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Showing what we see: psychoanalytic vision, transparency, and linguistic pragmatics

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A Dissertation

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Showing what we see: psychoanalytic vision, transparency, and linguistic pragmatics

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the possibilities that pragmatic linguistic analytic methods might have for psychoanalysis, both in the latter's attempts to establish itself as an empirically grounded endeavor and in its understanding of its own theoretical constructs. I begin with a discussion of some of the troubles psychoanalysis has had in legitimizing itself in the eyes of its peers since in inception, suggesting that a closer relationship with already-established sociolinguistic sciences (i.e. pragmatic analysis of linguistic interaction) may aid in its promotion.

I then describe how these methods have already been taken up within the field of psychology in the study of therapy process, noting a gap in the research such that they have yet to be brought to bear on the analysis of psychoanalytic constructs. I discuss some theoretical overlaps that already exist between psychoanalytic theory and the linguistic philosopher John Austin (namely critiques of modern subjectivity and the function of language) and give examples of possible conceptual intersections that might be further expanded in the future. I discuss repression and projective identification as two such possibilities.

I conclude with some of the implications and limitations of this dialogue, noting that a pragmatic perspective might be better suited to interpersonal theories of psychoanalysis. I discuss the hegemonizing risk inherent in the metaphor of vision. I also address in what way linguistic pragmatic methods—and a psychoanalytic theory that centers itself around the construct of unconscious intention—can in the end be said to be "empirical." While these problems are not likely be solved in the near future, a continued discussion of them, stemming from viewing psychoanalytic constructs through a pragmatic lens, will nonetheless be fruitful.

Preface: Writing an experiment

This dissertation draws together two ways of seeing: pragmatics, a perspective on human linguistic interaction that focuses on what is done in the saying rather than on what is said; and psychoanalysis, which might be described as a perspective that places claims to conscious intention to the side and instead describes human action in terms of unconscious motives. I have encountered both in the course of my psychological education, the former in the context of a qualitative research method and the latter as part of the development of a clinical stance for my therapeutic work. The two may have seemed originally to be at different ends of some spectrum. Pragmatics, as part of a research project, works to objectify and bring interpersonal processes to light while making its methods clear in order to justify its methods to outsiders who might be reading with a critical eye.[1] Psychoanalysis, as a part of clinical training, is not so concerned with laying its methods bare or justifying itself to outsiders; it has more practical concerns, and as such aims to justify its methods practically to other clinicians (who already share a psychoanalytic worldview) in regard to the timing and effectiveness of its interventions. Research and therapy, taken at face value, have different goals: one aims to reveal interpersonal processes for the purposes of furthering knowledge, and the other seeks to intervene, to make a difference in the life of an individual.

Still, despite the fact that one was presented as research and the other as a clinical stance, it seemed to me that the two in some sense shared the same aim: that of bringing to light the often unconscious, or at least overlooked, interpersonal processes that occur

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[1] For an example of the fruits of the research that grew out of this coursework (and showing a concern for justifying its way of seeing as a research method to outsiders), see Packer (2000).

when people speak to one another. Both perspectives seek to reveal what is happening

between people as they speak. Pragmatics is part of a linguistic analysis with social aims,

and psychoanalysis, commonly called "the talking cure," looks at the speech of its

participants in order to reveal what is happening between the subjects in the clinical

situation. In "The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis"

(1956/2002), Lacan points out the centrality of language use in the consulting room:

"Whether it wishes to be an agent of healing, training, or sounding the depths,

psychoanalysis has but one medium: the patient's speech. The obviousness of this fact is

no excuse for ignoring it. Now all speech calls for a response" (p. 40). Clinicians attend

to the language used in therapy, and have to decide how to respond to it—the practical

question of how to intervene. I began to wonder, given this similarity in focus, what

might happen if one attempted to weld these two perspectives together. Could this be a

fruitful enterprise? Could pragmatics offer something to the clinical lens of a therapist

that would aid her interventions? Secondly, on the issue of justification, given that

psychoanalysis is often disparaged as an empirically unfounded exploitation of power

upon the patient's integrity, could the pragmatic perspective as developed into a research

method give some sort of justification to critical outsiders? And lastly, how would a

pragmatic perspective inform—or transform—psychoanalytic vision?

Following Deleuze and Guattari's (1980/87) urging to write experimentally in an

attempt to create tools that can be applied to the world, this is my experiment: to see what

laminating these two discourses might bring into existence. As an experiment, this will

hardly be the final word on the matter (nor is it the first). Pragmatics and psychoanalysis

are disparate and expanding fields, each with its own internal questions over what defines

it and what might be considered orthodoxy. Those familiar with psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic therapy know that it is difficult to describe satisfactorily in a way that allows for its subtleties without taking the time to show how broadly and deeply it can range. Indeed, some of those who claim the label "psychoanalyst" share only the slightest family resemblance. The same is true for pragmatics; the ground it covers is vast, and as we will see, it is still working to define itself. Thus this dissertation will have the tone of an exploration. I am looking for possibilities of overlap, where one way of seeing (pragmatics) might inform the other (psychoanalysis), turning our eyes in a similar direction, but perhaps bringing things to light in a different way. I would also like to see how a pragmatic way of seeing might transform a psychoanalytic way of seeing, as their methods can be quite different. In the end, I hope to show at least that the intersection of these two discourses can result, if not in a new way of seeing, in a more powerful—and more visible—lens that reveals the interpersonal (heretofore "psychic") aspects of clinical process. In terms of the questions in the previous paragraph, I do believe that a pragmatic perspective can aid in the empirical justification of psychoanalysis in the eyes of outsiders as well as help sharpen the lenses of clinicians. It remains to be seen if it does.

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Introduction: Interweaving two perspectives

Perspectivism

Our age requires that we see in order to believe. But what is the character of this vision on which we rely to justify our beliefs? For some, it is the result of following proper scientific procedure that leads to a kind of knowledge. For others vision is a more intuitive endeavor. For still others it is grounded in fidelity to and careful articulation of experience.

There is much disagreement about what justifies what one sees in the eyes of those who do not see the same way. We are coming out of an optimistic enlightenment era having trusted a single rationality we hoped would eventually yield answers to the questions that dogged us. We hoped to draw a picture of a single reality we could all share. But our pursuit of that reality has led only to more questions. Indeed, our attempts to determine what is real has led instead to a proliferation of voices and visions, some of which have turned back to question the very rationality we placed our trust in to give answers in the first place. We have reached a crisis of legitimation (Habermas, 1973/88; Lyotard, 1979/84). Our methods have become suspect. But we remain attached to them, despite wondering if the answers are possible at all.

Kenneth Gergen (2000) asserts that finding ourselves in the midst of a sea change between enlightenment and postmodern values should not be taken as an occasion to lapse into a nihilistic depression. Gergen sees this proliferation of many ways of seeing as the doorway to a Nietzschean perspectivism that is as optimistic as the enlightenment project that would have laid the world bare before us. Since we can no longer take what

we see for granted, we can now turn our attention to the multitude of ways that we can see. Seeing, rather than a passive reception of what is, actively shapes the world. Each way of seeing reveals the world differently, and has very real effects. For Gergen, our obsession with what is "real" falls away, replaced by a concern for the effects of the ways that we look.

While perspectivism is often equated with (and hence rejected as) relativism, there is a significant difference. Perspectivism, while refusing to endorse the enlightenment fantasy of ever attaining a unified "objective" picture of the world as if from no point of view, does not uncritically accept every perspective with the same weight. It is quite critical; everything is not equal. We may no longer be able to judge according to the categories of truth and falsity, but our attention to our methods charges us with investigating and justifying what our vision *does*: what it reveals, what it covers over, and what is done as a result of it. Vision is creative, and we are now responsible for what we see, how we shape the world.

Drawing together two ways of seeing

I want to look into the intersection of two ways of seeing. The first, psychoanalysis, is perhaps the paramount example of a problem of legitimation in the modern era. Freud, as a master of suspicion, sought to disabuse us of the belief that all that we are is accessible to and controlled by consciousness (Freud, 1917/63; see also Ricoeur, 1965/70, p. 34). Our thoughts and actions are not what they seem to us; rather we are driven by things unseen. With this claim, it should be no surprise that in a climate where seeing is believing psychoanalysis has led a controversial existence. As a perspective on the unseen, its status and legitimacy as a science has been a hot topic ever

since Freud himself tried to establish it as a scientific theory of the psyche. Because it is, in the end, an argument between ways of seeing—paradigms, as Kuhn (1962) called them—the interchanges between psychoanalysis and its scientific critics can reach the outer edges of civility (consider the debate that followed Grunbaum's 1984 critique of psychoanalysis as a science). Those on the outside often view it with suspicion and ridicule, charging that it lacks empirical support and that it works mainly by suggestion rather than by discovering unseen motives. And those who espouse psychoanalysis call out against what they see as a cultural prejudice against the unconscious, sometimes even flatly refusing to answer its critics.

It is my belief that psychoanalytic vision can be clarified and supported by linking it to a second way of seeing, that of pragmatics. Pragmatics, a perspective on language use with roots in analytic philosophy's "linguistic turn" during the 20th century (Rorty, 1967), views language use in terms that are radically different than the modernist's typical understanding of language as representing the contents of one's internal thoughts to others. While we generally take it for granted (indeed, it is a foundation of enlightenment epistemology) that the primary function of language use is to represent the world, to state the facts, and to turn our attention to things, pragmatics sees this as only one of its functions—and hardly its most interesting. Indeed, it may be that the representational function of speech is a distraction that leads us to overlook its other possibilities. A pragmatic perspective is a way of overcoming this habit, turning our vision from what is said to the act of saying.

Psychoanalytic and pragmatic ways of seeing already have much in common. No strangers to the unseen, they both work from standpoints of suspicion, aspiring to reveal

what is covered over. And both stand as critiques of the enlightenment project. John Forrester (1990), drawing heavily from Lacan's description of psychoanalytic discourse, notes a striking affinity between pragmatics and psychoanalysis that has not been acknowledged in the English-speaking world (due in part to the dilution of pragmatics' critical power by its modernist adherents). Forrester sees pragmatics as a therapeutic on the theoretical level where psychoanalysis has been one on the clinical level: they are suspicious of what is consciously intended or said in speech, preferring to attend to what the subject of enunciation is doing. Both refuse to be seduced by the content of speech.

For Forrester, pragmatics and psychoanalysis overlap on two points: a refusal of the modernist assumption that speech is primarily referential, and, following that, a radical critique of modern subjectivity—starting with "the notion that utterances are a re-presentation of inner, psychic states" (p. 150). Tied to this second idea is a picture of the subject as a self-contained, self-transparent, boundaried individual with a clear distinction between what is inside and what is outside. Such a subject, it is believed, speaks in order to consciously communicate to other similarly understood subjects what is happening within it. As we shall see, this assumption begins to fall apart when we look carefully at the actual speech people use in their interactions with each other. Rather than taking what is said at face value as a representation of what is happening in the psyche, pragmatics and psychoanalysis turn to the process in between the speaking subjects (in pragmatics to the context of speaking, in psychoanalysis to the transference) in order to discern what is happening when they speak. As a result we begin to see that perhaps the subjects we might have previously described as individuals were not so distinct to begin with.

If this is the case, and the pragmatic and psychoanalytic perspectives look around the edges of speech to reveal what it is doing between speaking subjects, then pragmatics certainly has much to offer a psychoanalytic stance. Pragmatics is already established as part of a research method that empirically studies interpersonal process by fixing therapeutic conversations in text and analyzing it as a form of conversation in order to reveal some of the mechanics of human interaction. It is able to point to the processes it speaks of. But the bulk of this research does not dialogue directly with psychoanalytic constructs. If this method is brought to bear on a psychoanalytic way of seeing, such that psychoanalytic phenomena become linguistic phenomena, pragmatics can help bring what psychoanalysis sees to light in a more empirical way than psychoanalysis is typically known for.

By "empirical" here I do not mean that it will bear out psychoanalysis to be scientifically grounded as an "empirically validated treatment," or so-called EVT. Likewise when I speak of "justifying" psychoanalytic thinking. The question motivating pragmatic research on psychotherapy is not "Does it work?" but "What is happening?" In the same vein, this attempt to justify psychoanalysis in the eyes of its critics is an attempt to show them what psychoanalysis sees in a way that they might also be able to appreciate. But not only can pragmatics help those on the outside of psychoanalysis see what psychoanalysts are talking about; it can help those of us inside the fold to see and communicate our constructs more clearly and better understand some of the implications of our vision.

Summary of chapters

Keeping my original three questions in mind, (whether a pragmatic perspective can inform a psychoanalytic perspective by showing some of its constructs more clearly, whether a pragmatic perspective on language use can be used to support the project of psychoanalysis in the eyes of its critics, and how a psychoanalytic perspective might be changed after applying a pragmatic perspective to it—and vice versa), the structure of this dissertation is as follows. The first chapter outlines some of the trouble psychoanalysis has had in a scientific culture that more and more places a high premium on visibility. Psychoanalysis is viewed with suspicion and has been the subject of many debates about its legitimacy. Because of its concern with unconscious processes, it is quickly dismissed by mainstream psychology as not empirically supported—or even theoretically supportable. The majority of responses (or lack of response) to these charges by psychoanalysts have not helped its cause, leaving the impression that psychoanalysts are aloof and unconcerned with justifying themselves. This has hurt psychoanalysis both by damaging its image in the scientific community and by stunting its progress as a discipline. I argue that a pragmatic perspective might be able to help psychoanalysis become more transparent by showing some of the interpersonal processes that occur in its work. Pragmatic discourse methods already exist that can make interpersonal process into an object of study; doing this with psychoanalytic constructs can open psychoanalysis to a community of researchers who can discuss at least some psychoanalytic constructs in a more "visible" manner, and hence help overcome its contentious relationship with its empirically minded critics.

The second chapter introduces the perspective of pragmatics as a way of viewing speech as a form of human interaction. While pragmatics began as a subdiscipline of linguistics that tried to address linguistic phenomena that lay outside other existing disciplines, it has evolved into a linguistic perspective on human behavior—thus allowing it to be taken up into the social sciences. I then describe the basics of John Austin's (1975) Speech Act Theory as a key to understanding how we affect each other when we speak. John Austin is often cited as a major player in the development of a pragmatic perspective on language, and is an excellent example of someone who viewed the world through a pragmatic lens. His ideas are particularly interesting when applied to psychoanalytic discussions of interpersonal action. The chapter ends with a discussion of some criteria of pragmatic interpretation as well as some of the implications of the pragmatic perspective on our understanding of human interaction.

Chapter three returns to the empirical concern of showing what psychoanalysis sees. Labov and Fanshel (1977) note that both pragmatic analysis of speech and the psychoanalytic interview attend to verbal behavior (speech). But their methods diverge when it comes to how they justify their interpretations of what is happening. Pragmatic methods of analysis have been taken up in psychology in interpretations of therapeutic phenomena; I discuss some examples of these studies in order to show the breadth of the work and to outline some of the pragmatic constructs used in the interpretations. Then I discuss how these studies have tended to avoid addressing psychoanalytic concepts directly, and give some theoretical and philosophical reasons for this avoidance—such as a desire to remain on the behavioral level and avoid discussing intention.

In the fourth chapter I look to draw together pragmatic and psychoanalytic discourses. I begin by noting some shared qualities of the pragmatic and psychoanalytic perspectives, namely through Lacan's (1956/2002) critique of the function of language and of subjectivity. I then discuss several examples of psychoanalytic constructs that I believe can be interpreted pragmatically, such as the way that speech represses (or suppresses) certain experiences as well as some phenomena described by R. D. Laing (1969) and Thomas Ogden (1982). These constructs are interpersonal in nature, and thus the question of how a pragmatic perspective might change a psychoanalytic perspective (or at least be limited in which psychoanalytic constructs it can be applied to) comes to the fore.

The concluding chapter returns to my three guiding questions, and addresses some philosophical problems that are raised by this discussion: the problem of determining intention, the problem of how much unconscious process can be rendered visible by a pragmatic method (or any method), and whether this method could ultimately be called "empirical." While these problems will not be solved, I believe that continued discussion of them, stemming from viewing psychoanalytic constructs through a pragmatic lens, will be fruitful in the future.

Chapter 1: The trouble with psychoanalytic vision

A call for justification

If undergraduate psychology textbooks are any measure of the status of the field—they are, after all, the first step in the initiation of future psychologists—the opinion within psychology is that psychoanalysis has doubtful empirical legitimacy. Kassin's *Psychology* (2001), a fashionable introductory text, portrays psychoanalysis as belonging to the speculative and literary traditions rather than the scientific tradition because its objects of study (namely, unconscious processes) are by their very nature outside the grasp of the empirical sciences:

> Psychoanalytic interpretations can never be disproved. If a therapist interprets a patient's late arrival as a sign of resistance and the patient accepts this interpretation, it stands confirmed. If the patient emphatically denies the interpretation, the denial itself becomes proof of resistance, also "confirming" the initial interpretation ("heads I win, tails you lose"). (p. 674)

Introductory textbooks, discussing Freud in their chapter on personality, tend to lead with Freud's metapsychology presented as a picture of what is happening inside a person's head (where the tip of the iceberg is consciousness, with the majority of thought underwater; or the unconscious is a hall guarded by a censor with thoughts struggling to get into the chamber of consciousness). Thus the analyst's interpretations of these processes presume a privileged access into the head of his patient such that he can tell his patient what is happening in her unconscious. In Kassin's estimation, there is no way to determine whether a psychoanalytic interpretation is an accurate description of the patient's mental processes or not. The analyst holds all the cards.

When this clinical picture is evaluated by empirically-minded psychologists, the analyst's power position draws heavy fire. Psychology, as an empirical science, "the scientific study of behavior and the mind" in the tradition of Wundt and James (Kassin, p. 4), views psychoanalytic principles as difficult if not impossible to address scientifically and hence practically impossible to validate. Here the psychoanalyst's hand is not so good. Such a characterization (or caricature) of psychoanalytically-based theories and therapies portrays the clinician as mind reading, pressing his (unfounded) interpretations on his patient. At best this is considered unscientific, at worst as essentially paternalistic and leading to unethical practice.

Kowalski and Westen's *Psychology* (2005) presents a kinder introduction to psychoanalysis, acknowledging that some of Freud's ideas, namely resistance, transference, and the defenses, are almost universally accepted in one form or another amongst clinicians. Still, their critiques, while more subtle, are along the same lines:

> Although Freud developed psychoanalysis as a method of exploring and interpreting meaning and not of predicting behavior, there can be little doubt that psychodynamic theories would be much further along today if psychoanalysts had taken more interest in testing and refining their ideas empirically. (p. 454)

They leave it to the reader to decide what "further along" would mean; at the very least we might understand them to be saying that psychoanalysis would be taken more seriously, contributing more to research and dialogue, and occupying more real estate in an introductory textbook. But as it stands, psychoanalysis is left wanting for justification in the eyes of the psychological mainstream.

Bornstein (2005) points out that as psychoanalysis has been pushed to the side from its formerly established role in American psychology, many psychoanalytic constructs have been co-opted by mainstream psychology and presented without

reference to their original source. Unconscious memory is presented as implicit memory, repression as cognitive avoidance, parapraxis as retrieval error, and repetition compulsion as nuclear script. Bornstein charges that "the diminished influence of contemporary psychoanalysis is largely a product of theory mismanagement" (p. 325) and its adherents' habit of circling their wagons rather than dialoguing with those that question them. The result of this is that "whereas psychoanalytic *concepts* remain strong, psychoanalysis as a discipline has become 'disconnected' from contemporary scientific and clinical psychology" (p. 324). Psychoanalytic concepts have been reinterpreted and divorced from their context because they are more acceptable within the prevailing scientific *Zeitgeist* than in the declining psychoanalytic one. Bornstein offers that psychoanalytic proponents have much work to do in dialoguing with the mainstream if they want to avoid complete marginalization.

Often the response to the criticism that psychoanalysis is not in line enough with the empirical sciences involves a complaint that the criteria of justification psychoanalysis is being asked to meet are too strict and overlook the finer points of psychoanalytic experience. Attempting to operationally define psychoanalytic constructs so that they can be categorized, managed, and quantified entails stripping them of all that is interesting. But Roth and Fonagy (1996) charge that the psychoanalyst's complaint that empirical research cannot touch the subtleties of psychodynamic experience is an untenable position, and that those of the psychoanalytic ilk should stop ignoring the empirical data and start paying closer attention to the development of the more sophisticated outcome and process-outcome research coming to light (p. 46).

Indeed, in the current push for empirical validation of therapies that is part of the larger question of how to allocate mental health resources, there is an oft-cited disparity in the amount of research being done to justify psychoanalytically-based therapies in comparison to the more popular cognitive behavioral ones. This fact does not go unappreciated in the analytic community. Roth and Fonagy (1996) address this disparity in an attempt to push further therapy research for the psychoanalytic therapies. For them, the disparity of research is not due to an inherent problem in psychoanalysis itself. Rather, they cite as constraints on psychodynamic treatment trials an absence of a quantitative empirical history within psychoanalysis, practical issues such as costs and the availability of clinicians for studies of work that tends to be long term, and the absence of appropriate measures for "the more ambitious aims of these treatments," which often include characterological change rather than merely symptom reduction (p. 32). They do note that the outcome research that has been done tends to show that psychodynamic therapy is more effective than no treatment, but cite mixed results in its comparison to other forms of treatment. In the end, due to the combination of internal limitations within the studies and the small amount of data that has been produced, Ross and Fonagy conclude that it is far too early to weigh in on either side regarding the effectiveness of dynamic clinical work.

Nancy McWilliams (1999), writing as a clinician committed to psychoanalytic thinking and convinced of its ability to help people change, notes that although the objects of psychoanalytic interest do not easily lend themselves to the objectification and quantification that popular empirical methods often require, the disparity in research stems from theoretical and practical differences rather than from any inherent problem in

psychoanalytic experience itself. Empirical psychoanalytic research is difficult, but it is not impossible, and psychoanalysis would benefit from more research into what it does. Yet practitioners lack both the resources and the motivation to research psychoanalytically-based therapies. Because of the nature of psychoanalytic constructs, the complexity of the data, and the appreciation of the subtle qualities of human experience required in the consulting room, the translation of what happens in a psychoanalytically-based therapy into quantities or discrete categories often constitutes an act of betrayal for its proponents. People become analysts to be practitioners, and "few of us who feel the calling to be therapists also have the temperament of the dispassionate scientist" (p. 3). In other words, psychoanalysts are often turned off by the suggestion to research their constructs.

A reluctance to respond

Psychoanalysis may indeed be struggling against political and economic pressures for a respectable position within mental health. Yet we must admit that proponents of psychoanalysis have not done much to help its image or clarify itself in the eyes of its critics. McWilliams notes that psychoanalysis has, in its tendentious relationship with science going back to Freud, a history of presenting "smug, culture-bound convictions" as facts (p. 3). Instead of responding to their critics by trying to be more transparent, psychoanalysts can be quite defensive. Psychoanalytic discourse has historically been highly politicized and sectarian, with participants often treating those outside of (as well as within) its enclave in a spirit other than that of dialogue.

Ablon (2005), reviewing a book that summarizes over eighty empirical studies of psychoanalytic therapy, takes a sterner view than McWilliams regarding the

psychoanalytic response to the call for justification. While an advocate of psychoanalysis, and agreeing that psychoanalysis indeed lags behind other therapies in the amount of research done, he states that the problem at the end of the day is not a lack of empirical support or resources, but a lack (or refusal) of communication:

> The largest limitation of the research presented in this impressive volume remains [that] no one seems to be listening – be it inside or outside the insular world of psychoanalysis…Results of the American Psychoanalytic Association's Strategic Marketing Initiative (2002) suggested that the value of psychoanalytic theory remains widely appreciated despite the fact that analysts are seen as not relating well to other mental health professionals, as arrogant, intimidating and uninterested in what others have to say, and that the analytic community is viewed as isolated, patronizing, not open to new ideas, resistant to change, and not interested in dialogue. Even if these impressions are inaccurate, unfortunately, it is unlikely that any amount of empirical data will overcome the strength of resistance stemming from such misconceptions. If empirical data are to help reinstate psychoanalysis' deserving place, then steps also must be taken to communicate more openly and effectively with those outside the community. (p. 606)

The cynical interpretation of this, Ablon says, is that psychoanalysts simply do not care about justifying themselves, "that clinicians know the value of what they do and are insulted that empirical evidence should take precedence over clinical experience and case reports which represent data of another sort." Given the dismissive tone that runs through psychoanalytic debates, this may not be far off the mark. Psychoanalysis needs better ambassadors if it is to be taken seriously by its others.

An alternate interpretation to that of arrogance is the possibility that psychoanalysts are actually intimidated by those who ask them to account for themselves. Schachter (2005) believes that many psychoanalysts see dialogue with empirical methods as a threat to their identity: "Present disinterest may be based on anxious anticipations that empirical findings may undermine hard-learned analytic beliefs—which they may" (p. 487). This reactionary fear of the future leads to the circling of wagons mentioned

earlier, as psychoanalysts fear losing even more influence through admitting that they may not know what they are talking about.

Could it be that the psychoanalyst, having come to realize the power of the unconscious and the pervasiveness of defensive thinking, has simply given up on the possibility of a good-willed, transparent conversation? Thus, rather than taking a rational, philosophical stance that assumes that everything should be above board, the psychoanalyst responds to those who question him from a clinical position, interpreting its criticisms away. While this may be a philosophically tenable stance, it does not win friends. Freud himself employed the "heads I win, tails you lose" strategy not only with patients but with his philosophical adversaries as well. Forrester (1997), discussing Freud's reaction to the mixed reception of his *Interpretation of dreams*, notes that Freud consistently interpreted rejections of his theory as "counter wishes" in the style of the dream of the "Butcher's wife" (Freud, 1900/65, p. 180) within the text itself. Critics who contradicted him by offering dreams that they asserted had no wish were interpreted as deliberately trying to frustrate the theory and, in doing so, were subsumed into the theory as examples supporting it. With this sweeping application of a hermeneutics of suspicion, Forrester says, "Freud introduced a thesis that has provoked the ire of his critics ever since: one can never disagree with Freud without being a mere resister to truth" (1997, p. 159).[1]

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[1] Despite Freud's initial enthusiastic reception of Jung's word association test (and one might posit as a result of Freud's falling out with Jung), Freud seems to have taken a similarly dismissive stance even with some of his empirically minded supporters. Wallerstein (2006) states Freud's written response to an American experimenter named Saul Rozenzweig, who had sent Freud an outline of a scientific method to study repression. "I cannot put much value on these informations because the wealth of reliable observations on which these assertions rest make them independent of experimental verification. Still, it can do no harm. Sincerely yours, Freud" (p. 314). The case reports Freud gave were enough evidence to convince him that he was on the right track.

This sort of response seems closer to the point of the criticisms of the introductory textbooks: psychoanalysis does not play along with those who want to make the science of the unconscious transparent. The mainstream, understanding psychology to be the scientific study of the mind and behavior, is only looking for an even playing field, where their criticisms are taken seriously and psychoanalysts are willing to show their hand. The "heads I win, tails you lose" way of talking about things is not a response; it is a power play, merely stacking the deck so as not to have to respond.

The textbook critiques cited above are not questioning the effectiveness of psychoanalytic therapies. Their complaints are more fundamental, pointing to the nonempirical nature of psychoanalytic phenomena and the psychoanalyst's claim to be able to see and interpret them. This is a question of the face validity of psychoanalytic constructs, of making claims about the unseen. These calls for justification are complaints about the lack of transparency in psychoanalytic discourse and psychoanalysis' failure to explain itself. Any reluctance within the psychoanalytic community to make itself more transparent to outsiders risks being interpreted as a power move where the analyst is determined to hold all the cards so as not to have to be accountable.

The reluctance of analysts to show their hand is perhaps best reflected in their extensive use of case studies to illustrate what they are talking about. While case studies are indeed a good method to give examples of psychoanalytic constructs to those who already accept them, they are not effective ways of validating those constructs. Schacter (2005) notes that case presentations, with their "writerly" rhetorical style, while profoundly helpful as illustrations,

> are limited because they reflect the subjectivity of the analyst author, who is
> motivated in the writing to demonstrate some theory or technique. They are

unable to address some of the fundamental questions [about the validity of its constructs]. No case report can validate Freud's etiological theory. (p. 484)

Donald Spence (1989), in his comparison of the psychoanalytic discipline to that of alchemy, charges that the data in psychoanalytic case formulations have "too quickly been translated into the standard etic formulations of psychoanalytic theory" (p. 219). That is, the "emic" data (data expressed in the original categories of the subject being studied, e.g., a transcript of a session) are already filtered through the lenses of psychoanalytic theory into the theoretical "etic" language of psychoanalysis, and presented as proving or supporting the theory's categories and constructs. There is not much material left over and hence not much room for the reader of a case presentation to disagree with or even to draw her own conclusions about what is going on. The original conversations are kept from the public eye, often out of supposed concerns for the privacy of the patient, and hence are unavailable to those who would like to see for themselves what is going on (p. 208). The rhetorical style of the presentation is closed, thus avoiding the risk of critique or reinterpretation by those who might see the case quite differently. When the opportunity to reinterpret data is not made available, there is hardly any opportunity, outside that of outright rejection, to disagree.

Whether it is consciously intended or not, psychoanalysis' tight control over both its data and the right to interpret it does function as a power move, contributing significantly to the hostility in the discourse surrounding it. Again, this may reflect a suspicion that the uninitiated would naively take what is said at face value with no ear for the unconscious or the potential for self-deception (as if the analyst was now beyond this). But it functions to silence alternate interpretations that, when dialogued with, could further the psychoanalytic project.

Surely both those who adhere to a psychoanalytic worldview and those who are committed to psychology as an empirical science share the belief that what is hidden is the source of aggression, corruption, and the exploitation of power; but it is the empirical thinkers who still hold out for themselves the possibility that this may be overcome (or at least sidestepped) through transparency and openness. Psychoanalysis, on the other hand, has an ambivalent relationship with these enlightenment epistemological values. Yet it is the scientists who are accusing the psychoanalysts of exploitation. Forrester (1997) states the problem thus:

> I think that this is the fundamental source of the deep mistrust of psychoanalysis: the view that the power of the psychoanalyst is so great, because of the relationship of power, or the relationship of suggestion, that he exerts over the patient and, by extension, over the whole of twentieth-century culture, that the so-called evidence of analytic sessions is irredeemably contaminated, at best, by the analyst's wishes … or is largely the creation of the analyst's malignant imagination and technique. (p. 222)

From an enlightenment perspective, scientific procedure is not just the way to a more accurate description of the world; it is based in a democratic hopefulness, a fundamental ideal that no one person or group of people should control the data. The data should be public, available to all for interpretation and reinterpretation. And psychoanalysis' habit of holding its cards so close to its chest is not helping its case.

Psychoanalytic transparency: dialoguing with its others

Thus it would behoove psychoanalysis to be more transparent if it does not want to be left behind. Fortunately, despite its reputation, this disconnected ivory tower stance is not the only position that psychoanalysis takes. There are those within psychoanalysis who wish to dialogue with those outside, who are interested in a true pluralism that is not simply a cover for a refusal to question one's own theories. Haynal (1993), for example,

writes that while he has seen in many fellow proponents of psychoanalysis "an aggressive

assurance, which goes hand in hand with a refusal to submit their presuppositions to

methods of verification, or at least of assessment" (p. 77), he believes it possible to take a

less defensive stance and to have a more willing discussion with its critics. Haynal argues

that it comes down to a choice of posture:

> Psychoanalysis has frequently oscillated between the wish to be a *transparent*
> discourse, public and comprehensible as it most certainly was in the writings of
> Freud and his pioneers (Abraham, Ferenczi), and an *esoteric* discourse for the
> initiated … a jargon hindering—or avoiding—exchanges with the rest of the
> scientific community. (p. 171)

With this history in mind, proponents of psychoanalytic thinking must decide if and how

to dialogue with those outside who question them, particularly those who put a high

premium on the democratic values of transparency and the publication of data.

Even if we identify with Freud as a master of suspicion and disagree with

scientific efforts to validate the claims of psychoanalysis, whatever they might be, it

would serve us to be accountable for our actions. Requests that we justify ourselves make

sense. If I cannot or will not show others what I do, why should they trust me or believe

that I am actually doing what I say I am? Indeed, given the human propensity for self-

deception central to the psychoanalytic project, why should *I* believe that I am? Both

McWilliams and Haynal urge that those who believe in the efficacy of psychoanalytic

work give a compelling account of what they are doing (McWilliams, 1999, p. 3; Haynal,

1993, p. 132). This dialogue is not only for justification in the eyes of others in order to

be taken more seriously, but for the sake of psychoanalytic thinking itself, for a greater

self-understanding and to further its own development.

There are, in fact, those who are currently laboring to establish psychoanalysis as a self-critical discipline that is willing to evaluate its constructs and methods in response to empirical questioning (e.g., Ablon & Jones, 2002; Fonagy & Target, 1994 & 1996; Wallerstein, 2006; Westen, 1998, 1999, & 2002). These are not apologists in the style of the defensive reactionaries characterized earlier. While they are indeed invested in keeping the Freudian tradition alive, they are not afraid to take a critical stance. Their interest is in furthering psychoanalysis—even if this means that moving forward leaves parts of that tradition behind. I will present one such author as an example.

Drew Westen has been an inexhaustible apologist for psychoanalysis, defending it with empirical studies while at the same time reproaching its habit of shying away from those who question the legitimacy of its constructs. Westen believes that critics of psychoanalysis "have typically focused on a version of psychoanalytic theory—circa 1920 at best—that few contemporary analysts find compelling" and that in doing so

> have set the terms of the public debate and have led some analysts, I believe mistakenly, down an indefensible path of trying to defend a 75- to 100-year-old version of a theory and therapy that has changed substantially since Freud laid its foundations at the turn of the century. (Westen, 1999, p. 1062n2)

Consequently, in an extensive summary of some of the research that supports psychoanalytic thinking, he begins by pointing out that contemporary psychoanalysis includes a complex community that no longer resembles the popular picture of a closed univocal troupe obsessed with orthodoxy (Westen, 1998, p. 334). For Westen, psychoanalysis' survival will be secured through its interaction with contemporary psychological work, not through defending a hundred-year-old closed system. In fact, he argues, psychoanalysis has all along been flourishing and developing in spite of having already been declared obsolete in the mainstream. Rather than defending Freud's writing

itself, he offers an abundance of studies—many of which come from traditions outside of psychoanalysis—that support what he believes to be common tenets of contemporary psychoanalytic thought: that much of mental activity is unconscious, that these processes are multivocal and subsist in conflict and compromise with each other, that personality patterns begin to form in childhood, that many of our interactions are guided by mental representations of self and others, and that personality development involves the regulation of aggression and a maturation from dependence to independence. These tenets are neither comprehensive nor required beliefs; they denote a family resemblance shared by a pluralistic group of theorists and practitioners under the umbrella of psychoanalysis.

Westen also believes that psychoanalysis needs to be open to change if it is to move forward. He ascribes its survival thus far to its ability to be open; he points out that psychoanalysis has indeed been rolling with the punches, largely out of sight of the public eye, transforming itself and its relationship with psychology in general over the past sixty years. He lists in particular three ways that psychoanalysis has moved away from a unified orthodoxy into dialogue with other psychological theories: in its response to the cognitive (neuroscience) revolution, which led to a lifting of the behaviorist moratorium on mental processes, affects, and motivations; the multiplication of Freud's libido theory to include other motivations (beside sex and aggression) such as human needs for relationship and self-esteem; and a movement (that he is part of) responding to empiricist criticisms of psychoanalytic method and foundations (Westen, 1998, p. 334).

Still, Westen (2002) believes there is more transformation to be done in clarifying and being accountable for psychoanalytic constructs. Psychoanalytic thinking is fraught

with ambiguous references to disparate phenomena with the same concept (such as "clinical process" or "the unconscious"), the use of imprecise metaphors and jargon when simpler vocabulary would clarify ("cathexis"), and the lingering habit, despite improvement on the front of justifying its claims, of supporting itself with reference only to clinical illustrations. In the end, he is optimistic to see that over the past few decades (partly due to the increasing medicalization of psychology) the newer generations of psychoanalytically-oriented clinicians show "a greater appreciation for empirical work, an acknowledgement that psychoanalytic propositions do not rise and fall solely on the basis of their perceived clinical utility, and a recognition that 'I had a patient once' is not the firmest of epistemological foundations" (Westen, 1998, p. 334).

Meeting in the middle: showing what we see

       If our goal is to be more transparent in order to win a more sympathetic gaze, the question becomes how to do this effectively. How are we to communicate and illustrate psychoanalytic constructs in a way that makes others want to see them? It seems that transparency requires at the very least that psychoanalysis acknowledge the terms of its critics rather than simply repeating its own point of view. That is, it must address its audience and their demands. In doing so, it may indeed have to change, meeting its opponents in the middle. How psychoanalysis responds (or doesn't respond) to its critics will have a significant role in determining not only how seriously it is to be taken by its peers, but the direction psychoanalysis takes in the future. This is a natural result of dialogue: a discipline that responds openly to criticism may very well change in its response to those criticisms.

Of course, there have already been real responses to critiques of the psychoanalytic epistemology, responses that attempt to overcome the characteristically closed and defensive psychoanalytic stance. Some responses, such as those described above, have attempted to meet the critics on their own terms, giving scientific evidence to support the efficacy and perspective of psychoanalysis. Others have been more transformative, attempting to reinterpret psychoanalysis on other, less scientific grounds. Through these responses psychoanalysis has been able, however stiltingly, to change with the times and survive. In doing so, psychoanalysis has transformed from a tight-knit group with orthodox aims into a looser, more diverse community. The question remains, however, of how communal that community really is.

One debate that has had far reaching effects leading to change within the psychoanalytic community began with Adolph Grunbaum's (1984) searing analysis of what he held to be the epistemic foundations of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalytically-oriented thinkers rallied from all sides to answer this criticism, which in turn led to a struggle within the psychoanalytic community to redefine itself in the wake of the debate.

According to Edelson (1984), before Grunbaum, there had been two previous significant criticisms of the tenets of psychoanalysis from philosophers of science that were dismissed or ignored. The first was that of the logical positivists such as Nagel (1959), who charged that the theoretical terms of psychoanalysis lacked sufficient empirical content (mainly dealing with problems of observation and measurement) to even be scientifically meaningful. But since logical positivism itself fell out of favor as a too stringent and unrealistic plan even for the hard sciences, its challenges did not require an extensive response from psychoanalysis (Edelson, 1984, p. 13). The second critique

was Popper's (1959) charge that the hypotheses of psychoanalysis are not (as they are typically constructed) falsifiable—and that, as we have already seen, psychoanalysts are rarely motivated to try to falsify them. Instead, psychoanalysis has had a tendency to justify itself in its own eyes almost exclusively through seeking out examples that confirm its hypotheses and thus immunize itself from falsification (Edelson, p. 36). While this may be good practice in theory building and *generating* concepts and constructs with which to interpret behavior, there comes a point where one should attempt to test the strength of those hypotheses by seeing if they stand up to scrutiny.[2] Because of this failure of falsification in principle and practice (falsification for him being a defining characteristic of good science), Popper rejected psychoanalysis as a science.

These previous critiques, as global indictments, did not garner the attention of psychoanalysis as strongly as Grunbaum's critique has. Instead of dismissing any relationship between psychoanalysis and empirical science, Grunbaum's attack actually engages with psychoanalysis. Grunbaum agrees with Popper that psychoanalysis tends not to be interested in trying to falsify its hypotheses, but disagrees with the charge that they are not falsifiable in principle. Grunbaum thinks that they are, but, again, charges that the traditional psychoanalytic methods of gathering and presenting data are suspect. Along with the case report, the psychoanalytic method of free association produces data that are "contaminated" by the theoretical expectations of the analyst, who waits until the patient produces associations that fit his constructs before he intervenes. Likewise with the reconstruction of childhood memories, which are guided by the analyst's

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[2] Popper (1959) calls these two movements in science respectively the context of discovery and the context of justification. In the former he is quite permissive, but it is in the latter, in his view, that psychoanalysis falters in its failure to be sufficiently self-critical.

(theoretically informed) interventions. The only way that psychoanalysis can justify itself empirically, Grunbaum argues, is through experiments set up outside of the clinical setting that support the existence of its purported phenomena. As long as the data given to support psychoanalysis are taken from within a clinical setting, psychoanalysts leave themselves open to the charge that their supposed therapy is operating mainly by suggestion.

Grunbaum's critique reverberated through the psychoanalytic community in such a way that Luyten, Blatt, & Corveleyn (2006) have come to view the current state of psychoanalysis as an after-effect of this debate. Psychoanalysis, they say, has split between two ways of responding to Grunbaum, forming two camps: "those who consider psychoanalysis an interpretive science belonging to the humanities and those who believe that psychoanalysis should adopt a neopositivistic paradigm consistent with approaches in the physical, biological, and social sciences" (Luyten et al., 2006, p. 580). The latter side with Grunbaum, seeking to reestablish psychoanalysis using empirical methods, while the former attempt to absolve themselves of having to use empirical justification, at least in the sense of using established scientific method. Instead, they assert that psychoanalysis is better understood as a hermeneutic science, emphasizing Freud's interpretive moments and minimizing his assertions that psychoanalysis is akin to biology. For the hermeneuticists, psychoanalytic interpretations do not need to be objectively justified because they are not trying to access some sort of external or internal

reality. Rather, they are creating a narrative in the dialogue between the patient and the clinician.[3]

Luyten et al. state that many have simply taken a stance along a continuum between these poles and consider the case closed. But this has led to stagnation on the issue; psychoanalysis needs to continue to dialogue within itself if it is to move forward in dialogue with its others.[4] For them, the answer lies somewhere in the middle between acceding to the demands of the scientists and rejecting their questions outright. They "believe that the future of psychoanalytic research lies in methodological pluralism," that there will never be one sufficient method (p. 592). One possibility they see is to modify the traditional case study method so that it is more controlled, using more rigorous study design, clearer hypotheses, and a distinct separation of presentation of the case from its psychoanalytic interpretation (thus distinguishing a case *study* from a case *report*). This could be augmented with a quantitative method that attempts to remain true to the subtlety of the experiences of the participants, such as a Q-sort. Such an approach would contain elements of both interpretive and empirical methods, and require that each side accept at least some of the tenets of the other side.

The sticking point of this proposal, it would seem, would be this last point: accepting the tenets of the other side. This is where Luyten et al. believe the most work remains to be done, and where they see the impasse in psychoanalysis as it stands. While it may seem to some that the issue of whether psychoanalysis is a scientific or a

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[3] Grunbaum himself dismissed hermeneuticists such as Ricoeur as "scientophobic" (1984, p. 93); however, it appears that his criticism only strengthened the resolve of those who followed him. See their debate with Grunbaum in Messer, Sass, & Woolfok (1988).
[4] They liken this split to Snow's (1959) "two cultures," a trope that has been all too effective in destroying any dialogue between science and the humanities. The trope itself, it may be said, is a popularization of Dilthey's distinction between *Naturwissenschaften* and *Geisteswissenschaften*.

hermeneutic discipline has already been laid to rest, the groundwork has only just been set. We still need to establish "talking terms" in order to bridge the gap between the empirical scientific and the interpretive camps (p. 580). In order for psychoanalysis to justify itself to the mainstream, it must develop an acceptable vocabulary to communicate with it.

Understanding psychoanalysis as a way of seeing

As there can no longer be the fantasy of developing a unified psychoanalytic theory, establishing talking terms for psychoanalysis is no small feat. But talking terms are not the reduction of the language of one participant in a discussion to those of the other. They require the development of a third discourse, one that would allow each participant to have a voice; but again this would demand that each participant be open to the possibility that his or her own voice might in the end be subject to modification. Indeed, the very phrase "talking terms" brings with it an image of negotiations. It may be helpful here to recall Kenneth Gergen's point about perspectivism from the introduction: In the postmodern proliferation of perspectives, we see a turning away from concerns about the legitimacy of the objects that our vision reveals and towards a concern for the effects of our ways of seeing. Developing talking terms requires stepping back from the project of justifying psychoanalytic hypotheses with empirical evidence and turning to the way that psychoanalysis sees, to the way that it talks about its constructs. It is here that psychoanalysis' way of seeing comes into focus.

Thus one step toward the development of psychoanalytic talking terms might be to turn from the questions of whether or not psychoanalysis' approach is preferable to the null hypothesis, and whether its constructs are empirically justifiable or better understood

as narrative interpretations, to the way it understands and communicates itself to others: to bracket concerns about justification and view psychoanalysis as a perspective on the world that is in dialogue with other perspectives. Roy Schafer (1992) points out that, traditionally, psychoanalytic theorizing has been modeled on the powerful rhetorical role of the scientific authority, positioning the speaker or writer as

> a reliable member of the Old Enlightenment: a neutral, value-free, countertransference-free, well-trained scientific observer; a genderless, raceless, classless expert delivering a monologue that gives all the appearance of having been stripped of rhetorical ploys ... "Trust me," it says. (pp. 150-1)

In the context of enlightenment discourse, such an apparently rhetoric-free presentation is itself an effective rhetorical strategy precisely because it keeps our eyes on the facts, so to speak, and not on the speaker. The analyst is presented as a trusted authority, and his way of speaking functions to hold on to this authority, to keep others listening. But Schafer is not pointing this out as a critique of the abuses of psychoanalytic power. Rather, setting aside questions of how well this traditional method may or may not function in present scientific discourse, Schafer wants to bring our attention to the way we speak about things. Psychoanalytic discourse, like scientific discourse, can be a powerful and persuasive rhetorical method; but the "conventionalized drabness" of psychoanalytic speech "is an attempt to deny that there is much about Freud's creation of psychoanalysis, and thus of his legacy to us, that can be characterized as a triumph of vivid and masterful rhetoric" (p. 151). Schafer believes that Freud's strength, as will be the strength of any form of psychoanalysis that is to survive in the future, was in his persuasive ability to make others see the way that he saw. If psychoanalysis' progress is through dialogue, as Schafer believes, then it needs to continue developing new rhetorical forms that persuade others into its way of seeing.

Westen (2002) also notes the dry scientifically-inspired style of many psychoanalytic presentations that contain the same sort of section headings one would see in a journal article in the physical sciences: a discussion of the phenomena to be examined, a presentation of the data (the case study), and a "results" or "discussion" section. For Westen, these presentations can be full of insight that can lead to better understanding of the work. And they are just as empirical as a statistical scientific study: "They involve observations of the world, which is what empirical means" (p. 882). But they should not pretend to be scientific. They are a great source of information, but unlike statistical hypothesis testing, they are not part of the discourse of justification. Still, unlike psychoanalysis' positivistic critics, we should not think that this means they are not meaningful. They operate in a different rhetorical domain, that of drawing one's vision to phenomena, and should be recognized as such.[5]

Even Marshall Edelson (1984), himself an advocate of the scientific worldview and a scientific apologist for psychoanalysis, credits Freud for his powerful way of seeing and his ability to draw others into it:

> Freud's work … should be read as in part at least an effort to make it possible to see things differently. His gift for making it possible through his examples and case studies for others to 'see what I mean' is impressive. In fact a great amount of work in the social sciences does not involve hypothesis-testing even when it appears in that guise, but an effort by one or more, through the collection and organization of facts and proposals of explanations of them, to persuade others to see what they see. (p. 32)

For Edelson, Freud's *Interpretation of dreams* stands as an example of his powerful rhetorical style; it is "a brilliant quintessentially 'see-what-I-mean' book" that brings the

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[5] Westen then urges that if we want to be truly empirical in a case study, "we need to see the texts, not the Cliff Notes" (p. 882). A full disclosure of what has happened allows a discussion of alternate hypotheses. And further down the road we eventually do need to test our hypotheses with empirical statistical methods.

reader to the point of seeing the phenomena through the writer's eyes (p. 33). This is an essential step in science: before he gets to the point of showing that his theory can withstand empirical attempts at falsification, it is the responsibility of the theorist to persuade others that his theorizing is fruitful, that his way of speaking about the phenomena should be taken up at all. He must sell it. Otherwise it risks falling stillborn from the press. This is where a theoretical stance obtains its initial credibility.

We may even concede that the methods of psychoanalysis are different than those of traditional science, without rejecting it as therefore useless. Bouveresse (1995) and Elder (1994) take interesting perspectives on psychoanalysis and its relationship with science, writing from a Wittgensteinian perspective. Both authors agree with scientific critics that psychoanalysis is in fact not a science; but they understand psychoanalysis to be a unique way of looking that should be honored in its own right, rather than merely as an inadequately founded theory.

Bouveresse (1995) details this shift in perspective. Where previously psychoanalysis has been dismissed as nonscientific and "merely" a way of looking at things, thereby having nothing to offer "real" (scientific) knowledge about the world, it becomes possible to see it as a way of looking alongside a scientific way of looking— both having something to offer. The turn is toward a focus on language and language use and how they function to constitute experience.

Elder (1994) also does a Wittgensteinian analysis of psychoanalytic constructs. His main argument is that psychoanalytic statements such as "repression consists in keeping an idea from consciousness," while seeming on the surface to be statements of fact (and thus vulnerable to scientific criticism), actually function as "grammatical"

statements. That is, they are statements about how things should be viewed: they "set forth rules for the use of language" (p. 2). In true Wittgensteinian manner, saying that repression keeps an idea from consciousness is simply saying that we should view human psychic functioning through this theoretical construct. It is invoking a perspective, a way of looking at the world.

In this view, psychoanalysis is not a theory about the facts or the way things "really" are. It is a *way of looking*, and its theory is a set of directions about how to see things. Incidentally, Elder claims that science functions in the same manner: one of its directions is to see things as facts, objectively (that is, as objects), and to legitimize scientific claims through certain procedures, the scientific method. Psychoanalysis is a different discourse that wants for legitimation, but not through empirical scientific methods. Ultimately, using this perspective requires that we set aside arguments about what is "real" and instead ask: "What does it show us?"[6]

I believe that selling psychoanalysis requires that we present it in such a way that it appears credible on its face, even for its critics in introductory textbooks. Those who ask that we show what we are talking about are not asking for too much; they are simply asking for transparency. They are asking that psychoanalysis be explained in a way that is believable to them. If a psychoanalytically-oriented thinker sees psychoanalytic phenomena, should he not be able to make others see them as well? Such a demand is better answered by a "see what I mean" explanation than a mathematical number that

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[6] According to Gergen (1991), the move from modernism to postmodernism involves the same shift: Instead of asking what is real, we begin to ask what our way of seeing reveals to us and what the results are of taking this perspective. Ultimately, the answers are political in nature.

shows that it works. The question is *how* it works, what it looks like.[7] So I believe it is

fruitful to turn from the question of whether psychoanalysis is justified, whether it is

correct, to the question of psychoanalytic vision: what psychoanalysis sees happening,

what sort of phenomena it reveals, and how it sees them. As Edelson holds with Freud,

psychoanalysis is a way (or set of ways) of seeing that can be (more or less) persuasively

shown to others through good illustration.

      Of course this is not a minor task, given the breadth of psychoanalytic interest.

The problem of rendering visible (or at least available to public discourse) what is already

theoretically invisible is rife with methodological and philosophical difficulties and

implications. Presenting a convincing picture of what happens in psychoanalytically-

based therapies to those on the outside, who do not share the same theoretical

presuppositions and perspective, may be impossible given the great diversity of

viewpoints within psychoanalytic thinking itself. Since even those who use the terms of

psychoanalysis and claim the same perspective will disagree about what is going on, it is

doubtful that any one vocabulary will be adequate to this task.

      It may be more realistic to think smaller, to offer a lens or set of lenses that reveal

what could not be seen without them. At the very least this may sidestep the caricature of

the paternalistic psychoanalyst we saw above, arbitrarily speculating and claiming

privileged access to otherwise invisible or internal processes—"Heads I win, tails you

lose." It would allow those on the outside of the psychoanalytic cartel to see what is

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[7] This question of *how* psychoanalysis works is vastly different than the same question asked in psychotherapy research, which distinguishes questions of *what* works in therapy from questions of *how* it works. In effectiveness research, *what* refers to which therapies are effective, and *how* refers to the processes and factors that lead to change (e.g., Wallerstein, 2002, p. 313). These questions are still within the discourse of justification; my question of *how* psychoanalysis works is simply asking what is happening there, how it functions.

being talked about. It might also help those on the inside work more clearly with the phenomena—and offer a check to those of us who might fall into the habit of speculative mind-reading by requiring us to show others what we see. Once the "objects" of psychoanalytic study are empirically rendered (that is, made public for discussion) there can be discussion and disagreement as to what they might be, rather than outright dismissal. It is my hope that a pragmatic perspective on psychoanalysis can lend itself to this.

Chapter 2: A pragmatic perspective

> Once we realize that what we have to study is *not* the sentence but the issuing of an utterance in a speech situation, there can hardly be any longer a possibility of not seeing that stating is performing an act.
>
> J. L. Austin, *How to do things with words*, p. 139

What is a pragmatic perspective? Pragmatics, initially established as a branch of linguistics with roots in philosophy of language that has had difficulty figuring out its place in the field, has more recently evolved into an interdisciplinary stance on language use as a human behavior. The focus shifts from language itself to its functioning in human social interaction. For our purposes, the ultimate interest in the pragmatic perspective is its ability to reveal in a concrete way what is happening between people as they interact. As a perspective on language use, pragmatics has social goals, goals that I believe could fruitfully be taken up into psychoanalysis.

To illustrate this development I will use Verschueren's (1999) presentation of pragmatics as a perspective to build upon the presentation of pragmatics given in Levinson's (1983) earlier introduction to pragmatics as a linguistic subdiscipline. Then I will outline a text that could be described as the principal text written from a pragmatic perspective, John Austin's *How to do things with words* (1964). Austin's lively work outlines a philosophical stance that rejects the primacy of representation and views language use as social action. This, I hope, will begin to give a sense of what a pragmatic perspective can offer psychoanalysis insofar as the latter is interested in interpersonal dynamics, laying the ground for more empirical concerns in the third chapter. This chapter will end with a more a technical discussion of illocution (speech acts) that begins to show how the mechanics of interpersonal action can be located in language use, and

then will ask the question (to be returned to in the next chapter) of how we are to go about revealing these processes in a disciplined way.

Levinson's elevation of the pragmatic level of speech

At its most broad, and perhaps least informative level, pragmatics can be understood as the study of language use.[8] It is a discipline with roots in theoretical linguistics and analytic philosophy, but has expanded as it was taken up into the empirical social sciences. Levinson's (1983) well-known introduction to pragmatics attempts to situate pragmatics within the tradition of Anglo-American linguistics. Writing at a time when linguistic studies were dominated by transformational-generative grammar and its attempt to develop a picture of language contained entirely within sentence structure (Lyons, 1977), Levinson labors to define pragmatics as a distinct field within linguistics that cannot be reduced to other approaches to language. He wants to argue that pragmatics is able to address linguistic phenomena that other disciplines cannot account for. And while he considers himself successful in saving pragmatics from marginalization, he still finds it a difficult discipline to define; while other disciplines seem to have their own distinct objects of study, the subject matter of pragmatics is not so clear cut.

Levinson invokes the classic division of labor within linguistics as a starting point for his elevation of pragmatics, taken from the philosopher Charles Morris. Under the umbrella of semiotics, the study of signs and sign systems, he distinguishes three

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[8] In order to avoid a common confusion, it should be noted that pragmatics here, while not completely unrelated, is to be distinguished from pragmatism, the theory of truth and morality developed by the American philosophers Charles Sanders Peirce, John Dewey, and William James and, more recently, Richard Rorty.

subdisciplines: semantics, syntactics, and pragmatics. The first, semantics, addresses the relation of signs to what they refer to, their objects. Roughly, this looks at how language refers to the world. The second, syntactics, studies the study of the relation of signs to each other, or syntax. Much of grammar resides here. Finally, he posits pragmatics as the study of the relationship between signs and the interpreters that use them (Levinson, p. 1). Right at the beginning, then, we see that pragmatics connects language to its users, considering speech as it relates to people.

Levinson sees much of the development of pragmatics in the second half of the 20th century, at least in the Anglo-American tradition, as growing out of dissatisfaction with the notion that semantics and syntactics are far reaching enough to capture the full meaning of our communications. At the time, he claims, there was a gap between the theoretical work being done in linguistics and accounts of the language actually being used. They too often used as examples artificial sentences such as, "The cat is on the mat," in order to illustrate their points. This is a common criticism of the less empirical philosophies of language: Such sentences match the ideals of the theoreticians that create them rather than reflecting the reality of ordinary language use. Thus they are examples of clear communication, accenting the representational aspects of language use and suppressing its other possibilities. But much of everyday language use is not like this. Speech is rarely so clear cut as in this example, and it is strange that a theory would reject real examples of speech simply on the grounds that they don't fit one's understanding of what a language should be. Still, even some of their theoretically devised sentences run into problems that are difficult to solve without recourse to elements outside of semantics and syntax. Thus, Levinson says, interest in pragmatics has arisen to account for that

which seems to lie outside of these realms—as well as to help simplify the other two, which could sometimes become overly baroque in their explanations (Levinson, p. 35ff).

The prime example of a linguistic phenomenon that seems to lie outside of the reach of semantic and syntactic theory is that of deixis. Deictic words (also called indexicals or shifters) are words that refer in a special way (Levinson, p. 54). These words mix semantics and pragmatics so that the sentence refers to the immediate context in which it is being used in such a way that we have to know what is happening in that context for the sentence to be meaningful. Examples are deixis of person (*I, they*), time (*now, soon*), place (*here, there*), the relationships between participants (*ma'am, Mr. President*), and even references to the conversation itself (e.g., *that* in "What did you mean by that?"). Thus, while *I* is presumed to refer to the speaker or writer, *this* has no semantic content if we don't know what the speaker or writer is referring to. Thus to determine the meaning of the sentence, "Please give this to John," one needs to step beyond the "dictionary meanings" of the language used and invoke the extralinguistic situation: What is the object that is to be given? Even more complex is the sentence, "I was talking this loud," which requires we actually hear the person using his voice as he says the sentence to understand it.

Turning our attention from literal meaning to contextual function

The sentence, "Please give this to John," is also a good example of another aspect of language use that purely semantic and syntactic analyses have difficulty with, which Levinson calls the functional aspect. We do more than simply refer to things with speech. "Please give this to John" indeed refers to whatever *this* is, but it also (hopefully) leads the hearer to take it and give it to John. And this functional aspect often does not have a

one to one relationship with what is said. What speech says literally on the surface and the functions it can take on can be radically different depending on the way it is used. One can say something ironically to mean the opposite of what is said: "Oh, you're brilliant." One can even say something that cannot be found in the semantic content at all. The request, "Can you pass the salt?" while literally a question about the abilities of the person addressed, functions as a request for the addressee to do something.

In order for a linguist to understand this request, Levinson argues, we need to look beyond the literal, referential function of language. After all, the person in the street does this every day in her interactions with others. Except in the strangest of circumstances, we all interpret, "Can you pass the salt?" as a request rather than a question, even though there is no indication of it in the content or structure of what is said. We attend to the function of the sentence at the expense of its literal meaning—to the point where to answer the request only on the literal level (with a "yes") would be considered rude. For Levinson, the desire to account for the "functional" function of language has been a central motivator for pragmatics. Here he cites Austin's work as the springboard that inspired many to begin to describe language use in terms of what we do with it rather than what we actually say.

How do we explicate the functional function, if not by reference to literal meaning or sentence structure? As with deixis, the answer is to be found, literally, outside the structure of the sentence: in the context. To understand how, "Can you pass the salt?" functions as a request, we need to look not only at the traditional principles of reference and the internal grammatical structure of the sentence, but also contextual principles such as the speaker's tone of voice, the type situation in which it is used, the historical

relationship between the speakers, and larger contexts such as cultural expectations of politeness.

The pragmatists' concern with context is so central, Levinson adds, that they tend to talk about *utterances* when referring to the event of speaking rather than about sentences. While "sentence" (or fragment of a sentence) refers only to the words that are said, "utterance" refers to what is said along with the situated context of the speaking event (p. 18). It is this shift of focus from sentence meaning to utterance in context that allows us to include much more than literal meaning in our interpretations. Again, we do this every day, so it makes sense to do this in a study of speech. Thus, while we may (as often is the case with a veiled insult) focus only on the grammar of the sentence in order to deny what can done in the saying, the functional interpretation remains a possibility as long as we are able to cite the context of what is said.

In the end, while Levinson argues that any integrated linguistic theory must have a significant pragmatic component, he is unable to give a definition of pragmatics as a discipline that stands outside other linguistic studies. Because the referential function of language and its "functional" function are inherently intertwined and cannot be separated, pragmatics may stand instead as a supplement to semantics and syntactics. And since languages studied are usually languages as used, the work of pragmatics has the potential to be quite broad, informing any approach to language one might take. Indeed, after his survey of various proposed definitions of pragmatics as a subdiscipline of linguistics,[9]

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[9] As an investigation of language with reference to its users (p.2); the study of the psychological and sociological phenomena involved in sign systems (p.5); any study of language that looks outside its truth conditions (p.12); studies of language that look at intention or "speaker meaning" as opposed to "sentence meaning" (p.17); any study of language that focuses on meanings not covered by semantics (p.21); and the study of how language can come to mean other than what it literally says (p.27).

Levinson admits that his attempt to create a clear division of labor for pragmatics within linguistics is rather doomed. He suggests that anyone who wants to know what pragmatics is "must simply observe what practitioners do" (p. 32). The lack of a clear cut definition may be frustrating or intimidating to the uninitiated, but the pervasiveness of the phenomena he describes, he argues, requires that any thorough study of language needs to take pragmatic considerations into account.

The pragmatic perspective as an interdisciplinary stance

The difficulty Levinson had situating pragmatics within the linguistic subdisciplines might not be a bad thing after all. If pragmatic interests originated in noticing that some linguistic phenomena need to take into account the human context in which language is used, it may make sense to say that we are no longer studying language proper, but rather human behavior from a linguistic perspective. Since (and perhaps as a result of) Levinson's writing, the scope of linguistic interests has broadened: Transformational-generative grammar is no longer so dominant, and language studies have expanded beyond the boundaries of strict linguistics and philosophy of language into the realms of sociology, anthropology, and psychology.

Verschueren's (1999) presentation of pragmatics takes this interdisciplinarity for granted. He begins like Levinson in distinguishing pragmatics from the linguistic disciplines of semantics and syntactics (as well as phonetics, phonology, and morphology, all of which deal with the creation and lumping together of sounds into meaningful words and sentences). But Verschueren, frustrated with the "waste basket" definition of pragmatics as working with the leftovers of semantics and syntactics (p. 11), distinguishes between these fields and pragmatics by saying while the others take as their

objects the various linguistic resources available to speakers and writers (words and grammatical structure), pragmatics looks at how we use these linguistic tools at our disposal in our interactions with each other.

Again we have pragmatics as the study of language use. But here Verschueren takes a radically different position. Rather than coming down on the side of "language as used," Verschueren wants to focus on the *use* itself: language use as a mode of behavior. Pragmatics for him is a "perspective on linguistic phenomena in relation to their usage in forms of behavior" that asks the question of how language functions in the lives of human beings (p. 7). Language use is not simply the application of an abstract linguistic system; language use is a human behavior, a form of social action among other forms of social action. As such, an analysis of language use is at least as interested, if not more, in the social context of that language use.

This is an important turn. Not only does pragmatics attend to the various functions of language other than its referential aspect; it seeks to understand language use primarily as one of the ways we interact. The situated human context of speaking is no longer supplemental to the analysis of linguistic forms or the ground to their figure; the interpersonal situation now becomes the primary object of linguistic study. For Verschueren, pragmatics takes as its primary focus "the functioning of language in actual contexts of use," relating it to other aspects of human life rather than simply to other linguistic elements (pp. 9-10). In other words, pragmatics becomes a global stance, a perspective, a lens through which to view human behavior.

As a perspective on human behavior, pragmatics takes a much closer position to other disciplines than it did previously. In fact, Verschueren asserts that pragmatics is the

link between linguistics and human life: "*The* link between linguistics and the rest of the humanities and social sciences" (p. 7). The analysis of language use becomes the analysis of human behavior. Johnstone, in her *Discourse analysis* (2002), describes her discipline as bringing a particular set of linguistically-based analytical methods to bear upon questions about social processes. She notes that most discourse analysis, in fact, is not done by linguists, but is used "in one way or another by at least some people in most of the academic disciplines in which human life is the focus" (p. xiii). She also notes that the explication of the linguistic aspects of social process is more and more being done for the sake of critique or even intervention rather than simply to describe (p. 27). This is hardly a mere academic discipline. Pragmatics is in constant dialogue with the tools and theories of psychology, sociology, legal theory, and even neurology. A social scientist working from a pragmatic perspective may use linguistic categories side by side with her own in the pursuit of her own purposes. It becomes a lens, a tool to be applied to the world.

J. L. Austin: a pragmatic perspective on (inter)action

Any description of a pragmatic perspective would be remiss without discussing John Austin's seminal *How To Do Things with Words* (1975). This founding text of what became known as Speech Act Theory reconstructs Austin's lectures given at Harvard University in 1955, where he presented his work on the subject and explored an aspect of language use he thought had been neglected or even willfully ignored in analytic philosophy's fixation on truth value and its assumption that the primary and most interesting function of language is to paint a picture of the world to the mind. Austin's work is a direct assault on this tradition and is, I believe, a clear example of seeing the world through a pragmatic lens. Austin had a powerful influence on the development of

pragmatics within linguistics. As Austin is a philosopher, he does not himself speak of a pragmatic perspective. But in his analysis of speech acts he takes one. He looks at language use as behavior, avoiding falling into what is said while being sensitive to the meaning of behavior. And he begins to draw out some of the implications of this way of seeing. He provides a remedy for our habit of looking at speech as primarily about truth, a habit that too often leads us to overlook the interpersonal and social functions of speaking. Austin's work is vibrant, humorous, and often critical, bringing to light elements of our experience that usually remain at the edges. As we will see in the third chapter, it is this critical side of Austin's perspective that has drawn his work into dialogue with psychoanalytic theory.

Against representation

Austin's chief complaint about the linguistic philosophy of his time was its domination by logical positivism, concerning itself with questions of the content of our utterances, such as how a word could refer to an object and how such words fit together in the logic of sentences to make a proposition true or false. The assumption in logical positivism, he says, is that language use is primarily "constative," consisting of statements about the world: "This is a peach," or, more famously, "The cat is on the mat." If this is the case, an utterance's meaning is tied solely to its truth value such that it is meaningful insofar as it can be said to refer or fails to refer to reality. At the extreme positivistic end of such an approach, the possibility of a statement's truth and falsity is used as a litmus test for whether or not a sentence could be considered meaningful at all; if it could not be true or false, it was to be dismissed as nonsense. The desire was to create a completely clear language that communicated perfectly (Rorty, 1967).

Austin, of course, was not the first to remind his audience of the obvious fact that not all language use is of the type that can be true or false. Questions, for example, can only be considered true or false if reduced to a special kind of statement (e.g., seeing "Is the ball green?" as a converted case of "The ball is green"). More problematic is shouting the warning, "Look out!" to someone who is in danger. But Austin's analysis aims to make a deeper point: Not only is reference not the only function of language use; it may not even be its primary or most interesting function. There is no reason to think that the descriptive statement, "The cat is on the mat," should serve as an ideal model for language usage, and no reason to try to view the other possibilities of speech as derivative forms of statements by attempting to deduce their truth value. This is simply an assumption we have inherited:

> We certainly do not know that this is so, any more, for example, than that all utterances must have first begun as imperatives (as some argue) or as swear-words—and it seems much more likely that the "pure" statement is a goal, an ideal, towards which the gradual development of science has given the impetus, as it has likewise towards the goal of precision (pp. 72-73).

Perhaps there is in the end no fundamental function of language at all, but rather we assign a fundamental function based on our interests. The western tradition tends to take a representational perspective, where speech is seen as painting a picture of reality to the mind. The problem to be solved in this view is that of how the copy of objective reality gets into the subject's head. As mentioned before, in its extreme version this view rejects any language use that does not function towards drawing this picture as meaningless. Even if we do not take this extreme view, a preference for the constative leads us to ignore the other possibilities of speech and lose ourselves in deciphering the "meaning" in the content of what is said.

This representational view has been the subject of existential critiques. But even the language of existential phenomenology, while not representational in a narrow sense of re-presenting to the subject some hypothetical objective or perspectiveless reality, gives primacy to the realm of meaning and reference in speech. The "world" that language creates, the world that the qualitative researcher must explore through the words of the subject, still depends on the notion of truth as the unfolding of meaning (Heidegger, 1927/1996, p. 201ff). So speech is still *about* the world, even if in a creative or constitutive way. Some, such as Foucault, reverse the traditional dichotomy of representation over pragmatic function, critiquing the western tradition's "meaning-obsessed society" and looking at speaking instead as political exertion of power. From this reversed perspective, it is the political aspects of speech that come to the fore, while its meaningful or representational aspects are dismissed—to the point where the discourse of truth and representation itself is viewed as nothing more than a tool for the subjugation of other discourses (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. xxv). Austin looks to move away from this representational approach to speech as content about reality. It may be wise to follow him on this point and not assume that either the constative or the performative is the "more real."

Against this preference for the constative, and thus a representative perspective on language use, Austin introduces an alternate category of utterances he calls *performatives*: things that we say that are not so much *saying* something as *doing* something. Initially, Austin's favorite examples are the "I do" said in the context of a marriage ceremony and the act of saying, "I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth," while smashing a bottle against a ship's hull (Austin, 1975, p. 5). These "explicit

performatives," as he calls them, are on the surface difficult to describe as representations.[10] That is, it does not make much sense to ask whether such sentences are true or false; nor does it make sense, in Austin's estimation, to ask what the meaning of such a statement is. Rather, ask what these statements do. In these cases, they function to change the legal status of a person from unmarried to married and officially christen a ship. There is no truth or falsity to these statements; in place of these categories, Austin says, we are concerned instead with whether they actually do what they purport to do: whether they marry a person or christen the ship, or if they only pretend to do this. Performatives, rather than being true or false, are effective or ineffective. Austin uses "happy" and "felicitous" for the former and "unhappy" or "infelicitous" for the latter (p. 14). Thus saying "I do" in the proper circumstances with the proper persons constitutes the act of marrying someone; and the naming of a ship, done by the proper person in the proper ceremony, actually makes it so. Such acts can fail (e.g., if I do not have the proper credentials or position, or if I am saying it as part of a theatrical performance), but they cannot be true or false.

In distinguishing between performatives and constatives, Austin provides the thin edge of a wedge that allows us to begin to see other possible functions of language than representation or truth and falsity. But explicit performatives such as, "I do," make up only a small fraction of what can be done through speaking. Over the course of his lectures he broadens the scope of his analysis to include "indirect speech acts" (or "primary utterances"), things that we say that, while not explicitly actions such as the

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[10] While *I am naming this ship the Queen Elizabeth* can be described as a representation of what the person is doing, it does not function in the same way as *I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth*. That is, the former does not actually name the ship, whereas the latter does.

ceremonious christening of a ship, nevertheless function as performatives in the speaking situation. An example we have already seen is the request, "Can you pass the salt?" Austin's own example is, "There is a bull in the field," which appears to be (and is) a representative statement about reality on the content level but also functions as a warning in the proper situational context where someone is planning to enter said field (p. 33).

These indirect speech acts are not easily categorized as a separate class distinct from constatives; "There is a bull in the field" is, on the face of it, constative. But it also has other functions. Due to this multiplicity of functions Austin begins to question the possibility of distinguishing between constatives and performatives at all. In light of the speaking situation, the constative statements about reality that are so central to our tradition also contain performative elements. Even the exemplary statement of fact, "The cat is on the mat," functions performatively in at least a few ways: It informs the listener of a state of affairs; it puts the speaker in an assumed position of one who has the right to say something about that state of affairs; and it invites a response from the listener to confirm or disconfirm that position (Austin, 1975, p. 139). In expanding his analysis to indirect speech acts, Austin aligns himself with Verschueren's description of a pragmatic perspective. We are no longer looking at a separate class of linguistic events; we are taking a perspective on all language use that looks at the context in order to see how it might be functioning in human life. We may look for implicit pragmatic functioning in all language use, analyzing the performative "level" of what is said. There is no longer the need to determine if an utterance is primarily representing reality or doing something. It often does both.

But there is a significant difference between explicit and implicit performatives. Unlike explicit performatives, where their function is determined by official institutions and we can usually determine case by case whether they are successful or not, primary utterances are open to all the messy ambiguity, mistakes, failures, and attempts at repair that we experience in our everyday social relationships. Much of this ambiguity is due to the fact that the conditions of their functioning are not readily apparent and that they are often performing multiple functions at once.[11] This leads to misunderstanding, negotiation, and argument over what is happening. We even capitalize on this ambiguity by responding to the performances that fit our goals and frustrate those of the speaker. Interestingly, some performatives are only effective when they are *not* explicit. Many insults function in this way. "You are a jerk," while appearing to be a statement of fact, makes a far more effective attack than the more formal, "I insult you" (Austin, 1975, p. 31).[12] And the benefit is that we can then deny the insult or at least direct attention away from it to its content—another performance—by following it up with evidence for its truth: "(You are a jerk) for what you did to me"; or forcefully reinterpreting what has been done: "I was merely stating a fact."[13] These complex interactions contain the hidden pragmatic level of speech, the dynamics of interpersonal relating that we see every day.

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[11] While Austin believes that one of the characteristics that distinguishes explicit from implicit performatives is that the former's functional aspect is clear and unambiguous (a promise or a vow) while the latter must be translated and thus can be misrecognized (p. 69), even explicit performatives are implicit in the sense that their functions are not limited to their explicit purpose: The *I do* in a marriage ceremony carries with it other unofficial effects, possibly bringing tears of joy, anger, and relief—and a myriad of other unforeseeable consequences.

[12] Another alternative to *you are a jerk*, likely preferred by therapists, is *I am angry with you for what you did*. Like Austin's alternative, this is not very effective as an insult, but one might argue that it could have more desirable effects in the long term.

[13] R. D. Laing highlights how such actions are subsequently kept underground by further speech acts that place the person who would expose them in the position of being wrong, mad, or bad—an untenable position that he considers schizophrenogenic (1969, p.160).

Relationships are forged, commitments are made and broken, and entities come in and out of existence, all through the use of words.

So far our illustration of the pragmatic perspective has focused on its calling into question the assumption that representation is the primary function of speech, pointing instead to its other possibilities. The remaining two sections of this chapter will address more specifically how we determine what is happening when we speak. Each will address a particular theme in pragmatics, both of which turn our attention to what is happening around what is said. First I will discuss some fruitful categories that Austin distinguishes within the act of speaking. These distinctions bring to light the interpersonal nature of speech acts, and will be important when we turn to the overlapping of psychoanalysis and pragmatics. Then I will return to the issue of context in order to begin to lay out where exactly the pragmaticist draws his or her evidence from in his or her interpretations. This will also be a theme in the next chapter, when we look at some of the pragmatic empirical studies that have been done on therapeutic process. Again, both of these themes focus on the space between people, revealing interpersonal processes as they speak.

The linguistic mechanics of verbal interaction.

Having distinguished between the constative and performative levels of discourse by viewing an utterance as a speech act within a situational context, Austin then turns in his lectures to develop a more explicit theory of speech acts. We can promise, lie, intimidate, and bestow with words. But how exactly does this work? Austin makes some further distinctions within the performative level of speech that bring into view some of the subtle processes that occur when we speak. These processes are significant because, in the same way that pragmatics challenges the representational function of language,

they challenge the boundaries between individuals that we often take for granted. They draw us closer to the *inter*personal functioning of speech. Austin places our focus on the space in between the participants in a conversation in order to show that much of linguistic action is radically interpersonal in nature.

There are, according to Austin, three different senses in which we may say we are doing something when we speak. From the perspective of speaking as situated linguistic interaction, we can see a *locutionary* act, an *illocutionary* act, and a *perlocutionary* act (pp. 94ff). It is in these acts that we begin to see some of the ways our words have an effect on other people.

The locutionary act is the most simple: it is the act of saying something, a behavior we commonly point out with the formula "she said x." To perform a locution, a person articulates words in some manner (usually with the voice) consisting of a vocabulary from a particular language and following certain communal forms of grammar that make sense to others. Otherwise we would describe what the person is doing as "speaking gibberish" rather than saying something—though this in itself is an act with effects of its own (p. 110). The constitutive rules of the locutionary act essentially demand that a person be saying something "meaningful" in the loosest sense to be described as communicating.

If a locutionary act is the act *of* saying something, we may say that an illocutionary act is what is done *in* saying something: asking a question, making a command, stating a fact, giving information (p. 99). This is Austin's entry point for his performative analysis of speech discussed above, where we greet, support, inform, threaten, and insult each other. These are the illocutions Austin usually refers to when he

speaks of illocution. But in addition to the particular illocutionary effects a speech act has in the world (greeting, supporting, etc.), there are two other illocutions that usually occur when we speak: we get the other's attention ("securing uptake") and we invite a response (p. 118). These three acts, the securing of uptake, inviting a response, and the particular "intended" (or not) action such as supporting or threatening, are all on the illocutionary level. Such acts can often be made explicit in everyday speech with the construction, "*in* saying I would shoot him I was threatening him" (p. 122). (Or "In telling him the cat was on the mat, I got his attention and got him to respond.")

The third element, the perlocutionary act, refers to the effect or result corresponding to the illocutionary action: It is what is done *by* speaking, what speaking accomplishes. This is where the interpersonal element of Austin's perspective comes into view. When I effectively threaten someone (illocutionary act) I also intimidate him (perlocutionary act). Likewise, when I effectively ask a question, I place the other in the position of someone who is expected to know the answer (unless it is rhetorical). Austin admits that he sometimes has trouble distinguishing between illocution and perlocution (pp. 124ff), but he gives a rough and ready litmus test to distinguish illocution from perlocution: While I can explicitly point to what I am doing on the subject side (I can use the formula, "I hereby argue/threaten…"), I cannot own a perlocution in the same way. There is no room in our language for the explicit formula "I hereby convince/intimidate …" (p. 118). The distinction between illocution and perlocution rides on (and is as ambiguous as) the distinction between who is performing what act when we speak. When my speech secures the uptake of (demands a response from) another person, the other person feels the force of my demand regardless of whether he chooses or not. He

becomes a (willing or unwilling) participant in discourse with me simply by the fact that I have addressed him.

With perlocution, the assumed boundaries between individuals begin to break down. It may seem odd to ascribe the effects or results of an act to the act itself, particularly when we are talking about human relationships. We are used to applying the language of cause and effect to events in the world, and readily translate, "I threw the rock and the rock moved through the air and struck the window, and the force of the rock broke the window," into, "I broke the window with the rock." But we are more resistant, as therapists, to translating "He pressured me to break the window" into "He made me break the window." Such a formulation rubs against our preconceptions of what it means to be a responsible adult. We generally ascribe such formulations to children and the developmentally delayed, responding, "If he told you to jump off a bridge, would you do that too?" We read interpretations such as, "He made me do it," as rejections of personal autonomy and responsibility.

We might be tempted to view the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts as three separate acts, and then to look for causal relationships among them (e.g., How did my threat result in intimidating you?). The answer would then be found inside the heads of the participants through an analysis of their thoughts and experience.[14] But Austin makes it clear that these three acts are abstractions from the whole speech situation, three ways in which we act, not separate acts in themselves (p. 147-48). While

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[14] There is a world of difference between saying "I made her angry" and saying "I said x and she became angry." One could explicate the difference between the two in terms of the different effects each narration of the event would have—in other words, by viewing the act of interpretation as itself an interpretable speech act. Each statement places the "me" and the "her" in different relationships with each other; such a distinction has the potential to be a fruitful therapeutic intervention.

the perlocutionary act is not necessarily equivalent to its illocutionary counterpart (in that

he is also not in control of the perlocution in the same way that he is in control of the

illocution—my threat to harm someone can result in angering the recipient rather than

intimidating him), Austin still attributes it to the act of the speaker. From this perspective

the illocution of threatening and the corresponding perlocution of intimidating or

angering are *not* separate acts that are causally related. They are aspects of the same

utterance. Regardless of what I might say I was intending to do by saying something, for

Austin the effects of my utterance are conventional parts of my action (p. 119). I could

still say "I angered/intimidated him by saying that I would shoot him" without surprising

anyone.

This way of looking at human interaction flies in the face of our modernist

practice of separating ourselves from others. There are two habits that might get in the

way of our accepting the notion and consequences of perlocution. The first is our

conception of what it means to be a person, where being the source of activity is good

and being moved or influenced is taken as a sign of "poor ego boundaries." The second is

our preference for the content level of speech to the exclusion of the performative.

Indeed, these habits may be connected insofar as our preference for the constative level

of speech stems from our ignorance of how speech connects us to each other. And the

language used may itself function to keep the performative level unconscious insofar as it

draws our attention to the spoken and away from the speaking. But the recognition of

perlocution highlights the interpersonal nature of speech acts and the power speech has to

move others. Austin here is looking at the speech situation structurally, without the

atomistic assumption that the individuals involved exist outside of their situation. It

locates the force of the actions in the conventions of the situation and constitutive rules of

discourse rather than in the will of the individual. And this force works quietly and

unseen. My speech secures a response from the other, and whether or not that response is

the "desired" response or not (whether a threat frightens or angers), it is still brought

about by my speaking. And because how I say something is a choice, I can still be held

responsible for the way I say something and its effects, regardless of what I intended.[15]

One might say, then, that my intentions are to be revealed in speech, rather than in my

head.[16]

Our proclivity for interpreting speech as an outward signification of internal

mental states leads us too readily to interpret, "I'm going to shoot you," as a statement of

internal intentions, and then attempt to discern how real that intent actually is. This mode

of interpretation, which Austin dubs the "descriptive fallacy," again views speech as

either true or false, about an internal reality that stands behind it. But if I threaten a

person with bodily harm, it seems to make more sense—if we want to see what is

happening interpersonally—to ask if the threat worked (i.e., if it had sufficient force to

bring about the "desired" response—whatever that might be) than it is to wait and see if

my follow through will render the content of the statement true or not.[17]

Thus for Austin speech is not a way into a person's head; in fact, this assumption

can easily prevent us from seeing what is happening. From the perspective of the

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[15] Interestingly, one of the ways that we try to absolve ourselves from the responsibility of perlocutions is through recourse to personal intentions: "But I didn't *intend* to threaten you!" And then we blame the other for misinterpreting us rather than taking responsibility for what we have done.

[16] Freud somewhere: intentions are found in the results….and Lacan: "Meaning is determined in the place of the Other.

[17] Incidentally, this also addresses the clinical question of how "seriously" to take suicidal threats. The response to *I am going to kill myself* is often to attempt to discern how real the intention is—instead of wondering how this threat functions transferentially in the relationship between patient and clinician.

descriptive fallacy, "I apologize for what I did," is equivalent to, "I am apologizing for what I did." But these do not function the same in the speech situation and certainly are not experienced in the same way by the hearer. One is an apology; the other is a statement that functions to direct attention to the speaker's behavior and away from his actual current speaking behavior, which is more often than not the avoidance of an apology or an attempt to reap the benefits of having apologized (see Austin, 1975, pp. 9, 70, & 100). If this second utterance contains sufficient force (is well timed, done in the right context), the redirection succeeds.

Austin's understanding of perlocution calls into question not only our presumption that language may not be primarily representational, but also our understanding of ourselves as self-contained individuals. At this point it seems that looking more closely at the act of speaking with a pragmatic lens commits us to an intersubjectivity that opens the subject to its outside, placing our focus on the space in between individuals. The between is no longer the space between pre-existing subjects; it becomes an interpersonal field of activity upon which the mechanics of speech operate to define and move both speaker and respondent. The benefit of this perspective, strange as it may seem, is that it can bypass attempts at mind reading and trying to determine a person's unconscious intentions. It also moves us away from seeing human interaction in terms of causal or linear relationships between objects to a more dynamically useful structural or systemic understanding of relating in the style of Bateson (1972) or Laing (1969). It turns instead to the way we conventionally use language to bring about effects in the world. We will return to this point and the implications it may have for a psychoanalytic perspective in the final chapter.

Justifying what is seen: analyzing the text of conversation

I have stated several times that the pragmatist looks to the side of the content of speech into the situated context of its use in order to reveal the other functions of language. By referring to context, linguistic processes can be made explicit to show *how* the pragmatic functions of speech work; they are objectifiable. Interpretations can then be defended, shared, and explained. But this is too vague. What concretely are we looking at when we are looking at the context of speaking, and how do we do it empirically? Since the ultimate goal is to present interpersonal action as evidence to support what psychoanalysis sees, we need a set of tools or a disciplined heuristic telling us what parts of the speech situation we can turn to in order to justify our interpretations. We must move unconscious processes into a public space so that they can be studied empirically, as linguistic acts that are part of our embedded social practices. We can then point to speech acts as examples of these social practices, inviting discussion and other interpretations of what is there. If this move is successful, and we can see unconscious processes pragmatically then they are no longer constructs that only the analyst can see.

In order for this to happen, language use must be presented as data for analysis. In the field of empirical pragmatic research, examples of which we will see in the next chapter, the first step of an analysis of conversation is to objectify the discourse by transcribing it into a text. This then allows for the application of traditional methods of textual analysis as well as other methods developed specifically for the analysis of conversation. This "fixing" of a text through transcription transforms the fleeting and momentary speech event into a piece of data that can be viewed empirically, returned to in order to be viewed again, and placed on the table for discussion and reinterpretation.

The actions performed in speech can be explicated through an analysis of its text. Ricoeur (1971) argues that the text of a conversation, while not the same thing as the conversation itself, retains not only the prepositional content (constative level) of speech and the fact of speaking (the locution); it also "presents 'illocutionary' traits very similar to those of the speech acts" (p. 540). The text, then, acts as public data that contains meaningful action that can be analyzed as "an object of science" (p. 538).

In fact, fixing the text allows us to see action more clearly than we can when we look at conversation *in vivo*. First, a stance outside the conversation makes it such that we are not immediately affected by the speech of the conversation, at least not in the way that we would if we were participants. We thus escape the illocutions of the situation, and are able to see with an outsider's perspective what might otherwise be affecting us in the situation itself. But secondly, and more importantly for those who are looking for unconscious action performed outside of the awareness of its actors, fixing a conversation in text puts what is said in a different relationship with its speakers:

> With written discourse, the author's intention and the meaning of the text cease to coincide … The text's career escapes the finite horizon lived by its author. What the text says now matters more than what the author meant to say, end every exegesis unfolds its procedures within the circumference of a meaning that has broken its moorings to the psychology of its author. (Ricoeur, 1971, p. 534)

Unlike in spoken discourse, where the interpretation of what is said is ultimately decided with reference to the author's intention (except for odd cases like psychotherapy), the author is no longer master in his own house in the analysis of a text. The unconscious or "un"intended actions are opened for interpretation by the other.

Thus the fixing of conversation into text is the first key to making psychoanalysis more empirical. With the text objectified, interpersonal actions can be analyzed as

performances in the text. Previously psychological constructs can be interpreted from the text—empirically—as interpersonal actions, and what is said can be pointed to as evidence in support of interpretations. But with what do we interpret? In order for interpretations to be justifiable, the interpretive key or lens must also be visible—and at least somewhat disciplined. Freud (1900/65) sought the same sort of disciplined key for interpretation in *the interpretation of dreams*, where he distinguished between an interpretation where the "key to the symbolization is arbitrarily chosen by the interpreter" and his method, in which "the keys are [supposedly] generally known and laid down by firmly established linguistic usage" (p. 377).

I should note as an aside an important issue for any interpretive method that uses transcripts as its data. Ochs (1979) makes it clear that the fixing or objectifying of a text is not a natural or spontaneous process—and is far from an "objective" presentation of what is said. Transcribers choose how much of a situation to reproduce in the text (e.g. how much nonverbal behavior is to be included, when to indicate tone of voice in order to guide interpretation, and whether to use standard orthography or to present a more phonetically-based picture). What is presented and how it is construed should be determined, according to Ochs, by the aims of the researcher: what he or she is trying to show.[18] Thus, while the situation may be objectified in order to be referred to and talked about, the ambiguity of the situation (and the possibility of multiple interpretations) is not fixed through transcription. One might have transcribed a situation differently in order to support a different interpretation.

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[18] And because this is done according to what is believed to be relevant to the task, Ochs says, the aims of the researcher should also be made clear (rather than pretending to be "just looking" at the text in order to see what is there).

Unfortunately, just as there is no simple (or complex, for that matter), straightforward interpretive key in psychoanalysis, there is no set answer to the question of where to look for action in the speech situation. Of course we can develop an intuitive nose that allows us to pick up pragmatic processes; just as we hear, "Can you pass the salt?" as a request in everyday use, we can then look for what it is that might lead us to hear it in this way, and point out in the context what it might be that led us to this understanding. The goal is that we should be able to point to it in a way that encourages others to see what we see.

For Austin, it is the speech act's conventional conditions of satisfaction that make it succeed or fail. It is only when the proper conditions are satisfied that we can say a couple is actually married: the proper people, the proper procedure, the proper setting, as well as the larger context of the structure of linguistic conventions and discourse practices that surround the act. Searle (1969), following Austin, refers to these contextual factors as "felicity conditions" (p. 60, see also Austin, p. 14), a subset of the systems of "constitutive rules" that make symbolic or meaningful action possible (p. 51). Not meeting the felicity conditions of an act leads that act to fail.

Constitutive rules are not rules in the sense of determining what a person does; in fact they have only the loosest connection to subjective intention. Instead, they determine the possibilities of what can be done—or what can "be" at all. For example, in order to say that my throwing a rubber ball into a hoop is playing basketball I must be doing so within the context of a certain set of rules and practices that constitute the game of basketball (e.g., that it is on a court, with other players on a team, following certain procedures in order to score more points than the other team). If these contextual

conditions are not in effect, I cannot say that I am playing basketball—although I may be practicing. A sufficient number of these contextual factors can be pointed out to satisfy the question of what a person is doing with the ball. Likewise, in order for me to effectively christen a ship I must have been appointed through the proper channels and say certain things within the proper ceremony. Otherwise my actions do not constitute the christening of a ship. I may be doing something else (perhaps making a mockery of the ceremony), but I am not christening a ship. Again, we point to these factors if we want to justify our interpretation of what is happening.

With indirect speech acts, such as insulting, complimenting, or even in just making statements of fact, the constitutive rules of discourse are less formal but, perhaps, no less rigid. Yet, unlike with explicit speech acts, the felicity conditions of implicit speech acts are not laid out beforehand and are thus harder to determine. Unfortunately, Austin does not give us much help in this regard. Austin's work, having caught sight of the multiple possibilities of language use, is still preliminary, and he does not specify what aspects of context we are to turn to in order to determine the multiple and unforeseen functions of implicit performatives. Nor can we limit context to constitutive rules, as Searle (1969) attempts to do in his analysis of promising. In fact, Austin goes in the opposite direction of greater detail, stating that "the total speech act in the total speech situation is the *only actual* phenomenon which, in the last resort, we are engaged in elucidating" (Austin, 1975, p. 148). "The total speech situation" is, to say the least, a rather large affair. As it is not possible to lay everything bare, to make explicit everything implicit and hence determine every possibility beforehand, we are still left with the question of where to look.

Thus, while it may be possible to lay out the felicity conditions for explicit speech acts, we are left without guidance from the speech act theorists as to where to look in the context of speaking in order to justify an interpretation of an insult, a warning, or any of the many things we do to each other in the everyday interpersonal field of speech. Our concern here is (as is the concern of the clinician) to stay grounded and avoid arbitrary and unjustifiable interpretations while not missing something that might be relevant by setting arbitrary limits on our vision.

Verschueren (1999) argues that we should leave the criteria open rather than set strict limitations on what contexts can be invoked for an interpretation. This does not mean that anything is fair game. Since he holds that contexts are generated in language use rather than "out there" waiting to be discovered,[19] analysts should watch the way these are generated in conversation, for contextual "triggers" that could lend themselves to fruitful interpretation. The limits are particular to the speaking situation, and the pragmaticist who wants to justify his interpretation attends to those limits: "The challenge is to discover those [boundaries] in specific instances of language use, rather than to impose them on the basis of a pre-conceived theoretical model" (p. 109).

So the interpretation of implicit performatives is to be done on a case-by-case basis, post hoc, through the "explicature" of context (Verschueren, 1999, p. 27). This is where we can turn back to the sociolinguists, with their empirical background and methods, for help. Since we cannot lay out all possibilities beforehand, we need a

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[19] It is this belief and the ensuing anxiety about the possibility of infinite contextualization that Verschueren sees as the motivation behind attempts to limit context to preset criteria: "This is why the Gricean option to define meaning—after introducing a clearly pragmatic perspective—entirely in terms of the individual utterer's intentionality was so easily adopted as the standard for many years. It gave a false impression of manageability" (p.108).

disciplined way to look into the speech situation in order to interpret what is happening between speakers. Johnstone (2002) states that instead of a set interpretive procedure, we should use a heuristic, "a set of discovery procedures for systematic application or a set of topics for systematic consideration" (p. 9) with which we can "illuminate facets of the communication process that are important and not immediately apparent" (p. 7).

These heuristics are the stuff of textbooks, and different theorists give different advice on how to apply the contextual elements, the habits and rules of language use, in interpreting a speech event. I will discuss some of these interpretive keys in more detail as they become relevant to particular analyses in the following chapters; but for now I refer the reader to the following guides for summaries. Each heuristic has its own strengths (keeping in mind that what one draws from depends on what one is looking for in the text). Verschueren (1999) gives four "angles" he believes constitute a pragmatic perspective (pp. 65ff). Johnstone (2002), a Discourse Analyst, gives six different categories of context to consider in determining what is being done in language use. Nofsinger (1991), a Conversational Analyst, begins with conventional rules but adds to this Gricean maxims of conversational implicature, which are used to explain how speakers interpret each other's utterances in ways other than by what they literally say.[20] Nofsinger also extensively employs common structural elements of conversation ("sequences") that have been culled from empirical analyses of real conversations.

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[20] One of these is the "cooperative principle," which assumes that participants in a conversation cooperate in a conversation to follow its thread. Another principle is that of "quality," which in part assumes that participants are saying what they believe to be true. Obviously these principles are not always followed in practice; but it is assumed that in everyday conversation speakers are acting *as if* they are. See Levinson's (1983) third chapter for a discussion of this.

In the next chapter we will look at some examples of how the pragmatic perspective and its empirical method have been taken up in the field of psychology, and attempt to move the method towards the explication of psychoanalytic constructs. As we do, we will see the various ways that researchers point to situational factors of speech in order to support their interpretations. It remains to be seen which tools will be most fruitful for illuminating psychoanalytic constructs. It should be remembered that regardless of which heuristic is used, there should be no fantasy that what is revealed is simply a description of what is. As we have seen, we are no longer in a place or time where we can pretend to be looking at a preexisting objective world as if from no point of view. What we are trying to see will determine how we look for it, and how we look in turn determines what we see—and as Gergen (2000) pointed out, we are responsible for the results. It is possible that there is no "most fruitful" method at all, and that psychoanalytic interpretive methods will be as numerous as the various ways we can interpret language use.

Chapter 3: Pragmatics, psychology, and the study of therapy process

We have seen that a pragmatic perspective moves our attention away from what people are talking about and towards the verbal interactions between them, to what we do to one another with speech. The traditional assumption that speech is primarily constative, that its function is to represent the world, is called into question, allowing its other functions—many of which are interpersonal in nature—to come to the fore. Discourse Analysts and Conversation Analysts have developed empirically founded methods that rely on the conventional and patterned nature of language use in order to study these functions. They invoke conventions, pointing them out in transcripts of conversations, in order to interpret what is happening between speakers.

In this chapter I will return to the previous task of persuasively presenting psychoanalytic constructs by discussing some of the ways that the pragmatic perspective has already been taken up within psychology in order to explicate psychological processes. The purpose of this will be threefold. First, it will show some of what can be done by (and some of the implications of) applying an interdisciplinary social perspective to a field that is traditionally considered to be concerned with internal processes. Second, it will illustrate some of the pragmatic categories and keys of analysis. Third, it will remark upon a tendency of this empirical research to avoid engaging with psychoanalysis out of a desire to avoid being wed to a particular therapeutic school and, more particularly, a desire to avoid psychoanalysis' concern with internal constructs such as unconscious intention. This third point has led to a missed opportunity of any

engagement between the two discourses—an engagement that, as I have been arguing, would be a fruitful one.

Pragmatics in psychology

As an interdisciplinary perspective, pragmatics' application to psychological matters has been quite diverse and has been carried out in the absence of a unified body of theorists. It is as diverse as the field of psychology itself. Clark (1996) is the leading theorist in connecting pragmatics with cognitive psychology, attempting to dialogue the internal perspective of cognitive science with the social perspective of pragmatics. Others[21] have connected a pragmatic perspective with neuroscience, using pragmatic analyses to show, for example, that brain-damaged individuals interpret speech more concretely (that is, literally, rather than picking up on performative meaning) than their normal counterparts through their failure to pick up on the pragmatic level of what is said (Foldi, 1987) as well as how aphasic patients can adjust their speech in order to achieve pragmatic goals in spite of a linguistic handicap (Lesser & Milroy, 1993). This second study ties in with psycholinguistics, a large field that includes studies of the process of second language acquisition (Bahns, Burmeister & Vogel, 1986) and the problem of distinguishing speech pathology from thought disorders (Smith & Leinonen, 1992). Finally, there has been some interesting work in developmental pragmatics, where researchers bring a pragmatic perspective to bear on questions about how we learn to talk (Bruner, 1975; Bates, Camaioni, & Volterra, 1979). They answer these questions not in

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[21] A good introduction to the various ways pragmatics has been brought to bear in psychology (and where excerpts from many of these works, which span back into the 1970's, can be found) is in Kasher (1998).

terms of innate abilities or the cognitive development of the child, but in terms of the

relational function of the speech the children use to have an effect on their mothers.[22]

Within the area of pragmatic psychotherapy research we see a similar diversity

going back to Labov and Fanshel's (1977) groundbreaking study, generally considered to

be the first. The topics are expansive, leading to a proliferation of discourse rather than to

any "progress" towards consensus. A few examples will be listed here, and I will return

to discuss the details of some of them below. Edwards (1995) analyzes how each member

in couples therapy uses various performances in order to establish his or her own

characterization of their relationship as the "true" one (often portraying the self as victim

and the other as aggressor). The study exposes an element of the power struggle between

couples, showing how they manage their identity and participation within it, and suggests

ways to sidestep such an impasse by approaching it as an issue of perspective. Silverman

& Peräkylä (1990) study excerpts from AIDS counseling sessions, noting "disturbances"

in the rhythm of the conversation at points where the conversants are about to broach the

sensitive topics of sex and death. They also follow some of the ways that the counselors

manage these topics that either increase or decrease the level of disturbance in the

conversation. They suggest ways that the counselor might work to position him- or

herself in relation to the client as well as different ways to introduce sensitive topics in a

way that minimizes conversational disturbance. Roy-Chowdhury (2003) presents a study

of a consultation with a therapist that analyzes some of the power relationships (namely

the attempts of the client to put the therapist in the role of information and advice giver,

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[22] One interesting finding (Bates, Camaioni, & Volterra, 1979) is that children seem to develop an understanding of the interpersonal functions and goal-directedness of speech before they grasp its representational function—a finding that could have significant implications for psychoanalysis (as well as attachment theory).

and how the therapist avoids it) and the role of cultural differences in this struggle. Lastly, Goicoechea (2006) presents a study that uses a combination of Conversation Analysis and interviews to analyze how the discourse of psychiatric diagnosis is used between staff and patients in a state institution in a way that shapes their identities and the way the latter come to interpret their own behavior as "symptomatic."

Perhaps the best way to show the expansiveness of this research is to note particular studies that have reinterpreted the findings of earlier studies by appealing to the same data. Madill & Barkham (1997) reexamine a short series of psychotherapy sessions from a database that had been previously interpreted (Field, Barkham, Shapiro, Stiles, Rees, & Reynolds, 1994). Whereas the original study had outlined eight stages in the patient's presentation of her problems (relying on a rating system to fit utterances into specific categories), the reinterpretation used Discourse Analysis to map three distinct "subject positions" the patient took throughout the therapy and show how these positions contributed (and eventually helped her to ease) her depression. Stancombe & White (1997) point out possible problematic presuppositions in a study by Frosh, Burck, Strickland-Clark, & Morgan (1996)—namely, that their desire to show that the therapy is effective leads them to overlook the therapist's efforts in the dialogue. Their reinterpretation of the transcripts attends closely to the rhetorical devices employed by the therapist in order to manage the concerns of the family she is working with, moving their talk from assignments of blame towards more fruitful discussion. Thus, they believe, they illustrate *how* the therapy is working rather than showing *that* it is working. Finally, Packer (2000) presents four separate essays that use Conversation Analysis to analyze a videotape of a consultation at a conference between R. D. Laing and a

schizophrenic woman. Each essay (Bortle, 2000; Goldman, 2000; Harper, 2000; Hwang, 2000) offers a different perspective on what is happening in the session.

It is important to note that these reinterpretive studies, while critical of the original analyses of their data, are not critical in the exclusive sense of calling the previous analyses incorrect or wrong. While they might note that their predecessors fail to go far enough in their analyses, they support the original work insofar as it is a principled linguistic analysis of what is happening in the therapy sessions and view their own work as complementary. Stancombe & White (1997), for example, state that despite their critique they make no claims that their own analysis is superior to their predecessors': "rather, we present our work alongside theirs, hoping to emphasize the layered and intertextual nature of social 'reality' and, hence, of therapeutic encounters" (p. 22). Madill and Barkham (1997) note that they do not claim to have exhausted the possibilities of what is happening in the therapy, but rather "document some of the processes along with detailed evidence of our account" (p. 243). However, they also cite Potter & Wetherell's (1987) four "validity criteria" by which to judge discourse-analytic research and guide the discussion: coherence (that the interpretation should account for as much as possible); participants' orientation (that the research engages with the point of view of the people being studied); new problems (that the interpretation helps to understand and resolve problems that come about in discourse); and fruitfulness (that the interpretation open up new ways of looking and increase understanding of the subject matter). Multiple interpretations count as voices that further the discussion and show the multiplicity in the performative level of speech, rather than progress toward a unified picture.

This research is far more diverse in purpose than psychotherapy research that aims to justify a certain therapeutic method or technique as "effective." In fact, what these studies have in common is that for the most part they set aside questions of whether certain therapeutic techniques (or even therapy as a whole) are effective in order to ask the question of what is happening in therapy. In fact, the early examples of this research (Labov & Fanshel, 1977; Ferrara 1984) were undertaken in part simply to give an empirical picture of what takes place in a therapy session, since at the time of their study the entire field was operating in a manner hidden away from the public eye and shrouded in mystery. They simply wanted to know *what happens* in therapy. The diversity of the work is due to the fact that the answer to the question of what is happening in therapy depends on what one is looking for. There are many things that occur in therapy, just as there are many things that happen in other forms of conversation, and different analyses of the same therapeutic conversations—all of which may be legitimate—will yield different events.

It should also be noted that another common element in these empirical studies of psychotherapy is that they labor to further the methods (and cause) of Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis. While the methods described in scientific journals tend to be simply an explanation of the procedures followed, these pragmatic analyses appeal to their philosophical foundations in order to develop themselves as interpretive tools (this is another stated goal of the early research). Many of the writers, in fact, work as hard to develop and explicate their methods as they do to analyze its subject matter, drawing from previous sociological research on everyday speech and commenting on the implications their methods have in shaping the material. There is as of yet no univocal or

mechanical procedure for analyzing what is happening in therapy. Nor, we might say, should there be. The diversity is better viewed as a step towards greater methodological transparency.

Psychoanalytic roots of therapeutic studies

The pragmatic perspective, then, is already present within the field of psychology and therapy research. Its interdisciplinary origin has allowed it to be applied to a wide range of psychological phenomena, allowing researchers to view their subjects from a different and fruitful angle. They interpret what is happening in terms of the discourse between speakers rather than by reference to their individual psychologies. They point to the text, invoking common conversational patterns in order to interpret what is happening in the particular case of a clinical situation. Such a research method has the benefit of inviting others to disagree, to give alternative interpretations that can be discussed in turn through reference to the original text.

Can this be done for psychoanalysis in order to make its vision more transparent? Unfortunately, despite a keen interest in interpersonal process, the bulk of pragmatic analyses of psychotherapy do not address psychoanalysis or psychoanalytic constructs. Labov and Fanshel's (1977) historical description of the empirical study of texts of therapeutic interaction gives a clue to the reason for this gap between empirical therapeutic studies and psychoanalysis (this gap will be discussed further below). Interestingly they find the roots of therapy research in two grounds, that of psychoanalysis and that of the empirical social sciences, and attribute to both psychoanalysis and empirical research a shared goal of bringing psychological processes to light:

> The therapeutic interview has been the object of study under two major perspectives: first, as an element in the case history of a patient, illustrating the etiology and dynamics of a disorder as well as its treatment; second, as a communicative event, a conversation in which the therapist and patient interact under the general rules, constraints, and patterns of face-to-face interaction. (1977, p. 12)

The first perspective, they claim, originates in psychoanalytic clinical practice. They credit Freud for his close observation of behavior during what was then called the clinical interview. In the 1950's, psychiatric training texts instructed trainees to pay close attention to language use, "to examine the patient's remarks for particular constructions which reveal the inner psychodynamics and permit a correct diagnosis" (1977, p. 15). The clinician was to attend to patterns of verbal behavior (rather than simply to what is said) and to look for emotional tone, hesitations, contradictions, abrupt changes in topic, slips of the tongue, and the like. These behavioral observations were then used as diagnostic information (under the assumption, for example, that an hysteric would show particular dramatic styling) as well as to help the clinician recognize dynamic processes going on within the patient, such as resistance or Oedipal or dependent themes. All this was to be done on the fly during the interview rather than as an after-the-fact analysis of a transcript or recording; such close observation and interpretation of behavior was a practical clinical skill. The clinician weaves in the behavior that he observes with his theoretical perspective and comes up with an interpretation.

This may be good clinical technique, and perhaps a good starting point; and Labov and Fanshel are not critical of psychoanalysis as a clinical practice. But they do question its usefulness as an empirical research method on the grounds of its habitual neglect of the text of the interaction: "As a whole, the psychotherapeutic literature can be described as taking the text for granted" (1977, p. 15). Psychoanalysis, they charge, could

make better use of the text, understood as a detailed transcript of what is said, in several ways (Labov and Fanshel also include in their text charts of narrative sequences to show the logic of conversations as well as graphic presentations of sound bites in order to illustrate paralinguistic phenomena such as intonation).

First, as we have seen, the traditional case study rarely offers to the reader a detailed picture of the interaction. It uses third person accounts or paraphrases of what was said, and then only post hoc in support of the theoretical construct or interpretation that has already been made. The original data are not made available to the reader for discussion and reinterpretation by others.

Second, the text can be used fruitfully as an object of analysis in a way that psychoanalysis has traditionally neglected; again, Labov and Fanshel are not disparaging the techniques of psychoanalytic clinical practice, and do not deny, for example, that focusing on slips can be helpful. But they believe that what a person says has much more to offer than merely as a sign of internal dynamic processes. The empirical tradition, on the other hand, sees the interview as a speech event that follows implicit conversational rules and patterns. Again, as we have seen above, treating the conversation itself rather than the patient's psyche as the object of analysis will reveal different dynamics (namely, interpersonal ones) than those brought to light by the traditional psychoanalytic perspective.

Third, Labov and Fanshel, as sociologists, look to ground interpretations of what is occurring during the interview in different sources than they understand psychoanalysts to be relying on. While a clinician can draw upon basically any source in the moment of the interview in order to make interpretations (including the patient's history and what

the clinician knows about him or her), Labov and Fanshel want to restrict their sources to more public interpretive keys: the internal structures and embedded verbal habits of language use. To put it broadly, they base their interpretations ("microanalyses") on two axes. The first is the relationship between what is said and what is done in the saying, informed by the habitual rules of interpretation and production of speech (such as how responding "Mm-hm" to an utterance often functions to reinforce and support the speech of original speaker—a common occurrence in therapy). The second is the sequential relationships between particular utterances in the text, informed by sequencing rules (such as the fact that a question is usually paired with an answer or that a request prefers one of a certain small set of responses) (1977, p. 37). These in the end are not the only criteria they draw from, but they believe that such attention to the internal structures of speech—rather than relying on what they know about what is going on inside the speaker—is what sets their work apart as an empirical study of psychotherapy process. These elements are so pervasive and so habitual that Labov and Fanshel believe that they can be used as interpretive keys to determine what is happening.

This goes in hand with the final difference that Labov and Fanshel see between their work and the traditional methods of psychoanalysis: they strive to make the criteria they are using to interpret the text transparent. Making their interpretive grounds clear will allow for discussion and disagreement, as others can then offer alternate interpretations, citing other linguistic structures and habits of speech. This difference also highlights the fact that what they are doing is a form of research rather than elaborating a set of clinical skills. In short, this is what makes their work an empirical science. The data (the text) and the interpretive keys (the highly determined structures of conversation) are

available to others, and count as evidence. If their work is not falsifiable, at least others have grounds to disagree: One could point to other regularities in speech in order to offer a different interpretation.[23] But for Labov and Fanshel (as we saw in the studies discussed above) this possible multiplicity of interpretations is not simply part of the process of scientific discovery; it is a result of the inherent and necessary ambiguity in speech use. Just as the participants in a conversation make multiple and differing interpretations of what is said (which is how multiple things get done at the same time), so too should those who study it. This is not to say that one interpretation will trump the other; both may be right.[24]

Thus Labov and Fanshel see themselves as carrying on the same interpretive tradition as the psychoanalysts, with some important caveats. As sociolinguists, they are not particularly concerned with supporting psychoanalytic theory or aiding in the training of clinicians; rather, they are striving to develop an empirical method that will help to reveal what is happening in the interaction between clinician and patient. They want to further the development of an empirically defensible research method and in the process

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[23] Of course this scientific aspiration of transparency is quite different from what a therapist does in his or her work with patients in session. Where a clinician makes extensive use of her intuitive sense in an interpretation, Labov and Fanshel spend pages justifying each particular interpretation of the text in a way that is neither expected of nor practically feasible for the working clinician. While it is unrealistic to ask a clinician to think to ground every particular interpretation of a speech event in such an empirical manner, Labov and Fanshel hope that their techniques will be useful for clinicians "as a further resource and as a way of validating their intuitions" (p. 15). Presumably this means that the therapist should at least become aware of the regularities and habits that structure conversation, so that the evidence informs their interpretive intuitions.

[24] We might call this a linguistic principle of overdetermination. Labov and Fanshel use tone of voice, a paralinguistic cue, as an example of this multiplicity of pragmatic channels:

> It is advantageous for [conversants] to express hostility, challenge the competence of others, or express friendliness and affection in a way that can be denied if they are explicitly held to account for it. If there were not such a deniable channel of communication, and intonational contours became so well recognized and explicit that people were accountable for their intonations, then some other mode of deniable communication would undoubtedly develop. (p. 46)

"lay bare as much of the scaffolding of conversational interaction as we can" (1977, p. 26).

The task, then, is to make the intuitive rules of speech into explicit criteria for interpretation that can then be defended as a plausible interpretive key for what is happening. Indeed, Labov and Fanshel see in the development of studies of psychotherapy process a gradual movement from intuitive interpretation towards the explicit justification of grounds, where the interpretive key is no longer taken for granted or assumed to be legitimate. Their goal is a principled empirical analysis that will support their interpretation of events and allow for future discussion and disagreement.[25] This is the stuff of the second tradition that they draw from in their analysis of psychotherapy: the discourse driven research found in the social sciences.

This has been the direction that pragmatic therapy research has taken, drawing from the sociological tradition. These studies view the interview not simply as a source of information about what is happening inside the patient, but as a public "speech event" (Hymes, 1962), in which the participants follow the rules and patterns that are intrinsic to conversation.[26] Some of this empirical study has tended towards quantification, using coding systems in order to categorize types of verbal behavior (e.g., Bales, 1950; Gottschalk & Gleser, 1969). Labov and Fanshel are quick to criticize the limitations of

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[25] Again, this is a far cry from the primary goals of the clinician.

[26] Ferrara (1994) notes that the therapy situation creates a particular kind of speech event that might be seen as a subclass of speech events that occur in everyday speech. The particular situation creates particular rules and habits of the discourse that is to occur within it. While Labov and Fanshel see therapy as a kind of interview, Ferrara views it as a sort of consultation. In either case, the therapy situation places its participants in an asymmetrical relationship, with one member expected to disclose far more than the other, and the other in the position to ask questions. She also notes that therapeutic conversations are not as spontaneous as everyday talk, and that the topic of discussion tends to be more restricted (in that sessions do not usually contain as much small talk) (p. 39ff). Furthermore, the therapist is often expected to regulate the openings, closings, and turn taking in therapy, where in everyday conversation this regulation is more mutual.

this work, arguing that coding and categorizing verbal behavior into finite types (e.g., giving suggestions, disagreeing) is somewhat arbitrary, too quickly gets away from what is said, and ultimately is not very informative in showing what is going on (1977, p. 19).

Instead, they build on early qualitative microanalysis of conversation that took advantage of developing technology in order to perform detailed analyses of behavior through audio and video recorded conversations. In particular, they take their cue from the pioneering works of Goffman (1967), Sacks (1972), and Schegloff (1968), as well as Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974), whom they credit for making great progress in isolating the conversational patterns and principles of sequencing that regulate speech.[27] They employ these "rules of sequencing" in their interpretations of therapeutic discourse on the assumption that these patterns are what allow language use to be understood intuitively by competent language users in the first place. In other words, they believe that by viewing what is said in a conversation as an example of a more general pattern, they are explicating what is implicit in conversational practice and showing what is happening as the participants talk. They are showing how participants employ conventional means to do conversational work.

Studies addressing specific clinical phenomena

Given the diversity of the work and the fact that the analysis of speech is not the simple application of a procedure, the best way to learn how these studies make these linguistic processes explicit is to consult them directly. As we have discussed, what one sees depends significantly on what one is looking for and how one looks for it. Labov and

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[27] They also cite as influences Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology and Austin's speech act theory. Later theorists add Wittgenstein (1953) and Foucault (1969/1972).

Fanshel take a wide view. As the first major discourse study of therapeutic interaction (indeed, one of the first "objective" presentations of *what happens* in therapy), they try to give a general picture of what happens in therapy by analyzing several sessions of a therapy with a young woman with anorexia, noting how the patient's narrative of herself and her relationship to her family changes over time through discussion with her therapist, how she works to justify the events in her life, and how the therapist facilitates her acknowledgement of feelings that she denied previously.

Ferrara (1994), writing in a similar vein (attempting to further develop discourse analysis as a method) states that her study "offers a representative reflection of psychotherapeutic discourse as it is currently practiced in the United States" (p. 18). Thus the question, "What is happening?" is asked in a very broad sense, so that nontherapists may gain an understanding of what is going on. Ferrara pays attention to general therapeutic processes such as dream telling and interpretation, the function of the therapist's echoing and mirroring of what the patient says, the use of metaphor, and how patient and therapist work together in the mutual creation of meaning. While one of the hopes of these writers is that their work might be useful for clinicians, they do not dialogue much with theories of therapy or discuss how a discursive perspective might change a clinician's therapeutic stance. They want to reveal in general what happens in therapy.

For those who are already familiar with what happens in therapy (e.g., therapists), specific studies of particular clinical phenomena may be of more interest—although the early general studies are good examples of how to look at therapy with a linguistic lens. Remembering that my goal here is to be able to analyze psychological processes

heretofore presumed to be unconscious and inside people, it would be helpful to look at studies that work to explicate specific psychological (or interpersonal) processes that might be tied back in with psychoanalytic vocabulary. Let us look at three examples as illustrations of the method in order to show how psychoanalysis might begin to illuminate its concepts in an empirically satisfactory way. The first two studies do not address psychoanalysis explicitly, while the third could be said to be a good start towards connecting psychoanalysis with empirical pragmatic work.

Script formulations

Edwards (1995), for example, looks at the way that couples in therapy describe their partners' behavior ("script formulating"), as either isolated incidents or as incidents of a larger behavioral (often problematic) pattern. He analyzes the different ways that couples vie for the upper hand in descriptions of each other in a dialectic of blame and excuse, with each party working hard to establish his or her description as the "true" state of affairs:

> Any description of a partner's actions, especially one that is inferentially loaded with evaluation and blame, is also indexically available (i.e., potentially informative) about the speaker. As such, it risks being discounted as interested, self-serving, or biased. Speakers have various ways of managing those issues of fact and interest. These include script-formulating the actions in question; formulating them as breaches of some recognized formal order; appealing to the presence and testimony of corroborating witnesses … and, more subtly, dealing directly (and disarmingly) with the speaker's stake or role. (p. 325)

Edwards then gives examples of these interpersonal moves from transcripts of both therapeutic and extra-therapeutic conversations. For example, he shows how one partner speaks in an exasperated way in order to present the other's actions as extreme, trying to convince the listener to accept his or her narration of events (p. 324). This is done at the

expense of her partner, who is not present, and whose own description of his behavior might be done in a way to minimize how exasperating it might be for her. Here is an excerpt from the text (taken from pp. 324-325):[28]

1. Emma: But he gets so *mad* at me, Dottie. He jus' gets so mad. An' then he wont
2. speak you know for hours 'n hours. This is … this is a terrible thing sometimes…
3. Jus' because I say gee … It looks like rain. Well it isn' gonna rain how can it
4. rain? 'N he goes th' barometer, what the hell!
5. Dottie: oh you…
6. Emma: … you know then so … what. There's an argument … but it's me, too.
7. Dottie: Yeah but you hate to be put down all the time.
8. Emma: I know it.

Edwards interprets this interaction as Emma's exasperated presentation of her partner's pattern of behavior, followed by an example. From the way that Emma presents it, it seems that her partner's anger is unjustified by anything she has done. She presents herself as a victim of his anger. But Edwards then points out that Emma recants a bit, sharing some of the blame ("but it's me, too"). Edwards suggests that this happens perhaps because Dottie's response to her presentation in line 5 is not early or strong enough to align herself with Emma's statement, thereby leaving Emma open to accusations that her "facts" are self-serving. To manage this risk, Edwards suggests, Emma shares some of the blame—thereby rescuing her version of the facts, which Dottie affirms in line 7.

Note that the action is all performed on the outside; there is an "as if" quality to Edwards' discussion of impression management that allows him to discuss the

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[28] While there is no universal transcription notation, most are similar in their attempts to capture as much of the original conversation as possible. Thus they include not only the words said, but also the timing of the speech, the interruptions and overlaps that occur in conversation, and (to a greater or lesser extent) paralinguistic cues such as inflection and vocal emphasis—as well as bodily gestures and action. In the examples I give, I have simplified the transcription for readability. But with more complex transcription methods comes the possibility of more subtle interpretations, since more data is presented. See Ochs (1979) for a discussion of transcription methods and the significance of their differences.

negotiation of one's risk of being dismissed as self-serving or biased without recourse to these (presumably) internal processes. Rather than speaking about what might be motivating Emma's speech, Edwards refers to common discourse practices, habits we enact when we speak. He refers to verbal behavior. Thus if we agree with his claim that script-formulations are managed in the manner he describes (he draws from his previous research to support this), then his interpretation of this specific event makes sense to us. We see what is happening. Of course one might offer a different interpretation, which is the point of the empirical method. One could point to other linguistic practices that are occurring and apply those to the text to see if they fit.

From the perspective of unconscious action, we might view the constative level of what Emma is saying (the "facts" of the case) as the conscious part: Emma's attempt to justify (and perhaps her feeling of being justified) that she is the victim of her partner's irrational anger. But what is unseen to the participants is the pragmatic level: the speech act of justifying, the process of trying to have the only legitimate narrative, and the hostility and domination involved in this. The unconscious (or at least non-conscious) fantasy, so to speak, is the action. For the participants, of course, the attention is on the content of what is said. But the process is still operating. Edwards suggests that viewing these as competing perspectives allows the therapist to address the issue as one of competing perspectives, rather than being drawn into the fight about who is right (pp. 326-327).

Managing delicate issues

The second study is that of Silverman & Peräkylä (1990), who analyzed transcripts culled from HIV and AIDS counseling in order to show some of the ways that

conversational participants manage the discussion of delicate issues in therapy. Their study was motivated by the problem of broaching the touchy subject of safer sex practices, part of the therapy protocol required in England if someone seeks an HIV test. They took 100 extracts from tape recordings of these sessions, looking for patterns in the sequential organization around the topics of sex and death.

One of their findings was that, in this context of counseling, people often pause or stutter when they get to the topic of sex. These incidents of pauses and stuttering, they claim, are to be distinguished from other instances of pauses and stuttering in speech—of which there are many—in that they appear so predictably before the topic of sex is broached (they call them "pre-delicate perturbations"):

> Patients typically pause before first mentioning terms relating to sexual intercourse or contraceptives … In the whole corpus of transcripts, we have been able to identify only *two* deviant cases where patients fail to mark their *first use* of such an item by a pause or other marker. (p. 295)

They found that therapists also pause in this way, but not as often. An example follows:[29]

1. Counselor: right (1.0) what do you know about (0.5) catching AIDS or
2. how it can be how you can catch it [it's it er
3. Patient: [All I know is it is
4. transmitted em (1.0) through er sex

It would be tempting to try to explain these perturbations by interpreting them as outward signs of internal resistance or discomfort. But Silverman and Peräkylä want to explain delays before talk about delicate issues without reference to internal processes or experiences such as embarrassment (p. 304). The speech disturbances are not *signs* of conflict; for their purposes the disturbances *are* the conflict. For them, the pauses and

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[29] It is a common transcription convention to place numbers within parenthesis in order to denote pauses measured in seconds. The left hand brackets indicate overlap, where the patient and counselor are talking over each other.

stuttering are due to the implications around particular words used and the identity they assign to their users. Thus use of sexual words identifies their users' sexuality, opening up a highly conflictual realm full of cultural rules and "moral baggage."

Ultimately I believe that Silverman and Peräkylä fail to explain why these pauses (and not some other disturbance or pattern) occur. A satisfactory explanation should address the function of the disturbance (what it does) in speech, such as to buy time, to distract or hedge, or to distance the speaker from the emotional impact of the word. While the "why" question is traditionally one of motivation, the pragmatic answer (as with Edwards' study above) is one of function. Silverman and Peräkylä do not go this far, instead stopping at what might make it difficult to talk about sex.

But, since their study has practical goals of trying to make talk about sex less disturbed, they do note some ways to manage delicate issues in order to reduce the number of pauses. One type of structuring element is "question projection," where the therapist anticipates or marks the forthcoming delicate word by introducing it *as* a delicate topic. Another is to begin by using the delicate words in reference to people in general as a piece of information ("people who use condoms lower their risk"), rather than in reference to the individual. A third is to use the same categories that the patient uses (often "gay" rather than the more clinical and evaluative sounding "homosexual"). While we might not agree with Silverman and Peräkylä's particular suggestions, this at least shows one way to address technical questions from a linguistic perspective.

Interestingly (and this might lead to an answer about *why* these processes occur), Silverman and Peräkylä describe these ways of managing delicate issues as examples of empathy. But empathy, again, is to be understood without reference to internal states:

> Contrary to both the textbooks and commonsense, our analysis suggests an approach to empathy less as the psychological propensity to attune to the private meanings of the patient, but more as the *social* ability to pick up behavioural and cultural cues present in what the patient is saying and doing. (p. 312)

Again, redefining it in terms of social habits circumvents the problem posed by defining empathy in terms of internal dispositions. Empathy can be pointed to in the text as a type of action, namely managing verbal situations with a certain sort of tact in order to create more freely flowing discourse. Empathic behavior is not viewed as a sign of internal character, but behaviorally, as empathy itself.

Resistance vs. groping

The third study is Gerhardt and Stinson's (1995) study of the function of the utterance, "I don't know," in a particular psychoanalytic psychotherapy. Their essay covers several points, but for our purposes let us focus on their pragmatic analysis. Gerhardt and Stinson, working from the perspective of an interpersonal psychoanalysis, first note that while the analyst is supposedly working from a stance of non-direction, her questions function as "demand characteristics" that reveal what Gerhardt and Stinson see as a central purpose of psychoanalysis: the subjectification of the patient. That is, the analyst's requests that the patient reflect on her experience (such as, "What comes to mind?" and "Tell me more about that") pressure the patient to speak in a way that is meant to enlarge her internal experience.

In this context, Gerhardt and Stinson argue, the utterance "I don't know" seems to take on a particular function. While previous researchers have viewed "I don't know" as

a "hedge" that blunts the impact of a "dispreferred response" (Lakoff, 1972),[30] they reject

this interpretation. They also reject a straightforward psychoanalytic interpretation of "I

don't know" as resistance to a chain of associations (Gerhardt & Stinson, 1995, p. 628).

They point out that in their transcripts, the patient's responding "I don't know" to her

therapist's request to reflect often preceded an elaboration of the topic they were

discussing. They note eleven instances of this in the 12th session, where patient and

therapist are discussing the former's ambivalence about her upcoming marriage to Sidney

after having been widowed from James. Here is an example (p. 670):

1. T: Well, I can see you feeling some of the sadness.
2. can you –
3. P: Yeah. (cry)
4. T: Try to put it into words?
5. P: Um. Oh I don't know. It's real conflicting. I mean I feel happy just because I
6. do love Sidney terribly. Um and just sad that I'm going to be someone else's wife.
7. I mean it's—it's just overwhelming to think I'm not going to be PQ anymore.
8. I'm not going to be—I mean I'm just it's a—it's a big change.
9. It's kind of the way I felt when James died. I felt like my identity had changed drastically.

Because her "I don't know" precedes dialogue that counts as further reflection on her

situation, Gerhardt and Stinson interpret it as "groping" rather than avoiding or cutting

off discussion (as it often functions in everyday discourse). They also point out how

disturbed her speech is with stuttering and changes, indicating ambivalence about

discussing it, but note that this point in the therapy is a breakthrough in that in previous

sessions the patient had been describing her relationship with James as ideal. This

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[30] A "dispreferred response" to a question is one that goes against what is structurally occasioned by that question. Thus, "Why don't you come up and see me some time" is structured in such a way that it prefers an acceptance and disprefers a rejection (Nofsinger, 1991, p. 72). The way that the question is formed shapes the possibilities of the respondent. We will return to this shaping of possibilities in the next chapter.

discussion leads to a change where she later acknowledges that there were aspects of her previous marriage that were difficult for her.

Interestingly, Gerhardt and Stinson dialogue their interpretation with Freud's (1925) discussion of negation, where "I don't know" can be interpreted as part of the process of freeing associations from repression by allowing them to surface in their negative form. They reject this interpretation on the grounds that it presumes a depth model of the self, where unconscious material is uncovered or brought to the surface, allowing it to be said. Rather, they see "I don't know" as a marker that constitutes the taking of a reflective stance. In the context of the therapy situation, which includes the expectation that the patient explore areas of her life that may be uncomfortable, "I don't know" would be out of place if it functioned simply to close off discussion of the matter. As it precedes the elaboration of material, it functions as a step in the process of the patient's creating a new narrative for herself.

Thus they view the patient's "I don't know" as part of the therapeutic discourse that aims at the expansion of her subjectivity through the creation and deepening of the narratives and history of her life. In dialoguing with the psychoanalytic principle of subjectification (e.g., that it is better to know oneself than not to know), they view psychoanalysis' relatively recent trend towards an interpersonal rather than intrapsychic perspective as a turn toward the context of the therapy situation marked by its particular use of speech. While it should be noted that they do at points refer to internal processes (such as an intrapsychic dialogue and signs of the patient's internal struggles), for the most part Gerhardt and Stinson remain on the level of discourse, pointing out the way language is used to get things done.

A missed encounter: the intentional avoidance of psychoanalysis

In these linguistic analyses psychological processes are interpreted as "on the surface," occurring publicly in the verbal actions we perform, rather than hidden away inside our heads. The researchers attend to the pragmatic levels of language by invoking discourse structures, which are held to regulate language use, in their interpretations of what is happening in specific speech situations. While these studies contribute to an established tradition at the crossroads of linguistics and sociology, psychoanalytic thinking has largely been ignored, at least among English-speaking researchers.[31] Any connection that the linguistic study of therapy may have had with psychoanalytic theory has largely been abandoned in favor of a more general perspective on psychotherapy; but nonetheless this is a robust field of research that could prove useful for psychoanalysts who wish to take a more empirical turn and illustrate psychoanalytic concepts to outsiders.

What stands in the way of using pragmatic methods to justify psychoanalytic constructs? As Labov and Fanshel (1977) noted, empirical linguistic studies of therapeutic interaction were inspired in close concord with psychoanalysis but quickly rejected psychoanalytic vocabulary and constructs in favor of more sociological categories. Why did this occur? There are two reasons, one practical and one epistemological.

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[31] One other interesting article in English that dialogues pragmatic methods with psychoanalysis is Dolitsky's (1983) discussion of the pragmatics of humor, where she argues that elements of Freud's (1905/60) theory of jokes are supported by her own pragmatic analyses—namely, that the mechanics of (linguistic) humor lie in the element of surprise, in the contradiction of expectations: "Going against the pragmatic conventions of a linguistic community, i.e. stating the normally unsaid, or omitting the normally said, is the strategy most commonly used in humor (p. 47).

The first is that many of these studies aim to be atheoretical with regard to therapeutic stance in hopes that they will have a broader application. Ferrara (1994) points out that as the therapeutic world has distanced itself from psychoanalysis (with more and more therapists characterizing their work as eclectic), studies of psychotherapy have followed suit. As a result, the initial connection between psychoanalysis and empirical linguistic studies of therapy has been lost. Roy-Chowdhury (2003) and Frosch, Burck, Strickland-Clark, and Morgan (1996) state that one of their aims is to close the gap between researchers and family clinicians, but they do not mention what particular school of therapy they aim to help.

Related to this point is the "ethnomethodological indifference" present in these studies, where the researcher brackets the theoretical stance of the therapist as a factor in the situation to be interpreted. For example, Roy-Chowdhury (2003) addresses psychoanalytic constructs, but only in order to translate them into linguistic terms, thus leaving psychoanalysis behind. He speaks, for example, of stripping "professionalized rhetoric" from therapeutic interactions in order to find "what actually takes place between people, one of whom believes herself to be making a transference interpretation" (p. 83). Frosch et al. (1996) state that their aim is to look at "'knowledge in use' rather than relying on therapists' descriptions of their work" (p. 144). This part of their empirical method means that the theoretical stance of the clinician holds no authority in the interpretation, losing out to the sociolinguistic perspective of the researcher.[32]

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[32] Roy-Chowdhury also notes that this ethnomethodological indifference that "equalizes the status of all interactants" can tend to portray the therapist as "machiavellian and/or incompetent." The fact that many of the studies tend to include issues of power as themes in their analyses may actually prove useful for psychoanalytic therapies' attention to aggression in the session—on both sides of the couch (cf. Stancombe & White, 1997, p. 37).

Along with the desire to remain therapeutically atheoretical, there is a second, epistemological issue that is tied to Labov and Fanshel's distancing of themselves from psychoanalytic portrayals of therapy sessions. The method, aiming to be empirical, wants to avoid constructs that invoke internal states. And psychoanalysis is replete with them. Its concern with unconscious processes and intentions and the inability to make these visible to others is what has led to its rejection by positivistic science. Empirical linguistic researchers, it seems, may share the same view.

Billig (1999) holds that conversation analysts have avoided psychoanalysis due to its habit of using mentalistic constructs to explain behavior. In preferring to explain behavior without recourse to internal states they have no evidence for, they have avoided moving from descriptions of what is happening in language use to conclusions about what the individual is thinking. As a result, they have not had much to say about psychoanalysis and its presumption of getting into people's heads. Although Billig is talking specifically about the field of discursive psychology (to be mentioned in the next chapter), it is true of discourse analytic methods as a whole:

> Discursive psychologists are uncomfortable with the notion of consciousness. They prefer to talk about the structure of conversation, rather than the speaker's interior life. Certainly, discursive psychologists do not explain conversational interventions in terms of the speakers' motives, let alone their inner egos. If consciousness is not a topic for discursive psychology, then unconsciousness is doubly out of bounds. It is as if this psychology is declaring that there is no secret mental life: all can be heard, if one listens closely enough. Moreover, speakers know what they are doing: they do not have secrets hidden from themselves. (pp. 50-51)

The empirical research on psychotherapy, then, has avoided psychoanalytic constructs out of its desire to bring internal structures such as intention out of the head and into the open where presumably they can then be interpreted with pragmatic categories according

to linguistic patterns. The gap between pragmatics and psychoanalysis is motivated by the former's concern to be empirical and transparent.

It might be helpful at this point to note that the question of intention is one that remains open in linguistic analysis. Johnstone (2002) points out that different researchers tend to take different perspectives on motivation in language use, by and large locating it in one of two places. Discourse analysts, she states, generally take a see language use as "strategic." They take a rhetorical perspective, understanding conversational participants to be using language in order to have an effect on their world. Thus for them the conversant "comes into the conversation with a pre-set plan" (p. 96) and can be said to be the locus of motivation in their analyses. Some researchers, on the other hand, (and Johnstone includes Conversation Analysts here) view language use as "adaptive." They take a more structural approach, viewing conversational participants as spoken *through* rather than speaking: "Texts are best understood as responses to situations, often more automatic, less conscious, and less designed than speakers may imagine, and often allowing far less choice than they may imagine" (p. 232). In this view, participants use common, second-hand tropes to perform actions and to keep conversation flowing smoothly. Arguments, for example, are seen as negotiations where speakers work to adapt from a position of disagreement to one of agreement. While the discourse analytic view suggests a premeditated approach and allows more room for internal motivation, the latter places the motivations in the sequential process of discourse itself.[33]

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[33] It should also be noted, however, that if we try to apply this to psychoanalysis, the presumption that people are somehow predisposed to find agreement might not find much support in the psychoanalytic community. Some people prefer not to agree, and we find them quite difficult to talk to.

Thus the problem of intention is not specific to psychoanalysis alone, with pragmatic researchers dismissing psychoanalysis' interest in unconscious motivation the way that positivists do. The issue of individual intention has not been completely resolved among adherents of the sociological approach. Hjelmquist (1982) states that researchers have been ambiguous on this point; that while they aim to take "an external point of view" with regard to the empirical justification of their interpretations (relying solely on the linguistic resources of the data), they also aim to interpret in a way that is faithful to the way that the participants understand and cocreate their conversation (p. 31). He points out that Labov and Fanshel, while aiming to keep an external point of view in order to outline linguistic rules, also vacillate on the notion of intention. Hjelmquist concludes that "a crucial point in a theory of discourse processes is the relationships between thought, conceived of as including intentions, and language" (p. 36). While linguistic researchers may be able to operate without allegiance to any specific clinical stance, they cannot avoid taking a stance with regards to how individuals operate.

Although we see that the pragmatic perspective can be useful for therapy research in revealing interpersonal linguistic processes between therapist and patient, the centrality of unconscious motivation in psychoanalysis poses a difficulty in that empirical researchers shy away from a commitment to internal processes. Can we open a space for the empirical study of psychoanalytic constructs? And from the other side, could psychoanalysis use linguistic categories of interpretation in order to explain itself, and still remain psychoanalytic? The next chapter will attempt to connect the psychoanalytic and pragmatic perspectives.

Chapter 4: Interweaving the psychoanalytic and pragmatic perspectives

As we begin to weld a pragmatic perspective and a psychoanalytic perspective together, we can see how a pragmatic stance might require us to look at psychoanalytic concepts in a particular way. Placing our "space of interest" outside of the head leads us to some decidedly non-traditional psychological views of psychological constructs. While remaining on the "outside" will help to avoid the charge that the therapist is reading the minds of his or her patients and allow an opportunity for psychoanalysis to present some of its constructs more empirically, it will also lead us to recast traditional psychological concepts such that they are social rather than individual processes. More to the point, as psychoanalytic constructs become linguistic constructs so that they can be studied with linguistic methods, we commit ourselves to an interpersonal psychology. The intrapsychic itself becomes a questionable, albeit useful, category.

The different methods by which we articulate the unconscious or non-conscious aspects of the psyche, as well as the implications of their articulation, are contingent upon the way we conceptualize them (Walsh, 1996). If we consider them to be outside or between individuals, they might be accessed more directly than if consider them to be located inside. If we then consider them to reside within language, they might be accessed through the linguistic methods discussed in the previous chapter by focusing on the context within which interactions occur rather than on the individual's motivations. From this point of view, the unconscious aspects of human life, like all human experience, are primarily social; what is said is viewed as an expression of and in relationship to this public context. Depending on one's theoretical (and nontheoretical)

lenses, one could access the unseen through the explication of antecedent events, the perspectives of others, and the discourse practices, games, rules, and expectations that its participants, knowingly or unknowingly, are following.[34]

Given that psychoanalysis has in recent years taken a more interpersonal turn in the trajectory of Sullivan (1953), Gill (1994), Levinson (1991), Renik (1995), and others, emphasizing the interactions between people—particularly the patient's reaction to the analyst's personality—over an individual's intrapsychic processes, one might think that turning our attention from the patient's internal life to the space between conversational participants would be uncontroversial. But questions of orthodoxy remain. Ponsi (1997), in an interesting article that calls for clinicians to reframe the analytic understanding of pragmatic action on the linguistic level,[35] points out that the proliferation of interpersonal psychoanalysis has led to a breakdown of the distinction between (internal) feelings and attitudes and (external) behaviors (p. 247). In the context of recognizing the impossibility (and the danger of the fantasy) of analytic neutrality, internal and external processes have lost their strict delineation. But Ponsi also notes that others have resisted this trend out of a concern that "the erosion of fundamental principles such as the theory of drives, intrapsychic determinism, intrapsychic independence of the environment, and so on,

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[34] R. D. Laing's (1969; Laing & Esterson, 1964; Laing, Phillipson, & Lee, 1966) studies of unconscious interpersonal processes are good examples of this social perspective as constitutive of individual experience. Laing attempts to develop an investigative method that addresses what he thinks is conspicuously overlooked by the atomistic focus of traditional psychoanalysis:

> At the very least, we need concepts which indicate both the interaction and interexperience of two persons, and help us to understand the relation between each person's own experiences and his own behavior, always, of course, within the context of the relationship between them. (Laing & Esterson, 1964, p. 7)

[35] Ponsi augments Freud's (1917/1963) assertion that "nothing takes place in a psycho-analytic treatment but an interchange of words between the patient and the analyst" (p. 17) with the suggestion "that analytic interaction be defined as the flow of continuous, mutual influencing that is mediated by the *way* in which the discourse is organized" (Ponsi, 1997, pp. 250-251).

would result in a grave and irreversible transformation of the psychoanalytic edifice" (p. 245). We will leave this debate to others; but a dialogue between the psychoanalytic and pragmatic perspectives should have something to offer it, by beginning to draw out what a psychoanalysis informed by a pragmatic perspective would look like.

Furthermore, the question will remain as to how much of nonconscious life can be made explicit, and whether what is brought to light through this method can in the end be considered "unconscious" in a strictly psychoanalytic sense—or if we are talking more broadly about preconscious or overlooked processes. This question is central to whether a pragmatic linguistic method could be used to justify psychoanalysis, and I will return to it in the concluding chapter.

This chapter will begin with a return to Forrester's (1990) discussion of two critiques he sees shared by pragmatics and psychoanalysis. Forrester points out similarities between Austin's perspective and that of Jacques Lacan (1975/1988; 1956/2002). Their critiques, as we will see, also stand as critiques of the modern scientific project; but rather than being used to evade the challenge that psychoanalysis explain itself, they will decenter and open up subjectivity in order to allow interpersonal actions to be analyzed linguistically. While this will not likely head off the empirical questioning discussed in the first chapter, understanding subjectivity as out in the world rather than hidden away inside could help psychoanalysis show others what it sees. Psychic processes can be found in the text of speech, as interpersonal actions.

I will then address some specific psychoanalytic constructs from a pragmatic perspective. The first is repression, which will be reframed as a linguistic process that relies on both habits of linguistic usage and the very structure of speech. Then I will turn

to Laing (1969) and Ogden (1982) in order to weave pragmatics in with their already interpersonal understandings of the ways we position each other with speech. These illustrations aim not only to reinterpret traditional psychoanalytic processes pragmatically, but also to further explore a theoretical overlap of the psychoanalytic and pragmatic perspectives and show where a continued dialogue between them might go.

Theoretical overlaps: the deconstruction of interiority

Austin says that once we start seeing pragmatically, it is hard not to see speaking as social action. There is no possibility of returning to the idea that speaking is merely communicating ideas between two minds when our focus is turned instead to what is happening between speakers as they talk to one another. Still, this has not stopped Austin's followers from losing sight of the critical possibilities of his discovery. Taylor & Cameron (1987) note a "preoccupation with taxonomy" in the speech act tradition that follows Searles's (1976) development of Austin's theory, where the project became the classification of the myriad ways we can do things with words and attempts to determine the criteria for a successful speech act (Taylor & Cameron, 1987, pp. 5 & 45ff). This attempt to lay out all that is possible through speech, before it occurs, ignores the theory's critical edge: that this perspective might change the way we look at human relationships.

We might see this taxonomic project as an attempt to take the teeth out of Austin's work. While part of Austin's analysis is indeed an attempt to show the numerous things that can be done by speaking, provisionally sorting them into the five categories of judgments (appraising, reckoning), the execution of power (ordering, warning), commitments (promising, siding with someone), relational actions (apologizing, congratulating), and the various ways we take part in conversation (asserting, denying),

Austin himself says he is not happy with this effort (1975, p. 151). Cavell (1969), a

longtime champion of Austin's more radical side, believes that Austin was far more

interested in finding out why we speak the way we do, "why one wishes, or hesitates, to

use a particular expression" (p. 99). Rather than trying to build a comprehensive theory,

Austin was attempting to look at the world in a particular way, a method that Austin

himself described as "linguistic phenomenology" (Cavell, p. 99).

Felman (1980/2002) illustrates this resistance to (or dilution of) Austin's message

in France, where it was introduced by Emile Benveniste. Benveniste sought to limit

speech acts to explicit institutional acts such as the christening of a ship, thus disallowing

the possibility of implicit speech acts and their calling into question the absolute primacy

of the constative in speech. Felman cites Benveniste's acknowledged anxiety that if

Austin's theory were not thus curtailed, the very foundations of analytic philosophy

would be put in peril. He did not want to see every act of speech as containing a

performative element.

> We see no reason for abandoning the distinction between the performative and the constative. We believe it is justified and necessary … If one does not hold to precise criteria of a formal and linguistic order, and particularly if one is not careful to distinguish between sense and reference, one endangers the very object of analytic philosophy; the specificity of language in the circumstances in which the linguistic forms one chooses to study are valid. (Quoted in Felman, 1980/2002, p. 9.)

For Benveniste, a pragmatic perspective is a dangerous way to look at things. It threatens

the validity of any project that depends on the primacy of the constative. Not only does

seeing speaking as social action turn us away from the representational content of what is

said; it calls the entire representational (and scientific) project into question. The

constative way of seeing can no longer be trusted, and our picture of a self-contained

subject understanding the world as it is represented to the mind becomes nothing more than a chimerical hope. Austin challenges the modernist anthropology, the assumed interiority of the subject, and any hope to attain a clear picture of reality that the subject can then control. It calls into question the function and privacy of the interior. The upside of this is that it allows us to talk about psychological phenomena while remaining on the outside, where things are public.

Of course, psychoanalysis is no stranger to critiques of modern subjectivity. Nor, considering particularly the works of Jacques Lacan, could we deny it a deep-seated interest in the way that language functions. Still, there have been few writers in the English-speaking world who have explicitly drawn out a theoretical connection between pragmatics and psychoanalysis. One is John Forrester (1990), who sees two points of overlap between the pragmatic and psychoanalytic perspectives—both of which stand in opposition to prevailing assumptions about human interaction.[36] The first is the assumption that the primary function of speech is to represent the world to a subject. The second is the assumption that this subject is a self-contained or well-defined entity, closed off to the world and needing the world to be represented to it in the first place. For these comparisons, Forrester draws heavily on Lacan's paper "The function and field of speech and language in psychoanalysis" (1956/2002) and Lacan's first seminar, *Freud's papers on technique* (1975/88).

These two critiques are not simply abstract arguments about theoretical points; their realization, as Forrester argues, belongs to the goals of analysis itself. The existence of what they critique occasions psychoanalysis' own existence, which in turn aims for the

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[36] A second is Felman's *The scandal of the speaking body* (1980/2002), which served as one of the inspirations for Forrester's work.

dissolution of the false consciousness of the subject and the possibility of full speech. For

Forrester (1990), the psychoanalytic and pragmatic ways of seeing turn our eyes towards

things unseen not only in order to contradict, but to actively subvert Enlightenment

understandings of speech and subjectivity. While pragmatics changes our understanding

of the function of speech in human relationships, psychoanalysis works to neutralize the

unconscious effects of speech acts as they operate (p. 141). In breaking down the

imaginary and illusory boundaries presumed to exist between individuals, new

possibilities are created.

The representational function of language

       The first critique begins with what I have already discussed in the second chapter,

the decentering of the representational function of language. Unlike other philosophers of

language who focus exclusively on ideal examples of communicative language use and

their possibilities of truth and falsity, Austin is more interested in *how* language does (or

does not do) what it does, in its successes and misfires. Forrester lauds Austin for his

interest in linguistic mistakes:

> Austin's attention to the unsuccessful performative, the natural outgrowth of his
> view that these utterances are acts, and thus, like all conventional acts, liable to
> failure, prevents him from adopting the specious conception of speech as always
> succeeding. (p. 152)

Representation hopes to attain the clearest, most faithful portrayal of the world. Mistakes,

then, are seen as something to be overcome in the name of a more accurate picture. But

as Felman (1980/2002) points out, from a pragmatic perspective a misfire is not simply

an absence of success. A mistake is not nothing—it is something *else* (p. 57). When I

christen a ship without the proper qualifications to do so, I do not successfully christen it.

But I am still doing other things of interest. I may be making a mockery of the ceremony or trying to impress my friends, or both. These mistakes and misfires direct our attention to what lies behind unsuccessful communication. And given that a speech act can fulfill several undetermined functions at once, this leads us also to look for the "something else" in successes. Misfires and mistakes are, instead of errors to be avoided and fixed, a fruitful road into seeing the functional level.

Psychoanalysis, of course, is also interested in these processes. As the pragmaticist looks to the performance level of speech, to the way that language is being used interpersonally, the analyst looks to the transference. He attends to the overlooked, the covered over, the ambiguous, and the mistakes and slips that occur when one communicates as keys to unseen processes. Freud, in his *Introductory Lectures*, says that parapraxes are "the first product of psychoanalysis" and that psychoanalysis starts "from the assumption that parapraxes are psychical acts and arise from mutual interference between two intentions" (1917/1963, p. 60). Mistakes are not simply errors to be corrected, but afford an opportunity to see what else might be going on (in particular, how the person is multiply motivated).

One of the immediate consequences of the rejection of the primacy of the constative is that the speaking event comes into view. The pragmatic preference for word "utterance" rather than "statement" emphasizes the fact of speaking. In the same way, psychoanalysis speaks about the subject of enunciation as opposed to the subject referred to in speech. Both look past the referential function of language to what they are more interested in: the actions of the speaker. This contradicts thinkers such as Benveniste,

who would rather suppress this process in favor of accurate representation. For him, attention to the act of speaking merely gets in the way of what we talk about.

The truth of analytic discourse is not to be found in its content, but in its interpersonal function. Speech is part of a dialectic. It implies an other to which it is addressed, and it is to this transference level that the pragmatist and psychoanalyst direct their attention. Recall Austin's discussion of the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts performed in speaking events: speaking both secures uptake (it gets that other's attention) and invites a response. A question calls for an answer, and a statement invites qualification. This is the way that dialectic proceeds, such that even a lack of response stands as a (usually awkward) response. Thus in every event of speech, regardless of its representational content, an attempt is made by the speaker to be recognized.

Forrester points out that this picture is quite similar to Lacan's (1956/2002) portrayal of empty speech as the passing of a coin whose faces have been rubbed off from extensive use as currency. The fact that the coin has no picture on it does not stop it from being circulated: "This metaphor suffices to remind us that speech, even when almost completely worn out, retains its value as a *tessera*" (p. 44). The act of circulation is akin to the act of enunciation in that it is an exchange between subjects, regardless of the content of what is said. The content, of course, helps to determine the quality and mechanism of that exchange; but it is to what is happening on this level of speech, the fact of speaking, that the analyst attends.

A clinician familiar with psychodynamic theory should not find this point new. As clinicians, we are trained to look at the process and not to get lost in the content of

speech. We view a patient's claim, "I was merely stating a fact," as an attempt to head off interpretations of what has been said, and done by saying. We watch for the failure of (and for what happens around) communication and its consequences, not its presumed execution. Indeed, as Forrester (1990) states, "the very existence of psychoanalysis is a permanent testimony to the failure of communication" and to what may occur in that failure (p. 151). We attend to speech acts and call them "interpersonal process," trying to determine what is happening between people, what effect we have on one another. To use Felman's (1980/2002) term, clinicians have a material knowledge of language (p. 50).

The integrity of the subject

With our attention thus drawn to the enunciating subject, we turn to the second critique shared by the pragmatic and psychoanalytic perspectives, that of the modern subject. If speech is an act *in* the world rather than *about* it, the Cartesian picture of the subject as containing a copy of the world within himself no longer holds. In fact, this way of speaking, opposing inside to outside, itself begins to fall apart. As a result, the language that we use to refer to ourselves becomes problematic. "I feel sad" can no longer simply refer to some form of internal psychic state. Austin's rejection of the "descriptive fallacy," the assumption that statements about the self refer to internal events, is at once a rejection of both the primacy of representation and the interiority of the subject. If there is an inside that can be represented to the world, then the statement "I apologize for what I did" is equivalent to "I am apologizing for what I did." For Austin this is not the case; an apology is not an expression of a state of being sorry. It is an act in

the world.[37] With representation dethroned, communication is no longer the transfer of content between two egos; the ego is also dethroned.

Again we can see how dangerous a perspective that focuses on process rather than content can be, and why it makes people like Benveniste so nervous. The twin assumptions of the centrality of the ego and representation are part of the foundation of modern science, and a psychology that holds to Austin's perspective must find its foundation in something other than the scientific project. As Forrester points out:

> One of the epistemological foundations of scientific institutions and method is the complete and mutual substitutability of any given subject of knowledge; the ideal and rigorous demand for repeatable experiments, the notion of a democratic community of scientists, is part of the apparatus fulfilling this epistemological condition. Austin's account of speech acts reveals just how foreign such a notion of the subject is to the ordinary use of speech. Interpretations of the psychoanalytic situation that cling to this scientific ideal of symmetry require one to hold that such inner mental states are somehow imitated, in some ghostly fashion or other, in the mind of the hearer of the utterance. (pp. 152-153)

If this picture of scientific knowledge is rejected, the analytic project cannot be scientific in the sense of representing the subject's ego. The analyst cannot claim to have a metapsychological picture of what is inside the person's head. Nor can the goal of analysis be a striving towards transparent communication.

Forrester, following Lacan, draws a parallel between the modern theoretical obsession with the truth and falsity of statements and the clinical obsessive, who expends a good deal of psychic energy trying to attend exclusively to the truth and falsity of what he says in hopes of finding absolute certainty therein (p. 150n35; cf. Fink, 1997, p. 122). The traditional philosophical distinction between logic and rhetoric, often invoked in debates for rhetorical purposes, functions to police the boundary between what is said and

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[37] Cf. Wittgenstein (1953), for whom the meaning of a word is in its use.

what is happening in the debate itself. Those who might refer to the process are dismissed as using rhetoric and thus as unqualified to speak.

What can the object of analysis be, if not a representation of the subject? This is an important question, given that critics of psychoanalysis dismiss it because of its inability to empirically support (that is, represent) its claims about what it sees happening. How will we describe psychic action? The answer will have to be something other than internal processes. What psychoanalysis sees must be public if others are to see it. The intersubjective linguistic processes of speech may hold part of the answer.

Lacan would agree that the answer is not to be found in an integrated subject who can represent what is happening inside himself to others. When discussing the proper analytic stance, he urges the analyst to avoid conducting his work according to "some supposed 'contact' he experiences with the subject's reality" (1956/2002, p. 45). Whether "contact" refers here to the phenomenologist's attempts to step into the lived world of the subject or simply the analyst's labor to understand the world from the subject's point of view, Lacan has no patience for any analytic method that tries to get into the heads of patients. Whatever the object of the analyst's attention might be, "it certainly does not aim at an object beyond the subject's speech." This, for Lacan, would be an impossible task.

Rather, says Lacan, "the only object that is within the analyst's reach is the imaginary relation that links him to the subject qua ego; and although he cannot eliminate it, he can use it to adjust the receptivity of his ears" (pp. 45-46). This adjustment, Lacan states, involves attending to something other than what is simply heard: "to detect what is to be understood." The analyst listens to what is said, not in order to determine what the

person is referring to ("an object beyond the subject's speech"), but to attend to the speaking. It seems then, that the analyst responds to the transference, to what is occurring between analyst and patient as they speak, to a different sort of truth than the correspondence of thought and reality. He listens to the ways that the patient uses speech. As with Austin, the truth-value of what is said, what it represents, is itself suppressed in preference for the process of speaking. This, rather than a connection with the interior, is the place where any supposed contact between subjects is to be found.

Empiricism without interiority

Pragmatic and psychoanalytic perspectives, then, share a stance that calls the subject into question and focuses on the linguistic action taking place. Obviously, any perspective that rejects the anthropology that the scientific project is based on will run into problems when it comes to empirically justifying itself. Empirical justification is only a concern for subjects, subjects who distinguish between true and false claims. What we seek to justify is a representation of things. The decentering of interiority and critique of scientific subjectivity are generally attributed to poststructural thinkers, who are accused of dismissing the reality of the subject in its entirety. Frie (1999), for example, warns that the linguistic turn he sees in psychoanalysis (specifically with Lacan) falls into the same problem that positivistic materialism encounters in the social sciences. Working from an existential point of view, Frie calls for patience with the subject and holds that a linguistic perspective is not equipped to address nonverbal experience, namely the body and its affects. He fears that an exclusive focus on language will do the same damage to the subject that modern reductions of experience to physical processes have done: "The readiness with which many postmodernist theorists have dismissed subjectivity and

heralded [the] 'death of the subject' is surely premature" (p. 694). Such a linguistic turn, for Frie, risks eliminating the subject in its entirety.

Still, to dethrone the subject is not necessarily to kill it, or to say that it no longer exists. Nor is it to say that subjective experience and representation is to be ignored. But it does call into question how subjectivity functions (Frie himself agrees that the subject is probably not an absolute, unified Cartesian ego). If Austin's strength is his critical edge rather than his theory building, it is probably true that we cannot build a complete anthropology on a pragmatic or strictly linguistic psychoanalytic perspective. There are surely things that cannot be articulated. But we might ask for patience from those who would reject these perspectives as a bland postmodern call for the "death of the subject." A decentered subject is not a dead subject; it is just put to the side. The space between them is just as important as what might happen within. There is no reason to give primacy to subjectivity.[38]

A pragmatic perspective does not require that one reject the subject outright, nor does it completely reverse the traditional domination of the representative over the performative. It only loosens the boundaries between them. Felman puts this well when she says that, after Austin, "referential knowledge is not knowledge about reality (about a separate and distinct entity) but knowledge that *has to do with reality*, that acts within reality, since it is itself—at least in part—what this reality is made of" (p. 51). Language can still be used to refer as long as we remember that referring is also an act in the world

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[38] I am grateful to Daniel Burston for pointing out to me the oddity of the metaphor of "dethroning the subject" in that it is the monarchs, rather than their subjects, who are dethroned. Still, the subjects have taken their rulers' places. And since, as Freud says, the ego is no longer to be considered master in his own house, the subject is now susceptible to dethroning.

with its own consequences. But with inside and outside no longer so distinct, we might question the usefulness of the categories themselves.

A subdiscipline of discourse analysis called discursive psychology has arisen that uses textual analyses of conversation in order to study the way that attributions of internal mental states function as social interaction. The very categories of inside and outside become the subject of analysis. Wooffitt (2005) describes the project of discursive psychology as viewing references to memory, thinking, and knowledge as "social actions embedded in everyday social practices" (p. 117). Drawing from ethnomethodological practices, it views such attributions as the categories used by discursive participants rather than as "real" categories by which a scientist interprets behavior. Thus, for example, when a person says, "I think that it is true," this verbal behavior can be viewed as a way of relating to other participants in the conversation—as a way to hedge or distance herself from a particular claim, rather than as a statement about the quality of the knowledge she has:

> "I think" formulations of knowledge claims are rooted in social activities. They allow speakers to manage sensitive interpersonal matters in delicate and subtle ways … It is a mistake to assume that reference to a speaker's "thoughts," "thinking" and so on simply expresses the operations of inner mental states. (p. 117)

Likewise, "I dunno" can be viewed as enacting a lack of concern for a topic and a refusal to continue talking about it, rather than as a statement of lack of knowledge. Cognition, as an embedded category of social life, is thus often brought to bear to perform interpersonal work. This is not to say that cognitive attributions are incorrect, but rather that they aren't the most interesting things going on when they happen. Their truth or falsity is bracketed out of a preference for the analysis of interpersonal action.

Some interpersonal psychoanalytic constructs

Discursive psychology thus gives us external structures where previously there were internal ones. A psychoanalysis informed by this perspective can focus on processes in language use rather than (or as well as) within the subject. With the subject "opened up to the world," linguistic processes are not to be taken as a *sign* of subjective processes, as external evidence of internal mechanics, but as the very processes themselves. To illustrate this, we will examine two possible linguistic mechanisms of repression from a pragmatic psychoanalytic perspective. The first stems from the way that we use language to avoid certain content; the second concerns the difference between the pragmatic and the constative levels of speech. As in the introduction to this chapter, it will remain to be seen how far these constructs can be considered "psychoanalytic," insofar as they might deviate from an orthodox psychoanalysis.

1. The repressive/avoidant function of speech

Freud understood repression to be an internal psychic process. In his *Introductory lectures* (1917/1963) he paints his topological picture of mental impulses jostling against one another at a doorway guarded by a censorious watchman. The impulses that will become conscious must make it past the watchman, who can be more or less alert throughout the day. Freud admits that this is a crude metaphor, and that it is probably incorrect (p. 296), but even in his more subtle presentations the psychic mechanisms of repression are presented as located within the individual (cf. Freud 1900/1965, pp. 626ff).

We might instead see a mechanism of repression in the language itself. Billig (1999), writing from the perspective of discursive psychology, challenges Freud's original presentation of repression and offers an alternative that focuses on language

use.[39] Drawing from Brown and Levinson's (1987) work on habits of politeness, Billig considers repression to be a result of the linguistic habits we are taught, sometimes directly but mostly indirectly, in the process of our socialization as children. As we grow up, we develop from our elders and peers various concerns for—and techniques or strategies for managing—what is considered polite to and not to talk about and in which contexts, how direct to be when we are saying or asking for something, how formal or informal to be in a particular setting, how to take turns and when it is acceptable to interrupt in conversation, and which cues (such as silence or hedging) to attend to in order to "save face" for both participants.[40] These ways of speaking become more or less engrained and habitual in individuals (psychoanalysts might say "internalized"), not particularly *because* they save face and are the proper or polite ways to speak, but simply because they are taken to be the way things are done. Children are told to wait their turn; sometimes they are told to do so because it is polite, but mainly they are taught that this is the way conversation works.

For Billig, this process of linguistic socialization becomes the way we learn to repress aspects of experience. The example he gives is when someone changes the topic of conversation to avoid a previous topic that was becoming uncomfortable. While on rare occasions we might tell others that we are uncomfortable with the topic and would

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[39] Billig (1999) not only challenges Freud's theoretical understanding of repression; he argues that Freud placed the mechanism of repression too early in a child's development (stating instead that it evolves with language use). He goes on to point out places where he thought Freud himself was using language to repress in his writings, particularly around the fact of his Jewish identity and how it may have affected his relationships with his patients (such as Dora). Also, while sympathetic to Lacan's linguistic project, Billig rejects Lacan as showing "a wanton disregard for other psychologies" and their contributions as well as writing in a deliberately obfuscating style which, instead of encouraging dialogue, contributes to the arrogance of his followers (p. 7).

[40] These are common contextual categories used in pragmatic analyses, as covered in introductory texts to pragmatics or pragmatic methods such as Levinson (1983), Nofsinger (1991), and Verschueren (1999).

like to move on to something else, for the most part this is done without explicit

acknowledgement. We make a joke, and in the laughter introduce a new topic; or perhaps

there is an uncomfortable pause and someone speaks of something else. For Billig, this is

the mechanism of repression: it keeps us from talking or thinking about things, keeping

thoughts from consciousness.

We change topics in order to cover over the fact that something has been avoided.

Without a new topic, the old topic would remain, albeit left hanging. The transition is a

distraction that functions both to avoid the old topic and cover over the fact that it has

been avoided. And for Billig, internal repression is just an analogue of this "dialogic

repression":[41]

> Should the repression occur in an inner dialogue, then the thinker must follow up
> an inwardly spoken discontinuity marker with a replacement topic of thought. It
> would be a mistake to think that "real" repression is internal, or even that there is
> a sharp distinction between internal mental life and external social life. The topic,
> which is used as a replacement, need not be confined to the interior dialogue: it
> can become part of an external conversation. (pp. 55-56)

Billig goes on to say that if a person "externalizes" repression by speaking with others

(thereby enlisting their assistance) it works more effectively: I can more easily distract

myself and interrupt a train of thought if I initiate a conversation with someone else. It

has the appearance of a beginning, rather than a transition, and neither of us will be the

wiser. And the more habituated we are to this process, the less noticeable it is. "Other

people can be enrolled into its accomplishment. It is even better still if the repression

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[41] In order to head off some objections: Billig is not particularly interested in arguments about whether all
repressed thought is linguistic in nature. While he concedes that we recognize shapes and attend to patterns
long before we can speak, he notes that animals can do the same. It is the particularly human kind of
thinking that interests him (and, presumably, us), thinking about "morality, politics, the course of our lives,
the characters of others, what will happen tomorrow" (p. 49). It is within these topics of interest, which are
not experienced outside of language, that repression occurs.

becomes sedimented into habits of life, so that repression becomes a repeated, habitual dialogic activity" (p. 56). The particular techniques may be broadly cultural, narrowly familial, or individual. But it is an overarching linguistic habit of social politeness and peacekeeping that leads people to work together to avoid the unsaid.[42]

Burston (1986) comes to a similar conclusion in his discussion of the historical relationship between the cognitive and clinical understandings of the unconscious. While Billig speaks only of the mechanism of repression here, and not of the process that determines which topics in particular are defended against, Burston points out that from the perspective of an interpersonal psychoanalysis, "the enveloping social matrix evidently plays a pre-eminent role in determining what thoughts, feelings and experiences are subject to social stigma or intrapsychic repression, and presumably the way in which these particular contents are withheld from consciousness" (p. 163). So in addition to Billig's individual processes of repression that are used to avoid painful or uncomfortable experience, we might add that the system that determines what is to be repressed also finds its footing in linguistic habits and rules.

Language, then, does more than uncover, reveal, and bring things to light. It also covers over and obscures. The revealing function of language is familiar in existential phenomenology, but the notion of an intentional covering or avoidance is rather foreign. Heidegger (1927/1996) is very interested in the way that discourse uncovers, equating truth with the process of revealing the world (p. 201). For Heidegger, the function of discourse is to disclose: "What is expressed becomes, so to speak, an innerworldly thing

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[42] It is interesting to note that Billig describes these shared repressive habits as collaborations (p. 100), marking his linguistic background. Thus he emphasizes the cooperative function and how this helps keep things running smoothly. Laing (1969), a psychoanalyst, calls them collusions, focusing on how such smooth operations can simultaneously be destructive for one or both parties.

at hand that can be taken up and spoken about further" (pp. 205-206). But while he

allows for covering over in language, he does not speak of *motivated* covering over. That

is not to say that he does not appreciate the undisclosed: "What is discovered and

disclosed stands in the mode in which it has been disguised and closed off by idle talk,

curiosity and ambiguity ... Being closed off and covered over belong to the facticity of

Da-sein" (p. 204). But he does view that which is undisclosed, particularly that which has

fallen from disclosedness back into darkness, as "degenerate" and "pernicious" (p. 32), a

product of "idle talk" because of its propensity to mislead (pp. 156ff). What is disclosed

must be "defended" to "ensure itself of its discoveredness again and again" (p. 204). The

hope, it seems, is for clear and unambiguous understanding.

   If Heidegger allows for the action of covering over in speech as part of the

"falling prey" inherent in human existence, he does not explicate this process in *Being

and time*.[43] He sticks with the process of uncovering through discourse. Interestingly, he

does point out that the Greek term for disclosure, translated as un-covering, is a negative

term, which for him shows "that being in untruth constitutes an essential determination of

being in the world" (p. 204). So while he allows that the covered over is an integral part

to human existence, he presents human discourse only in terms of its bringing into truth

rather than as actively working to cover things over. Discourse is the process by which

"beings are torn from concealment."

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[43] It should be noted that Heidegger explicitly addresses—and rejects—the possibility of repressive
covering over as part of his larger phenomenological rejection of the existence of a psychoanalytic
unconscious. For an interesting discussion of this (and a discussion of how Freud might have responded),
see Askay and Farquhar, 2006, pp. 220ff.

But Billig has given us an example of discourse being used to *avoid* uncovering, where language use (he believes) constitutes repression.[44] Is this merely an example of idle talk? Or is the habitual and motivated covering over function of discourse inherent to all language use? If so, is it realistic to think that this can or should be defended against? This is where Austin's distinction between the constative and the performative can be helpful. Language can be used in a way that both uncovers and covers over on the constative level where the content of speech brings its topics to light. This seems to be what Heidegger was aiming at, in that the function of language is to bring entities into being. But he did not attend to language's other performative possibilities beyond its capacity to reveal. The linguistic process of revealing gets around the Cartesian problem of representing an outside to an inside, but language for him is still ultimately descriptive, disclosing, or designed to present the world.

2. The repressive/avoidant structure of speech

Austin's acknowledgement of the performative level of speech breaks apart this duality of covering and uncovering and allows for language's other possibilities— particularly its interpersonal functions such as distracting, encouraging, or seducing. Billig's dialogic repression (or avoidance) operates on this level, in the habitual ways we

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[44] Whether or not Billig's redefinition of repression (as well as the structural avoidance presented in the next section) can be acceptable to psychoanalysts is a point of debate, one that I will touch on in the concluding chapter. But it already contains a significant deviations from Freud's (1915/1957a; 1915/1957b) presentation. For Freud, the mechanism of repression separates an idea from its affect, actively keeping the ideational content from consciousness. But the affect remains, and we can become aware of it (indirectly) from its derivatives: the return of the repressed. Freud explicitly notes that repression, rather than annihilating the idea to be avoided, keeps an idea from consciousness in a way that (when performed neurotically) leads to other evidence of its existence. Thus a person who is repressing experiences either anxiety or some form of symptom, where the repressed idea is linked to a substitute, resulting in a phobia, obsession, somatic complaint, etc. It seems, then, that Billig's understanding of repression, which is missing the possibility of an "unthought thought," is more in line with simple avoidance in that it does not give an opportunity for a return of the repressed. Still, avoidance is a phenomenon that retains dynamic clinical interest.

use language. But there is another structural mechanism that covers over aspects of experience to be found in the very distinction between statement and performance.

Austin's work itself serves as an example. His goal is to turn our attention from the constative to the performative. There is a performative aspect to his own work: he is presenting the performative on the constative level for our understanding, in such a way that it seems obvious once he has shown us. There are certainly other ways of writing performatively; Deleuze and Guattari's *A thousand plateaus* (1980/1987) is a text that aims to be a performance through other means than the use of the constative to explain itself. But in general, theoretical writing shows a preference for the constative, with a suppression and even suspicion of the performative (as "mere rhetoric").[45] Austin's writing places him firmly in this tradition. His rhetoric still operates behind the scenes as he presents his linguistic discoveries for his readers to think about. His work remains, in the terms of Deleuze and Guattari, a "Radicle-book" in that it relies on constative content to make its point (1980/1987, p. 6).[46]

In other words, it is by ignoring the performative aspect of Austin's writing that we learn (in a cognitive sense) about the distinction between the performative and the constative. The *process* of presentation, while more or less effective, remains in the background. This is no accident: it is only by remaining in the background that Austin's rhetorical style works. The performative can be pointed to, but pointing to it in the

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[45] Hence Billig's suspicious reading of Freud, looking for what Freud was repressing in his texts about repression.

[46] A "radicle-book" is one that attacks the primacy of representation through the presentation of a theory—while still itself remaining representational. Still, it is a step forward from the more common "root-book," which aims to present a coherent picture of the world. Deleuze and Guattari state that their own work aims instead to be a "rhizome," attacking representation through performance (doing) rather than by theorizing about it (showing). Theory for them is more like a wrench to tinker with the world than a picture to describe it—and thus can be an infuriating read for those who expect clear representational theories.

moment makes it work less effectively in that we would not be understanding what he has to say. The presentation works because we see what is presented, not the act of presenting. So even as Austin points out the performative level of speech (and writing) for our use and critiques our preference for the constative, he is relying on that preference for the constative to make his critique effective. In everyday use we see the constative level more readily, at least in part because that is how we get things done. Speech acts might not work if we did not get lost in the content of what is said—and if they did, Austin might have to paint a different picture of how they work.

Of course we can turn our attention to the linguistic performance; this is what Austin's work allows us to do. But even then we have not left the constative behind. If I remind my readers that I am making an argument and trying to make them see things in a certain way, then I have brought the performative level of what I was doing into the constative. But this pointing out of my performance is itself a performance, one that requires an explanation in turn. And so on. There is an infinite regression where the performative aspect of speech always stands in excess of what is said. There seems to be a kind of "falling" (to use a Heideggerian word) into the constative level of what is said, a falling that keeps our eyes turned away, distracted, from what our speech is doing in the moment of its enunciation. Our use of language seduces us by always drawing us to the constative. The performative remains on the level of action rather than thought.

This dynamic may be essential to language use, or it may be a habit of modern subjectivity. Either way, it certainly functions to keep thoughts from consciousness in the sense that it directs our attention away from what we are doing with language. Such covering over is built into the structure of our speech. It also might help explain why we

tend to assume that language is primarily constative: our language use inclines us to do so. As Billig believes, linguistic "repression" obscures its own traces such that we don't even know it is happening (p. 55). An aspect of language use that always remains structurally unseen would be a worthy candidate for this mechanism.

Because the performative and the constative are never identical, in the same place at the same time, the act of enunciation, in the moment of enunciation, exceeds the content of what is said. We might say that they *cannot* be done explicitly in the sense that what is said and what is done are equivalent. "I seduce you" and "I insult you" are not generally seductive or insulting, and if they are (one might imagine such a situation), this is not directly due to their constative content but rather to contextual factors. It is the difference between the "illocutionary force" of an utterance and its meaning.[47] This excess exists even in the explicit performatives that Benveniste wanted to determine as the only possible speech act. When I perform an action such as saying "I do" to marry, the *force* of what is said, the movement and the changes it brings about in the world, remains for the moment unseen, exceeding what is said.[48] As a Möbius strip always obscures its obverse side, the performative exists in the moment of speaking as the unseen yet effective or operational underside of the constative. It can be pointed to, but only from a different point on the strip.

The task, then, will be the explication of this unsaid—not an unsaid that is "implied by" what is said, but an unsaid that is *done in* the saying. Performances are

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[47] "I want to distinguish *force* and meaning in the sense in which meaning is equivalent to sense and reference, just as it has become essential to distinguish between sense and reference" (Austin, 1975, p. 100).

[48] For Felman, the scandal of Austin's work is not only the separation of what is said from the act of enunciation (meaning from force), but their continuous interference with (and, presumably, interdependence on) one another (1980/1983, pp. 53, 67).

public. How what is done *is done*, because of the distinction between meaning and force, cannot be determined simply through what is said or through reference to internal intention; its explication requires reference to the utterance's external context.

Thus we have seen two mechanisms explicated as linguistic rather than intrapsychic events that function, if not by repressing, at least by actively directing our attention away from phenomena. Let us turn now to two more examples of interpersonal psychoanalytic mechanisms, Laing's (1969) discussion of interpersonal defenses and Ogden's (1982) explication of projective identification, as further examples of linguistic understanding of psychological process—and as examples of the possibilities of dialogue between pragmatics and psychoanalysis. While neither author explicitly references pragmatics, they both focus on the act of speaking in order to make visible what they believe to be unconsciously operating between the individuals in their situations. They consider the force of conventional linguistic practices to be the source of power for the speech acts in question. Their works are both interesting for what they reveal about these processes and (I believe) stand as good illustrations of the power of the pragmatic perspective. If we make more explicit the linguistic character of their theories' interactions, we can see more subtly what they are talking about.

3. Laing: interpersonal positioning, confirmation & disconfirmation

R. D. Laing's *Self and others* (1969) is a well known investigation of what Laing sees as the interpersonal violence people do to each other in the co-construction of each other's identities. While he uses the phenomenological language of interpersonal experience in order to discuss the power that one person's perspective has over another's, it is through the verbal interactions between them that he shows how our construction of

each other's identity and self-experience actually take place. In particular, he looks at the way we move and position each other, determining each other's possibilities through speech.

Laing describes a category of interpersonal actions he terms *confirmation and disconfirmation*, ways that we do or do not recognize another's presentation of herself as having a particular identity. We can respond in a way that confirms that identity and supports the other's self-understanding, or we can respond in a way that ignores the attempt—or even functions to give an alternate identity to the person than the one she is seeking in addressing us (Laing, 1969, pp. 102ff).

Laing tells of a boy who approaches his mother to show her a worm he has found on the ground while playing: "Mummy, look what a big fat worm I have got." The mother, in turn, responds by saying "You are filthy—away and clean yourself immediately." This response, Laing notes, is tangential to what the boy initially approached his mother with. He reads this as a disconfirmatory response: the boy, Laing presumes, has presented himself to his mother, *as* her son ("Mummy, look!"), with an object she might be impressed with. Or she might be disgusted with it. But her response, rather than confirming him as "Boy with worm" (as would a response such as "what a filthy worm, throw it away!"), instead identifies her son as a filthy object. Thus an opportunity to confirm the boy's identity in his relationship with his mother as her son— even as a son who is doing something unacceptable—is turned into an event of identifying the boy as himself unacceptable (not a son) unless he is clean.

In Austin's terms, the disconfirmation is an illocutionary act. The mother, put in a position where she may either confirm or disconfirm her son's implicit request for

recognition, chooses the latter.[49] Laing does not specifically say what the effect (the

perlocution) of such an act is in this case; this would be an empirical issue. But he argues

that a consistent pattern of these forms of relationship will have far reaching negative

effects on the boy's experience of himself, namely insecurities about his place in his

relationship with women (as man-with-penis). Laing's is a psychoanalytically-formed

interpretation of the interaction.

Laing speaks directly of the habitual ways we position each other in our

interactions and determine the other's possibilities for being or acting. He refers to these

"games" as "knots," and in explaining them portrays the game as unconscious and

motivated to remain so:

> Some people undoubtedly have a remarkable aptitude for keeping the other tied in
> knots. There are those who excel in tying knots and those who excel in being tied
> in knots. Tyer and tied are often both unconscious of how it is done, or even that
> it is being done at all. It is striking how difficult it is for the parties concerned to
> see what is happening. We must remember that part of the knot is not to see that it
> is a knot. (1969, p. 158)

Without using pragmatic vocabulary, Laing does a pragmatic analysis of one such

interaction to illustrate this point. He examines a statement made by a man to his wife,

"It's a rainy day," in the light of several possible contexts. The possible range of actions

that can be performed by this statement, even in the few contexts Laing provides, is quite

broad. They range from the "simple" constative statement of fact to a request for her to

close the window, or not go out (if she were getting ready to go), to a triumphant

declaration that he is always right (e.g., if there was an argument yesterday, as is their

pattern, over what the weather would be like today).

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[49] Note that the analysis cannot assume that hers is the only action in the matter; her son's request (a choice) functioned to put her in a place where she had to choose *some* sort of response. Nor should we assume, as Laing does, that the boy's presentation of the worm was so innocent.

In this last possibility, Laing views what is happening between the couple when the man speaks as a certain positioning, a putting each party in "his" and "her" place. This is a linguistic move where the man, through speaking, and relying on the rules and habits of discourse, places the woman in a certain position where she is the loser (and always will be) and he is the winner. One could imagine in such a relationship that the man might minimize in speech or simply pass over in silence instances when he is wrong and she is right. In order for this attempt at positioning to be effective—that is, to have the perlocutionary force to function successfully—the woman must accept that position with actions of her own. (This is a point we will discuss with Ogden on projective identification below.) Such an interactive pattern would continually keep her beneath him, or (in a less stable state of affairs) be a part of a competition where each is repeatedly trying to undermine the other. When one is positioned in a relationship as the one who is always wrong, the possibilities of what one can say or be are at least in part determined by that position.

This recalls Austin's point that the particular moves in a conversation shape the possible future moves that can be made: "If I have stated something, then that commits me to other statements: other statements made by me will be in order or out of order" (1975, p. 139). Likewise, what I say commits *others* to particular possibilities. The boy who brought the worm to his mother put her in a place where she had to respond—*not* to respond would still have been a type of response.[50] The possibilities can vary in their flexibility, but they are still determined. If I wanted to say something that contradicted

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[50] Interestingly, this response of not responding has been the one of choice for more than a few clinical stances. Of course the context is different such that it creates a third option that is neither confirmatory nor disconfirmatory, but this response still has its effects.

what I said previously, I would either have to do so in such a way that acknowledges my earlier statement or I would have to act in such a way as to neutralize the effects of what had been said (i.e., steer the conversation away or pressure or confuse the other). The ways I would do that, what is possible for me to say, depend on what has already been said.

Such positioning and erasures can be quite convoluted and convoluting, as in the "double-bind" or impossible positions that Laing believes contribute to insanity. A mother can demean her daughter's body in speech, thereby positioning her as ugly. At the same time she can buy her daughter a dress that accentuates the very features she is belittling. So along with the linguistic position of being unattractive, the mother has through her actions demanded or pressured her daughter to display her unattractiveness by giving her a gift. Laing sees this combination of linguistic and extralinguistic action as equivalent to the mother on the one hand telling her daughter that she must hide herself and on the other hand commanding her to appear unattractive (1969, p. 153). Of course, if this were said so explicitly in the content of her speech, it probably would not be so effective. It works best surreptitiously. Such an implicit injunction, Laing believes, if part of a larger relational pattern, will surely shape the possibilities for action on the daughter's part, both with her mother and in her future relationships.

4. Ogden: projective identification

Ogden (1982) is the second theorist to offer a brief but quite powerful description of unconscious interpersonal action, this time a clinical example. Instead of describing it as an internal process, in terms of putting parts or experiences of oneself into another, Ogden describes projective identification as an interpersonal mechanism where one

linguistically manipulates the other's behavior such that she experiences herself in a way that matches what the first person would rather disavow. This process is akin to Laing's interpersonal positioning. While Ogden still speaks of private fantasies that constitute the disavowed content, the unconscious mechanisms lie in the public realm of speech rather than in the individuals themselves.

Ogden states apodictically that projective identification does not occur without an interaction between the projector and the recipient (p. 14), and holds that there is no transfer of experiences from one to the other; rather the projector uses conventional means to pressure the receiver into having an experience that matches the one he or she refuses to have. We might say that the victim (or partner) in projective identification has the analogous experience to what the projector is *not* having (but otherwise would be having), an experience that it is "appropriate" for a person to have in this context. The projector speaks in a way to position the recipient so that the projector is no longer in a position to have that original experience, while the recipient is now in a position to have it. But the recipient's experience remains original and new, brought about through the force of social interaction. Again, it is not that the projector is internally having an experience and then deciding to get rid of it; rather he or she is in a position that would "normally" lead to a certain experience and works to get out of that position. The projective identification is an interpersonal act requiring a partner, an act that constitutes a refusal to experience a certain situation as it would occur "naturally" (that is, conventionally).

To illustrate, Ogden gives a clinical example of a man who spent the lion's share of his therapy sessions speaking in a pressured way that did not allow his therapist much

room for comment. Furthermore, the patient subtly belittled the therapist through

continued discussion of his fantasy life, in which, he said, he imagined the therapist to be

"awkward, self-conscious, and weak" (p. 48). The therapist indeed began experiencing

himself in this way, qua therapist, mainly because he felt he was not doing his job or

being an effective clinician (as was becoming the case). At the same time the patient

began to say that he in turn was feeling much better, that he felt very macho during his

sessions and felt sorry for his therapist in comparison. When the therapist finally began to

realize what was happening he saw the parallel between his position in relation to his

patient and his patient's childhood relationship with his father.[51] Whereas the patient had

a history of subordinate relationships with powerful men, this time the roles were

reversed—using, perhaps, the same heretofore hidden interpersonal techniques to create

that position as had been used on him. This interpretation of events as the patient

pressuring the therapist to feel inadequate allowed the therapist to reposition himself—as

analyst—so as not to experience the situation in this way.

In pragmatic terms, we see two illocutionary acts on the part of the patient

constituting the act of projective identification in Ogden's example. The first is the verbal

demeaning of the therapist and the comparisons between therapist and patient that situate

the therapist as lacking. But this in itself might not have enough force to lead to the

perlocution of the therapist colluding with the patient by feeling inadequate. Alone, this

illocution might only serve to make the therapist angry or alienate the therapist from the

patient (or many other possibilities). In this case, the second illocution seems to have

more force to bring about successful projective identification so the therapist would

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[51] From a pragmatic perspective, we might see similar *patterns of linguistic interaction* between the analyst/patient relationship and the patient/father (or father/patient) relationship.

experience himself in a certain way: The patient also "acts in," speaking in such a way as to make it difficult for the therapist to do his job effectively—and the therapist allows himself to be caught up in the process.[52] Where the first illocution seems closer to the surface, if you will, the second illocution is a more "material" positioning in that it is on the level of the constitutive rules of turn-taking in conversations, and in this case it is an effective one.

Ogden is writing for a clinical audience and is not concerned with convincing nonanalysts. He points this process of projective identification out as a step in becoming aware of the manipulative behavior occurring between the parties so that it can be dealt with clinically. After seeing it, the clinician can then position herself in such a way as to interpret what is happening or address the patient's rejected would-be experience. Whatever the response, Ogden says, the therapist's awareness and mapping of the dynamic will help her not to respond by colluding with an unconscious interpersonal repetition.

Despite this clinical focus, Ogden's work lends itself to a pragmatic perspective and to the possibility of empirical pragmatic analysis. Ogden invokes the linguistic mechanics of this interpersonal process more directly than Laing, and does not refer so much to the way that the participants understand themselves in his interpretation of the action. Still, in order for this to be an empirical presentation of projective identification, Ogden would have had to provide a transcript on which to base his analysis and discuss the particular conventions employed in the enactment, such as how dominating the

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[52] A note on "acting in": This term, used for "acting out" in session, is traditionally understood as action taking the place of the symbolizing talk that is supposed to be occurring in session (e.g., acting violently rather than talking about being angry). But since speaking is also an action, enactment is no longer opposed to speech (cf. Ponsi, 1997).

conversation and refusing to yield the conversational floor affects other participants. But it should be clear that viewing projective identification as a linguistic process allows for it to be seen in terms of the way speakers use habits and rules, rather than in terms of internal occult processes. The processes can be accessed through reference to a transcript, pointing to examples of speech and allowing discussion about what is being done through it.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

As an exploration, this study necessarily leaves many loose ends, so I will structure my findings according to the three questions that motivated it. The first question was whether pragmatics might be able to offer psychoanalytic work some theoretical clarification that might sharpen its clinical lenses; the second was if a pragmatic perspective could aid in justifying the psychoanalytic project to those on the outside who question its scientific legitimacy; the third was how a pragmatic perspective might inform or transform a psychoanalytic way of seeing. After discussing these three questions, I will discuss some limitations of this study, which in turn will point to possible directions for future dialogue.

Findings: Three guiding questions

Clarifying the clinical lens

The first question was whether a pragmatic perspective, aiming to make psychoanalytic vision more transparent, might inform the clinician's lens in such a way as to help make psychoanalytic constructs more easily visible to its practitioners. In theory, this should be the case; if we are able to point out processes like projective identification in a text from a therapy session, we should be able to see them more easily as they occur by attending to the way the patient uses language. In Ogden's example in the previous chapter, the clinician was able to change his clinical stance once he noticed what the patient was doing with his speech. If a pragmatic perspective can train a clinician to be more attuned to what is done with speech, it can be an additional clinical tool, helping a therapist "to adjust the receptivity of his ears" (Lacan, 1956/2002, p. 46).

Chaika (1999), a linguist who has researched the pragmatics of schizophrenic speech, wrote a book for therapists in hopes of providing such clinical tools. She introduces pragmatic categories such as speech acts and gives some advice to therapists about attending to the ways their own speech has an effect on their patients. She warns therapists to watch how the wording of their questions might steer their patients' responses. Furthermore, and perhaps most importantly, she reminds us of the fact that the rules and habits of speech I have been referring to, while necessary for the functioning of language, are not universal: they vary between and within cultures. These differences, Chaika notes, can lead to many misunderstandings and examples of a clinician "missing" his or her patient.

As an example, Chaika differentiates between "high involvement cultures" and "low involvement cultures" (taken from Tannen, 1984). These differ significantly in the way that pauses are taken up by their participants. While the former is marked by few pauses and many interruptions between speakers, in the latter "one doesn't speak until the conversant has stopped, and, typically, a pause of a given length has passed (Chaika, 1999, p. 51). When people from these two groups interact, the person from the low involvement culture can view the other as rude (or nervous), while the person from the high involvement culture might see the other as unconcerned or detached.[53] Such "mismatches" in conversational style (coming from different habits and rules) should be paid attention to, lest the clinician misjudge what is happening in the session.

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[53] Chaika also differentiates between high involvement and low involvement *situations*; it would be fruitful in this vein for a clinician to consider which sort of situation he or she sets up in his or her work.

Unfortunately, Chaika's effort to show that pragmatics can be useful to clinicians falls short of its mark. Wetzler (2001), in his review of Chaika's book, argues that

> as therapists, we are already fluent communicators, and more explicit knowledge of linguistic rules will not improve our fluency. If my intuitive communication skills guide me in using a particular metaphor or in understanding the implications of the patient's use of a particular metaphor, the recognition that we use metaphor as a linguistic device does not offer much clinical benefit. (p. 827-828)

Despite Wetzler's arrogance in assuming that his clinical eye cannot be improved, we may still fault Chaika for her failure. Her knowledge of clinical technique, as Wetzler notes, is rudimentary at best, and comes solely from her observations of supportive work used in speech therapy with schizophrenics. She then offers advice for all levels of therapeutic work. She does not try to integrate her perspective with the tradition of dynamic psychotherapy (she is in fact rather dismissive of it) and does not seem to realize that there are already therapies that focus on interpersonal dynamics. Her work, then, remains at a rather shallow level.

What is needed is work that dialogues a pragmatic vocabulary directly with therapeutic technique so that therapists, who already know *that* language functions in certain ways, can understand *how* it is functioning in the moment, in the session, as patient and therapist are using it. Ponsi's (1997) article mentioned at the beginning of the previous chapter is a good example of this. She invokes the distinction between the message transmitted in speech and its "relational meaning" (from Watzlawick, Bavelas, & Jackson, 1967) in order to attend to what the patient is doing in their sessions:

> By receiving and elaborating a multiplicity of linguistic and paralinguistic signals, the analyst is able to identify the type of action in which the patient seeks to involve him … This level of discourse analysis sometimes becomes especially demanding for the analyst, because this is precisely where the most regressive parts of the patient's internal world are often concentrated. (p. 250)

Ponsi believes that the patient continually "acts out" in the analytic session, and believes that seeing what the patient is doing with his words is the key to responding in a therapeutic manner. While she does not use the more technical vocabulary of pragmatic analysis, she places a high priority on the meaning brought to bear on the situation that results from seeing speaking as an act. If perspectivism is right, and different ways of seeing bring different phenomena to light, then clinicians should see linguistic action more sharply as psychoanalytic and linguistic categories draw closer together.

Showing what psychoanalysis sees

The question that has engaged most of my attention has been that of whether a pragmatic methodology can help justify psychoanalysis in the eyes of empirically minded critics. In the first chapter I reviewed some of the complaints that have been made against psychoanalysis concerning its relationship to scientific methods: that psychoanalysts speculate about unseen processes, that the constructs of psychoanalysis are in principle or in practice empirically unverifiable, and that proponents of psychoanalysis refuse to dialogue with those who call for an empirical account for their work (leading to accusations that they are hiding behind a veil of authority).

Rather than attempting to answer these charges by arguing that psychoanalytic methods are or are not scientific in nature, I focused on the ways psychoanalysis has (or has not) responded to calls that it account for itself. I agreed with Luyten et al. (2006) that if we wish to salvage the possibility of dialogue between psychoanalysis and the mainstream we need to step back from the discourse of justification and work to establish "talking terms" that neither simply bow to empiricist demands nor dismiss them outright. Taking cues from Gergen's (2000) perspectivism, I suggested that we consider

psychoanalysis to be a fruitful and interesting (rather than "correct") way of seeing, and seek ways to convey that perspective to others. I then suggested that a pragmatic perspective on language use would help in this by making psychoanalytic constructs more "visible." This in turn would help to make the psychoanalytic perspective more transparent in the sense that it would use a more public interpretive ground and an already accepted interpretive methodology. In the same way that Edelson (1984) saw Freud so clearly presenting his ideas in a "see what I mean" fashion, understanding at least some psychoanalytic constructs pragmatically (such as the process of projective identification) can aid in their clear presentation.

Will empirically-minded critics of psychoanalysis be satisfied with this offer? It remains to be seen. The short answer is probably not, if we understand "empirically-minded" to mean positivists or those who demand a strictly quantitative or unified scientific worldview that deals solely with "brute facts."[54] The pragmatic method I have presented is considered to be interpretive rather than "empirical." But the positivist is too convenient a straw man, particularly in the common discourse that polarizes empirical against interpretive methods. Packer and Addison (1989), in their distinction between the rationalist, empiricist, and hermeneutic worldviews, argue that because all three methods are in reality interpretive (the latter being the only one to admit this) the hermeneutic stance is to be preferred. But this does not lead to their rejection of empirical methods. Rather, like Luyten et al. (2006), the studies they present combine qualitative and quantitative methods as part of a larger project.

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[54] Packer and Addison (1989) note that one of the defining features (or motivations) of logical empiricism is an attempt to establish a way of looking that cannot be questioned and will be accepted as furnishing the final answer to the questions we ask (p. 20).

A pragmatic perspective on its own will not rescue psychoanalysis from empiricism. But it can play a role, for example, in a case study, illustrating interpersonal processes and allowing them to be "seen" by those who accept such an interpretive method. The fact that the interpretive ground of pragmatics is a "third party" to psychoanalysis means that nonanalysts have the possibility of reinterpreting what is seen in a different—even nonanalytic—way. This is at least empirical in Westen's (2002) sense that it allows us to make observations about the world in such a way that the data are public and available for disagreement and reinterpretation. As Ablon (2005) urges, "steps also must be taken to communicate more openly and effectively with those outside the community" if psychoanalysts hope that others will accept their data (p. 606). A pragmatic perspective can indeed lend itself to this dialogue and play a part in making the psychoanalytic worldview more transparent and accessible to its others.

Consequences for psychoanalysis—and pragmatics

Finally, we come to the third question, the consequences of this dialogue for psychoanalysis. Insofar as the psychoanalytic and pragmatic discourses overlap, psychoanalytic problems become linguistic problems, and vice versa. The consequences of this overlap may be extensive. One significant consequence of the pragmatic perspective, we have seen, is that it turns our attention to the space between speakers, to their verbal interactions and the effects they have on one another. This led me to recast some psychoanalytic constructs in interpersonal terms. I gave as examples some ways that we cooperate (or collude) in speaking to keep certain topics out of consciousness and how the very structure of speaking may turn speakers' attention away from the interactions that occur. I also discussed some "psychological" processes that have come

to be viewed as interpersonal processes by Laing and Ogden, and how pragmatic methods might be used to address them.

It is important to keep in mind here that I am not saying that all previously "internal" psychological processes are now "external"; rather that pragmatics can be used in the wake of the softening of the boundaries of the subject (seen, for example, in Forrester's linking of Austin to psychoanalysis) to access some of what has traditionally been considered to be inaccessible. The inside is not rejected; it is merely put to the side. Still, there are implicit claims about human nature being made by pragmaticists in their preference for "the outside"—as seen in their aversion to intention noted in the third chapter. Indeed, my very use of the categories of inside and outside presupposes the very anthropology that the "softening of boundaries" is meant to deconstruct.

Can a pragmatic perspective address what is near and dear to psychoanalysis? Billig's redefinition of repression as an interpersonal linguistic process that keeps certain subjects from being discussed, for example, seems to ignore the fundamental aspect of the Freudian understanding of repression as a mechanism that works to keep representations from consciousness. With the Freudian understanding of repression, we can't help but talk about people's experience—and their unconscious motivations—and use them as a source for our interpretations. But it seems that the more we shift our attention to interpersonal process occurring between people (basically, as behavior), the further away we move from a Freudian understanding of the unconscious.

Burston and Frie (2006) note that one of the essential features of repression is that it is an act of self-deception; this is what separates it from suppression or self-inhibition, which can function to deceive others, but are done with at least some sense of what is

being suppressed. For Burston (1991), Billig's expansive use of the term "repression" to cover interpersonal processes would harken back to Marcuse's "promiscuous" use of the term (critiqued by Fromm) to refer to all forms of psychic keeping away from consciousness (pp. 218ff). Furthermore, it ignores the classic distinction between primary and secondary process thought. Despite the fact that many recent psychoanalytic thinkers (including Laing, whom I discussed in the previous chapter) have rejected Freud's drive theory, Burston notes that in their revisions of psychoanalytic theory they have tended to retain the unconscious and, therefore, the possibility for self-deception and "unthought thought."

As Ponsi (1997) noted in the previous chapter, there is a question of whether interpersonal psychoanalysis moves too far away from fundamental psychoanalytic principles. The same issue remains for pragmatics: while the sociological method I described certainly seems able to bring to light unthematic, unnoticed, or taken for granted interpersonal processes, we must ask whether the pragmatic perspective has an adequate vocabulary to talk about repressed thought. The answer to this question determines how closely pragmatics could be tied to psychoanalysis. If a pragmatic perspective cannot address the unconscious, then its application to psychoanalysis is obviously limited.

I do not have an answer to this problem, except to say that if a pragmatic perspective can reveal what is unconscious in the nontechnical sense of things not attended to, it might be modified in order to address what is intentionally covered over. Such a modification would require further dialogue between pragmatics and psychoanalysis (as well as interpersonal psychoanalysis). As I have mentioned, the

sociolinguistic method as presented does not inquire into intention (avoiding it in its attempts to ground its interpretations in the objectified data of the text); one might capitalize on differences within the sociolinguistic community, such as Johnstone's (2002) distinction between strategic and adaptive language use, to explore the possibilities of addressing intention—and, after that, unconscious thought. I have only laid some of the groundwork for this future discussion, but it certainly seems that some brands of psychoanalytic thought lend their vocabularies more readily—and dispose their adherents more willingly—to dialogue with a pragmatic vocabulary. It would be interesting to see how different adherents to different schools would react to the suggestion that a pragmatic perspective might inform their vision.

Future directions and limitations

The first step in this continued discussion, and perhaps the most obvious one, is that there is much to be done in the way of actual studies. I have been arguing that an intersection of the psychoanalytic and pragmatic perspectives will be fruitful, but it is actual pragmatic studies that engage with psychoanalytic concepts that will determine which direction this will take—and if such a dialogue will ultimately help justify psychoanalytic concepts or clarify psychoanalytic lenses. Gerhardt & Stinson's (1995) study discussed in the third chapter, along with responses by Feldman (1995) and Kaplan (1995), might be taken as a model for how such discussions could proceed. Their pragmatic analysis leads to a discussion of some of the consequences such a perspective might have for psychoanalysis. I may be overly optimistic in thinking that a dialogue between pragmatics and psychoanalysis will lead to rapprochement rather than a proliferation of further differences, given that historically psychoanalytic discussions

have tended more toward the divisive end. But I would not view this as a failure, if such division led to a clarification of differences.

I should note some possible impediments to clarification. The first is the metaphor of vision I have used throughout this exploration. While Gergen's (2000) perspectivism uses a visual metaphor in order to emphasize that different people look at the "same" object from different interpretive stances and hence see that object differently, there is a temptation to use the metaphor in an empirical or Cartesian sense where vision pretends to see things "as they are" without interpretation. Elkins' (1996) extended study of visual experience points out that this is hardly the case, but still, I have been speaking of a pragmatic method that simply "allows things to be seen." Does this mean that everyone can see them in the same relatively uncontested way that we see physical objects? Obviously, they are not "seen" in any empiricist sense. Rules and habits of speaking are abstractions, and require an interpretive key to appear. One must first accept a pragmatic way of seeing (that is, the pragmatic interpretation) as a fruitful enterprise. A pragmatic perspective can be useful for those who accept it, and its utility can only be judged according to what it produces. This is, in fact, the point of perspectivism: that all phenomena are "seen as" something, that different people see different things, and no one perspective should be considered the "correct" one. Rather, the recognition of differing perspectives leads to further discussion.

Still, I imply that the pragmatic method allows interpersonal processes to be seen in a relatively unified (and passive) way when I speak of using the common habits and rules of speaking as an interpretive key. But in reality there are quite a lot of different ways to speak, and different and often conflicting rules that are brought to bear in the act

of speaking. While I have said that this in principle allows for diversity in interpretation, and therefore continued discussion, there is little mention of these multiple grounds of interpretation and how they might create a problem for the research. Many of the interpretive keys used in pragmatic research in fact function to suppress the possible differences in speaking styles—a necessary evil, since researchers are looking for generalizable behavior in order to justify their interpretations. But while this may be necessary, it is a significant limitation when we seek to apply these sociological methods to individual psychological phenomena.

For example, in Johnstone's (2002) presentation of the "adaptive" view of the use of speech, it is assumed that the speakers are working together in order to keep the conversation flowing smoothly. While this assumption may be necessary in order to help researchers orient their interpretations (for example, in showing how conversants often anticipate requests by asking questions such as "What are you doing tomorrow afternoon?"), it is an assumption that seems to fly in the face of a psychoanalytic stance that sees aggression and competition so plainly in everyday speech. It does not leave room for the possibility that often, on some level, one or both of the conversants might be deliberately antagonizing the other. Another example can be seen in the use of Grice's cooperative principles of conversation (e.g., "tell the truth" and "say only what is relevant") in the interpretation of speech. But still, as Verschueren (1999) says, one can use the flouting of these habits of speech in order to interpret what is said (pp. 34ff). Likewise we can use the assumption that conversation is cooperative in order to point out deviations from this principle. Still, the presumption of a cooperative default is quite a strong bias. If a pragmatic perspective is to be fruitfully applied to psychoanalysis in

helping to make its constructs more transparent in a world that places a high premium on the value of vision, it must be able to address some of the darker points of human existence.

This is particularly pertinent if we would like to talk about people who are presumed to be suffering from psychopathology, and therefore may very well be using a different set of rules and habits—indeed, even quite idiosyncratic ones—or speaking from a different ground. Where a psychoanalyst might speak of "internalized" tropes or habits, or conjecture developmentally where an individual's distinctive habits come from, the pragmaticist must ground her interpretation by applying known patterns to externally observable behavior. Hence she will have difficulty addressing exceptions to the rule. How, then, will we speak of those who draw our attention because of the very fact that their speech and behavior (and their way of thinking) does not match "ours"?

There are also significant differences within groups of people presumed to speak the "same language." Tannen (1990), for example, notes that the same statement (such as an apology) can have vastly different implications depending on whether it is said by a man or a woman—and whether it is said *to* a man or a woman. Ochs (1979) argues that conversations that include children should be transcribed and analyzed with a careful awareness that children speak under a different set of conversational assumptions than do adults.[55] Different cultures and subcultures use different rules, and it is difficult to say within this multiplicity what is "normal" and what is "deviant" speech. While such differences can and are taken into account in interpretations as coexisting speech patterns and habits, it should be remembered that interpretations involve the application of quasi-

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[55] This may be the strength of Chaika's (1990, 2000) work, mentioned above, which stems from her research on how the speech patterns of schizophrenics differ from those of "normals."

universal rules to individual cases. This of course does not stop us from interpreting; it should be no surprise that those in more marginal communities are often interpreted on the grounds of the presumed hegemony.

A further distinction that needs development is how the speech situation that occurs in therapy differs from that of everyday conversation—and how psychoanalytic therapy situations differ from other therapeutic situations. Therapy research risks treating therapy simply as an instance of everyday speech, but as Gerhardt & Stinson (1995) note, the habits and expectations in psychotherapy do set it apart from everyday talk—otherwise it would be hard to justify psychotherapy's existence in the first place. Ferrara (1994) describes the psychotherapy situation as a particular speech event that is notable in several ways, such as the asymmetrical relationship between therapist and patient as well as differences in spontaneity of speech and topics of conversation. But, as the empirical pragmatic research on psychotherapy is still young, the more subtle differences—presumably linked to what makes psychotherapy effective—need further explication. Determining what sets different therapies apart from one another, and in particular psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic therapy, seems an important step in their justification.

Tied to the issue of the multiple grounds of interpretation are questions about human nature, in particular Hjelmquist's (1982) point noted in the third chapter that "a crucial point in a theory of discourse processes is the relationships between thought, conceived of as including intentions, and language" (p. 36). While the pragmatic method presented typically takes a stance of "ethnomethodological indifference" in order to remain theory free in the sense of not being fixed to any particular psychological theory,

it cannot be theory free in the sense of having no assumptions about human beings and their relationship to language. The point of the assumption of cooperation noted above serves as an example. Such an assumption is not simply a methodological convenience in order to establish a generalizable interpretive key; it is also a fundamental claim about human motivation—as well as about the function of speech.

It should be clear that both pragmatics and psychoanalysis reject the notion that speech functions primarily as a vehicle for the communication of facts about the world. I have stated in my discussion of Austin in the second chapter that it may make sense to presume that there is no primary function of language at all; language does many things, and they are all (more or less) interesting depending on what we choose to focus on. But there remain fundamental questions that require a commitment to particular functions in order to answer them: How are we to understand our motives? How much of our self is available to us, and in what way? How much hostility or cooperation do we see in our interactions with one another? What is the role of pleasure in speaking? These questions require answers if we want to give a truly psychological explanation of what is happening when people talk.

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