Workshop *Sentences and Embedded Clauses: New Work in Syntax and Semantics*

Paris, September 14, 2015

**Illocutionary Products and their Form**

Friederike Moltmann

CNRS-IHPST and NYU

**1. The standard account of attitude reports**

The Relational Analysis of attitude reports

- *That*-clauses are referential terms, provide propositions as arguments of the relation expressed by the verb.

- Attitude verbs express dyadic relations between agents and propositions.

(1) a. John thinks that Mary is happy.

b. think(John, [*that Mary is happy*])

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**2. *That*-clauses as predicates of attitudinal objects**

Attitudinal objects:

Cognitive products: thoughts, claims, decisions, imaginations etc

Illocutionary products: claims, requests, promises, threats etc

Mental states: beliefs, intentions, fears, hopes

‘Products’ in the sense of Twardowski (1912): non-enduring products

Davidsonian events and attitudinal objects

Cognitive and illocutionary products are products of Davidsonian event arguments.

Mental states are themselves Davidsonian event arguments (and their own ‘products’).

Function of *that*-clauses

predicates of the products of Davidsonian event arguments

Different ways for clauses to characterize attitudinal or modal objects

- specify composition of product in terms of smaller products: concept-conveying products, predicational products, referential / identificational products etc.

- specify truth- or satisfaction conditions of attitudinal objects

- combination of both

(2) a. John thought that S.

b. ∃e(think(e, John) & [*that* S](product(e)))

c. John has the thought that S.

d. ∃d(have(John, d) & thought(d) & [*that* S](d))

(3) a. John claimed that S.

b. ∃e(claim(e, John) & [*that* S](product(e)))

(4) a. John’s claim that S

b. ιe[claim(e, John) & [*that* S](e)]

*Think, claim*:

clausal complement may specify smaller products composing the thought or claim:

act of reference – referential product

act of predication – predicational product

(5) a. John thinks that Mary is happy.

b. [*that Mary is happy*] = the property of a cognitive product x such that x consists of a

referential product involving the use of ‘Mary’ and a predicational product involving

the use of the concept ‘happy’

Implicit belief:

clausal complement specifies truth conditions (or better truthmakers: truthmaking situations)

Implicit desire: clausal complement specifies satisfaction conditions (or better satisfiers: actions fulfilling the desire)

Extension:

Modal sentences: clausal complement (prejacent) as predicates of satisfiers (and perhaps violators) of modal objects, e.g. permissions, obligations, needs, offers

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**3. The semantics of ‘special’ quantifiers and pronouns**

(6) a. John said something nice.

b. ∃e∃e’(say(e, John) & nice(e’) & e’ = product(e))

c. John said something that caused astonishment

d. John said something I could not hear very well.

(7) a. John thought what Mary thought.

b. ∃e∃e’∃e’’(think(e, John) & e’ = product-kind(e) & think(e’’, Mary) & e’ = product-

kind(e’’))

c. ??? John thought what Mary hopes, that it is raining.

d. ??? John thought what Mary wrote down, that it is Sunday.

(8) a. John hopes what Mary fears.

b. ∃e∃e’∃e’’(believe(e, John) & pos(product(e)) & e’ = product-kind(e) & believe(e’’,

Mary) & neg(product(e’’)) & e’ = product-kind(e’’)) (roughly!!)

c. John requested what Mary demanded, that the afternoon will be free.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**3. Illocutionary products**

**3.1. Nominalizations of illocutionary verbs**

The traditional view

Nominalizations of illocutionary verbs are ambiguous/ polysemous describing either events or propositions, depending on the lexical context.

(9) John’s claims that Mary likes Bill.

(10) a. John’s claim made Mary upset.

b. Bill overheard John’s claim.

c. John made the claim yesterday.

(11) a. John’s claim is true.

b. John’s claim implies that Mary is guilty.

c. John’s claim is that Mary is guilty.

Problems for the traditional view

[1] Copredication

(12) a. John heard Mary’s false claim.

b. John’s obviously false claim caused astonishment.

[2] Part structure

Propositions and acts have different part structures: acts, but not propositions, have temporal parts

Observation: *Part of* is unambiguous with *John’s claim*: can only pick out partial content, not temporal parts!

(13) a. part of John’s claim: partial content !

b. part of John’s speech act: temporal part !

[3] *John’s claim, John’s request, John’s promise* etc allow for (readings of) predicates that neither propositions nor acts permit:

(15) a. Mary’s request to be allowed to enter the room be was fulfilled.

b. ??? The proposition that Mary is allowed to enter the room was fulfilled.

c. ??? Mary’s act of requesting / Mary’s speech act was fulfilled.

(16) a. John broke his promise.

b. ???? John broke his act of promising / his speech act.

c. ???? John broke the proposition that S.

Conclusion

Claims, requests, promises are neither acts nor propositions, but objects sui generis (Ulrich 1976, Moltmann 2003, 2004, 2014): they illocutionary products of illocutionary acts.

**3.2. Twardowski (1911)’s distinction between actions and their (non-enduring) products**

Terms for actions and terms for products

thinking – thought, judging – judgment, believing – belief, claiming – claim, promising, promise, requesting, request, deciding – decision, screaming – scream

Enduring products and non-enduring products;

writing – writing, drawing – drawing

Distinguishing characteristics:

Products of the same type are exactly similar iff they are the same in content.

Only products have truth- or satisfaction conditions

(17) a. John’s claim / John’s belief is true

b. ?? John’s claiming / John’s act of claiming / John’s speech act is true.

c. John’s believing / John’s belief state is true.

(18) a. John’s claim / John’s belief is the same as Mary’s

b. John’s claiming / John’s act of claiming / John’s belief state is true.

Sharing the same propositional content: engaging in actions with similar products

Cognitive and illocutionary products as abstract artifacts

Abstract artifacts: artifacts without physically realization (Thomasson 1999),

e.g. fictional characters, unwritten rules, musical compositions that have not been performed

Artifacts set up apparent polysemies:

(19) a. The book was interesting, but too heavy to carry.

b. There are three different books on the shelf.

Characteristics of artifacts

- can bear representational and normative properties,

- can bear a part structure based on partial content

The ontology of artifacts (Ingarden 1937 / Thomasson 1999)

Artifacts are agent- / mind-dependent objects and may or may not come with a physical realization. They are neither actions nor material objects nor abstract objects, but belong to a fourth category of objects.

Cognitive and illocutionary products as artifacts

With physical realization: claims, screams

With material realization: writings

**3.3. More semantic data bearing on illocutionary products**

Physical realization plays a role for properties of sharing

Similar illocutionary verbs

(20) a. John suggested what Mary asserted.

b. John’s suggestion was Mary’s assertion.

(21) a. John requested what Mary demanded.

b. John’s request was the same as Mary’s demand.

Illocutionary verbs and verbs of saying

(22) a. ??? John asserted what Mary said.

b. ??? John demanded what May said.

Verbs of saying conveying different physical realizations

(23) a. ?(?) John screamed what Mary whispered.

b. ? John shouted what Bill yelled.

c. ??? John said what Mary whispered.

(24) a. ??? John’s scream was the same Mary’s whisper.

b. ?? John’s shout was the same as Bill’s scream.

**3.4. Searle’s notion of an illocutionary act**

Illocutionary acts are composed of illocutionary force f and propositional content p f(p).

Illocutionary force composed of:

- illocutionary point: the aim of the illocutionary act:

‘assertion’: representation of states of affairs as true

command: making addressee do something

promise: commitment to do so and so.

- sincerity condition: belief in the case of assertion etc

- preparatory condition …

Searle’s illocutionary acts vs illocutionary products

Illocutionary point is the illocutionary product: product has the relevant representational and normative properties

The problem for the present purposes

Illocutionary acts / products have no physical aspect!

They do not provide objects for the complement of verbs of saying and manner of speaking to apply to.

Moreover, they do not provide a basis for a product-based account of quotation.

**3.4. Austin’s (1962) distinction between linguistic acts of increasingly higher levels**

Locutionary acts

- phonetic acts (the uttering of sounds) –

- phatic acts (the uttering of sounds as belonging to phonological, morphological, or syntactic categories)

- rhetic acts (acts of referring to things and saying something about them: referential and predicational acts)

Illocutionary acts

making assertions, demands etc).

Austin’s acts are ordered by the by-relation (Goldman’s (1970) ‘level generation’):

Is the by-relation a form of composition or acts?

Yes: on Austin’s view and on Goldman’s view of actions!

Pulling the trigger is different from killing the king, but the latter has the trigger pulling as a nontemporal part.

But can there also be acts that ‘forget’ the lower level acts that generate them, such as Searle’s illocutionary acts?

Intuitively yes! The killing of the king could have been by throwing a bomb.

In any case, locutionary acts is what is involved in the semantics of verbs of saying and manner of speaking or rather locutionary products should play the role in the semantics of verbs of saying that illocutionary products play in the semantics of illocutionary verbs.

Austin:

Rhetic acts described in indirect quotation,

phatic acts described in direct quotation.

**3.5. The semantics of locutionary products**

The action-product distinction for lower-level linguistic acts

Product of a phatic act: has only relevant properties, properties of the linguistic structure the act is meant to realize.

The notion of a token

best conceived of as the product of a lower-level linguistic act (utterance act): phonological product, morpho-syntactic product

Interpreting the data with verbs of saying:

*Say*:

Involves locutionary product only, is neutral regarding force

Manner of speaking verbs:

Involve locutionary + phatic product

*Whisper, scream*:

Verbs allow decomposition into phatic verb and manner of speaking modifier, but not their nominalization

How do *that*-clauses characterize locutionary products?

Based on syntactic structure, *that*-clauses can specify locutionary products as composed of smaller products, in particular ‘rhetic products’ (referenial and predicational products).

**3.6. Further evidence for locutionary products**

direct quotes as complements

*Say, write*: neuntrality regarding force (Grimshaw NYU workshop on quotation handout 2014)

(25) a. John said ‘I will come’.

b. John said ‘Can you come?’

c. John said ‘Come as soon as possible!’

(26) a. John wrote ‘can you come?’

b. John wrote ‘come as soon as possible!’.

(27) a. John whispered ‘I will come’

b. John whispered ‘Will you come?’

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**4. A product-based semantics of quotation**

**4.1. Types of quotation and general approaches**

Pure quotation

(28) a. Mary said ‘hey’.

b. John translated ‘red’ as ‘rouge’.

Direct quotation

(28) c. Mary said ‘I will come’.

Mixed quotation

(28) d. Quine says that quotation ‘has a certain anomalous feature’.

Two general challenges of quotation

- integration of quotation into syntax

- integration of quotation into compositional semantics

Approaches to pure quotation

Pure quotations as referential terms, referring to expression types

- as names (Quine, Reinach), as descriptions (Geach)

- as complex expressions consisting of quotation marks acting as demonstratives pointing at displayed token within quotation marks (Davidson)

- as names involving quotational use or mentioning, that is, reference to the expression type that is being used (Washington 1992, Saka 1998)

The present approach

Lower-level linguistic acts are performed not or not just in order to perform higher-level linguistic acts, but rather to convey lower-level product types as part of the meaning of the sentence.

Quotational complements: convey form-related product types

**4.2. Product-based semantics of pure quotation**

Observation: Pure quotations do not generally act as referential terms, may have predicative function.

Pure quotations convey meanings based on lower-level linguistic acts: phatic or rhetic acts.

Pure quotations have as their meaning lower-level product types and as such can easily have a predicative function in the sentence.

A simple case:

(29) a. John said ‘hey’

*Hey*, with its morphological structure within the LF of the sentence and without quotation marks: stands for a morphological product type

Its semantic function is to be predicated of the utterance product:

(29) b. ∃e(say(e, John) & [*hey*](product(e)))

The compositional semantics

Quoted material has lower-level linguistic structure within the syntactic structure that is input to interpretation (LF): phonological, morphological, or syntactic structure within the LF of the sentence. Lower-level linguistic structures are interpreted not as meaning-related product types, but as form-related product types.

The syntactic (LF-) structure of (8)

(30) John [said [hey]m ]VP

Consequences

- Pure quotations need not be considered NPs, but can be of lower-level categories, licensed

as such in particular contexts in the syntactic structure of a sentence.

- Pure quotations need not be considered be referential terms, but may be predicational..

Extension to direct and mixed quotation straightforward:

express both properties of lower-level linguistic products and of locutionary, illocutionary, or cognitive products

**4.3. Direct quotation**

(31) Mary said ‘I will come’.

Properties of direct quotation:

CP complements of verbs of saying: *say, state, ask, answer, complain, remark*

CP adjuncts (?) of verbs like *smile, laugh*, etc.

Semantic selection (Grimshaw 2014)

(33) Mary asked ‘Will you come?’

The approach:

Direct quotations specify a property of form and a property of content of (complex) illocutionary or locutionary products. The property of form is based on a lower-level linguistic structure, possibly a partial structure or mixed structure, such as phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic (non-LF) structure.

Mixed quotation

(35) John said that he ‘resides’ in Paris.

Again complex structure as input to interpretation:

LF plus partial lower-level linguistic structure, interpreted as a partial form-related specification of cognitive products.

Mixed quotation relating to a different agent in the context:

form-related product type is predicated of contextually given cognitive product.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**References**

Austin, (1962): *How to do Things with Words?.* Harvard University Press.

Davidson, D., 1979. ‘Quotation’, in *Inquiries Into Truth and Interpretation*, Oxford: Oxford

University Press, pp.79–92. Originally in *Theory and Decision*, 11 (1979): 27–40.

Goldman, A. (1970): *A Theory of Human Action*.

Grimshaw (2014): sentential Complementation and Direct Quotes, handout NYU workshop

on quotation, 2014

Moltmann, F. (2014): ‘Propositions, Attitudinal Objects, and the Distinction between

Actions and Products’. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*.

--------------- (to appear): ‘Cognitive Products and the Semantics and Attitude Verbs and

Deontic Modals’. In F. Moltmann / M. Textor (eds.): *Act-Based Conceptions of*

*Propositional Content*, Oxford UP.

Saka, P. (1998): ‘Quotation and the Use-Mention Distinction’, *Mind*, 107: 113–35.

Washington, C. (1992): ‘The Identity Theory of Quotation’, *Journal of Philosophy*, 89.