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WAYS OF FORMULATING DIRECTIVES

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Directive discourse has become an object of interest for philosophy of language, logical semiotics and linguistics only in the past few decades. Recent years have brought a blurring of the once distinct boundaries between these domains, which manifested themselves in their different ranges of problems, methods and outcomes.

The boundaries of directive discourse are rather vague. Its scope encompasses the following types of utterances: norm, principle, rule, order, encouragement, wish, suggestion, proposition, request, plea, advice, warning, recommendation, guideline, hint, and admonishment. The set presented above is most probably incomplete. Furthermore, the scopes of some of these utterance types either intersect or overlap, so our listing cannot be treated as a classification of directives (Opałek 1974: 134). One should also note the fundamental ambiguity of the majority of the enumerated terms, which consists in the fact that they either refer to an utterance (that is, a notation or a sequence of sounds) or to the act of using an utterance. For the benefit of this article, it will be more convenient to treat directives as utterances, not acts.

Directive discourse encompasses utterances with varied syntactic, semantic and pragmatic characteristics. As a result, the attempts to define the term "directive" in a reporting or even regulative manner encounter significant difficulties. The establishment of precise boundaries of directive discourse is not necessary for the purpose of the present article. We shall analyze only such utterances which are considered to be directives in accordance with all the semantic intuitions. Particular attention shall be paid to utterances

whose use constitutes the act of giving an order (command) or making a request.

Directives can take on various grammatical forms:

- (1) *I order you to close the window.* (performative)
- (2) *Close the window!* (imperative)
- (3) *You should close the window.* (modal)
- (4) *I want you to close the window.* (declarative)
- (5) *Can you close the window?* (interrogative)
- (6) *You will close the window.* (prognostic)

This catalogue is not complete. Directives can also have other grammatical forms, which shall not be analyzed here. (Opalek 1974: 50).

The performative and imperative forms of directives are significantly different from other types. The grammatical form of such utterances as (1) and (2) determines the fact that they are directives – using them constitutes the act of giving an order (making a request). Thus, utterances which take on this form can unambiguously be referred to as directives. However, modal, declarative, interrogative and prognostic utterances are not unambiguously directive, because using them can constitute the act of either making an observation, asking a question or formulating a prediction. The ambiguity of the utterance (3) is a result of the lexical ambiguity of the modal verb *should*. The utterance (3) can be called a directive only if we can ascribe a deontic meaning to this verb. The ambiguity of the declarative, interrogative and prognostic forms of this utterance do not stem from the lexical ambiguity of their components. The present article shall analyze only these types of utterances.

Metaethical and legal-theoretical reflections on the structure of directives focus on utterances which have unambiguously directive forms. It is usually observed that utterances with other forms can become directives only in certain contexts, so they should be analyzed within the domain of language pragmatics.

This point of view is by no means satisfactory. If one considers the significant dependence of speech acts on context, it becomes clear that virtually every utterance can be used to make numerous speech acts, including an order, a request or a command (Downes 1977: 94). Let us consider the following utterance:

- (7) *It has gotten cold.*

In some contexts, using this utterance constitutes an observation, in some – a warning and in others – an order or a command. In the two latter contexts, the utterance (7) can be used for issuing various orders, including,

for instance: *bring me a sweater, close the window, turn on the heating*. The relation between the utterance (7) and the speech acts performed through its use cannot be explained systematically, that is, by referring to the rules of language, because: (a) this utterance can be used to perform various speech acts in different situational contexts, (b) even if this utterance is used to issue an order (command), then the content of this order is not determined by the linguistic meaning of (7). It is the knowledge of the context within which (7) has been used that allows one to interpret the utterance. Due to the existence of an infinite number of possible situational contexts, it is not possible to formulate a set of rules which would allow one to determine *ex ante* which speech act shall be performed through the use of (7) in any situational context.

Utterances with prognostic, declarative and interrogative forms present an entirely different issue. Let us consider, for instance, the utterance (5). It is not unambiguously directive in character, because it can be used to either issue an order (make a request) or ask a question. However, unlike the utterance (7), one must notice that whenever the utterance (5) is used to issue an order, the contents of that order are determined by the linguistic meaning of (5). Thus, (5) can only be used to formulate a directive inducing the addressee of the utterance to close the window. The contents of the directive formulated by the utterance (5) are independent from the situational context (which, however, does indicate the window in question and the recipient of the directive). This observation refers to all utterances with forms similar to (4), (5) and (6). The fact that these utterances can be used to formulate directives, the content of which is determined by their linguistic meaning, demands further explanation.

One might wonder if this explanation should refer to grammar (that is syntax and semantics) or pragmatics. The answer to this question largely depends on the boundary drawn between grammar and pragmatics. It is commonly believed that the issues connected with speech acts belong within the domain of pragmatics. The popular formulation by Stalnaker (1972: 283) states that “pragmatics is the *study of* acts of speech and the contexts in which they are performed.” This observation proves beyond doubt that the issue analyzed here is strictly pragmatic in character, since the concept of directives is described by referring to the concept of a speech act and the directive interpretation of utterances with declarative, interrogative and prognostic forms is dependent on context.

The discussed issue takes on a different character when the differentiation between grammar and pragmatics is viewed as a correlation of the differen-

tiation between linguistic competence and linguistic performance. In this view, grammar shapes the linguistic competence of its native speaker, that is, it recreates the rules which generate only the sentences of this language. The linguistic competence of a native speaker is the knowledge which enables him to formulate and interpret an infinite number of sentences in this language and to recognize numerous syntactic and semantic properties of utterances, particularly to recognize ungrammatical sentences and utterances, unambiguous and ambiguous utterances, internally contradictory sentences, sentences whose meaning can be inferred from each other, etc. Grammar is supposed to explain these reactions of the native speaker by recreating the rules which cause them. Pragmatics, on the other hand, refers to linguistic performance, that is, the actual behavior of specific language users in specific situational contexts. Linguistic performance can diverge significantly from linguistic competence. These discrepancies can occur if, for instance, language users sometimes assign a meaning to certain utterances which is different from their grammatical meaning, either they accept ungrammatical utterances or they refuse to accept utterances generated by means of grammatical rules. Such reactions from specific language users are caused by various cultural and situational factors, as well as certain psychological limitations (limited memory, errors, etc.). As a result, the actual behavior of language users does not lead to an ideal realization of their language competence. Grammar omits these factors and refers to an idealisation concept of a native speaker of a language.

Since grammar shapes the language competence of native speakers, then the role of situational context in formulating and interpreting utterances is excluded from its scope of interests. However, one might ask if this places the issue of speech acts entirely outside of the domain of grammar.

The type of speech act performed through the use of a specific utterance depends both on the linguistic meaning of this utterance and numerous situational factors. The linguistic competence of a native speaker consists, among others, of the knowledge that the utterance (2) *Close the window!* can be used to issue an order, whereas the utterance

(8) *John closed the window*

can be used to make an observation, regardless of the situational context within which these two utterances are spoken. Since grammar is supposed to shape the language competence of the native speaker, then it ought to consider the relations between certain forms of utterances and speech acts conducted through their use. Thus, grammar should explain to what degree the syntactic and semantic structure of the utterance determines its

illocutionary force (Katz 1977: 9). The illocutionary force of an utterance is its capability of producing a speech act of a specific type (Austin 1962: 93). This scope of problems connected with speech acts belongs in the domain of grammar.

It is not true that making a directive interpretation of such utterances as (4), (5) and (6) dependent on context, indicates an undeniably pragmatic character of the above-mentioned issue. The fact that the utterance (5) (for instance) is understood in certain contexts as a directive and in others as a question can be treated as a purely grammatical phenomenon. One might say that the utterance (5) is grammatically ambiguous.

Thus, there are two possible explanations for the fact that utterances with declarative, interrogative and prognostic forms are in certain contexts interpreted as directives: (a) explanations based on the assumption that these utterances are grammatically ambiguous and the context selects one of their grammatical meanings, (b) explanations based on the assumption that these utterances are grammatically unambiguous (that is, for instance (5) is a question) and the context changes their meaning.

Each of these explanations is based on a differentiation between the utterance's grammatical and pragmatic meaning. Grammatical meaning is considered to be a type of meaning which is attributed to the utterance regardless of the situational context in which it has been used. Pragmatic meaning is a type of meaning ascribed to the utterance within a specific situational context, in which it has been used. The pragmatic meaning of an utterance can be different from its grammatical meaning. The purpose of pragmatics is to explain the mechanisms responsible for the fact that in certain contexts, utterances receive meanings which differ from their grammatical meaning.

In other words, the grammatical meaning of an utterance is a meaning ascribed to it by the native speaker of the language when he does not possess any information about the context within which it has been spoken. Such a situation is referred to as zero context (Katz 1977: 15). The concept of zero context, similarly to the concept of a native speaker, is idealistic in character.

Explanations concerning the first discussed type are based on the assumption that utterances such as (4), (5) and (6) are ambiguous within the zero context. This assumption requires one to recreate the grammatical rules which ascribe double meaning to these utterances.

One of the tasks of pragmatics is to answer the question, which properties of contexts are responsible for attributing these utterances with the meaning

of directives, claims, questions or predictions as pragmatic types of meanings. According to this approach, the pragmatic meaning of each of these utterances is an actualization of one of its grammatical meanings.

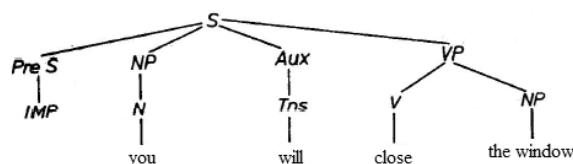
The second type of explanation is based on the assumption that such utterances as (4), (5) and (6) are unambiguous in zero contexts (thus, for instance, the utterance (5) is a question). In certain non-zero contexts, their pragmatic meaning differs from the grammatical meaning; in particular – they are attributed with the meaning of directives. Therefore, it is the context that changes the meaning of these utterances. Such an assumption requires reproducing the pragmatic mechanisms responsible for this change in meaning.

It appears that a convincing explanation of any of the alternative answers to the question whether such utterances as (4), (5) and (6) are unambiguous or ambiguous in zero contexts is highly difficult. These obstacles are a result of the idealistic character of the concept of zero context and the concept of a native speaker. In order to answer this question, one would have to analyze the meaning of these utterances within a pure zero-context, that is, free oneself from all the convictions concerning the circumstances accompanying verbal communication. It would be difficult to conduct such a mental experiment, if only because the differentiation between language competence and paralinguistic knowledge is vague, since we are not fully aware which of our convictions originated in our knowledge of the language and which have an objective (extralinguistic) character. It would appear therefore that in order to eliminate the controversy between the discussed types of explanation, one shouldn't really examine the validity of assumptions they are based on, but ought to analyze the validity of their consequences. Of particular importance here is the question, which of these explanations allows one to predict various linguistic facts in a more successful manner.

Explanation of the first discussed type can be described as grammatical conceptions and explanations of the second type – as pragmatic conceptions. The analysis conducted below encompasses conceptions selected from among those which have already been published in the literature. This analysis does not claim to be complete. It is not conducted to delve deeply into one or another conceptions, but to demonstrate the general properties of grammatical and pragmatic conceptions.

There are two types of grammatical conceptions. According to the first type, the ambiguity of utterances with declarative, interrogative and prognostic form is a regular grammatical ambiguity. According to the second conceptions, the ambiguity of these utterances is a result of the idiomatic

character of their certain components. Katz and Postal (1964: 74) analysed such utterances as (6) *You will close the window*. They assume that the utterance (6) is grammatically ambiguous. In one of its meanings it constitutes a paraphrase (2) *Close the window*, therefore it has a directive meaning; in the second meaning, the utterance (6) is a prognostic sentence. The ambiguity of (6) is not a consequence of the ambiguity of any morpheme present in the surface structure. Katz and Postal explain this ambiguity by assuming that (6) is derived from two different deep structures, one of which is identical to the deep structure (2). It is represented by the following phrase marker:



Thus, the deep structure of directives contains an abstract morpheme *IMP*, which is not realized in the surface structure. This morpheme cannot be identified with any lexical unit.

According to Katz and Postal, the placement of the morpheme *IMP* within the deep structure of directives allows one to explain numerous linguistic phenomena. These explanations refer to certain selection limitations which exclude various types of verbs, adverbs, etc from occurring together with the said morpheme. For instance, the ungrammatical character of the directive:

(9) *Be able to *swim*!

is a result of selection limitations, which exclude the morpheme *IMP* from occurring together with the so called *stative verbs* (verbs which denote states independent from human will). Discussing other selection limitations allows one to explain the unambiguous character of such utterances as:

(10) *You will probably close the window*,

and especially the fact that this utterance does not have a directive meaning. The same limitation explains the ungrammatical character of the utterance

(11) **Probably close the window*!

Placement of the morpheme *Fut* within the deep structure allows one to explain the ungrammatical character of such utterances as

(12) **Close the window yesterday*!

And the unambiguous character of such utterances as:

(13) *You closed the window yesterday.*

Thus, one may conclude that Katz and Postal treat the ambiguity of (6) as a regular grammatical ambiguity.

The conception of Katz and Postal refers directly to utterances with prognostic forms. Attempts to broaden its scope to include the declarative and interrogative form encounter significant technical difficulties. It is quite easy to reconstruct the transformations leading from the deep structure presented on the diagram on page 96 to the surface structure of the utterance (6). However, one encounters significant difficulties when trying to reconstruct the transformational rules which derived from this structure utterances such as (4) and (5). This is caused chiefly by the fact that these utterances contain lexical units (*I want, you can*) which have not been introduced by the deep structure. One might wonder if the ambiguity of declarative and interrogative utterances also has a grammatical character. (Downes 1977: 77)

Regardless of this technical difficulty, the claim that the ambiguous character of prognostic utterances is a regular grammatical phenomenon leads to predictions which are contrary to linguistic facts. Thus, according to the discussed concept, the utterance

(14) *You will marry and have three children*

should be grammatically ambiguous. In one of its meanings, similarly to (6), this utterance should constitute a prognostic sentence, and in the second – a directive synonymous to (15):

(15) *Get married and have three children!*

However, in reality, the utterance (14) is unambiguous and it is unlikely anyone would attribute it with the meaning of (15). The concept created by Katz and Postal does not provide an explanation why utterances such as (14) are not ambiguous like the utterance (6). This proves that the ambiguity of prognostic utterances cannot be treated as a regular grammatical occurrence.

According to the second type of grammatical conceptions, the ambiguity of such utterances as (4), (5) and (6) is a result of the idiomatic character of some of its components. This is particularly true with reference to interrogative utterances. The idiomatic character is ascribed to the phrase *can you*, which occurs in such utterances. One ought to mention here that we are referring to a particular kind of idiomatic character. Idioms are usually defined as a structure consisting of at least two words, whose meaning cannot be inferred from the meaning of its individual components (Urbańczyk 1978: 123). It has been emphasized that in many regards, idioms require the same treatment as lexical units. However, the phrase *can you* (considered to be

an idiom) is not a lexical unit. Its idiomatic character manifests only at the level of the sentence, therefore we are dealing here with syntactic, not lexical idiomaticity.

The thesis concerning the idiomatic character of the phrase *can you* is defended by the following arguments (Bogusławski 1979: 312). First, if one were to substitute the verb *can* with any of its synonyms, it would cause the utterance (5) to lose its directive character. For instance:

(16) *Are you able to close the window? (do you have the ability to)*

is not interpreted as a directive. The impossibility to substitute certain words with their synonyms is one of the characteristic features of idiomatic constructions. Second, an interrogative utterance can have a directive meaning only when the verb *can* is accompanied by the noun in second person singular or plural. Other forms cause the utterance to unambiguously become a question, for instance:

(17) *Can he close the window?*

(18) *Can we close the window?*

Third, it has been claimed that interrogative utterances take on the meaning of directives only when they are spoken without an interrogative intonation and the word *can* is not emphasized, or even only when they have the same intonation as directive utterances (Green 1973: 67).

The first argument undoubtedly carries the most significance. In order to examine it thoroughly, one ought to first answer the question, whether such expressions as *have the ability*, or *be able to* are exact synonyms of the word *can*. This issue shall be discussed below.

The second argument is not convincing. The fact that interrogative utterances are interpreted as directives only when the verb *can* is accompanied by a noun in the second person, is a result of the pragmatic properties of directives. One does consider directives whose addressee is a listener (recipient of the utterance), and the listener is addressed in the second person. For instance, the following utterance could also be a directive:

(19) *Can the gentleman close the window?*

Here, the verb *can* is accompanied by a noun in the third person.

There are further arguments against attributing an idiomatic character to the phrase *can you*. If the phrase is treated like an idiom, then it is claimed that two different meanings are attributed to it: a literal and idiomatic meaning. When the phrase occurs in an utterance in its idiomatic meaning, it is not entitled to its literal meaning. This point of view would entail that if the utterance (5) is a directive (if the phrase *can you* is idiomatic), then it is not a question. Such a consequence is contrary to the observation that the

utterance (5) behaves like a question even if it occurs in a directive meaning – it allows for (and sometimes even demands) a literal answer (Searle 1976: 970):

(20) *Of course (Unfortunately, he can't)*

Furthermore, if the phrase *can you* were an idiom, then every utterance containing it would be potentially ambiguous. This is contrary to the observation that certain utterances containing this phrase are never interpreted as directives, for instance:

(21) *Can you learn infinitesimal calculus within a week?*

It seems that the concept which tries to explain the directive character of an interrogative utterance by treating the phrase *can you* as an idiom is not able to account for the differences between (5) and (21). In order to account for these differences, one has to refer to pragmatic issues, for instance to the fact that an affirmative answer to the utterance (5) interpreted as a question, is obvious in the majority of contexts. One might also add that there is one more fact which speaks against treating the phrase *can you* as an idiom – a literal translation of the utterance (5) into a majority of other languages retains its directive character. Idioms, on the other hand, are usually untranslatable.

The above observations reveal certain common limitations of all the grammatical (intralingual) attempts to explain the directive character of such utterances as (4), (5) and (6). The first limitation consists in the fact that these attempts refer only to one of all the discussed forms of directives. When one tries to transfer them to other forms of directives, one encounters significant obstacles (for instance the following question: which component of the prognostic utterance can be called an idiom?). As a result, these explanations seem to have been compiled *ad hoc*.

The second of the above mentioned limitations lies in the fact that treating the ambiguity of a declarative, interrogative and prognostic utterance as grammatical ambiguity leads to one inevitable consequence: when these utterances express the meaning of directives, then they cannot also function as, respectively, a declaration, a question or a prognosis. This consequence is contrary to the observation that, for instance, the utterance (5) functions simultaneously as a directive and a question.

The third limitation of the discussed concepts is that they are not able to account for the fact that the ambiguity of such utterances as (4), (5) and (6) is not only a result of their syntax and lexical content, but also some of their pragmatic properties. To prove it, one need only indicate the above mentioned differentiation between (5) and (21) as well as (6) and (14).

Limitations connected with the attempts to find a grammatical (intra-lingual) explanation for the directive character of declarative, interrogative and prognostic utterances induce one to search for an adequate explanation in the domain of pragmatics of language. The most desirable solution here would be an explanation free from the errors present in *ad hoc* explanations, that is, an explanation that refers to more general theories concerning verbal communication.

It seems that a convenient theoretical base for such an explanation might be found in the theory of the so-called conversational implicature, formulated by H. P. Grice (1975: 41). Its main objective was to explain the pragmatic mechanisms which allow the speaker to transmit and the listener to receive information which does not fall into the scope of the linguistic meaning of the given utterance. Thus, in ordinary contexts, the utterance:

(22) *Yesterday I tried to communicate with John.*

implies that

(23) *Yesterday I did not communicate with John,*

despite the fact that (23) cannot be analytically inferred from (22).

Grice's theory is founded on the assertion that a conversation is not based on exchanging disconnected and independent information, but must exhibit a certain level of cooperation between the interlocutors. This cooperation is manifested by the fact that the participants of the conversation adhere to certain rules. These rules were formulated by Grice in the form of the following conversation maxims:

Maxim of quantity:

1) Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange,

2) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Maxim of quality:

3) Do not say what you believe to be false,

4) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Maxim of relation:

5) Be relevant.

Maxim of manner:

6) Avoid obscurity of expression.

Grice does not claim that the participants of every conversation always adhere to these maxims. He also does not treat the maxims as recommendations for the way a conversation should be conducted. He is of the opinion that the interpretation of utterances formulated during a conversation is based on the assumption that the interlocutors do adhere to these maxims.

Referring to this assumption allows the recipient to capture not only the information which is included within the literal meaning of the utterance but also the information which is implied. Grice defines the concept of conversational implicature in the following way: Someone who says that p implies q can be said to imply q conversationally, if: (1) it can be assumed that he adheres to conversational maxims, (2) it can be assumed that he is aware of the fact that q is necessary in order for his saying that p was not contrary to the above assumption, (3) the speaker knows (and expects that the listener knows that the speaker knows) that the assumption mentioned in point 2 is indispensable (Grice 1975: 47).

This definition can be illustrated with the following example. The purpose of the conversation between A and B is to plan a trip together. A knows that B wants to see person C during their trip. A asks: *Where does C live?* B answers: *Somewhere on the coast.* B 's utterance violates the maxim of quantity, because it contains too little information for the successful fulfillment of the purpose of the conversation. A , assuming that B does not want to wilfully violate the conversational maxims, explains the violation of the maxim of quantity by assuming that B does not know the city where C lives. Thus, when B says *C lives somewhere on the coast*, B implies conversationally: *I do not know which city C lives in.*

This example demonstrates that conversational implicatures of an utterance are not a part of its linguistic meaning. Furthermore, conversational implicatures are strongly dependent on the purpose of the conversation and the actual situation within which it is conducted.

In the above example, the utterance of person B would not have the indicated implicature if the purpose of the conversation was different. As it would seem, the assumption that the interlocutors adhere to the conversational maxims is a result of a more general assumption concerning the interpretation of all the cultural activities; namely the assumption that subjects conducting these activities are behaving rationally.

Grice's reconstruction of conversational maxims is based upon the assumption that the purpose of a conversation is the most effective exchange of information. Such a description seems too narrow, because it does not include other possible purposes of conversation (Larkin and O'Malley 1976: 117; Martinich 1980: 215). Thus, the maxim of relation with reference to questions asked during the conversation shall most probably take on the following form: (5a) Ask relevant questions, that is: do not ask questions, to which you know the answer, or questions to which answers do not help realize the purpose of the conversation.

Let us note, that in ordinary contexts, making utterances such as (4) *I want you to close the window*, (5) *Can you close the window?*, (6) *You will close the window* is incompatible with the assumption that the speaker adheres to the conversational maxims. Thus, making the utterance (5) violates the maxim of relation, because it is obvious in ordinary contexts that the listener can conduct the activity mentioned in the question. Utterance (4) is similarly irrelevant when the topic of the conversation is not the actual psychological experiences of the speaker. The utterance (6) violates the maxim of quality within contexts where the speaker does not have any grounds to predict the future behavior of the speaker. The incompatibility of these utterances with the conversational maxims occurs within a certain class of contexts. However, there are also situational contexts within which these utterances do not violate conversational maxim (for instance the utterance (5) spoken by a doctor examining a patient's physical ability to move).

According to Grice, the incompatibility of utterances with conversational maxims in a certain context is a signal that the speaker intends to communicate a certain conversational implicature. However, there is a question – how are the conversational implicatures of the utterances (4), (5) and (6) to be recreated and especially, why do these utterances imply directives.

The claim that the participants of a conversation adhere to conversational maxims is the result of a more general assumption that the interlocutors behave in a rational manner. In order to answer the above question, one needs to re-create the conditions of rationality for such speech acts as an order, request or command (directive speech acts). A full reconstruction of the conditions of rationality for speech acts is a very complex task (Searle 1969: 73; Ziemiński 1977: 127). Without attempting a full reconstruction, one might assume that if the person conducting such a speech act aims to cause a specific behaviour from the recipient, then such an act is rational if:

- 1) The speaker wants the recipient to behave in a way specified by the directive,
- 2) The speaker believes that the recipient can act in such a way,
- 3) The speaker believes that under normal circumstances (if the speech act was not conducted) the recipient would not behave in such a way.

It is easy to notice the fundamental similarity between the above conditions for the rationality of speech acts and declarative, interrogative and prognostic utterances (Gordon, Lakoff 1975: 83). Thus, the utterance (4) in particular is an observation that the first condition has been fulfilled, the utterance (5) is a question, whether the second condition has been fulfilled and the utterance (6) is a prognostic sentence contrary to the third condition.

This similarity results in the following generalization: a directive can be communicated as a conversational implicature through stating that the first condition for the rationality of directive speech acts has been fulfilled, or through asking whether the second condition has been fulfilled, or through formulating a prognostic sentence contrary to the third condition.

However, this generalization alone does not explain why the utterances (4), (5) and (6) have conversational implicatures which are directives. Such an explanation can be twofold. First, it can be based on the claim that language has certain rules of conversational implicature, whose status is similar to that of grammatical rules. Second, one may reconstruct the reasoning which leads the recipient of utterances such as (4), (5) and (6) to interpret them as directives.

An example of the first type of explanation is the concept formulated by Gordon and Lakoff (1975: 83). They claim that language is governed by certain rules of conversational implicature (conversational postulates):

I: A claims that A wants B to do d^* \rightarrow A requests (orders) B to do d .

II: A asks whether B could do d^* \rightarrow A requests (orders) B to do d .

The list of these conversational postulates can be enhanced by referring to other conditions for the rationality of directive speech acts. Gordon and Lakoff claim that a directive is communicated by uttering the sentence (4) and (5) as a conversational implicature only when the speaker does not intend to communicate the literal meaning of these utterances and when the listener can assign to the speaker the lack of such intention. This “weakening” of connection between the predecessors and successors of the conversational postulates is indicated by the star placed after the predecessors.

If assigning a certain intention to the speaker depends on the situational context, within which the utterance has been made, then the utterance has specific conversational implicatures only within this context (or within contexts belonging to a certain class). According to Gordon and Lakoff, taking into account this dependence between contexts and conversational implicatures allows one to identify the relation of conversational implicature with the relation of logical entailment and to formulate the following definition:

L implies P conversationally within the context Con_1 when and only if P is inferable from L within the context Con_1 based on the conversational postulates.

Gordon and Lakoff claim that conversational postulates are grammatical rules if they govern the distribution of morphemes. The possibility of certain utterances to be transformed is dependent not only on their literal meaning,

but also on what these utterances imply conversationally. Thus, expressions such as *please* or *if you would be so kind* might be added to the utterance (5) if the said utterance conversationally implies a directive. The utterance:

(5a) *Would you be so kind as to close the window?*

interpreted literally is ungrammatical.

It is easy to notice that identifying conversational postulates with grammatical rules leads to serious consequences with regard to determining mutual relations between pragmatics and grammar. However, this issue shall not be discussed in the present work.

The conception of Gordon and Lakoff, which claims that language possesses a number of rules for conversational implicatures raises certain many reservations. The first of them refers to identifying the relation of conversational implicature with the relation of logical entailment. This certainly cannot be the relation of logical entailment occurring, for instance, between a question and a directive. Thus, Gordon and Lakoff probably claim that when a certain person has asked a question by using a declarative sentence, they must have done so in order to express a directive within a certain class of contexts based on conversational postulates. However, even this claim causes certain reservations. Entailment could occur only if saying the utterance (5) within contexts of a certain class always led to the production of a directive. Even if one disregards the difficulties connected with further clarification of the class of contexts within which (5) conversationally implies a directive, one might note that there is no context which would force one to understand the utterance (5) as a directive. In other words, there is no context within which (5) would have to be uttered only with the intention of communicating a directive (Morgan 1977: 277). One might only observe that in certain contexts it is more probable than in others that (5) was uttered as a directive. Therefore, one must draw the following conclusion: based on conversational postulates, it cannot be entailed logically that a person who uttered (5) within a specific context has necessarily communicated a directive.

Furthermore, there are reservations concerning the claim made by Gordon and Lakoff that a directive as a conversational implicature is communicated only when the speaker does not intend to communicate the literal meaning of the utterance (4), (5) or (6). That is not the case, according to them, that when we formulate the utterance (5), we simultaneously communicate a question and a directive. This assumption does not allow one to explain the above mentioned differences between (5) and (2) – such as the fact that (5), unlike (2), demands an answer and therefore behaves like a

question.

It seems that these shortcomings of the concept created by Grice and Lakoff are the result of their “paragrammatical” approach to the rules of conversational implicature. According to their view, conversational implicatures are automatically inferred from the given utterance within a specific context based on conversational postulates. This assumption is contrary to the observation that the relationship between an utterance and its conversational implicatures is much more looser and contexts do not determine specific implicatures. This loose relationship makes it impossible to speak of any rules for conversational implicatures.

The explanation why such utterances as (4), (5) and (6) have directive implicatures should therefore be based on a reconstruction of the reasoning which leads the recipient of these utterances to understand them exactly this way (Searle 1975: 73). One might immediately assume that the casual character of the relationship between the utterance and its implicature is a result of the fact that such reasoning is not deductive.

The first stage of such reasoning was presented above. It ends with a conclusion that attributing utterances (4), (5) and (6) with meaning which does not exceed their literal meaning is (within the given context) contrary to the assumption that the speaker adheres to the conversational maxims. In order to uphold the latter claim, one ought to assume that the speaker intends to communicate a certain conversational implicature. Further stages of this reasoning must be individualized for each utterance separately.

Utterance (4) constitutes a confirmation of the fulfilment of one of the conditions for the rationality of directive speech acts. The situational context allows one to assume that other conditions have also been fulfilled (i.e. the listener can perform the action of closing the window and it is known that he would not have done it without some sort of intervention from the speaker). Within this context, the validity of the claim that the speaker adheres to conversational maxims requires one to assume that it was his intention to communicate a directive and the direct function of (4) is to induce the listener to fulfill one of the conditions for rationality.

In the contexts within which an affirmative answer to (5) is obvious both for the recipient and the speaker, the function of this utterance is to direct the recipient’s attention towards fulfilment of the second condition of the rationality of directive speech acts. If these contexts lead the recipient to believe that other conditions have been fulfilled as well, then he shall uphold the assumption that the speaker is adhering to the conversational maxims and accept that the speaker intends to communicate a directive as

a conversational implicature. Attributing a different intention to the speaker would force the recipient to abandon this assumption.

Similarly, the utterance (6) conversationally implicates a directive only in contexts within which it is obvious for the recipient that the speaker does not have any premises to predict the future behavior of the recipient.

Thus, such contexts fulfill the third condition for the rationality of directive speech acts. If the context allows one to suppose that other conditions have also been fulfilled, then the listener will uphold the assumption that the speaker adheres to the conversational maxims and intends to communicate a directive.

The entailment processes which lead to attributing proper conversational implicatures to utterances such as (4), (5) and (6) are highly complex. The premises for these processes include: the assumption that the speaker is adhering to the conversational maxims, claims concerning the situational context and the resulting suppositions about the intentions of the speaker as well as observations of whether the conditions for the rationality of directive speech acts have been fulfilled (Searle 1975: 63). One ought to note here that the conclusions from these types of entailment processes cannot be accepted with absolute confidence, both because the premises of these entailments (for instance the suppositions about the speaker's intentions) also cannot be accepted with absolute confidence and because the entailment processes are not deductive with regard to their structure. Therefore, contrary to the opinion of Gordon and Lakoff (1975: 83), the conversational implicature of an utterance is not a logical consequence of this utterance based on a certain set of rules. Recreating a conversational implicature involves reconstructing the presumable intentions of the speaker. Furthermore, it is not the case that the recipient of such utterances as (4), (5) and (6) in fact conducts the reasoning processes outlined above. The conversational implicatures are attributed to these utterances in a rather automatic manner, without the need for reflexion. The above could be explained in the following way: the assumption that the speaker adheres to the conversational maxims does not allow one to ascribe to him the intention of communicating only the literal sense of the utterance (4), (5) or (6) within ordinary contexts. Only particular contexts provide a signal that the intention of the speaker does not exceed the scope of the literal meaning of the utterance. As a result, the reconstruction of reasoning processes conducted here cannot aspire to be psychologically realistic.

According to the outline presented here, unlike in the concept created by Gordon and Lakoff, conversational implicature is a piece of information

attached to other information included within the linguistic meaning of the given utterance and not a piece of information which substituted the meaning of this utterance. Therefore, a person making the utterance (5) within an appropriate situational context is not only communicating a directive (as a conversational implicature), but is also asking a question. This approach allows one to explain, why (5) retains certain properties of a question, even when it is uttered with the intention of communicating a directive.

However, the approach presented here faces one significant difficulty. The pragmatic character of this approach consisting in the fact that the explanation of the directive interpretation of a declarative, interrogative or prognostic utterance refers to conversational maxims, conditions for the rationality of speech acts and situational contexts leads to the conclusion that the conversational implicatures of an utterance are independent of its syntactic form and lexical content. In particular, two synonymous utterances ought to have identical conversational implicatures (Green 1973: 72). It appears, however, that this consequence of the approach presented here is contrary to observation. Let us now consider the utterances:

(5) *Can you close the window?*

(16) *Are you able to (capable of) close the window?*

The verb *can* is lexically ambiguous. In the utterance (5) it carries the meaning “be able to.” As a result, (5) and (16) are synonymous linguistically. However, in ordinary contexts only the utterance (5) receives the directive as a conversational implicature. Furthermore, the following utterance is unacceptable:

(16a) **Are you able to be so kind as to close the window?*,
although the utterance

(5a) *Could you be so kind as to close the window?*
is fully acceptable.

The latter observation induces one to conclude that the distribution of such expressions as *be so kind* can be explained only by referring to the pragmatic properties of the utterance with particular attention given to the polite character of these expressions (Leech 1977: 142). It is particularly inadmissible if using this type of expression would be considered a test of the directive character of the utterance, because e.g. the following utterance is absolutely unacceptable:

(24) **Attention, if you would be so kind!*

The difference between (5) and (16) does not consist in the fact that (5) implies conversationally a directive in every context, whereas (16) does not imply it in any context. This difference consists solely in the fact that

the directive as a conversational implicature is ascribed to the utterance (5) rather automatically without the need for reflexion. Only certain situational contexts provide a signal that the utterance (5) ought to be attributed solely with its literal meaning. However, this presumed directiveness does not concern (16). One needs to reflect before one ascribes any conversational implicature to this particular utterance. If the recipient is not in possession of the appropriate information concerning the situational context (for instance, does not know if all the conditions for the rationality of directive speech acts have been fulfilled), then he shall be inclined to attribute the utterance (16) only with its literal meaning. Therefore, the difference between (5) and (16) manifests itself only when we are analysing these utterances regardless of their situational context. Within a specific situational context, they possess identical conversational implicatures (i.e. whether both imply a directive, or none of them implies it.)

One further difficulty faced by the approach outlined here refers to the conditions for the acceptability of conjunction. It has been claimed that conjunction of a question and a statement is linguistically unacceptable, for instance:

(25) **Will you watch a TV programme and I will read a book?*

However, the conjunction of a directive and a statement is acceptable under certain circumstances.

(26) *Watch television, and I will read a book.*

The statement that the utterance (5) is a question from the grammatical point of view would entail that the conjunction of (5) with any statement should be unacceptable. However, the utterance:

(27) *Can you close the window and I will turn on the heating?*
appears to be grammatical.

This argument is based on weak intuitions concerning the grammaticality of such utterances as (25). Even if one considers this utterance as ungrammatical, then the grammaticality of the utterance (27) only proves that the ability of an utterance to enter into conjunction with other utterances is dependent not only on its linguistic meaning but also on the conversational implicatures which apply to this utterance within the given situational context; thus – it is dependent also on pragmatic factors.

It would appear that the issue of a conjunction's cohesiveness should be approached in the same way as the issue of the cohesiveness of a multi-sentence text; and – it is widely known that the cohesiveness of a multi-sentence text is determined pragmatically to a great extent.

The conducted review of possible explanations as to why utterances

with the declarative, interrogative and prognostic form are understood as directives leads one to conclude that a satisfactory solution of this issue ought to refer to language pragmatics.

One ought to emphasize here that contrary to the openly expressed or silently accepted conviction that pragmatic phenomena are irregular and coincidental, it can still be claimed that they are governed by important principles. Further exploration of the issues concerned with conversational implicature and speech acts shall most likely allow us to explain many phenomena, which have hitherto remained somewhat of a mystery within the domain of grammar.

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