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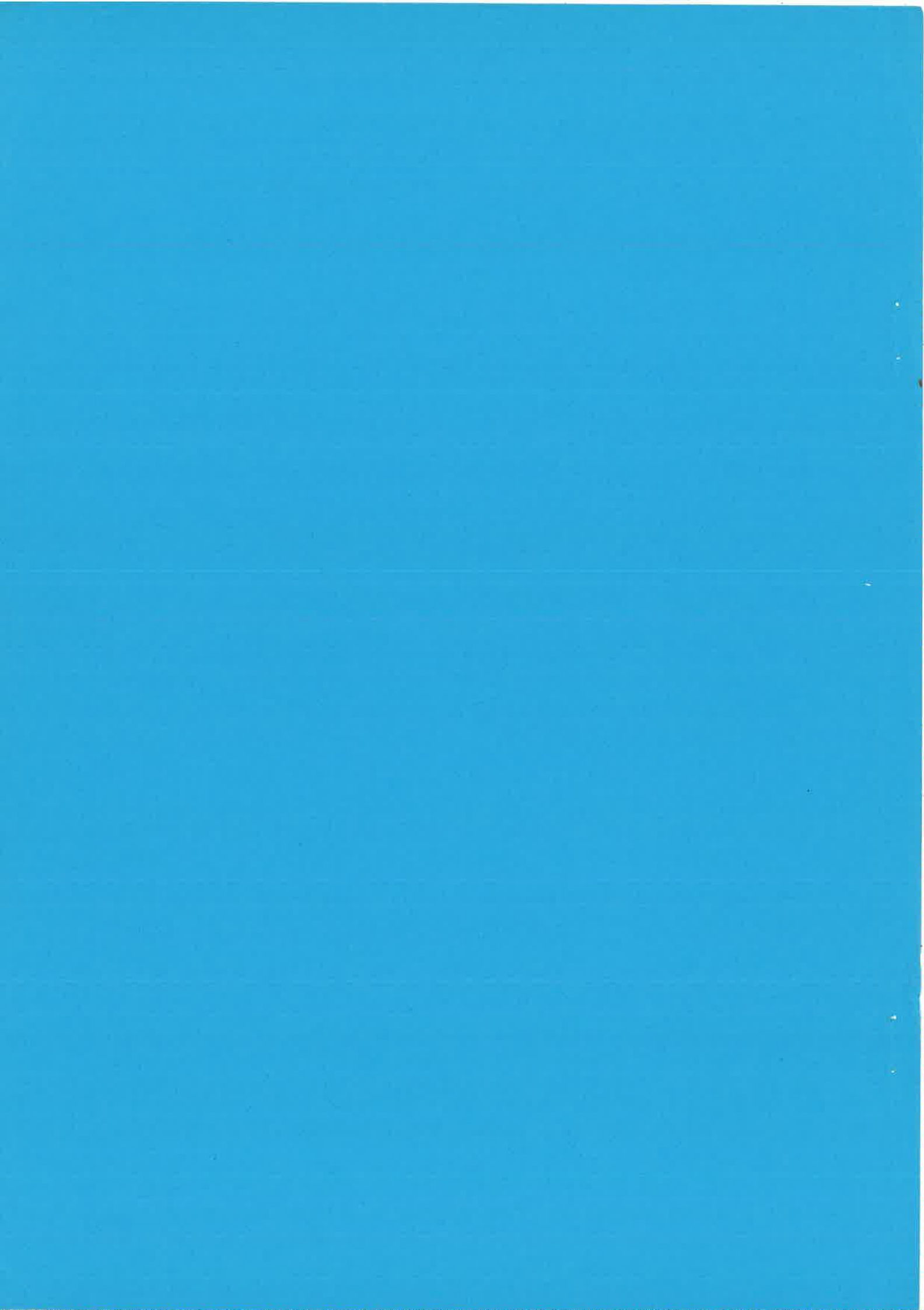
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Bystander and social deixis:  
some programmatic remarks on the grammar/pragmatics interface  
Jan Rijkhoff  
Universität Konstanz



**BYSTANDER AND SOCIAL DEIXIS:  
some programmatic remarks on the grammar/pragmatics interface<sup>1</sup>**

Jan N.M. Rijkhoff

Abstract

This article proposes a number of changes in the representation of utterances which should lead to a better fit of Functional Grammar (FG) in a wider theory of verbal interaction, especially in the area of bystander and social deixis. First I argue that —besides Speaker S and Addressee(s) A— Bystanders should be represented at the interpersonal level as a distinct third party in the fully specified underlying structure of an utterance, and that the variable symbolizing this non-linguistic contextual entity (B) must be provided with certain features (sex, age, kinship relation with the speaker) in order to account for the actual effect(s) of B's presence on the form of S's utterance.

Then I contend that similar features must also be attached to the S(peaker) and H(earer) variables at the interpersonal level to capture certain aspects of the social identities of S and A, or the social relationship between S and A (or S and B), to the extent that this is reflected in the form of the utterance. Likewise the speech act variable E should be provided with features which define the formality level of the setting in which the speech act takes place and which are somehow relevant for the form of the utterance.

Finally I will argue that, for a more principled account of bystander and social deixis, a distinction must be made between *speech acts* and *speech events* in the representation of utterances.

## 0. Introduction

Since linguistic expressions are always used by people at a particular time and place, we may expect all languages to possess devices to integrate contextual information. Besides person, time, and place deixis, two more deictic categories can be distinguished: discourse deixis (which concerns references to portions of the surrounding discourse) and social deixis, which is concerned "with the grammaticalization, or encoding in language structure, of social information" (Levinson 1987: 93); bystander deixis is usually regarded as a subcategory of social deixis (ibid. 89-94). Here I will mainly deal with manifestations of social and bystander deixis in the **form** of the utterance (i.e. as reflected in the syntax, morphology, phonology,

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or lexicon).<sup>2</sup> Issues that are more directly related to the intention and interpretation of speech acts will mostly remain undiscussed.

Speech act theories usually take into account only two parties of the verbal exchange: speaker S and addressee(s) A. This is also reflected in Hengeveld's (1991) model of the underlying structure of utterances, which is partially repeated here for convenience (for a full description of the representation of utterances, see e.g. Dik 1989, Hengeveld 1991, Siewierska 1991):

(1) (E<sub>i</sub>: |Ill (Speaker) (Addressee) (Proposition X<sub>i</sub>: |SoA e<sub>i</sub>|(X<sub>i</sub>))|(E<sub>i</sub>))

The structure in (1) constitutes the *interpersonal level* of the representation of an utterance. 'E' symbolizes the speech act and 'Ill' an abstract illocutionary predicate (to be specified as DECL(ative), INT(errogative), etc.), which takes three arguments: the speech participants S and A, as well as the information that is communicated between S and A, i.e. proposition X, which can be evaluated in terms of its truth value. A proposition contains a *predication* (or: clause), which refers to a State-of-Affairs (SoA) symbolized by the e variable.

It will be demonstrated in section 1 that there are several reasons for introducing a distinct variable for a third party (besides S and A) in the underlying structure of an utterance, namely B (for 'Bystander'); for instance, there are many situations in which the form of S's utterance is co-determined by the presence of (sanctioned or non-sanctioned) bystanders who are within earshot of the speaker. This leads to the first modification of Hengeveld's model of the underlying structure of utterances:

Interpersonal level of the utterance:

(2) (E<sub>i</sub>: |Ill (Speaker) (Addressee) (Proposition X<sub>i</sub>: |SoA e<sub>i</sub>|(X<sub>i</sub>)) (B<sub>1</sub>) (B<sub>2</sub>) ... (B<sub>n</sub>))|(E<sub>i</sub>))

In (2) the abstract predicate frame ('Ill') is extended by **satellites** symbolizing bystanders (B) who are present in the non-linguistic context of the utterance and who are somehow relevant for the form of the utterance. It will be demonstrated that in most cases the B variable must

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<sup>2</sup> But note that "how something is said is part of what is said" (Hymes 1972: 59). On social deixis see also e.g. Fillmore (1975: 76); Anderson & Keenan (1985: 270-277).

be further specified by various features to account for [i] the role these bystanders play in the speech event and [ii] for the effect(s) they have on the form of the utterance. These features may relate to such factors as the kinship relation between S and B (which can often be characterized in terms of taboo relations), B's nationality, B's sex or age group, possibly even e.g. B's command of a certain language, dialect, or jargon (as estimated by S).

The underlying structure of the predication (which gives a description of an action, an event, a process or a state, i.e. SoA e) constitutes the *representational* level of the utterance (Hengeveld 1991: 3; cf. also Halliday 1970: 325).

Representational level of the utterance:

(3) (SoA e<sub>1</sub>: [pred<sub>V/N/A</sub> (arg<sub>1</sub>) ... (arg<sub>n</sub>) (sat<sub>1</sub>) ... (sat<sub>n</sub>)](e<sub>1</sub>))

In (3) 'pred' stands for the main (verbal, nominal, adjectival) predicate of the clause and 'arg' and 'sat' are short for the argument(s) and satellite(s); satellites are the more or less optional constituents of the predication (i.e. adverbials of time, space, cause, reason, etc.; cf. Dik et al. 1991; Hengeveld 1991). Notice that the introduction of satellites at the interpersonal level (4a) results in a (horizontal) mirror image of the structure at the representational level (4b):

(4)a. (E<sub>1</sub>: [Pred<sub>m</sub> (Arg<sub>S</sub>) (Arg<sub>A</sub>) (Arg<sub>X1</sub>) (Sat<sub>B1</sub>) ... (Sat<sub>Bn</sub>)] (E<sub>1</sub>))

(4)b. (e<sub>1</sub>: [pred<sub>V/N/A</sub> (arg<sub>1</sub>) ... (arg<sub>n</sub>) (sat<sub>1</sub>) ... (sat<sub>n</sub>)] (e<sub>1</sub>))

In section 2 I will argue that information about social identity must also be attached to the S(peaker) and A(ddressee) variables to the extent that this information is reflected in the form of the utterance.

Section 3 is devoted to features of *setting* that should be attached to the speech act variable E, i.e. properties of the physical or psychological context that determine the degree of formality of the setting in which the utterance takes place. Thus attention is paid to all four "standard" components of social deixis: the bystander, the speaker, the addressee, and the setting or scene (Levinson 1987: 90). However, since it will be shown that it is sometimes also necessary to indicate to what extent the proposition fits in the surrounding discourse (the topic of which can be dependent on the formal setting), I will propose that all variables at the

interpersonal level (E, S, A, X and B) must be further specified to account for social and bystander deixis in linguistic expressions (section 4).

Section 5 finally sketches a model for the representation of utterances in which a distinction is made between *speech acts* and *speech events*. I will contend that this "extended" model is more suitable for the representation of deictic elements than the current version.

## 1. Bystanders

Roughly speaking there are three kinds of situations in which bystanders are more or less an integral part of the speech event.<sup>3</sup>

- [a] when S's utterance is not so much directed to the (apparent) addressee, but rather to someone else present at the speech situation;
- [b] when due to the presence of certain bystanders the form of the utterance is changed so that only A will be able to fully understand its contents; that is, (part of) the propositional content is communicated in such a way that bystanders will not be able to understand the full content of the utterance (negative accommodation);
- [c] when S's changes the form of the utterance to show respect or politeness for certain bystanders (positive accommodation).

Each of these situations is briefly exemplified below.

### 1.1. Type [a] situations: indirect communication

Type [a] situations can be illustrated by the following story (from Morgan 1991: 434):

I was talking to some close women friends of mine when another close friend of mine they hadn't met, Dorothea, joined us. Well, Dorothea and I have been friends for years, but my other friends don't know her as well as I do. Anyway, we were all sitting around talking about how our lives have changed and Dorothea said "One thing I like about my life is that I don't have to have any babies if I don't want to. I think any woman who has more than two kids is crazy and needs her head examined." Now, no one said anything but two of my friends have four kids a piece and one of them was pregnant with her third child. Well, a little later on, after we had been drinking and laughing a bit, I was talking to one of the girls and Dorothea was sitting nearby. So my girlfriend says very loudly so that everyone could hear "I'm sorry that I have so many kids. I guess women like me

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Hymes (1972: 58-60), Comrie (1976), Brown & Fraser (1979: 45), Clark & Carlson (1982: 332 fn.2), Allan (1986b), Clark (1992), Clark & Schaefer (1992a, 1992b).

just don't have any sense and should just forget it and have our tubes tied!" I was so embarrassed that I didn't say anything.

Although such forms of indirect communication may seem marginal from a (white) European perspective, it has been argued that there are societies in which they are a much more integrated mode of verbal interaction. Morgan (1991: 424) writes: "Fisher (1976) and Reisman (1974) report that in the Caribbean, addressing remarks to (or about) a person within her/her hearing but through a "sham receiver" is a common practice [note omitted - JR]. The speaker avoids responsibility for the audience's assignment of intentionality by obviously and strategically providing conflicting symbols and signs. In Africa and the Caribbean, indirect communication occurs in contexts and within norms which all members of the society recognize as appropriate or inappropriate."

Sometimes instructions can also be categorized as Type [a] situations. A case in point is the way Walbiri boys are taught the secret language or *tjiliwiri speech* as part of their integration into ritual life (see also below). According to Hale (1971: 474) "..., the novices are exposed to rapid dialogues between guardians. In these dialogues, one guardian speaks *tjiliwiri* while the other answers, or rather interprets the message, in Walbiri."

In certain cultures the presence of a third party may even be a prerequisite, as when S wants to interact with a person of the opposite sex. Consider this remark about the Cuiva tribe of Columbia (Kerr 1977: 161): "When a conversation is mixed, women speak through their husbands to another man, and men speak through their wives to another woman."

To sum up, in situations of Type [a] the B variable symbolizes bystanders to whom the utterance is actually addressed and without whom the utterance would be pragmatically marked.

### **1.2. Type [b] situations: hiding (part of) the propositional content**

There are several ways to hide (part of) the propositional content from others present at the speech situation: word substitution, the (excessive) use of jargon, a special style or language variant, a secret or foreign language.

The simplest form of word substitution are probably "ad hoc" or "on-the-spot" substitutions, as when certain entities are referred to as "you-know-who/what" ("Is it true that you-know-who has left his wife?"). The deliberate and excessive employment of jargon is a

slightly more sophisticated strategy that is typically found in certain subcultures and professions (medical doctors, car mechanics).

A more elaborate and systematic strategy to prevent bystanders from partly or fully understanding the propositional content involves the use of secret languages, which are often found in the context of ritual events such as rites of passage, hunting expeditions, and religious ceremonies. Consider, for example, this citation from Foley (1986: 42):<sup>4</sup>

"While hunting, the Yimas prohibit the uttering of words denoting the animals being hunted, for fear that the latter will hear the hunter's plans and conceal themselves. Laycock (1969) reports a similar prohibition and rationale among the Buin of Bougainville. Clans among the Kuman are also said to have secret languages which are used in hunting expeditions (Laycock 1977). The justification provided here is that men of other clans must not learn of the hunters' plans."

The special language of initiated Walbiri men (*tjiliwiri* or 'up-side-down Walbiri') mentioned above may serve as an example again here. In this language each noun, verb and pronoun is replaced by an antonym to disguise the contents from uninitiated bystanders. Thus, the expression 'I am short' would actually mean 'You are tall'.<sup>5</sup>

However, one can also find examples of such languages in less exotic places (from the author's perspective). For instance, the fishermen from IJmuiden (a small fishing port on the coast of North-Holland) use a special language in the presence of e.g. competing fishermen from nearby villages such as Katwijk. To keep these people in the dark about the size of the catch they pronounce the syllables backwards while leaving the inflectional ending of the verb in tact. Thus, *vang-en* catch-Inf 'to catch' becomes *gnaven*. This secret language, referred to as *omgekeerd praten* 'reverse talk', is now on the decline but it was very popular between the late 19th century and the end of the second world war.

Notice that in more "exotic" cultures bystanders may also include animals (see Foley's citation above) and supernaturals. The Chinese and the Marsh Arabs, for instance, are reported to call their young children by such names as "Mud" or "Pig" to avert the attraction

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<sup>4</sup> An extensive bibliography of secret languages that are used across the globe (including language games) can be found in Plénat (ed) 1991, pp. 118-125.

<sup>5</sup> It is appropriate to mention here that the Walbiri strongly requested "... that none of the knowledge be discussed with uninitiated Walbiri men or with Walbiri women and children" (Hale 1971: 472).



of evil spirits that could harm their children's health (Maxwell 1983: 182).

Thus in Type [b] situations the B-variable symbolizes non-sanctioned bystanders, from whom (part of) the propositional content should be kept hidden. Notice also that in the case of secret languages we are often dealing with morphological and phonological rules that are not part of the standard grammar. For instance, the secret language of teenagers of the Western Torres Straits involves "inserting after each syllable in a word an additional syllable beginning with *k* and repeating the vowel of the preceding syllable. Thus *yawo* 'goodbye' becomes, in this teenager secret language, *yakawoko*, ..." (Dixon 1980: 68). And to give an example concerning the phonological component: the secret language of the Lardil tribe *Damin* has four nasalised clicks that are not part of the conventional inventory of everyday Lardil (Dixon 1980: 66). This clearly shows that the representation of bystanders in the fully specified underlying structure of utterances is not just a matter of pragmatics: what is grammatically correct in one context is ungrammatical in another context. Any theory of grammar that aims at descriptive, typological and psychological adequacy must somehow take into account that grammatical rules cannot be separated from the pragmatic rules imposed by the conditions under which language is spoken, i.e. a theory of grammar is an integral part of a wider theory of verbal interaction (cf. Dik 1989: 5-6).

### 1.3. Type [c] situations: politeness and deference

In situations of Type [c] the form of the utterance is changed out of respect or politeness for persons who are within earshot. The so-called *avoidance styles* in Australian languages are a case in point. In all Australian aboriginal cultures there are certain kin relations that require special respectful linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour. These relations typically involve a man's in-laws (with the notable exception of a man's wife's sisters), especially a man's mother-in-law, with whom he has to avoid all contact (at least traditionally).<sup>6</sup> For instance, in Guugu Yimidhirr society a man and his mother-in-law do not sit in one another's presence, do not look at each other, approach one another, or stand face to face. Verbal interaction with other taboo-relations such as brother-in-laws is allowed, but then the man has to use the special *avoidance style*, which involves the use of an entirely distinct vocabulary.

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<sup>6</sup> Notice that in many cultures across the globe it is more respectful to be silent than to speak (see, for instance, Basso 1970 and Darnell 1991).

Furthermore the respectful language of the Guugu Yimidhirr is characterized by "a deliberately subdued voice, drawing out words and dropping into a near whisper. At the same time it is impolite to attempt physical proximity with one's in-laws; instead one *diili yirrgaalga* or *wurrin yirrgaalga* — that is, speaks "sideways" or "crosswise," neither facing one's interlocutor nor, if it can be avoided, addressing him or her directly" (Haviland 1979: 217, 234).

The point to be made here is that this avoidance style is not only used in direct communication (say between a man and his father-in-law), but also in the **presence** of a taboo relative (Dixon 1980: 59f.). Thus the strictly defined respectful style of the Australian aboriginal communities is another example of the effects bystanders may have on the form of the utterance.

As a final example of positive accommodation, let us take a situation in which a monolingual Englishman joins a group of Dutch colleagues who are having a conversation in their own language but who can also speak English. When it is clear that the Englishman wants to join the conversation, the Dutch will soon switch to English.

#### **1.4. Bystanders in the underlying representation**

The situations described in sections 1.1-1.3 clearly demonstrate that bystanders can play a significant role in speech events. In situations of Type [a] they are the actual addressees, in situations of Type [b] their presence causes S to resort to one of various strategies to hide the propositional content from them, and in situations of Type [c] they are the reason why S changes the form of his or her utterance to show respect or politeness. This three-way typology of bystander deixis gives only a rough characterization, of course; further research will undoubtedly prove that finer distinctions can or should be made.

To account for the effects of bystanders on (the representation of) utterances, it is necessary to specify in the underlying structure of the utterance (i) B's pragmatic role in the speech event and/or (ii) the relevant features of B that cause S to change the form of his or

her utterance.<sup>7</sup>

It seems that in situations of Type [a] B's socio-cultural properties are of little significance, so that only B's role in the non-linguistic context of the utterance should be specified. The main reason to include bystanders in Type [a] speech events is that, although the speaker is facing one party when uttering his/her message, (s)he is actually directing his/her utterance to another party (the apparent bystander), who is the addressee in the pragmatic sense. This can be indicated, for instance, by A' (= Addressee plus apostrophe):

(5) (E<sub>1</sub>: [III (S) (A) (X<sub>1</sub>) (B<sub>1</sub>=A')](E<sub>1</sub>))

In situations of Type [b], on the other hand, socio-cultural features of the bystander (often to be seen in relation to those of S) are more significant than the role (s)he plays in the speech event. However, the reason why S expresses (part of the) utterance in an unintelligible form for B can be due to one of a wide variety of socio-cultural factors, such as B's age group (as in the case of the secret language of teenagers), whether or not B has been initiated (as in the case of *tjiliwiri speech*, but note that sex and age play a prominent role here), whether or not B is regarded as a threat to the business interests of S and/or A (as in the case of the fishermen from IJmuiden), etc. In fact anything that places B outside a certain in-group may qualify as a potentially relevant feature of B in the underlying representation. Future typological research may produce a more or less exhaustive listing of all the relevant features and show to what extent they can be more economically or systematically captured in the form of a typology or hierarchy.

Now consider this (partial) representation to account for the use of the secret language

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<sup>7</sup> Bystanders must also be represented in the fully specified underlying structure of the utterance to account for certain forms of place deixis. To give an example, the Philippine language Samal has a four-way distinction on the proximal-distal dimension (Levinson 1987: 81): (i) close to speaker, (ii) close to addressee, (iii) close to audience (other members of conversational group), (iv) close to persons present but outside the conversational group that consists of speaker, addressee(s) and audience. Using the B-variable, Samal demonstrative pronouns can be represented as follows:

- |       |                      |   |  |
|-------|----------------------|---|--|
| (i)   | (prox.S              | ... x <sub>i</sub> : Φ <sub>1</sub> (x <sub>i</sub> ): ... : Φ <sub>n</sub> (x <sub>i</sub> ) | [close to Speaker S]   |
| (ii)  | (prox.A              | ... x <sub>i</sub> : Φ <sub>1</sub> (x <sub>i</sub> ): ... : Φ <sub>n</sub> (x <sub>i</sub> ) | [close to Addressee A]                                       |
| (iii) | (prox.B <sub>1</sub> | ... x <sub>i</sub> : Φ <sub>1</sub> (x <sub>i</sub> ): ... : Φ <sub>n</sub> (x <sub>i</sub> ) | [close to B <sub>1</sub> → attending, non-speaking party]    |
| (iv)  | (prox.B <sub>2</sub> | ... x <sub>i</sub> : Φ <sub>1</sub> (x <sub>i</sub> ): ... : Φ <sub>n</sub> (x <sub>i</sub> ) | [close to B <sub>2</sub> → present, non-participating party] |

of the Yimas hunters:

(6)  $(E_1: [Ill (S) (A) (X_1) (B_1 = \text{game})](E_1))$

Clearly this is not enough to trigger the employment of the secret language of the Yimas, since it is presumably only used among males of certain age who are on a hunting expedition. This already shows that we also need to further specify S and A (as Yimas males of a certain age group) as well as E (as taking place while hunting).

The same more or less holds for situations of Type [c]. To be able to account for the various linguistic manifestations of deference and politeness, it is usually not enough that we only specify features of B, since social deixis is often triggered by the social-cultural distance **between** S and B (or **between** S and A for that matter; see below). This is exemplified in the following representation to account for the *avoidance style* in Australian languages.

(7)  $(E_1: [Ill (S) (A) (X_1) (B_1 = \text{S's mother-in-law})](E_1))$

It is not sufficient to state that B is S's mother-in-law, because this leaves open the possibility that S is B's daughter-in-law. Since the *avoidance language* is only used when S is a man and B (or A) are his in-laws, we must also state that S is male.

## 2. Speaker and Addressee(s)

So far we have mainly been concerned with the role of bystanders in the speech situation. It was argued that, since there are a number of situations in which bystanders are an integral part of the speech situation, they must be represented by a distinct variable in the underlying representation of the utterance; furthermore the B variable must often be specified with certain socio-cultural features to account more precisely for the formal consequences on S's utterance.

In this section I will argue that features must also be attached to the S(peaker) and A(ddressee) variables to explain the coding of **their** socio-cultural properties in the form of

the utterance.<sup>8</sup> For instance, we saw in sections 1.2-1.3 that in order to explain that the speaker has to use the so-called *avoidance style* in Australian languages, we must not only specify properties of B, but also those of S and A, since it is the kinship **relation** between B and S or A and S that is important here (recall that the avoidance language is used when S is a man and A or B are his in-laws). The same point is also illustrated in the language of the Abipon of Argentina, in which "-in is added to the end of each word if any participant (whatever his role) is a member of the Hocheri (warrior class)" (Hymes 1972: 61).<sup>9</sup>

A more principled reason to provide the S and A variables with features is that contextual information (to the extent that this is relevant for the proper expression of the utterance) should be given at the interpersonal rather than on the representational level.

The importance of having access to such contextual features in the underlying representation of the utterance can be illustrated by examples from many languages. Although social deixis may effect all levels of grammar (including phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon; Levinson 1987: 93), the socio-cultural features of S and A are perhaps most typically expressed in the lexicon. For instance, Javanese has six levels of speech styles (coding the social rank of S and A, or the social distance between S and A) that are expressed through a system of honorific lexical alternatives (Errington 1988: 90-91; respect vocabularies are found in many languages across the world; see also e.g. Anderson & Keenan 1985: 274; Irvine 1992: 253):

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Moreno (fc.), who uses pluses and minuses to account for the use of honorific forms in Korean; see also Ross (1970), cited in Hengeveld (1991: 7); Dik (1986).

<sup>9</sup> Notice though that certain properties of S, notable his or her sex, are always reflected in the form of the utterance, either categorically (as in Japanese, where the form of 'I' depends on S's sex (Brown & Fraser 1979: 37); see also e.g. Hoff (1994) on Island Carib), or as a tendency. For instance, in Samoan "women use subject-initial word order far more often than men (four times as much overall)" and "men use verb-subject-object word order more than women (nearly twice as much overall)" (Ochs 1987: 66). On the other hand, differences in the use of ergative case marking also depend on features of A: "For ergative case marking, it was found that men use this marking as often as women do in family interactions but much more often than women in interactions involving nonfamily members" (ibid. 66). For a cross-linguistic overview of men's and women's speech, see Bodine (1975).

- (8) a. *menapa nandalem mundhut sekul semanten*  
 b. *menapa panjenengan mendhet sekul semanten*  
 c. *napa sampeyan mendhet sekul semanten*  
 d. *napa sampeyan njupuk sega semanten*  
 e. *apa sliramu mundhut sega semono*  
 f. *apa kowe njupuk sega semono*  
 QM you take rice that much  
 'Did you take that much rice?' (QM = question marker)

To give another example, Thai is reported to have over 20 first person forms, the use of which is determined by various properties of S and A. Here is an illustration of the nature of the features of S (and A) that must be specified in the underlying representation to yield the correct first person form (from Anderson & Keenan 1985: 271; based on Cooke 1968). Thus different first person forms are used, for instance, when

- S is an adult or adolescent male and A is an inferior or female intimate;
- S is an adult female speaking and A is a superior;
- S is a male commoner and A belongs to royalty of any but the highest ranks;
- S is male and A is high-ranking non-royalty;
- S is a child or a young woman and A is an intimate;
- S is male and A is equal or superior;
- S is a Buddhist Priest and A is a non-intimate layman or low-ranking priest.

It is perhaps useful to point out, however, that not all the information that is coded in person pronouns relates to S and A's social rank or relationship. This holds especially for number distinctions in pronouns. Although number distinctions can be used to express respect or social distance (e.g. French *vous* [2Pl] versus *tu* [2Sg]), 'number' as such, unlike e.g. sex or age, it is not a socio-cultural property of S or A.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. The setting

In the previous sections we saw the S, A and B variables need to be further specified for socio-cultural properties in order to account for social and bystander deixis. In this section

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<sup>10</sup> Note further that number distinctions are also coded in third person pronouns, which often serve as anaphoric rather than deictic elements. Other ways of coding social distance in pronouns are (a) person distinctions, as German *Sie* [3Pl] vs. *du* [2Sg]), (b) proximity, (c) inclusiveness, and (d) definiteness (cf. Head 1978; Levinson 1987: 92; Mühlhäusler & Harré 1990: 19).

I will say a few words about the fourth constituent of social deixis: the setting in which speech act E occurs.<sup>11</sup> Consider this example from Allan (1986a: 17):

- (9) ... at lunch before a board meeting Ed and Max might be on casual christian name terms; but when conducting official business in the board-room Ed would address Max as 'Mr. Chairman' if Max were chairman of the board, because the official business of a board meeting is customarily conducted in a frozen style.

This example shows that the formality level of the setting must be coded separately to explain manifestations of social deixis in the utterance that are not due to socio-cultural properties of S, A, and B. It remains to be investigated, however, (i) whether a single dimension ('formality') is enough to capture all the relevant properties of the setting, (ii) how many distinct levels (styles, genres) are to be recognized within each dimension, and (iii) to what extent properties of the setting can always be separated from the features of S, A, and B, the other three components of social deixis. For instance, it is not immediately clear whether rituals (hunting expeditions, rites of passage, religious events) can always be characterized as constituting a 'frozen style' at some level on a single scale of 'formality', or whether they constitute distinct dimensions by themselves.<sup>12</sup> Irvine (1978: 16) has argued that "formality and informality represent not poles on a one-dimensional continuum, but a complex of interrelated factors concerning many facets of the speech event. [...]. Formality, [...], is largely a process of focusing, which can operate along various dimensions. Where societies differ is in what they focus on -- and what are the consequences of doing so."

Obviously this is a matter of great complexity. Since current proposals in this area are based on a rather restricted number of languages, definite statements can only be made after

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<sup>11</sup> It may be useful to distinguish between *settings per se* and *settings-associated-with-purpose*, since "it appears to be rare that speech choice is actually determined by the setting *per se*. But settings imbued with cultural import [...] are associated with the activities which customarily take place in them: sermons in church, football on the playing field, buying and selling in the market place" (Brown & Fraser 1979: 44: cf. also Hymes 1972: 60).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. e.g. Joos (1962: 11), who identified five levels of formality: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate (see also Allan 1986a: 17). Some other possible dimensions along which the setting can be classified are: public-private, sacred-secular, serious-trivial, impersonal-personal, polite-casual, high culture - low culture, open network - closed network (Brown & Fraser 1979: 45).

a representative sample of the world's languages and cultures have been investigated (see also section 6).

#### 4. The proposition

Let us return to the example in (9); Allan's description of the board meeting continues as follows:

- (10) Note that it is not simply their presence at the board-meeting which demands use of the frozen style: if Ed were to utter an unofficial aside to Max during the course of the meeting, he would quite properly use a casual style.

As a rule, formal occasions invoke formal speech, which is characterized by constraints on topic, continuity, and relevance.<sup>13</sup> But the side address in (10) demonstrates that S may indicate (by verbal and non-verbal behaviour) that he is aware of the irrelevance or inappropriateness of the contents of his utterance in a particular setting (S leans over to A, speaks in a low voice, calls the chairman by his proper name). Although one could argue that the propositional content of an utterance (and by extension: the topic of the conversation) is perhaps in itself not a socio-cultural variable (but rather a **function** of features of E, S, A, and B), it is obvious that on certain occasions the relevance or appropriateness of a propositional content must be known and specified to account for manifestations of social deixis. Such is the case in the example above, in which a particular form of address does not fit the setting. In other words, so as to be able to explain why Ed may suddenly call the chairman 'Max' at a board meeting, it seems essential that we not only specify (i) the relationship between S and A, and (ii) the setting of the speech act, but also (iii) whether or not S's regards the contents of his proposition X as appropriate or relevant in a given context (cf. also Ervin-Tripp 1972: 243; Irvine 1978: 9). In cases such as these it seems appropriate to qualify the contents of S's proposition X as an *Aside*.

Note, however, that the proposition (or rather: the topic or subject matter) is a distinct

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<sup>13</sup> Some generally observed **coding** properties of formal speech are: elaboration of syntax and lexicon, phonological precision and rhythmicity, redundancy, increased structuring and predictability, reduction of variability and spontaneity of speech (Levinson 1978; Irvine 1978: 2; Brown & Fraser 1979: 46).



component in several models of the speech situation (Fishman 1972, Hymes 1972, Goffman 1964), and for Brown & Fraser, for instance, 'purpose' ('end', or 'goal', which in turn is closely tied to notions of task and topic) "is the motor which sets the chassis of setting and participants going [...]. [...] we find it necessary to consider at some length the intersection of setting and purpose in order to deal with a wide range of linguistic markers related to levels of formality" (Brown & Fraser 1979: 34).

Whatever one's view on the status of the proposition and/or topic as a distinct component of social deixis, it is evident that all variables at the interpersonal level (E, S, A, X, and B) need some kind of specification to be able to account for bystander and social deixis in linguistic expressions.

### 5. Speech acts and speech events

So as to be able to account for social and bystander deixis I have suggested a number of modifications in the way utterances are currently represented in Functional Grammar, viz. [i] the introduction of a variable for bystanders and, [ii] to allow for the possibility to add features to the variables at the interpersonal level (E, S, A, X, B).

It has been pointed out by Bolkestein (1992: 390), however, that in the current FG literature the E-variable is basically ambiguous with respect to the entity it represents. On the one hand it is said to symbolize (the product of) the speech act, i.e. the utterance or clause; on the other hand the variable E is supposed to stand for the situation in which the speech act takes place, i.e. the setting or speech event (cf. Bolkestein *ibid.* for references).

Recall that in section 3 I argued for the possibility to specify the E-variable for the formality level of the setting in which the speech act takes place when the degree of formality is coded in the form of the utterance. Since "formality" is a feature of the speech event rather than a property of the speech act, it seems appropriate to distinguish between the two in the representation of utterances. Thus, this section deals with the third and last change in the formal representation of the underlying structure of utterances that is proposed in this paper: the introduction of a separate layer to describe the speech event.

### 5.1. Speech events in a layered model of the utterance

What constitutes a speech event? There seem to be three necessary components to every speech event: a purpose (section 4), a discourse, and speech participants (which typically involve a speaker, one or more addressees, and possibly a third party viz. bystanders). This can be represented as follows

(Speech\_Event SE: [Purpose (D) (P<sub>1</sub> - P<sub>2</sub> ... P<sub>n</sub>)] (SE))

where the variable D stands for Discourse and the P variables symbolize the various speech participants that play a role in that particular discourse. The **purpose** of the speech event is represented as a two-place predicate which takes the discourse (D) and speech participants (Ps) as its arguments. Both the speech event and the speech participants can be further specified to account for deictic expressions in discourse D: the speech event variable SE can be specified for time, place and the degree of formality; each P-variable can be provided with the necessary socio-cultural features (sex, age, status, etc.). Note that at this point in the representation there is no specification of the various roles the participants play in the speech event (Speaker, Addressee(s), Bystander(s)); this is done at the level of the speech act (see below).<sup>14</sup>

I will not concern myself with the formal representation of the various types of (spoken, written, signed) discourse. There are many ways discourse can be analyzed, but since we are dealing here with communicative events of a particular category, viz. **speech** events (rather than e.g. **sign** events), I will restrict myself to **spoken** discourse in the form of an informal conversation, which like many other types of spoken discourse consists of a number of turns T:<sup>15</sup>

Discourse D = T<sub>1</sub> - T<sub>2</sub> ... T<sub>n</sub>

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<sup>14</sup> This suggestion is due to Kees Hengeveld.

<sup>15</sup> Turns are not restricted to informal conversation, but the rules for turntaking may depend on such factors as social status of the speech participants (driver vs. police-officer), the type of (spoken) discourse (a reprimand, a radio interview) and the kind of speech event (a birthday party, a tutorial, a session in a court of law).

Each turn may consist of one or more individual speech acts E, for example:

$$T_1 = (E_{1,1}) - (E_{1,2}).$$

$$T_2 = (E_{2,1}) - (E_{2,2}) - (E_{2,3}).$$

It is at this point that we can specify the various roles the persons P play in the speech event, for instance:

(Speech\_Act  $E_{1,1}$ : |Ill (X<sub>1,1</sub>) (P<sub>2</sub>=S) (P<sub>4</sub>=A) (P<sub>5</sub>=B)| (E))

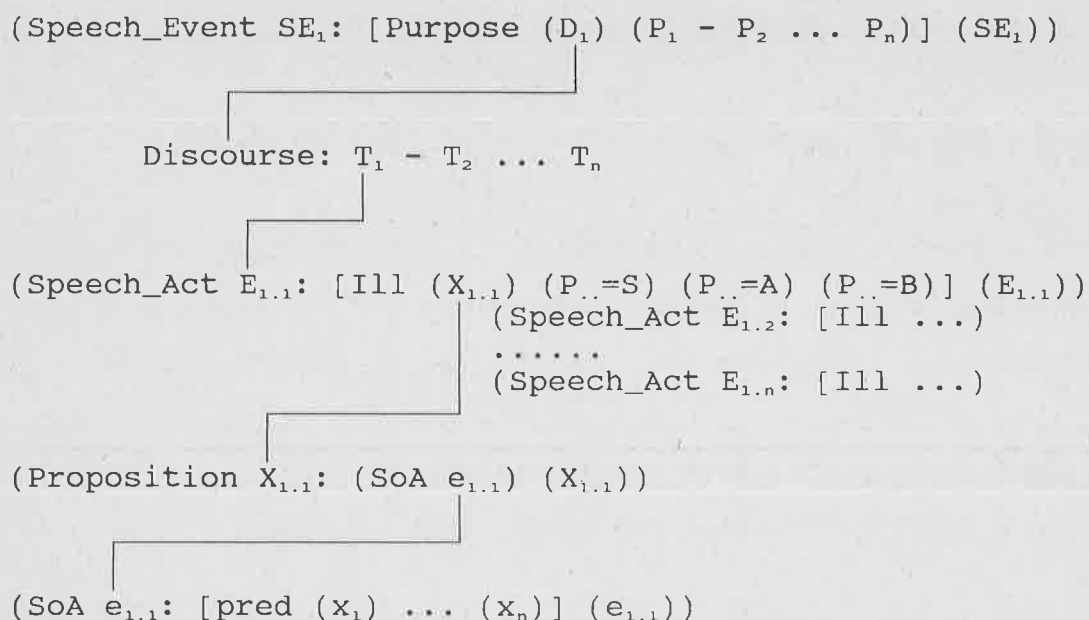
(Speech\_Act  $E_{1,2}$ : |Ill (X<sub>1,2</sub>) (P<sub>2</sub>=S) (P<sub>4</sub>=A) (P<sub>5</sub>=B)| (E))<sup>16</sup>

That is, both speech acts ( $E_{1,1}$  and  $E_{1,2}$ ) contained in the first turn ( $T_1$ ) are uttered by the entity formally characterized as  $P_2$  in the description of the speech event. The addressee is  $P_4$  and the speaker ( $P_2$ ) also takes into account the presence of bystander  $P_5$ ; consequently the form of  $P_2$ 's utterances is changed accordingly.

As in Hengeveld's model for the representation of utterances, the illocutionary value of the speech act is represented as an abstract predicate 'Ill', which takes three arguments: the speaker S, the addressee(s) A and the proposition X. The difference is of course that S and A (as well as B) are now cross-referenced by entities specified at the level of the speech event and that bystanders are represented as satellites of the illocutionary predicate. Thus, a simplified model for the representation of utterances in the greater context of a speech event could look like this:

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<sup>16</sup> Although the speaker usually remains the same in each turn (but note that occasionally someone else may complete the speaker's sentence), the addressee(s) and bystander(s) may be different. This is not indicated in this example.



## 6. Final remarks

In this paper I have only talked in rather general terms about the kind of dimensions and features that are or can be associated with the variables at the level of the speech act and the speech event in a fully specified underlying representation of an utterance. The fact is that currently it is not yet possible to be more specific, which is due to various reasons (cf. also Hymes 1972: 49f.; Goffman 1964). First of all, although a considerable amount of research has been devoted to e.g. politeness phenomena in language (e.g. Brown & Levinson 1978, 1987; Mühlhäusler & Harré 1990, Watts et al. (eds) 1992), this has not resulted in a taxonomy of features concerning social deixis that is based on a systematic investigation of a representative sample of the world's languages. Secondly, existing studies in this area show that the relevant features of the components of the speech situation (such as sex, age, class, caste, country of origin, generation, region, schooling, ethnicity, kinship relation and degree of intimacy with other speech participants, occupational status; the physical and psychological setting of the speech act; topic and purpose of communication) are often intricately connected, and that their relative importance varies from language to language. For instance, certain features are largely or entirely predictable from others (e.g. sex and kinship/taboo relations); and whereas the social significance of sex is primary in one language, social rank may override all other features in another language (see e.g. Ervin-Tripp 1972: 224-225) on such differences in the systems of address in Bisaya and Korean). Furthermore, features that determine the social distance between participants in the speech event (S, A, and B) can be

in conflict, in which case we need some kind of calculus to determine the outcome (see Allan 1986a: 11). This is the case, for example, when a young teacher has to deal with an older pupil (i.e. age versus professional status; cf. Blocker 1976).

Ultimately the study of bystander and social deixis in linguistic expressions should not only result in a taxonomy of the relevant dimensions, features and coding devices, but also contribute to the integration of a theory of grammar into a theory of verbal interaction; eventually it may even lead to a new, **functional** classification of languages in which languages are classified according to the interaction between social deixis and grammar (as more or less envisaged by Hymes (1972) in the context of sociolinguistic research).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> "We need taxonomies of speaking, and descriptions adequate to support and test them. Such description and taxonomy will share in the work of providing an adequate classification of languages. If the task of language classification is taken to be to place languages in terms of their common features and differences, and if we consider the task from the standpoint of similarities, then four classifications are required. Languages are classified according to features descended from a common ancestor (genetic classification), features diffused within a common area (areal classification), features manifesting a common structure or structures, irrespective of origin or area (typological classification), and features of common use or social role (as koine, standard language, pidgin, etc.) (functional classification) (see Hymes 1968; Greenberg 1968: 133-135). The processes underlying the classifications (various kinds of retention, divergence, convergence) all can be viewed in terms of the adaptation of languages to social contexts, but the forms of classification in which the dependence on social processes can be most readily excluded (genetic, typological) are the forms that have been most developed. Sociolinguistic research reinforces the intermittent interest that areal classification has received, and can properly claim the most neglected sector, functional classification, the interaction between social role and features of languages, for its own" (Hymes 1972: 43).

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