Not deep, just thick.

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This paper takes the view that lexicogrammar has developed as a series of resource systems for realising multivalent meanings through language within a social context in real time in order for a speaker to negotiate a complex subject position: in relation to the world as they perceive it, their interlocutors, and the unfolding text. Such meaning is seen therefore as simultaneously construction of the first person[1], negotiation with the second person[2] and the expression of the third person[3]. As such, language is not "thought expressed verbally" but a speaker's verbally constructed position with respect to the ideational content, interpersonal relations and real-time development of discourse within a social context. The lexicogrammar has specialised resources for expressing, constructing and negotiating the ideational, interpersonal and textual subject position of speakers, but these are not discrete (primarily ideational resources can contribute to the construction of the interpersonal subject position, for example) and their combined effect is more than the sum of their parts (as interaction between the various resources realises a complex of interrelated meanings). As such, utterances have neither deep structure nor deep semantics. Rather, the speaker-as-agent draws upon the various structural and semantic resources of the language simultaneously in order to construct this threefold subject positioning through an amalgam of surface features. Lexicogrammar is seen, therefore, not as a finite set of rules for expressing and transforming underlying concepts, but as a series of creative resources for verbally instantiating multiple subject positions within specific contexts. Not deep, just thick.

The first part of this paper attempts to justify the various parts of this overly dense (or just thick) formulation of lexicogrammar as I see it and to distinguish it from other formulations, while the second section gives an example of thick analysis (deriving ultimately from Geertz's (1973) use of *thick description* in anthropology) in action.

1. Theoretical underpinnings.

To say that language is "a series of resources for verbally instantiating multiple subject positions within specific contexts" is not to deny that aspect of language which has traditionally been described as "putting thoughts into words". Rather, it reinterprets this as that aspect of meaning (amongst several) that makes explicit *one's relationship to* the ideational (propositional) content of an utterance. Thus to say

[1] "Meaning by" = "want to say", as in "What do you mean by *not very bright*?"
[2] "Meaning to" = "affect", as in "It means nothing to me."
[3] "Meaning in" = "represent" as in "*Llorar* means *cry* in Spanish.", "What does *endogenous* mean?"

1. *The man is big.*

is not simply expressing one's thoughts in words, but stating where one stands with regards to a particular proposition, one's adherence or affiliation to a view of reality - in this case, probably, an acceptance of its truth value. For this reason, I would place epistemic modality within the ideational metafuction of language, as MIGHT in the following sentence, for example, clearly modifies the speaker's stance towards the ideational content of the utterance more than the interpersonal relations (though taking a particular stance with respect to perceived reality clearly also affects interpersonal relations - for this reason the three metafuctions cannot be seen as discrete):

2. *The man might be big.*

If we now insert sentence 1 into a short dialogue we can see how it also carries interpersonal and textual weight:

3. *A: The man is small.*
   B: No; the man is big.

In textual terms, B is responding to A's utterance, while interpersonally B is taken up a contrary position to A (through renegotiation of A's polarity/modality). In example 4 these textual and interpersonal features can be more specifically described in terms of the speech acts realised:

4. *A: You stole my pen!*
   B: No I didn't.

Here, B's response is a denial, where the textual context, A's accusation, had set up a framework that projected as the unmarked response either this speech act or that of admission (the consecutive utterances constituting an "adjacency pair" in the terminology of Conversation Analysis). A combination of the ideational and interpersonal functions can be seen in the following:

5. *B: You mustn't spit.*

In 5, B is not simply asserting his view of reality, he is also asserting his authority and thus setting up a very particular interpersonal subject position (through deontic or "interpersonal modality", cf. "ideational modality" above). And example 6 shows how all three metafunctions may work together:

6. *A: Can I go to the shops?*
   B. It's too dark.

Here B simultaneously sets up ideational, interpersonal and textual subject positions by making a statement about the perceived world (ideational) that demonstrates his authority over A (interpersonal:refusal) within a (textual) framework that had

projected[4] the request-permission/refusal pairing. This demonstrates how the metafunctions are not discrete but *synergetic*, as it is the ideational content of B's utterance, in the textual framework, that realises his interpersonal subject position. This interdependence between metafunctions can also be described from the different perspectives of "meaning" above[5]: B expresses a third-person ("neutral reality") meaning to construct their first-person meaning (intention) of denying permission. A, however, might interpret this strategy differently, through second-person (affective) meaning, and see the utterance not as a direct refusal but as a discussion of possible obstacles, so producing the following reply:

7. *A: I'll be careful.*

If B then replies

8. *B: Oh, all right then.*

we can see how the meaning of B's initial utterance has been negotiated, with B now accepting A's reinterpretation of his original (first-person) meaning (with "oh" formally marking the renegotiation, or following Schiffrin (1999:282), "a shift in speaker's orientation to information"). This, then, is what I mean when I distinguish expression, construction and negotiation of meaning and when I claim that language verbalises a speaker's orientation to and interaction with the "real world", their interlocutors and the unfolding discourse itself.

While these sentences are clearly contrived, they point to the idea that language is not just verbalised thought but verbalised behaviour aimed at affecting the (verbal) behaviour of others through the ongoing negotiation of subject positions within a social context - or in Halliday's terms, through the lexicogrammatical realisation of particular semantic options from the system of meaning potential in a social context (e.g. Halliday 1978).

Also important here is the claim that discourse must be analysed as behaviour in real time, as B's single utterance "It's too dark" meant different things at different moments in the discourse - it does not convey both meanings at once, or either/or, but each meaning separately at different times or to the different interlocutors, an analysis beyond those methods which deal with text/discourse as *product* as opposed to *process* (cf. Widdowson 1979, Chapter 7).

This notion of negotiated process, however, does not detract from the need for structure, but emphasises that any seeming post hoc structural unity is actually a result of an ongoing active dialectic between the real-time state of the discourse and "a mind armed with a particular type of schema" (Bourdieu 1990:55). As the conversation analysts put it, speakers "orient to" (Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998:1) existing structures:

[4] N.B. my use of "had projected" as opposed to the more conventional "projects". This is as utterances are to be analysed in real time, a concept that is brought out at various points in this paper.
[5] Cf. Dik's (1989:256) distintion between the illocutionary intention of the speaker, illocutionary interpretation of the addressee, and the illocution-as-coded-in the-expression.

> …resources…while they are not tied to the specific occasion of use are none the less utilised in a way which attends to the unique features of that local occasion. In this sense, talk-in-interaction can be described as an abstract, structural phenomenon, without going against the idea that participants are knowledgeable agents who are not somehow "caused" to act by the structure but actively use it to accomplish particular communicative actions.
>
> Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998:141

This is counter to Foucault's heavily deterministic position that subjects necessarily fill the structural spaces created around them (Foucault 1972), criticised, amongst others, by Fairclough:

> Foucault's insistence upon the subject as an effect of discursive formations has a heavily structuralist flavour which excludes active social agency in any meaningful sense…The position I shall advocate…is a dialectical one, which sees social subjects as shaped by discursive practices, yet also capable of reshaping and restructuring those practices.
>
> Fairclough 1992a:45

Fairclough's perspective deals not just with orientations towards the formal framework of discourse, as the conversation analytical approach does, but also with the use of the lexicogrammar to create subjects position *within and through* the utterances that make up this framework. Use of the lexicogrammar, therefore, is seen as an agentive activity which draws on existing structures for a speaker's own real-time purposes. This is Bourdieu's notion of practice, seen as neither structuralism nor phenomenology but the selective use of structure in real-time situations, a move from *ergon* to *energia* (Bourdieu 1990: 94, though the level of agency Bourdieu credits participants with is left unresolved). In terms of "thick" grammatical analysis, this is the use of the various lexicogrammatical resources to build up the threefold subject position of the speaker according to the real-time context of interaction. This is very similar to Halliday's approach, on which it is based, but I find systemic grammar overly structuralist in its presentation of systems networks as routes leading to specific lexicogrammatical realisations (e.g. Halliday 1973). This gives the impression that all the legwork is done on the sociosemantic side to produce an off-the-peg complex lexicogrammatical structure, with the form-to-function relation applying to utterances as a whole[6]. I prefer to see the speaker as grappling with a multifaceted meaning potential and creatively drawing on the different metafunctions of the grammar and manipulating them to realise the desired pragmatic-semantic effect through an amalgam, or gestalt, of lexicogrammatical features. This level of choice and goal-oriented creativity extends to ideational concepts themselves, as demonstrated by Shi-xu (1994, 1996), who shows how participants draw on different aspects of lexemic meaning potential to construct representations of reality suitable to their discursive goals (see also Lakoff 1987:79-84 for a discussion of selective constructions of the concept MOTHER). This approach seems to bring out both the agency behind every choice, and the specific effect of each of these, alone and in combination, on the

[6] Although this may be chiefly the result of a mode of presentation; the functional side of Systemic Functional Grammar (n.b. Halliday 1994) gives a different perspective.

utterance in context. This perspective is a little lost in systemic grammar which tends to portary utterances as holistic though ultimately analysable products suited to a specific context as opposed to my highly agentive "pick-and-mix" view of utterance formation[7]. For this reason I distinguish between semantic *options* available within the system, agentive *choice* from among these, and *resources* of the lexicogrammatical system (for realising the semantic choice from among the options), all of which are at some time or another referred to as "options" in Systemic Functional Grammar.

My approach, then, is based on a strong notion of agency in discourse, both in terms of the sequencing of events and of their internal lexicogrammatical form. This agentive choice orients to structural rules - aids to communication and action that have been formulated over the centuries so that knowledge may pass from one generation to the next without having to be reinvented. Such a view of structure by definition implies that these structures are neither compulsory nor immutable. They are the well-trod paths, no more, and at each point they are open to renegotiation (which they constantly undergo in the process of transmission from speaker to speaker). As Hasan and Perret claim (1994:221), form is a "resource for meaning" and its context should be "defined by the meanings at risk in it". This suggests tension, creativity and change in the use of the lexicogrammar and echoes Bourdieu's notion of practice (1990:98&
99):

> Quite apart from the trouble-makers who call into question the game itself and its apparently flawless mechanisms…, even when the agent's dispositions are as
> perfectly harmonised as possible and when the sequence of actions and reactions seems entirely predictable from outside, uncertainty remains as to the outcome of the interaction until the whole sequence is completed.

In view of this, Bourdieu and Passeron put forward the notion of *practical competence* as "the ability to embed utterances in strategies which are tacitly adjusted to the relations of forces between speakers" (in Harvey 1992:79) and Bourdieu talks, though not in specific relation to language, of the "transgressions of wise men" (1990:104), the ability of those who have mastered the structures to go beyond them. However, this notion targets issues of sequence rather than thickness. Combining both considerations leads to my definition of *intersubjective competence* as

> that aspect of *communicative competence* which enables a speaker to participate in socially situated discourse - not necessarily appropriately, but by continuous negotiation of their multiple subject positions, drawing on the resources of the lexicgrammatical system to manipulate meaning potential as it unfolds in the discourse.

This notion of intersubjective competence (IC) is different from the more traditional *communicative competence*, or at least emphasises one particular aspect of it, in that it

[7] This allows, of course, for formulaic "constructions", provided the use of such formulae is also seen as a matter of individual choice.

caters more for the meaning "at risk", "the troublemakers" and the "transgressions of wise men". Communicative competence, on the other hand, has often tended, in practice at least, to rely heavily on culturally-bound set responses, or "isolates" (Widdowson 1979:248), and notions of "appropriateness" (Fairclough 1992b) based in existing power relations and, therefore, ultimately inapproriate in certain social contexts.

Criticising the supposed univerality of Grice's cooperative principle, Eggins and Slade (1997:43) make a point that is of equal importance to notions of communicative competence: "most or many conversations are marked by disagreement and by the absence of support". Similarly, in the words of Fairclough (1989:10), from whom I take the notion of the right and the ability to be inapproptriate:

> Pragmatics often appears to describe discourse as it might be in a better world, rather than discourse as it is…Social context is acknowledged but kept in its place, which does it less that justice.

IC, then, looks at the ability to manipulate (or even ignore) the structures rather than follow them, to create one's own multiple subject positioning rather than assuming the roles set up by others, to create the uncertainy and the risk that are not resolved until the "the whole sequence is completed" and the process becomes a product[8].

Analysis, therefore, must look to this process and the creation and manipulation of risk, the ongoing negotiation and confrontation between subjects as context is created anew at every turn:

> …what is sometimes referred to as the context of situation can, and should, be defined in such a way that it subsumes everything in the co-text that bears upon the question of cohesion, coherence and relevance.
>
> Lyons 1995:271

Sinclair (1992) takes this further, claiming that context has no linear sequence, but is the sum of relevant information in the interlocutors' minds at each new time of utterance, that is, in unfolding real time, whether this accurately reflects what was actually said at the original time of utterance or not[9]. This is relevant not just in its opposition to the standard view of coherence and cohesion, often based on linearity and recentness, but also as it brings in the relational state of play between the interlocutors, the intersubjective context, which must also form part of the context of situation and affects our interpretation of the discourse.

Interpreting discourse as process and emphasising the ever-changing context of each utterance points to the limitations of some approaches that deal very much with the text as product and can fall into the habit of number-crunching. For example, Critical Language Studies (CLS, n.b. Kress and Hodge 1979) often takes an extremely static

[8] In other words, the ability to realise of one's own subject positioning through language. This is quite the opposite of what Fairclough (**) calls the "technologisation of language".

[9] Cf. Dik's (1989:8) concept of the perceived gap between P_S and P_A, the "pragmatic information" of speaker and addressee at the time of utterance.

and structural view of social relations; Critical Discourse Analysis tends to adopt a featutre-by-feature analytical approach towards the text as product[10]; while some later practical work in SFL (see for example Eggins and Slade 1997:109&110) often lists formal features at the expense of the link between the utterance and its immediate circumstances of production, neglecting SFL's theoretical underpinnings. This failing is brought to book by the conversation analysts:

> …policies of simply counting the number of questions, or coding the type of question asked, can run the risk of not being sensitive enough to the more basic sense of context stressed by CA: the local sequential context of talk in which utterances are produced.
>
> Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998:164

CA, on the other hand, focuses almost exclusively on the structural aspect of discourse and is extremely wary of subject positions (unless specifically referred to in the text itself), the feature of CDA most applicable to IC (and see Billig 1999a&b and Schegloff 1999a&b for the debate between the CA and CDA approaches to this issue). CA also emphasises the immediate context of utterance, as against the total context suggested by Sinclair and Dik (above). This wider context of discourse is highlighted in the Ethnography of Speaking, but strictly lexiciogrammatical analysis is thin on the ground (though see Duranti 1994, which concentrates on one aspect in depth) and context by and large refers to the context of culture to the exclusion of the context of text. Interactional Sociolinguistics draws on the cultural insights of the Ethnography of Speaking as well as the structural approach of CA, and does deal with the context of text, but its primary target is finding areas of misunderstanding and so focuses on relevant exchanges and highlights chiefly isolated areas of the lexicogrammar that seem to be the cause of these misunderstandings.

All of these approaches are lacking in one way or another in sensitivity to the immediate context of each utterance, the emphasis on discourse as process. Thick grammatical analysis, then, is a step towards counteracting this by drawing simultaneously on insights from all these approaches whenever appropriate, without focusing on any particular one, as all contribute to an understanding of discourse as a process, of talk as practice guided by cultural assumptions, social relations and habitualised scripts. Every utterance, therefore, should be analysed from the point of view of the contexts of culture, institution and situation, as well as the unfolding context of text in which it is situated; its lexicogrammatical content; the speech acts realised; and the subject positions so constructed. Such a holistic approach is essential in detailing the ongoing negotiation of subject positions, and while it may be impossible to undertake such a complex analysis on each utterance within a text, it is necessary, for a true picture of speech as behaviour, to place each utterance analysed within a context based on these features so as to provide a satisfactory understanding of where the participants stand in relation to each other at the time of utterance and

[10] See Widdowson (2000:156-157) for a similar critique of the CDA approach; although Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, n.b. p.152) is a rearticulation of CDA that recognises and attempts to overcome such limitations.

how this relates to the multiple aspect of the utterance produced. In short, the analysis should be in context, in depth and in full.

Dik (1989:4) approaches this notion of negotiating subject positions when he states that:

> Communication can be seen as a dynamic, interactive pattern of activities through which NLUs [Native Language Users] effect certain changes in the pragmatic information of their communication partners.

I would extend this definition, however, from changes in merely "pragmatic information", which seems to be biased towards the language-as-information idea, to cover "changes in subject positions" - in relation to the stated idea, the interpersonal relations and the context. From this point of view, discourse is the negotiated transition from one context to the next in real time. Meaning potential (cf. Halliday 1973) is the tension between the immediate context of utterance, including the perlocutionary effect of the most recent utterance, and the perlocutionary intent of the next speaker: the speaker's reaction to the context-as-a-whole, and their desire to turn the discourse to their advantage, drawing on all the resources of the contextualised lexicogrammar. Figure One tries to capture these ideas of context, meaning potential and realisation of intended meaning:

	context of culture→
	context of institution→
Context	*context of situation (including personal relationship)→*
	context of text→
	immediately prior speech act→
Meaning potential	*perlocutionary effect of context→*
	perlocutionary intent of speaker→
Realisation	*concept - ideational, interpersonal and textual→*
	lexicogrammatical realisation - choices from systems

Figure One: Context and realisation of a speech act → = "informs"

Such an approach begs two fundamental questions: Can interlocutors really be performing such complex acts at such speed and as agents? And: How is the analyst able to read the mind of the interlocutors to gauge their understandings and intentions?

In reponse to the first of these I quote Sacks (Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998:138):

> When people start to analyse social phenomena…then if you have to make an elaborate analysis of it - that is to say, show that they did something as involved as some of the things I have proposed - then you figure that they couldn't have thought that fast. I want to suggest that you have to forget that completely. Don't worry about how fast they're "thinking". Just try to come to terms with how it is that the thing comes off. Because you'll find that they

> can do these things…So just let the materials fall as they may. Look to see how it is that persons go about producing what they produce…

Speakers do produce these complex meanings, relying on precedent surely, but also as unique behaviour appropriate to a unique situation. And hearers, as "sophisticated veterans of perception" (Tannen 1979 in Saville-Troike 1982:152), more or less successfully understand the intent behind the message. Otherwise their would be no communication. Taking language to be a social semiotic construct it cannot by definition evolve beyond the capacities of its users, both speakers and hearers. And where there is a mismatch between speaker intention and hearer understanding this is marked and becomes interesting in terms of an examination of norms and expectations and differentiated use of the lexicogrammar (the areas of interest of the Ethnography of Speaking and Interactional Sociolinguistics).

As for analysts, we too are "veterans of perception". As Widdowson (1979:165&166) puts it, in terms of written discourse:

> I think the inaccessibility of intuitions has been somewhat exaggerated. The writer of a particular instance of discourse may have individual intentions, but he has to convey these through certain conventions which define the kind of discourse he is producing. If conventions did not exist to mediate the communication between writer and reader, then intentions could not be conveyed at all.

Of course there will be misinterpretations, especially when analyst and producer are from different cultures, and for this reason it is essential for conscientious analysis that feedback be obtained from the original participants, as in the methodology of Interactional Sociolinguistics - though this in itself will not be completely reliable and the analyst must bring their intuitions to bear here also (and cf. Bourdieu 1990, Chapter One, on objectification objectified).

Generally, then, once we have completed formal analyses based on theories and methodologies, we must stand back as civilians, as *speakers of language*, and ask ourselves "Does this ring true? Is this what we felt and understood from the text?" In the end all social scientific theory is based on just such resonances.

2. Sample text.

The following analysis follows the pattern set out in Figure One, analysing the context from culture through institution to situation. Then a short description is given of the flow of conversation as far as the last utterance of the context of text. Then follows an in-context, in-depth and (more or less) in-full grammatical analysis of the reply to this, emphasising subject positioning in both utterances. The grammatical analysis builds up the complexity of the utterances, beginning from the central ideational concept and gradually adding modal and textual elements. In this it roughly follows the presentation of Dik's (1989) Functional Grammar (while maintaining the terminology of SFL as presented in Halliday 1994). This is not intended to imply that I believe that the utterance is progressively modified in this way: as I have made clear above, I

view the entire utterance as an amalgam realising a complex concept, with each part contributing to the complex subject position of the speaker. Semantics, like grammar, is thick, not deep. The approach taken, however, is convenient as a means of linear presentation, and may reflect in some way the order of processing of the various components once they have been amalgamated within the complex concept. The analysis of the process of realisation begins with the lexicogrammar of the utterance produced and works back to the perlucutionary intent analysing the choice of meaning from within the potential of the system, the thick concept, on the way. This, not unusually for analysis, is the reverse order suggested for the creative act itself in Figure One.

2.1 Context: Culture, Institution, Situation.

The following exchange took place between myself and a friend G, who is German by birth but married to M., from the States, her second husband, and has been living in the United States for some thiry years. She is older than me, of that generation that came to feminism after the horse had bolted: that is, its principles, formulated by a younger generation, became important only after they themselves had personally gone through marriage and child-rearing within the old order. G. is avowedly capitalist and espouses the kind of individualism that emphasises the right to take your own decisions in order to enhance your lifestyle within a context of hard work[11].

I am British (and therefore assumed to have some "reserve"), of the generation that was just becoming adult during the eighties, when some of the stronger feminist ideas were being espoused and taken up, especially within my middle class liberal background (and by my wife, who is definitely not from that background), not without some backlash. I am avowedly Catholic and leftist and espouse a view of society that emphasises the rights of others. A woolly liberal to the pragmatic G.

The two participants are therefore arguing from within very different contexts of cultures and this will have a marked bearing on our discussion, as it always does, even when not explicitly stated. However, we have in common the experience of being expatriates. This carries with it opposing views, relating to economic and intercultural politics, but also the shared experience of being a long way from home and living without certain facilities that are taken for granted there.

The conversation takes place in Guyana's main international hotel, used almost exclusively by visiting businessmen and well-to-do Guyanese as a place to socialise. Most of the clientele, therefore, work either for transnational corporations or have economically successful businesses locally. Business, therefore, is a frequent topic of conversation, with participants generally sharing neoliberal political and business ideology, indeed presupposing such views as a basis to conversation.

The weekly "cocktail party", an occasion for many ex-pats to come together and socialise informally (and drink free rum), has finished and the group has now moved

[11] Though clearly simplified, this description is the result of a year's friendship and conversations, not just immediate impressions.

to the poolside bar. This is an occasion for "bonding", often by gender, and making contacts on an informal basis, with the usual banter and repartee on the battle of the sexes, national stereotypes, etc. My wife, Mary, and I are talking to G. and her husband as a subgroup within a crowd of a dozen or so gathered around the semicircular bar, standing and sitting. It is important that although the exchange is between G. and myself, Mary, in particular, and M. are an "audience" to the discourse (Goffman 1959:110).

2.2 Context: Co-text.

The conversation has been on childbirth and rearing, with G. chiefly relating her experiences and comparing them with Mary. This has created a "lighthearted" discussion on the hard lot of women and the insensitivity of men in general. G.'s husband M. and I have been playing the usual role of villain-cum-comic demanded of husbands in these situations, while Mary has been dutifully expressing solidarity with G. and discussing how our two children were both delivered by Caesarian section and how this means that any third birth would also be so. Our youngest child is eight, so Mary is now a fair bit older than when she last gave birth. In this context, G. exclaims:

You gotta have a vasèctomy, Tom. D' ya want Mary to go through all that agáin?

2.3 Meaning potential.

Here I look at the perlocutionary effect of G.'s utterance on me, her interlocutor, within the contexts as described above, and the options for speech-as behaviour this presented me with, within the new context, looking at a few of the lexicogrammatical features that led to this effect. Further features will be discussed within the analysis of my counter-utterance, which is looked at in more depth.

Primarily, I felt aggrieved that it was taken for granted that I had neither considered a vasectomy nor was I willing to undergo one, with the implication that I was putting my petty macho concerns of my own above Mary's health. G. has clearly created this impression. By placing me as both Theme and Subject of a neutral, common-sense obligation (HAVE TO, cf. MUST, etc.) to have a vasectomy, I am brought to the fore of the discussion and the implication is made that I, as Subject, the peg on which the truth of the statement hangs, am going against the common-sense order of things, that the only thing that stands between Mary and more suffering is me me having a vasectomy and that, as this is so obviously the correct thing to do (HAVE TO), it is willful obstinacy on my part that keeps Mary in danger. This is compounded as I am then kept to the fore, as Theme again, and positioned as the Subject of WANT, the Experiencer of the projected clause "Mary to go through all that again", which as a non-negotiable minor clause is seen as relying entirely on me, the Subject, the Experiencer's, wants, reinforcing the impression created in the first utterance that it is all down to me. The rising stress here is on "agáin", this is the New information and focal point of G's question. This creates a sneaking suspicion in my mind that the Given information is that I wanted Mary to go through all "that" before and that her

sufferings were my fault for getting her pregnant, my wants as a man, etc. This all fits in with my view of both G.'s present feminist views on birth control and the experience of the older generation of "catering to men's needs".

This rankled with me as an individual, as a challenge to my cherished view of myself as a caring member of society and a decent husband, and for ideological reasons, with its explicit presupposition that I, *as a man*, and perhaps also as a Brit and Catholic, would not have considered a vasectomy either for reasons of machismo or religious conservatism.

So: G. has made a statement and posed a question which functions as an accusation, projecting as the unmarked response either an admission of guilt or a denial. My reply is:

You want me to have it done hêre?

2.4 The lexicogrammar.

2.4.1 Speech act.

The first thing to notice about my response is its function as a speech act. Whereas G.'s accusation projected as an unmarked response a denial or an admission of guilt, I have to some extent been inappropriate in that I have issued a counter-accusation. How this is marked by the grammar and various parallels and contrasts with G.'s accusation in the battle over subject positions will be brought out as the lexicogrammatical analysis thickens.

2.4.2 Concept.

Shi-xu (1994,1996) demonstrates how speakers gradually, creatively and selectively construct the meaning of concepts to suit their needs in unfolding discourse, drawing on the lexemic meaning potential inherent in vocabulary items. Again the speaker *orients towards* structure, a process Bourdieu (1990, on *practice*) compares to extending and modifying a large house according to an intuitive sense of taste rather than building the whole edifice in one go and according to the set rules of one style.

In the exchange analysed, I have taken the concept of "vasectomy", and changed the emphasis from a mode of birth control, which G. orients to (as safer for Mary), and brought out its properties as a surgical operation (as foolhardy "here"). This reconstruction of "vasectomy" underlies, and is brought about by, my reformulation of G.s utterance itself, as part of the ideational metafunction, and my presentation of Given and New, as part of the textual metafunction, analysed below.

2.4.3 Transitivity and the ideational metafunction.

An analysis of the ideational aspect of my response following Functional Grammar would be:

α		’β
you	want	me to have it done here?
Senser	Process:mental: affective	Projection

This mirrors G.’s original accusation in that the projected clause relies for its existence on the Senser, thus placing responsibility for the Projection on G., where G.’s utterance had placed responsibility for a different Projection on me. Placing the responsibility on G. also has the effect of counteracting the objective modality of her earlier utterance *Tom, you gotta have a vasectomy*. As well as shifting responsibility, however, an analysis of the Projection shows that G.s utterance itself has been reformulated, not just through a negotiation of the meaning of vasectomy, but also through the way agency is differentiated in the lexicogrammar of the two utterances. The projected clause displays the following relations of transitivity:

me	to have	it	done	here
?	Process: material	Goal		Circumstance

In this clause the role of “me” is ambiguous. There are in fact three similar constructions here. The first of these is exemplified by “I have a bath” where “I” is the Actor and “bath” the Range of a material process, in that “bath” provides the lexical content for delexicalised “have”, the whole clause being paraphrasable as “I bathed”. This is clearly not the construction here - which would be realised by *You want me to have* one *here?* Both the second and third constructions are possibilities, however. The second, agnate to *I had it done (**to myself**).* allocates agency to the Subject as Initiator as in *The general marced the troops up the hill.* A paraphrase would be *I got somebody to do it (to me).* On the other hand, *I had it done (**to me**).* seems to be agnate with *I had my bike stolen.* I can find no mention of such participant roles in the Functional Grammar literature, but I suggest the term Victim as the Process involved is usually seen as harmful. The chômeur for this role is ON as in *Someone stole my bike on me.* (which I think is used more in Celtic Englishes than in other varieties and probably derives from Irish Gaelic). The construction with HAVE is the form for presenting the Victim as Subject (BE and HAVE are often complementary in such constructions). The other participants would be Actor and Goal in this construction, which I imagine can only be used with material Processes[12].

In the present analysis, then, it is not clear which of the latter two constructions is realised, as this could only be disambiguated by adding either “to me” or “to myself”, either of which is possible here. The allocation of agency is therefore unresolved,

[12] This pair of constructions seems to raise questions regarding reflexivisation in general and Chomsky’s notion of c-command in particular as the choice of either “me” or “myself” in the sentence *I had it done to me/myself.* seems to depend on the functional notion of agency rather than any structural properties.

with “me” as either Instigator or Victim. What is apparent, however, is that my Projection is a subtle reformulation of G.’s original utterance, which *did* contain the “have a bath” construction ruled out here. By reformulating this and, in doing, so leaving unstated my own level of agency in the Process, I have cleared the way for the Senser of the matrix clause, seen as bringing the Projection into being, to step into the agentive vacuum, increasing the burden of responsibility already placed on this participant - that is, G. - through other lexicogrammatical means. The sum effect, within the ideational metafunction, is that I have reformulated G.’s picture of me as freely choosing to use birth control into a picture of G. forcing me to undergo surgery. This picture is reinforced and taken even further through the manipulative use of the other metafunctions.

2.4.4 The interpersonal metafunction.

A functional representation of the utterance is as follows:

<table>
<tr><td>α</td><td colspan="2">’β</td></tr>
<tr><td>You</td><td>want</td><td>me to have it done here?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Subject</td><td>Finite/Pred.</td><td>Complement</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Mood</td><td>Residue</td></tr>
</table>

The Mood here is declarative, Subject^Finite, and the intonation is low-high with a rise-fall contour on “here”. This is a marked question form, one which questions not the content of the utterance but the very utterance itself. The use of the declarative mood suggests that I am merely repeating or verbalising someone else’s proposition, that the words are not mine, while the rising intonation brings out the utterance’s function as a question. A gentle rising intonation would suggest that I was seeking clarification, but the extreme intonation here is used to suggest incredulity at the nature of the utterance questioned (which is ironic here, given that this is in fact a reformulation).

The adjacency pair accusation-denial/admission projected that the unmarked response would have the second speaker as Subject of their own response, e.g. *Of course I don’t!* Instead, I have chosen, through the use of a counter-accusation, to maintain G. in Subject position - the participant “responsible for the success of the proposal” (Martin *et al*. 1997:65), “the ‘perspective’ from which the state of affairs is presented” (Dik 1989:24). This, combined with the reformulation of G.’s original utterance and the question of agency, above, serves to keep G. and her evil intentions towards me under the spotlight and take pressure away from my own part in the proceedings.

The projected clause has the following Mood structure:

me	to have	it	done	here
Subject		Complement		Adjunct
	Predicator			

The fact that this clause is both subordinate (hypotactic) and lacking a Finite (and therefore Mood) makes it difficult to negotiate and so renders it somewhat of a presupposition, even though it is embedded within a question (of some kind) - again an irony, given that it is a reformulation. "me" as Subject suggests the process is seen from my perspective, that its truth hangs on my participation, but this is an illusion: my Subjecthood exists only within a non-negotiable Projection of G.'s wants. The importance of the Adjunct "here" will be shown in the textual analysis.

The combined efect of matrix and embedded clause is that the truth of a formally presupposed state of affairs, reformulated as unpleasant for me yet dependent on my participation, ultimately rests on G. as Subject of the matrix clause. This mirrors her responsibility, as Senser, for bringing this very state of affairs into existence, an action met with the incredulity of my intonation pattern. The pressure's piling on.

2.4.5 The textual metafunction.

The textual representation of the utterance is:

α		’β		
You	want	me	to have it done	**hêre**?
Theme	Rheme			
		Theme	Rheme	
Given				New

The Theme of the matrix clause "you" corresponds to G. and is therefore held up as contrastive to the "you" of G.'s utterance (which was me), whereas the unmarked accusation-denial/admission would have projected continuity of theme - that is, me. As Theme relates a clause to its place within the cotext, this means that rather than seeing myself as the textual bridge, I have decided that continuity depends rather on G.'s place in the discourse and her furnishing an explanation. This contrastive Tom-G. Theme structure also highlights the combative nature of the exchange brought about by other lexicogrammatical resources.

The Given of the utterance is that G. wants me to undergo some process, "to have it done", which, as we have seen, is a distortion of G.'s original utterance, and therfore not really given at all. The New is "here". Now, given our shared presuppositions about the risks of operations in underdeveloped countries, this emphasises the "unpleasant operation" construction of "vasectomy" and lends weight to the ideational

interpretation of "me" as Victim in "me to have it done", thus denying my alternative role as Instigator and confirming G.'s agency in the whole damn affair!

2.5 Meaning.

Taking all the above features as a whole, as an amalgam, brings out the following meaning: G. has made an accusation that calls into question my cherished liberalism and my concern for Mary's welfare. I turn this accusation back on her by holding her accusation up to ridicule, suggesting that she is in fact coercing me into undergoing an unpleasant and potentially dangerous operation in an underdeveloped country and that if this is the case then she would be in some way responsible for the consequences. This is an accusation she must challenge by gainsaying her original portayal of me as uncaring and heedless of the safety of others if she does not want to be seen in that very light herself. Of course, the serious content of the accusation is situated within battle-of-the-sexes playfulness, and is therefore downplayed and acceptable. My stance is intended both for G. as interlocutor and Mary as audience.

2.6 Subject positioning.

I have claimed above that language is "a series of resources for verbally instantiating multiple subject positions within specific contexts", and that these subject positions relate to the speaker's stance with regard to the "real world", their interlocutors, and the unfolding text in contexts, the ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions. In setting up a subject position for themself, however, a speaker is also setting up a subject position for their interlocutors, the self defined against the other. This is, then, a battleground.

In the analysis above, I, as speaker, have taken up a very particular stance with regard to the "real world" through my renegotiation of the meaning of the concept "vasectomy" and the parts that are being played out by myself and G., realised through the semantic roles of Victim and agentive Senser and by the use of (reformulated) presuppostions. Thus my stance towards the ideational element in the exchange is clearly differentiated from G.'s: in fact, it is in conflict. This is part of my subject positioning.

Similarly, I negotiate my position in the unfolding text by renegotiating the speech role textually projected for me by the adjacency pair denial/admission, at the same time forcing (or attempting to force) G. to fill that position. This is formally reinforced by my thematisating of G. highlighting her relevance to the unfolding text at this point, just as I am diminishing my own relevance. Again, this is a specific stance towards the text, and one that has to be negotiated.

Interpersonally, I orientate myself towards G. by holding up to ridicule her (reformulated) utterance, the truth of which hinges upon her both as author and as Subject.

2.7 Perlocutionary intent.

Standing back as a speaker, do I believe that the whole amalgam of pragmatico-semantic meanings above was what I intended to convey with my eight-word utterance? Yes, more or less, I do. That is the power of the lexicogrammar.

3. Conclusion.

This paper highlights the importance of two main concepts: discourse as a real-time phenomenon and the need for a thick grammatical analysis of this process. The two approaches are necessarily complementary: the analysis of my utterance above would have been impossible without placing it as a real-time response to various elements of G.'s immediately preceding utterance.

The thick approach also runs counter to ideas of deep semantics. In concrete, my selective conceptualisation of "vasectomy" and the corresponding reformulation of G.'s utterance show how semantic unity is created synergetically using the multiple resources of the lexicogrammatical system. Meaning is not "deep" and "surface" but an amalgam of interdependent resources. This aspect is missed by those approaches that analyse discourse as a product. The post hoc unity of discourse may give the impression of structured and socially deterministic discourse but it is in fact the result of negotiation and tension, of process and practice, of real-time agentive orientation towards structure and combative subject positioning.

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