 162)

*Sort of* in (27) explicitly conveys that the speaker is not quite committing herself to the proposition to be expressed. Therefore, *sort of* in (27) is a linguistic means to explicitly communicate the speaker's limited conviction in the proposition expressed. (28), on the other hand, conveys that the speaker considers it desirable for the speaker to close the window under the condition that the hearer is able to close it. Without *if you can*, however, (28) would convey the illocutionary force of ordering quite strongly, or at least more strongly than the 'hedged' command (28). Many of Fraser's hedged performatives have this negative politeness effect too.

In (28) the speaker's interests/desires and her recognition of the hearer's interests/desires interact and the speaker's want is not put forward as strongly as in the non-hedged version. So, it is argued that by adding *if you can* in (28), the force of ordering is weakened or hedged. This limited backing of the speaker to the force of ordering is not obviously a part of the Gricean notion of 'what is said': what the speaker 'says' is that 'the hearer is to close the window under the condition that the hearer is able to close it'. The speaker's limited conviction then seems a part of pragmatic meaning, which complies with the characterisation of 'hedging' I will give in Section 1.3.4.

Brown & Levinson (1987: 146) argue that in some languages particles encode the function of hedging i.e. avoiding commitment, and give the example of the Japanese particle *ne*. The particle *ne* is claimed by R. Lakoff (1972) to "suspend the sincerity condition on assertions, the preparatory condition of coerciveness on orders, and the essential condition of questions - operations that are syntactically done in English with tags or with expressions like *I wonder*." In 1.4.3 I will present R. Lakoff (1972)'s account and point out the descriptive inadequacy of her analysis. Further in Chapter 4, I will give a full analysis of *ne* and present a Relevance-based analysis of this particle.

In this section I have introduced Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987)'s argument that hedging is 'modification of illocutionary force', a notion which is also argued for by other linguists such as Fraser (1975) and Holmes (1984), and that its primary function is to achieve politeness. In 2.4.4 where I talk about posterior hedging, I will give more examples of *if*-clause hedges which suspend felicity conditions. However, I will not investigate hedges like *if you can* in this dissertation as they basically describe conditions whose interaction with a contextual assumption/a speech act brings about a softening of its force. In this dissertation, I will concentrate on hedges whose intrinsic linguistic meaning is more directly responsible for their hedging effects. Now I will turn to Prince et al (1982).

#### 1.2.4 Prince, Frader and Bosk (1982)

Prince et al (1982) analyse physicians' discourse and present a corpus-based analysis of hedges. They (1982: 93) argue that there are four different types of hedges: (I) 'Approximators' which "affect the propositional content, either by (Ia) adapting a term to a non-prototypical situation, or by (Ib) indicating that some term is a rounded-off representation of some figure"; and (II) 'Shields' which "affect the degree and type of speaker commitment that is inferred, by implicating that the speaker is uncertain because s/he speaks from knowledge or beliefs acquired via plausible reasoning (IIa) or that s/he has no direct knowledge but is attributing the belief to a particular other (IIb) ", i.e. 'shields' have an evidential function.

Examples of (I) 'approximators' and (II) 'shields' given by Prince et al (1982: 85-91) are (29)/(30) and (31)/(32) respectively:

((Ia) a case of adapting):

(29) His feet are *sort of* blue.

((Ib) a case of rounding off):

(30) I and O was *about* ten fifty over five fifty.

((IIa) a case of plausible reasoning):

(31) And *I think* we can *probably* just slow him down.....

((IIb) a case of attributing):

(32) *According to* Dr. Smith, there was a dramatic response.

Unlike Lakoff (1972) etc., Prince et al (1982) do make a semantics/pragmatics distinction and turn to the Gricean framework with its saying/implicating distinction in analysing hedges. This makes for much deeper analyses but also gives rise to some problems. For example, they (1982: 85) argue that a shield type hedge *I think* does not affect the propositional content but 'implicates' that the speaker is less than

fully committed to the truth of the proposition expressed. This is obviously counter-intuitive since *I think* in (31) for instance is linguistically encoded, i.e. explicitly given and is therefore surely a part of what the speaker ‘says’, not a part of what the speaker conversationally ‘implicates’. In 3.2.3 I will show that none of the different types of Gricean implicature fit to Prince et al’s argument. I will consider further problems with the four cases of hedging expressions given by Prince et al (1982) in Section 1.4.4.

This quick review of past work on hedges shows that linguists do not have an agreed definition of hedging phenomena; Lakoff (1972) analyses hedges as linguistic means to affect the truth-value of an utterance; Lakoff (1987), as encoding different cognitive models of the world (i.e. different world views) against which the utterance is interpreted; Fraser (1975), as devices for modifying an illocutionary force; Prince et al (1982), as affecting the propositional content as well as the speaker’s propositional attitude.

Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987), on the other hand, analyse the phenomenon of hedging as a means of mediating social relationships by achieving politeness affects. However, I wonder if the general phenomenon of hedging is intrinsically social as Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) suggest, or otherwise intrinsically linguistic as Lakoff (1972) suggests. In the following section, I will re-examine and attempt to characterise the phenomenon of ‘hedging’.

### 1.3 Hedging - a linguistic, pragmatic, or social phenomenon?

#### 1.3.1 Hedging and Linguistic Expressions

Often speakers do not give their assertions full backing and frequently use linguistic devices that indicate limited conviction in the propositions they express: for instance, certain psychological verbs such as *I guess*, *I suppose*, phrasal terms such as *according to*, *or so I’m told*, adjectival and adverbial modifiers such as *sort of*, *kind of*, *in a way*, *perhaps*, *maybe*, modals such as *might*, *may*, and various particles that indicate the sort of evidence the speaker has for her utterance. However, as I have

argued, they do not form a natural class and means of hedging in communication are not limited to linguistic expressions: i.e. they extend to intonation, tone of voice, gestures such as shrugging, etc. Hedging, then, is not intrinsically a linguistic phenomenon. So what (33) and (34) communicate might be more or less the same:

(33) *I guess* this house was built in the eighteenth century.

(34) This house was built in the eighteenth century.

(uttered with a hesitant tone of voice and/or with a look of doubt on her face)

In both of the utterances above, the speaker conveys her uncertainty, i.e. her limited conviction in the proposition that the house was built in the eighteenth century. However, the difference is that *I guess* might constitute a part of the Gricean what is said (I will however look at a different view about this (Urmson 1966) in Chapter 3), while the speaker's attitude of uncertainty in (34) clearly does not. Even if the speaker's attitude is not linguistically encoded as in (34), the hearer guided by some pragmatic principle can infer it and might recover (35):

(35) The speaker is not certain that the house was built in the eighteenth century.

The hearer of the following (36) in which an attitudinal or psychological verb is not used might nevertheless recover (35) as well, due to the use of *probably*.

(36) This house was *probably* built in the eighteenth century.

To the extent that we can say anything precise about this rather impressionistic notion of hedging, it does seem that it is intrinsically related to the speaker's non-committed attitude to a proposition communicated. This attitude is sometimes linguistically encoded as in (33) and sometimes pragmatically inferred on the basis of a clue such as a speaker's facial expression of uncertainty as in (34). Prince et al (1982: 89) would argue that *probably* (= a shield) in (36) does not contribute to the proposition expressed. If so, *probably* in (36) might only be a clue, just like facial

expression, which helps the hearer of (36) to pragmatically infer (35). I will look into the use of the evidential adverb *probably* in Chapter 3.

### 1.3.2 Hedging and Speaker Attitude

It looks as if hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon since the uncommitted propositional attitude of a speaker is not always linguistically encoded (see (34)) and may have to be pragmatically inferred. Even in quite literal cases, some inference might be required to identify the degree of uncertainty expressed by *I guess* or *maybe* which may differ across contexts. I would like to argue that the speaker is 'hedging' when (37) is communicated.

(37) The speaker has limited commitment to P, where P is any communicated proposition.

This can be communicated linguistically as in (33) and (36) or non-linguistically as in (34). Of course, inference is necessary in every utterance interpretation process and is not limited to recovering the speaker's attitude. In Chapter 2, I will explain what pragmatic principle governs the recovery of the speaker's attitude, or, more generally, the hearer's interpretation processes including the recovery of the speaker's attitude.

Certain linguistic means of hedging might be efficient and useful ways of communicating (37). However, a certain expression which operates as a hedge in one context, might not operate as a hedge in another. For instance, an attribution phrase, though analysed as a hedge (a shield) by Prince (1982: 91), might communicate (37) in one context but might not in another. Consider the following:

(38)A: Is Kyoto a beautiful town?

B: *According to* what people say, it is.

(Travellers A and B are discussing where to visit next)

(39) I know, from this grey sky, it will rain today, and *according to* the weather forecast, it will.

*According to* helps the hearer to infer that the speaker is communicating different degrees of the speaker's commitment to the proposition that Kyoto is a beautiful town, and the proposition that it will rain today. That is, the speaker of (38)B can communicate her limited conviction in the proposition that Kyoto is a beautiful town, by attributing it to someone else. The speaker will not be held personally responsible for misleading A even if Kyoto turns out to be an ugly town, since she has not asserted the proposition but indicated her limited conviction in it, by putting the responsibility in other people's hands. She can thus protect herself from accusations she might get should Kyoto fail to satisfy A's expectation. So, *according to* operates as a hedge in (38)B in the sense I defined (see (37)). The speaker of (39), on the other hand, expresses her full commitment to the proposition that it will rain today, and *according to* is used to further endorse her view by attributing it to the authority. In (39), *according to* is used to support and justify the speaker's commitment to the truth of her view and there is no hedging element in it in the sense I defined (see (37)).

Examples (38)B and (39) further support the view that hedging is a pragmatic rather than linguistic phenomenon, since it is not certain linguistic expressions alone but contextual information together with linguistic clues that determine whether (37) is communicated or not. As seen in (38)B, the speaker can protect her own face by not committing herself to the proposition expressed. In such cases hedging has a social function.

In the following section, let me see whether 'hedging' exists solely for social reasons, as Brown & Levinson seem to suggest.



### 1.3.3 Hedging and its Social Implications

#### 1.3.3.1 Hedging and Politeness

Social factors such as politeness play an important role in verbal communication. As Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) argue, when utterances threaten the 'face' of the speaker, the hearer, or whoever is talked about, by hedging the speaker can convey to the hearer that she is concerned with the interests of that person. When an utterance threatens the speaker's own face e.g. having to admit her own failure etc., she can protect her face by hedging but she might sound insincere out of being a bad loser. When an utterance threatens the face of someone other than the speaker, on the other hand, by being polite the speaker can soften the threat and so she can protect herself from damaging her relationship with the hearer.

As Brown & Levinson (1978: 13) argue, 'face' may well be a universal concept, and there might be a universally held assumption such as (40):

(40) If an utterance U threatens someone's face other than the speaker, an 'appropriately' hedged version of U can convey to the hearer that the speaker is concerned with his face, and is being polite.

A 'face'-threatening utterance must be 'appropriately' hedged in a given context since too much or too little hedging can be impolite. That is, assumptions about appropriate levels of politeness in particular situations may well be contextual assumptions or, if not actually represented by the participants, they might be simply aspects of the cognitive environment which could be represented if relevant. And, of course, cultural aspects play an important role since the 'appropriate' amount of social hedging varies from culture to culture: e.g. hedging in a Japanese context might sound 'too much' for an English person while hedging in an English context might sound 'too little' for a Japanese.

Now the social functions of hedging in being polite are not explicitly conveyed to the hearer but only implicitly conveyed: the assumption that the speaker is being

polite seems to be recovered as one of many weak implications or it may be only covertly communicated. In most contexts, the point of an utterance does not lie with this. This implication is derived by an utterance interacting with contextual information such as (40).

In many contexts, the appropriate level of politeness seems to be too trivial a matter to be always consciously considered, since for humans engaging in communication with each other the concept of 'preservation of face' seems to be a constant background concern (Brown & Levinson 1987: 60-1). However, when politeness implications are not available at all, for example, if the speaker points out the hearer's mistakes without hedging, all sorts of impact can be predicted. That is, the absence of the appropriate levels of politeness will lead to the presence of an implication that the speaker is actually threatening rather than preserving 'face', and may have far more implications such that the speaker wishes to offend the hearer or doesn't care if he does. That is, the potential threat of 'face', i.e. the absence of appropriate levels of politeness, often has far more impact on verbal communication than its presence.

It might appear that the sole or primary function of hedging is to preserve 'face', or to be polite, in Brown & Levinson's technical sense (1978, 1987). Although I will argue against this in 1.3.4, let me pursue this line of analysis a little by discussing a report on conversational practices in the Malagasy society in Madagascar, an island off east Africa.

### 1.3.3.2 Hedging in Malagasy Contexts

Keenan (1976) describes Malagasy speakers who deliberately make their conversational contributions uninformative, indefinite and obscure. For Malagasy speakers knowledge commitments should be made sparingly. It is usually the case that the more sincerely informative you are, the more commitments you have undertaken to defend your beliefs. However, for Malagasy speakers the less informative they are the better, everything else being equal.

There are two main reasons for this (Keenan 1976: 70). One is that in a society such as Malagasy where everybody knows what everybody else is doing, new information is very scarce and highly sought after, so individuals are not willing to reveal it. The other is that an individual has the fear of committing himself explicitly to a particular piece of information as there is a cultural belief that malevolent forces might overhear and act on the information. Then the speaker would be held to blame for anything bad happening as a result. In a society such as the Malagasy society, 'hedging' might have an important social function in reducing speakers' commitments. The adherence to a social norm of keeping explicit informational commitments to a minimum might constitute a contextual assumption.

The hearer who shares this social norm would derive different implicatures from those a hearer in the English society would derive. For example, a Malagasy hearer of (41)B might derive (42) while a hearer in the English society would not only derive (42) but also derive that B in fact does not know where C lives (Grice 1975: 51-2):

(41)A: Where does C live?

B: Somewhere in the south of France. (Grice 1975: 51)

(A is planning with B an itinerary for a holiday in France. Both know that A wants to see his friend C, if to do so would not involve too great a prolongation of his journey:)

(42) C lives in the south of France.

A hearer of (41)B in the Malagasy context would not infer that B in fact does not have any more specific knowledge as a hearer in the English society does, and might continue trying to find out where exactly C lives. And if B says for instance 'I guess, probably in Nice or somewhere', A would infer from this that C lives in Nice.

In Malagasy contexts, the social norm of expressing low commitment seems to be conventionalised and 'hedging' might be a standard manifestation of this convention. Keenan (1976: 71), for example, reports that even if a precise date for

the turning of the ancestral bones has been set, the host household member would answer 'I am not certain' or 'In a bit' or 'Around September' when somebody asks him the date. The host family may suffer great loss of face if the event does not take place as specified, and this is the reason they keep hedging.

It might appear from this that 'hedging' is a social phenomenon, but in the following section, I will argue against this view.

#### 1.3.4 Hedging - a pragmatic phenomenon

Let us consider (43). Here, analysing 'hedging' as intrinsically social would be problematic. For example, if I am asked whether I will live in Tokyo for good, I might say:

(43) I *guess* I will.

A hearer would judge me as hedging since (43) communicates my limited conviction in the proposition that I will live in Tokyo. However, the hearer does not necessarily infer any social connotations, but he will only infer that I cannot give a definite positive answer for various reasons. This tentative answer may well be relevant enough for the hearer who did not have any idea where I would be living for good.

It then follows that it is incorrect to say that hedging is intrinsically a social phenomenon. It might give rise to social implications hinging on considerations of 'face' in many social contexts but there are cases in which the same hedging expressions do not give rise to such implications. So, by elimination, we can conclude that hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon. This is the right way to view hedging, since pragmatics can accommodate such social factors (e.g. the speaker's concern with politeness, a social norm of expressing less commitment as in the Malagasy example etc.) as contextual assumptions and implications on particular occasions of utterance. The speaker's being polite or her conforming to a social norm of 'hedging' can be derived by the hearer as implications.

I have mentioned that hedging is closely related to the attitude a speaker has towards the proposition expressed and inferring the speaker's propositional attitude is in fact a pragmatic process: the speaker's attitude is seldom entirely encoded in an utterance and even if it is encoded as *I suppose* used in (44)T, the hearer might yet have to infer the speaker's intended attitude to the embedded proposition (and to the proposition expressed) and not necessarily take the 'supposing' attitude as having been communicated. In (44)T, the teacher does not believe or even suppose that the capital of UK is Paris.

(A pupil to his teacher)

(44)P: *I suppose* the capital of USA is Ottawa, am I right?

T: *I suppose* the capital of UK is Paris, am I right?

When a linguistic means of hedging is expressed as a part of an irony as in (44)T, the phrase e.g. *I suppose* in (44)T prima facie conveys to the hearer the assumption (37), as *I guess* in the non-ironical utterance (43) does. However, the whole of (44)T is ironical and the speaker does not want to give any backing to its explicit content as the speaker of (43) does. The explicit content of (44)T is not accepted by the speaker as a true assumption, and the speaker's attitude *I suppose* in (44)T is not to be taken literally by the hearer. So, naturally I do not want to say that (44)T conveys the assumption (37) or that the speaker of (44)T is hedging.

Moreover, the point of the speaker's attitude expressed in an irony is that it is a disapproving one such as ridicule (Grice (1978), Sperber & Wilson (1986)). In (44)T this attitude is held towards the embedded proposition as well as towards the propositional form given by the utterance ( which includes *I suppose*). The speaker's implicit expression of attitude of ridicule takes within its scope the explicit expression of attitude of less commitment, i.e. *I suppose* in (44)T, so that no hedging is communicated.

So, in (44)T *I suppose*, though it is linguistically encoded, is not endorsed any more than 'It's a lovely day' is endorsed in an ironical utterance of 'It's a lovely day'. A speaker's explicit expression of reduced commitment does not entail that the

speaker is in fact hedging. So, it is not the domain of linguistic semantics which recovers the speaker's attitude to a proposition or an embedded proposition, but of pragmatics which does this job of inferring the speaker's real attitude. The domain of linguistic semantics and that of pragmatics will be discussed in 2.3.1.

In the following section, an attempt will be made to characterise the phenomenon of hedging.

### 1.3.5 What is it to 'Hedge'?

In (44)T the teacher obviously does not 'suppose' that the capital of UK is Paris. This can be compared with (4) (repeated below) in which the speaker might not 'suppose' the embedded proposition but in fact strongly believes it:

(4) *I suppose* you could be mistaken.

However, the difference is the following. (44)T is an irony and the explicit content of the utterance is not conveyed to the hearer as the speaker's belief. In (4), on the other hand, the explicit content that the speaker supposes that the hearer could be mistaken is conveyed to the hearer as the speaker's belief though the speaker is being polite and the point of the utterance is in fact the embedded proposition itself.

So, in (44)T the speaker's supposing the embedded proposition is not conveyed to the hearer as the speaker's belief, i.e. not 'communicated' to the hearer in Relevance-theoretic terms (Sperber & Wilson 1986: 239), while in (4) it IS communicated and the speaker of (4) is hedging. That is, when the speaker's limited conviction is 'communicated' in the technical sense of this term (i.e. the speaker overtly makes the information manifest to the hearer), the speaker can be considered to be hedging.

The hearer of (4) might infer on the basis of his own assumptions that the speaker in fact strongly believes that he is mistaken but this does not fall within the speaker's communicative intention and so she cannot be held responsible for it. The speaker of (4) has not asserted that the hearer is mistaken but only said with reservations that it might be the case. The speaker can secure herself from damaging her relationship

with the hearer, and from later accusations perhaps if the hearer should turn out to be not mistaken. Thus, we can say that the speaker of (4) is hedging by communicating her limited conviction in the proposition that the hearer is mistaken.

So, if the speaker communicates (37), whether sincerely (as in (43)) or not (as in (4)), we can say that the speaker is hedging:

(45) Hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon by which the speaker communicates that the speaker has limited conviction in or commitment to a proposition communicated by her utterance.

Here we need to explicate what is meant by ‘a proposition communicated’. In (4) the proposition concerned is only the embedded proposition that the hearer could be mistaken (though usually taken as the proposition expressed by the utterance). In Relevance terms, the propositional form of the utterance is the linguistically encoded logical form with reference assigned, ambiguity and vagueness resolved (see 3.2.4), and this notion would include *I suppose* in (4). Then ‘a proposition’ is not or at least need not be, the propositional form of an utterance in Relevance terms. It can be any assumption which can be taken by the hearer as communicatively intended by the speaker as seen in (37).

(45) is quite different from any analysis of hedges in the past and some of the expressions analysed as hedges in the past do not meet this characterisation. Furthermore, sometimes existing analyses leave problems unexplained. In the following section, I will point out the kinds of problems that these analyses might face.

## 1.4 Problems with Existing Analyses

### 1.4.1 Lakoff (1972, 1987)

#### 1.4.1.1 Lakoff (1972)

Let us consider Lakoff's examples again:

(46) Esther Williams is a fish.

(47) Esther Williams is *a regular* fish. (Lakoff 1972: 197)

Lakoff's work (1972) predates a lot of work in pragmatics, but even today he still seems to eschew a semantics/pragmatics distinction (Lakoff 1987: 139). Lakoff (1972: 197) has claimed that (46) is false since Esther Williams is a human being, while (47) would seem to be true since it says that she swims well and is at home in water. In the Gricean framework, what (47) says is actually not that she swims well in Grice's technical use of the term saying (as conventional content plus disambiguation and reference assignment). What (47) says i.e. the proposition expressed is that Esther Williams is a regular fish, and what it implicates is that Esther Williams swims well etc. Apparently, Lakoff (1972: 215) does not make any distinction between the explicit and implicit content of an utterance, and as a result he assigns the value true to the utterance as a whole.

On a more careful analysis, we distinguish the propositional form of the utterance from the contextually derived implicatures; then the truth-conditions of the utterance are such that the propositional form is clearly false. It follows then that both (46) and (47) are false, and we can analyse them as metaphors. Sperber & Wilson (1986), for example, treat them as 'loose talk' in which a literally false statement (e.g. 'It is one o'clock' instead of 'a minute past one') is used in order to communicate the intended meaning at less processing effort than would have been involved in spelling it out literally. That is, the literally false statements are the best possible way to communicate a range of implicatures which include that Esther



Williams swims well. In Section 3.3.2, however, I will present a new and rather different Relevance-based approach to the analysis of *a regular X*, one which captures Lakoff's intuitions but maintains a principled semantics/pragmatics distinction and explicit/implicit distinction.

Lakoff (1972) does not account for the semantics of *a regular* but merely points out, in impressionistic terms, what effect it has on the overall interpretation. By resisting semantics/pragmatics and explicit/implicit communication distinctions, he deprives himself of any means of accounting for the very vigorous intuitions that people have about these two distinctions. For example, the point in an indirect answer to a question lies with the implicit import rather than the explicit content of the utterance, and undoubtedly we perceive the explicit/implicit distinction. People have clear intuitions that ambiguity and referential indeterminacy are resolved not linguistically but contextually, and that the interpretation of irony involves not only linguistic but also contextual knowledge. These show that the role of semantics and the role of pragmatics are clear and distinct.

Further, he claims that *a regular X* would not be said of X, if X is true, as *a regular* picks out metaphorical properties (Lakoff 1972: 198). For example, *a regular bachelor* cannot be said of someone who is actually a bachelor. I will, however, give a counter-example to this in Section 3.3.2.

*A regular* in (47) drives the hearer to focus on connotations of the word *fish* rather than to interpret the speaker as asserting a false proposition. In this sense, some might argue that the force of asserting the false proposition is modified, or rather weakened. However, the proposition given by (47) is a metaphor (generally given the value false) and the speaker does not expect the hearer to take its explicit content as the speaker's belief, i.e. does not want to 'communicate' the proposition expressed. That means, there is no force of asserting the proposition expressed by (47) and therefore there is no modification of the force of asserting (47).

*A regular* in (47) directs the hearer away from the literal import of the utterance and therefore we might want to say that the speaker of (47) is hedging. However, she does not communicate the speaker's limited conviction in the proposition expressed: i.e. as for metaphorical cases generally she does not endorse it at all and therefore.

according to the characterisation of hedging given in (37), I would not want to say that the speaker is hedging in (47). I will propose another analysis of *a regular* in 3.3.3. Let me now turn to Lakoff's recent work.

#### 1.4.1.2 Lakoff (1987)

Lakoff (1972: 199) argued that “*technically* picks out some definitional criterion, while *strictly speaking* requires both the definitional criterion and other important criteria as well.” Let me consider (9)-(10) again (repeated below):

(9) *Technically*, Richard Nixon is a Quaker. (true)

(10) *Strictly speaking*, Richard Nixon is a Quaker. (false)

By some definitional criterion such as being a member of a Quaker church, Richard Nixon may be a Quaker, and hence (9) is true. On the other hand, he does not share general Quaker values such as pacifist values i.e. he does not meet other important criteria though he meets the definitional ones, and hence (10) is false.

Lakoff (1987), on the other hand, gives quite a different analysis as seen in 1.2.1. Hedges such as *technically* and *strictly speaking* evoke different cognitive models of the world against which the truth-value of the hedged utterances is assessed. The idea is that (9) is assessed against a cognitive model of the world of experts in some domain while (10) is assessed against a cognitive model of the world as it is (Lakoff 1987: 123 4). When the relevant area of expertise of these experts coincides with the nature of the world, the truth-conditions converge. Recall the examples:

(48) *Technically*, a dolphin is a mammal.

(49) *Strictly speaking*, a dolphin is a mammal. (Lakoff 1987: 123)

Lakoff (1987) seems to capture our intuitions about the truth-value of utterances such as (9)-(10) and (48)-(49). However, as I argued in the last section, his account does not consider the important distinctions i.e. semantics/pragmatics and

explicit/implicit distinctions, which people intuitively have in interpreting utterances, and therefore it does not fall out of a theoretically motivated framework in linguistics. Further, his account of *technically* does not differentiate (50) from (51):

(50) A fiddle is *technically* a violin.

(51) Tom is *technically* a bachelor.

The paraphrase of (50) would be that ‘violin’ is a technical word for a fiddle, while that of (51), something like that Tom is a bachelor by definition. This might suggest that we need some other finer notion than the general concept of a cognitive model of expertise in order to capture the mention of a name for a concept in one case (i.e. (50)), and the definitional conceptual content in another (i.e. (51)). In Chapter 3, I will turn to a Relevance-based notion ‘representation by resemblance’ which subsumes ‘mention’ of words and non-descriptive representations, and show that this notion explains *technically* in (50) and (51) nicely. In Chapter 3, I will focus on the following Lakoffian hedges i.e. *a regular*, *a typical* and *technically* as they instantiate interesting distinctions within Relevance theory.

#### 1.4.2 Fraser (1975)

As the title of his paper ‘Hedged Performatives’ suggests, his work presents Speech act based analyses. Speech act theory originates in Austin (1962) who claims that language is used not only to describe the world, but also to perform acts such as making statements, giving commands, asking questions, making promises, warning, begging etc. Speech act theorists have mainly been concerned with such descriptive issues as what types of speech act there are, and how they should be grouped together (Ifantidou 1994: 28). Searle (1979: 1-29) gives five major categories of speech act: i.e. assertives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations, while Fraser (1975: 190-3) has eight categories: i.e. asserting, evaluating, reflecting speaker attitude, stipulating, requesting, suggesting and committing.

The forces of performative verbs are classified under these categories: e.g. 'promising' under commissives and committing, and 'thanking', under expressives and reflecting speaker attitude respectively. However, the use of certain performatives does not guarantee that the illocutionary forces associated with them are communicated. As pointed out by Levinson (1983: 247) difficulties in explaining non-literal uses of expressions arise in most theories of Speech acts. For example, in (52) the use of performative verb *promise* does not communicate the speech act of promising.

(52) "I promise to do the job!."

(ridiculing a politician's statement which the speaker has just heard on TV)

This is not limited to irony. The most convincing case would be embedded uses of performative verbs. For example, in "He thinks I *promised* ...", the speaker is not performing any act of promising, nor attributing any act to 'he': she is reporting thoughts, but not words (Wilson & Sperber (1990: 104)).

Let us go back to his example (17) which he considers as a case of 'strong performative'.

(17) I *must* advise you to remain quiet.

As Fraser (1975: 187) argues, the speaker of (17) is not literally advising the hearer to remain quiet, but literally stating the obligation to advise the hearer to remain quiet. The speaker gives her full backing to the proposition expressed by (17) and there is no reduced commitment of the speaker to it.

However, by using the modal *must*, the speaker puts the responsibility for the act of advising in someone else's hands, whoever is obliging her to give the advice. By attributing the responsibility to someone other than the speaker, she can dissociate herself from the proposition that she advises the hearer to remain quiet and communicate her reduced commitment to it, i.e. the reduced force of advising. Thus the speaker can weaken the illocutionary force of her explicit act of advising and in such a case (17) is a hedged performative. The reduced commitment of the

speaker can be pragmatically inferred by the hearer. Since the speaker's limited commitment is communicated to the hearer, we can argue that the speaker is hedging (see the characterisation of hedging (37)).

Now advising someone to remain quiet is a face threatening act in Brown & Levinson's terms (1978: 66) and by attributing the responsibility to someone other than herself and thus communicating her limited commitment to the force of advising, the speaker can communicate her concern not to threaten the hearer's 'face'. In such a case the use of *must* may give rise to the social implication of politeness.

What Fraser (1975) calls 'hedged' performative forces come from the very fact that by using modal or semi-modal verbs such as *must* and *wish* the speaker can dissociate herself from the force of the following performative verbs and express various attitudes to them, one of which being speaker's limited commitment. The hearer then pragmatically infers that the speaker might not have full commitment to what is communicated by performatives and arrives at an estimate of degree of commitment. For example, a policeman or lawyer might utter (17) to someone under arrest. In such a case he is not necessarily communicating the weakened force of his advice as shown in (17)':

(17)' I *must* advise you to remain quiet. And I am seriously advising you to do so.

The use of modals such as *must* does not always modify or hedge the illocutionary force communicated. This is in fact a general point about all so-called hedging devices.

In this dissertation, I am not going to pursue any further Fraser's (1975) notion of 'hedged performatives' but conclude that the use of modals/semi-modals such as *must* and *wish to* can result in the speaker's hedging in appropriate contexts by dissociating herself from the full force of her performative verb. Let us now turn to Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987).

### 1.4.3 Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987)

Brown & Levinson (1978: 146) argue that in some languages hedging is semantically encoded in particles and they give the Japanese particle *ne* as an example. Assuming Searle's standard speech act analysis, they (1978: 147) argue, following R. Lakoff (1972), that "the Japanese particle *ne* suspends the sincerity condition on assertions, the preparatory condition of coerciveness on orders, and the essential condition on questions - operations that are syntactically done in English with tags or with expressions like 'I wonder'".

I will show that R.Lakoff (1972)'s analysis of the particle *ne* is not correct. She (1972: 919) states that by the particle *ne* "a normally obligatory rule of conversation is relaxed". The sincerity condition for an assertive is that the speaker believes what she says, and according to R. Lakoff (1972: 919), *ne* used in an assertion (53) softens the claim that the hearer should believe the propositional form of an utterance.

(53) John is here *ne*. 'John is here, *isn't he?*' (R.Lakoff 1972: 919)  
(a declarative, but without the normal declarative demand for the hearer's belief)

It is obviously too strong to say that a declarative force in general demands the hearer's belief. When I utter a declarative sentence such as 'Mary is very nice', I am stating my opinion on Mary and I am not demanding that the hearer should have the same opinion. Further, *ne* used in the assertions in (54) does not suspend the claim for the hearer's belief but quite on the contrary asks for the hearer's corroboration:

(54)A: Kyoo wa samui desu *ne*. 'It's cold today, *isn't it?*'  
today topic cold is  
B: Soo desu *ne*. 'It is, *indeed!*'  
So is  
(A meets B on a street and it is freezingly cold)

By using the particle *ne*, A in (54) expresses that A assumes that B believes the truth of what A says, and seeks for B's agreement: A's utterance without the particle would be inappropriate in a context such as (54) in which it is fairly clear that the speaker and hearer both believe the proposition expressed. That means, contrary to R. Lakoff, the demand for the hearer's belief in what the speaker says is in fact not softened but assumed or strengthened in this context: without assuming that the hearer believes that it is cold today, the speaker A cannot seek for the hearer B's agreement.

Likewise, in (54)B the speaker assumes that the hearer (=A), of course, believes that it is cold today (=what A has just said) and the hearer's belief about the coldness is already established at the time of uttering (54)B. In (54)B, *ne* is used to confirm that the speaker and the hearer share the same thought, contrary to R. Lakoff's claim. In (54)A-B, the speaker knows that the hearer believes that it is cold today, and there is no point in using *ne* if its function is to soften the claim for the hearer's believing it.

For an order, R. Lakoff (1972: 919) argues that the normal imperative demand for the hearer's obedience is weakened by *ne* and she gives an example (55):

(55) Come here *ne*. 'Come here, *won't you?*' (R.Lakoff 1972: 919)

(an order, but without normal imperative demand for the addressee's response)

*Ne* used in an order, however, can result in the opposite effect in certain contexts. Let us see the following:

(56) Katazukenasai *ne*.

tidy up, *I say*.

(A mother sees a messy room of her son, and it is obvious to the son that he has to tidy up. Mother says (56) to the son)

*Ne* in (56) is used to help convey the speaker's insistence on the son's agreeing to tidy up rather than weakening the demand for the son's obedience. Especially when

the order carries an angry tone of voice, there is no way the appended particle *ne* weakens the imperative force.

Lastly, for a question, according to R. Lakoff (1972: 919), *ne* is used to suspend the demand for the hearer's response:

(57) Is John here *ne*?      'I wonder if John is here'.      (R.Lakoff 1972: 919)

(a question, without the normal interrogative demand for the addressee's response)

Again, *ne* used in a question can have the opposite effect. For example, in (58) *ne* appended to the question does not weaken the demand for the hearer's response, but quite on the contrary, helps convey the speaker's insistence on the hearer's response compared with the one without *ne*:

(58) John wa koko desu ka *ne*?

topic here      is      Question particle      'Is John here?'

(A boss impatiently asking to his secretary)

In this context, *ne* does not function the way R. Lakoff considers it to function: i.e. weakening effects. (58) without *ne* is a polite way of asking whether John is here due to the polite form copula (i.e. *desu*). The addition of *ne*, however, here does not make the utterance softer, i.e. does not withhold the questioning force.

Of course, in some contexts the particle *ne* might be used so that the various demands mentioned above, i.e. various forces of utterances are weakened, and R. Lakoff(1972) analyses this Japanese particle *ne* as being responsible for this effect. However, as argued in 1.3.4, 'hedging' is a pragmatic phenomenon and a lexical item which operates as a hedge in one context might not operate this way in another. So, counter-examples (54), (56) and (58) are not at all unexpected since hedging or weakening the forces of assertion, order, question etc. is not due to certain lexical items alone such as the particle *ne*, but due to some contextual information as well. In the given counter-examples, this particle *ne* is not even signalling or giving a clue



for 'weakened forces' but seems to be communicating 'strengthened forces' (this effect to be discussed in 4.2.2.3).

What does it mean that in one context, *ne* is used to weaken an illocutionary force of an utterance and in another to strengthen it? We can definitely say that neither of the operations is intrinsic to the particle. This particle seems sensitive to other factors such as contextual information, intonation, tone of voice etc. I will try to isolate the intrinsic meaning of this particle *ne* and explain its variable effects in utterance interpretation in Chapter 4.

Further, Brown & Levinson (1978: 151-5) list Tzeltal particles operating as hedges. They include *lah* - a quotative particle 'it is said', *me* - a possibility marker usually translated as 'if' and *mak* - dubitative particle 'perhaps' 'I guess' 'I suppose' and so on. The quotative particle *lah* used in assertions might communicate the speaker's limited commitment to the utterance by putting the responsibility for the truth of the utterance in someone else's hands. However, hearsay expressions do not always operate as hedges as demonstrated in (59):

(59) *It is said* that Kyoto is beautiful and in fact it is.

The speaker of (59) does believe the truth of the proposition that Kyoto is beautiful. The hearsay phrase *it is said* is used to communicate what is said about Kyoto in general and there is no hedging element there.

Interestingly, the Tzeltal quotative particle *lah* used in commands distances the speaker from a command by indicating (truly or as a pretence) that the command is somebody other than the speaker's. This way *lah* softens the imperative force of an utterance (Brown & Levinson 1978: 151 2). Likewise, the so-called quotative particle *tte* of Japanese can be used to soften the imperative force by indicating that the command is a third-party one. However, as is the case with hearsay expressions in English, *tte* does not always operate as a hedge and the same is probably true of *lah*. For example, in the context specified in (56), *tte* can be used instead of *ne*. and can convey Mother's insistence on her son's tidying up as demonstrated below:

(60) Katazuke nasai.      Katazuke nasai-*tte*.  
Tidy up.                      Tidy up, *I say*.

I will examine the intrinsic function of the Japanese quotative particle *tte* in Chapter 4.

According to Brown & Levinson (1978: 154), *mak* dubitative particle meaning ‘perhaps’, ‘I guess’ weakens an assertive force and “in some cases turns a statement into a question”. This sounds as if questions could be placed along a continuum of the strength of the speaker's commitment to a proposition: of course, at the weak end of the continuum. Arguing along these lines, Kendal (1985), for instance, places the Japanese interrogative particle *ka* (see (58)) at the weak end of a commitment continuum.

However, there is a crucial difference between the speaker's weakened commitment to the truth of a proposition and a proposition represented as a question. The difference is that the former, however weak it is, has the speaker's commitment to the truth of P while in the latter there is no endorsement of the speaker towards the truth of the proposition. That is, a questioner does not express any degree of commitment to the truth of the proposition at the time of asking. In fact, it has been argued by Sperber & Wilson (1986) and Wilson & Sperber (1988a) that interrogatives are, unlike declaratives, not descriptive representations at all (see 4.4.4).

So, I doubt very much that the dubitative particle *mak* sometimes turns a statement into a question. Of course, if the speaker expresses her uncertainty towards a proposition whereas the hearer is certain about its truth, the hearer's response might sound as if he was replying to a question as in (61). However, the hearer is not answering a question but confirming the truth, of the other's tentative statement.

(61)A: You are sad, *I guess*? (Brown & Levinson 1978: 154)

B: Yes, I am. I lost my wallet.

I have said that a proposition represented as a question does not have any endorsement from the speaker. The propositional form expressed by a question does

not in fact describe a state of affairs at all. Rather it represents another representation (a thought). The thought so represented is a desirable i.e. relevant thought. Interrogatives are 'interpretive' representations, an account of which will be given in 4.4 where I give a full analysis of the Japanese question particle *ka*.

Lastly, Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) do not clarify what it means to 'modify illocutionary forces'. Let me try to clarify this notion. They might mean that an illocutionary force is modified by a hedge if the same utterance without the hedge has a different illocutionary force. Or they might mean that an illocutionary force of some strength is communicated, and then a hedging expression is used which modifies it. For example, in (28) (repeated below) the force of command is first communicated and then the hedging phrase *if you can* modifies the illocutionary force by reducing or softening it. This kind of 'posterior hedging' is going to be discussed in Section 2.4.4 in which the alteration of the speaker's propositional attitude will be discussed.

(28) Close the window, *if you can*.

It seems that they mean the former as the hedging phrase *if you can* in (28) does convey a different strength of ordering from the one conveyed by the non-hedged version of (28). That is, if they meant the latter, the idea of hedging the illocutionary force of ordering in (28) would be problematic. Consider (28)':

(28)' *If you can*, close the window.

When *if you can* is uttered initially as in (28)', I doubt that the illocutionary force of the command is first communicated and then it is modified by *if you can*. Because *if you can* is already in the context against which the command 'close the window' is processed, it is unlikely that the hearer first infers the full force of command and then the hedged force, but rather that the hearer only infers the hedged force. The inference of the first step force is obviously a redundant process.

It seems better to define 'modifying illocutionary forces' in the first sense: i.e. a hedge modifies illocutionary force if the same utterance without the hedge would have a different illocutionary force (either different in kind, e.g. a request instead of an order, or different in strength). Otherwise, *if you can* in (28)' would not function as a hedge while in (28) it would. Of course, as seen in (28), there are cases in which a hedge modifies an illocutionary force which is first communicated to the hearer. By defining hedges this way, we can explain 'modifying illocutionary forces' both in (28) and (28)'.

Brown & Levinson (1987: 146) gave data from Tzeltal, Japanese etc. and argued that in some languages hedges are encoded as particles. In this section, however, I have shown that hedging effects are not always present with those particles, confirming that we need fuller semantic and pragmatic analyses for the particles. In Chapter 4 I will give detailed analyses of the Japanese particles *ne*, *tte* and *ka* based on the Relevance framework. In the next section, I will examine Prince et al (1982)'s analysis.

#### 1.4.4 Prince, Frader & Bosk (1982)

Prince et al (1982: 85) analyse hedged utterances taken from physician - physician discourse in a clinic. They base their notion of hedges on Lakoff (1972): i.e. hedges make things more or less 'fuzzy', and at the same time they present a Gricean analysis of hedges. Some of the problems I will point out in this section are in fact due to the limitations of the prototype theory which Lakoff (1972) and Prince et al(1982) resort to, as well as to the Gricean framework.

Prince et al (1982) first categorise hedges into 'approximators' and 'shields': the former affects the proposition expressed by an utterance while the latter the propositional attitude. Then, each type of hedge is further categorised into two: 'approximators' into 'adaptor' and 'rounder' while 'shields' into 'plausibility' and

'attribution'. Let me in turn examine the four types of hedges given by Prince et al (1982: 93).

#### 1.4.4.1 Adaptors (a sub-case of approximator)

Let me repeat the utterance (29):

(29) His feet are *sort of* blue. (Prince et al 1982: 85)

(29) 'His feet are blue.

Prince et al (1982: 85) state that "*sort of* is the type of hedge that affects the propositional content but not the speaker commitment". However, (29) might convey to the hearer that the speaker is not totally committed to the proposition that the feet are blue. I wonder if there is a clear cut distinction between these two interpretations. If the speaker saw the feet being not quite blue and uttered (29), we can either interpret that the speaker is not quite committed to the blueness of the feet or that she is committed to the non-prototypical blueness of the feet. If the former, *sort of* would affect the speaker's commitment to the propositional content of an utterance, and the distinction between 'approximators' and 'shields' mentioned above may not be hard and fast.

Further, Prince et al (1982: 86) argue that the speaker of the unhedged version (29) "*implicates* full personal commitment to the truth of the proposition conveyed by simply asserting the proposition". Although their analysis is based on the Gricean framework, this is directly against what Grice himself says about the proposition communicating the speaker's belief. According to him (Grice 1978: 114), "it is not a natural use of language to describe one who has said that P as having, for example, "implied," "indicated," or "suggested" that he believes that P; the natural thing to say is that he has expressed (or at least purported to express) the belief that P."

Their argument is based on a psychological experiment by Rosch (1977) on how people perceive category membership. She tries to establish the internal structure of various noun categories in terms of central instances (prototypes) and peripheral

instances. According to Prince et al (1982: 85), statements involving peripheral rather than central instances seem to be considered to be more fuzzy and *sort of* explicitly indicates this.

So with regard to ‘adaptors’ Prince et al follow Lakoff closely and presumably inherit his views on multiple truth-values, degrees of truth, being necessary in assessing utterances with ‘adaptors’ in them. They do not mention *technically* or *a regular*, presumably because they did not arise in their corpus. They would seem to qualify as adaptors too since they too alter class membership and therefore truth-value. I shall focus on the adaptors *technically* and *a regular* in Chapter 3 and make a suggestion about *sort of*; my account will obviate the need for anything beyond the two classical values ‘true’ and ‘false’.

Further, there is an example in which it is not clear whether *sort of* affects speaker's attitude or the propositional content of an utterance:

(62) A: Do you think that Mary is happy?

B: *Sort of*.

In this example, *sort of* might affect the speaker's thinking (as a shield-type hedge) and communicate (64), or it might affect the proposition (63) (as an approximator-type hedge) and communicate (65).

(63) Mary is happy.

(64) I *sort of* think that Mary is happy.

(65) I think that Mary is *sort of* happy.

Actually it does not seem to matter which is the case: i.e. in both cases (62)B communicates that the speaker has limited commitment to the proposition that Mary is happy. So it seems that Prince et al's claim that *sort of* affects the speaker's propositional content is not always true. Let me now turn to 'Rounder'.

#### 1.4.4.2 Rounders (a sub-case of approximator)

Lakoff (1972: 196) includes words such as *roughly* and *almost* in his category of 'some hedges and related phenomena'. Following Lakoff (1972), Prince et al (1982: 88) call words like *approximately*, *about*, and *something between X and Y* which indicate a range, 'rounders', a sub-case of approximators. Prince et al (1982: 88) are correct in saying that these words do not affect the speaker's propositional attitude but its content, and that they encode a range: sometimes precise terms or numbers are not relevant or not known by the speaker and she gives merely approximate terms.

They argue that the figure chosen is taken to be the prototypical diagnosis by the physicians while the hedge chosen indicates that "the actual situation is close to but not identical with the prototypical situation". So in (30) (repeated below) 'ten fifty over five fifty' indicates some prototypical or rather precise situation of this figure while *about* indicates some non-prototypical situation or a range:

(30) I and O was *about* ten fifty over five fifty.

It is certainly true that rounders contribute to the proposition expressed, however, I am not pursuing this type of hedges any more. As far as numbers or figures are concerned, I doubt that we need notions such as prototype as we have notions such as 'preciseness' and a 'range' that make a contribution to the proposition expressed.

Moreover, as (66) demonstrates, even a hedged term can indicate a prototypical instance of that term (a situation which is contextually determined), or as (67) demonstrates, a non-hedged term can indicate a range.

(A friend the speaker has not seen for some years, asks her over a drink how much she is earning now. She replies:)

(66) I earn *about* 800 pounds a month.

(adapted from Sperber & Wilson 1986: 233)

(67) I earn 800 pounds a month. (Sperber & Wilson 1986: 233)

This approximate figure 'about 800 pounds' can lead to exactly the same conclusions about the speaker's status, standard of living, life style, etc. as the 'unhedged' exact figure '800 pounds' can. The hearer can infer kinds of typical information on the speaker's life style associated with that amount of salary. Then, it does not matter whether the speaker says a hedged figure, or an unhedged figure in a context such as (66) in which the hearer would like to know about the speaker's life in general. Therefore, in the above mentioned context, the speaker could have said (67) - unhedged figure though this is strictly speaking false.

Both in (66) - a hedged figure and (67) - an unhedged figure, information about the speaker's life style typically associated with the salary '800 pounds' is derived. That means, a hedged figure does not necessarily indicate some non-prototypical situation associated with that figure. In (66) the hedge *about* communicates a range as Prince et al (1982: 88) argues. And in (67) where there is no hedge used, a range is communicated as well: i.e. the figure which is not explicitly hedged, is indeed understood as loosely used. That is, the hearer in the given context knows that a pay slip salary figure is usually a complex one such as 787.89 pounds after tax deduction, and that the speaker of (67) does not earn exactly 800 pounds net per month. Then, 'a range' can be communicated without using a rounder such as *about*.

As the last and this section have shown, Prince et al's (1982) argument that approximators encode some non-prototypical situation, simply is not correct. The utterance of *sort of X* or *about X* requires contextual information for them to be interpreted fully: i.e. for *sort of X* some encyclopaedic information about X is required and for *about X*, the range the hedge *about* communicates cannot be fixed without contextual information.

From our definition of hedging (37), approximators discussed here are not always hedges, although they can be as seen in (64). The attribution of hedging effects to the semantics of linguistic elements is simply wrong since, as the definition (45) goes, hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon.



#### 1.4.4.3 Plausibility Hedges (a sub-case of shields)

'Shields' are hedges which do not affect the propositional content of an utterance but "affect the degree and type of speaker commitment". As the term 'shield' indicates, they protect the speaker from having to take full responsibility for the propositional content of her utterance. 'Plausibility hedges' such as *I think* and *probably* 'implicate' that "the speaker is uncertain because s/he speaks from knowledge or beliefs acquired via plausible reasoning" (Prince et al 1982: 93). Let me consider (68):

(68) And *I think* we can *probably* just slow him down....

(Prince et al 1982: 89)

It might be true that these hedges *I think* and *probably* do not affect the proposition expressed by (68), since the point of the utterance seems to be that 'they can slow him down' and it is towards that which the speaker expresses limited commitment. If so, *I think* and *probably* in (68) are what Urmson (1966: 193, 200) calls a parenthetical usage by which is meant that "they help the understanding and assessment of what is said rather than being a part of what is said" (Urmson 1966: 212). I will look into Urmson (1966) in 3.2.2.

However, the Gricean notion of 'what is said' is usually characterised as linguistically encoded content with referents assigned and any ambiguity resolved. It should therefore include the explicitly given *I think* and *probably* in (68). If Prince et al (1982) and Urmson (1966: 212) are correct, this looks like a problem for the Gricean notion of 'what is said' and this notion needs more investigation.

Prince et al (1982: 93) argue that these hedges 'implicate' that the speaker is uncertain about a proposition. However, in Chapter 3 I will show in detail how none of the Gricean categories of implicature (conventional, generalised conversational, particularised conversational) can account for the contribution made by the hedging expressions. The fact that the speaker of (68) is uncertain about a proposition is not actually implicated but explicitly uttered. *I think* and *probably* might well not be a

part of the proposition expressed by (68) if Prince et al (1982) are correct in considering the proposition as one that carries the point of the utterance (see 3.2.6). However, they are definitely a part of the explicit import of the utterance.

Here we might need some other notions which explain that *I think* and *probably* are not a part of the propositional content but yet a part of the explicit import. That is, they are not a part of what is implicated because they are not implicitly but explicitly given. Relevance theory makes a distinction between the propositional form of an utterance (the outcome of linguistic decoding, reference assignment, disambiguation, fixation of indexicals and vagueness) and its explicatures (which may or may not include the propositional form). Explicatures are assumptions which are communicated (as opposed to merely expressed) by the speaker and are developments of the logical form encoded by an utterance (see Section 2.3).

Given this distinction, we can explain why *I think* and *probably* which may or may not constitute a part of the proposition expressed, nevertheless constitute a part of some explicitly communicated assumption other than the Gricean 'what is said'. We will give Relevance-based analyses of explicit attitude expressions such as *I suppose* and *probably* in Chapter 3.

#### 1.4.4.4 Attribution Hedges(a sub-case of shields)

Prince et al (1982: 89) include expressions such as *according to*, *presumably*, *somebody said that...*etc. in their category of attribution shields, and they argue that they "simply attribute the belief in question to someone other than the speaker, the speaker's own degree of commitment being only indirectly inferable".

Sometimes the attributee is explicitly specified as in (69) and sometimes not, as in (70) and (71):

(69) *According to* John Major, Britain's economy will improve.

(70) *They say that* Britain's economy will improve.

(71) Britain's economy will improve (uttered ironically).

(The speaker and the hearer are watching TV and have just heard John Major making a speech. The speaker does not support Tory's policy.)

In (70) the attributee is not specified but *they say that* explicitly conveys that the complement clause is not the speaker's thought. (71), on the other hand, does not have any explicit expression of the utterance being attributed to someone other than the speaker, but in the given context, the hearer can infer that the utterance is not the speaker's thought. Whether or not the attributee is given, or whether or not it is expressed that the belief in question is someone else's, all of the above utterances can communicate that the speaker does not believe what John Major said.

According to Prince et al (1982: 85), shield type hedges do not affect the proposition expressed, but affect the relationship between it and the speaker, i.e. the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition expressed. This means that *according to...* does not contribute to the proposition expressed and the propositions expressed by (69) (repeated below) and (72) would be identical. If they were identical, i.e. synonymous, the conjunction (69) & (72), i.e. P & P, would be redundant at the explicit level. However, they are not.

(69)*According to* John Major, Britain's economy will improve.

(72)*According to* Tony Blair too, Britain's economy will improve.

Further, Prince et al(1982) would consider *it is said* in the following as an attribution hedge and would argue that this hedge does not affect the truth-conditions of the first conjunct. Then, what the speaker is SAYING is that Kyoto is beautiful and in fact it is beautiful, which is obviously a redundant remark. However, (73) is not redundant since the first conjunct communicates what is said about Kyoto and the second, the speaker's belief.

(73)*It is said* that Kyoto is beautiful and in fact it is.

So, contrary to Prince et al (1982: 89)'s argument, it seems that attribution hedges do contribute to the truth-conditions of an utterance. I shall pursue this point further in Chapter 4 when I consider the hearsay particle *tte*.

Let us now consider (74) and (75), examples given by Prince et al (1982: 91):

(74) There was a dramatic response after medication.

(75) *According to me*, there was a dramatic response after medication(?).

According to Prince et al (1982: 90), the hearer observing the maxim of quality (Grice 1975) infers that the speaker has adequate evidence for believing the proposition expressed to be true and (74) is in a way equivalent to 'the redundant' (75). However, for any echoic, especially ironical, utterance an unhedged version P is not always equivalent to '*according to me*, P': i.e. the proposition given by an utterance is not always the speaker's thought (e.g. (71)). Also as (76) shows, '*according to me*, P' is not always redundant:

(76) According to John, Jane, and many other people, I might be crazy, but *according to ME*, I am totally sane.

Prince et al (1982: 289) argue that the use of expressions including *according to...* attribute an assumption/belief to someone other than the speaker and the speaker's own degree of commitment is indirectly inferable. '*According to ME*' in (76), however, clearly indicates that what follows is attributed to the speaker, not to anybody else. Then, this expression does not fall in the category of hedges specified by Prince et al at the beginning of this section. *According to* specifies who the assumption/belief is attributed to but does not exclude the case of attributing to the speaker.

I have argued that speakers communicate their doubt or limited conviction in a proposition by hedging. Though *according to* and *they say that...* are analysed as hedges by Prince et al (1982), they do not always diminish the speaker's commitment. For example, suppose that the speaker and the hearer are talking about

today's weather, and that they are talking about how to improve their violin skills respectively:

(77) *According to* the weather forecast, it will be sunny today.

(78) *They say that* practice makes perfect.

The speaker of (77) communicates her strong commitment by attributing the information to the expert, so does the speaker of (78) by quoting a popular proverb. So, according to my characterisation of hedging given in (37), they are not hedges in the context specified above. What they do is to convey explicitly that the complement clause is attributed to someone other than the speaker.

Lastly, Prince et al (1982: 91) argue that attribution shields "implicate that the speaker is speaking from knowledge or beliefs acquired via hearsay, in the broadest sense of the term". However, as the conjunction '(69) & (72)' is not a redundant remark and therefore shows that *according to...* IS a part of the Gricean notion of 'what is said', their claim is incorrect. The speaker of (69) does not implicate that she is speaking from knowledge or belief acquired via hearsay, but SAYS so.

To conclude, plausibility shields such as *I think* and *probably* might not contribute to the proposition expressed by an utterance, but attribution shields such as *according to* and *it is said* definitely do. So, Prince et al (1982)'s classification of hedges seems not so fast and clear: their argument that adaptors and rounders (approximators) affect the propositional content while plausibility and attribution hedges (shields) do not needs further consideration.

In Section 1.4, I have pointed out some problems and shortcomings observed in the past work on hedges. As I mentioned, some of the problems arise from the limitations of the frameworks (i.e. speech act theory, prototype theory, Gricean pragmatics) within which the past studies are done.

## 1.5 Conclusions

Discussions of hedging often arise in the context of sociolinguistically oriented work on politeness phenomena in language use. For example, I have discussed in 1.3.3.1 that pointing out someone's mistake is a 'face'-threatening act but by hedging the speaker can weaken her assertion, thereby preserving the 'face' of that person and giving rise to 'politeness' in Brown & Levinson's term (1978, 1987).

I have mentioned the case of the Malagasy society in which 'hedging' seems to be the norm that people conform to. In this society in which everybody knows what everybody else is doing, any piece of new information is extremely important and therefore by hedging people try not to reveal it in definite terms. Also it would be a great loss of face if what the speaker said turned out to be not taking place. For this reason the speaker keeps hedging even if she is quite sure of the truth of the information she is giving. In a society such as this, the less commitment the speaker gives, the better, everything else being equal. However, although the hedging effect does often play a crucial role in the modulation of social relations through discourse, I argued that this is neither its sole nor its intrinsic function.

I have tried to give a characterisation of what linguists informally call 'hedging' in communication, i.e. of the way in which speakers may moderate the assertive force of their utterances. Hedges include various linguistic devices such as *I suppose/guess* and *probably* in English and particles such as *ne* (= isn't it) and *tte* (= I hear) in Japanese. However, the hedging effect may be achieved by features of the ostensive stimulus other than encoded linguistic content; it may be communicated by an uncertain tone of voice or by such non-linguistic means as facial expression and shoulder shrugging, etc. (e.g. (34)). I therefore argued that the hedging effect is not intrinsically linguistic but is a broader pragmatic phenomenon communicating the speaker's less than complete conviction, as characterised in (37).

In this chapter I have presented studies on hedges in the past and shown that so far linguists have used the term to mean various functions: e.g. Lakoff (1972) defines hedges as making an utterance more or less true; Lakoff (1987), as evoking various cognitive models of the world in which an utterance is interpreted; Fraser

(1975) and Brown & Levinson (1978 1987), as modifying the illocutionary force of an utterance; Prince et al (1982), as e.g. implicating the speaker's weakened commitment. They all present interesting linguistic data but existing frameworks and distinctions such as the Gricean 'what is said/implicated' cannot explain them satisfactorily.

In several places, I have in passing mentioned the Relevance theoretic approach of Sperber and Wilson and the important notions of the 'semantics/pragmatics' and 'explicit/implicit' distinctions for explaining some of the so-called hedging phenomena. In the next chapter I will introduce Relevance theory since I believe that it enables a better analysis of what are informally labelled 'hedges'.

## Chapter 2: Relevance Theory

### 2.1 Introduction

Relevance theory is a general cognitive theory in that its basic claims concern human information processing in general, and within this basic framework, there is a more specific pragmatic theory which has its own particular principle, called 'the principle of relevance' (see Section 2.2.2).

Wilson & Sperber (1986) point out that humans pay attention to some phenomena rather than others: they represent these phenomena to themselves in one way rather than another; they process these representations in one context rather than another. What determines these choices is some standard governing human cognition called 'relevance'. They suggest that humans tend to pay attention to the most relevant phenomena available; they tend to construct the most relevant possible representations of these phenomena, and to process them in a context that maximises their relevance.

Sperber & Wilson (1986) claim that relevance, and the maximisation of relevance, is the key to human cognition. In the next section, let us see how they explain this notion.

### 2.2 On the Notion 'Relevance'

According to Sperber & Wilson (1986), information is relevant to a human if it interacts in certain ways with his existing assumptions about the world. They present three types of interaction described in the following situations. First, I arrive home with the thought (1)a. and discover via visual perception the information (1)b.

- (1)a. If Mary is at home, I will suggest that we should go to see a play.
- b. Mary is at home.

In this case, I can deduce the following implication (1)c. using both old and newly acquired information (i.e. (1)a-b.) as joint premises in a deductive inference process.



(1)c. is not deducible from either the existing assumption (1)a. or the newly acquired information (1)b. alone, but from the union of the two.

(1)c. I will suggest that we should go to see a play.

Second, I arrive home with the thought (2)a. and hear Mary singing and discover, via auditory perception this time, the information (2)b.

(2)a. Mary may be at home.

b. Mary is at home.

In this case, the newly available information (2)b. raises the strength of the existing old information (2)a. from weak to certain. There might be a case in which newly available information lowers the strength of the existing old information (2)a. For example, when I am thinking Mary must be home by now, somebody tells me that he has just seen her shopping and I start to think she is not likely to be at home. This weakening is not discussed in Sperber & Wilson (1986). However, the newly available information is changing the status of the existing old information as in the case just given above and I feel this should be included here. In 4.5.3 I will give a possible example of 'weakening' observed in utterance-final use of *kedo*.

Lastly, I arrive home with the thought (3)a. and discover (3)b.

(3)a. Mary might be/is at home.

b. Mary is not at home.

In this case, the newly available information (3)b. erases the existing old information and replaces it.

When a newly acquired piece of information interacts with a person's assumptions in any of the ways mentioned above, Sperber & Wilson (1986) say that it is 'relevant' both in their technical sense and in an intuitive sense. Intuitively, for example, we know that noticing that the hall needs cleaning, is not relevant in any of the above

situations. Technically, this is because it does not interact in any of these three ways with the contextual assumptions given in (1)-(3)a.

The three types of interaction above show how a piece of information can be relevant, specifying what kind of effects the information can achieve i.e. derivation of a contextual implication, strengthening an existing assumption and eliminating (and perhaps weakening) an existing assumption. However, this is not a sufficient characterisation as, first, 'relevance' is a matter of degree, and second, there is another factor we have to consider, i.e. effort required for achieving the effects. It is to these that I now turn.

### 2.2.1 Processing Effort and Contextual Effects

Information is relevant if it interacts with existing assumptions in the ways given in the last section. So there are basically three ways in which a newly presented piece of information can be relevant: it may lead to a contextual implication, it may strengthen an existing assumption, or it may eliminate an existing assumption and replace it with the newly available piece of information. Sperber & Wilson (1986) call these interactions, 'contextual effects' and say that information is relevant when it has one of these contextual effects. Having contextual effects is a necessary condition for relevance, and the more contextual effects a newly presented piece of information has, the more relevant it is. However, it is not the only factor involved.

Contextual effects are achieved by certain mental processes i.e. processing efforts, and this is the second factor which is considered for assessing the degree of relevance. Intuitively, the information that Mary is not at home is more relevant than the information that Mary is not at home and the hall needs cleaning in the second and third cases described in the last section. This is because the latter conjoined information requires more processing effort than the former, although both yield just the same range of contextual effects. So 'relevance' is, on the one hand, a classificatory notion in that we can talk about a newly acquired piece of information being relevant or not. And on the other, it is a comparative notion in that we can talk about a newly acquired piece of information being more or less relevant.

Let me clarify this point. Suppose I am on my way home with the thought that Mary is probably at home, and if so, I will suggest that we should go out for supper. And then I meet Mary's colleague who says that Mary has to stay late in the office. This utterance is highly relevant as it eliminates my thought that Mary is probably at home. Now suppose that the colleague says that Mary has to stay late in the office and I see children crossing the road behind the colleague. This conjoined information achieves the same contextual effect i.e. the elimination of my thought that Mary is probably at home. However, intuitively we know that this conjoined information is less relevant in the given context than the former case.

The reason is: only the information that Mary is not at home is used to eliminate and replace the existing assumption, i.e. to achieve contextual effects; and processing the information that children are crossing the road will not yield any immediate effect in this context but will require some effort (it may, of course, have effects in another context I have available). That is, when achieving the same amount of contextual effects, a newly acquired piece of information is more relevant the less the effort that was required to derive the effects. So the following comparative definition of relevance is suggested:

#### (4) Relevance

- a. Other things being equal, the greater the contextual effects, the greater the relevance.
- b. Other things being equal, the smaller the processing effort, the greater the relevance.

In the last section, we have seen that relevance is a relation between a newly available piece of information and the context in which it is processed and it is a function of effects and effort. Suppose that (1)b. is processed in the following context (5)a-b:

- (5)a. If Mary is at home, I will offer to take her to a restaurant.
- b. If I offer to take her to a restaurant, she will be pleased with me.

(1)b processed in the context (5)a-b gives two contextual implications, while (1)b processed in the context of (1)a. has only one contextual implication (1)c. Now on the contextual effect side i.e. the first condition in (4)a., (1)b processed in context (5) is more relevant than it is in (1) as it has more contextual effects. However, on the processing effort side i.e. the second condition in (4)b., this is not necessarily the case.

It might be the case that the contextual assumptions are very easily accessible and accessing (5)a-b requires the hearer just the same effort as accessing (1)a. Suppose, however, that Mary always works till late and is seldom home when I come home, and I do not plan anything for the evening. Then, accessing the context (5)a-b requires more effort than accessing the context (1)a. When I go home, I discover to my surprise that Mary is at home. The former context gives two contextual implications that I will take her to a restaurant, and that she will be pleased with me, while the latter gives only one, that I will suggest that we should go to see a play. On the contextual effects side, the former case will be more relevant, as it gives two contextual implications. However, according to the processing effort factor, it is not the case, as accessing two contextual assumptions that are not easily accessible requires more effort than accessing one contextual assumption that is not easily accessible. So the context (5)a-b. yields more effects with MORE effort than (1)a. and again, neither, then, is predicted as more relevant than the other.

An individual, whose aim is to maximise relevance, should pay attention to the phenomena which seem likely to give rise to the greatest possible contextual effects in return for the available processing effort. In turning our attention to some phenomenon in the world we may have the hope that it will be relevant. For a certain subset of attention-demanding phenomena we can have a warranted expectation of relevance. I now turn to this point.

### 2.2.2 Principle of Relevance

Some phenomena are relevant to an individual and are worth processing mentally, and others are not relevant at all and therefore are not worth processing at a conceptual

level. When a phenomenon is designed to achieve contextual effects i.e. when it is produced by an agent with the intention of informing an audience of something, it is called a stimulus. Some stimuli are used to make an informative intention mutually manifest and they are called 'ostensive stimuli'. They are characterised as, first, attracting the audience's attention, and second, focusing it on the communicator's intentions.

There is a substantial difference between the way an individual approaches an ostensive stimulus directed at him and the way he attends to other stimuli. For example, your friend winking at you has the informative intention of informing you of something and the communicative intention of informing you of this intention. This ostensive stimulus yields contextual effects that the same act of her winking at someone else, or her involuntary or deliberate (but nonostensive) twitch do not achieve. In twitching involuntarily, your friend would have no informative intentions at all. And by twitching deliberately, she might have the informative intention of letting you know how exhausted she is or making you wonder what is wrong with her eye, etc. but does not have the communicative intention of informing you of these intentions, i.e. does not make her informative intention mutually manifest. Winking is an ostensive stimulus but it is only the winking at you (not at someone else) that demands your attention and guarantees some level of relevance to you.

Or your friend raising a hand at you in a restaurant has the informative intention of letting you know that she is also at the restaurant and has the communicative intention of informing you of this intention. This ostensive stimulus yields contextual effects that the same act of her raising a hand at a waitress, or her deliberately raising a hand to stretch muscles and/or to let you see her new bracelet do not. While the addressee of an ostensive stimulus has fairly precise expectations of relevance, the addressee of other stimuli can only have hopes of relevance, which are sometimes totally unwarranted and sometimes turn out to be justified (she may, for example, be particularly interested in involuntary twitches and have a rich context available in which to process any new instance).

Now humans pay attention only to phenomena they think will be relevant and the success of an act of ostensive communication requires the addressee's attention. That

is, an act of ostensive communication automatically communicates some guarantee of relevance: i.e. the stimulus directed at the addressee is relevant enough to be worth his attention. This can be characterised as, on the contextual effect side, guaranteeing an adequate range of contextual effects, i.e. as being worth the addressee's attention, and on the processing effort side, guaranteeing that the addressee is put to no unnecessary processing effort in deriving those effects. This is called 'the presumption of optimal relevance' and its definition goes:

(6) Presumption of optimal relevance

- (a) The set of assumptions I which the communicator intends to make manifest to the addressee is relevant enough to make it worth the addressee's while to process the ostensive stimulus.
- (b) The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one the communicator could have used to communicate I.

(Sperber & Wilson 1986: 158)

The communicator should therefore try to make sure that the intended context is one the addressee can access easily, so that she guarantees that when processed in this context, the information she is communicating yields an adequate range of contextual effects for the smallest possible processing effort. When an ostensive stimulus achieves an adequate range of contextual effects to be worth the addressee's attention and puts the addressee to no unjustifiable processing effort, Sperber & Wilson say that it is 'optimally relevant'.

Relevance theory covers all incoming information, which makes this theory a general cognitive theory. However, within this general framework, there is a more specific principle called 'the principle of relevance' which applies just to ostensive stimuli, of which utterances are a central case, and so forms the basis of a pragmatic theory. The definition of this principle goes:

(7) Principle of Relevance

Every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of its own 'optimal relevance'.

(Sperber & Wilson 1986: 158)

An adequate pragmatic theory should deal with how the hearer derives from an utterance all the information that is ostensively communicated (i.e. the intended interpretation). That is, an explanatory pragmatic theory is expected to account for how the hearer selects context, recognises which proposition the speaker intended to explicitly express, derives intended implications, i.e. implicatures, of the utterance, and decides what attitude the speaker intended to communicate to the proposition expressed and to the implicatures. The recovery of all these sorts of information is the interpretation of an utterance which was intended by the speaker.

According to the principle of relevance, every utterance carries a guarantee of its optimal relevance. An utterance, on a given interpretation, is optimally relevant iff: (a). it achieves enough effects to be worth the hearer's attention; (b). it puts the hearer to no gratuitous effort in achieving those effects. Note that some processing effort is required to achieve any contextual effect, and the effort needed for utterance interpretation depends on, first, the linguistic complexity of an utterance, second, the accessibility of the context, and third, the inferential effort needed to achieve the contextual effect in the accessed context.

Now every utterance has a variety of possible interpretations which are compatible with the information given by the linguistically encoded stimuli. And there might be several possible interpretations which could give rise to an adequate range of contextual effects. For example, the utterance (8) has possible interpretations such as (9) and (10):

(8) Mary handed over the key and Ken opened the safe.

(9) Mary handed over the key & (then) Ken opened the safe (with that key).

(10) Mary handed over the key & (simultaneously) Ken opened the safe (with a wrench).

Obviously in a normal context, the interpretation (10) has more contextual effects. as unexpectedly Ken opened the safe with a wrench despite the key handed to him. However, the hearer is likely to derive the interpretation (9), because this is far more accessible in a normal context.

According to the second condition of optimal relevance, which guarantees that the hearer is put to no gratuitous effort, the speaker must have made the intended interpretation as easy as possible for the hearer to recover. If the speaker of (8) intended to communicate the second interpretation (10), she ought to have actually uttered the sentence ‘ Mary handed over the key but Ken opened the safe with a wrench’, so the hearer first accesses this interpretation. That is, the speaker should have avoided producing an utterance which has a satisfactory and immediately accessible interpretation (e.g. (9)) which is not the intended one.

An implication of this is that the hearer does not go through inferring and discarding wrong interpretations until he gets the right one. That is, the first interpretation which satisfies the principle of relevance in a way that a rational speaker could have foreseen is the one the hearer should choose as the intended one. And the most important implication which follows from this is that an utterance does not actually have to be optimally relevant in order to meet the pragmatic criterion. An utterance indeed creates a presumption of optimal relevance but this does not mean that it will necessarily BE optimally relevant to the hearer. The actual pragmatic criterion used by a hearer is not one that assumes optimal relevance is inevitably achieved but one that accepts an interpretation which is consistent with the principle of relevance, a notion which I shall go on to discuss now.

### 2.2.3 The Pragmatic Criterion of Consistency with the Principle of Relevance

Let us suppose the following situation. Knowing that the hearer plans to go hiking the following day, the speaker tells him that it will be a fine day which he happens already to have heard on the radio. The information given would, then, have no contextual effects and would be irrelevant to him. However, the utterance will be interpreted



without difficulty if the hearer can see how the speaker could rationally have expected it to be relevant. In this case, it is easy to see the implications this utterance was intended to have, such as the hearer will have a lovely day out in the mountains etc.

Or suppose that both my baby and my supervisor are called Rachel, and a fellow student tells me that Rachel is ill. The first referent to come to my mind will be my baby and on this reference assignment the utterance is highly relevant to me. However, it cannot be the one the speaker intended because she does not know me or my family. That is, the speaker could not have intended the 'baby Rachel' interpretation though this is the first one accessed and it is highly relevant to me. The first example is accidentally irrelevant while the second is unintendedly relevant. So the actual pragmatic criterion of utterance interpretation is a criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance:

#### (11) Criterion of Consistency with the Principle of Relevance

An utterance, on a given interpretation, is consistent with the principle of relevance if and only if the speaker might rationally have expected it to be optimally relevant to the hearer on that interpretation. (Wilson 1992: 176)

Then, the point mentioned in the last section, that hearers do not have to access and compare a variety of interpretations in order to arrive at the correct one, can be rephrased: that is, the first interpretation tested and found consistent with the principle of relevance is the only interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance. This means that there is, at most, a single interpretation which satisfies this pragmatic criterion.

Now let me go back to the recovery of the propositional content of (8). The most accessible referents are assigned to Mary, the key, Ken and the safe, and (8) is further enriched into the propositional form in (9) rather than (10). The hearer has an accessible context in which the propositional form (9) would be optimally relevant to him in a way the speaker could manifestly have foreseen. Then the speaker of (8) must have intended to communicate (9) rather than (10) since this is the first, and therefore the

only, interpretation which meets the pragmatic criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance.

What I have shown just now is that the pragmatic criterion is at work at the level of explicit content, i.e. the identification of the proposition expressed, which pragmatists before Relevance theory such as Grice (1975), tended to overlook: i.e. they apply pragmatic principles only to the recovery of the implicit content of an utterance, i.e. at the level of deriving implicatures. In 2.3.2, I will present Grice's treatment of the temporal connotation of *and* as a generalised conversational implicature and show that his analysis is inadequate and the connotation is in fact a part of the explicit propositional content. In the next section, I will introduce the Relevance-based view on the explicit and implicit import of an utterance and discuss in more detail how pragmatic principles are at work at the level of identifying the proposition expressed as well as at the level of implicatures.

### 2.3 The Proposition Expressed, Explicatures and Implicatures

It is often considered that the distinction between the explicit and implicit import of an utterance corresponds to the distinction between the proposition expressed and implicatures the utterance gives rise to. The former is often labelled as sentence-meaning which falls under the domain of semantics in traditional truth-conditional terms, while the latter, as utterance-(sentence in context) meaning which falls under the domain of pragmatics in traditional terms. The semantics/pragmatics distinction is drawn differently in Relevance theory and is discussed in 2.3.1. In Relevance theory, the explicit/implicit distinction is the distinction between what is communicated explicitly (i.e. explicatures, a notion to be clarified below) and what is communicated implicitly (implicatures), not between the proposition expressed alone and implicatures.

The Relevance theory view of how the proposition expressed is recovered is different from other linguists' views as it involves pragmatic processes. The propositional form of an utterance is the outcome of linguistic decoding with reference assignment, disambiguation, and enrichment, such as recovering the temporal connotation observed in (8), which are governed by the pragmatic criterion of consistency with the principle

of relevance. The proposition expressed, however, is not always communicated, and is sometimes embedded in higher-level descriptions of propositional attitudes or speech-acts.

For example, a mother, talking of her little girl Mary who is very nice to her baby boy, says (12) on one occasion, and (13) on the other.

(12) Mary is an angel.

(13) Mary is very nice.

Since the mother obviously does not believe that (12) is literally true (having wings, etc.), the speaker does not intend to make (12) manifest to the hearer, i.e. to make it available to the hearer as an assumption to be represented as true. That is, the speaker does not intend to 'communicate' the proposition given by (12). What is communicated explicitly by (12) in the given context is:

(14) The speaker has said that Mary Smith is an angel.

The speaker of (13), on the other hand, believes the truth of the proposition expressed in the given context, and she does communicate not only (15) but also (16) from which the hearer may infer (17):

(15) The speaker has said that Mary Smith is very nice.

(16) The speaker believes that Mary Smith is very nice.

(17) Mary Smith is very nice.

So in Relevance theory the explicitly communicated content of (12) is (14) while that of (13) is (15)-(17), a difference that the traditional view of explicit content as being the proposition expressed does not capture. Now what governs the recovery of these explicit assumptions is the pragmatic criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance. For example, in the given context, the speaker's endorsement of the

proposition expressed as seen in (16) is easily accessible in the literal assertion (13), while in the metaphor (12) this is not the case.

An utterance is considered to have only one identifiable propositional form (= the truth-conditional content), but it can have many explicit assumptions as given in (14)-(17). They are called 'explicatures' and are characterised as assumptions (a) which are explicitly conveyed, and (b) which the speaker intends to make manifest to the hearer. For example, explicatures such as (14)-(16) are developed from the logical form encoded by the utterance, by embedding it in propositional attitude/speech act descriptions and are known as 'higher-level explicatures'. Sperber & Wilson (1986: 182) define explicitness as in (18):

(18) Explicitness

An assumption communicated by an utterance U is explicit if and only if it is a development of a logical form encoded by U.

The propositional form that Mary Smith is an angel, will interact with contextual assumptions such as (19)-(20) and give rise to contextual effects, i.e. implicatures such as (21) and (22) respectively, which are (part of) the implicit import of the utterance:

(19) An angel is very nice.

(20) An angel is very gentle.

(21) Mary Smith is very nice.

(22) Mary Smith is very gentle.

Assuming that the assignment of Mary Smith to 'Mary' gives rise to an interpretation which has an adequate range of contextual effects which the speaker could have foreseen, the utterance (12) will satisfy the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance.

Now the hearer of (12) could have accessed contextual assumptions such as (23) and (24). However, they are much less accessible in a situation of attributing properties to a

human being (Mary), or even if they are accessed, they are then immediately discarded as inconsistent with highly salient and strongly held assumptions about Mary.

(23) An angel has wings.

(24) An angel is not a material being.

Not only (21) and (22) but also the contextual assumptions (19) and (20) accessed by the hearer to derive those implications are aspects of the implicit import of the utterance (12), i.e. implicatures. This is because the speaker intends to make (19) and (20) manifest to the hearer as true assumptions: otherwise, the speaker could not have expected the hearer to derive the intended implicatures (21) and (22). So the speaker is implicitly communicating (19) and (20) as well.

Relevance theory assumes that reference assignment, disambiguation, concept enrichment as in the *and* example in (9) (repeated below) are rather standard processes required for the recovery of the propositional form of an utterance.

(9) Mary handed over the key & (then) Ken opened the safe (with that key).

These processes are, of course, governed by the same pragmatic criterion as the one used to derive implicatures, i.e. consistency with the principle of relevance. If so, we have to cast doubt on the traditional saying/implicating distinction (sometimes equated with semantics/ pragmatics distinction) in which pragmatic principles are supposed to be applied only at the level of recovering the implicit content of an utterance, e.g. at the level of deriving implicatures. For example, Grice's co-operative principle and his maxims are at work only at this level.

In Section 2.3.2, I will demonstrate by embedding the utterance in an *if*-clause that the enrichment of the relation between the conjuncts in (9) falls under the scope of that operator and so is part of the proposition expressed rather than an implicature. I will point out a problem with the Gricean distinction between 'what is said' and 'what is implicated' which he sometimes seems to equate with the semantics-pragmatics distinction (and some neo-Griceans certainly do). In the following section, I will

discuss problems with traditional views of semantics and pragmatics. I will then present the semantics/pragmatics distinction we work with in Relevance theory and a further semantic distinction, between the encoding of concepts and the encoding of procedures.

### 2.3.1 Semantics/Pragmatics Distinction

The common traditional approach to semantics assumes that it involves assigning truth-conditions to the sentences of natural language. Pragmatics is, in this traditional spirit, seen as the study of all non-truth-conditional aspects of meaning, or, according to Gazdar (1979: 2), pragmatics is “meaning minus truth-conditions”. Thus, the truth-conditional view of linguistic semantics is maintained in spite of obvious counter-examples we will consider below.

If natural-language sentences had truth-conditions, then we would have to be able to specify the conditions under which the following sentences are true:

(25) She went to a bank today.

(26) That was cheap.

We cannot assign truth conditions to (25)-(26) unless more information is given. In (25), we do not know who *she* is, whether *she* went to a financial institution, or to a river bank, and we have to identify the time of utterance. In (26), we have to know what is referred to by *that*, and what sense of *cheap* was intended, low in price or mean etc. Pragmatic processes governed by the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance have to be applied in order for us to be able to identify the propositional form of an utterance and to assign truth-conditions to it. Truth-conditions cannot be assigned to natural language sentences such as (25)-(26). They can only be assigned to the propositions recovered via pragmatic processes.

Some attempts have been made to deal with deictic expressions (e.g. today, I, here) within a truth-conditional semantics for natural language sentences. We might set up some rule that decodes *today* into 'the day of the utterance', *I* into 'the speaker', *here*

into 'the place of the utterance' and so on. However, even sophisticated rules cannot handle e.g. *that* in (26), the identification of which is impossible without having contextual information and an adequate pragmatic principle. Grice, for example, recognised a role for context at the level of what is said as he considers reference assignment, disambiguation and fixation of indexicals as processes required for the identification of the proposition expressed. However, he does not propose any pragmatic principle which is necessary for the recovery of the proposition expressed: i.e. his maxims are at work only at the level of what is implicated.

Further, including actual reference assignment, necessary to get determinate truth-conditions leads to the conflation of linguistically determined meaning and contextually determined meaning, the conflation of semantic and pragmatic meaning. The truth-conditional view of linguistic meaning cannot thus be maintained, as simply, natural language sentences standardly do not have truth-conditions. Their logical forms, the outcome of linguistic decoding, are semantically incomplete.

Additionally, this view of semantics cannot capture the difference of interpretation derived from certain differences in word order i.e. difference in linguistic meaning. For example, the difference between (27) and (28) cannot be defined truth-conditionally, i.e. they have the same truth-conditions, but, equally, it is not a matter of context.

(27) It was Mary who hit Ken.

(28) It was Ken whom Mary hit.

It is our linguistic knowledge, not non-linguistic knowledge, that gives rise to different interpretations for (27) and (28). However, semantic meaning in terms of truth-conditions cannot capture this, and has to resort to pragmatics to define the difference, which is surely inappropriate or at least not the whole story since the difference is a formal one.

The same argument can be put forward for the difference between English conjunctions *and* and *but*. Truth-conditionally they are usually considered to have the same meaning, logical connective '&'. For example, Grice (1975) treats *but* as giving rise to a conventional implicature of contrastive meaning on top of having the truth-

conditional meaning '&'. Grice uses the term 'implicature' which is a pragmatic notion. However, it is our linguistic knowledge of the word *but*, not non-linguistic knowledge that tells us something about this contrastive meaning. In Relevance theory, Blakemore (1987) suggests a semantic treatment of this contrastive meaning (see 4.5.2). More generally, there is a wide range of lexical items and linguistic structures whose semantics is non-truth-conditional.

In Relevance theory we assume that both semantics and pragmatics have to be part of a psychological theory of utterance interpretation, within which the distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge has to be made. A principled and psychologically grounded distinction between these kinds of knowledge has to underlie the semantics/pragmatics distinction.

Linguistic knowledge, i.e. knowledge of grammar, is an autonomous system which is engaged in decoding processes, not affected by other cognitive systems. According to Fodor (1983), the language faculty is an input system, similar to other senses such as vision, audition, etc. and it feeds information into the central system where inferential processes integrate information from a range of sources. Input systems are modular in that each of them has its own method of representation and computation, and can only process information which has a suitable format for that particular input system.

Non-linguistic knowledge is located in the central cognitive system, as opposed to input systems. The central cognitive system integrates all the information it receives from the input systems together with information retrieved from memory. The central system is thus non-modular, i.e. global and unencapsulated, and performs inferences and derives further information such as contextual implications.

So the semantics/pragmatics distinction as employed in Relevance theory is the following. Semantics is the study of the meaningful content actually encoded in linguistic forms. Pragmatics, on the other hand, is the study of those cognitive processes and representations involved in interpreting utterances in context. The hearer infers the intended interpretation based on the linguistic meaning he automatically decodes and the wider contextual information he accesses, constrained by the relevance-based pragmatic criterion. Both semantics and pragmatics are part of a psychological theory of utterance interpretation, and the distinction between them is



based on the different cognitive processes responsible for them: automatic decoding and central inferencing.

Now the information linguistic data encodes is of two different kinds: i.e. 'conceptual' and 'procedural', and an adequate semantics for natural language has to accommodate this distinction. According to Blakemore (1987: 144), 'conceptual' semantics explains the way linguistic items contribute to the logical form representation of an utterance and so, ultimately, to the truth-conditional content of the utterance while 'procedural' semantics concerns the way they constrain the hearer's pragmatic inference i.e. computations. That is, in the Relevance framework, information encoded by linguistic elements is either procedural or conceptual, and if it is conceptual, it constitutes a part of a conceptual representation while if procedural, it does not encode a conceptual representation but encodes a set of clues for constructing one (Wilson & Sperber 1993: 3, 22).

For example, the word *dog* encodes the concept DOG and contributes to the logical form representation of an utterance in which it occurs while the discourse connective *but* encodes information which constrains the hearer's accessing of contextual assumptions, so that the *but*-introduced proposition establishes the relation of contradiction (Blakemore 1987, 1989 Rouchota 1990) (a more detailed analysis of this semantic constraint of *but* is given in 4.5.2). This conceptual/procedural distinction will be discussed with relevant linguistic data in Chapter 4.

In the following section, I will point out some problems with the Gricean explicit/implicit distinction, i.e. the notions of 'what is said' and 'what is implicated' and discuss in more detail how we identify the proposition expressed by an utterance.

### 2.3.2 The Identification of the Proposition Expressed - a comparison of Grice and Relevance theory

Grice (1975: 44) defines 'what is said' as the truth-conditional content of an utterance, arrived at by the conventional linguistic meaning, reference assignment and disambiguation, while 'what is implicated' is the pragmatic meaning of an utterance which is derived on the basis of his co-operative principle and maxims of conversation.

His notion of 'what is said' then might appear to be identical with the Relevance-based propositional form of an utterance. However, there is a crucial difference as demonstrated in his treatment of the temporal connotation that arises for many *and*-conjunctions (Grice 1981: 186).

He does not talk about how the truth-evaluable proposition is recovered, i.e. what kind of criterion (if any) governs processes such as reference-assignment, disambiguation, and fixation of indexicals. As I demonstrated in the last section, they are pragmatic processes governed by the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance. The important point here is that Grice confined the use of pragmatic principles to the derivation of implicatures, the level of what is implicated.

Let me now turn to how these notions are applied to the analysis of *and*-conjunctions. Grice analyses the semantic meaning of *and* as equivalent to the truth-conditional content '&'. According to him, additional meanings such as '& then' in (29) and '& as a result' in (30) are derived pragmatically, i.e. based on his conversational maxims and labelled as generalised conversational implicatures.

(29) Ken took out the key and (then) opened the door.

(30) Ken hit Mary and (as a result) she cried.

Generalised conversational implicatures are derived by saying that P across most contexts (it requires particular assumptions to block them), in contrast with particularised conversational implicatures that are derived by saying that P on a particular occasion (Grice 1975: 56).

In (29) the hearer infers the temporal connotation based on the submaxim 'be orderly' of the general maxim of manner. According to Grice (1981: 186), if one is talking about events, then the most orderly manner in which to relate them would be an order corresponding to the order in which they took place. So the two events conjoined by the logical connective '&' irrespective of the order of these events are the semantic meaning of (29). And the temporal connotation is the pragmatic meaning derived based on the manner maxim. Grice does not give an account of the causal connotation examples. However, the explanation would be that a co-operative speaker would not

have mentioned the events in (30) in that order if she did not intend this causal meaning to be derived pragmatically. The maxim 'Be relevant' may be called upon here. This account is, however, far from being a substantial explanation, as this maxim was never developed in Grice's system.

A more satisfactory account of the temporal and causal connotations is given by Carston (1988: 170-1) in the framework of Relevance theory. The criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance would predict that the derivation of the single assumption 'P & then Q' or 'P & as a result Q' is more economical than the two assumptions 'P & Q' 'P & then Q' or 'P & Q' 'P & as a result Q'. And whatever contextual effects 'P & Q' gives rise to so will 'P & then Q' or 'P & as a result Q', with the potential for more as there are some contextual effects which can only be derived from the conjunction with the temporal or causal connotations. If an adequate range of effects can be derived solely from the single assumption 'P & then Q' or 'P & as a result Q', why should the hearer derive the two assumptions, which is obviously against the cost factor of optimal relevance.

If 'P & then Q' or 'P & as a result Q' were implicatures as Grice argues, all the contextual implications of the utterance would follow from these implicatures rather than from the proposition expressed, the conjunction 'P & Q'. In Relevance theory, contextual implications are defined as following from the union of the proposition expressed and contextual assumptions, but not from either alone (Sperber & Wilson 1986: 107-8). This means that in fact this theory precludes the implicature analyses of the temporal/causal connotations of *and* such as given by Grice (1981).

Now Grice's notion of 'what is said', the truth-conditional content, does face some problems, as his account predicts the following (31) and (32) to be contradictory at the level of what is said although they are intuitively felt to be entirely consistent.

(31) If Ken hit Mary and Mary cried, I will report him.

(32) If Mary cried and Ken hit Mary, I will not report him.

The truth-conditional content of the antecedents of (31) and (32) would be identical, according to Grice, as temporal and causal connotations are captured at the level of

'what is implicated' and do not fall under the scope of *if*. That is, Grice's analysis would predict (31) and (32) to be contradictory, as the identical proposition leads to, on one occasion, the conclusion that the speaker would report, and on the other, the negation of that conclusion.

However, what is actually happening here is that the temporal and causal connotations do fall under the scope of *if*-clause. On this new account, the antecedent clauses in (31) and (32) are truth-conditionally distinct and the different consequents observed in these utterances will not be a problem. This satisfies our intuition that we can accept (31) and (32) at the same time as seen in the conjunction '(31) but (32)'. The propositions given by the antecedent clauses would be (33) and (34) respectively:

(33) Ken hit Mary at t & as a result Mary cried at t+n

(34) Mary cried at t & as a result Ken hit Mary at t+n.

(t is some more or less specific time prior to the time of utterance, and t+n is some more or less specific time, later than t)

(adapted from Carston 1988: 161)

Thus temporal and causal connotations are captured at the level of what is said. And Grice's conception of what is said as the outcome of linguistic decoding, reference assignment, disambiguation, and fixation of indexicals has to be reconsidered. That is, the gap between the sense of a sentence i.e. the outcome of linguistic decoding and the truth-evaluable proposition cannot be filled by reference assignment, disambiguation, and fixation of indexicals only. We have to derive, for example, the temporal/causal connotations for (29)/(30) and this is a pragmatic process required to recover the proposition expressed. This pragmatic process is called 'enrichment' and Carston (1988: 167) gives a more detailed account and examples of this process.

Lastly, to give appropriate credit to Grice, his analysis of *and* as giving rise to generalised conversational implicatures started in the right spirit which is the avoidance of lexical ambiguity analyses. There surely are many more meanings such as simultaneous happenings etc., which multiple ambiguity analyses cannot exhaust. A range of subtly different interpretations of the word *and* must be the outcome of general

knowledge of the sorts of temporal and cause-consequence relations that states of affairs can enter into.

In this section I have shown how the propositional form of an utterance is identified, and pointed out that the Gricean distinction between 'what is said' and 'what is implicated' cannot be maintained. This is attributed to the failure to distinguish two different levels of semantics, one, semantics of linguistic decoding based solely on our linguistic knowledge, and the other, semantics of propositional content based on the outcome of linguistic decoding and pragmatic processes using our non-linguistic knowledge.

Relevance theory calls the former, 'linguistic semantics' and the latter, 'real semantics'. Linguistic semantics is a crucial component in recovering the truth-conditional content which is the domain of 'real semantics'. So pragmatic principles govern not only the derivation of implicatures as Grice recognises, but also the recovery of the propositional form of an utterance, what Grice calls 'what is said'.

So far, I have talked about the identification of the propositional content, the accessing of intended contextual assumptions and the derivation of intended contextual implications (i.e. implicatures). I have argued that all of these are governed by a single pragmatic criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance. There is yet another important element we have not considered. That is the recovery of the speaker's propositional attitude. This is the issue we now turn to.

#### 2.4 Propositional Attitudes in Relevance Theory

As I have argued so far, utterances are semantically under-determined as to their truth-conditional content, and so is the attitude expressed to that propositional content. There are some syntactic means (e.g. the mood of the main clause verb) for indicating the propositional attitude the speaker expresses to the proposition. However, there are many more numerous and varied lexical means: for example *I believe that P*, *I wish that P*, *I desire that P*, *I regret that P*, sentence adverbials such as *probably*, *certainly*, *fortunately*, *regrettably*, particles such as *oh* etc. An assumption P can be embedded under a main clause expressing the speaker's

propositional attitude and it is this higher-level representation which underlies the expression of weak commitment (i.e. hedging).

Wilson (1994a) distinguishes between two kinds of attitudes; one is ‘descriptive’ which is an attitude to states of affairs, and the other, ‘interpretive’, which is to propositions, assumptions or thoughts. For example, the propositional attitude of the speaker’s believing can be expressed to a state of affairs expressed by the utterance (35) and if the speaker is not so sure about it, the weakened attitude of the speaker’s belief can be expressed as in (35)’:

(35) I believe that Tokyo is the capital of Japan.

(35)’ I suppose that Tokyo is the capital of Japan.

Or it can be expressed to a thought or utterance, i.e. propositions as in (36).

(36) I believe whatever you tell me. (Wilson 1994a).

The former attitudes in (35)-(35)’ are ‘descriptive’ and the latter attitude in (36) is ‘interpretive’. Let me first look at ‘descriptive’ attitudes.

#### 2.4.1 Descriptive Attitudes

A state of affairs can be thought about by the speaker in at least four different ways. It can be thought as ‘actual’ i.e. as existing in the actual world, as ‘possible’ i.e. as capable of existing in some possible world, as ‘potential’ i.e. as compatible with what we know about this world, or as ‘desirable’ from somebody’s point of view. These four attitudes are all descriptive attitudes when they are expressed to a certain state of affairs, and they are attitudes required for analysing the semantics of English (Wilson 1994a).

As mentioned, the speaker thinks of (37) as representing an actual state of affairs, as existing in the actual world. Or the speaker is mistaken and might utter (37)’. In such a case, (37)’ represents a possible state of affairs which is false in the actual

world but is true in some possible world. By contrast, a Japanese speaker who knows about the talk of the transfer can think of (38) as representing a potential state of affairs, though it does not exist in the actual world, or as a future state of affairs in the actual world. Wilson (1994a) claims that declarative utterances are in some sense ‘descriptions’ of actual or possible states of affairs.

(37) Tokyo is the capital of Japan.

(37) Osaka is the capital of Japan.

(38) Sendai will be the capital of Japan.

(the government has been talking about transferring the capital to a less crowded city Sendai)

Imperatives such as (39) and (40) are, on the other hand, claimed to represent potential and desirable states of affairs.

(39) Go straight and turn right. (when instructing how to get to the station)

(40) Bring me a cup of tea.

Both (39) and (40) describe states of affairs which are compatible with what we know about this world i.e. potential; that the hearer will go straight and turn right, and that the hearer will bring the speaker a cup of tea. These potential states of affairs are desirable from the view-point of the hearer and the speaker respectively. This analysis does not face the counter-examples that the speech-act analysis would do. Imperatives are usually analysed by speech-act theorists as directives which are an attempt to get the hearer to do something. (40) complies with this analysis as the speaker is trying to get the hearer to bring her a cup of tea. However, the speaker of (39) is not trying to get the hearer to perform the action described by (39). She is just indicating that the described action will be desirable for the hearer, i.e. will help the hearer to find the station.

(37)-(40) represent states of affairs which can be true or false in the actual, possible, or potential worlds, and/or are desirable from someone's point of view. In Relevance it is argued that the propositional form of declarative utterances represents a thought of the speaker which is a description of an actual or possible state of affairs (e.g. (37) and (37)') and the propositional form of imperatives represents a potential and desirable state of affairs (e.g. (39) and (40)). In the next section, I will look into attitudes expressed not to states of affairs, but to representations which do not describe definite states of affairs.

#### 2.4.2 Interpretive Attitudes

Let us consider:

(41) How expensive is it to have a nanny?

(42) How expensive it is to have a nanny!

Both (41) and (42) represent the incomplete logical form (43):

(43) It is ----- expensive to have a nanny.

Incomplete logical forms such as (43) do not describe any definite state of affairs to which the speaker could express an attitude. Interpretive attitudes are attitudes expressed not to a state of affairs but to a belief, utterance, assumption or other item of information such as (43) (Wilson 1994a). The speaker of interrogatives such as (41) is thinking of a certain item of information (i.e. the answer) as 'desirable' from her point of view, i.e. as relevant, giving rise to contextual effects such as leading her to decide whether to have a nanny.

The speech act analysis of interrogatives as directing the hearer to provide information would face problems when it comes to rhetorical questions, surprise questions, exam questions, guess questions etc. as the speaker is not trying to get the hearer to provide information that she does not already have (detailed discussion:



Wilson & Sperber 1988a). According to Relevance theory, an interrogative encodes the abstract information that its logical form interpretively represents a thought such as (43) whose completion would be desirable, i.e. relevant to someone if it is true (e.g. relevant to the speaker in the case of genuine questions, and to the hearer in the case of rhetorical questions etc.)

Now the speaker of exclamatives such as (42) is thinking of the completion of information such as (43) as ‘desirable’ to herself i.e. as relevant, giving rise to contextual effects such as leading her to decide not to have a nanny. In Relevance theory, both wh-interrogatives and wh-exclamatives represent an incomplete logical form, the completion of which is desirable (i.e. relevant) to someone. However, the difference between them is that exclamatives encode two extra assumptions: that the speaker already has the relevant (completion of the) logical form in mind, and that the (completion of the) logical form is relevant to the speaker (Clark & Lindsey 1990: 39). So the speaker of (42) has in mind that it is quite expensive to have a nanny, and this piece of information is relevant to herself in the way mentioned above. Wilson (1994a) argues that interrogatives are the interpretive counterpart of imperatives in that the speaker of the latter is thinking of a certain state of affairs as desirable, while the speaker of the former considers a certain piece of information desirable.

Interpretive attitudes are also expressed to propositions (i.e. thoughts or utterances) attributed to someone else or the speaker in the past. For example, a speaker of (38) who does not believe in the capability of the Japanese government to actually transfer the capital, does not think of (38) as a potential state of affairs. The speaker is not thinking of (38) in this context as existing in a potential world. The speaker is dissociating herself from the proposition expressed and expressing scorn towards it. For example, consider (44):

(44)A: What did the government say about the solution to the over-crowded capital?

B: Sendai will be the capital of Japan.

(44)B has at least the following two interpretations (45)a-b:

(45)a. Sendai will be the capital of Japan, I believe.

b. Sendai will be the capital of Japan, the government said.

(44)B with the interpretation (45)a. would be an ordinary assertion, i.e. the speaker is thinking of (44)B as a potential state of affairs. (44)B with the interpretation (45)b, on the other hand, might be a reported speech or an irony. With the interpretation (45)b, the utterance (44)B represents a complete logical form, i.e. a propositional form, which ‘resembles’ the government announcement. It might not be an identical reproduction of the original, i.e. the government might have said (46)-(47):

(46) Sendai will be the capital city.

(47) We will transfer the capital to Sendai.

(44)B closely ‘resembles’ (46) and (47) in content, and the same relation of ‘resemblance’ can be established between (43) given by the interrogative (41)/ the exclamative (42) and what (43) represents (i.e. the completed form). In the following section, I will say more about representation by resemblance as this is a crucial notion in Relevance theory.

#### 2.4.3 Interpretive Attitude and the Notion ‘Resemblance’

According to Sperber & Wilson (1986), the propositional form of an utterance may or may not be identical with the propositional form of the thought it represents; the relation between them is best captured in terms of the notion ‘resemblance’. This relation, Sperber & Wilson (1986) call ‘interpretive’ and they argue that an utterance is an ‘interpretive’ expression of a thought of the speaker.

The thought of the speaker which is represented by an utterance can represent some state of affairs to which the speaker can express descriptive attitudes such as that she is thinking of it as actual, possible, potential and/or desirable. Or it can

represent some other representation with a propositional form in virtue of a 'resemblance' between those two propositional forms. This is where 'interpretive attitudes' come in.

If I utter (37) (repeated below), the proposition given by this utterance is an 'interpretation' of a thought of the speaker in the sense that the propositional form of the utterance is intended to resemble the propositional form of the thought communicated to a greater or lesser degree, and it represents a state of affairs to which the speaker expresses the attitude of belief.

(37) Tokyo is the capital of Japan.

However, the propositional form of some utterances can be an interpretation of a thought of the speaker which itself represents some other representation with a similar propositional form. That is, as mentioned, when (38) (repeated below) is uttered in order to communicate (45)b. (repeated below), it represents the propositional form of the utterance which was the government's original announcement, say (46) or (47) (repeated below), and it is to this similar propositional form the speaker expresses an 'interpretive' attitude.

(38) Sendai will be the capital of Japan.

(45)b. Sendai will be the capital of Japan, the government said.

(46) Sendai will be the capital city.

(47) We will transfer the capital to Sendai.

That is, the propositional form given by (44)B 'resembles' that of (46) or (47) to which the speaker's interpretive attitude is expressed. Sperber & Wilson (1986) gives a technical definition of 'interpretive resemblance' such that a propositional form resembles another propositional form if they share analytic and/or contextual implications. 'Resemblance', clearly, is a matter of degree. (44)B has closer resemblance to (46) than (47) as (44)B shares more analytic and contextual implications with (46) than with (47). Obviously, they share many analytic and

contextual implications, among which are the analytic implication (48) and the contextual implication (49), which is derived as a result of the interaction with a contextual assumption such as (50):

(48) There is a city called Sendai.

(49) People in Sendai area will have more job opportunities.

(50) If the capital of Japan is transferred to Sendai, people in Sendai area will have more job opportunities.

As mentioned, the same relationship of ‘resemblance’ can be established between the logical form (43) given by interrogative/exclamative (41)/(42) (repeated below) and a thought they represent.

(41) How expensive is it to have a nanny?

(42) How expensive it is to have a nanny!

(43) It is ----- expensive to have a nanny.

The logical form (43) given by the interrogative/exclamative (41)/(42) does not describe any definite state of affairs, but represents a relevant thought such as (51) which is a relevant completion of (43).

(51) It is very expensive to have a nanny.

We can argue that (43) resembles (51) as they share at least an analytic implication such that there is some expense involved in having a nanny and a contextual implication such as (52) which is derived via interacting with the contextual assumption (53).

(52) The speaker is not a millionaire.

(53) If the speaker talks about the expense of having a nanny, she is not a millionaire.

In contrast with ‘descriptive’ attitudes expressed to states of affairs, ‘interpretive’ attitudes can be characterised as attitudes expressed to representations which have a relation of ‘resemblance’ to the propositional form expressed by an utterance.

In (35)’(repeated below) I have shown that the speaker’s weak endorsement of a proposition can be expressed in descriptive attitudes: i.e. the speaker’s hedging is expressed to a proposition communicated by a declarative sentence here.

(35)’ I suppose that Tokyo is the capital of Japan.

In an imperative sentence, the speaker’s limited conviction towards the potentiality or desirability of the state of affairs can be communicated if we use e.g. the phrase *if you can* or *if you like* which gives the hearer a choice of opting out of performing the action described ( e.g. (28) in Chapter 1 given below).

(28) Close the window, *if you can*.

The addition of the phrases does not change the status of what an imperative syntax encodes i.e. the imperative syntax encodes a potential state of affairs which is desirable from the view point of the speaker or the hearer, but it interacts with this in determining the final force of the utterance.

On the other hand, the speaker’s hedging i.e. the weak endorsement cannot be communicated in interrogatives or exclamatives by phrases such as *I suppose* and *probably*.

(41)’ How expensive is it to have a nanny, *I suppose/probably?*

This is precisely because the attitude encoded by an interrogative is that of desire while *I suppose* and *probably* communicate that of (weak) belief: two incompatible types of attitude, therefore (41)’is anomalous. In interrogatives, the speaker is requesting the

hearer to complete an incomplete form encoded by the utterance and the taking back of this speaker's request can only be done by describing conditions as seen in (41)'':

(41)'' How expensive is it to have a nanny? *Answer, if you want to/if you can.*

Nor can exclamatives be weakened by using the hedges just mentioned as demonstrated by (42)'':

(42)''How expensive it is to have a nanny, *I suppose/probably!*\*

The attitude encoded by an exclamative is also that of desire which is incompatible with the attitude of (weak) belief communicated by *I suppose* or *probably*. Recall exclamatives communicate that the speaker has the relevant completion of the incomplete logical form in her mind, and they communicate the speaker's strong expression of various attitudes which include approving and disapproving ones. Therefore, the expression of reservation or weakened commitment is incompatible with the expressiveness of this syntactic sentence type.

There is an interesting difference between interrogatives and exclamatives. That is, we can embed interrogatives in different attitudes as shown in (54)a-c, but not exclamatives as shown in (55). I have to note that in these embedded cases, there is no interrogative syntax (i.e. inversion) which encodes the attitude of desire. In the case of exclamatives, we have to go for the equivalent declarative (56). The reason seems to be that the speaker already has in mind the relevant completion of the incomplete logical form encoded by an exclamative and the expression of this would make the utterance declarative as shown in (51) (repeated below).

(54)a. I must know how expensive it is to have a nanny.

(the answer being highly desirable/relevant to the speaker)

b. I wonder how expensive it is to have a nanny.

(the answer being moderately desirable/relevant to the speaker)

c. I have some interest in how expensive it is to have a nanny.

(the answer is desirable/relevant to some small degree)

(suggested by Robyn Carston)

(55) I believe how expensive it is to have a nanny!\*

(56) I believe it is very expensive to have a nanny.

(51) It is very expensive to have a nanny.

As I argued in 1.2.3, the addition of hedging phrases like the one in (41)” (*if you want to/if you can*) have the effect of softening the illocutionary force already communicated. In this thesis, I am primarily interested in linguistic elements whose intrinsic linguistic meaning interacts directly with other propositional attitude information to determine a moderate level of commitment. However, this type of ‘posterior hedging’ is quite common and has its own properties. This is the issue I now turn to.

#### 2.4.4 Modification of the Propositional Attitude - posterior hedging

By posterior hedging I mean that first an illocutionary force of some strength is communicated and then a hedging expression is used to soften it. This is a very common way to communicate the speaker’s hedging; Brown & Levinson (1987: 162), for example, list the following adverbial-clause hedges in English which they claim are encoded in some other languages as particles.

(57) That’s just how it is, *in fact/in a way/in a sense/as it were/in all probability/I shouldn’t be surprised/it seems to me/don’t you agree.*

*If*-clauses are another common means of posterior hedging. Heringer (1972) discusses how they suspend felicity conditions on imperatives such that the hearer can perform the action described.

(58) Tidy up, *if you can/if it's messy/if it's not already tidied up/if you want/\*if I want you to (OK if S might later ask H to do it).*

(adapted from Brown & Levinson (1987: 162))

*If*-clauses can also suspend the speaker's assumptions that she has the right to ask the hearer to do the action and that the hearer will not mind doing it.

(59) Would you close the window, *if I may ask you/if you'll forgive my asking/if you want to help me/if you don't mind?*

(Brown & Levinson 1987: 163)

Other than adverbial phrases and *if*-clauses, posterior hedging may be expressed by attitudinal verbs (e.g.(60)), adverbs (e.g. (61)), and the description of evidential status (e.g. (62)) (all of which function as parenthetical comments):

(60) Your house is very old, *I suppose/I guess/I believe.*

(61) I will be in time, *maybe/possibly.*

(62) This house dates from 18th century, *or so the surveyor says.*

The common property of all of the above examples is a slight garden-path or repair effect especially if there is a pause between the main clause and the appended expression (Robyn Carston: personal communication). The existence of so-called garden-path utterances is well exemplified in the following example taken from Sperber & Wilson (1986: 184):

(63) I saw that gasoline can explode. (pause) And a brand new gasoline can it was too.

At the end of processing the first utterance, the hearer would most likely have recovered the interpretation (64)a. but the second utterance would force the reinterpretation as (64)b.



(64)a. I saw that it is possible for gasoline to explode.

b. I saw that can of gasoline explode.

Although the effect in the hedging cases does not result in altering the propositional content, it does lead to alteration to the speaker's propositional attitude (e.g. (57) (60)-(61)) that the hearer has been encouraged to derive on the basis of the 'unhedged' part of the utterance. The garden path effect could result in jokes, teasing, etc. and might well be intended by the speaker or it might be a repair as the speaker realises that her expression of attitude has been too strong.

It might be interesting to mention cases of the logical extreme of this sort of garden-pathing concerning the speaker's propositional attitude. They are cases of what Horn (1992) calls 'retro-NOT' and ironic postposed 'I don't think'. For example:

(65) You're are my favourite person. *Not!*

(66) He's a good neighbour, *I don't think.*

The attitude expressed by the main clause utterance is one of endorsement, which is then completely reversed by the following expression *Not* and *I don't think*. Of course, this is no longer hedging, since it involves complete retraction of the attitude apparently expressed.

Lastly cases such as (60) and (62) present a further interesting feature. These hedging expressions may constitute a separate elliptical utterance which corrects or comments on what the first utterance communicates (i.e. propositional content, propositional attitude or contextual assumptions). Posterior hedging presents interesting data for two utterance or two speech-act analyses of parenthetical phrases (Blakemore 1991, Ifantidou 1992). In Chapter 3, I will consider parenthetical cases such as (60) in some detail.

## 2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced Relevance theory which has a lot of implications for a pragmatic theory of utterance interpretation. Since an utterance is an ostensive stimulus, its interpretation (and so its processing) is governed by the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance which falls out of Relevance theory, a theory of cognition generally and of ostensive communication in particular.

I have introduced the Relevance account of explicatures which are explicitly communicated assumptions, an account which covers the explicit content of figurative utterances such as metaphor since it includes the speaker's expression of propositional attitude. This notion is contrasted with implicatures though the recovery of both types of assumptions (i.e. explicatures and implicatures) is governed by the same pragmatic criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance.

Relevance theory sheds new light on the conventional view of semantics. Traditional semanticists have assigned too much work to the domain of linguistic semantics: e.g. recovering the proposition expressed without pragmatic processes by setting up a programme to deal with a limited range of linguistic data, i.e. fixing indexicals such as *I* and *here*. It is not surprising that the actual recovery process of the proposition expressed has never been explicated in semantics, because it simply is not possible. In this chapter, I have argued that pragmatic processes are at work, not only in deriving implicatures, but also in accessing contexts, recovering the proposition expressed by an utterance, and identifying the speaker's attitudes.

I have shown that the pragmatic criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance governs the process of recovering the propositional form of an utterance. That is, the speaker expects the contextually recovered propositional form to be optimally relevant (or, at least, to seem to be) to the hearer on that interpretation: i.e. on that interpretation the utterance achieves enough effects with no gratuitous effort required in their derivation. This was observed in, for example, 'enrichment' processes involved in the derivation of temporal and causal connotations associated with the conjunction *and* in arriving at the truth-conditional content of conjunctive utterances.

In this chapter I have also introduced the Relevance view of propositional attitudes of the speaker. In the Relevance framework, propositional attitudes are of two kinds: one is ‘descriptive’ which is an attitude to actual, possible, potential or desirable states of affairs; the other is ‘interpretive’, which is an attitude to propositions, assumptions or thoughts. I have said that the propositional attitude of belief can be hedged as seen in (35)’ (repeated below) in which the speaker’s weak endorsement is expressed to a descriptive representation.

(35)’ I suppose that Tokyo is the capital of Japan.

On the other hand, I have said that the speaker’s hedging can be expressed in imperatives and interrogatives with the use of phrases such as *if you can* and *if you want to answer* which modify the so-called imperative and interrogative forces. However, I mentioned that exclamative utterances in which the speaker expresses a certain attitude quite strongly cannot be hedged.

There are other important concepts of Relevance theory not discussed yet in this dissertation. They include attributive use, and the loosening/narrowing of concepts etc. I shall introduce them in due course when I need these notions for explaining linguistic data. In Chapter 1, I have discussed problems with Gricean analyses that take English hedges *I think* and *probably* to fall under ‘what is implicated’ (Section 1.4.4). In Chapter 3, I will give analyses of these hedging expressions, which Urmson (1966) calls parentheticals. I will further show that while the Gricean framework cannot explain these expressions fully Relevance theory can.

## Chapter 3: Hedged Utterances in English

### 3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, I have characterised hedging as a pragmatic phenomenon by which the speaker communicates that she has limited conviction or commitment to a proposition she is communicating. So this phenomenon is not culture-specific as in any culture we can hedge linguistically or non-linguistically when we do not want to give unqualified support to our statements. For example in English, instead of saying (1), we could say (2), and so could we in Japanese as in (3) and (4).

(1) I will leave tomorrow.

(2) Perhaps if everything is fine, I may leave tomorrow.

(3) Asu            tachimasu.

tomorrow leave                            ‘I will leave tomorrow.’

(4) Shishoo ga            nakere-ba tabun asu tachimasu.

trouble sub.-marker no-if perhaps tomorrow leave

‘Perhaps if everything is fine, I may leave tomorrow.’

It is true that this non-committal aspect of hedging is often associated with politeness but it is not always so as I argued in 1.3.3.1. Politeness given rise to by hedges, however, will not be my main concern in this section.

As observed in the examples in Chapter 1, hedges cross cut parts of speech such as adjectives, adverbs etc. and hence do not seem to form any natural syntactic or semantic class. Therefore, there has not been any unitary definition of hedges agreed upon by all linguists. In this chapter, I will further show that some but not all expressions of attitude, have a hedging function. Hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon and as I argued in 1.4.4.4 there is no particular class of linguistic expressions which always communicate that the speaker is hedging. I have

suggested in Chapter 1 that when the following is communicated to the hearer, we can say that the speaker is hedging.

(37)(Chap1) The speaker has limited commitment to P, where P is any communicated assumption.

So the pragmatic phenomenon of hedging affects the speaker's propositional attitude recovered in accordance with the principle of relevance. This is often but not always realised by non-figurative expressions of explicit attitudes such as *I suppose* and *probably*, which I will give a full pragmatic analysis of, pointing out the inadequacy of Gricean implicature analyses in detail in Section 3.2. The speaker's limited commitment to P is communicated explicitly and in Relevance theory an explicitly communicated assumption in which the speaker's propositional attitude can be expressed is a higher-level explicature. I will pursue the analysis of *I suppose* and *probably* in terms of higher-level explicature in 3.2.4. I will then see whether all uses of these terms communicating (37) do in fact contribute to higher-level explicature in 3.2.6.

Lakoffian hedges (Kay (1983), Lakoff (1972, 1987), Prince et al (1982)) also include linguistic expressions which affect the proposition expressed by an utterance rather than the propositional attitude. The examples are e.g. *a regular*, *a typical*, *technically*, *loosely speaking*, *strictly speaking*, *in a metaphorical sense* etc. Kay (1983) analyses hedges as making a metalinguistic comment, Lakoff (1972), as making the proposition expressed less true or more true, Lakoff (1987), as evoking a relevant cognitive model in which the hedged utterance will be true, and Prince et al take a Lakoffian (1972) line. However, the examples of Lakoffian hedges just given above do not seem to help the hearer to recover (37)(Chap1), and may well prove to have nothing to do with the pragmatic phenomenon of hedging as given in (45) (Chap 1).

(45) Hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon by which the speaker communicates that the speaker has limited conviction or commitment to a communicated proposition.

I will look into this in Section 3.3, and argue that these linguistic expressions are not hedges in the sense I defined in Chapter 1, but rather they are expressions which combine with another term in the utterance so as to modify its truth-conditional content in a particular way. Let me now turn to expressions of explicit attitude such as *I suppose* and *probably*.

## 3.2 Expressions of Explicit Attitude

### 3.2.1 Introduction

Attitudinal phrases such as *I suppose* and *probably* are often considered to fall outside of the truth-conditional content of the utterances that contain them and so to be non-truth-conditional aspects of the meaning (Urmson 1966, Greenbaum 1969, etc.). But as yet no satisfactory non-truth-conditional account has been given of the role of these expressions. The Gricean notion of ‘what is implicated’ proves inadequate in explaining the use of such expressions as pointed out in 1.4.4; this is discussed in detail in 3.2.3. Speech-act accounts are shown to be inadequate by Ifantidou (1993) and Ifantidou-Trouki (1993). I would like to show that the distinctions made within Relevance theory do enable a convincing account of these expressions.

First, I will present Urmson's (1966) argument that attitudinal phrases or adverbs such as *I suppose/guess/regret* and *probably/supposedly/unfortunately* do not always function descriptively (truth-conditionally), i.e. do not always describe the psychological state of the speaker (Urmson 1966: 194-5). I will introduce Urmson's argument in the next section.

Second, I will show that the Gricean notion of ‘what is implicated’ cannot explain the use of hedging devices such as *I think* and *probably* contrary to the suggestion of

Prince et al (1983). I will then discuss in detail the Relevance-theoretic notions of the propositional form of an utterance ( i.e. the proposition expressed) and higher-level explicature, introduced in Chapter 2. The distinction between these notions, which will be explained in this section, gives us the necessary concepts for an analysis of these phrases. Let me now introduce Urmson's (1966) account of parenthetical verbs.

### 3.2.2 Parenthetical Uses

Let us consider the following examples:

- (5) *I suppose* that your house is very old.
- (6) Your house is, *I suppose*, very old.
- (7) Your house is very old, *I suppose*. (Urmson 1966: 193)

The term parenthetical usually refers to a syntactic manifestation such that a piece of information e.g. *I suppose* is slipped into another as observed in (6) and (7). I will call these 'true parentheticals'. However, Urmson (1966) considered parenthetical verbs as those not contributing to the proposition expressed by the utterance , but signalling or indicating how the proposition is interpreted.

Urmson (1966: 193) argues that "in some contexts it will be virtually indifferent, on all but stylistic grounds, whether the verb occurs at the beginning, middle, or end of the indicative clause with which it is conjoined". He argues that in all of (5)-(7), *I suppose* does not contribute to the proposition expressed by the utterance (its truth-conditional content). Rather, he argues that *I suppose* in (5) - (7) signals the way the proposition (indicative clause) should be interpreted: the signal concerns what degree of belief in the proposition is being claimed by the speaker, the degree being in this case a weak one (Urmson 1966: 199).

As Urmson (1966: 199) argues, the evidential situation of the statement expressed may be made explicit by the use of *I suppose* or *I guess* or it may be left to the hearer to infer from the context how much credence the speaker is giving to the statement.

So a parenthetical verb is one of several means of communicating how much support the statement should be interpreted as having. Now Urmson (1966) would argue that (5)-(7) and the following (8) make the same statement, say the same thing.

(8) Your house is very old.

When (8) is uttered with an uncertain tone of voice, the effect of the utterance may be very similar to that of (5)-(7). That is, in (8) the speaker's uncertainty is expressed by means of intonation and it does not affect the truth-conditional content of (8). In (5)-(7) the speaker's uncertainty does not affect the truth-conditional content either, according to Urmson (1966), even though *I suppose* is explicitly given. This seems correct as far as true parentheticals (i.e. (6) and (7)) are concerned (see Section 3.2.5). I will, however, give a different analysis for (5) in 3.2.5.

As for attitudinal adverbs such as *certainly*, *probably*, and *possibly*, Urmson (1966: 200) argues that they, like parenthetical verbs, signal or indicate how the whole statement to which they are attached is to be understood: i.e. they show how reliable the statement is rather than being a part of the statement. Greenbaum (1969: 202) also claims that attitudinal adverbs such as *probably* and *supposedly* “express an opinion on the notion of the truth-value of what is being said” and suggests that these adverbs fall outside of what is said, i.e. are non-truth-conditional.

Now Urmson (1966) and Greenbaum (1969) made their claims for the non-truth-conditional of these attitudinal expressions before Grice (1975) introduced the notion ‘what is implicated’ to capture the non-truth-conditional aspect of meaning. Afterwards, linguists like Prince et al (1983) analysed the non-truth-conditional aspect of non-committal attitude conveyed by *I think* and *probably* etc. as Gricean implicature. I will argue against the implicature analyses of these expressions in the following section.

The so-called parenthetical use of *I suppose* in (5) can be contrasted with (9)B where the explicitly given attitude of the speaker can be considered as describing the state of affairs of the speaker's psychological state, i.e. contributing to the



proposition expressed. Urmson (1966) would analyse (5) and (9)B as describing different states of affairs.

(9)A: *I suppose* that this house is quite new.

B: Well, *I suppose* that it is very old.

(adapted from Urmson 1966: 194)

Although Urmson (1966) does not explicitly say that *I suppose* in (9)B constitutes a part of the proposition expressed, he says that *I suppose* is not being used purely parenthetically in (9)B, thus pointing out the difference between it and (5). This indicates that they should be given distinct analyses. Although (9)B is identical to (5) on the surface, B's attitude *I suppose* in (9)B is not used parenthetically in Urmson's sense, that is, it describes the state of B's supposing that the house is very old. When *I suppose* is used this way, it seems that the speaker is not communicating her weak endorsement of P and so I would not want to say that the speaker is hedging here.

The difference Urmson (1966) points out can in fact be attributed to where the main relevance lies. *I suppose* in (9)B is uttered in clear contrast with what A supposes. The point of the utterance lies with this contrast between what A supposes and what B supposes rather than the information that the hearer's house is very old, and might give the main bulk of contextual effects. On the other hand, in (5) the main relevance lies with the embedded proposition and the speaker's weak endorsement is expressed to it. I will come back to this in 3.2.6.

In the next section, I will pursue possibilities of Gricean analyses of explicitly given attitudes.

### 3.2.3 Gricean Analyses

The saying/implicating distinction is fundamental to Gricean pragmatics. Grice (1975: 44), on closer examination, gives two characterisations of what is said, which do not always make identical predictions. On the one, it is the truth-conditional

content of an utterance, the proposition expressed so that, in line with Urmson's intuitions, *I suppose* is not part of what is said by utterances (5)-(7). On the other, it is the outcome of linguistic decoding, reference assignment and disambiguation so that what is said in the case of (5) and (9)B (and perhaps even (6) and (7)) would include the attitudinal phrase *I suppose*. In Section 3.2.5, I will resolve this apparent conflict within the Gricean account by moving to the more articulated pragmatics of Relevance theory and by employing certain tests for truth-conditionality developed within that theory.

Let me now turn to Gricean 'what is implicated'. A typical Gricean analysis would be to say that (5) 'implicates' that the speaker is not totally committed to the truth of the proposition that the hearer's house is old. This is obviously counter-intuitive since *I suppose* is actually uttered in (5) and there is nothing implicit about it. Let us nevertheless pursue this implicature analysis a little. In fact, this is how Prince et al (1982) analyse explicitly given attitudes such as *I think* and *probably* as I mentioned in 1.2.4.

(10) *I think* his feet were blue. . (Prince et al 1982: 85)

(11) His feet were blue

They claim that (10) conveys the same proposition as (11) and that *I think* in (10) does not affect the proposition expressed but implicates that the speaker is less than fully committed to its truth. Prince et al (1982) do not say what kind of implicature the use of *I think* in (10) gives rise to. So let me consider the kinds of implicature Grice (1975) discusses. Since the implicature of the speaker's limited conviction in the proposition expressed is not confined to a particular situation of utterance, we may safely say that this implicature is not a particularised conversational implicature. Then it is either a generalised conversational implicature or a conventional implicature.

The crucial difference between conversational and conventional implicatures is that the former are calculated on the basis of Gricean maxims while the latter are not. Now, which maxim could be involved in giving rise to the implicature of the speaker

being less than fully committed to the proposition? Regardless of which maxim we take as being observed or flouted, we still get the same implicature, so we can safely assume it is not a conversational implicature of any sort. There simply is no process of calculation or inference involved. This leaves us with only one option: that the implicature is a conventional implicature.

According to Grice (1975: 44), “in some cases the conventional meaning of the words used will determine what is implicated, besides helping to determine what is said”. Conventional implicatures are not derived inferentially via maxims but are merely attached by convention to particular words or expressions. For example, *therefore* conventionally means, though does not SAY, that “a certain consequence holds” and it would be linked with a certain sort of secondary speech act whose performance is dependent upon two primary (central) speech acts, performed by the utterances *therefore* relates.(Grice 1989: 121-122).

However, conventional implicature seems to be a problematic category. Grice (1961, 1975, 1989) gives only a few examples, *but*, *moreover* and *therefore*, though various people have given other candidates for this category: e.g. *even*, *too*, *yet*, discourse connectives such as *so* and *after all*, certain syntactic structures like clefting and particular intonational patterns. Levinson (1983: 128-9) even includes socially deictic items such as *tu* and *vous* in French and argues that *vous* used to a singular addressee conventionally implicates that he is socially distant from, or socially superior to, the speaker.

All that this range of cases have in common is that they do not seem to be part of what is said, nor to be derived via Gricean maxims. That is, conventional implicature is simply a label for aspects of utterance meaning that do not fit into the positively defined theoretical classes. Any such negatively defined category is highly unlikely to form a natural class.

Blakemore (1987 1989) has given an alternative analysis of one group of cases, the so-called discourse connectives including the examples given by Grice (1961, 1975), i.e. *but* and *therefore*. She argues that the main function of these words is to indicate how the proposition they introduce is to be interpreted as relevant by

constraining the hearer's choice of context for its interpretation, i.e. by constraining the kind of implicatures the hearer would derive.

She argues that connectives such as *but* and *therefore* have the function of prescribing how the propositional form they introduce is to be processed rather than describing any aspect of the world: i.e. they have a procedural rather than conceptual semantics, a distinction which was discussed briefly in 2.3.1. Phrases like *I think*, *I suppose* and *probably*, on the other hand, clearly map onto concepts, i.e. they encode conceptual content which plays a constituent role in larger conceptual representations and so they do not have procedural meaning. Two distinct semantic properties i.e. procedural and conceptual are associated with *therefore*, *but* and *I think/suppose* respectively, all of which are supposed to give rise to conventional implicatures. Again, the ragbag nature of the category of conventional implicature is evident.

Without any developed explanation of what it means to say that *I think/suppose* gives a conventional implicature of low speaker conviction, it amounts to no more than saying that it does not fall into the two better understood categories of what is said and what is conversationally implicated. We must try to give a more positive explanation of the role of these explicitly given attitudes. My general conclusion then is that Prince et al's implicature analysis of the speaker's expression of limited conviction is inadequate.

Thus, *I think/suppose*, *probably* etc. cannot be properly explained in terms of any of the Gricean notions of 'what is implicated'. It seems that they fall in the level of explicit content of an utterance. As was argued in 2.3, the Relevance-based notions of the propositional form of an utterance and higher-level explicature amount to the explicit content of an utterance in ordinary assertions. They will give us the distinctions necessary for an explanation of attitudinal expressions such as *I think/suppose* and *probably*. Let us look at these notions again.

#### 3.2.4 The Propositional Form of an Utterance and Explicature

Sperber & Wilson (1986: 86) claim that linguistic decoding assigns a logical form to a linguistic stimulus. The logical form assigned by linguistic decoding is usually

semantically incomplete, i.e. not fully propositional, since reference, the time of utterance etc. are not identified, and ambiguities and vaguenesses remain. A semantically complete logical form, on the other hand, is fully propositional i.e. is capable of being true or false, and it is called a propositional form.

As I argued in 2.3.2, an incomplete logical form encoded by an utterance is enriched so as to be semantically complete, i.e. to be fully propositional, and this fully propositional form, Relevance theory assumes, is the truth-conditional content of an utterance, i.e. the proposition expressed. For example, it is only after reference assignment and disambiguation, etc. that the incomplete logical form encoded by (12) can be developed into a fully propositional form something like (13) which is the truth-conditional content of (12):

(12) She was mean.

(13) Mary<sub>1</sub> was mean (as not being generous) at t.

(1 = identified as a particular individual      t = some identifiable time span)

An utterance is considered to have only one identifiable propositional form (=the truth-conditional content), but it can have many explicitly communicated assumptions. For example, the utterance (12) has one identifiable propositional form (i.e. the proposition expressed) (13) but may communicate assumptions such as the following (14) and (15). That is, we are assuming that it is manifest to the speaker and the hearer that the speaker really believes the truth of (13) and the assumption (15) is communicated to the hearer.

(14) The speaker has said that Mary<sub>1</sub> was mean at t.

(15) The speaker believes that Mary<sub>1</sub> was mean at t.

Sperber & Wilson (1986: 181) point out that the speaker who communicates (15) does not automatically communicate (13). For example, suppose it is mutually manifest that the hearer believes that Mary is a warm, generous person and has no reason to believe the speaker's utterance (12) more than his own opinion. Then the

speaker could not have intended her utterance to be a relevant one by making manifest to the hearer that Mary was mean, but only by making manifest that she believes that Mary was mean.

Let us, however, suppose that the hearer has decided that the speaker intended to communicate both that the speaker believes that Mary was mean and that Mary was mean. In other words it is mutually manifest that the speaker intended the hearer to infer (13) from (15). Then the utterance (12) is an ordinary assertion and the propositional form (13) is communicated to the hearer as a true assumption.

Sperber & Wilson (1986: 182) define explicatures as communicated assumptions which are developments of a logical form encoded by an utterance. Wilson & Sperber (1990) argue that the explicatures of an utterance include the proposition expressed by the utterance, and higher-level descriptions called ‘higher-level explicatures’. The former is obtained by enriching the logical form to the point where it has truth-conditions, and the latter, obtained by optionally embedding this proposition under a speech-act verb or a propositional attitude verb. For example, (13) and (14)-(15) are cases in point respectively.

In the last section, I argued against treating the speaker’s low endorsement in terms of Gricean implicatures. It seems as though linguistic expressions of the speaker’s attitude should be explained at the explicit level, perhaps in terms of higher-level explicature where the speaker’s propositional attitude is expressed. For example, if the speaker utters (12) with a parenthetical use of *I suppose* or *probably*, the hearer would recover a modified version of the higher-level explicature in (15) such as the following (15)’:

(15)’ The speaker weakly believes that Mary was mean.

In Chapter 1 I characterised hedging as a pragmatic phenomenon by which the speaker communicates that she has limited commitment to P. So the following characterisation of hedging expressions can be given:

(16) Hedges are expressions which contribute to a higher-level explicature which communicates the speaker's limited commitment to the proposition expressed by an utterance.

Now if the terms in question are non-truth-conditional i.e. do not contribute to the proposition expressed, as argued by Urmson (1966), Greenbaum (1969), Prince et al (1983) etc. they would contribute to the higher-level explicature and the definition in (16) would be all right. However, if they are truth-conditional, they would contribute to the proposition expressed, i.e. not to a higher-level explicature but to the base-level explicature of an utterance (or conceivably to both). In the following section, I will apply a standard test for distinguishing truth-conditional and non-truth-conditional meaning as a check on the intuitions of Urmson, etc. I will follow the procedure developed by Ifantidou (1993) and Ifantidou-Trouki (1993), and some developments of it suggested by Carston (personal communication).

### 3.2.5 Testing for Truth-conditionality

The truth-conditional tests have their origin in some examples used by Cohen (1971) to argue against Grice's implicature analysis of certain inferred elements of utterance meaning. For example, Grice argued that the temporal and cause-consequence connotations of *and* in (17) are generalised conversational implicatures which are derived by observing the conversational maxims. The sequential ordering, for instance, is derived via the submaxim of manner, enjoining orderliness:

(17) The old king died of a heart attack *and* a republic was declared.

Cohen (1971) has argued that the following (18) should be contradictory at the explicit level (Grice's 'what is said') if the semantics of *and* is solely truth-functional and those connotations are implicatures. That is, schematically, (18) would be 'if P then Q but if P then not Q'. However, as he points out, it is not contradictory which shows that the temporal and causal connotations fall within the scope of the *if*-clause.

That is, they contribute to truth-conditional content and so, in Cohen's view, must be part of the semantics of *and*.

(18) If the old king died of a heart attack and a republic was declared Sam will be happy, but if a republic was declared and the old king died of a heart attack Sam will be unhappy.

(adapted from Cohen in Carston (1988: 172))

This procedure of embedding a given case within the scope of a logical operator such as *if* has subsequently been used within Relevance theory in order to distinguish pragmatically derived truth-conditional content from conversational implicatures (Wilson 1992, Carston 1988 etc.). For example, the above-mentioned temporal/causal connotations are treated as part of the proposition expressed, i.e. part of the truth-conditional content of an utterance (Carston 1988) though, crucially, they are cases of pragmatic enrichment rather than semantic encoding. The tests are, however, used by Ifantidou (1993) and Ifantidou-Trouki differently: i.e. they are used to show whether a certain linguistic item i.e. encoded content, does or does not contribute to the proposition expressed. The idea is to embed into a conditional the sentence which includes the expression to be tested, and to see if this expression falls within the scope of the *if*-clause. For example, let us see *but* in (19):

(19) If your house is very old *but* mine isn't, we cannot swap.

Now the question is under what conditions is the speaker of (19) claiming that we cannot swap? Is she saying that if (20)a-b are true we cannot swap, or is she saying that if (21)a-c are true we cannot swap? That is, does the contrastive connotation (21)c contribute to the truth-conditions of (19) or does it fall outside the scope of *if...then...?*

(20)a Your house is very old.

b. My house is not very old.



- (21)a. Your house is very old.
- b. My house is not very old.
- c. There is a contrast between the fact that your house is very old and the fact that my house isn't.

Clearly (21)c does not contribute to the truth-conditions of the utterance in (19). The contrast meaning encoded by the linguistic item *but* is therefore non-truth-conditional.

Along the same line, we can see whether or not the main clause parenthetical *I suppose* contributes to the proposition expressed. The question is whether the truth-conditions of (5) (repeated below) are equivalent to (22) or (23). As I said, the intuitions of Urmson (1966), Prince et al (1983) etc. seem to favour (22).

- (5) *I suppose* that your house is very old.
- (22) Your house is very old.
- (23) I suppose that your house is very old.

Now let me apply the test and embed (5) under *if*-clause and see if *I suppose* falls within the scope of the 'if'-clause.

- (24) If *I suppose* that your house is very old, then I will send a surveyor for verification.

Now the question is whether the antecedent of this conditional has the same truth conditions as (22) or (23). It seems that it has the same truth conditions as (23) rather than (22). That is, if there were no doubt at all about the vintage of the house, the speaker would not have to seek the verification of an expert. This may be even clearer when *I suppose* is contrasted with another attitudinal expression of a similar kind. Consider the following (25).

(25) If *I suppose* your house is very old I will send a surveyor for verification but if *I am certain* that it is very old I'll buy it without further verification.

It looks as if the two different attitudinal expressions contribute to the truth-conditional content of the antecedents here and that it is their particular contributions which account for the consistency of the two conditionals despite their contradictory consequents.

Finally, Carston (personal communication) suggests that the following should settle the matter for those who remain unconvinced by these appeals to intuition. Consider (26)-(29):

(26) If *I suppose* that your house is very old, then your house is very old.

(27) If your house is very old, your house is very old.

(28) Either your house is very old or *I suppose* your house is very old.

(29) Either your house is very old or your house is very old.

The above pair (26) and (27) make it clear that there is a truth-conditional distinction. That is, (27) is a necessary truth while (26) certainly is not and may well be false. As for the disjunctions, (28) is not truth-conditionally synonymous with (29) as the former expresses genuine alternatives (i.e. P or Q) while the latter does not (i.e. P or P). The test therefore shows that the main-clause parenthetical *I suppose* in (5) does contribute to the proposition expressed contrary to Urmson (1966).

Now let us look at the case of *probably*. Again the question is whether the truth-conditions of (30) are equivalent to (22) (repeated below) or to (31):

(30) Your house is *probably* very old.

(22) Your house is very old.

(31) It is probable that your house is very old.

As we know, the intuitions of many scholars seem to favour (22) (e.g. Urmson (1966) Greenbaum (1969), Prince et al (1983) Chafe (1986)). The truth-conditional tests provide a useful means of checking and sharpening such intuitions. Let me now embed (30) under the conditional *if...then...* and see whether or not *probably* falls under the scope of the antecedent:

(32) If your house is *probably* very old, I will send a surveyor for verification.

Intuitively, the antecedent of this conditional has the same truth-conditions as (31) rather than (22). That is, if there were no doubt at all about the vintage of the house the speaker would not have to seek the verification of an expert. Note that *probably* here is interpreted as ‘only probably’ rather than ‘at least probably’, so a pragmatic process of enrichment (i.e. conceptual narrowing: see 3.3.4) has also contributed to the truth-conditional content. This may be even clearer when it is contrasted with another sentence adverbial:

(33) If your house is *probably* very old I will send a surveyor for verification, but if it is *certainly* very old I will buy it without further verification.

In (33) the two different sentence adverbials contribute to the truth-conditional content of the antecedents and it is their particular contributions which account for the consistency of the two conditionals despite their contradictory consequents. Finally let me again apply the tests suggested by Carston in order to better capture the truth-conditional difference.

(34) If your house is *probably* very old, then your house is very old.

(27) If your house is very old, then your house is very old.

(35) Either your house is *probably* very old, or your house is very old.

(29) Either your house is very old, or your house is very old.

Again the question is whether or not (34) and (35) are truth-conditionally equivalent to (27) and (29) respectively. The answer is obvious: they are not truth-conditionally equivalent. (27) is a necessary truth while (34) is definitely not: in fact it may be false. And (35) expresses genuine alternatives while (29) does not: i.e. in (35) the speaker is not saying 'P or P' but 'P or *probably* P'. From the conditional and disjunction tests, the proposition expressed would be (31) rather than (22). This means that *probably* does contribute to the proposition expressed contrary to Urmson (1966) and Greenbaum (1969).

Unlike these evidential adverbials such as *certainly* and *probably* that we observed in (33), attitudinal sentence adverbials such as *unfortunately* and *sadly* do not contribute to the truth-conditional content, i.e. the proposition expressed, but rather to a higher-level explicature (Ifantidou-Trouki (1993)). For example, (36) shows that the truth-condition of the antecedent is (37) rather than (38):

(36) If your house is, *unfortunately*, very new, then I won't buy it.

(37) Your house is very new.

(38) It is unfortunate that your house is very new.

That is, the speaker won't buy the house under the circumstance that it is very new, rather than in the circumstance where it is unfortunate that it is very new. That is, the proposition expressed would be (37) and Ifantidou-Trouki argues that *unfortunately* contributes to a higher-level explicature such as (38) rather than to the proposition expressed. This would predict that both (39) and (40) (also with antecedent and consequent reversed) would be necessary truths and that both (41) and (42) are non-genuine alternatives respectively.

(39) If your house is, *unfortunately*, very new, then your house is very new.

(40) If your house is very new, then your house is very new.

(41) Either your house is *unfortunately* very new or your house is very new.

(42) Either your house is very new or your house is very new.

And indeed (39) sounds like a necessary truth and (41) does not present genuine alternatives. (39) and (41) are thus in contrast with (34) and (35) in which *probably* does contribute to the truth-conditional content of the *if*-clause and the disjunction.

Now what about the true parenthetical uses of *I suppose* or *I think* observed in (6) and (7) (repeated below)? Do the parentheticals fall within the scope of the *if*-clause and the disjunction? Let us consider the following:

(6) Your house is, *I suppose*, very old.

(7) Your house is very old, *I suppose*.

(43)a. If your house is, *I suppose*, very old, I will send a surveyor for verification.

b. If your house is very old, *I suppose*, I will send a surveyor for verification.

(44)a. If your house is, *I suppose*, very old, then your house is very old.

b. If your house is very old, *I suppose*, then your house is very old.

(45)a. Either your house is very old, or your house is, *I suppose*, very old.

b. Either your house is very old, or your house is very old, *I suppose*.

(43)-(45)a-b all sound very odd, which shows that these parentheticals are very difficult to run the truth-conditional test on. This might be because, as Ifantidou (1993: 199) tentatively suggests, true parentheticals constitute two utterances: i.e. we are trying to embed two utterances into one utterance of *if...then...* and *either...or...*. That is, (6) and (7) would encode two speech acts (46) and (47).

(46) Your house is very old.

(47) I suppose your house is very old.

It would follow from this that it might be erroneous to talk of THE truth-conditions of (6) and (7) since in fact each of them has two sets of truth-conditions.

It may well be that the strong intuitions people have about these cases are really intuitions about relevance, i.e. intuitions about the sub-part of the utterance (or about the one of the two speech acts) which carries the main relevance, making the major contribution to overall relevance by giving rise to the main bulk of the contextual effects. From this perspective, the main-clause parenthetical would contribute to the proposition expressed while the true parentheticals would contribute to that one of the two propositions expressed which does not carry main relevance but which ‘fine-tunes’ a higher-level explicature of the first in Ifantidou’s terms (1994). That is, the function of the second utterance is to weaken the expression of speaker’s belief that comes with the first utterance, i.e. to modify a higher-level explicature as exemplified in (15)’repeated here:

(15)’ The speaker weakly believes that Mary was mean.

Wilson & Sperber (1993: 23) indeed express doubt about the long-established assumption that every utterance encodes a single logical form, expresses a single proposition and has a single set of truth-conditions. However, the new perspective has not yet been fully established and employed in Relevance theory and in this dissertation I follow the existing assumption that every utterance has one identifiable truth-conditional content, i.e. the truth-conditional content of an utterance and assume that the true parenthetical utterances (6) and (7) constitute one utterance.

On this basis, Ifantidou (1993: 199) runs the truth-conditionality test and claims that when interpretable at all the embedded true parentheticals take the whole sentence in their scope i.e. in her view (43)-(45) would be equivalent to (48)-(50) below. The true parenthetical *I suppose* in (6) and (7) does not therefore fall within the scope of the *if*-clause and *either...or...*

(48) *I suppose* that if your house is very old then I will send a surveyor for verification.

(49) *I suppose* that if your house is very old, then your house is very old.

(50) *I suppose* that either your house is very old or your house is very old.

From this result, one could conclude that (48)-(50) are the truth conditions of (43)-(45) respectively, or one could argue that what is being asserted is only the embedded conditional and *I suppose* is merely commenting on this assertion (Ifantidou 1994: 165). That is, the result does not show whether or not the term in question falls under the proposition expressed.

Ifantidou (1994: 165), then, employs different connectives i.e. factive connectives such as *although* and *because* instead of *If...then...* and *either...or...*. Then, the term in question does not fall outside of the whole utterance as seen in (48)-(50), but falls within the scope of the connectives. Let us embed (6)-(7) under *because* and consider (51)a-b. and see whether my sending for a surveyor follows from the reason (46) or from the reason (47).

(51)a. Because your house is, *I suppose*, very old, I will send a surveyor for verification.

b. Because your house is very old, *I suppose*, I will send a surveyor for verification.

(46) Your house is very old.

(47) I suppose that your house is very old.

Our intuition is fairly clear that the consequence follows from (46), and this shows that *I suppose* in (6)/(7) does not fall within the proposition expressed

Then parenthetical *I suppose* in (6)-(7) is non-truth-conditional, and its function is, as in (15)' to contribute to the recovery of a modified version of the speaker's belief communicated to the proposition that the hearer's house is very old as expressed in (52).

(52) The speaker weakly believes that the hearer's house is very old.

I have argued that attitudinal expressions such as *I suppose* may modify a higher-level explicature. Similarly, Ifantidou (1994) argues that parentheticals such as *I think* ‘fine-tune’ a higher-level explicature in such a way that they weaken the speaker’s commitment to the proposition expressed. However, in (51)a-b. the weak commitment is not expressed to the proposition expressed which is schematically ‘Because P, Q’ but it is expressed to ‘P’ which is a logical implication of ‘Because P, Q’. Therefore, the parenthetical in (51)a-b is not modifying or ‘fine-tuning’ a higher-level explicature which is a development of the proposition expressed. We have to add the cases such as (51)a-b to the characterisation of hedging given in (16):

(16) Hedges are expressions which contribute to a higher-level explicature which communicates the speaker’s limited commitment to the proposition expressed, or which weaken the speaker’s commitment to a proposition P which is entailed by the proposition expressed.

It has to be noted here that the parenthetical *I suppose* in (6)-(7) (repeated below) has its own truth conditional content although it does not contribute to the truth-conditions of the utterance.

(6) Your house is, *I suppose*, very old.

(7) Your house is very old, *I suppose*.

This is shown in the fact that a parenthetical utterance of *I suppose* can be challenged by a different attitudinal expression such as *you know* as in ‘That’s not true. YOU KNOW the house is very old!’ *I suppose* in (6)-(7) does not contribute to the proposition expressed and is claimed to be non-truth-conditional. However, it has its own conceptual content and contributes to a higher-level explicature, which is a conceptual representation with its own truth-conditions. It is obvious that its contribution is conceptual rather than procedural since when used in a main clause it contributes the concept SUPPOSE to the proposition expressed (truth-conditional content).



In the existing (single utterance) framework, *I suppose* in the true parenthetical uses (6) and (7) contributes to the construction of a higher-level explicature. *I suppose* in the main-clause counterpart, on the other hand, contributes to the proposition expressed. Now in (6) and (7) the speaker's weak endorsement is communicated as a higher-level explicature such as (52) (repeated below), which complies with the revised characterisation of hedging given in (16)'.

(52) The speaker weakly believes that the hearer's house is very old.

However, in (5) it is communicated to a proposition which is not entailed by the proposition expressed, and this does not comply with the characterisation (16)'. That means we need to further amend (16)'. This is the matter I now turn to.

### 3.2.6 The Hedging Function in Relevance-theoretic Terms

As we have argued in 3.2.5, the true parenthetical *I suppose* does contribute to the higher-level explicature which communicates the speaker's limited commitment to P. On the other hand, I argued that the main clause counterpart *I suppose* contributes to the proposition expressed. In ordinary assertions, the proposition expressed by an utterance is an explicature which is communicated to the hearer. So in the case of the main-clause use of *I suppose* and the evidential sentence adverb *probably*, the speaker's limited commitment is communicated as part of the basic explicature of an utterance.

This is where the notion 'main relevance' comes in. In the true parentheticals (6) and (7) the speaker's weak endorsement is expressed towards the proposition that carries the main relevance, i.e. the proposition expressed would give rise to the main bulk of contextual effects. In the main-clause parenthetical (5) as well, the speaker's weak endorsement is expressed to the proposition that carries the main relevance, i.e. here the embedded proposition would give rise to the main bulk of contextual effects. That means, we have to further amend the characterisation of hedging (16)' (repeated below) as the definition (16)' cannot capture the speaker's hedging in (5).

(16)' Hedges are expressions which contribute to a higher-level explicature which communicates the speaker's limited commitment to the proposition expressed or which weaken the speaker's commitment to a proposition P which is entailed by the proposition expressed.

Instead of (16)', I would now like to suggest the following:

(16)'' Hedges are expressions which communicate the speaker's limited commitment to the proposition that carries the main relevance or which weaken the speaker's commitment to a proposition P which is entailed by the proposition expressed.

This new definition correctly predicts that *I suppose* in (9)B (repeated below) is not a hedge as the main relevance lies with the proposition which represents the speaker's attitude *I suppose*.

(9)A: *I suppose* that this house is quite new.

B: Well, *I suppose* that it is very old.

It is this that has contextual effects, e.g. the implicature that what the speaker supposes is in direct contrast with what the hearer supposes i.e. that they are in opposing states of mind, with all the further implications that that might have. This satisfies our intuition that the speaker of (9)B is not hedging.

Let us now consider further examples to test this definition.

(53) *I suppose/think* he is a ballet dancer.

(referring to a man who has tripped over in a pub)

(54) *I suppose/think* she is an angel.

(said of a small child who is very nice to her little brother)

(53)-(54) are figurative utterances and it seems that the speaker's limited commitment is not communicated in these utterances. In the ironical utterances (53) the speaker's limited commitment to the proposition that he is a ballet dancer is represented. However, since the utterance is a case of irony, it is an echoic rather than a descriptive representation. In the Relevance-based analysis of irony, the main relevance lies with the disapproving attitude expressed by the speaker to the attributed proposition that the speaker supposes that he is a ballet dancer. The contextual effects are derived from the higher-level explicature which expresses a disapproving or scornful attitude to the whole proposition. That is, the speaker dissociates herself from the proposition expressed: i.e. she dissociates herself from *I suppose/think* that P. Thus, in this example the speaker's weak endorsement is not communicated to the hearer as part of the explicature of an utterance. So the definition (16)'' holds and we can happily say that the speaker of (53) is not hedging.

What about (54)? Is the speaker's weak endorsement to the proposition that she is an angel communicated? That is, do we want to say that the speaker of (54) is hedging? If the speaker of (54) were hedging, we should be able to use true parentheticals in order to communicate the speaker's weak endorsement as seen in (6) and (7). Let us see the true parenthetical versions of (54)a-b.

(54)a. She is, *I suppose/think*, an angel.(?)

b. She is an angel, *I suppose/think*.(?)

(suggested by Robyn Carston)

(54)a-b. sound odd, which might suggest that in (54) the speaker is not communicating her weak endorsement but rather she is communicating her psychological state of supposing/thinking that she is an angel. That is, contrary to Urmson's parenthetical examples (5)-(7), *I suppose/think* in (54) communicates the speaker's mental state of supposing/thinking that she is an angel. Intuitively, this sounds right as we have reservations about saying that the speaker of (54) is hedging. So the definition (16)'' does not apply here, either.

(54) may be comparable to (9)B (repeated below) where *I suppose* is accented.

(9)A: *I suppose* that this house is quite new.

B: Well, *I suppose* it is very old.

Both (9)A and (9)B include *I suppose* in the proposition expressed and it is communicated as part of the explicature of an utterance. That is, the notion ‘explicature’ would not capture the difference between *I suppose* in (9)A and that in (9)B, or between the case where attitudinal expressions communicate the speaker’s limited conviction and the one where they do not as in (54). Again, the notion ‘main relevance’ is very important, as both in (9)B and (54) the main relevance lies with the proposition which includes the attitudinal expression *I suppose*.

In the last section, I mentioned that Urmson’s (and other’s) intuitions about truth-conditional content may really be intuitions about that part of an utterance where the main relevance lies. In an unaccented version such as (9)A it would only be a sub-part i.e. the embedded proposition, while in (9)B, it would be the whole proposition including *I suppose*. However, I showed in the last section that the main-clause use of *I suppose* falls in the truth-conditional content of an utterance regardless of whether it is accented or not. As I argued in Itani (1990), the difference between (9)A and (9)B must therefore be captured in terms of where the main relevance lies i.e. from which proposition the main bulk of the contextual effects is derived, rather than whether the expressions in question are truth-conditional or not.

For example, in (9)A the main relevance lies with the embedded proposition that the house is quite new and might give rise to an implicature such that the speaker would consider buying it, etc. In (9)B, on the other hand, the main relevance lies with B’s supposing that it is very old, implicating that B’s opinion is the opposite of A’s, that the conclusions she might draw would be very different from A’s.

*I suppose* in (9)B is accented while that in (5) and (9)A is unaccented. Grice (1989: 140-1) says that accented *I think that P* implicates that the speaker claims justification for not having made the stronger claim that she knows that P. In Relevance terms, the accented verb of the speaker’s propositional attitude carries the main relevance and gives rise to implicatures. Whether accented or not, there will be

some contexts in which the speaker's propositional attitude is what matters most i.e. where the main relevance lies, and the use of *I suppose/think* does not communicate the speaker's hedging. For example, suppose the speaker has for many years been uncertain whether or not she will permanently live in England, but everyone else has long been of the view that she will. Then finally one day she comes to a firm conclusion and says (55):

(55) *I think/believe* I will live in England.

(55) is not a case of hedging as what is important is the speaker's attitude, that she has now come to have this belief. In Relevance-theoretic terms, what hedging comes down to is the communication of the speaker's less than wholehearted endorsement/backing for that proposition expressed by the utterance which carries the main relevance, which Urmson (1966) or Prince et al (1982) consider as THE proposition expressed.

The main relevance bearing proposition may be THE proposition expressed by the utterance in which case the attitude of weak endorsement is captured by a higher-level explicature as shown in the true parenthetical utterances in (6) and (7). On the other hand, when the proposition expressed by the utterance, i.e. the truth-conditional content is attitudinal itself, the main-relevance bearing proposition may be the one embedded in that attitude as suggested by Itani (1990). In such a case, the attitude of weak endorsement is captured by the proposition expressed i.e. the lower-level explicature of the utterance.

I have shown in (9)B and (53)-(55) that the mere use of expressions of weaker attitude such as *I suppose/think* does not communicate the speaker's hedging, which comports with my argument in Chapter 1 that hedging is not a linguistic phenomenon but a pragmatic one. Now the question is whether or not the speaker's limited endorsement is only contributed to explicatures or may extend to implicatures. In the metaphor (54) the speaker is strongly implicating that she is very kind by using the 'angel' metaphor. The speaker's uncertainty which might in other contexts be given rise to by *I suppose/think* does not seem to be communicated: i.e. it seems that it is

communicated neither to the implicature of her kindness, nor to the proposition that she is an angel.

In Relevance-theory (1986), one analysis of metaphor is that the contextual effects are derived from the proposition which is used loosely i.e. not literally. The proposition expressed would be false, yet giving rise to the intended interpretation with less cost than would have been required to spell out the effects literally. The metaphor “She is an angel” would be false but it yields the intended interpretation without incurring unjustifiable efforts for that effect.

The other analysis would be that the word, but not the whole proposition is used loosely. That is, the word *angel* communicates a concept ANGEL’ which is a loosening of the concept ANGEL in that it can also be used to refer to individuals who are not literally angels but who have angelic features (Wilson 1993-4; see Section 3.3.3). In this analysis, the metaphor “She is an angel” is true as the individual referred to by ‘She’ now belongs to the set of individuals referred to by the new concept ANGEL’.

*I suppose/think* can be used in (54) and here the speaker is not communicating her weak endorsement of the proposition that she is an angel, but is communicating her psychological state of supposing/thinking so. The reason why *I suppose/think* cannot be used as a hedge in the metaphor (54) seems to lie in the following. If we take the first analysis of metaphor, the speaker gives no endorsement to the false proposition that she is an angel, so the communication of her weak endorsement to it seems contradictory. And if we take the second analysis of metaphor, the speaker is strongly asserting that she is very kind etc., so the communication of her weak endorsement in here is contradictory as well.

Is it not at all possible to communicate the speaker’s weak endorsement to implicatures? What about the following example (56)? Surely (56) communicates (57) in which *I suppose* modifies the implicature that he took the money. The utterance (56) gives rise to an implicature that he took the money, and the main relevance lies in this implicature and the speaker’s limited commitment is expressed to it. So the speaker’s weak endorsement is expressed in both (56) and (57).

(56) *I suppose/think* he is a thief.

(The speaker is speculating who took the money)

(57) *The speaker supposes/thinks* he took the money.

Now some might say that *I suppose/think* in (56) describes the speaker's psychological state of speculation i.e. her supposing/thinking carries the main relevance in (56). In such an interpretation, the whole proposition expressed, not its sub-part is where the main relevance lies, and the speaker is not hedging as I argued for (54).

Let us consider other examples in which the speaker's weak endorsement is clearly expressed to an implicature as well as to that sub-part of the basic explicature, which carries the main relevance.

(58)A: What time is it now?

B: *I think* the milkman has just come.

(Milkman comes at six o'clock every morning)

(59)A: Will he come to my party tonight?

B: *I suppose* he likes a crowd.

(A always has a big party)

(60)A: Is his house old?

B: The roof is *probably* falling in.

In their respective contexts, (58)-(60)B do not give direct answers to A's question but they implicate answers to A, and the attitudinal expressions express the speaker's weak commitment to the respective implicature as well as to the explicit import where the main relevance, arguably, lies. In (58)A the speaker communicates her weak commitment to the embedded proposition where the main relevance lies, i.e. to the proposition that the milkman has just come. At the same time, she communicates

the implicature that it is six o'clock, not with her full endorsement but with her limited endorsement.

In (59), the speaker's weak commitment expressed to the embedded proposition carries over to the implicature that he will come to the party. In (60)B as well, the speaker's weak endorsement is expressed to the implicature that it is very old as well as to the proposition expressed which carries the main relevance, i.e. that the roof is falling in. Now it seems as though the speaker's weak endorsement expressed by the terms in question carries over to the implicature and it might appear that I have to amend the characterisation of hedging.

However, as Sperber & Wilson (1986: 109-110) argue, an implication inherits a strength at least as high as that of the conjunction of the premises from which it was derived. That is, the strength of the implicature i.e. answer to A in (58)-(60) inherits is at least as high as that of the respective proposition to which the speaker's weak endorsement is expressed. We can then argue that the weak endorsement to implicatures results from the weakness of the main-relevance carrying proposition in (58)-(60) which gives rise to the implicatures.

That is, the strength of the main-relevance bearing proposition on which the inferential processes depend was weak, so the output of the implicature therefore became weak as well. So the contribution of the terms in question to conveying the speaker's weak endorsement is manifested at the explicit level. My characterisation of hedging thus remains the communication of the speaker's weak endorsement to the main-relevance bearing proposition; implicatures may be hedged in that they inherit the strength of the explicit proposition from which they are derived.

### 3.2.7 Conclusion

In this section I have introduced Urmson's discussion of true parentheticals and their main-clause counterparts, and argued against his claim that the main-clause counterparts behave the same way as true parentheticals, i.e. that they do not describe a state of affairs (enter into the proposition expressed), but indicate how the proposition is to be interpreted. The truth-conditionality test showed that the main-



clause counterparts do contribute to the truth-conditional content (i.e. the proposition expressed).

Urmson (1966) argued that evidential sentence adverbs such as *probably* and *possibly* likewise indicate how the proposition is to be interpreted. It is to be interpreted as having the speaker's limited commitment. Again, the truth-conditional test showed that they fall within the scope of *if*-clause and *either...or...* and I argued that they contribute to the proposition expressed.

Prince et al (1983) analysed attitudinal expressions such as *I think* and *probably* as hedges and argued that they 'implicate' that the speaker has limited commitment to the truth of the proposition (see Section 1.4.4.3). Again, I showed by the truth-conditional test that they constitute a part of the proposition, and are therefore truth-conditional (part of what is said, in Gricean terms). Nevertheless I pursued possible implicature analyses in 3.2.3 and showed that any Gricean category of implicature proves inadequate to treat these attitudinal expressions. This satisfies our intuition that explicitly expressed attitudes are not treated at the level of 'what is implicated'.

True parentheticals such as *I suppose* in (6) and (7) are claimed to fall outside of the *if*-clause and *either...or...* and take the whole of *if...then...* and *either ... or ...* in their scope as shown in (48)-(50). They are, in contrast with the main-clause counterparts, non-truth-conditional, i.e. not part of the proposition expressed, and yet contribute to an explicit aspect of the utterance called 'higher-level explicature'. They indicate what kind of higher-level explicatures are intended by the speaker.

Although they are not truth-conditional in the sense that they do not contribute to the proposition expressed, they map onto concepts and have truth-conditions in their own right: i.e. their truth can be challenged as in 'That's not true, you know it'. When we talk about THE truth-conditional content, we assume that every utterance encodes a single logical form, expresses a single proposition and has a single set of truth-conditions, and therefore any assumption to which these true parentheticals contribute is analysed as a non-truth-conditional aspect of utterance meaning. Wilson & Sperber (1993: 23) express doubt about this long established assumption and true parentheticals such as (6) and (7) might be evidence that supports this. That

is, (6) and (7) might express two utterances as I mentioned, having more than one proposition expressed and the terms in question might contribute to one of the two utterances.

Now the true parentheticals in (6)-(7) weaken the associated assertions and this can be predicted by the pragmatic criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance. According to Sperber & Wilson, every utterance creates an expectation in the hearer that the utterance is optimally relevant. An utterance is optimally relevant if and only if it achieves adequate contextual effects with no unjustifiable processing effort required in achieving these effects.

Extra information such as parentheticals slipped in the main clause would incur extra effort on the part of the hearer. The Relevance notion of optimal relevance, however, guarantees that the utterance was the easiest possible one for the intended interpretation. It follows from this that this extra information slipped in contributes to a higher-level explicature. That is, the contextual effect of *I suppose* in (6)-(7) would be to weaken the speaker's belief in the proposition expressed, which is reflected in the higher-level explicature. Or if the parentheticals such as *I know* or *I'm certain* are used, the effect would be to strengthen speaker commitment to the proposition expressed, which is also reflected in the higher-level explicature. That is, the contextual effect of the parenthetical attitudinal phrases would be to change the status of the speaker's belief in the proposition expressed.

In Section 3.2.4 I defined hedging in terms of Relevance theory and claimed that a hedge is an expression which contributes to the higher-level explicature where the speaker's propositional attitude of her limited commitment is expressed. However, in 3.2.6 I amended the definition (16) as in some hedged utterances such as (5), the speaker's weak endorsement is communicated not as part of a higher-level explicature but as part of the base-level explicature of an utterance. The crucial notion here was 'the main relevance of an utterance'.

That is, I showed that the mere use of certain expressions of the speaker's weak attitude such as *I think/suppose* does not automatically lead to the speaker's hedging. Sometimes it communicates the speaker's psychological state of thinking/supposing as seen in (9)B and (55) and the expressions are part of the proposition which carries

the main relevance of an utterance. An interesting point to note is that the terms in question cannot be used to communicate the speaker's hedging when the proposition expressed is not communicated to the hearer. This is demonstrated in ironical utterances such as (44)T(Chap 1), (53) and metaphors such as (54). So it seems correct that the speaker's hedging is manifest at the explicit level of an utterance, i.e. at the level of the proposition expressed or its sub-part as shown in the revised definition of hedging (16)'' (repeated below):

(16)'' Hedges are expressions which communicate the speaker's limited commitment to the proposition that carries the main relevance or which weaken the speaker's commitment to a proposition P which is entailed by the proposition expressed.

In Chapter 1, I introduced hedges and their analyses in the past. I argued against Lakoff (1972 1987) and Prince et al (1982) who resort to 'proto-type' and claim that some hedges such as *a regular, a typical, technically* make the utterance more or less fuzzy, or convey a more or less proto-typical instance of the term they modify. Kay (1983), on the other hand, argues that hedges such as those just mentioned make meta-linguistic comments on elements of the utterance. In the next section, an attempt will be made to explain Lakoffian hedges in terms of Relevance-based analyses and to see whether or not the speaker is actually hedging in those utterances.

### 3.3 Reanalysis of Lakoffian Hedges

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

As I argued in Chapter 1, expressions listed under 'some hedges and related phenomena' by Lakoff (1972) include not only those which weaken the speaker's commitment to a proposition but also those which intensify her commitment, including a wide range of expressions cutting across parts of speech. They include for example *sort of, very, really, a true, a regular, a typical, technically, loosely*

*speaking, strictly speaking, etc.* According to Lakoff (1972: 195), hedges are “words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy”. For example, (61) and (63) are literally false but the use of *sort of* and *a regular* would make them less false, i.e. more true, as in (62) and (64):

(61) A bat is a bird. (false) (Lakoff 1972: 185)

(62) A bat is *sort of* a bird. (seems to be true)

(63) Esther Williams is a fish. (false)

(64) Esther Williams is *a regular* fish. (seems to be true) (Lakoff 1972: 197)

Lakoff (1972: 198) argues that *sort of* and *a regular* pick up connotations or associated properties of the noun they modify as observed in (62) and (64). In contrast with this, he gives examples of adverbials which pick up the literal meaning or definitional property of the linguistic expression they modify. For example, in (65) and (66), *technically* and *strictly speaking* focus on the literal meaning i.e. defining criteria of a whale rather than its connotations.

(65) A whale is *technically* a mammal.

(66) *Strictly speaking*, a whale is a mammal. (Lakoff 1972: 198)

However, the semantics of these adverbials are different as demonstrated below, as the use of these hedges make the contradictory remark (i.e. R. Nixon being and not being a Quaker) sound non-contradictory in (67):

(67) Richard Nixon was *technically* a Quaker but, *strictly speaking*, he was not.

(adapted from Lakoff 1972: 198)

The wide range of the phenomena Lakoff (1972) calls hedges has inspired many linguists to look into them more closely (Kay (1983), Prince et al, (1983), Brown & Levinson (1978 1987) etc.) as I presented in Chapter 1. In this Chapter, however, I

will consider in detail just *a regular*, *a typical* and *technically* because of the interesting differences in their treatment within Relevance theory. I will also consider whether or not the terms in question function as hedges, i.e. whether the speaker uses them to communicate her weak endorsement of a proposition. In the following section, I will present three categories of adjectives suggested by Robyn Carston (personal communication) the investigation of which will help us with understanding the particular features of the adjectives *regular* and *typical*.

### 3.3.2 Three Categories of Adjectives

First, I would like to discuss adjectives which encode independent concepts. They encode independent concepts in that the concept encoded by adjectives of this type can contribute to a predicate on its own. Examples are *rich*, *old*, *small*, *poor*, *stupid*, etc. and they can constitute a predicate without having a following noun. For example, (68)-(69)a. can be paraphrased by the synonymous (68)-(69)b or (68)-(69)c.

- (68)a. Tom is a *rich* bachelor.  
b. Tom is *rich* and he is a bachelor.  
c. Tom is a bachelor and he is rich.

- (69)a. Tom is a *tall* bachelor.  
b. Tom is *tall* and he is a bachelor.  
c. Tom is a bachelor and he is tall.

Although these adjectives are independent, some standard of ‘richness’ or ‘tallness’ has to be fixed in context: i.e. having a yacht might indicate richness in one context, but might not in another; being 5 feet 10” might be tall in one context but might not be tall enough in another. *Rich* is independent in the sense that it can constitute a predicate on its own. Of course, in some sentences, the fixation of the standard can be affected by the following word(s) it modifies. For example, in (70) Tom’s wealth would be something humble, compared with that of, for example, a rich lawyer.

(70)a. Tom is a *rich* student.

b. Tom is a student and he is *rich* by the standards of students.

Second, there are adjectives that encode a concept which is dependent on the noun it modifies. The concept an adjective of this type encodes is dependent in that it cannot make a contribution to a predicate on its own.

(71)a. Tom is a *good* thief/musician/cook.

b. Tom is *good* and he is a thief/musician/cook.(?)

c. Tom is a thief/musician/cook and he is a *good* one (= thief/musician/cook)

(68)-(69)b were synonymous with (68)-(69)a. However, (71)b. is not synonymous with (71)a. This is because the adjective *good* in (71)b. requires some more specification in order to determine what he is good at i.e. in (71)a. *good* modifies the way Tom steals/plays a musical instrument/cooks and his being good at the respective deed is communicated. (71)c. is synonymous with (71)a. but only by virtue of the anaphor *one* which takes the predicate noun of the first conjunct as its antecedent. The important difference between *rich* and *good* is that *a rich X* may apply to someone who is rich (according to some standard) and who is X, while *a good X* may apply only to someone who is good at being a X. *A typical X*, included by Lakoff in his list of hedges, patterns like *a good X*; it encodes a concept which is dependent on the noun it modifies. Consider:

(72)a. Tom is *a typical* bachelor.

b. Tom is *typical* and he is a bachelor (?).

c. Tom is a bachelor and he is a *typical* one (= bachelor).

Finally, there seems to be a small class of adjectives that encode some indication for forming a new concept out of the lexical concept encoded by the noun they

modify. So the noun cannot be replaced with the pronoun *one* as is possible in (72)c. The hedge *regular* is such a case:

- (73)a. Tom is *a regular* bachelor.
- b. Tom is *regular* and he is a bachelor (?).
- c. Tom is a bachelor and he is *a regular* one (?).

Please note that this understanding of *regular* (= having the usual characteristics of) is to be distinguished from the one that is synonymous with ‘habitual’ or ‘customary’. Of course, in this non-hedging use, it falls into the second class of adjectives:

- (73)’a. Tom is *a regular* contributor to seminars.
- b. Tom is *regular* and he is a contributor to seminars. (?)
- c. Tom is a contributor to seminars and he is *a regular* one.

With *regular* (in its so-called hedging use) neither (73)b. nor (73)c. is synonymous with (73)a.

In both (72)a. and (73)a. the hearer would focus on some stereotypical properties such as Tom’s having a care free life, living alone, being promiscuous etc. rather than the defining properties of an unmarried adult male. That is, the hearer would focus on some encyclopaedic information of the concept BACHELOR rather than its logical or definitional content. *Sort of* behaves similarly in some of its uses: i.e. it focuses on some encyclopaedic information of the concept encoded by the following word. For example, in (62) (repeated below) it focuses on some stereotypical properties of the concept BIRD such as being able to fly etc. However, I am fully aware of the complication that *sort of* also modifies attitudinal verbs as in ‘I *sort of* think...’ (see (27) (Chap 1)).

- (62) A bat is *sort of* a bird.

The crucial difference is that *a typical X* entails X while *a regular X* does not. So (72)a. entails that Tom is a bachelor while (73)a. does not: Tom may or may not be a bachelor. This can be shown in the following conjunctions. In (74) Tom's not being a bachelor contradicts what *a typical bachelor* entails, i.e. his bachelorhood. In (75) Tom's being a bachelor is true while in (76) it is false. However, in both examples the proposition that Tom is a regular bachelor can be conjoined.

(74) Tom has just got married but he is still *a typical bachelor*\*.

(75) Tom is a bachelor and in fact he is *a regular bachelor*.

(76) Tom has just got married but he is still *a regular bachelor*.

According to Lakoff (1972: 198), (73)a. could not be said of someone who actually is a bachelor and *a regular bachelor* presupposes the negation of the literal meaning of a bachelor i.e. the negation of Tom's being categorically a bachelor in (73)a. However, in (75), (73)a. is conjoined with the proposition that Tom is a bachelor and I showed in (75)-(76) that *a regular bachelor* can be said of someone who is or is not a bachelor. The reason why one might not say *a regular bachelor* about someone who is a bachelor seems to be that one would say *a typical bachelor* instead as this entails that he is a bachelor. Let us now look more closely at the use of *a regular* and attempt a Relevance-theoretic analysis.

### 3.3.3 *A Regular* - concept loosening

In Relevance theory, each concept constitutes a conceptual address which acts as a heading in memory at which lexical, logical and encyclopaedic information is stored (Wilson 1993-4). In this framework, what a word encodes is just a conceptual address, and there is a gap between it and what the word communicates on a given occasion of utterance. In order to fill this gap, certain inferential processes take place in a bid to satisfy the expectation of optimal relevance. It seems *a regular* and *sort of* explicitly indicate what kind of inferencing should take place for the word they modify to be interpreted as relevant. Let us consider (73)a. again (repeated as (77)):



(77) Tom is *a regular* bachelor.

The speaker of (77) is not crucially communicating that Tom is an unmarried adult male: indeed, this may not be communicated at all. What is communicated crucially here is that Tom has certain stereotypical properties of bachelors, such as leading a care free life etc. The implication that Tom is an unmarried adult male, is of low relevance in (77) and its truth or falsity is not important as seen in the acceptable conjunction of propositions as I argued in (76) (repeated below):

(76) Tom has just got married but he is still *a regular* bachelor.

This is because the information encoded by *a regular* directs the hearer to derive stereotypical properties associated with bachelorhood, e.g. leading a care-free life, no commitment to a relationship, childless etc. We can compare (76) with (78) in which there is no such information encoded by the adjective *rich*.

(78) Tom has just got married but he is still a rich bachelor\*.

(78) is obviously contradictory: Tom cannot be married and a bachelor at the same time. In this utterance, Tom's richness and his membership of the bachelor category are two distinct properties within the proposition expressed and this contradicts the category of being married expressed in the first clause. As I argued in the last section, *a regular* does not encode an independent concept but encodes information which directs the hearer to interpret the word *bachelor* loosely or metaphorically, i.e. away from the defining criterion of his bachelorhood and focusing on accessible encyclopaedic information of the concept BACHELOR. What is happening here is that *a regular bachelor* encodes a new concept BACHELOR' which maintains the stereotypic encyclopaedic properties of BACHELOR but has dropped the definitional property [+unmarried].

Wilson (1993-4) talks about the ‘loose use’ of concepts, and my claim is that the term in question is explicitly indicating this, i.e. *a regular* indicates that the word that it modifies is to be interpreted loosely. One of the examples she gives is the verb *blossomed* used with the subject *Our friendship*. The word *blossom* encodes a concept BLOSSOM which has logical and encyclopaedic information. The literal use of this concept would lead the hearer to access the following logical and contextual implications such that their friendship belonged to the plant species and sprouted flowers, and that it grew from a small beginning into something beautiful, respectively.

Obviously, the logical implication above is not intended by the speaker and we can observe the discrepancy between the concept encoded and the concept communicated in this use. The concept communicated here is a weaker one which shares some but not all of the logical and encyclopaedic information of BLOSSOM, and does not lead to the unwanted logical implications such as mentioned above. Here a concept is loosely used so as to refer to some states of affairs which do not fall within the range of the lexically encoded concept. ‘Concept loosening’ is a word-level equivalent of utterance-level ‘loose talk’ (for detailed analysis on ‘loose talk’ see Wilson & Sperber 1985-6).

I would like to argue that *a regular* explicitly indicates that the concept encoded by the word it modifies is to be loosened and in such a way that certain stereotypical properties associated with the lexical concept are the crucial properties of the new concept. That is, A REGULAR X forms a new concept X’ by dropping the logical/definitional properties of X and taking a sub-set of encyclopaedic properties of X. X’ is an ad hoc concept which is formed during on-line interpretation, and is not likely to be stored in long-term memory, and is variable across contexts (Wilson 1993-4, Carston: personal communication).

This idea leads to an interesting consequence. That is, the second conjunct in (76) which is generally analysed as a loose or metaphorical use and so as false, would now become true with the new concept BACHELOR’ being incorporated into the proposition expressed. This provides an explanation for Lakoff’s intuitions regarding the truth values of (63) and (64) repeated here.

(63) Esther Williams is a fish. (false)

(64) Esther Williams is a *regular* fish. (seems to be true) (Lakoff 1972: 197)

The new concept communicated FISH' is wider than the concept encoded by the word *fish* in that the states of affairs or set of individuals to which it can be applied include both those that the encoded concept refers to and some that it does not: i.e. the crucial point here is that it has certain stereotypical properties. However, the new concept communicated may well also be narrower in that the states of affairs or set of individuals to which it can be applied might exclude the ones which the lexical concept refers to if they do not have those stereotypical properties. The following diagram (i) might be helpful to understand this. Diagram (ii), on the other hand, illustrates Lakoff's view that *regular bachelor* cannot be said of a real bachelor and therefore Tom in (76) does not belong to the set of bachelors.

Diagram (i) bachelor regular bachelor      Diagram (ii) bachelor regular bachelor



(adapted from Wilson 1994a)

(75) Tom is a bachelor and in fact he is *a regular* bachelor.

(76) Tom has just got married but he is still *a regular* bachelor.

(79) Tom is a bachelor but he is not *a regular* bachelor.

In (77) (repeated below) Tom might belong to that category of people of whom it is relevant to say they are bachelors as this would give rise to the intended interpretation i.e. many contextual implications associated with bachelorhood, at less cost than would have been needed to literally spell them out. Here, the new concept formed from *a regular bachelor* is wider than the concept BACHELOR in that the set of people to whom it can be accurately applied may include both actual bachelors

and non-bachelors (e.g. (76)). Or in some context it may well also be narrower in that it will exclude certain actual bachelors who do not have the stereotypical properties. The example of the latter is given in (79) above.

(77) Tom is a *regular* bachelor.

In (79) Tom belongs to the bachelor category but does not belong to that subset of bachelors who have the stereotypical properties. For instance, Tom might be a highly responsible unmarried father. Here *a regular bachelor* encodes a new concept which picks out a subset of the set picked out by the concept encoded by the word *bachelor*. Considerations of optimal relevance would determine the range of bachelors the new concept would refer to. The contribution of the use of *a regular* to the overall relevance of (77) would be to cut down the hearer's effort for interpreting the word *bachelor* loosely by explicitly indicating the loose use of the concept.

The use of *a regular* leads the hearer to drop the logical defining properties of the following word, focusing on certain stereotypical properties (i.e. encyclopaedic information), but this does not mean that it entails the negation of the logical properties either, as (75) above shows.

Now is the speaker of (77) hedging? We could argue that *a regular* in (77) is a hedge as the speaker might communicate her low commitment to the truth of the proposition that Tom is a bachelor. This is partly attributable to the claim that the defining properties of the concept that follows *a regular* are dropped and the focus is on some stereotypical features derived from the encyclopaedic information of the concept.

However, we would hesitate to say that *a regular* in (75) is a hedge as the speaker does not communicate her weak conviction in the proposition that Tom is a bachelor: i.e. the speaker believes the truth of the proposition quite strongly. As I argued in Chapter 1, hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon and therefore it is predictable that the suspension of the defining criteria can go in both ways: i.e. one is a certain degree of the speaker's endorsement of the criteria, and the other, not endorsing at all, a matter which is determined pragmatically. So the use of *a regular* might or might not

communicate the speaker's weak endorsement of the defining properties of the concept encoded by the word it modifies. It is a hedge just in the broad sense that it loosens or weakens the lexical concept it modifies.

The adjective *typical* in *a typical bachelor* also leads the hearer to focus on stereotypical encyclopaedic content of the concept BACHELOR, such as leading a care-free life, childless etc. However, *a regular* and *a typical* are importantly different in their semantics, as I will show in the next section.

#### 3.3.4 *A Typical* - concept narrowing

Let us consider (72)a. again (repeated as (80)):

(80) Tom is *a typical* bachelor.

The speaker of (80) is not only communicating that Tom is an unmarried adult male, but also, more crucially, that Tom has stereotypical properties of bachelors, such as leading a care free life etc. The logical implication, i.e., that of being an unmarried adult male, is of low relevance in (80). However, (80) cannot be conjoined with the proposition that contradicts Tom's bachelorhood as seen in (81), although that was possible with *a regular* (see (76)).

(81) Tom has just got married but he is *a typical* bachelor.\*

Some further modification is necessary in order for (81) to be acceptable (see (82) whose second conjunct means that he behaves like a typical bachelor), or the whole predicate *a typical bachelor* has to be taken loosely or metaphorically.

(82) Tom has just got married but he is *a typical* bachelor in his habits.

In contrast with *a regular* which loosens a concept in that it drops the defining properties of the following word it modifies, *a typical* does not affect the defining

properties i.e. the logical content of the concept encoded by the following word *bachelor*. So we cannot use *a typical bachelor* with the conjunct which asserts Tom's marital status while we can use *a regular bachelor* in the same situation. This characteristic of *a typical* that it leaves the analytic content of the concept it modifies untouched is better demonstrated in (83) where it is contrasted with (84):

(83) Esther Williams is *a typical* fish. (false)

(84) Esther Williams is *a regular* fish. (true)

In this example, the defining properties of the concept FISH (e.g. cold-blooded and (perhaps) having gills, living in water, etc.) are not suspended when it is modified by TYPICAL and these are obviously not true of Esther Williams, a human being. In contrast with this, *a regular* can perfectly be used as in (84). This is because it does indeed suspend those defining properties of the concept FISH, making the new concept FISH' (constructed on the basis of the instruction encoded by *regular*) literally true of Esther Williams.

In the last section I have argued that *a regular* loosens a concept and directs the hearer to focus on the encyclopaedic content, dropping the defining properties of the concept. So in (77) (repeated below) *a regular* is used to direct the hearer to derive stereotypical properties of bachelors such that Tom leads a care-free life, is childless, etc.

(77) Tom is *a regular* bachelor.

Likewise, *a typical* is used to communicate similar properties of bachelors, but this is not due to 'concept loosening'.

Here I would like to turn to the Relevance theory idea of 'concept narrowing' (Wilson 1993-4) and argue that *a typical* in (80) explicitly requires this. There are people of whom it is true to say that they are bachelors. If they are unmarried adult males, they belong to the bachelor category. However, on any given occasion of utterance, people of whom it is relevant to say that they are bachelors are only a

subset of the bachelor category. For example, there are not many contexts in which we would want to say (85), though it is a true statement: i.e. the pope IS an unmarried adult male:

(85) The pope is a bachelor. (?)                      Wilson (1993-4)

Wilson (1993-4) argues that in some contexts, a concept which applies to a wide range of objects or states of affairs is narrowed in use. The pope does not belong to this narrower range and therefore the utterance in (85) is unacceptable (i.e. irrelevant). This ‘concept narrowing’ is not semantic but pragmatic, which enables us to maintain the assumption that concepts such as BACHELOR can be defined.

That is, because of examples like (85), some (e.g. prototype theorists) argued that the concept BACHELOR cannot have the necessary and sufficient conditions UNMARRIED ADULT MALE. However, according to Wilson (1993-4), the concept BACHELOR does have those defining conditions and the reason that we hesitate to say (85) is not because it is not true, but because it is not ‘relevant’: i.e. in most contexts it does not satisfy the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance. The word *bachelor* would give rise to unwanted contextual implications such as leading a care-free life, etc. which are not true of the pope. So (85) is semantically fine but will very often be pragmatically anomalous and speakers, observing the principle of relevance, will not say (85).

What modification by *a typical* does in (80) is narrow down the set of people picked out from all bachelors to that range of bachelors who have stereotypical properties. In other words, *a typical X* forms a new concept X’ which picks out a subset of the set picked out by the concept encoded by X. Tom belongs to this narrowed range of bachelors who have stereotypical properties. Obviously, the pope does not belong to this range encoded by the new concept BACHELOR’ and therefore the predicating *a typical bachelor* of the pope makes a false statement.

‘Concept narrowing’ is semantically motivated by concept encoded by the word *a typical*. It is, however, important to note that concept narrowing and loosening are generally pragmatic processes driven by optimal relevance considerations; what the

adjectives *typical* and *regular* do is make it explicit to the hearer which of these processes to carry out and what sort of properties to focus on.

I argued that *a typical* encodes a concept which is dependent on the noun it modifies. My claim in this section is that this dependency of *a typical* manifests itself in such a way that it narrows the concept encoded by the word it modifies, so that the subject is claimed to belong to the narrower range: i.e. the range of individuals who have stereotypical as well as defining properties of bachelors.

There may be another distinction to be made between *typical* and *regular*; they may encode different semantic types, a concept in the first case, a procedure in the second. There is no discussion in the literature, as far as I know, of the possibility of procedural adjectives, but I would suggest that if such a category exists, *regular* (and perhaps *sort of*) might be good candidates. This idea is implicit in my discussion of the third category of adjectives in 3.3.2 where it seemed natural to talk of *regular* as INDICATING loosening and as INSTRUCTING the hearer to perform a certain inferential operation on the concept it modifies. This idea is merely suggestive and needs much more motivation than I am currently able to give it.

Lakoff (1972: 196) includes *a typical* in his 'some hedges and related phenomena'. It intensifies the meaning of the word it modifies, i.e. in his terms making it more true. Contrary to Lakoff, I have reservations about calling the term in question a hedge as there is high speaker commitment to the defining properties of the concept of the word it modifies: e.g. in (80) the speaker expresses her strong commitment to Tom's being literally a bachelor. All elements that intensify commitment are obviously excluded from my characterisation of hedges. *A typical* does not seem to contribute to the higher-level explicature in which the speaker's lower commitment to the proposition expressed is communicated. Rather it contributes to the proposition expressed in such a way that it and the following word form a new concept which picks out a subset of the set picked out by the concept encoded by the word it modifies.

So far we have seen cases of adjectives *a regular* and *a typical*. I argued that they make a contribution to the loosening and narrowing of the concepts encoded by the words they modify. I argued that the pope does not belong to the narrowed range



of bachelors encoded by *a typical bachelor* and therefore *a typical bachelor* cannot be predicated of the pope. Nor does the pope belong to the loosened range of bachelors encoded by *a regular bachelor*, and therefore *a regular bachelor* cannot be predicated of the pope either. However, *technically a bachelor* can be predicated of the pope and I would now like to turn to the use of *technically* which seems to have the effect of commenting on the use of a particular linguistic expression.

### 3.3.5 *Technically* - metarepresentational comment

Let us consider the following:

(86) Tom is *technically* a bachelor.

*Technically* in (86) directs the hearer to concentrate on the defining properties of bachelorhood i.e. on an unmarried adult male, indicating that whether or not Tom has other, say, stereotypical, properties of bachelorhood is of low relevance. Indeed, in some contexts it might implicate the absence of stereotypical properties of bachelors, and so we might want to analyse *technically* in (86) as having a semantics which narrows the range of bachelors to those who are categorically so but who do not have stereotypical properties of bachelors: i.e. it picks out a sub-set of the set of bachelors which the lexical concept BACHELOR refers to.

However, let us consider the following context. Tom has been legally married but has led a life an ordinary bachelor would lead for many years. Finally, the divorce is established and the speaker utters (86). In this context, Tom belongs to the sub-set of bachelors who do have stereotypical properties of bachelors. However, the point is what is communicated: i.e. what is communicated is that he now belongs to the set of bachelors. That is, *technically* does not in itself narrow or loosen the range of the concept which it modifies. Here it is relevant enough to talk about Tom simply belonging to the class of bachelors.

The implications of not having stereotypical properties of bachelorhood which are derived in some contexts are not due to the semantics of *technically* but are due to

pragmatic factors. Because of the focus on certain defining properties given by *technically*, the absence of the usual associations with bachelorhood may be communicated. This negation of the stereotypical properties of bachelorhood is a pragmatic matter rather than a semantic one. There must be some point in using *technically* and that point will often, though not always, be to suggest atypicality.

The use of *technically* in (86) is a case of sentence adverbials which modify an implicit illocutionary verb of speaking and the paraphrase (87) might characterise this. (86) distinguishes itself from the predicate adverbial use in the following (88)-(89): i.e. notice that *technically* falls within the noun phrases ‘a good computer-programmer’ and ‘an accomplished musician’ while *technically* in (86) does not.

(87) *Technically speaking*, Tom is a bachelor.

(88) Tom is a *technically* good computer-programmer.

(89) Tom is a *technically* accomplished musician.

In (88) and (89) the speaker is expressing the technical expertise of the computer-programming and musicianship as opposed to, say, inspiration, creativity, expressiveness etc. In some contexts, the speaker might implicate the absence of Tom’s inspiration, creativity etc. which are also important qualities of a computer-programmer and a musician. In such contexts, we can argue that the speaker is hedging. However, in a context in which the issue is not the general ability but the technical ability of a computer programmer and a musician, the speaker is not necessarily hedging: i.e. Tom’s inspiration, creativity might be communicated to the hearer contextually. In this predicate adverbial use, it is clear that *technically* fully contributes to the proposition expressed, and I am not going to pursue this predicate adverbial use.

I am interested in *technically* in its sentence-adverbial use whose paraphrase is given in (87). It is often argued that the hedge *technically* does not make a contribution to the proposition expressed. For example, Kay (1983) argues that *technically* is a hedge which makes a meta-linguistic comment on the proposition.

The paraphrase *technically speaking* might support this view that it is commenting on the use of a certain linguistic expression or concept.

Further, other sentence adverbs such as *frankly* and *seriously* which can also be paraphrased as in *frankly/seriously speaking* are claimed to fall outside of the proposition expressed by an utterance. For example, Ifantidou-Trouki (1993) gives Relevance-based analyses of *frankly* and *seriously*, arguing that they do not fall under the scope of the proposition expressed but contribute to higher-level explicatures in which they modify the speaker's verb of saying i.e. saying frankly/seriously. Along the same line, we might be able to argue that *technically* in question contributes to the higher-level explicature in which it modifies the speaker's saying. And this way the meta-linguistic comment might be explicated.

However, if *technically* contributes to higher-level explicature, not contributing to the proposition expressed, the following (90) should be perceived as contradictory as the speaker is saying 'P but not P' at the level of the proposition expressed. (90) is not a contradictory remark. There are many more examples which show that *technically* appears to make a contribution to the truth-conditional content of an utterance. Consider (91)-(93):

(90) Tom is *technically* a bachelor but, in reality, he is not.

(91) *Technically*, he is innocent but, morally, he is guilty.

(92) *Technically*, we can do but, in practice, we cannot because...

(93) *Technically*, R. Nixon was a Quaker but, in reality, he was not.

This complies with Wilson & Sperber's argument that "in some cases a sentence adverbial does seem to contribute to the truth-conditions of the utterance which conveys it" (Wilson & Sperber 1990: 106). They give the following example to argue that (94)b. should be perceived as contradictory if the sentence adverbials *on the record* and *off the record* do not contribute to the truth-conditions of (94)b; yet intuitively it is not.

(94)a. Peter: What can I tell our readers about your private life?

b. Mary: *On the record*, I'm happily married; *off the record*, I'm about to divorce.

(Wilson & Sperber 1990: 106)

Likewise, if *technically* in (90)-(93) makes no contribution to the proposition expressed, then they should be understood as contradictory and yet they are not. This shows that the term in question does contribute to the truth-conditions of the utterance.

I would now like to return to the Relevance notion of 'representation by resemblance' in order to explain how the term in question contributes to the proposition expressed in Relevance terms. Wilson & Sperber (1989) characterise 'representation by resemblance' as the exploitation of the resemblance either between linguistic expressions i.e. linguistic forms, or between concepts/contents. A clear case of 'linguistic form resemblance' is the case of 'mention' in which a word is not used to refer to a particular entity in the world but to represent itself. On the other hand, 'linguistic content resemblance' involves two representations sharing not all but some of their logical and contextual implications (Sperber & Wilson 1986).

Wilson (1994: personal communication) suggests that terms such as *so-called* and *so-to-speak* and the sentence adverbials *technically/strictly speaking* might indicate that 'resemblance in form' is exploited, communicating that a linguistic expression/form is spoken/used by certain criterion. For example, in (95)-(96) below the word *violin* does not refer to a particular entity in the world but merely represents a linguistic form i.e. a word of English which is a technical word for a *fiddle*. This can be shown in (97) which is the paraphrase of (96). In the philosophical literature, this kind of self-referential use of words/expressions is called 'mention' as opposed to 'use' in which a word/expression is used to pick out an entity in the world (Wilson & Sperber 1989: 100).

(95) A fiddle is a violin. (Deirdre Wilson: personal communication)

(96) *Technically (speaking)*, a fiddle is a violin.

(97) 'Violin' is a technical word for a fiddle.

The linguistic form given by the word *violin* in (95)-(96) represents an identical linguistic form which is given by the word of English *violin*, a technical version of *fiddle*. On the other hand, what the linguistic form given by the word *fiddle* represents is the concept FIDDLE with its conceptual information such as being a musical instrument, creating a beautiful sound etc. *Technically (speaking)* which has a scope on the expression that a fiddle is a violin seems to indicate that 'resemblance in form' is exploited in that expression.

A slightly different way of viewing the situation is to say that *technically* tells us that the proposition expressed is from the view-point of some technical criterion. So we might be able to argue that *technically* in its sentence adverbial use indicates that the expression involves the Relevance-notion 'resemblance in form' and/or it is uttered from a particular technical perspective.

Let us now consider another example:

(98) A bug is *technically (speaking)* an insect. (adapted from Kay 1983: 134)

(99) 'Insect' is a technical word for a bug.

Likewise, (98) can be paraphrased as in (99) which shows that the word *insect* in (98) is not used to pick out a particular entity in the world but represents an identical linguistic form which is given by the word of English *insect*. The word *bug* in (98), on the other hand, is used to communicate the concept BUG with its conceptual information such as being an animal, small creatures etc. Again, *technically (speaking)* seems to indicate that 'resemblance of form' is involved in the use of the word *insect* and that it is uttered from the perspective of some domain of technical expertise.

Can the same argument be applied to *technically* in (86) (repeated below) ?

(86) Tom is *technically* a bachelor.

In this example, *Tom* is used not to refer to a word of English *Tom* but to refer to a particular person called *Tom* in the world: i.e. this does not involve ‘resemblance in form’. How about the word *bachelor*? *Bachelor* is used to communicate the conceptual content of the concept BACHELOR encoded by the lexical *bachelor*. However, due to the use of *technically*, only a sub-set of the conceptual content seems to be communicated: i.e. the defining properties, unmarried adult male are strongly communicated to the hearer. This does not seem, then, to be a case of resemblance of form.

The resemblance involved here is between the linguistic contents: i.e. the conceptual information of BACHELOR with a focus on the defining properties and that of BACHELOR. Because of the focus on defining properties, the concept BACHELOR in (86) might not share all the logical and contextual implications of the unmodified concept BACHELOR. However, they definitely share at least some of those implications, i.e. the defining properties, and therefore we can observe ‘resemblance in content’ here.

According to Kay (1983: 134), *technically* has a meaning something like “as stipulated by those persons in whom society has vested the right to so stipulate”. In some contexts, this stipulation might be, as Kay (1983) suggests, attributed to certain experts. For example, *technically* or *technically speaking* might indicate that the word *insect* instead of *bug* is used as that is what experts would say when talking about the same object which can be referred to by the common word *bug*. However, what the use of *technically* focuses on in (86) i.e. the defining properties of Tom’s being an unmarried adult male, is not only what some experts stipulate but also what everybody understands: i.e. the word *bachelor* is uttered not because some experts would say so. So a certain defining criterion associated with the use of *technically* is not necessarily the experts’ one.

*Technically* indicates that the word *bachelor* is used to communicate that the subject is a bachelor by its defining criterion rather than his being a bachelor in some looser sense. The crucial properties might be the logical properties of the encoded concept as in the case of the word *bachelor*: i.e. an unmarried adult male. Or they might be part of the encyclopaedic information of the encoded concept as in the case

of the word *mammal*: i.e. the logical entry of the concept MAMMAL would be an animal of a certain kind, and the encyclopaedic entry would have the defining information such as animals which feed their young with milk from the breast. For example:

(100) A whale is *technically* a mammal.

In this example, the expression *technically a mammal* is used to communicate the concept MAMMAL with the focus on the defining properties of a mammal rather than other properties associated with mammals such as living on land, walking animals, etc. all of which are stereotypic encyclopaedic properties of the concept MAMMAL.

In (100) the word *whale* is used to communicate the concept WHALE with its full conceptual information. The word *mammal* is used to communicate a subset of the conceptual information of the concept MAMMAL such as defining properties due to the use of *technically*. Here, what is encoded by the word *mammal* and what is communicated by it do not share all the conceptual information but share some of it. So we can say that the Relevance notion ‘resemblance in content’ is involved in (100).

Schematically, we have so far cases such as the following in which (ling. form/content) means that ‘resemblance in form/content’ is exploited:

(101)a. X is *technically* Y (ling. form). e.g. (96) (98)

b. X is *technically* Y (ling. content). e.g. (86) (100)

(101)a-b. can be contrasted with utterances such as (102)a-b. in which there is no ‘resemblance in content/form’ involved.

(102)a. My favourite musical instrument is a violin.

b. Tom enjoys being a bachelor.

That is, either ‘resemblance in form’ or ‘resemblance in content’ is exploited in the expression that *technically (speaking)* modifies, i.e. has scope over. Therefore, I might be able to argue that *technically* makes a meta-representational comment in such a way that ‘representation by resemblance’ is involved in the expression and that it is uttered in accordance with a certain defining criterion, which often belongs to a particular domain of expertise.

Now I said that sentence adverbs such as *frankly* and *seriously* modify the implicit illocutionary verb *speaking*. But would we want to argue that ‘representation by resemblance’ is involved in the expression they modify? Consider:

(103) A fiddle is *frankly/seriously* a violin.

(104) Tom is *frankly/seriously* a bachelor.

(105) A whale is *frankly/seriously* a mammal.

(103) might be uttered, for example, in a context in which the hearer insists that a fiddle is a guitar. Here *violin* is not used to represent a word of English, another linguistic form and ‘resemblance in form’ is not involved. *Violin* is used to communicate the conceptual content of the concept VIOLIN. In (104) the speaker is not communicating a sub-set of properties associated with bachelors, i.e. defining criteria of bachelors such as an unmarried adult male. She is communicating the conceptual content of the concept BACHELOR, i.e. properties of bachelors in general and there is no involvement of ‘resemblance in content’. (105) would be uttered in, for example, the context in which the hearer insists that a whale is a fish as it lives in the water. Here, not the full conceptual information of the word *mammal* is communicated as the speaker and the hearer know that a whale lives in water and a common association of mammal’s living on land is not communicated. So ‘resemblance in content’ is involved here. However, this has nothing to do with the adverbial but to do with contextual factors.

(103)-(104) show that it is not always the case that the implicit illocutionary verb *speaking* sentence-adverbs modify indicates the exploitation of ‘resemblance in form/content’. This is supported by the fact that *frankly* and *seriously* can be used in



the utterances (102)a-b. which do not involve ‘resemblance in form/content’, while *technically* cannot. Finally, it is clear that the relationship that *technically* has to the verb of *saying* and the relationship that *frankly/seriously* have are quite different as their positions relate to *that* show:

(106) I say/assert/suggest *frankly* that P.

(107) I say/assert/suggest that *technically* (speaking) P.

That is *frankly* modifies a speech act verb while *technically* modifies the following proposition. Therefore I would like to maintain the claim that *technically* in its sentence adverbial use indicates that ‘representation by resemblance’ is involved in the expression it modifies, metarepresentationally commenting that the expression is used in accordance with some technical criterion.

I have said that ‘resemblance in form’ is involved for ‘mention’ cases while ‘resemblance in content’ is involved for ‘interpretive use’ cases (see 2.4.2-3). What is happening in ‘resemblance in form’ cases is that *technically* indicates that the expression (or part of the expression) it modifies involves ‘mention’, communicating that a certain word is used from some technical point of view. As it is clear from the paraphrases (97) and (99), this use of *technically* undoubtedly contributes to the proposition expressed. On the other hand, in ‘resemblance in content’ cases *technically* sets a point of view, something like ‘from certain defining criterion’ and it indicates that the expression it modifies does not describe states of affairs the speaker endorses but represents similar representations which the speaker may or may not endorse. *Technically* changes the status of the representation to an attributive interpretive one (i.e. attributed to some technical or defining criterion) and following Ifantidou (1994:213), I claim, therefore, that it contributes to the proposition expressed.

All sorts of speaker attitude can be expressed to an interpretively represented assumption: i.e. from no endorsement to full endorsement, or from total disapproval to total approval. For example, in (91) (repeated below), the speaker might hesitate

to say that he is innocent (i.e. disapproval) while she accepts that he is innocent from the technical (i.e. legal) point of view.

(91) *Technically*, he is innocent but, morally, he is guilty.

In (86) and (100) (repeated below), on the other hand, the speaker might be happy to say that Tom is a bachelor and that a whale is a mammal but accepts that Tom and a whale are so from the technical (legal/biologists') point of view.

(86) Tom is *technically* a bachelor.

(100) A whale is *technically* a mammal.

Sentence adverbials such as *morally*, *in practice*, *in reality*, *on the record*, *off the record* etc. might also set a certain point of view, from which the speaker might be happy to endorse the propositions they modify, indicating that the expression is attributively (interpretively) represented. My claim then is the following: the semantics of *technically* in its sentence adverbial use encodes that 'representation by resemblance' is involved in the proposition it modifies, which is being attributed to a particular technical viewpoint.

As was argued in Chapter 1, hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon, and an expression which helps to communicate the speaker's low commitment in one context, might help to communicate the speaker's high commitment in another. The focus on a certain defining criterion by *technically* might lead to the dissociation from the full range of implications carried by a word/utterance or a concept/proposition. For example, *technically* in (86) (repeated below) may have a hedging function as it can dissociate the speaker from some of the implications i.e. stereotypical properties that might be communicated by the word *bachelor*.

(86) Tom is *technically* a bachelor.

In such a case, we can say that *technically* is a hedge.

However, in other contexts, the defining properties of Tom's being an unmarried man are put forward without suspending any of the stereotypical properties: e.g. recall the case that the divorce is established for Tom who has been married officially but has led a bachelor-like life for many years. In this example, Tom's stereotypical bachelor properties are contextual assumptions and the speaker is not communicating any doubt about them. Further, if (100) (repeated below) is uttered to the hearer who incorrectly insists that a whale is a fish, the use of *technically* here helps to communicate the speaker's high commitment by resorting to its defining criterion.

(100) A whale is *technically* a mammal.

I have said that in (86) some of the implications standardly associated with bachelors may be weakened and we can observe that the speaker's low commitment to such implications is communicated. Likewise, in the predicate adverbial cases such as (89) (repeated below), the speaker might communicate that Tom lacks professional or some other qualities of musicianship though he has technical virtuosity.

(89) Tom is a *technically* accomplished musician.

Then, the speaker communicates her doubt (low commitment) to Tom's professional ability and musicianship in general which otherwise would have been derived as implicatures. This satisfies our general definition of hedging as given in (45)(Chapter 1) in which P is any communicated proposition which includes implications:

(45)(Chap 1) Hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon by which the speaker communicates that the speaker has limited conviction in or commitment to a proposition communicated by her utterance.

Lakoffian hedges are contrasted with the attitudinal expressions such as *I suppose* and *probably* as the speaker's weak endorsement expressed by these attitudinal expressions is manifest at the explicit level. The characterisation of hedging was given in (16)'' (repeated below):

(16)'' Hedges are expressions which communicate the speaker's low commitment to the proposition that carries the main relevance or which weaken the speaker's commitment to a proposition which is entailed by the proposition expressed.

Obviously (16)'' does not apply to the three terms in question *a regular*, *a typical* and *technically* which I investigated in this section. I have argued that *a typical* does not function as a hedge but *a regular* and *technically* may do in certain contexts where some implicitly communicated assumptions receive low backing from the speaker.

### 3.3.6 Last Remarks on *Regular*, *Typical* and *Technically*

So far we have analysed the use of the alleged hedges *a regular*, *a typical* and *technically* and shown that they function in various ways to fill the gap between what is encoded by words/utterances and what is communicated by them: i.e. *a regular* loosens the concept encoded by the following word, directing the hearer to interpret it loosely; *a typical*, on the other hand, narrows the concept encoded by the following word, focuses on its stereotypical properties i.e. encyclopaedic information while maintaining its logical content, and the sentence adverbial *technically* indicates that the expression it modifies involves the Relevance-notion 'resemblance in form/content'.

*A regular* and *a typical* encode dependent concepts which make a contribution to the proposition expressed in such a way that the concepts they modify are loosened and narrowed respectively. On the other hand, *technically* in its sentence-adverbial use indicates that the expression it modifies involves 'mention' or 'interpretive

representation' from the view point of some technical criterion. Without any of the terms in question, Tom can be interpreted as being *a regular bachelor*, *a typical bachelor*, *technically<sup>a</sup> bachelor* in (108):

(108) Tom is a bachelor.

If Tom who is married leads a care-free life of bachelors, (108) might be uttered instead of (73)a. (where *a regular* is used) involving a loose use of *bachelor*. Tom's girlfriend might utter (108) instead of (80) (where *a typical bachelor* is used) in an angry tone of voice as Tom does not want to have a committed relationship with her. And instead of (86) (where *technically a bachelor* is used), (108) might be uttered of Tom who has a stable family but is not married legally. However, with the use of *a regular*, *a typical* and *technically* the hearer is given explicit information regarding the speaker's intended interpretation, thus contributing to the overall relevance by reducing processing effort.

I argued that *a regular X* forms a new concept X' by taking a set of stereotypical encyclopaedic properties of X and making them the defining properties of X'. This new concept X' which is derived by 'concept loosening' contributes to the proposition expressed and on such an analysis metaphorical utterances such as (64) (repeated below) become true statements.

(64) Esther Williams is *a regular* fish.

On the other hand, *a typical X* forms a new concept X' by taking over the set consisting of both the logical and the stereotypical encyclopaedic properties of X. This new concept X' which is derived by 'concept narrowing' contributes to the proposition expressed. Now the contextual as well as logical implications are the new defining properties of X' and they constitute the propositional content of an utterance. In (72)a (repeated below) for example, the new concept BACHELOR' is formed to communicate that Tom belongs to the set of bachelors who have

stereotypical properties. (72)a. cannot be correctly uttered of Tom if he does not have certain stereotypical properties.

(72)a. Tom is *a typical* bachelor.

Lastly, I have argued that *technically* tells us ‘mention’ or ‘attributive interpretive use’ as well as the involvement of some defining criterion/point of view. In the case of ‘mention’, it indicates that a technical name/expression is given while in the case of ‘attributive interpretive use’ it indicates that the expression it modifies does not describe states of affairs but represents another representation from which the speaker may dissociate herself. To this representation, all sorts of speaker attitudes can be expressed: i.e. from her disapproval as in (90)-(93) (repeated below) to her approval as in (109).

(90) Tom is *technically* a bachelor but, in reality, he is not.

(91) *Technically*, he is innocent but, morally, he is guilty.

(92) *Technically*, we can do but, in practice, we cannot.

(93) *Technically*, R. Nixon was a Quaker but, in reality, he wasn’t.

(109) A whale is *technically* a mammal but, for most ordinary folk, it is a fish.

I have argued that the proposition that falls within the scope of *technically* does not describe a state of affairs i.e. is not used descriptively, but is an interpretive representation and so represents by resemblance.

I have so far analysed the sentence adverb *technically* whose meaning is different from its predicate-adverbial use observed in (88)-(89) (repeated below):

(88) Tom is a *technically* good computer-programmer.

(89) Tom is a *technically* accomplished musician.

Here *technically* means ‘with regard to the skill required for mastery of subject’ while *technically* in (90)-(93) does not have this meaning ((91) repeated here, for convenience).

(91) *Technically*, he is innocent, but, morally, he is guilty.

It might appear that *technically (speaking)* as a sentence adverb never has this meaning. However, consider (110):

(110) *Technically*, the pianist’s performance was perfect. (Papi 1992: 123)

Here *technically* means the skill of piano performance and has a distinct semantics from the use that alters the following proposition to a case of ‘representation by resemblance’. So, the sentence adverb *technically* seems to be at least two ways ambiguous. So I have to make it clear that the indication of ‘representation by resemblance’ does not apply to the sentence adverb *technically* whose meaning concerns technical skill.

For the ‘skill’ meaning of *technically*, Papi (1992) suggests a Relevance-based analysis. Papi (1992: 139) considers *technically* in (110) to be a domain adverb which contributes to the proposition expressed by providing access to encyclopaedic information such as ‘skill’ and restricting the range of properties which can be associated with the perfection of the pianist’s performance: e.g. her performance might not be perfect in other domains such as expressiveness and art. In this analysis, *technically* does not indicate an interpretive representation, and the proposition expressed by (110) seems to describe a state of affairs, to which *technically* contributes.

### 3.4 Conclusions

In Chapter 1 I mentioned the problem with analysing the speaker’s hedging expressed by the main-clause *I think* and *probably* as part of the Gricean what is

implicated. Further, in this chapter (3.2.4) I pointed out more specifically why it is problematic to do so. First of all, the truth-conditionality test shows that these expressions contribute to the proposition expressed by an utterance, which meshes with our intuition that they should be treated as part of the explicit content of an utterance. Secondly, 'conventional implicature' under which the speaker's limited commitment is supposed to fall, is a poorly defined concept and does not seem to form a discrete category.

In the Gricean framework, the explicit content of an utterance is what is said, i.e. the proposition expressed by an utterance. The expression of limited conviction does not always fall under this category, as seen in the true parenthetical use of *I suppose*, which had to be captured by the notion of what is implicated. Relevance theory, on the other hand, provides a more developed account of explicit content including the concept of 'higher-level explicature' which can capture this limited conviction. Thus, the speaker's hedging expressed by true-parenthetical *I suppose* has been shown to be communicated to the hearer as a higher-level explicature.

The main-clause counterpart *I suppose/think* and the sentence adverb *probably* are, on the other hand, shown to contribute to the proposition expressed by the truth-conditionality test in 3.2.5. I have, however, argued that the use of the main-clause *I suppose/think* does not always communicate the speaker's weak endorsement. That is, they might be used descriptively in Urmson's sense, and might describe the psychological state of speaker's supposing/thinking. In such a case, I argued that the speaker is not hedging and the main relevance lies with the speaker's explicit attitude *I suppose/think* as well as the embedded proposition. Hedging expressed by the attitudinal expressions was thus characterised as the communication of the speaker's weak endorsement to the proposition that carries the main relevance, i.e. the one which gives rise to the main bulk of the contextual effects.

Among the Lakoffian hedges, I mainly focused on *a regular*, *a typical* and *technically* as they present interesting distinctions in Relevance theory. I argued that *a regular* and *a typical* respectively 'loosen' and 'narrow' the concepts encoded by the words they modify. For example, *a regular bachelor* requires the construction of a new concept which designates those adult men (bachelors and non-bachelors) who



have certain stereotypical properties associated with bachelors. Or *a typical bachelor* encodes a new concept which refers to bachelors who have stereotypical properties, i.e. picks out a subset of bachelors, which excludes those who do not have stereotypical properties.

The sentence adverbial use of *technically*, on the other hand, indicates that the Relevance-notion of ‘representation by resemblance’ is involved in the expression it modifies. For example, in (98) (repeated below) the word *insect* is used not to communicate the conceptual content of the concept INSECT encoded by the word but to communicate an identical linguistic form encoded by a word of English *insect*.

(98) A bug is *technically (speaking)* an insect.

Further, in (86) (repeated below) the word *bachelor* is used to communicate a certain conceptual content, i.e. properties of bachelors with a focus on the defining criteria.

(86) Tom is *technically* a bachelor.

Here the different linguistic contents are manipulated: i.e. the linguistic content the word *bachelor* encodes and what is communicated by this use of the word might share only some analytic and contextual implications. That is, *technically a bachelor* might be bachelors by definition and refer to all bachelors in the world who do not have stereotypical properties : e.g. bachelors who have a family. In such a case, what is communicated is only a subset of the information attached to the lexical concept BACHELOR and it is argued that the expression *technically* modifies is being used attributively (interpretively).

Lastly, as to the question whether the terms in question are hedges, I excluded *a typical* from the class of hedges as its use does not communicate the speaker’s weak endorsement to the proposition expressed, nor of implicatures. On the contrary, some implicatures associated with the word it modifies are put forward rather strongly by the use of *a typical*. On the other hand, I argued that *a regular* and *technically* can be hedges in some context: i.e. *a regular* contributes to the

dissociation of the speaker from the defining criteria of the word it modifies while *technically*, from some implications associated with stereotypical properties of the word/utterance it modifies.

I argued that the terms in question encode properties that seem to direct the pragmatic processes of loosening/narrowing and the recognition of metarepresentational use. This might suggest that these hedges encode procedural semantics (mentioned in 2.3.1) which constrains the hearer's inferential processes, rather than contributing to conceptual representations. However, conceptual enrichment by inferential processes are not uncommon for adjectives such as *rich* (for a student/lawyer?), *tall* (for a basket-ball player/a three-year-old child?) and *good* (at what?) which are standardly analysed as encoding conceptual semantics. *Typical* seems to function in much the same way as *good*, i.e. to encode a concept which operates on the concept encoded by the word it modifies to give a new concept with a narrower designation. I suggested that *a regular* (in the Lakoffian hedging sense) might be a candidate for a procedural semantics instructing a hearer to loosen the following concept in a particular way, though this possibility needs much more investigation. *Technically* contributes to the proposition expressed as I argued in the last section, but its effect is to change the status of the following proposition to a case of 'representation by resemblance'.

In this chapter I have given Relevance-based analyses of so-called hedges in English. In the next chapter, I will examine Japanese examples of so-called hedging devices. I will give Relevance-based analyses of utterance-final particles *ne*, *tte*, *ka* and *kedo* which have been considered as hedges; Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) analyse *ne* as a hedge as shown in 1.4.3; they analyse the Tzeltal quotative particle *lah* as a hedge and analogously they would analyse the Japanese quotative particle *tte* as a hedge; Kendal (1985) analyses *ka* as expressing the speaker's weak commitment; and Mizutani & Mizutani (1987) argue that utterance-final *kedo* makes an utterance softer and more polite. I will firstly point out problems with the analyses of these particles in the past and then show that Relevance notions can provide convincing analyses of these words.

## Chapter 4: Hedged Utterances in Japanese

### 4.1 Introduction

Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) argue that the human concern for 'face' holds across cultures and hedging is one of many 'face'-preserving politeness strategies. They (1978: 146) argue that in some languages hedging is encoded in particles and give the Japanese particle *ne* as an example. Brown & Levinson base their argument on R. Lakoff's claim (1972: 919) that by using the particle *ne* "a normally obligatory rule of conversation is relaxed". However, as I pointed out in 1.4.3 her analysis is inadequate. First, her rule of conversation that a declarative force in general demands a hearer's belief is too strong and, second, *ne* used in an assertion sometimes has the effect of seeking a hearer's agreement, which is not a suspension of the requirement that the hearer believe the proposition expressed. For example, *ne* in 'It's cold today *ne* (= isn't it?)' uttered on a freezingly cold day does not suspend the claim for the hearer's belief in the freezingly cold weather.

It is true that in some contexts *ne* can communicate the speaker's hedging i.e. the speaker's limited conviction in the proposition expressed by the utterance. For example, the use of *ne* in (1) might communicate that the speaker does not give her full endorsement to the proposition that John is Irish, compared with (2) which does not have this particle.

(1) John is Irish *ne*. (John is Irish, isn't he?)

(2) John is Irish.

However, *ne* used in (3) shows that this is not always true. *Ne* used in (3) has the effect of urging the hearer to admit (agree) that he hasn't cleaned up and certainly does not decrease the degree of 'face-threat'.

(3) You haven't cleaned up yet *ne*.

In the next section I will attempt to give a full analysis of the particle *ne* and isolate its intrinsic semantic meaning that carries across all contexts. I will show that in the terms of Relevance theory this meaning contributes to a higher-level representation.

Another Japanese particle I will consider in this chapter is utterance-final *tte*, which, like the Tzeltal particle *lah* that Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) analyse, functions as a quotative, or hearsay particle. As with all hearsay particles, *tte* can communicate the speaker's limited commitment by putting responsibility for the truth of the utterance in someone else's hands. For example, suppose someone asks me whether Kyoto is a beautiful town and worth visiting or not, I can hedge by appending *tte* as in (4) when I am not sure about it.

(4) Kyoto is a beautiful town and worth visiting *tte*.

However as I mentioned in 1.4.3 hearsay lexicals do not always communicate the speaker's limited conviction as demonstrated in (5) whose reading is that people say that Kyoto is a beautiful town and that is also the speaker's view. Here *tte* is used to communicate what is said about Kyoto in general and there is no hedging element there.

(5) Kyoto is a beautiful town and worth visiting *tte* and I believe it is indeed so.

So it is incorrect to analyse this particle as encoding hedging: in fact hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon as argued in Chapter 1 and though *tte* can be a hedge in one context, it is not always so. In 4.3 I will explicate the hearsay function of *tte* in the Relevance-based framework.

According to Brown & Levinson (1978: 154), the Tzeltal dubitative particle *mak* which is translated as 'perhaps', 'I guess' softens an assertive force and sometimes turns a statement into a question. This amounts to saying that questions can be placed along the continuum of the speaker commitment, *mak* being placed at the weak end of the continuum, of course. However, as I mentioned in 1.4.3 there is a crucial difference between (6) and (7): i.e. the proposition with the speaker's weak

commitment and the proposition represented as a question in which the speaker communicates nothing as regards her belief in the propositional form of the utterance.

(6) *I guess that Kyoto is a beautiful town.*

(7) *Is Kyoto a beautiful town?*

In the same spirit, Kendal (1985) places the Japanese question particle *ka* along the speaker commitment continuum and analyses *ka* as encoding the speaker's weak commitment to the truth of the proposition. In 4.4, I will turn to the Relevance-based notion of representation of a 'desirable thought' which can be contrasted with descriptive representations such as the one in (6) that describe a state of affairs, and point out problems in analysing *ka* as expressing the speaker's weak commitment, or as encoding the illocutionary force of asking.

Lastly, I will give a Relevance-based analysis of the utterance-final use of *kedo* which is readily translated as English 'but' or 'although'. Many authors claim that one of the ways of talking politely in Japanese is to use utterance-final *kedo* (Mizutani & Mizutani (1987: 26), Ogino et al.(1983: 65), Sakuma (1983: 107)) because this use of *kedo* conveys the speaker's reserved attitude. Again I argue that this reserved attitude is not an intrinsic semantic meaning of *kedo* but a result of an interaction between the semantics of *kedo* and the context in which *kedo*-appended utterances are processed. I will show how these politeness effects are derived in the light of Relevance theory. Let me first turn to the particle *Ne*.

## 4.2 Japanese Sentence-Final Particle *Ne*

### 4.2.1 Introduction

Japanese grammarians agree that sentence-final particles including *ne* do not affect the proposition expressed by an utterance and that their primary function is to 'act upon the addressee' (Haga 1953: 59, Watanabe 1953: 26-27, Saji 1956: 26-31, etc.).

However, they do not clarify what it means to act upon the addressee and I feel we need an explicit account of the intrinsic nature of *ne* in terms of the hearer's utterance interpretation process. In this section, I will make an attempt to arrive at the semantics of this particle. I will first look at kinds of usage listed by the National Language Research Institute (1951):

(8) Exclamation

e.g. Baka *ne*. Anta wa hitori ni narya shinai.

silly!      you    alone    will not be

‘How silly (of you to have such an idea)! You won't be left alone.’

(9) Speaker's insistence

e.g. Kohii to chiisana pan dake desu kara *ne*.

coffee and tiny    bread only were since

‘Since there were only coffee and a tiny bread roll, *you know*.’

(10) Seeking for agreement, encouraging a response

e.g. Anna daisusei wa mettani arawarenai deshoo *ne*.

Such    big comet    rarely appear    will

‘Such a big comet will rarely come into sight, *won't it?*’

(11) Questioning

e.g. Nan to kaite aru *ne*?

what    written is

‘What is written (there)?’      (National Language Research Institute 1951)

The alleged differences among these four uses are not clear at all: e.g. some might argue that in (11) the speaker is encouraging the hearer to respond to her question and so this utterance should be under (10). Furthermore, in all of the examples above, the same aspect of meaning such as exclamation, speaker's insistence etc. can be communicated to the hearer even without *ne*, if an

appropriate tone of voice and contextual information are given. This shows that none of the above uses is intrinsic to this particle. Now what is the intrinsic nature of this particle? I will first show that existing analyses of *ne* are not accurate and then present a Relevance-based analysis of *ne*.

#### 4.2.2 Problems with Existing Analyses

##### 4.2.2.1 Uyeno (1971)

Uyeno (1971) analyses Japanese sentence-final particles including *ne* within the framework of generative semantics and presents detailed sociolinguistic constraints on the use of these particles. She argues that *ne* can be associated with at least four underlying performative verbs: i.e. ‘state’, ‘ask’, ‘order’ and ‘suggest’. For example, Uyeno (1971) would argue that (10) and (11) above have the following underlying structures:

(12) The speaker STATES that such a big comet will rarely come into sight.

(13) The speaker ASKS what is written (there).

Although Uyeno (1971: 125) claims that *ne* cannot be appended to exclamative sentences, this needs further consideration as (8) and the following (14) show. What makes an utterance exclamative in Japanese is basically an exclamatory tone of voice. Words such as *nante* (=what a ...!) and *maa/waa* (=dear!/boy!) might be used but such words do not have to be used. So, Uyeno (1971) would have had to include ‘exclaim’ in the underlying performative verbs:

(14) Nante takai n deshoo *ne*!

how expensive is s.f.p.

‘How expensive!’ (s.f.p. = sentence-final particle)

According to Uyeno (1971: 12), "Generative semantics claims the illocutionary force of a sentence is to be represented in logical form by the presence of a performative verb which may or may not appear overtly in the surface form of the sentence." Therefore, the underlying performative verbs *ne* can be associated with might indicate the range of illocutionary forces an utterance with *ne* can have: i.e. *ne* can be associated with the force of stating e.g. (10), force of asking e.g. (11), force of exclaiming e.g. (14), force of ordering e.g. (15), and force of suggesting e.g. (16) (*shimashoo/shinai-n-desu-ka* = let's/why don't you constructions).

(15) (Mother to her little boy) Katazuke nasai *ne*.

tidy up imp.inflection, s.f.p.?

‘Tidy up, *will you?*’

(16) Nichiyoo wa eiga ni ikimashoo *ne*.

Sunday film to let's go s.f.p.?

‘Let's go to see a film on Sunday, *shall we?*’

So *ne* can be associated with just about every speech act verb; then what job does it do in indicating anything about speech act/illocutionary force to the hearer? *Ne* does not appear to perform the function of picking out any particular illocutionary force, i.e. it is not obviously an illocutionary particle.

Naturally, linguistic clues or other clues such as contextual information etc. are necessary to determine which illocutionary force *ne* is associated with. For example, in (11) the illocutionary force ‘ask’ is indicated by the use of an interrogative *nan* (= what) and it is on the basis of this that *ne* in (11) is to be associated with the underlying performative verb ‘ask’. Clearly, aspects of linguistic form other than the particle *ne* are indicating a specific illocutionary force of an utterance and *ne* does not even constrain the choice of the illocutionary force of the utterance. Then, it seems natural to conclude that *ne* is better not analysed as intrinsically associated with any particular illocutionary force.

Uyeno (1971: 131) also makes the more plausible claim that the particle *ne* gives the effect of softening the basic nature of each illocutionary force: e.g. an imperative



force can be softened by using *ne* and so can an assertive force. This claim has led R. Lakoff (1972: 919) to argue that the use of *ne* allows conversational rules such as the maxim of truthfulness to be suspended, and Brown & Levinson (1987: 146) to argue that the Japanese sentence-final particle *ne* hedges on illocutionary forces.

These seem better ideas than *ne* being an illocutionary force indicator. However, as I argued in 1.4.3, if Mother utters (15) with an angry tone of voice, this *ne*-appended version does not communicate less force than the version without *ne*. That means *ne* in (15) does not necessarily soften the imperative force of the utterance. So the claim that *ne* weakens the illocutionary force of an utterance, is not entirely adequate, either.

#### 4.2.2.2 Tsuchihashi (1983)

Tsuchihashi (1983: 361), following Givon (1982), argues that Japanese sentence-final particles "seem to represent the lexicalisation of a non-discrete speech act continuum between what has been traditionally labelled as 'declarative' and 'interrogative'". According to them, types of speech acts are non-discrete categories and they argue that there exists a coherent speech act continuum ranging from assertions to questions on which Japanese sentence-final particles including *ne* and modals are placed. However, this analysis ignores the fact that *ne* is sometimes associated with exclamatives as in (8) and (14), and imperatives as in (15): i.e. her declarative-interrogative continuum does not cover exclamatives and imperatives.

Tsuchihashi (1983: 374) places an auxiliary verb *daroo* (= may be) near the interrogative end of the continuum and the sentence-final particle *ne* near the declarative end. This implies that *ne* has more assertive force than *daroo* and *daroo* has more questioning force than *ne*. However, as (17) shows, we have a combination *daroo-ne* about which she gives no explanation.

(17) Soto wa ame *daroo-ne*.

Outside rain may be-s.f.p.

'It may be raining outside, *don't you think?*'

She might want to argue that the two different forces associated with *daroo* and *ne* off-set each other and *daroo-ne* is placed between the two on her continuum. However, (17) clearly shows that this is not the case: i.e. *daroo* indicates the speaker's limited conviction in the proposition expressed by (17) with or without *ne* appended while *ne* indicates that the speaker is seeking for the hearer's agreement with or without the modal *daroo*. The assertive force of (17) (weak due to *daroo*) is indicated by the utterance being of declarative sentence type, rather than by the sentence particle *ne*. Neither in (17) nor in the examples in the previous section does *ne* have anything to do with assertive force, and there does not seem to be any reason to place *ne* on the declarative-interrogative speech-act continuum.

It is true that some declaratives could be said to have question force although they are not in the interrogative mood. For example, when a speaker expresses her uncertainty towards the proposition expressed by an utterance, the hearer's response might sound as if he was replying to an ordinary interrogative. For example, the reply 'Yes, it is' to the declarative (17) might lead some people to analyse (17) as an interrogative. Then, *ne* should better be placed near to the interrogative end and the whole conception of declarative-interrogative continuum does not hold.

The point is that Tsuchihashi fails to distinguish linguistic mood (a semantic matter) and illocutionary force (a pragmatic matter). Weak assertions in the declarative mood are still semantically declarative and are distinct from interrogatives. Even in a declarative with the speaker's weak commitment, the utterance represents a state of affairs whose factuality the speaker weakly believes (as declarative syntax indicates).

On the other hand, an ordinary interrogative does not represent a proposition which can be straightforwardly analysed in terms of truth-conditions. This is because the proposition represented is not endorsed by the speaker: i.e. in the case of Yes-No interrogatives, the speaker does not know the truth of the proposition represented, and in the case of Wh-interrogatives, the proposition is incomplete (the speaker does not know 'who', 'where', etc.) and truth-conditions cannot be assigned to it.

In Relevance-terms, declaratives are 'descriptive' representations which describe states of affairs, i.e. can be assigned truth-conditions, while interrogatives are 'interpretive' representations which do not represent states of affairs but some other similar representations. The proposition expressed in the declarative mood, however weak the assertive force, is a descriptive representation while an interrogative is an interpretive representation. It is true that a declarative can be used interpretively as seen in the irony 'It's a lovely day' uttered when it is raining badly. However, the point is that an interrogative is specialised for interpretive use, while a declarative is not. They encode different types of representation and cannot be placed on the same continuum, though they may give rise to similar effects in context.

Now, as against Tsuchihashi, there might appear to be a case for *ne* in (17) (repeated below) as indicating an interrogative and in fact when the response (18) follows, the status of (17) as an interrogative might appear to be firm.

(17) Soto wa ame daroo-*ne*.  
 outside topic-marker rain maybe - s.f.p.  
 'It may be raining outside, *don't you think?*'

(18) Iya futte imasen yo.  
 No, fall isn't s.f.p.(strong assertion)  
 'No, (rain) isn't falling. (= No, it isn't)'

This might be due to the function of *ne* being 'acting upon the addressee' as is generally claimed by Japanese grammarians (Haga 1953: 59, Watanabe 1953: 26, Saji 1956:31 etc.), or more specifically due to the function of this particle being 'seeking the hearer's agreement' as discussed by Mizutani & Mizutani (1987: 133). That is, by seeking the hearer's agreement, (17) communicates that the speaker wants a response from the hearer: this gives it some question force, as the translation into an English tag-question further suggests.

However, what about the case of *ne* used in a strong assertion as in (19)A? Nobody would argue that the following (19)A is an interrogative (indicated by *ne*) to which B responds:

(19)A: Zettaini gogo wa ame da *ne*.  
For sure afternoon rain copula s.f.p.  
'For sure it will rain this afternoon.'

B: Iya furi masen yo.  
No, fall is not s.f.p.  
'No, (rain) won't falling (= No, it won't)'

Here again, the function of *ne* seems to be 'seeking for the hearer's agreement'. However, as seen in this example, this function of *ne* is not particularly related to the force of asking, nor to the force of asserting: i.e. in (17) and (19)A it is the use of *daroo* (auxiliary verb meaning 'will/may') and *zettaini* (adverb meaning 'for sure'), respectively, that affects the assertive force of the utterances. It follows then that placing the particle *ne* on the declarative-interrogative continuum is unfounded since *ne* is not more strongly associated with either assertive or question force.

#### 4.2.2.3 Kendal (1985)

Kendal (1985: 172) does not stipulate any particular relation between *ne* and illocutionary force types or speech act types as Uyeno (1971) and Tsuchihashi (1983) do. She argues that Japanese sentence-final particles and modals can be placed on a speaker commitment scale ranging from strong to weak. According to Kendal (1985: 171), "commitment refers to a willingness to be held accountable to the truth-conditional content and illocutionary force of an utterance". Here, the relation between speaker commitment and truth-conditional content/illocutionary force is unclear.

By speaker commitment, she might mean a greater or lesser degree of strength or conviction toward the truth-conditional content and illocutionary forces such as ‘telling’, ‘asking’, ‘warning’ etc. For example, when a speaker ‘tells’ strongly, she might want to indicate that she is strongly committed to the truth of the proposition expressed by an utterance. When the speaker ‘warns’ strongly, she might want strongly that the event expressed by the warning will not come true for the sake of the hearer. And when the speaker ‘asks’ strongly, it might mean that the speaker strongly demands the hearer's response.

According to Kendal (1985: 171), using *ne* shows that speakers would like the hearer to confirm what they say. She admits this is a simplistic characterisation, as there are cases of *ne* being used to just pretend that the speaker wants confirmation in order to be polite (e.g. see (19)A). Here, she does not clarify the relation between the particle *ne* and speaker commitment, either. Seeking for confirmation would generally indicate that the speaker is less than fully certain. However, in (19)A the speaker is committed to the truth of the proposition expressed and yet *ne* is used. Thus, seeking for confirmation, as claimed by Kendal (1985: 171), does not have a direct relation with speaker commitment to the truth-conditional content of an utterance. If there is a relation between *ne*'s function of seeking for confirmation and speaker commitment, Kendal has to make it explicit.

Let me nevertheless present Kendal's argument. Like Tsuchihashi (1983), Kendal (1985) considers *ne* to indicate stronger commitment than *daroo* (auxiliary verb meaning 'will/may') does, but again she does not talk about the combination *daroo-ne* which I discussed in the last section:

(20) (strong).....yo.....*ne*.....ka.....daroo.....(weak)

(only relevant s.f.ps and modals are given) (adapted from Kendal 1985: 171)

She (1985: 171) places *yo* (see (18) and (19)B) nearer to the strong end of speaker commitment than *ne*. However, in the following utterance (21) *ne* is used to convey the mother's insistence on the son's agreeing to tidy up and replacing *ne* with *yo* in (21) does not make her insistence any stronger.

(21) Katazuke nasai *ne*.

tidy up, *I say!*

(It is clear to Mother and her son that he has to tidy up and Mother says to him in an angry tone of voice)

So it is not always the case that *ne* indicates weaker speaker commitment than *yo*: i.e. the speaker wants only weakly the state of affairs described by (21) to come true. As for the speaker's commitment to the truth-conditional content, *ne* can be used in both weak and strong assertions (see (17) and (19)A respectively). That is, *ne* can be used when commitment expressed is both weak and strong, and this shows that *ne* cannot in fact be associated with a particular point on a scale of commitment. Thus, the analyses of *ne* in terms of speech act/ illocutionary force types and speaker commitment fail. I would like to suggest a new analysis of this particle and then to try to locate it within the Relevance-based framework.

#### 4.2.3 Reanalysis of *Ne*

##### 4.2.3.1 Showing/Seeking Agreement

*Ne* is a sentence-final particle. This is a syntactic notion and as for the function of this type of particle in utterance interpretation, the only feature agreed by Japanese grammarians is that sentence-final particles do not fall within the scope of the proposition expressed (Watanabe 1953: 27, Saji 1956: 26, etc.). So the following utterances have the same truth-conditional content:

(22) Pari wa kirei desu.

Paris topic marker beautiful is

‘Paris is beautiful.’

(23) Pari wa kirei desu *ne*.

Paris topic marker beautiful is s.f.p.

'Paris is beautiful, *isn't it?*'

Does the particle *ne* then affect the speaker's propositional attitude? The answer seems to be 'No'. As shown in the last section, I have argued that *ne* cannot be associated with any specific level of commitment. *Ne* can be appended to utterances in which sentential attitudinal adverbs such as *tabun* (= probably) and *zettaini* (= for sure) are used and it can be appended to auxiliary verbs such as *daroo* (= will/may be) and *nichigainai* (= must be). *Ne* in *tabun-ne/daroo-ne* and *zettaini-ne/nichigainai-ne* does not further convey weakened and strengthened speaker commitment respectively. Contrary to Brown & Levinson (1987), *ne* itself is not a hedge which communicates the speaker's limited commitment. *Ne* has some other function than modifying strength of propositional content or attitude.

Japanese grammarians seem to agree that the primary function of the sentence-final particle *ne* is to 'act upon the addressee' as in seeking the addressee's agreement, as seen in the example (17) (Haga 1953: 59, Watanabe 1953: 26, Saji 1956: 31). Mizutani and Mizutani (1987: 133), analysing politeness in Japanese, state that "several sentence (final) particles are used in conversation to express the speaker's feelings and attitude toward the listener". According to Mizutani & Mizutani (1987: 133), *ne* is used either to show agreement or to seek the hearer's agreement. For example:

(24) Honto ni soo desu *ne*.

Certainly so is s.f.p.

'That's certainly true, *isn't it?*'

(25)A: Ii otenki desu *ne*.

Lovely weather is s.f.p.

'Lovely day, *isn't it?*'

B: Ee, soo desu *ne*.

Yes, so is s.f.p.

‘Yes, *isn't it?*’

(26)A: Kore de juubun deshoo *ne*.

This enough will be s.f.p.

‘This is enough, *don't you think?*’

B: Saa, chotto tarinai kamo shiremasen.

Well, a little insufficient may be

‘Well, it may be a little insufficient.’

(Mizutani & Mizutani 1987: 134)

*Ne* in (24) and (25)B is considered to show speaker agreement with what the other person has said (Mizutani & Mizutani 1987: 133). In (25)A and (26)A, on the other hand, A seeks B's agreement and B does or does not agree with A as seen in (25)B and (26)B respectively.

*Ne* can also be used to carry focal stress and express certain attitudes. Consider:

(27)A: Atsui desu *ne*.

hot is s.f.p.?

‘It's hot, *isn't it?*’

B: *Nee*.

‘*Isn't it* (just).’

Here the particle is pronounced '*nee*' and it expresses the speaker's attitude to the proposition that it is hot. The speaker of (27)B might not like the hot weather and communicates her displeased attitude.

Other than that, however, it seems that *ne* can be used to communicate the speaker's desire to share with the hearer the proposition expressed by a *ne*-appended utterance. In cases of (24) and (25)B in which *ne* is considered to show agreement, this particle seems to communicate the speaker's desire that the hearer understands that they share the view/belief which the propositional form expressed by the



utterance represents. (24) and (25)B sound more polite than the corresponding versions without *ne* appended, and Mizutani & Mizutani (1987: 133) argue that this particle is a linguistic device of politeness to express friendliness and intimacy (positive politeness in Brown & Levinson's term) like tag-questions in English.

According to Brown & Levinson (1987: 103), 'claiming common ground' is a positive politeness strategy. The use of agreement phrases is one means of complying with this politeness strategy as seen in (28)B, but the particle *ne* which additionally communicates the speaker's desire to 'claim common ground' would make (28)B sound even more polite.

(28)A: Kyoo mo atsui desu *ne*.  
today too hot is s.f.p.  
'Today is again hot, isn't it?'

B: Honto ni soo desu. Iya ni narimasu yo.  
Indeed so is fed up become s.f.p.  
'Indeed, it is. I'm fed up with this.'

Now Mizutani & Mizutani (1987: 34) state that in (25)A and (26)A *ne* is used to seek agreement. This is another way of saying that *ne* is used to communicate the speaker's desire to establish 'common ground'. If it is desired that the proposition expressed is established as common ground between the speaker and the hearer, it is also desired that the hearer would agree with what the speaker said. It follows that the speaker is seeking agreement.

In (25)A, the speaker is uttering what is obvious to the hearer (suppose that A and B are outside, looking at the blue sky). (25)A cannot achieve relevance by communicating that it is a lovely day today, which is a redundant piece of information. But rather, it achieves relevance by communicating explicitly (by using *ne*) that the speaker has a desire to 'establish common ground'. This way, the speaker can be polite and fulfil the social function of 'greeting'. In fact, (25)A cannot function as a greeting if *ne* is not appended.

It is true that 'lovely weather' is already common ground (or, at least, mutually manifest) for the speaker and the hearer. However, by using *ne*, the speaker's desire to establish this piece of information as common ground is explicitly communicated to the hearer. So *ne* has a function of communicating the speaker's desire to establish the proposition expressed as common ground with the hearer, which would be taken to be a positive politeness strategy in (25).

On the other hand, (26)B appears to be a reply to (26)A and *ne* in (26)A might be taken to convey 'questioning' as in (11) presented by the National Language Research Institute. However, as I argued, the proposition expressed by (26)A is used descriptively and is endorsed by A: i.e. A is uttering what A believes (even if A believes only weakly) and is seeking to establish this proposition as common ground although, in fact, she does not succeed in this case. This is indicated by (26)A being a declarative sentence type, and *ne* does not change (26)A into an interrogative.

Now I have said that *ne* communicates explicitly the speaker's desire to establish that she and the hearer share an idea/opinion with the hearer. From this it follows that the speaker is seeking agreement. That is, the speaker (= A) desires to share with the hearer (= B) the opinion that this is enough, i.e. to share the proposition expressed by (26)A. In other words, the speaker desires to get the hearer's agreement, i.e. seeks agreement. It might appear that the particle *ne* communicates that the speaker desires that she and the hearer establish the proposition expressed as part of their mutual knowledge (or, in Relevance theory terms, their mutual cognitive environment). Therefore, some might claim that *ne* encodes meaning such as (29):

(29) The speaker desires that she and the hearer establish *the proposition expressed* as common ground.

However, in figurative utterances such as (30) and (31), *ne* does not communicate the speaker's desire that she and the hearer establish the (false) proposition expressed as common ground, but her desire that she and the hearer establish implicatures given rise to by the utterance as common ground.

(30) Yamada san wa hotoke san desu *ne*.

Mr. Yamada topic marker Buddha is s.f.p.

‘Mr. Yamada is Buddha, *isn't he?*’

(31) Orikoo san desu *ne*.

a smart child is s.f.p.

‘You are a smart child, *aren't you?*’

(Mother to her little boy who has spilt milk)

In (30) which is a metaphor, it is clear that neither she nor the hearer would believe the truth of the proposition that Mr. Yamada is Buddha. What is communicated here is a range of implicatures concerning Mr. Yamada's kindness, wisdom and generally fine character. It is these that the speaker wants to establish as common ground with the hearer. For example, the speaker would like to share with the hearer the same opinion on Mr. Yamada such that he is very kind which is a standard implicature of the utterance that someone is Buddha. So *ne* here communicates the speaker's desire that the hearer share with her belief in the implicated assumptions. Also in (31), which is an irony, it is clear that neither the speaker nor the hearer will believe the truth of the proposition that the little boy is a smart child. However, by using *ne*, Mother is conveying to the child that he would as well agree that he is, for example, a clumsy boy. Again, *ne* here communicates the speaker's desire that she and the hearer establish implicatures, i.e. what is communicated by (31), as common ground. So we need to revise (29) as in (32):

(32) The speaker desires to establish the assumptions communicated by the utterance as common ground

However, *ne* appended to exclamatives and interrogatives as in (8) and (11) does not appear to indicate speaker's showing or seeking agreement. Therefore, (32)

might not appear to apply to *ne* appended to exclamatives and interrogatives. In the following sections, I will look into the use of *ne* in exclamatives and interrogatives.

#### 4.2.3.2 *Ne* Appended to Exclamatives

In Relevance theory exclamatives which involve the use of exclamative words such as *nante* (=what a...!/how...!) are not descriptive truth-conditional representations but they are interpretive representations. They encode an incomplete thought or incomplete logical form and do not describe a state of affairs: i.e. the speaker's attitude expressed is therefore not descriptive but interpretive as discussed in 2.4.2. Additionally they encode information that she has in mind its relevant completion and that the pragmatic completion of an incomplete logical form is relevant to the speaker. Let us again consider (8) and (14) which have exclamative force:

(8) Baka *ne*!

silly s.f.p. 'How silly of you!'

(14) Nante takai n deshoo *ne*!

how expensive is s.f.p.

'How expensive (it) is!'

The above utterances can have exclamative force whether *ne* is there or not. Also, *ne* neither weakens nor strengthens the effect of exclamation in (8) and (14): i.e. it is intonation that affects this. As I have already argued, the semantics of *ne* has no particular relation with exclamative force, nor with the strength of the force.

On the other hand, *ne* is not excluded from being appended to exclamatives as seen in (8) and (14). As for (8), it can be argued that it is in fact a declarative sentence though uttered with exclamative tone of voice, and the translation might better be 'You are silly, *aren't you*?!' rather than 'How silly!'. However, (14) is definitely an exclamative sentence which involves the use of *nante* (an interjective meaning 'what a...!') and interpretively represents a relevant (=desirable) thought. So

with *ne* appended, the speaker communicates that she wants to establish as common ground the relevant thought that is a true completion of the incomplete logical form 'It is --- expensive' encoded by (14): That is, the assumption the speaker desires to establish as common ground is a relevant (= desirable) thought that is a true completion of the incomplete logical form encoded by an exclamation. Hence I claim that *ne* appended to exclamatives also communicates (32).

Contrary to this, Uyeno (1971: 117) claims that *ne* cannot be appended to exclamatory sentences (see 4.2.2.1). Although her claim is descriptively incorrect, it highlights one important fact which is that exclamatives are basically expressions of the speaker's state of mind, whether uttered to herself or to the hearer, and the use of *ne* can be anomalous in certain exclamatives. For example, suppose I panic because of a sudden big earthquake in Tokyo. I might exclaim 'Earthquake!' regardless of the presence of the hearer. Using *ne* in this situation is incorrect, or rather it does not communicate the state of emergency. The anomaly lies with the incompatibility of two goals: expressing panic or warning of danger, on the one hand, and the social nicety of seeking to establish common ground with the hearer, on the other hand.

Communicating states of emergency such as an earthquake or a fire requires the most efficient possible means, and generally overrides all other concerns at the time, so this additional piece of information (32) which is not sufficiently relevant in an emergency would only decrease the communicated effect of emergency. Of course if I would like to communicate that I am not panicking in the big earthquake, I can utter "Earthquake *ne*" with a calm tone of voice and seek the hearer's response. This piece of evidence confirms that this particle has an element of 'acting upon the addressee' as claimed by Japanese grammarians.

Let us now turn to interrogatives and see if *ne* used in interrogatives also communicates (32).

#### 4.2.3.3 *Ne* Appended to Interrogatives

I have argued that the questioning force of (11) (repeated below) is not due to the use of *ne* but due to the interrogative pronoun *nan(i)* (= what). Like exclamatives,

interrogatives encode that they interpretively represent relevant (= desirable) thoughts as I argued in 2.4.2.

- (11) Nan to kaite-aru ne?  
what quotative written-is(plain) s.f.p.  
'What is written (there)?'

What is communicated by an interrogative is that the completion of the propositionally incomplete assumption is relevant to the hearer and/or to the speaker. In a genuine question, the speaker regards the completed proposition i.e. the answer as being relevant to herself while in a rhetorical question she regards the answer as being relevant to the hearer. My assumption here is that *ne* in an interrogative indicates the speaker's desire to establish the answer as common ground.

Now (11) is an example of male speech used e.g. by a senior staff speaking to his junior colleague. When *ne* is appended to a plain form auxiliary (i.e. *aru* as opposed to *arimasu* (polite form)) interrogatives, the utterance seems to be either male speech or non-standard speech. Let us consider a neutral standard case of interrogative to which *ne* is appended:

- (33) Ima nan-ji desu ka ne?  
now what-time is(polite) Q-marker s.f.p.  
So what time is it now?

(33) without *ne* being appended can be uttered to a stranger on a street when the speaker wants to know what time it is now. However, (33) in which *ne* is appended cannot be uttered in the same situation. This is because the speaker of (33) communicates by using *ne* her desire to establish the answer as common ground. The speaker has of course no reason to establish any common ground with a stranger: i.e. (33) would perplex a stranger.

Of course if the speaker is in a curfew-imposed town when it is getting dark, then knowing the time would be relevant to everybody who is in the town. In such a

context (33) can be uttered to a stranger: i.e. the time is relevant to the speaker of (33) and *ne* communicates that she desires the answer (i.e. the time) to be established as common ground because the time is relevant to the hearer as well (especially when it is getting dark).

Here it is important to point out the following. The speaker of (33) seems to be claiming some 'common ground' with the hearer which has been claimed to be a positive politeness strategy (Brown & Levinson 1987: 117). Yet this does not lead to politeness in the context: on the contrary, (33) could sound rude to a stranger. This is because (33) communicates that the speaker's asking a question is expected, i.e. the speaker assumes that she is entitled to ask a question. This assumption of the speaker violates one of the negative politeness strategies which is 'Don't presume/assume' (Brown & Levinson 1987: 144). This means that the speaker should avoid "presumptions about the hearer, his wants, what is relevant or interesting or worthy of his attention" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 144).

Brown & Levinson (1987: 147) list *ne* as a hedging device on illocutionary forces which comes under the negative politeness strategy 'Don't presume/assume'. However, (33) demonstrates that there is something contradictory in Brown & Levinson's framework of politeness. *Ne*, on one hand, satisfies a positive politeness strategy which is 'establishing common ground' as shown in the last sections, while on the other hand it violates another politeness strategy which says 'Don't presume/assume'. *Ne* in (33) does not weaken the question force, so again, Brown & Levinson's analysis of *ne* as weakening illocutionary forces (one of negative politeness strategies) does not hold.

Now if (33) is a genuine question, the hearer of (33) without *ne* appended knows that the answer will be relevant to the speaker. In Relevance terms, the enrichment of the incomplete representation (incomplete due to the wh-interrogative 'what time') which is (interpretively) represented by the interrogative utterance is relevant to the speaker. Interrogatives are non-truth-conditional interpretive representations. The use of *ne* in (33), on the other hand, indicates the speaker's desire to establish the answer as common ground.

Let us now consider (11) (repeated below) as a rhetorical question.

- (11) Nan to           Kaite-aru       *ne*?  
what quotative written-is(plain) s.f.p.  
'What is written (there)?'

Take a context in which there is a big sign saying 'no smoking' which a boss and his secretary can see clearly, and yet the secretary has started to smoke. In this case, the answer is relevant to the secretary rather than to the boss.

It is not the use of *ne* that makes (11) a rhetorical question. (11) can be a rhetorical question without *ne* appended in this context. The speaker (the boss) regards the enrichment of the incomplete assumption as being relevant to the hearer (the secretary) rather than to himself. A rhetorical question is an interpretive representation and what the hearer is reminded of is the pragmatically enriched or completed proposition communicated by the utterance. Now the use of *ne* again additionally communicates the speaker's desire to establish the answer i.e. the completed assumption as common ground. That is, the boss makes it explicit that the sign 'no smoking' stands as their common ground.

*Ne* used in any sort of question in fact communicates the speaker's desire to establish the answer as common ground. That is, the speaker indicates her desire to establish the completed proposition as common ground. Now can we say that the answer is an assumption communicated by an interrogative?

An interrogative encodes an interpretive representation of an incomplete (wh-interrogative) or complete (Yes-No interrogative) logical form as was discussed in 2.4.2. The hearer assumes that the completion of the logical form is relevant to the speaker and/or to the hearer. The answer to an interrogative is a fully propositional completion of the logical form communicated by the interrogative. In rhetorical questions, the speaker has in mind a fully propositional form (i.e. the answer) and we can argue that by using *ne* she wants to establish the assumption communicated by an interrogative as common ground. However, in genuine questions the speaker does not have in mind the relevant completion i.e. the answer and so she cannot be communicating it.



Interrogatives encode that they interpretively represent relevant (= desirable) thoughts. As argued, the speaker does not always know the answer i.e. does not always have in mind the relevant completion. So the speaker communicates that she wants to establish as common ground the relevant thought which is interpretively represented by the interrogative.

So we have to modify (32) as in (32)':

(32)' The speaker desires to establish as common ground the assumptions communicated by her utterance or the assumptions interpretively represented by her utterance as desirable (i.e. relevant).

Now let us examine whether *ne* used in hortative (= Let's constructions) also communicates (32)'.

#### 4.2.3.4 *Ne* Appended to Hortatives

Clark (1993: 191) analyses the semantics of *let*-constructions within the framework of Relevance theory and suggests that "to utter a let's-construction with propositional content *P* is to communicate that *P* represents a thought entertained as a description of a state of affairs which is potential, and desirable from the speaker's point of view." This analysis is based on the analysis of imperatives discussed in 2.4.1. For example, the imperatives (34) and (35) are analysed as representing potential and desirable states of affairs, i.e. as describing states of affairs (that the hearer will go straight and turn right, and that the hearer will bring the speaker a cup of tea) which are compatible with what we know about this world (hence potential) and are desirable from the view point of the hearer and the speaker respectively.

(34) Go straight and turn right. (when instructing how to get to the station)

(35) Bring me a cup of tea.

The difference is that a potential state of affairs described by hortatives is desirable from the speaker's point of view while that of imperatives is either from the speaker's or hearer's point of view as shown in (34)-(35).

Along the same line, we can analyse the hortative (16) (repeated below) as representing a state of affairs (that the speaker and the hearer will go to see a film on Sunday) that is potential and desirable from the speaker's point of view. Hortatives encode descriptive representations and they are contrasted with exclamatives and interrogatives in the previous sections which encode relevant (= desirable) thoughts i.e. interpretive representations.

(16) Nichiyoo wa eiga ni iki-mashoo *ne*.

Sunday topic-marker film to go-let's s.f.p.

'Let's go to see a film on Sunday, *shall we?*'

The speaker of (16) communicates the potentiality and desirability of the state of affairs that the speaker and the hearer will go to see a film on Sunday and the additional *ne* in (16) indicates that the speaker communicates that she wants to establish this assumption as common ground. So (32)' applies in the case of hortative, too.

I would now like to discuss why *ne* is often considered to have politeness effects.

#### 4.2.4 *Ne* and Politeness

*Ne* is often considered to have intrinsically a social function (Brown & Levinson 1987, Mizutani & Mizutani 1987 etc.). Indeed, there is a case in which the use of *ne* is essential to serve a certain social purpose. For example, comments on weather such as (25)A and (27)A (repeated below) are common greeting phrases in Japanese, and the use of *ne* is crucial here.

(25)A: Lovely day *ne*?

B: Yes, it is so *ne*.

(27)A: It's hot *ne*?

B: *Nee*.

The utterances without *ne* appended would not function as greeting. This is predicted from the semantics of *ne* I have argued so far. *Ne* communicates that the speaker desires to establish assumptions or an interpretively represented assumption communicated by the utterance as common ground. That is, when the speaker presents a proposition P, she is presenting the extra information concerning interpersonal relations by communicating her desire to establish P as common ground with the hearer. Further, the reason that led Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) etc. to analyse *ne* as a hedging device is that it can take away the assertive force. That is, the information (32)' is contextually implemented as seeking agreement as seen in (25)A/(27)A and satisfies a social goal such as 'not being coercive' which has softening effect.

However, this sort of effect is not something *ne* semantically encodes. *Ne* can be used in utterances which bluntly threaten the hearer's face and sometimes it even increases the degree of face-threat: i.e. it cannot function as a politeness strategy device. For example, criticism is a face-threatening act and yet *ne* can be used to increase the effect of criticism as seen in the following:

(36) You've broken the glass *ne*.

Here *ne* communicates (32)' i.e. the speaker's desire to establish common ground, and it has the effect of urging the hearer to admit (agree) that the hearer has broken the glass. So 'claiming common ground' is not always a politeness strategy. It depends on what the speaker wants to establish as common ground.

Social approaches concerned with politeness have not been able to capture the intrinsic nature of *ne*: i.e. Brown & Levinson (1987) and Mizutani & Mizutani (1987) face counter-examples in which *ne* has effects of not communicating anything regarding speaker politeness, or, on the contrary, of her being rather blunt to the hearer as seen in (36).

This justifies our turning to the more cognitive approach of Relevance theory which seems promising in explaining the particle *ne* in terms of the hearer's interpretation processes, while capturing social implications such as politeness when they arise. In fact, Relevance theory is the only theory which seems to provide us with the necessary notions to explain the true feature of *ne*, as the other main pragmatic theory, i.e. Gricean theory, cannot do this job. That is, the Gricean notion of 'what is said' cannot explain the information (32)' which is the semantics of *ne* (i.e. its intrinsic meaning) and yet does not fall within the scope of the proposition expressed. The Gricean notion of conventional implicature seems to be the only possible candidate for *ne* which communicates (32)' regardless of the context. However, I have pointed out the problems with this notion in 3.2.3 and it is not reasonable to resort to this notion simply on the basis that the function of *ne* does not seem to be captured by the concepts of what is said or conversational implicature.

As mentioned, Japanese grammarians claim that sentence-final particles do not fall within the scope of the proposition expressed (Watanabe 1953: 27, Saji 1956: 26, etc.) and I have followed this line. The standard truth-conditionality test, however, cannot be employed, as sentence-final particles, like true parentheticals such as *I suppose*, fall outside of the scope of *if...then..* or *....or....*. So we have to appeal to our intuition that for example (22) and (23) (repeated below) are truth-conditionally identical though they might have different pragmatic effects.

(22) Paris is beautiful.

(23) Paris is beautiful, *ne*?

Indeed, both (22) and (23) are true if and only if Paris is beautiful, and therefore we can argue that *ne* does not constitute a part of the proposition expressed.

In Relevance theory, a linguistic element which does not contribute to the proposition expressed by an utterance is not necessarily a part of the implicit content of the utterance. A linguistic element can encode a piece of information which contributes in some way to a higher-level explicature. In the following section, I will

try to explain (32)' in the light of this Relevance-theoretic concept and see how *ne* contributes to the hearer's utterance interpretation processes.

#### 4.2.5 *Ne* as a Procedural Constraint on Higher-level Representations

I have claimed that the semantics of *ne* is to indicate the speaker's desire to establish communicated assumptions as common ground. This is the information that the particle *ne* encodes although aspects of the content of the assumptions which the speaker desires to establish as common ground have to be inferred contextually. What we have to consider now is the type of information *ne* encodes: i.e. conceptual or procedural, the distinction I mentioned in 2.3.1. If it is conceptual, it encodes a concept which should be able to go through logical operations such as denial. However, this is not possible. For example, the semantic content of *ne* in (23) (repeated below) cannot easily be denied (see (37)a.) while the proposition expressed which is a conceptual representation can (see (37)b).

(23) Paris is beautiful *ne*.

(37)a. That's not true. You don't desire to establish this as common ground.(?)

b. That's not true. Paris ISN'T beautiful at all.

(37)a. sounds odd and this indicates that the semantic content of *ne* is most likely procedural and cannot be brought to our consciousness and challenged easily. So I might argue that the semantic content (32)' is procedural and constrains the formation of a higher-level explicature rather than being a part of the proposition expressed.

In cases of non-figurative declaratives, imperatives, exclamatives, hortatives and interrogatives, the assumption the speaker desires to establish as common ground is a pragmatic development of the logical form of the utterance to which *ne* is appended. For example, *ne* in (25)A (repeated below) encodes the information (32)' (repeated below) and the utterance (25)A communicates (38):

(25)A: Lovely day *ne*.

(32)' The speaker desires to establish as common ground the assumptions communicated by her utterance or the assumptions interpretively represented by her utterance as desirable (i.e. relevant)..

(38) The speaker desires to establish as common ground that it is a lovely day.

(38) is a development of a logical form encoded by the utterance (25)A and so (38) is, what Wilson & Sperber (1990: 98) call, an explicature, more specifically a higher-level explicature which is constructed by enriching a linguistically encoded logical form to the point where it expresses a determinate proposition and then embedding it under a higher-level description. Now in cases of interrogatives, exclamatives, imperatives and hortatives such as (33), (14), (21) and (16), *ne* encodes (32)' and the utterances communicate the higher-level explicatures (39)-(42) respectively:

(39) The speaker desires to establish as common ground the relevant thought that the time is ----.

(40) The speaker desires to establish as common ground the relevant thought that it is ---- expensive.

(41) The speaker desires to establish as common ground that the hearer will tidy up his room.

(42) The speaker desires to establish as common ground that the hearer and the speaker will go to see a film on Sunday.

Can we then argue that *ne* encodes a semantic constraint on a higher-level explicature? The answer is 'No, not always'. Let us go back to the figurative utterance (30) (repeated below):

(30) Mr. Yamada is Buddha *ne*.

Here the particle *ne* encodes the information (32)'. However, the assumption that the speaker desires to establish as common ground is not the pragmatically completed

propositional form given by (30), but implicatures given rise to by the utterance.

(30) might communicate:

(43) The speaker desires to establish as common ground that Mr. Yamada is very kind.

(43) is definitely not a higher-level explicature: i.e. it is a development of an implicature given rise to by (30) which is then embedded into a higher-level description whose construction the particle *ne* linguistically constrains. I would like to call a higher-level representation such as (43) i.e. a development of an implicature, a higher-level implicature by analogy with the term 'higher-level explicature'.

It seems that *ne* constrains the construction of higher-level representations whether they are higher-level implicatures or higher-level explicatures. *Ne* is not the only linguistic element whose content can make a contribution at either the explicit or implicit level. *Please* in English seems to be another. It encodes the information that the speaker is making a request. Yet the content of the request may be the propositional content expressed by e.g. (44) or it may be an implicature given rise to by e.g. (45) (Robyn Carston: personal communication).

(44) Please get off my foot.

(45) Please, you are standing on my foot.

The word *please* might constrain the formation of higher-level representations, whether explicatures or implicatures, and so both (44) and (45) might communicate:

(46) The speaker is requesting the hearer to get off her foot.

(46) can be a higher-level explicature which is a development of the logical form given by (44), or a higher-level implicature given rise to by (45). To this extent, *ne* and *please* seem similar as both can contribute to either the level of explicature or

implicature. It seems correct then that *ne* linguistically encodes (32)' and constrains the formation of higher-level representations.

#### 4.2.6 Conclusions

The sentence-final particle *ne* does not contribute to the proposition expressed, nor does it affect the speaker's propositional attitude to that content. I claim that this particle linguistically encodes the information (32)' and constrains the formation of higher-level representations, whether they are higher-level explicatures or implicatures.

Although it is true in many contexts that *ne* has politeness implications, I have given cases where this is not so and argued that the semantics of *ne* is not intrinsically a marker of politeness. *Ne* encodes (32)' i.e. encodes procedural information, which can be spelled out conceptually, and as in (47) which can operate either as an explicature or as an implicature:

(47) The speaker desires to establish as common ground that .....

*Ne* is non-truth-conditional and procedural in that it does not contribute to the proposition expressed, nor does it encode a concept. (47) can operate either at the level of explicature or implicature and the propositionally completed assumption or interpretively represented assumption can be communicated to the hearer either as a higher-level explicature or as a higher-level implicature.

The sentence-final particle *ne* is often associated with illocutionary force or speaker commitment to the proposition expressed (Uyeno 1971, Tsuchihashi 1983 and Kendal 1985). However, I have shown in Section 4.2 that this line of analysis does not explain the full range of data adequately. I have instead presented a Relevance-based analysis which can provide all the necessary notions for the explanation of the way *ne* contributes to the hearer's utterance interpretation processes. Let us now turn to the Japanese hearsay particle *tte*.



### 4.3 Japanese Sentence-final Particle *Tte*

#### 4.3.1 Introduction

Another way of communicating the speaker's weak commitment in Japanese is to use the so-called hearsay particle *tte* which can be translated as 'so I hear' or 'so they say'. Hearsay is a type of evidential which marks that the speaker does not have direct evidence for the information and therefore its use might often communicate that the speaker has weak commitment to the truth of the information. According to the National Language Research Institute (1951), the Japanese sentence-final particle *tte* - a colloquial version of the complementiser *to* - has the meanings of reporting and echoing. I will however try to give a unified account of its semantics which explains the various aspects of its meaning including reporting and echoing.

Unlike evidential adverbials such as *evidently*, *apparently*, *allegedly* studied by Ifantidou-Trouki (1993), the particle *tte* does not seem to encode a concept. As I argued for *ne* in the last section, it is difficult to bring its meaning to consciousness. Nevertheless, *tte* clearly does encode some sort of information which affects interpretation. I shall argue that the semantics of *tte* is not conceptual but is procedural as I argued for *ne* and constrains the construction of a higher-level explicature (to be clarified in Section 4.3.7).

*Tte* and *to* can be used utterance-medially to embed a complement clause. In such a case, they are complementisers and do not have a feel of hearsay. This is not surprising as a hearsay particle marks that the proposition expressed by the utterance as a whole is second-hand information and it helps the hearer to recover the higher-level explicature of the utterance which expresses the evidential status of the proposition expressed. Embedded sentences or clauses, on the other hand, are obviously not explicated in this way (Wilson 1994).

Ifantidou (1994: 219) argues that *tte* might be a genuine hearsay particle, so identifying the information encoded by *tte* may shed light on the adequate description of the nature of hearsay particles more generally. I shall use the concepts of Relevance

theory to provide a convincing description and explanation of the nature of the particle *tte*.

#### 4.3.2 Hearsay as an Indicator of Diminished Speaker Commitment

It has been argued that the main function of a hearsay particle is to indicate diminished speaker commitment to the truth of the proposition expressed (Palmer 1986; Chafe 1986). That is, a hearsay element is treated as a case of an evidential which indicates the kind or amount of evidence the speaker has for her utterance. Hearsay marks that the utterance is based on second-hand information, i.e. the speaker says what she has heard and might not herself have direct evidence for. For example, (48) can communicate the speaker's limited commitment compared with its counterpart which is not appended with *tte*.

(48) Mary wa kashikoi *tte*.

Mary topic smart s.f.p.

'Mary is smart, *I hear/so I'm told.*'

However, low speaker commitment is not an inevitable outcome of the use of *tte*. The speaker might be attributing the utterance to an authority in whom she has absolute trust, though she has no direct evidence of her own, and she could thereby communicate her own high commitment. As an evidential treatment would correctly predict, the speaker could indicate that she has reliable (hearsay) evidence for her utterance. For example:

(49) According to her teacher, Mary is smart *tte*. I always knew it.

(50) According to the weather report, it is sunny today *tte*. I knew it would be.

So a hearsay particle itself does not indicate a particular degree of speaker commitment. A reliable source of evidence is expressed in *according to...* phrases in (49) and (50): i.e. it is not the hearsay particle *tte* that indicates this. The speaker's

varying levels of commitment (weak and strong) are communicated in the *tte*-appended utterances (48) and (49)/(50), but, again, this is not what *tte* itself linguistically encodes. Different degrees of speaker commitment are contextually inferred with the help of *tte* indicating that the proposition expressed is second-hand information. So Palmer's claim that the main function of hearsay is to indicate a diminished speaker commitment is descriptively inadequate. In the following sections, I will use Relevance theory ideas to describe and explain the function of this hearsay particle.

#### 4.3.3 Utterance-final *Tte* and Attributive Use

According to a study done by the National Language Research Institute (1951: 74-5), *tte* is used when introducing or reporting someone's speech (pretty much standard hearsay usage) or when echoing back a part or whole of the immediately preceding utterance. For example, (48) as a reply in (51) and (52) illustrates these usages. (51)B is a reporting use and (52)B is an echoic use: i.e. (51)B reports the teacher's speech and (52)B echoes a part of the immediately preceding utterance.

(51) A: What did Mary's teacher say?

B: Mary ga kashikoi *tte*. 'Mary is smart, *she says*.'

(52)A: Our teacher said that Mary is smart.

B: Mary ga kashikoi *tte*! 'Mary is smart, *did she say that? Goodness!*'

Now (48) (= (51)B, (52)B) can also have the interpretation given in (53) which shows that *tte* can be used when echoing a past utterance of the speaker herself.

(53) 'She is smart, *did I say that? Goodness!*'

In Itani (1991) I argued that *tte* marks the Relevance-theoretic notion attributive use, a sub-case of interpretive use. Ifantidou (1994: 219) seems to assume that *tte* is appended only to direct quotations which involve resemblance of linguistic form and

therefore it is not a case of interpretive use involving resemblance of content. However, *tte*-appended utterances do not have to be direct quotations: i.e. they can be quite a loose paraphrase. For example, the original utterance of the teacher in (51) might have been something like 'Mary got straight As' which has a resemblance-in-content relation with (51)B.

As I outlined in Chapter 2, propositional forms can be used to represent either a state of affairs in the world or to represent other propositional forms. In the former case, which Sperber & Wilson (1986) call descriptive representation, the relation between the representation and what is represented is truth-conditional. In the latter, which Sperber & Wilson (1986) call interpretive representation, the relation is one of logical resemblance, i.e. the sharing of analytic and contextual implications.

In Sperber & Wilson's framework, every utterance is an interpretation of a thought of the speaker's, in the sense that the propositional form of the utterance is intended to resemble the propositional form of the thought communicated to a greater or lesser degree. However, some utterances are 'interpretive' in a second order way, in that the thoughts they 'interpret' are themselves 'interpretations' of other thoughts or of utterances.

In Relevance theory, this second order interpretation, called 'interpretive use', characterises, on the one hand, the use of language in reported speech and echoic utterances, and on the other, the meaning encoded by interrogatives and exclamatives. Blass (1989: 325) argues that the particle *re* in Sissala marks this second order interpretation as it is used under verbs expressing propositional attitudes such as belief and desire, in questions and answers to questions, and in ironical utterances as well as to indicate hearsay evidence. So she analyses this so-called hearsay particle as an 'interpretive use' marker.

I showed in Itani (1991) that *tte* has a narrower range of functions than *re* and encodes a sub-case of this second-order interpretation: i.e. it is used in reported speech and echoic utterances but not in interrogatives and exclamatives. The utterances (51)B, (52)B, (48) and the interpretation in (53) are cases in point. They are a sub-case of the second order interpretation. i.e. they all involve the attributive aspect of language use.

The propositional form of (48) does not describe a state of affairs but 'interprets' the propositional form of a thought or an utterance attributed to someone other than the speaker (e.g. (51)B (52)B), or the speaker in the past (e.g. (53)). In the following section, I will pursue this analysis.

#### 4.3.4 Hearsay Particles and Attributive Use

(48) with the interpretation (52)B and (53) (repeated as (48)' below) and the following (54) are cases of echoing, the second usage listed by the National Language Research Institute (1951). On a Relevance-based analysis, echoic use is a sub-case of attributive use with the crucial characteristic that it involves an expression of attitude by the speaker to the original utterance.

(48)'Mary wa kashikoi *tte*!

'Mary is smart, *did she say that? (for (52)B)/did I say that? (for (53)) Goodness!*'

(54) Oh, so it can remove any stain *tte*.

(Expressing the speaker's disgust at the overstated claims made for the new product)  
adapted from Itani (1991))

However, there is a crucial restriction on the sort of echoic utterances *tte* can be attached to. It can mark direct/indirect speech and paraphrase, but it cannot echo implications recovered by inference without actually being heard. So while (54) does not have to be an identical reproduction of the original T.V. commercial, *tte* cannot be appended to a contextual implication such as (55) which the speaker might recover from the T.V. commercial, a point I shall return to shortly.

(55) So it can remove this wine stain *tte*. \*

Sperber & Wilson (1986: 238) argue that the attributive aspect of the second order interpretation i.e. interpretation of someone else's utterance/thought, or the speaker's

utterance/thought in the past, can achieve relevance in either of the following two ways. It can achieve relevance by informing the hearer that the speaker in the past or someone else has said something or thinks something as seen in (48) and (51)B, or it can achieve relevance by informing the hearer of the fact that the speaker has in mind what some individual(s) say/think and has a certain attitude toward it. The latter is called echoic use and (48)' and (54) are cases in point.

For example, (48)' echoes what the teacher/the speaker said and the main relevance i.e. the point of the utterance lies, not with reporting what the teacher/the speaker said, but with the attitude of surprise and disbelief the speaker expresses toward it. Likewise in (54), the utterance echoes what the T.V. commercial has said and its main relevance lies, not with reporting it, but with the attitude of scorn and disbelief the speaker expresses toward it. This is a fairly typical case of irony. (48)' and (54) can be interpreted as ironical in Japanese even if they are not appended with *tte*, which shows that attributive use does not have to be marked linguistically, i.e. with a linguistic device such as a particle, but may be pragmatically inferred.

Linguistic devices certainly include intonation and there might exist a certain type of intonation associated with the kinds of attitude the speaker conveys in irony. However, here I take linguistic devices to mean those that encode a certain type of information, whether it is a concept, or a non-truth-conditional indicator of attributive use. It is unlikely that a certain intonation solely encodes irony but nothing else, as irony can be expressed in various ways with various attitudes, i.e. subtly, obviously, in an exaggerated way and so on, which are standardly accompanied by different tones of voice and intonation.

Now, the use of a linguistic device indicating attributive use makes it explicit to the hearer that a certain utterance does not directly describe a state of affairs, but interprets an attributed utterance, thus increasing the overall relevance of an utterance by reducing the processing effort involved in arriving at the intended interpretation. The English translations of (48)' and (54), on the other hand, would not involve any attributive use marker and the hearer would have to infer this aspect of the intended interpretation without any explicit linguistic clue such as particles.

Now if *tte* does mark all types of attributive use as I argued in Itani (1989/1991) and if Sperber & Wilson are correct that ALL cases of irony are echoic, then it should be possible for all ironical utterances to be appended with *tte*. However, this is simply not the case. In addition to (55) above, consider the following:

(56) *Ii ten o torimashita tte.\**

'So you've scored a good mark, *tte*.'

(As a teacher hands back a badly scored exam to her pupil)

(57) This is a lovely party *tte.\**

(When the speaker intends to communicate that the party is boring)

(58) You can tell he is upset *tte.\** (Wilson & Sperber 1989/1992)

(Coming upon a customer complaining in a shop, blind with rage and making a public exhibition of himself)

(56)-(58) without *tte* would be perfect ironies in which the speaker dissociates herself from the proposition echoed and is expressing her disapproving attitude toward it. The proposition expressed in (56)-(58) is not used to describe a state of affairs, but is interpretively used to represent an attributed thought, according to Sperber & Wilson, where the thought concerned may be peculiar to a particular individual or may be a general hope or expectation that people tend to have, i.e. it need not have been verbally expressed.

If *tte* marks all types of attributive use, (56)-(58) should be acceptable but the fact that they are not indicates that *tte* is restricted to the hearsay function. What is this 'hearsay function'? Blass (1989: 300) discusses the minimalist position which says that hearsay particles should be used only for reporting actual utterances; reported thought would be excluded. She goes on to show that *re* in Sissala has a much broader range of functions and could be appended to all the irony cases above.

It seems, though, that *tte* conforms with the minimalist hypothesis: it can only be appended to utterances whose propositional forms are attributed directly, not to

thoughts, but to utterances, whether spoken or written. In (56)-(58) the propositional forms represent attributed thoughts which the speaker dissociates herself from, and they have never been heard in the past, i.e. they are not attributed to utterances. The standard understanding of hearsay is that it is a kind of indirect evidence: i.e. the utterance is what the speaker heard or what someone or the speaker in the past said.

A definition of hearsay particles can nevertheless be built around the Relevance notion of attributive use. I claim that the main function of a hearsay particle is to indicate that the propositional form of an utterance is attributed to an utterance of someone else or the speaker in the past, i.e. it is 'quotative'. Whether the utterance achieves relevance as a reported speech or as an echoic utterance is a matter which is determined pragmatically. What *tte* itself encodes is that the utterance it is attached to is based on another utterance. Along this line of analysis, the unacceptability of (56)-(58) can be explained as follows: i.e. the hearsay particle *tte* is appended to utterances whose propositional forms are directly attributed to someone's thoughts, but not to their utterances, and so there is a conflict with the encoded content of *tte*.

This definition of a hearsay particle naturally accounts for the straight case of reported speech, i.e. one of the ways the second-order interpretation achieves relevance. Let us consider (51) again:

(51) A: What did Mary's teacher say?

B: Mary wa kashikoi *tte*. 'Mary is smart, she said.'

The function of *tte* in (51) is to indicate that the propositional form does not describe a state of affairs, but represents another propositional form which is attributed to the teacher's utterance. And it achieves relevance by informing the hearer that the teacher has said that Mary is smart.

In this section, I have argued that the function of a hearsay particle is to indicate that the propositional form is attributed to an earlier utterance. I have shown that this definition explains straightforward cases of hearsay: reported speech, and certain echoic utterances, including certain types of irony i.e. those which involve the echo of an



earlier utterance. This supports the Sperber & Wilson's unified account of irony in terms of echoic use.

*Tte* is the colloquial version of *to* which is used utterance-medially and is standardly analysed as a predicate-complementiser (Nakau 1973 Josephs 1976). Indeed, it could be argued that (51)B is an elliptical utterance and 'Mary's teacher said' has to be recovered as part of the proposition expressed. Then, *tte* itself would be a predicate-complementiser. In the following section I will look into the predicate-complementiser *to*, as the analysis of *to* also applies to utterance-medial *tte* (though the level of formality differs). I hope this may give further insight into the analysis of utterance-final use of *tte* and point to the possibility of a unified account of the final and medial uses.

#### 4.3.5 Utterance-medial Use of *To*

Kuno (1973) argues that *to* is a predicate-complementiser and is used mainly with non-factive predicates or verbs. It is contrasted with noun-complementisers such as *koto* and *no*. According to this line of analysis, while *to* can be used in (59) where a non-factive verb *omou* (= think) is used, it will not be used in (60) where a factive verb *shiru* (= know) is used.

(59) Mary wa kashikoi *to* omou.

Mary topic smart predicate-comp. think

'I think *that* Mary is smart.'

(60) Mary wa kashikoi *koto/no* o shi-tteiru.

Mary topic smart noun-comp. o-accusative know-ing

'I know Mary's being smart.'

However, Kuno (1973) also mentions that there are a number of Japanese verbs such as *kiku* (= hear) which are indifferent to factive and non-factive paradigms and so they can occur with both *to* and *koto/no*. For example,

(61) Mary is smart *to* ki-iteiru  
pre-comp. hear-ing.

'I hear *that* Mary is smart - she might or might not be so.'

(62) Mary is smart *koto/no* o ki-iteiru. 'I hear Mary's being smart, which she is'.  
noun-comp. acc. hear-ing

(adapted from Josephs 1976: 316)

The choice between *to* and *koto/no* results in a subtle difference in meaning, which is reflected in the English translations above (Josephs 1976: 316) and might lead me to argue that *to* encodes that its complement clause expresses a proposition that is not factive. However, as expected from the argument in Section 4.3.2 concerning the utterance-final use of *tte*, the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition that Mary is smart can be a strong one if we add 'from her teacher' as seen in (63).

(63) A: Is Mary smart?

B: Un soo-da yo. Sensei kara mo Marii wa kashikoi *to* ki-iteiru.

Yes so-is s.f.p.-assertive teacher from also Mary topic smart pre-comp. hear-ing

'Yes, it is so. Also from her teacher I hear *that* Mary is smart - and she is.'

In (63), B believes the truth of the proposition that Mary is smart and in order to provide strong evidence for her view, she is reporting the teacher's view. In such a context, the non-factivity of the complement clause which is felt in (61) is not communicated; rather, the speaker resorts to authority and her sureness of the factivity of the complement clause is communicated. This means, as argued with utterance-final uses of *tte*, the non-factivity of complement clauses associated with *to* is not semantic, i.e. is not a linguistic meaning which *to* encodes, but is one of the contextual implications which would be frequently derived. In other words *to/tte* is not encoded as factive or non-factive.

It would be misleading to use *to* (instead of *koto/no*) when the speaker is sure about Mary's smartness, as argued by Kuno (1973). When the speaker knows that Mary is

smart, it is usually odd to say that she hears so, because this would explicitly express that the information is second-hand, and communicate in many contexts an implication that the speaker does not have direct evidence for its truth. So it is usually unacceptable contextually, but it is acceptable semantically, as (63) shows. If *to* does not encode [-factive], this particle should also be able to be used in certain circumstances with factive verbs such as *shiru* (= know). Indeed we can say (64) and observe the co-occurrence of *to* and the factive verb *shiru*(= know):

(64) *Watashi wa sensei kara ki-iteiru node, Marii ga kashikoi to shi-tteiru yo.*

I topic teacher from hear-ing as, Mary subject smart *pre-comp. know-ing* s.f.p  
'Because I've heard from the teacher, I know that Mary is smart.'

*To* was originally a particle for reporting someone else's statement (Kuno 1973: 215). However, as the examples above show, *to* is not only used with verbs of reporting but with all sorts of factive and non-factive predicates. So it can well be analysed as a predicate-complementiser syntactically as many linguists do (Kuno 1973 Nakau 1973 Josephs 1976 etc.). Likewise, utterance-medial *tte* - the colloquial version of *to* - can be analysed as a predicate-complementiser: i.e. *to* can be replaced with *tte* in (59), (61), (63) and (64). And some of the utterance-final uses of *tte* such as (51) might turn out to be cases of a predicate-complementiser, too, if the ellipsis analysis alluded to in the previous section can be maintained.

I will pursue a semantic analysis within the Relevance theory framework, which is compatible with the syntactic analysis of *to* as a predicate-complementiser. I will see if the analysis applied to the utterance-medial use of *to* meshes with the utterance-final use of *to* (used only among older generation) or *tte*. As was argued in the last section, in utterance-final uses *tte* communicates hearsay and conveys that the proposition expressed by the utterance has been uttered in the past and heard by the speaker directly or indirectly (or entertained by the speaker as will be argued in Section 4.3.8). The same thing can be said of utterance-final *to* - the less colloquial version of *tte*.

Now the question is why is it that the utterance-final use of *tte* or *to* always has an element of hearsay while this element in their utterance-medial use in examples such as

(59) and (64) is not felt to be present? This would seem to lead one to the conclusion that the utterance-final *tte* encodes meaning which its medial-use does not. However, I hope to show there is a common semantic core to both of these uses. I will come back to this matter in Section 4.3.9. In the following section, I will introduce another common use of *to*, *to-yuu*.

#### 4.3.6 The Meaning of *To-yuu*

*To-yuu* consists of *to* (= predicate-complementiser discussed in Section 4.3.5) and *yuu* (= say) and it literally means 'that says...'. It can be used utterance-finally as seen in (65) where *to* in *to-yuu* is a predicate complementiser which falls under the scope of the main clause 'People say...'. In the utterance-final use of *to-yuu*, *to* is utterance-medially used and the argument in the last section applies. I will therefore only consider utterance-medial uses of *to-yuu*.

- (65) Hitobito wa Mary wa kashikoi *to(tte)* yuu.  
 people topic Mary topic smart *that* say  
 'People *say that* Mary is smart.'

The utterance-medial use of *to-yuu* is standardly analysed as a noun-complementiser (Joseph 1976; Nakau 1973 etc.). As for its semantics, Josephs (1976: 359) assumes that "*to-yuu* connotes varying degrees of doubt on the part of the speaker that the embedded proposition (i.e. the noun complement) is true" and that "it has an inherent meaning that is essentially non-factive". Furthermore, he argues that the anomaly of the factive noun-complementiser *koto* used with non-factive predicates such as *utagawashii* (= is doubtful) and *machigaida* (= is mistaken) can be resolved by the addition of *to-yuu*. So we have the following example:

- (66) Marii ga kashikoi *to-yuu koto/koto\** wa utagawashii.  
 Mary sub. smart n-comp/n-comp topic doubtful  
 'That Mary is smart is doubtful.(The fact that Mary is smart is doubtful)'

It has to be noted here that although *to-yuu* is analysed as a noun-complementiser which is associated with non-factivity (Nakau 1973), the use of *to-yuu* alone without *koto* (= fact) would be anomalous syntactically in (66). It must always have a noun antecedent, as *to-yuu* alone cannot form noun clauses. Instead of *koto* we can have *shirase* (= news) or *houkoku* (= report) as antecedents in (66). So *to-yuu-koto*, not *to-yuu* nominalises the clause that Mary is smart, and the internal structure of *to-yuu koto* would be something like [TO-YUU [KOTO]n]comp.

Now we can use *to-yuu koto* in examples such as (67) in which factivity of the noun clause is established as it is predicated with factive verbs such as *shiru* (= know). In (67) the use of *to-yuu* does not make the factivity of *koto* non-factive as was assumed in (66), or create a [+ factive], [- factive] contradiction.

(67) Mary ga kashikoi *to-yuu koto* wa yoku shi-tteiru.

Mary sub. smart. n-comp. topic well know-ing

'I know full well (*the fact*) that Mary is smart.'

So the points made about the predicate-complementiser *to* apply also to the noun-complementiser *to-yuu*. That is, the inherent meaning of *to-yuu* is not non-factivity. The non-factive understanding arises contextually. In (66), for instance, the non-factive connotation of the noun clause is due to the non-factive predicate *utagawashii* (= is doubtful), and this goes well with *to-yuu* which is indifferent to factive/non-factive paradigms, and in this case associated with non-factivity.

In (67), on the other hand, the proposition expressed by the noun clause is understood as factive but this factivity arises on the basis of the semantics of elements other than *to-yuu*, i.e. due to the factive verb *shiru* (= know). And again, this is totally compatible with the use of *to-yuu* which can nominalise factive and non-factive clauses given an appropriate antecedent noun, and can be used with factive and non-factive predicates.

*To-yuu* and the colloquial version *tte-yuu* have the literal meaning '...that says...', and apart from *koto* which means 'the fact', they are mostly used with head nouns designating messages or forms of communication such as *shirase* (= news) and *houkoku*(= report) (Alfonso 1966: 1155-60). This seems to be further evidence for *to*, or the colloquial version *tte*, being a particle for reporting someone else's or the speaker's previous speech.

However, what still remains to be accounted for is the use of *to* or *tte* with verbs not designating communication, as in examples (59) and (64) (repeated below), i.e. cases where the hearsay element seems to have been lost.

(59) Mary wa kashikoi *to* omou.

Mary topic smart predicate-comp. think

'I think *that* Mary is smart.'

(64) Watashi wa sensei kara ki-iteiru node, Marii ga kashikoi *to* shi-tteriru yo.

I topic teacher from hear-ring as, Mary subject smart pre-comp. know-ing s.f.p.

'Because I've heard from the teacher, I know *that* Mary is smart.'

It might indeed be the case that no cases of utterance-medial *to/tte* communicate any hearsay feel. That is, when utterance-medial *to/tte* is used with verbs of some sort of communication, the hearsay feel comes from those verbs not from the complementiser *to/tte*. In the next section, I will argue that the hearsay feel is derived in the form of a higher-level explicature for whose recovery utterance-final *to/tte*, not utterance-medial *to/tte*, is partly responsible. I will argue that its role is one of constraining the recovery of higher-level explicatures in relevance-theoretic terms.

#### 4.3.7 *Tte* as a Procedural Constraint on Higher-level Explicatures

In 2.3 I have introduced the distinction between explicit and implicit content in Relevance theory. An utterance is considered to have only one identifiable

propositional form (= the truth-conditional content) but it can have many explicatures. An explicature can be the propositional form of an utterance which is recovered by enriching a linguistically encoded logical form to the point where it expresses a determinate proposition, or can be a further developed one which is recovered by embedding the propositional form under higher-level descriptions of speech act or attitudinal verb type.

So (68) might have higher-level explicatures such as (69)-(71).

(68) A (happily): Mary is smart.

(69) The speaker says that Mary is smart.

(70) The speaker believes that Mary is smart.

(71) The speaker is pleased that Mary is smart.

And (70) might be further elaborated so as to represent the speaker's degree of conviction (very strong, moderately strong, etc.)

I have argued that the utterance-final use of *tte* is essentially quotative and can be appended only to an utterance which was heard by the speaker directly or indirectly at one time in the past. Now *tte* in (48) (repeated below) marks a sub-type of interpretive use which, according to Ifantidou (1994: 213), automatically suspends the speaker's commitment. So the recovery of (70) is automatically suspended. Instead, *tte* constrains the recovery of a higher-level description such as the following (72) and when context allows, (72)' where the strength of the speaker's belief has to be further explicated contextually.

(48) Mary is smart *tte*.

(72) Someone (the speaker in the past) said that Mary is smart.

(72)'The speaker believes (based on hearsay evidence) that Mary is smart.

When (48) is used to report someone's speech or opinion, a higher-level explicature such as (72) is the assumption which carries the main relevance, i.e. where the point of the utterance lies. When the main relevance lies here and context allows, (72) is likely

to be enriched into a more specific content such as 'Peter said that...' etc. Another possible analysis of reporting cases such as (51)B (repeated below) would be that *tte* is a complementiser and the hearer recovers the main clause such as 'Mary's teacher said that...' as part of the propositional form of an utterance.

(51)A: What did Mary's teacher say?

B: Mary ga kashikoi *tte*. 'Mary is smart, *she says*.'

Then, *tte* would not be functioning as a hearsay particle but a predicate-complementiser.

On the other hand, when (48) is uttered as a case of echoic use, a range of speaker's propositional attitude including varying degree of commitment may be recovered pragmatically. In the case of an irony, higher-level attitudinal descriptions such as 'The speaker believes it is ridiculous for someone to say that...' and what may be inferred from that if the speaker is considered trustworthy: i.e. 'It is ridiculous for someone to say that...' are contextually recovered, considerably enriching the minimal information *tte* encodes. These are the assumptions where the main relevance lies, i.e. which carry the contextual effects and (72), though communicated, is less important.

Let us look again at some of the utterance-medial complementiser cases, such as (73) and (74) which do not communicate a feel of reporting or quoting at all, and where a higher-level description of the sort in (72) is obviously not communicated.

(73) Mary is smart *tte* shitteiru. 'I know *that* Mary is smart.'

(74) Mary is smart *tte* utagawashii. 'It is doubtful *that* Mary is smart.'

Why this is so follows from the definition of higher-level explicature. Higher-level explicatures are recovered by embedding the whole proposition expressed, not a part of the proposition i.e. complement clauses to which *tte* is attached. For example, Wilson (1994) says that it is the mood indicators of the MAIN CLAUSE such as the sentence type (e.g. indicative, imperative, etc.) and attitudinal particles (e.g. English *well*) that determine the speaker's propositional attitude. A hearsay feel is also reflected in the



higher-level description such as (72), to which the complementiser *tte* obviously does not contribute.

Now the speaker's attitudes such as belief and disbelief are also expressed to the complement clause as seen in (75) and (76). However, (75) and (76) are straightforward logical implications of (73) and (74) respectively, hinging on the meaning of the main verb and they are not recovered based on the information encoded by *tte*.

(75) The speaker believes that Mary is smart.

(76) The speaker does not believe that Mary is smart.

In 4.2.5 I argued that *ne* encodes procedural information that the speaker desires to establish (interpretively represented) assumptions communicated by an utterance as common ground, and also argued that it constrains the construction of higher-level representations.

Similarly, the semantics of the utterance-final *tte* is not conceptual but procedural unlike English hearsay adverbs such as *reportedly* and *allegedly* argued by Ifantidou-Trouki (1993). *Tte* does not map onto a conceptual representation and therefore we cannot deny its meaning with phrases such as 'You haven't heard so'. Instead of making a contribution to a conceptual representation, it constrains the hearer's inference processes in constructing higher-level descriptions I have argued so far.

Let us consider (52) again:

(52) A: Our teacher said that Mary is smart.

B: Mary ga kashikoi *tte*?!

Mary sub smart s.f.p.-hearsay

'Mary is smart?! *Did she say that? Goodness!*'

In this utterance, the use of *tte* suspends the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition that Mary is smart, and the propositional form, though it is enriched to the point where it is a determinate proposition, is not communicated as a true assumption, i.e. is not communicated as an explicature. On the other hand, assumptions which

embed this proposition in higher-level descriptions such as (77) and (78) are communicated to the hearer as true assumptions, i.e. are explicatures.

(77) The speaker is surprised that the teacher has said that Mary is smart.

(78) The speaker believes that the teacher has said that Mary is smart.

These are developed from another higher-level explicature (79) which is recovered on the basis of the information encoded by *tte* (i.e. quotative attributive use) and contextual information. And if the hearer trusts the teacher enough, (79) provides evidence for (80). In Relevance theory all of these constitute part of the explicit import of an utterance.

(79) The teacher said that Mary is smart.

(80) The speaker believes (on hearsay basis) that Mary is smart.

This does not mean that *tte*-appended utterances may never have their propositional form communicated to the hearer as a true assumption, i.e. explicated. Let us consider (81):

(81) (Looking at the teacher's report) Mary is smart *tte*.

In this example, the speaker is echoing the proposition to which she gives her own full endorsement: this is because the proposition is attributed to an authority. Then (81) communicates the propositional form (82) as an explicature and (83) as a higher-level explicature derived as a result of the constraint imposed by *tte* and the contextual information.

(82) Mary is smart.

(83) The teacher said that Mary is smart.

As the attribution is made to the authoritative report, another higher-level explicature (84) in which a more specific description of the speaker's belief is given, is likely to be communicated.

(84) The speaker strongly believes that Mary is smart.

Wilson & Sperber (1993: 22) argue that the content of this type of higher-level representation will have much more specific and richer concepts than simple abstractions such as 'believing that' or 'saying that', and (84) is a case in point. My claim, then, is that the Japanese hearsay particle *tte* does not encode any concept, but encodes the procedural information that the propositional form is attributed to an utterance or the speaker's thought (i.e. a representation directly accessible to the speaker). This information constrains the sort of higher-level explicatures that are derived.

In (52)B the utterance-final *tte* encodes the information that the propositional form is attributed to an utterance, i.e. in this case the teacher's utterance that Mary is smart, thus constraining the recovery of a higher-level explicature such as (83) where the source of attribution is specified. There are cases in which the source of the *tte*-appended utterance cannot be recovered contextually and it is not important. In such a case *tte* constrains the recovery of a higher-level explicature such as 'someone said that...' and it is relevant without further specification as in (83). Such an abstract higher-level explicature is derived on the basis of the hearsay indicator, *tte*, which in one context leads the hearer to interpret the speaker's weakly believing the proposition expressed; and in another, the speaker's having strong commitment to the proposition expressed.

In this section, I argued that the utterance-final *tte* has a procedural semantics of constraining the recovery of higher-level explicatures. That is, what *tte* encodes is not a conceptual representation, but a set of clues (i.e. quotative attributive use) for constructing ones, i.e. higher-level explicatures such as (83). So it can be characterised as making a direct contribution to inference processes, and this type of semantic

information, together with contextual information and the pragmatic criterion based on optimal relevance will determine the content of the higher-level explicatures.

Now Japanese is a language which has a grammaticalised evidential system. The main types of evidentiality are reporting someone else's sensations, reporting something which is not knowable and indicating that information was derived via hearsay or inference (Chafe & Nichols 1986: x). In the next section I will turn to the issue of evidentiality.

#### 4.3.8 Utterance-final *Tte* and Evidentiality

Let me now consider (85)B - a standard answer to the question in (85)A. In such a case, *tte* seems to be clearly a complementiser.

(85) A: What does Mary's teacher think of her?

B: Mary wa kashikoi *tte* omotte-iru yo.

Mary topic smart comp. think-ing s.f.p.-assertive

'She thinks *that* Mary is smart.'

C: Mary wa kashikoi *tte*.

Mary topic smart s.f.p.-hearsay

'Mary is smart, *she thinks/That* Mary is smart.'

Now, as we might expect, we can also have (85)C as a reply to A, a case of using the so-called hearsay particle. In this example, the utterance achieves relevance by informing the hearer that the teacher thinks that Mary is smart. This might appear to be a counter-example to my claim that *tte* attributes utterances, but not thoughts, contributing to the recovery of higher-level explicatures such as (72). The point lies with reporting the teacher's thought as in (85)B.

However, the propositional form is attributed to what the speaker must have heard from the teacher directly or indirectly, not to what the speaker B-C is speculating as to

what the teacher is thinking about Mary. Otherwise, (85)B-C would not be uttered in Japanese. The reason that we have hearsay feel from (85)B does not follow from the presence of *tte* but follows from the fact that the speaker is asserting someone else's thinking which is not knowable without her having heard him saying so directly or indirectly. On the other hand, the hearsay element in (85)C is present due to the utterance-final *tte* which distinguishes this sort of case from (73) and (74).

If A asks B to speculate on what B thinks the teacher thinks of Mary, a natural way of questioning in Japanese is the following way as expressed in English in (86)A, and a natural way to answer this would be (86)B in which the speaker's thinking is explicitly given, or (86)C in which the inferential forms of modals *yoo mitai* etc. readily translated as 'seem', 'look like', 'appear' or left untranslated are used (Aoki 1986). As was mentioned, in Japanese the thought, belief, desire, feeling etc. of others cannot be directly asserted as in English, but must be marked with some evidential indicators (Aoki 1986).

(86) A: What do you think Mary's teacher thinks of her?

B: Mary wa kashikoi *tte* omotte-iru *tte/to* omou yo.

Mary topic smart comp. think-ing comp. think s.f.p.-assertive

'I think *that* the teacher thinks *that* Mary is smart.'

C: Mary wa kashikoi *tte/to* omotte-iru-yoo/mitai.

Mary topic smart comp. think-ing-seem/appear (inferential modals)

'The teacher seems to think *that* Mary is smart.'

In (86)B the speaker has to explicitly give the verb of B's (the speaker's) thinking *omotte-iru* (=think-ing) as the information on Mary's smartness has never been heard by B and it is a pure speculation of B regarding what the teacher is thinking of Mary. In such a case, the utterance-medial *tte*, as I mentioned, functions as a complementiser and as such does not contribute to the recovery of higher-level explicatures which communicate a feel of hearsay. This is comparable to *tte* used in (73) and (74) where

the predicate of the main clause is describing the speaker's propositional attitude and *tte* is used as a complementiser.

It has to be noted however that the utterance can echo a thought of the speaker as well as an utterance of the speaker in the past. Let us consider (87):

(87) Mary is smart *tte*?! What am I thinking?

(87) shows that the speaker did not have to utter it in order to echo it, i.e. she did not have to utter overtly in the past that Mary is smart. The speaker could echo her own thought and ridicule it. How does this fit with the hearsay/quotative nature of *tte*? Although 'hearsay' evidence for a particular view is indirect evidence, the utterance which provides this evidence has itself been directly perceived (aurally or visually). We all have a kind of direct access to our own thoughts which we do not have to other people's thoughts, so we may consider or think about our own (unuttered) thoughts in much the same way as we may think about other people's utterances. I think it is this that makes the hearsay particle use possible in these cases.

In the case of someone else's unuttered thought, on the other hand, the speaker does not have direct access but can only speculate about what that person thinks, and verbs of the speaker's thinking so or inferential modals have to be explicitly used as seen in (86)B-C. When the speaker utters (85)C, i.e. apparently echoing someone else's thought, the thought must have been expressed at some stage and heard by the speaker directly or indirectly, thereby giving her some evidence for it, and this makes the use of the hearsay particle *tte* possible. This seems to explain why *tte* can be appended to an utterance which involves attributing a thought to the speaker herself as in (87), but not to an utterance which attributes an unverballed thought to someone else.

So we have to modify (72) as in the following:

(88) Someone said or the speaker thinks or thought that...

I would now like to argue that utterance-final *tte/to* encodes procedural information such as (88) which constrains the construction of higher-level explicatures.

#### 4.3.9 Conclusions

In the recent Relevance theoretic work on evidentials, Ifantidou (1994: 213) argues that English evidentials such as *allegedly* and *reportedly* affect the truth-conditional content of an utterance by changing the status of the proposition to an interpretive one. Further, she argues that the use of a parenthetical comment like *I hear* changes the truth-conditions of the utterance, i.e. it contributes to the proposition expressed. Her analysis complies with Blass (1990: 123) who considers Sissala interpretive use marker *re* to be truth-conditional.

Now it is also true that the use of *tte* makes the proposition of an utterance interpretive. Then, similarly, it affects the truth-conditional status of an utterance and this means that *tte* contributes to the proposition expressed. Although *tte* does not encode concepts as *allegedly*, *reportedly* or *I hear* do, it contributes to the proposition expressed in that it determines the status of representation as interpretive.

Then, I have to discard the assumption made by Japanese grammarians that Japanese sentence-final particles do not affect the truth-conditions of an utterance. *Ne* does not change the truth-conditions of an utterance as shown in (22)-(23) (repeated below), nor does it change the truth-conditional status of the proposition that falls within its scope.

(22) Paris is beautiful.

(23) Paris is beautiful *ne* (= isn't it?)

*Tte*, however, suspends the speaker's commitment and does change the truth-conditional status by making the proposition interpretive. That is, different properties are associated with sentence-final particles: non-truth-conditional for *ne* and truth-conditional for *tte*, and the Japanese grammarians general claim does not hold. This means that sentence-final particles cannot be given a unified semantic analysis as to the question of whether or not they contribute to the proposition expressed.

Hearsay particles are standardly included as a case of evidentials (Palmer 1986: 53) and this seems correct as the source of evidence is what someone has said. Against this, Blass (1989; 1990) has shown that supposed hearsay data from Sissala are better analysed as general markers of 'interpretive use' rather than as restricted to the reporting of actual speech, or as belonging to a modal/evidential system.

The Japanese data, however, show that *tte* favours an analysis of hearsay particles as markers of quotative attributive use, over an analysis as markers of 'speaker's diminished commitment' or those of 'interpretive' or perfectly general attributive uses. I claimed that the utterance-final *tte* communicates a feel of hearsay by encoding the procedural information that the propositional form is attributed to an utterance or the speaker's thought, i.e. a quotative attributive use, and that it constrains the recovery of higher-level explicatures.

The utterance-medial *tte*, on the other hand, does not constrain the recovery of higher-level explicatures and does not communicate any feel of hearsay. This follows from the definition of higher-level explicatures in that they are recovered by embedding the whole proposition, not a part of the proposition such as a complement clause the utterance-medial *tte* marks.

The original meaning of *to* - the more formal version of *tte* - was reporting someone else's statement (Kuno 1973: 215), but it is true that the complementiser *tte* in (73) and (74) (repeated below) reports the speaker's thought that Mary is smart.

(73) Mary is smart *tte* shitteiru. 'I know *that* Mary is smart.'

(74) Mary is smart *tte* utagawashii. 'It is doubtful *that* Mary is smart.'

The proposition the complementiser *to* or *tte* marks does not describe the state of affairs in the world, but interprets someone's thought. So we might be able to argue that the complementiser *to* or *tte* marks 'interpretive use'. Indeed Blass (1990: 123) mentions that the English complementiser *that* is a candidate for an interpretive-use marker.

If this line of argument is correct, we could give a unified analysis for both the utterance-medial and final *tte*. That is, *tte* in both the utterance-medial and final uses indicates 'interpretive use': i.e. the complementiser *tte* marks general 'interpretive use'



while the utterance-final particle *tte* has a narrower semantics, i.e. indicates attribution to a previous utterance or the speaker's thought which is a quotative attributive use, i.e. a sub-type of 'interpretive use'.

I have argued that the utterance-final *tte* linguistically encodes procedural information i.e. clues for constraining a conceptual representation i.e. a higher-level explicature. Like *ne* the semantics of the utterance-final *tte* is not conceptual but procedural, encoding quotative attributive use, a sub-case of 'interpretive use'. I would now like to give a full analysis of the Japanese interrogative particle *ka* which, like English interrogative syntax, is likely to mark 'interpretive use'.

#### 4.4 Japanese Sentence-final Particle *Ka*

##### 4.4.1 Introduction

In 4.2.2.2 I argued against Tsuchihashi (1983) who does not consider declaratives and interrogatives as discrete categories. Instead I argued that they have totally distinct properties: i.e. declaratives encode descriptive representations while interrogatives encode interpretive representations. I argued that declaratives with the speaker's weak endorsement might have similar pragmatic effects to the interrogative: e.g. (18) replied to (17):

(17) It may be raining outside *ne*.

(18) No, (rain) isn't falling. (= No, it isn't.)

Conversely, yes-no interrogatives might have the pragmatic effects of communicating the speaker's weak endorsement of their fully propositional logical form. For example, the interrogative 'Is it raining?' might well communicate that the speaker is not certain that it is raining. I am, however, interested in the semantics of *ka* rather than its pragmatic effect and I would first like to consider Japanese interrogatives.

While English interrogatives are usually marked by syntactic features such as subject-auxiliary inversion, wh-fronting etc., Japanese interrogatives are marked by the use of the sentence-final particle *ka* and the use of question words such as *dare* 'who', *nani* 'what', etc. Both in English and in Japanese, rising intonation can turn a statement into a question and there are some interesting correlations between intonation and sentence types. However, as Bolinger (1989: 98) argues, no intonation is associated exclusively with any particular sentence type. So intonation is not a primary concern here as basically any intonation can occur with an interrogative which is indicated in some other way.

Examples of interrogatives in Japanese are given in (90) -(92), with the corresponding declaratives in (89) :

(89) Yamada-san wa gakusei desu-0.

Mr. Yamada topic student is-present (0 = no inflection)

'Mr. Yamada is a student.'

Yamada-san wa Tokyo ni iki-mashita.

Mr. Yamada topic Tokyo to go-past

'Mr. Yamada went to Tokyo.'

Tokyo ni Yamada-san wa iki-mashita.

Tokyo to Mr. Yamada topic go-past

'Mr. Yamada went to Tokyo.'

(90) Yamada-san wa gakusei desu-0 *ka?*

Mr. Yamada topic student is-present Question-marker

'Is Mr. Yamada a student?'

(91) Yamada-san wa doko ni iki-mashita *ka?*

Mr. Yamada topic where to go-past Q-marker

'Where did Mr. Yamada go?'

(92) *Doko ni Yamada-san wa iki-mashita?*

Where to Mr. Yamada topic go-past

‘Where did Mr. Yamada go?’

The verb inflection we see in (89)-(92) is an indication of tense rather than of an interrogative mood and, as the examples show, Japanese does not have an interrogative mood in this sense. Neither is there any syntactic marking of questions: i.e. there is no *wh*-fronting, so both (91) and (92) are possible; there is no subject-auxiliary inversion, as seen in (90) -(92) . Note that it is not obligatory to use *ka* in yes-no interrogatives (since rising intonation can turn a statement into a question), nor in *wh*-interrogatives (see (92) ). Japanese interrogatives seem to be indicated by the use of *ka* as well as interrogative words such as *doko* 'where'. So Japanese interrogatives are marked lexically rather than syntactically.

As is the case with English interrogatives, *ka*-appended utterances are often analysed as encoding an underlying performative verb of asking or a speech act of requesting information (Uyeno 1971, Tsuchihashi 1983). Kendal (1985: 172), on the other hand, argues that *ka*, like modals, is associated with the degree of speaker commitment (see 4.4.3). In the following section, I will show that the problems with the existing analyses for *ne* also apply to *ka*.

#### 4.4.2 Problems with Performative Verb/Speech Act Analyses

Uyeno (1971) analyses *ka* within the framework of generative semantics. She (1971: 39) maintains that the use of *ka* as a sentence-final particle is "a direct reflex of the performative verb 'ask'", so she would argue that *ka* encodes the underlying performative verb 'ask' which appears in the logical form of a *ka*-appended utterance.

Tsuchihashi (1983: 361), on the other hand, places *ka* on a speech act continuum which has a 'declarative' at one end and an 'interrogative' at the other. She argues that many Japanese sentence-final particles, including *ka*, represent the lexicalisation of a

speech act continuum, and that *ka* falls towards the interrogative end of the continuum. Tsuchihashi (1983) takes this idea of the non-discrete nature of speech acts from Givon (1982: 105).

A major problem with these performative verb/speech act analyses is that they cannot explain the non-final use of *ka*. For example, *ka*-appended sentences can be embedded in another clause as seen in (93) and (94) :

(93) (Mr. Yamada is a student *ka dou* (= how) *ka* ) shirimasen.

I do not know (whether Mr. Yamada is a student).

(94) (Where Mr. Yamada went *ka* ) shirimasen.

I do not know (where Mr. Yamada went).

*Ka* is required in embedded interrogatives which confirms the claim that it is an interrogative marker. (93) can be compared with an embedded declarative (95) in which not *ka* but the complementiser *to* or *tte* is required (see 4.3.5):

(95) (That Mr. Yamada is a student *to/tte*) shiranakatta.

I did not know (that Mr. Yamada is a student).

(94) would not be correctly paraphrased as “I do not know *I ask* where Mr. Yamada went” as the performative verb account would seem to predict. From a speech-act point of view, (94) is certainly a declarative sentence which would be associated with a performative verb ‘state’, so here the force of asking, supposedly encoded by *ka*, has to be lost. This is, of course, a quite general problem for speech-act analyses of interrogatives.

Let us nevertheless pursue the analyses of Uyeno (1971) and Tsuchihashi (1983) a bit further. On their approach, the sentence-final particle *ka* encodes a performative verb ‘ask’, or a speech act of asking that an interrogative sentence type is usually associated with. Hence *ka* is treated as linguistically encoding the following conceptual representation:

(96) The speaker is asking -----.

A yes-no question such as (90) might encode the information in (97) while a wh-question such as (91) and (92) might encode the information in (98) :

(97) The speaker is asking whether Mr. Yamada is a student.

(98) The speaker is asking where Mr. Yamada went.

On this approach, the conceptual representation (96) is not treated as part of the proposition expressed by the utterances, but as a non-truth-conditional aspect of sentence meaning. Austin (1962) classified this kind of non-truth-conditional meaning via a taxonomy of performative verbs such as ‘asking’, while Searle (1976) presented a more abstract scheme of five basic kinds of act, including directives, together with felicity conditions on the successful performance of these acts.

Asking is defined by Searle and his followers as a directive speech act, which is an attempt to get the hearer to do something: in this case, to provide information (Searle 1976). The felicity conditions on requests for information, and hence on asking, are that the speaker believes the hearer is able to provide the information, the speaker does not already have the information and the speaker wants the hearer to supply the information.

The objections to this approach to the semantics of English interrogatives are well known, and have been discussed extensively by Wilson & Sperber (1988a). These objections apply just as much to comparable analyses of *ka* in Japanese. I will show in the following examples that even literal and serious cases of *ka*-appended sentences do not always have the force of requests for information, given the characterisation of requests for information discussed above.

Consider (99) and (100) :

(99) Tabako wa suwa-nai to dare ga iimashita ka?  
cigarette topic smoke-not quotative who focus said Q-marker  
‘Who said that he will not smoke?’

(The hearer has already claimed that he will not smoke)

(100) Ittai disinfureeshion to wa nani-o imisuru no *ka*?

on earth disinflation quotative topic what-acc. mean nom. Q-marker

‘What on earth does ‘disinflation’ mean?’

(Lecturer addressing students)

(The National Language Institute: 1951: 13)

(99) is not a request for information as defined above. The speaker of (99) already has the information concerning who said that he will not smoke. The speaker is not requesting the hearer to provide this information, as the speech act analysis requires.

(99) is a rhetorical question and functions as a reminder.

(100) may be uttered as an expository question. If so, it is not a request for information as defined above. A lecturer who utters (100) as an expository question already knows the answer, and is aiming to arouse the students' interest in certain information rather than getting them to provide it. She will most likely follow the utterance in (100) with an answer. Expository questions such as (100) are in fact offers of information rather than requests for information (Wilson & Sperber 1988a.).

There are many other counter-examples to performative verb/speech act type analyses of interrogatives. They include exam questions, guess-questions in which the speaker already knows the answer, and surprise questions in which the expression of surprise is more relevant than any element of asking (See Wilson & Sperber 1988a. for further counter-examples). All these counter-examples apply to *ka* in Japanese. This confirms that the analysis of *ka* as encoding a conceptual representation such as (96) is not appropriate and so in 4.4.9 I will pursue a procedural analysis of this particle. In the following section, I will turn to the analysis of Kendal (1985), which does not resort to the notion of speech act/performative verb.

#### 4.4.3 *Ka* and Strength of Commitment

It is not the particle *ka* alone that determines the speech act communicated by an interrogative in Japanese. Many other elements, including lexical items such as *dare* 'who' and *doko* 'where', rising intonation, contextual information etc., are involved. By not stipulating any relation between *ka* and an underlying performative verb or speech act type, Kendal (1985)'s analysis in terms of degrees of commitment allows for the full range of illocutionary forces (e.g. reminding in (99) ) that *ka* can express in interaction with different elements of linguistic form and context. Moreover, her analysis avoids the problems that arise in explaining the non-final use of *ka* , how combinations of particles such as *ka-ne/yo* work, and so on, because *ka* is not associated with any particular illocutionary force.

As I mentioned in 4.2.2.3, Kendal (1985: 171) places some modals and sentence-final particles, including *ka* , on a speaker commitment scale which has 'strong' at one end and 'weak' at the other. *Ka* is placed near the weak end of the scale. Kendal (1985: 164-5) argues that *ka* is used when the speaker is not sure whether the proposition expressed is true or false. She also argues that *ka* makes absolutely no claims about the state of affairs described (e.g. by the proposition "the window is open"), and requires the hearer to determine whether the proposition is true. Thus Kendal might argue that *ka* in (90) expresses the speaker's weak or rather zero commitment to the proposition that Mr. Yamada is a student. Similarly, Haga (1953: 54) analyses *ka* as expressing the speaker's doubt about the truth of the proposition expressed by a *ka*-appended utterance.

However, *ka* is not always used in utterances where the speaker has weak or zero commitment to the proposition (or logical form) expressed. For example, in the rhetorical question (99) , the speaker is committed to the truth of the proposition that the hearer said at some time that he would never smoke. Similarly, in the expository question (100) , the speaker is committed to the truth of the proposition that *disinflation* has a certain meaning.

Or consider the following:

(101) A: Ichijikan kakarimasu yo.

one hour will take s.f.p.-assertive

‘It will take an hour.’

B: Ichijikan kakarimasu *ka*? Ja, moo dekakenakya.

one hour will take Q-marker Then, now must leave

‘It will take an hour? I have to leave now then.’

(Mizutani & Mizutani 1987: 137)

In (101)B the speaker is not expressing doubt about the proposition that it will take an hour. Rather, she indicates that she believes it and she follows it up by expressing a conclusion she has drawn on the basis of her belief in it. So *ka* can be associated with both strong and weak speaker commitment to the proposition expressed by an utterance, and it seems unlikely that analysing *ka* as indicating a particular degree of commitment will work.

There is another way of interpreting Kendal's proposal, however. At one point she says, "When used sentence-finally, the effect of using a SFP (sentence-final particle) is that speakers indicate an attitude toward some IF (illocutionary force) - they are still asking or telling, explaining or warning, etc.(as determined by other elements in the utterance and by context), but with a greater or lesser degree of strength or conviction (which I call commitment)" (Kendal 1985: 170).

Here, she seems to be assuming that *ka* encodes an interrogative force but one that comes with a weak intensity as compared with other interrogative indicators such as *dare* 'who' and *doko* 'where'. That is, by appending *ka*, the strength of the request for information will become weaker. However, it is not the case that the *ka*-appended interrogative (91) makes a request with less strength than (92), which has no *ka*. Similarly, in (99) and (100), *ka* does not weaken the strength of a request for information, since there is no request for information communicated in these examples ((99) is a rhetorical question and (100) an expository question). So her argument for 'weak intensity' of the requesting force does not seem to hold.



Furthermore, the arguments given above against speech act analyses of interrogatives hold here too. Not all *ka*-appended utterances are requests for information as defined above. In particular, the existence of embedded interrogatives is a decisive objection to the speech act approach so that *ka* cannot be weakening a request force in an embedded case. Thus existing analyses of *ka* in terms of performative verbs/speech act types and speaker commitment have failed. We need an adequate semantics for *ka* which will interact with contextual and other pragmatic factors to yield a full account of all its uses. I would now like to explore the possibility of a Relevance-based approach.

#### 4.4.4 Interrogative-marker *Ka* and Interpretive Use

Recall that propositional forms can be used to represent either states of affairs in the world or other propositional forms. In the former case, which Sperber & Wilson (1986) call 'descriptive representation', the relation between the representation and what is represented is truth-conditional. In the latter, which Sperber & Wilson (1986) call 'interpretive representation', the relation is one of logical resemblance.

In Sperber & Wilson's framework, every utterance is an interpretation of a thought of the speaker's, in the sense that the propositional form of the utterance is intended to resemble the propositional form of the thought communicated to a greater or lesser degree. However, some utterances are interpretive in a second order way, in that the thoughts they interpret are themselves interpretations of other thoughts or utterances.

This second order interpretation, called interpretive use, characterises, on the one hand, the use of language in reported speech/echoic utterances to a sub-set of which the hearsay particle *tte* is appended, and on the other, the meaning encoded by interrogatives or exclamatives. Recall also Sperber & Wilson (1986; Wilson & Sperber 1988a) argue that interrogatives and exclamatives are interpretive representations of *desirable* thoughts, by which it is meant that the thoughts so represented are seen as relevant to the speaker and/or to the hearer.

Here, I should make it clear what I mean by interrogatives, as I do not wish to conflate a certain linguistic form i.e. an interrogative, with the illocutionary force that

is often associated with it. Uyeno (1971) and Tsuchihashi (1983) assume that *ka*-appended utterances are Japanese interrogatives, which are in turn associated with the illocutionary force or speech act type of asking. I maintain that a Japanese interrogative is a certain linguistic form, indicated by the use of *ka* and interrogative words such as *doko* 'where', as seen in (91)-(92). By contrast, I have argued that *ka* does not encode illocutionary force representations (i.e. a conceptual representation) such as (96).

Following Wilson & Sperber (1988a), I argue that an interrogative indicates a rather abstract property. In the first place, it is specialised for interpretive rather than descriptive use. In the second place, it indicates that the logical form expressed is a representation of a desirable thought, and hence that the thought so represented would be relevant if true. On this account, the logical form of an interrogative does not descriptively represent any state of affairs, but interpretively represents a desirable thought. Hence I assume that the logical forms of Japanese interrogatives such as (91)-(92) and (99)-(100) or yes-no questions such as (90) do not represent any state of affairs either, but interpretively represent a certain thought (the answer to the question) and indicate that it is desirable (relevant) from someone's point of view.

There is an indeterminacy here - desirable/relevant to whom?, speaker or hearer? According to Sperber & Wilson, this is resolved contextually and is one of the factors determining the type of 'question' communicated. For example, in genuine questions such as (90), in which the speaker does not know whether Mr. Yamada is a student or not, the speaker indicates that she regards the answer as relevant to the speaker herself. To be relevant, the answer must have a range of contextual effects. For example, the answer to (90) might imply that Mr. Yamada can get a discount for theatre tickets, that he can travel with reduced fare by trains, that he is on tight budget, and so on.

In the case of rhetorical questions such as (99), the speaker already knows the answer, i.e. that the hearer has said at a certain time that he will not smoke. Here the speaker indicates that she regards the answer as relevant not to the speaker herself but to the hearer. For instance, the speaker might have caught the hearer smoking despite the fact that the hearer promised the speaker not to smoke again. In expository

questions such as (100) , there is no expectation on the speaker's part that the hearer will supply the answer and this is clear from the circumstances, e.g. a formal lecture. In (100) the speaker indicates that she regards the answer as relevant to the hearer(s) and the question is designed to arouse their interest. So the analysis of *ka* as an interrogative particle indicating the desirability/relevance of a thought which would constitute its answer seems to account nicely for the examples (90), (91), (99) and (100) .

However, there are some uses of *ka* in Japanese that do not, at first sight, fit happily into this interrogative analysis. In (101)B (repeated below), for example, since both speaker and hearer already know the answer, it does not seem that *ka* can be indicating that the answer would be relevant to either speaker or hearer.

(101)A: It will take an hour.

B: It will take an hour *ka*? I have to leave now then.

On the other hand, (101)B is clearly echoic, and one might be tempted to think that here *ka* is encoding the information that the utterance is echoic. If this analysis proved correct, *ka* might be seen as a general indicator of all types of interpretive use, rather than an indicator of the particular type of interpretive use associated with interrogative utterances. In the next section, I will consider this more general analysis, and argue against it.

#### 4.4.5 *Ka* and Echoic Utterances

Recall that in Relevance theory, reported speech and echoic utterances are varieties of interpretive use. They interpretively represent attributed thoughts/utterances: that is, someone else's thoughts/utterances or the speaker's thoughts/utterances in the past. This attributive aspect of the second order interpretation can achieve relevance in either of the following ways: by informing the hearer that someone has said/thinks something, or by informing the hearer of the fact that the speaker has in mind what some individual(s) say/think and has a certain attitude to it.

(101)B cannot achieve relevance in the former way, as there is no point in B's informing A of what A has just said. When interpretations achieve relevance in the latter way, Sperber & Wilson (1986: 238) say that they are echoic. Thus *ka* in (101)B might appear to be indicating echoic use (a sub-type of interpretive use). Let me now look at (101) again (repeated below):

(101) A: Ichijikan kakarimasu yo.

one hour will take s.f.p.-assertive

'It will take an hour.'

B: Ichijikan kakarimasu *ka*? Ja, moo dekenakya.

one hour will take Q-Marker Then, now must leave.

'It will take an hour? Then I have to leave now.'

(101)A expresses the proposition that it will take an hour, and gives it A's strong backing (indicated by the use of the assertive particle *yo*). Based on his acceptance of the truth of this proposition, B concludes that he must leave straightway. A is not invited to answer or respond to a request for information, having just given that very information. Nor should the *ka*-appended utterance in (101)B be regarded as a rhetorical or expository question, in which the answer is relevant to the hearer, i.e. to A.

The function of (101)B is to echo what A has just said and to express a certain attitude to it. In this case, as the continuation makes clear, B accepts the proposition echoed. In different circumstances, B could echo what A has said without accepting it: for example, B could go on to say that it will not take that long, so he does not have to leave immediately. In either case, by echoing what A has said, B gives evidence that she has paid attention to A's utterance and is weighing up its reliability and implications (Sperber & Wilson 1986: 238). The question is, can *ka* here be analysed as indicating that (101)B is echoic? If this line of analysis were correct, *ka*-appended utterances could interpretively represent not only desirable thoughts but also attributed thoughts. Then *ka* would indicate the full range of cases of

interpretive use i.e. the second order interpretation of a thought or utterance. However, I will show this to be incorrect.

Notice, first, that (101)B without *ka* appended would have the same interpretation as (101)B. That is, the echoic nature of (101)B does not have to be indicated by *ka*; it is enough that the first part of (101)A is immediately repeated by B. Furthermore, if *ka* indicates echoic use, the echoic utterances (102)B and (103)B should be acceptable:

(102) A: Kinoo doko ni i-tta?

yesterday where to go-past(plain form)

'Where did you go yesterday?'

B:'Kinoo doko ni i-tta?' *ka* \*

yesterday where to go-past(plain form) s.f.p.

'Where did I go?'

(103) A: Doko ni Yamada-san wa iki-mashita *ka*?

where to Mr. Yamada topic go-past Q-Marker

'Where did Mr. Yamada go?'

B:'Doko ni Yamada-san wa iki-mashita *ka*?' *ka* \*

where to Mr. Yamada topic go-past s.f.p.

'Where did Mr. Yamada go?'

As the English translations show, (102)B and (103)B are echoic utterances in which B echoes A's questions (echoed parts indicated by single quotation marks). If *ka* indicates echoic use, (102)B and (103)B should be acceptable, as practically any sentence can be used echoically, including interrogatives, imperatives etc. The unacceptability of (102)B and (103)B shows that *ka* does not in fact mark echoic use; hence it is incorrect to argue that *ka* is responsible for the echoic feel of (101)B.

Incidentally, the sentence-final particle *tte* - a marker of a sub-case of attributive use - can be appended to (102)B and (103)B, a point I return to in a later section.

Now, can we say that (101)B is an echo of an interrogative? The answer is clearly 'no'. What is echoed in (101)B is not the interrogative 'it will take an hour - *ka?* ' but only the declarative 'it will take an hour'. So in (101)B *ka* is not itself echoed. What is its function, then? I have said that *ka* in general indicates that the utterance is interrogative, i.e. that it represents a thought that the speaker regards as desirable ( or relevant). In the case of (101)B, I have also said that the speaker already has this thought in mind: that is, the speaker is already entertaining the thought that it will take an hour.

Recall, though, that in the framework of Relevance theory, thoughts can be entertained with varying degrees of strength. The use of *ka*, or interrogative intonation, in an echoic utterance like this lets the hearer know that the speaker is weighing up the evidence for, and reliability of, the proposition expressed, with a view, precisely, to increasing its strength, and hence its relevance (since relevance is, among other things, a function of strength). (101)B, in other words, represents a desirable thought - a thought that is desirable because of its increased strength -and *ka* indicates this. The echoic feel comes not from the use of *ka* but from the circumstances of utterance: it is not linguistically encoded.

In this section I have argued that *ka* does not indicate echoic use, but is a specialised marker of interrogation - i.e. representation of a desirable thought. However, *ka* is also used in ironical utterances, which are a typical case of echoic use. In the following section, I will argue that in *ka*-appended ironies, the function of *ka* is not to encode this information and that its use is still consistent with the claim that *ka* is an interrogative marker, an indicator of the representation of a desirable thought.

#### 4.4.6 *Ka* and Irony

In Relevance theory, irony is a typical case of echoic interpretive use, in which the speaker echoes a thought or an utterance and expresses one of a range of disapproving attitudes towards it. For example:

(104) A: It's a lovely day for a picnic.

(They go for a picnic and it rains.)

B(sarcastically): It's a lovely day for a picnic, indeed.

(Sperber & Wilson 1986: 239)

Here the speaker B echoes an utterance attributed to A, dissociates herself from the opinion echoed and indicates that she does not endorse it but rather rejects and even ridicules it. In Japanese, *ka* can be appended to the equivalent of (104)B, and this might be taken as evidence that *ka* can be a marker of echoic use.

*ka* can be appended to other types of ironical utterance too. In irony, the proposition echoed does not have to be some other particular person's thought or utterance: it can be the speaker's own thought or utterance in the past, or an opinion generally held by people e.g. an old saying. Here too *ka* may be used in Japanese. So the speaker might utter (105) and (106) in the circumstances indicated:

(105) I never get lost on the roads *ka* .

(The speaker used to tell people that she never gets lost on the roads but now she has no idea where she is.)

(106) More haste, less speed *ka* .

(The speaker who thought of the proverb 'More haste, less speed' decided not to rush to the station and eventually she missed the train. Now she ridicules the proverb.)

The propositions expressed by (105) and (106) are used to represent other declarative utterances (what the speaker used to say in (105), and a proverb in (106)). The

speaker dissociates herself from these propositions, expressing her disapproval. and this is how ironical effects are derived. Again it might seem that *ka* is responsible for the echoic interpretation. However, (105) -(106) without *ka* appended could yield the same ironic interpretation. Again, the echoic feel does not seem to be indicated by *ka* .

What, then, is *ka* doing in these ironical utterances? I would like to suggest (pursuing an idea put forward by Deirdre Wilson) that *ka* has much the same function in Japanese as *eh* in English, though *eh* cannot be appended to embedded interrogatives (see (93) and (94)). Notice that *eh* can perfectly well be appended to the ironical (104)-(106) :

(107) It's a lovely day for a picnic, *eh*?

(108) I never get lost on the roads, *eh*?

(109) More haste, less speed, *eh*?

These utterances have two possible analyses: on one, *eh/ka* remains outside the scope of the proposition echoed, and functions to indicate that the speaker is questioning the truth of that proposition; on the second, *eh/ka* is itself echoed, and the speaker is ironically requesting confirmation of a proposition which is manifestly false. In either case, *eh/ka* has its regular interrogative function, encoding the information that the utterance is being put forward as an interpretation of a desirable thought. The fact that (104)-(109) are also echoic is incidental to the analysis of *ka*. As Sperber & Wilson have shown, any utterance can be echoic, and this fact does not have to be linguistically encoded.

In this section, I have argued that in *ka*-appended ironical utterances, it is not *ka* that indicates the echoic nature of irony. I have shown how the interpretation of such utterances can be explained. *Ka* is roughly equivalent to the interrogative particle *eh* in English, with the one difference that *ka* can be used in embedded interrogatives as in (93) and (94) whereas *eh* can generally not. In the next section I will look at some uses of *ka* with exclamatives, and consider how these should be understood.



#### 4.4.7 *Ka* and Exclamatives

Recall that in the framework of Relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson 1986: 243-54), exclamatives, like interrogatives, are interpretations of desirable thoughts. The difference between them is that exclamatives encode two extra assumptions: that the speaker already has the relevant (completion of the) propositional form in mind, and that the (completion of the) propositional form is relevant to the speaker (Clark & Lindsey 1990: 39). So, for example, if I exclaim "How expensive that house is!", I already have in mind that the house is very expensive, and the discovery of this piece of information was relevant (hence surprising) to myself. On the other hand, if I ask "How expensive is that house?", I may not already have in mind the information that it is very expensive, and the discovery of this piece of information may be relevant either to the hearer or to myself. In either case, the incomplete propositional form expressed by the utterance is an interpretation of a desirable (i.e. relevant) thought.

As I mentioned in 4.4.1, there is no syntactic marking of interrogatives in Japanese. Similarly, there is no syntactic marking of exclamatives. As in English, any sentence can be uttered with an exclamative tone of voice, and might be analysed as an exclamative. However, this would involve the conflation of a linguistic form (i.e. an exclamative) with its effect in use (i.e. an exclamation) in the sense mentioned earlier. So I shall use the term 'exclamative' to refer to a linguistic form which involves the use of an exclamative word such as *nante* 'how/what a'. Consider (110):

(110) A: How much is this?

B: It's 10,000 yen.

C: *Nante takai n deshoo ka? !*

how/what a expensive nominalisation is s.f.p.

'How expensive it is! *eh/isn't it?*'

In (110) C the propositional form of the utterance is a representation of a desirable thought, i.e. it is ----- expensive (Sperber & Wilson 1986: 253). So, we can still happily say that *ka* marks a representation of a desirable thought.

Relevance theory can thus capture similarities between exclamatives and interrogatives in terms of the unified concept 'interpretation of a desirable thought'. Indeed, it has been argued that there is no need to make a categorical distinction between exclamatives and interrogatives. For example, Clark & Lindsey (1990) suggest that the English exclamation 'Is syntax easy!' is syntactically (i.e. subject-auxiliary inversion) and semantically indistinguishable from the corresponding yes-no interrogative, and that both of the cases are interpretations of a desirable thought. We might claim, that *ka* encodes this information.

If *ka* is responsible for marking a propositional form as an interpretation of a desirable thought, we need not specify whether *ka* is an interrogative marker or an exclamative marker. The notion of a desirable thought is neutral between the two sentence types, and other factors will interact with it to determine whether it is interpreted as interrogative or exclamative. However, let us pursue further the analogy with the English interrogative marker *eh*. This particle can be appropriately appended to these exclamatives but no one would argue that *eh* is responsible for the exclamative force. Analogously, I argue that *ka* in exclamatives is not responsible for the exclamative force as the English translation 'isn't it?' shows. That is, *ka* is not responsible for the exclamative force in (110).

It seems clear, then, that the function of word order inversion in the English interrogative/exclamative cannot be performed by *ka*: i.e. the former indicates a general 'desirable of thought' representation while the latter is a sub-type which encodes only the interrogative. I claim then that *ka* is an interrogative marker, and, following Wilson & Sperber (1993: 22), it is not analysable in terms of a conceptual representation of illocutionary force such as 'the speaker's asking...' but in terms of a constraint on constructing one as I argued for *ne* and *tte*. I will pursue this line of analysis in 4.3.9. In the next section, I will briefly look again at *tte* discussed in 4.3., which is similar to *ka* in some of the effects it can give rise to, although its basic semantics is importantly different from that of *ka*.

#### 4.4.8 *Ka* and *Tte*

In Section 4.3, I have argued that *tte* is a hearsay marker and indicates a sub-type of attributive use in the sense of Sperber & Wilson (1986): i.e. it indicates that the propositional form of the utterance is a representation of an attributed utterance, or a thought of the speaker to which the speaker has direct access. It can function as a genuine hearsay particle, as seen in (111) :

- (111) Kono natsu atsuku naru *tte*.  
this summer hot become s.f.p.  
'It will be hot this summer, *I hear*.'

Or it can be used in (101)B and (104)B instead of *ka*, resulting in the same sorts of effect as *ka* gives rise to:

- (101)B' Ichijikan kakarimasu *tte*. Ja, moo dekakenakya.  
one hour take s.f.p. Then now must leave  
'It will take an hour, *did I hear*? Then I have to leave now.'

- (104)B' (ironically) It's a lovely day for a picnic *tte*.

In (101)B' and (104)B' the speaker is echoing utterances attributed to A. These utterances illustrate the two basic types of attributive interpretive use. (111) would achieve relevance by informing the hearer of the fact that someone said that it will be hot this summer. On the other hand, (101)B' and (104)B' would achieve relevance by showing the hearer that the speaker is echoing what A said, and either endorsing it or dissociating from it.

Both *tte* and *ka*-appended utterances can result in ironical effects, but the way these effects are derived is not identical. In a *tte*-appended ironical utterance, the speaker explicitly indicates that her utterance is attributive, and leaves her attitude implicit. In a *ka*-appended ironical utterance, on the other hand, the speaker

explicitly indicates that something is being questioned, and leaves implicit the fact that her utterance is echoic. Thus, the same results are achieved by different means.

Unlike previous analyses, my analysis also explains how the combination *ka-tte* works. Obviously, *ka*-appended interrogatives or exclamatives such as (90) and (110) themselves can be attributed: i.e. *tte* in (90)' and (110)' indicates that these utterances are attributed to the speakers of (90) and (110) :

(90)' Yamada-san wa gakusei desu *ka tte*?

'Is Mr. Yamada a student?', *you say*?

(110)'Nante takai no deshoo *ka tte*?

'How expensive it is!, isn't it?', *you say*?

Here *ka* has scope over the logical forms 'Mr. Yamada is a student,' and 'it is ... expensive', and itself falls within the scope of *tte*, which indicates that the speaker is echoing the *ka*-appended interrogative and exclamative (echoed parts indicated by single quotation marks).

In fact, these particles can be iterated in the sequence *ka-tte-ka*. In the following examples (90)" and (110)", the sentence-final *ka* has scope over implicit verbs of asking and saying respectively:

(90)" Yamada-san wa gakusei desu *ka tte* (kiiteiru no) *ka*?

Mr. Yamada topic student is comp.(asking nom.)

'(Are you asking me) whether Mr. Yamada is a student?'

(110)" Nante takai no deshoo *ka tte* (itteiru no) *ka*?

how expensive nom. is comp.(saying nom.)

'(Are you saying) how expensive it is?' (nom. = nominalisation)

Here the non-final use of *tte* functions as a complementiser, although the verbs of asking and saying are implicit. In these examples, the final use of *ka* indicates that

the speaker is surprised at what has just been said. This use of *ka* functions in the regular way, as an indicator of an interrogative, and it has the whole preceding utterance in its scope.

It seems, then, that the main difference between *tte* and *ka* is that the former indicates a sub-type of attributive use, namely, the attribution of an utterance, or a thought of the speaker, while the latter indicates a sub-type of desirable thoughts. Their common property is that they both indicate interpretive use, but the types of interpretive use which they pick out are different.

#### 4.4.9 *Ka* as a Procedural Constraint on Higher-level Explicatures

In 4.2.5 I argued that the sentence-final particle *ne* encodes the procedural information that the speaker desires to establish assumptions communicated by an utterance as common ground. And in 4.3.7 I argued that the hearsay particle *tte* encodes the procedural information of quotative attributive use: i.e. *tte*-appended utterances represent attributed utterances or thoughts of the speaker in the past. The information is not in the form of a conceptual representation but is a set of hints for constructing ones. In other words, the semantics of *tte* constrains the construction of higher-level explicatures. The content of higher-level-explicatures will be determined on the basis of contextual information, the semantics of *tte*, and the search for optimal relevance and will sometimes be more specific: e.g. ‘the teacher’s saying that...’ or ‘the speaker’s weakly/strongly believing that...’ rather than ‘someone’s saying that...’ or ‘the speaker’s believing that...’.

So far I have argued that *ka* is an interrogative particle, indicating a sub-type of ‘desirable thought’. Sperber & Wilson (1986: 254) say that “illocutionary force indicators such as declarative or imperative mood or interrogative word order merely have to make manifest a rather abstract property of the speaker’s informative intention: the direction in which relevance is to be sought.” This idea is developed within a framework of ‘procedural semantics’ which was introduced in 2.3.1. That is, according to Wilson & Sperber (1993: 22), “illocutionary force indicators should be seen as encoding procedural constraints on the inferential construction of higher-

level explicatures.” Like the hearsay particle *tte*, I argue, therefore, that *ka* constrains the construction of a higher-level explicature expressing the attitude of ‘desire’.

*Ka* in genuine questions such as (90)-(91) would constrain the construction of the higher-level explicature that the speaker is asking -----, and *ka* in rhetorical questions such as (95), the higher-level explicature that the speaker is reminding ----. Further, *ka* in expository questions such as (96) would constrain the construction of the higher-level explicature that the speaker is offering information that -----.

Various illocutionary forces are derived on the basis of the semantics of *ka*, contextual information and the consideration of optimal relevance. This explains the data nicely.

#### 4.4.10 Conclusion

Consider the following English examples:

(111) A: Jane has finally moved, did you know?

B: She has finally?!

C: Has she finally?!

The utterances (111)B and (111)C would be analysed differently while in both cases having the effect of expressing surprise. (111)B, which has a declarative form, would be analysed as echoing A's utterance, i.e. representing a thought attributed to A. On the other hand, (111)C would be analysed as representing a desirable thought, as it is an interrogative sentence-type.

(111)B and (111)C can be translated into (112)B and (112)C respectively. My claim is that *tte* indicates that the proposition expressed is an interpretation of an attributed utterance or of a thought of the speaker. On the other hand, *ka* indicates that the proposition expressed is an interpretation of a sub-type of desirable thought.

(112) A: Jein tootoo hikkoshita yo. Shitteta?

Jane finally move  $\text{\textcircled{d}}$  s.f.p.-assertive Did you know?

B/C: Tootoo hikkoshita *tte/ka!*?

finally moved

‘Goodness, finally moved?!’

Although the interpretation of an attributed utterance and a desirable thought are different varieties of interpretive use, the speaker's surprise is communicated in both cases. I have argued that the sentence-final particles *tte* and *ka* are specialised for indicating these sub-varieties of interpretive use.

In 4.3 and 4.4, I have shown that Relevance theory can provide the necessary framework and concepts for analysing the Japanese sentence particles *ka* and *tte*. Unlike past analyses, the one I propose does not face problems with non-final uses of *ka*, since *ka* is not treated as encoding any illocutionary force. Also, my analysis can explain particle combinations such as *ka-tte* and *ka-tte-ka*. My claim in 4.4 is the following. The Japanese sentence-final particle *ka* is an interrogative marker which does not encode a conceptual representation such as (96) (repeated below) but constrains the construction of higher-level explicatures in which various illocutionary forces such as ‘asking’, ‘reminding’ and ‘requesting information’ are expressed.

(96) The speaker is asking -----.

These forces are derived on the basis of the ‘desirable thought’ indication encoded by *ka*, contextual information and considerations of optimal relevance.

So far we have surveyed three sentence-final particles *ne*, *tte*, and *ka* and explicated their semantics and the kinds of effects, including ‘hedging’, they can contextually give rise to. I argued that they all encode procedural information which constrains the construction of higher-level representations (higher-level explicatures for *tte* and *ka*, and higher-level explicatures/implicatures for *ne*). This might lead us to think that so-called Japanese hedging devices used utterance-finally might be of this general semantic type. However, in the following section I will turn to the use of utterance-final *kedo*, which works differently.

## 4.5 Japanese Sentence-final Particle *Kedo*

### 4.5.1 Introduction

It is commonly observed by people working in pragmatics that making a request indirectly, by implicating it, is more polite than making the request directly. So uttering (113) is a more polite way of requesting the hearer to close the window than (114) is:

(113) There's quite a draft coming from that window.

(114) Close the window (please).

Requesting someone to do something is to place an imposition on him: i.e. in the terminology of Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987), it is a potential threat to his negative face (his freedom of action). Making the request indirectly, by implicating it rather than saying it, is a negative politeness strategy: it gives the hearer wider scope for interpreting the utterance and so he has more ways out of complying with the request than having to blatantly say 'no'.

However, when making a request in Japanese, doing it indirectly may, in some circumstances, be not yet polite enough, and so there are ways of reducing still further the force of the request. One of these is to append the utterance with the word *kedo*, which is most readily translated into English as 'but' or 'although'. This is exemplified by (115)-(118):

(115) Moo jikan desu. 'It's time now'

now time is

Implicating the request that the hearer do something, say get ready to go out.

(116) Moo jikan desu *kedo* ...

now time is but ...



(117) Ocha ga hairimashita. 'Tea is ready'

tea subj. ready

Implicating the request that the hearer, say, come to the table.

(118) Ocha ga hairimashita *kedo* ...

tea subj. ready but...

(from Mizutani & Mizutani 1987: 26)

*Kedo* in examples such as (116) and (118) is classified as being in the same category as *ne* and *ka*, i.e. simply as a sentence-final particle (The National Language Research Institute 1951: 43). However, in the next section I argue that its semantics is identical with utterance-medial *kedo* which is a conjunctive connective whose meanings are translated into English as 'but' and 'and'.

The indirect request made in (115) is also made in (116), but (116) is felt to be more polite than (115); the appending of *kedo* seems to be a negative politeness strategy, reducing further the force of the request, giving the hearer even greater space for non-compliance. In this sense, the utterances in (116) and (118) are cases of hedging in which the speaker communicates a weakened force to the requests she is making indirectly. This use of *kedo* in (116) and (118) is a feature of women's speech in particular (Sakuma 1983: 107), considered to reduce the assertiveness of their utterances and so to be appropriate to their relatively powerless position in society.

According to Mizutani & Mizutani (1987), the speaker leaves a certain part of the utterance unsaid and invites the hearer to complete the utterance. Presumably, it is this implicit proposition, which the hearer is free to recover, which is responsible for the politeness effect. However, it is not the case that leaving something unsaid in this way always has this polite, softening effect. Conjunctions other than *kedo* may be appended to utterances, similarly leaving a clause unexpressed, without having any particular politeness effect. Examples are given in (119) and (120) with the conjunctions *node* and *kara*, which are best translated as 'since' or 'because':

(119) It is time *node*... 'Because it's time...'

(120) Tea is ready *kara*... 'Since tea is ready...'

These are indirect requests just as much as the examples in (115)-(118), but they have no particular politeness effect. In fact they suggest that the speaker feels quite justified in making the request and, if anything, they have more force than the utterance made without any appended conjunction as in (115) and (117). According to Mizutani & Mizutani (1987: 26), the use of *node/kara* would imply that the speaker is making requests as a matter of course.

Having set out the data that I want to focus on, I would like to consider the following questions: (i) Is the semantics of *kedo* in utterance-final position the same as, or different from, that of *kedo* in its standard-medial use?; (ii) What is the implicit proposition that the hearer recovers in (116) and (118) and how does the hearer recover it? What factors guide the hearer in this process which is clearly a pragmatic one?; (iii) How does this implicit import have the effect of softening the force of the request implicated by the part of the utterance which precedes *kedo*? In other words, how is the politeness effect achieved? I will consider these questions in order.

#### 4.5.2 Semantics of *Kedo*

Let us consider *kedo* in utterance-medial position. Like English *but* it has two closely related uses: (a) the contrastive use, illustrated in (121), and (b) the denial of expectation use, illustrated in (122):

(121) *Watashi wa se ga hikui kedo imooto wa takai.*

I topic back sub low *but* sister topic high

'I am short *but* my sister is tall'

(122) *Yamada-san wa Osaka shushhin da kedo hyoujungo wo hanashimasu.*

Mr. Yamada topic Osaka come from *but* standard Jap. obj. speak

'Mr. Yamada comes from Osaka *but* he speaks standard Jap.'

In (121) *kedo* explicitly marks the contrast between the predicates in the two conjuncts. In (122) the use of *kedo* indicates that there is something unexpected about the proposition that follows it; in the terminology of Blakemore (1987), it encodes a procedure or instruction to the hearer to treat the proposition it introduces as a denial of a proposition communicated by the sentence that precedes it. In this case, it is a denial of a contextual implication of the first part of the utterance. That is, it denies the assumption in (123)b, that Mr. Yamada must speak non-standard Japanese, an implication which follows deductively from the first conjunct, Mr. Yamada comes from Osaka, together with the contextual assumption given in (123)a:

(123)a. People from Osaka speak non-standard Japanese.

b. Mr. Yamada speaks non-standard Japanese.

In the Relevance-theoretic terms of Blakemore, *kedo*, like English *but*, encodes a semantic constraint or instruction to the hearer to process the second conjunct in a context such that the contextual effect derived is one of contradiction and elimination. In this example, (123)b, which is a contextual implication of the first conjunct, forms (part of) the context against which the second conjunct is interpreted. The second conjunct contradicts this assumption and eliminates it.

Now, some authors, such as Lakoff (1971), have simply assumed that *but* is ambiguous between these two senses, contrast and denial. However, intuitively, these two meanings seem closely related, and Blakemore (1987, 1989) has attempted to give a unitary analysis of the semantics of *but*, from which the two uses can be derived in interaction with other (contextual) factors. Her main point is that, in both uses, *but* has a procedural semantics of signalling some sort of relation of contradiction or antonymy, between the interpretation of the first conjunct and the second. In the case of the denial of expectation use, this is a relation between propositions; in the case of the contrast use, it is a relation between predicates or properties, such as short and tall (i.e. not short) in example (121).

Here I have to note that the contrastive use of *kedo* in Japanese is sometimes translated into English ‘and’ and indeed the conjunction *kedo* is standardly analysed as being ambiguous at least between the meanings ‘and’ and ‘but’ (The National Language Institute 1952: 43-5). For example:

(124) Today is Monday *kedo* (= and/but\*) tomorrow will be Tuesday.

(125) My name is Mr. Yamada *kedo* (= and/but\*) your name is Mr. Tanaka.

However, there is a fairly straightforward sense in which this use of *kedo* (= and) is also contrastive. The predicates in the conjuncts of each of the examples form a set of contrasting terms in a particular domain: the ‘days of the week’ domain, the ‘surname’ domain. I would suggest that the core meaning of *kedo* is some broad concept of contrast. If *kedo* really did encode as one of its senses the same meaning as English *and* the following should be acceptable, but they are not:

(126)a. Today is Monday *kedo* your name is Mr. Tanaka.\*

b. He handed her the key *kedo* she opened the door.\*

So *kedo* encodes contrastive meaning, though its range is broader than English *but*.

Now I want to argue that *kedo* used utterance-finally, as in (116) and (118), is semantically the same as *kedo* used utterance-medially. That is, although it has the effects of a politeness marker in these cases, this is to be accounted for entirely pragmatically; the word *kedo* itself has the same ‘contrast’ or ‘denial of expectation’ functions here as it has in the utterance-medial examples just discussed. My first point is that a univocal analysis is what we would hope for on grounds of theoretical economy. It would be in line with the methodological principle advocated by Grice, ‘do not multiply senses beyond necessity’, a version of Occam's Razor. That is, if we can account for an apparent ambiguity pragmatically this is to be preferred to the stipulation of an extra sense for the word, since the pragmatic principles involved are independently required.

Secondly, as described informally in the literature, the examples in (116) and (118) seem to be understood as quite standard cases of denial of expectation. The idea seems to be that the second, unexpressed, conjunct denies, or at least weakens, a contextual implication derived from the first conjunct, that is, the implicated request that the hearer do something: 'get ready now' or 'come to the table for tea'. In other words, Japanese authors describing this use assume that a further conjunct is understood and has to be supplied. So *kedo* does not function as simply a particle signalling deference or politeness in these examples; it is just as much a connective here as it is in the utterance-medial cases.

Thirdly, the utterance-final use of *kedo* does not inevitably give rise to politeness effects, as the examples in (127) and (128) show:

(127) A: Is your sister smart?

B: She is smart *kedo* ...

(128) A: Is your sister good-looking?.

B: She is good-looking *kedo* ...

In these contexts there is no implicated request and B's utterance in each case has no particular politeness effect, in fact quite the contrary. The unexpressed part of B's utterance is something contrasted with or unexpected from B's utterance which is a positive remark on B's sister. That is, in (127) and (128) something negative about B's sister might be felt.

So it seems fairly clear that we need a pragmatic analysis to account for the politeness effects of (116) and (118).

#### 4.5.3 The Recovery of the Unexpressed Conjunct

In order to explain the effect of diminished force of the request we need to consider the nature of the unexpressed conjunct. Plausible possibilities for (116) and (118) would be (129) and (130) respectively:

(116) Moo jikan desu *kedo*. 'It's time now'

now time is

Implicating the request that the hearer do something, say, get ready to go out.

(118) Ocha ga hairimashita *kedo*... 'Tea is ready'

tea sub. is ready

Implicating the request that the hearer, say, come to the table.

(129) Moo jikan desu *kedo* dekakeru yooi wo shi-nakutemoiidesu.

Now time is *but* go out ready acc. do not have to

'It's time now *but* you do not have to get ready to go out.'

(130) Ocha ga hairimashita *kedo* noma-nakutemoiidesu.

tea subj ready *but* drink do not have to

'The tea is ready *but* you do not have to drink it.'

In each of these cases the reconstructed second conjunct would be a denial of a contextual implication of the first conjunct: for instance, in the case of (130), the implication that the speaker should come and drink the tea. Thus, once the second conjunct is supplied in this way, we have what looks like a straightforward utterance-medial *kedo* of the denial of expectation variety.

However, a question arises here: how do we or the hearer know that the unexpressed conjunct is the one given in (129) and (130)? In the case of (130) could it not just as easily be (130)a-b or any number of other possibilities?:

(130)a. The tea is ready *but* you may not want it now.

b. The tea is ready *but* I see that you are too busy to come to the table.

There does not seem to be any obvious reason to prefer the ones given in (129) and (130) to a range of others. I do not mean to imply that the possibilities are entirely unconstrained; they are not, but just that there is some indeterminacy here; that

there is no one particular proposition that a hearer must derive in order to have interpreted the utterance in the intended fashion.

This sort of indeterminacy has been largely ignored in pragmatics. Grice (1975: 58) did mention it as a characteristic of conversational implicatures but he gave no indication of how it could be treated. Within Relevance theory, the notion of weak implicature was introduced in order to capture indeterminacy at the level of implicit import. The utterances in (131)B and (132) illustrate the point:

(131)A: Would you drive a Mercedes?

B: I wouldn't drive any expensive car.

(Sperber & Wilson 1986: 194)

(132) I'm feeling a lot better today.

Now B's response to A in (131) clearly implicates a negative answer to A's question: B wouldn't drive a Mercedes. However, as Sperber & Wilson (1986: 196) argue, since the speaker chose to use the indirect response which demands more effort from the hearer, it follows from the presumption of optimal relevance that the hearer can expect a wider range of effects than this: i.e. if the speaker wanted to make manifest only the negative answer, the speaker would have said it directly.

The negative answer and the contextual assumption that Mercedes is an expensive car are both strongly implicated by (131)B. In Relevance theory the former is an implicated conclusion and the latter, an implicated premise from which the conclusion is deduced. The hearer can have strong confidence that these implicatures reflect the speaker's belief. Indeterminacy, on the other hand, lies in weak implicatures which the hearer must take some responsibility for deriving himself, so he is not entitled to assume the speaker gives her full backing to any particular ones in the range. They are not specifically intended by the speaker as the strongly implicated premise and conclusion for (131)B were. By uttering (131)B, while the speaker provides conclusive evidence that she considers a Mercedes as an expensive





Such assumptions (i.e. recovered conjuncts) within this range have in common that they are, both individually and collectively, in some sort of relation of contradiction or at least modification of the request implicated by the first part. So the recovery of such a range of assumptions is not entirely unconstrained. It is constrained by the semantics of *kedo* which instructs the hearer to establish a relation of relevant contrast between an implication derived from the first part and the recovered conjunct.

The recovery process of such a range of assumptions is a pragmatic process, which, I argue, is governed by the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance. Logically a range of assumptions such as (136)a-c can be compatible with the context for (118):

- (136)a. Tea is ready *kedo* (coffee is not).
- b. Tea is ready *kedo* (tea is not our favourite drink).
- c. Tea is ready *kedo* (the pot is broken).

However (136)a-c are not easily accessible in the context in which the announcement that tea is ready implicates that the speaker wants the hearer to come to the table for tea: i.e. (135)a-c are more accessible. The assumptions (135)a-c are more accessible than (136)a-c in any ordinary context in which one person is preparing tea for another and there are no particular assumptions about coffee or favourite drinks. Furthermore, in line with the Relevance-based pragmatic criterion these would achieve an adequate range of effects at no gratuitous cost to the hearer, principally politeness effects achieved through the softening of the force of the implicated request.

Other than the constraint encoded by *kedo* and the pragmatic criterion of consistency with optimal relevance, what determines the range of possible recovered assumptions is the contextual assumptions accessible to the hearer. There are a range of contextual assumptions such as (137)a-f, and the hearer's access to such assumptions would guide him to recover such assumptions as (135)a-c. The conjunct

that follows *kedo* is constructed in such a way to modify the force of the implicated request, and this is done against such contextual assumptions (137)a-f:

- (137)a. The speaker is in <sup>an</sup> inferior position to the hearer  
(in (116) and (118) e.g. wife talking to her husband).
- b. The speaker has no right to impose on the hearer.
  - c. The speaker is requesting the hearer to do something.
  - d. Requesting is an act of imposing on the hearer.
  - e. The speaker has to reconcile the situations a. b. c. and d.
  - f. Making a request indirectly by implicating it instead of saying it is not polite enough etc.....

So the pragmatic effect of politeness is derived from the fact that an indeterminate but delimited range of assumptions are recovered at the explicit level, and this pragmatic process of recovery is governed by the following factors: the constraint encoded by *kedo*, the principle of relevance and accessible contextual assumptions.

#### 4.5.4 Conclusions

In many Japanese contexts, *kedo*-appended implicated requests such as (116) and (118) sound softer, less coercive, than the versions without *kedo*. As I argued, the hedging effect arises pragmatically, i.e. not solely being the outcome of the semantics of *kedo*. So there are naturally utterances such as (127)B and (128)B in which the utterance-final use of *kedo* does not give rise to any politeness effect.

I have argued that the nature of the unexpressed conjunct that follows *kedo* is responsible for the politeness effect in (116) and (118). What characterises the recovered second conjunct in (116) and (118) is that it is not a single assumption which the speaker has made strongly manifest to the hearer, but an indeterminate range of assumptions she has made only weakly manifest to the hearer. In Sperber & Wilson (1986), this characteristic is called 'indeterminacy' and it is discussed in detail as a feature of implicatures. However, in these examples, 'indeterminacy' is

observed not at the level of implicature, but rather at the explicit level: in the unexpressed propositions that follow *kedo* .

This indeterminate range of assumptions have a relation of contradiction with implicatures derived from the first expressed part in (116) and (118), and moderate the force of the implicated requests by implicitly giving the hearer an option in fulfilling or not fulfilling the speaker's request if the hearer has other interests at that moment as observed in (134)a-c and (135)a-c. I have said that this effect is precisely the hedging effect, communicating the speaker's weakened or gentle request.

Now an interesting point is that despite this contrast with and so apparent denial of the force of request, the utterances are still interpreted as requests. That is, even though the illocutionary force of requesting is very gentle and unassertive, it is not totally eliminated. Recall that within the relevance theory approach to interpretation there are three sorts of contextual effects that an utterance may have (see Chapter 2): i.e. contextual implications, strengthening a contextual assumption, eliminating a contextual assumption.

It is this third effect that the denial of expectation use of *but* has been argued to have by Blakemore (1987, 1989). However, in the examples under consideration here, I would like to suggest that the contextual effect of this use of *kedo* is not one of contradiction leading to elimination, but contradiction leading to weakening. As I mentioned in 2.2.2, I wonder why there should be an effect of strengthening and no effect of weakening, but just the total elimination of a contextual assumption. The examples here seem to indicate that weakening should indeed be added to the set of effects, perhaps with elimination as a special case.

#### 4.6 Last Remarks on *Ne*, *Tte*, *Ka* and *Kedo*

In Chapter 1, I have given the Japanese examples of so-called hedging devices, but I have shown that the semantic treatment of these hedging devices are incorrect. I argued that the speaker's weak conviction is derived not as part of the semantic meaning of respective hedging devices, but as the result of the hearer's pragmatic

inferencing in looking for the optimally relevant interpretation, which is based on linguistically encoded meaning, contextual information, and a pragmatic criterion.

In this chapter, I have tried to isolate the linguistically encoded meaning of the various particles, independent of any pragmatic, i.e. contextual, influence. I argued that *ne* does not contribute to the proposition expressed but encodes the following procedural information: the speaker desires to establish assumptions communicated by the utterance as common ground. It is argued that this information constrains the recovery of higher-level representations, i.e. higher-level explicatures and/or implicatures.

*Tte* is claimed to encode quotative attributive use i.e. the procedural information that the proposition expressed is attributed to someone's utterance or a former thought of the speaker. Like *ne*, *tte* does not encode conceptual information but constrains the construction of higher-level explicatures. However, unlike *ne*, *tte* is argued to contribute to the proposition expressed as it suspends the speaker's commitment and changes the status of the truth-conditions of the utterance: i.e. it makes the utterance interpretive. That is, *tte* instructs the hearer to interpret the utterance to which it is appended as not describing a state of affairs, but as representing another similar propositional form attributed to someone else's utterance or the speaker's thought.

*Ka* is claimed to be an interrogative marker which encodes the procedural information that the propositional form of the utterance to which it is appended represents a desirable thought and it constrains the construction of a higher-level explicature in which various illocutionary forces can be expressed as a result of the relevant completion of the incomplete propositional form. It marks interpretive-use, which means that it too contributes to the proposition expressed by changing the status of the truth-conditional content of the utterance.

Lastly, utterance-final *kedo* is not analysed as a hedging particle but as being synonymous with the utterance-medial *kedo*, which is a conjunction with the meanings of contrast and denial of expectation. So the analysis of *kedo* goes parallel with that of English *but*. Apart from the conjoining function, it is claimed to encode the procedural information that the second unexpressed conjunct has a

relationship of contradiction with assumptions derived by the first *kedo*-appended conjunct. So it seems that what all these utterance-final particles have in common is that their semantics is procedural.

Of course, with the above mentioned encoded meanings, these Japanese so-called hedging devices achieve what I defined as hedging effects in some contexts. For example, because *ne* in (1), (repeated below), communicates the speaker's desire to establish that John is Irish as common ground between speaker and hearer, this has an effect of seeking agreement.

(1) John is Irish *ne*. (John is Irish, *isn't he?*)

Seeking agreement conveys in some contexts that the speaker is not certain and therefore seeks agreement or confirmation. This way the speaker might communicate that she has a limited commitment to the proposition that John is Irish.

*Tte* in (4), (repeated below), indicates that the proposition that Kyoto is a beautiful town and worth visiting does not directly describe a state of affairs but represents what other people say, i.e. it is an attributive use.

(4) Kyoto is a beautiful town and worth visiting *tte*.

The speaker puts responsibility for the truth of the proposition in someone else's hands and in this way the speaker may communicate that she does not commit herself to its truth. However, all that *tte* semantically encodes is the information that the proposition is attributed to someone's utterance or the speaker's thought. If it is attributed to an authority such as a well-established travel advisor (suppose the speaker is reading Fodor's guidebook on Japan), then (4) might communicate the converse effect, i.e. communicate that the speaker is certain about the truth of the proposition.

Kendal (1985) and the Japanese grammarian Haga (1953) argue that *ka* encodes the speaker's weak commitment. However, the speaker's weak commitment implies that the speaker is still committed to the truth of the proposition expressed (Ifantidou

1994: 213). In *ka*-appended interrogatives, the speaker does not express anything with regard to her belief in the proposition represented (that is the reason why the speaker is asking).

I argue that *ka* encodes a very abstract property, a sub-type of the Relevance-theoretic notion 'desirable thought' and the relevant completion of the proposition achieves various effects such as genuine questions, rhetorical questions, reminders, surprise questions etc. It is true that by asking a yes-no positive question, the speaker indicates that she expects a positive answer, so the hearer might interpret that the speaker wishes confirmation. So in some contexts, *ka*-appended utterance could have the hedging effect.

For utterance-final *kedo* I have argued that its semantics is the same as in its clearly conjunctive use and encodes the procedural information that the second conjunct (unexpressed conjunct in this case) has a contradictory relation with assumptions derived from the first conjunct, i.e. the *kedo*-appended utterance. The idea comes from Relevance-based analyses of *but* (Blakemore 1987, Rouchota 1990). The procedural information encoded by *kedo* constrains pragmatic inferential processes, i.e. it instructs the hearer to access assumptions that stand in contradiction with assumptions derived from the first part of the utterance.

The recovery of some unexpressed conjunct is constrained by this procedural information, contextual information and the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance. The assumption or assumptions recovered might lead to the effect of diminishing the speaker endorsement of the implicatures derived by the utterance. So for instance, the force of the request to come to the table derived from "Tea is ready *kedo*..." is weakened by recovered second conjuncts such as that you may be too busy etc., and this weakening of speaker endorsement could achieve the effect of hedging.

In the analyses of all these particles, Relevance-theoretic notions were necessary to provide convincing accounts. They include higher-level representations, interpretive use, procedural constraints, etc. The notions used were all theoretically motivated, well-defined categories, not having the waste basket nature we discussed concerning the Gricean notion of conventional implicatures (see 3.2.3). Pragmatic

inferencing explained in the light of Relevance theory makes it possible to isolate and focus on the intrinsic semantic meaning of these Japanese so-called hedging devices. The encoded semantic content is often a rather abstract property which merely directs the hearer towards the various specific interpretations, including the speaker's hedging.

## Chapter 5 : Conclusions

In this thesis, I have described and explained what linguists informally call ‘hedging’ in communication, that is, ways in which speakers may moderate the assertive force of their utterances. Discussions of hedging standardly arise in the context of sociolinguistically oriented work on politeness phenomena in language use. For example, I discussed in 1.2.3 that Brown & Levinson (1978, 1987) in their work on politeness include hedging as one of the face-preserving strategies, i.e. politeness strategies. Among linguistic devices for hedging, they include English phrases *I guess/suppose/think*, particles such as Japanese *ne*, *if*-clause descriptions such as *if you can* and *if you like* which can suspend assumptions of interrogatives and imperatives.

However, I argued that the modulation of social relations through hedging is neither its sole nor its intrinsic function and it is therefore not difficult to find examples which do not give rise to any social softening effect. For example:

(1)A: Where are you going to settle for good?

B: *I guess/think/suppose* I will live in Tokyo.

(2) (Accusing the hearer) You have broken the glass *ne*.

‘You have broken your glass, *haven't you?*’

(3) (To someone who has lost his memory) What is your name? *If you can*.

(4) (To a person who is asking dietary advice)

Try fish instead of meat, *if you like*. Or if you don't like fish, try Tofu instead.

In (1)B the speaker is communicating the speaker's limited conviction in the proposition that she will live in Tokyo simply because she does not know for sure, not because she wants to be polite to the hearer. In (2) the use of *ne* has the effect of communicating the force of accusation more strongly than the version without this particle. This is because *ne* communicates the speaker's desire to claim the unfortunate event as common ground, thus making the mishap more mutually manifest, i.e. mutually aware between them. *If you can* in (3) hedges on the



interrogative force but this is not due to any social reason but due to the concern as to the ability of the hearer. *If you like* in (4) likewise hedges on the imperative force but does not give rise to any politeness effect either. This phrase purely concerns the taste of the hearer who might not like fish at all. All the examples show that hedging is not intrinsically social as I claimed in Chapter 1.

I also claimed that hedging is not intrinsically linguistic either. That is, the hedging effect may be achieved by features of the ostensive stimulus other than encoded linguistic content; it may be communicated by prosodic features or by such non-linguistic means as facial expression and shoulder shrugging etc. I then argued that the hedging effect is a broader pragmatic phenomenon communicating the speaker's less than complete conviction in the proposition (or a part of the proposition) her utterance expresses. For the most part of the thesis, however, my detailed analyses focused on particular linguistic expressions.

In Chapter 1, I surveyed existing discussions and analyses of hedging devices. These fall short of adequacy in a number of ways, the main problem being the lack of a sufficiently articulated pragmatic framework within which to locate the different ways in which the hedging effect may be achieved. I showed, for example, that neither the Gricean notion of 'what is said' nor 'what is implicated' can explain the true parentheticals such as *I suppose* and *I think*. They are standardly analysed as not contributing to the proposition expressed (Urmson 1966 Greenbaum 1969 Prince et al 1982 etc.), but are not implicitly communicated either.

For this reason in Chapter 2 I turned to Relevance theory which provides a cognitively based account of communication, incorporating a number of distinctions which are crucial in accounting for how speakers communicate their attitude to a proposition communicated by an utterance. Particularly important to my analyses are the distinctions between implicature and explicature and between descriptive and interpretive attitude/representations.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I proposed relevance-theoretic analyses of particular English and Japanese expressions, which appear regularly in the literature on hedging. I tried to isolate the intrinsic semantic content of these elements and show how the familiar

hedging effects arise as a result of interaction between the encoded content, the particularities of context and consideration of optimal relevance.

In 3.2 I argued that the Relevance notion of ground-level explicature can explain the hedging effect given rise to by the main-clause *I suppose that...* or *probably*, while higher-level explicature can explain the hedging effect given rise to by the true parenthetical *I suppose*. For example, I argued that *I suppose* in (5) contributes to the proposition expressed and is communicated as the ground-level explicature. On the other hand, the true parenthetical, *I suppose*, in (6) is claimed to contribute to a higher-level explicature such as (7). (7) is a higher-level explicature derived by embedding the proposition expressed under the propositional attitude of the speaker's weak conviction, a modified version of (8) which may be communicated by the ordinary assertion 'Edinburgh is a beautiful town'.

(5) *I suppose* that Edinburgh is a beautiful town,.

(6) Edinburgh is a beautiful town, *I suppose*.

(7) The speaker weakly believes that Edinburgh is a beautiful town.

(8) The speaker believes that Edinburgh is a beautiful town.

Japanese sentence-final particles *ne*, *tte* and *ka* in (9), (10) and (11) are, on the other hand, claimed to encode procedural semantics and to constrain the construction of higher-level explicatures such as (12), (13) and (14).

(9) Edinburgh is a beautiful town *ne* (= *isn't it?*)

(10) Edinburgh is a beautiful town *tte* (= *I hear*)

(11) Edinburgh is a beautiful town *ka* (= *eh?*)

(12) The speaker wishes to establish as common ground that Edinburgh is a beautiful town.

(13) People say that Edinburgh is a beautiful town.

(14) The speaker is asking whether Edinburgh is a beautiful town.

However, (12)-(14) are not the only interpretation for (9)-(11) respectively. (9)-(10) might be ironical utterances and (11) might be an expository question. In such cases, the following different higher-level explicatures might be derived:

- (15) The speaker wishes to establish as common ground that Edinburgh is not a beautiful town.
- (16) It is ridiculous to say that Edinburgh is a beautiful town.
- (17) The speaker is giving information that Edinburgh is a beautiful town.

What *ne*, *tte* and *ka* semantically encode is a rather abstract property: i.e. ‘establishing common ground’, ‘quotative attributive use’ and ‘a sub-type of desirable thought’ respectively. And the specific content of the higher-level explicatures in any particular case is determined by an interaction of the semantics of these particles, contextual information and consistency with the principle of relevance.

Further, the distinction between the attitude of belief and the attitude of desire makes a correct prediction that expressions such as *I suppose/think* and *probably* cannot be appended to interrogatives or exclamatives as seen in (18)-(19):

- (18) How expensive is it to buy a castle in Scotland, *I think?*\*
- (19) How expensive it is to buy a castle in Scotland, *I think!*\*

The anomaly is precisely because the attitude of (weak) belief is expressed where the attitude of desire is encoded by an interrogative or exclamative, i.e. two incompatible attitudes are expressed, and therefore (18)-(19) are anomalous.

The distinction between descriptive and interpretive use captures the semantic difference between *ne* and *tte/ka*. These particles are standardly analysed as belonging to the same category, of sentence-final particles, which are claimed by Japanese grammarians (Watanabe 1968 etc.) to fall outside of the proposition expressed and to have the impressionistic function of ‘acting upon the hearer’. I have argued that *tte* and *ka* mark interpretive use while *ne* does not. This means, contrary

to Japanese grammarians' claim, *tte* and *ka* contribute to the proposition expressed by changing the truth-conditional status of the utterance while *ne* does not, following Ifantidou's argument on English hearsay adverbs such as *allegedly* and *reportedly* (1994: 213). So while (9) has the identical truth-conditional content to that of (20) in that the propositions given by (9) and (20) are true if and only if Edinburgh is a beautiful town, (10) and (11) do not: i.e. (9) and (20) are specialised for descriptive representation while (10)-(11) are interpretive representations.

(20) Edinburgh is a beautiful town.

As for Lakoffian hedges *regular*, *typical* and *technically*, I have employed the ideas on concepts developed by Wilson (1993-4) (see 3.2). I argued that they contribute to the proposition expressed but their contributions are quite distinct: 'concept loosening', 'concept narrowing' and 'meta-representation', respectively. The examples given in 3.2 were:

(21) Tom is a *regular* bachelor.

(22) Tom is a *typical* bachelor.

(23) Tom is *technically* a bachelor.

My claim was that *regular* indicates that the concept BACHELOR should be interpreted loosely. (21) might be a metaphor in that Tom is married but he has the stereotypical properties stored in the encyclopaedic entry of the concept BACHELOR. Or Tom might actually be a bachelor but the main relevance is that he has the stereotypical properties of bachelors. I claimed that REGULAR BACHELOR forms a new concept BACHELOR' whose crucial property is not being an unmarried adult male but the stereotypical idea of bachelors as leading a care-free life etc. This is the reason why *regular bachelor* can be predicated of someone who is a bachelor as well as someone who is not.

*Typical* was claimed to effect a 'concept narrowing'. That is, the bachelors that *typical bachelor* refers to are only a sub-set of bachelors, i.e. those who have

stereotypical properties. So Tom in (22) cannot be someone who is a bachelor only by definition, i.e. cannot be a bachelor who has a family, for example. I claimed that the concept TYPICAL BACHELOR forms a new concept BACHELOR' which maintains the logical entry of unmarried adult male but restricts the encyclopaedic entry to stereotypical properties of bachelors.

On the other hand, I argued that *technically* encodes 'meta-representation' which involves representations by resemblance in form and content. In 2.4.3, I introduced the notion 'resemblance' which is the means by which interpretive representations represent. That is, they do not describe a state of affairs but represent some other representation which they 'resemble', i.e. with which they share some logical and/or contextual implications or some linguistic properties. So the way *technically* contributes to the proposition expressed is rather different from *regular* and *typical* in that besides making a conceptual contribution, it changes the truth-conditional status of the proposition expressed, as *tte* and *ka* also do.

I argued that *technically a bachelor* means bachelors from the point of view of some technical criterion and does not communicate the full conceptual content of BACHELOR which includes bachelors with some stereotypical properties. So in (23) Tom can be an unmarried adult male who has a family, for example. Here what is communicated by TECHNICALLY A BACHELOR and what could be communicated by BACHELOR alone share not all but some analytical/contextual implications: i.e. 'resemblance in content' is exploited here. In contrast with this, in (24) *insect* is not used to communicate the concept INSECT but used to communicate a word of English which is the technical word for a *bug*. (24) was claimed to be a case of 'mention' involving 'resemblance in form'.

(24) A bug is *technically* an insect.

Lastly, in 4.5 the Japanese utterance-final particle *kedo* (= 'but') was claimed to be identical with the conjunctive particle *kedo* in its utterance-medial use. Like English *but*, it is argued to have a procedural semantics. However, it constrains the recovery not of implicatures but of explicatures, i.e. of the unexpressed second

conjunct. In some contexts, the unexpressed conjunct may be a determinate proposition as seen in (25). However, in others, it may be an indeterminate range of different assumptions that have a contradictory relation with explicatures or implicatures given rise to by the first conjunct as seen in (26).

(25) (Talking about the differences between Mr. Yamada and his brother)

Mr. Yamada wears glasses *kedo*...(his brother does not)

(26) (The speaker would like the hearer to come to the table for supper)

Supper is ready *kedo*...(you might not want it now/you might not be hungry etc.)

In (25) the semantics of *kedo* constrains the recovery of the second conjunct in such a way that it has a contrastive relation with the first expressed conjunct. A contrast is made between the two properties (wearing glasses and not wearing them) ascribed to Mr. Yamada and his brother. Here the recovered second conjunct is a determinate proposition. In (26), however, the range of possibilities which have some contradictory relation with the first is not limited to a single proposition. There are many possibilities as seen in the bracket in (26) though they are only weakly manifest. I argued that this indeterminate range of the second conjunct takes away the force of the request to come to the table, i.e. has the effect of hedging which makes the implicated request even more polite.

As I pointed out in many places, hedging is a pragmatic phenomenon: its effect is derived not semantically but pragmatically based on the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance. However, there is a difference as to how much contribution the semantics of the terms in question make. That is, attitudinal expressions such as *I suppose* and *possibly* make a direct contribution to the ground-level or higher-level explicatures. So when one of these is used, the attitude of weak belief of the speaker is communicated as part of the explicit content of the utterance.

On the other hand, the Lakoffian hedges *regular* and *technically* yield hedging effects which are reflected in implicatures. The proposition of which the new concept BACHELOR' is a part in (21) might contextually give rise to implicatures

such as (27) because of the focus on stereotypical properties. And the proposition expressed in (23) might contextually give rise to implicatures such as (28) because of the focus on the defining properties.

(21) Tom is *a regular* bachelor.

(27) The speaker weakly believes that Tom is a bachelor categorically.

(23) Tom is *technically* a bachelor.

(28) The speaker weakly believes that Tom has stereotypical properties of bachelors.

The lines of reasoning used to derive (27) and (28) might be something like:

(29) If the point of (21) is Tom's stereotypical behaviour of bachelors, the speaker is not quite committed to the truth of his being categorically a bachelor.

(30) If the point of (23) is Tom's membership of the bachelor category, the speaker is not quite committed to the truth of his having stereotypical properties.

However, as was argued in 3.3.3 and 3.3.5, the context might be such that *a regular bachelor* and *technically a bachelor* do not give rise to (27)-(28) respectively. For example:

(31) Tom has been a bachelor all his life and he has in fact been a *regular bachelor*.

(32) Tom has been leading a bachelor-like life anyway, but finally, the divorce is established. So we can say he is now *technically a bachelor*.

Likewise, the hedging effect which might be communicated by (9)-(11) might be analysed as implicatures, not part of the explicit content of the utterance: i.e. higher-

level explicature. In such an analysis, (9)-(11) might contextually communicate (7) (repeated below) as an implicature:

(9) Edinburgh is a beautiful town *ne* (= *isn't it?*)

(10) Edinburgh is a beautiful town *tte* (= *I hear*).

(11) Edinburgh is a beautiful town *ka* (= *eh?*)

(7) The speaker weakly believes that Edinburgh is a beautiful town.

The reasoning might be the following respectively:

(33) If the speaker wants to seek agreement as to the beauty of Edinburgh, she is not certain about it.

(34) If the speaker presents the beauty of Edinburgh as second-hand information, she is not certain about it.

(35) If the speaker is asking whether Edinburgh is beautiful or not, she is not certain about its beauty.

The same argument can be applied to the hedging effect created by the use of utterance-final *kedo*: the effect of speaker's weak endorsement is realised as an implicature not as a part of the explicit content of the utterance. For example, in (25) (repeated below) there is no hedging effect: no speaker's weak commitment is communicated to any proposition.

(25) (Talking about differences between Mr. Yamada and his brother)

Mr. Yamada wears glasses *kedo*...(his brother does not)

In (26) (repeated below), on the other hand, it is clear that the request to come to the table is an implicature and the speaker's weak endorsement is expressed to the implicature as I argued above: i.e. the hedging effect is realised as an implicature.



(26) (The speaker would like the hearer to come to the table for supper)

Supper is ready *kedo*...(you might not want it now/you might not be hungry etc.)

To summarise, the hedging effect, i.e. the speaker's limited commitment to a communicated proposition, as defined in (37) in Chapter 1, is realised both at the explicit and the implicit level of communication. Thus, I have shown that the expressions that fall under the impressionistic label of 'hedges' are a rather heterogeneous lot, and an attempt to define the phenomenon in either linguistic or social terms would not cover many data we intuitively consider as cases of hedging.

In this thesis, I have shown that Relevance-based concepts such as descriptive-interpretive, procedural-conceptual and desirable/attribution thought distinctions were necessary to capture the linguistic meaning of all the hedging terms in question, and that concepts such as base-level and higher-level explicatures/implicatures provide the representational levels at which the relevant degree of the speaker's belief, including the weak one, are communicated. What makes it possible to explain the recovery of the speaker's hedging is of course the single pragmatic criterion: i.e. the criterion of consistency with the principle of relevance.

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