

This volume is a collection of essays written by Summer Institute of Linguistics members working in languages from a number of geographical areas, notably South America, the Pacific and Africa. All the essays discuss topics in what can be very loosely termed the 'pragmatics' of these languages. The topics range from typical core areas of pragmatics, such as speech acts, to those which would more generally be described as belonging to sociolinguistics. The expressed aim of the volume is to provide data from these exotic non-western languages to be used in the construction of a general theory of pragmatics. I will discuss briefly each article and comment on its potential contribution to this task.

Headland's 'Social rank and Tunebo requests' is one of the papers which just as properly belongs to sociolinguistics. The author describes the formal features of request speech acts in this South American language and then correlates these formal differences with the semantic components in the explication of the speech act of requesting. He then goes on to discuss how the variants in the forms of requests correlate with the social rank of the addressee in the Tunebo social hierarchy; i.e. requests made to social superiors have some different formal properties from those addressed to social inferiors. This paper is an interesting example of how the analysis of a language's pragmatic system requires crucial input from information about the social organization of the
speakers of the language and is an important contribution to a
sociolinguistic theory of speech acts.

The next paper 'The use of reported speech in Saramaccan
discourse' by Naomi Glack discusses the different functions of
direct and indirect speech in this South American creole. She finds
that direct speech is used as a foregrounding device, to highlight
information belonging to the main argument or to show strong
emotion, while indirect speech is, conversely, a backgrounding
device, to reinforce an argument given previously in direct speech
or to supply peripheral information. This paper supplies data on
still another device used in the languages of the world to express
the contrast between foregrounded and backgrounded information in
ongoing discourse. Other devices previously presented in the
linguistic literature include voice oppositions (active versus
passive), aspect contrasts (imperfective versus perfective) or
syntactic relationship (subordination versus coordination).

The issue of speech acts is again dealt with in Joyce Hudson's
essay 'An analysis of illocutionary verbs in Walmatjari'. This is a
detailed and finely grained analysis of the meaning of speech act
verbs in this Australian language, using Wierzbicka's semantic
 primitives approach (Wierzbicka 1980). This approach is especially
useful in the analysis of speech act verbs because it allows one to
tease out subtle semantic differences among them and to state these
differences in an explicit and intuitively verifiable metalanguage.
Hudson's article is an important contribution to the development of
a cross-linguistically valid theory of speech acts. Because the
meanings of the Walmatjari speech act verbs are stated so
explicitly, they can be compared with analogous verbs in English
and other languages, with both language differences and potential
universals noted.

Hartmut Wiens' paper 'Please be specific: a functional
description of non-marking particles in Limos Kalinga' describes
the semantic differences encoded by the choice of various nominal
modifiers. Limos Kalinga, a language of the northern Philippines, has a very interesting contrast in its deictic system, not to my knowledge attested elsewhere. Wiens phrases this contrast in terms of what he calls 'exophoric and endophoric reference'. If the referent of a nominal is said to be within the context of the ongoing discourse, that is, visible, observable, a living participant or one in an ongoing event, or a place known to exist contemporaneously, then the nominal is marked with the form for endophoric reference. If, conversely, the referent is outside of the context of the discourse, more specifically, invisible or otherwise not observable, deceased, or not a participant in a contemporaneous event, then the form for exophoric reference is required. This contrast is clearly related to that of visible or invisible referents more commonly found in the deictic systems of languages like Kwakiutl. This Limos Kalinga distinction is quite likely related to those operative in the unusual deictic system of its linguistic congener, Kawi or Old Javanese (see Becker and Oka 1974). Wiens' paper provides important new data to be considered in the construction of a typology of deictic systems in the world's languages.

The next paper by Betty Loos, entitled 'Self-correction in Capanahua', returns to the question of discourse structures. Loos is at pains to describe how speakers of Capanahua, another South American language, repair errors in ongoing narrative discourses. She shows there are different strategies of repair depending on the nature of the error. There are two basic types of errors: grammatical errors, those in the concatenation of words or morphemes, and lexical errors, those concerning choice of the lexical item and its semantic content. The former are repaired by going back and restating the word or form in question, but with the proper correction(s). The latter are corrected by an interjection like 'what is it' or 'I said', followed by the right lexical selection. These data provide important new information on speech
errors and their relevance for linguistic analysis (for example, Loos points out the manner in which Capanahua speakers repair grammatical errors provides important evidence for what counts as a word in this language) and they also illustrate features of language performance in the construction of text cohesion in yet another language.

Ger Reesink's 'Being negative can be positive' is the best in the volume, a true gem. The author's expressed intent is to provide a contrastic analysis for the behavior of negation in English and Usan, a Papuan language of New Guinea, but he actually ends up accomplishing much more than this. With regard to negation, Reesink demonstrates that Usan, an SOV language, is in many ways the mirror image of SVO English. For example, a negative in the first of two conjoined clauses in English can often have only the second clause within its scope: I did not hit the child and drive on does not actually deny the first proposition 'I hit the child', but rather the second, 'I drove on' (after I hit the child). Usan is the opposite. A negative in the second of two clauses need not negate it, but may negate only the previous one: I dog hit not died in Usan may mean 'I didn't hit the dog, although it died', in which only the first proposition is denied by the negative in the second clause. In developing his analysis of negation in Usan, Reesink has to consider a number of issues which has bedevilled students of Papuan and other languages, such as how the embedding of a clause relates to its presuppositional status and how to establish and measure the closeness of linking between joined clauses, especially as this is viewed culturally according to the sequence of actions involved. I cannot begin to summarize here the richness of his data and the clarity of his insights. I can simply urge all linguists regardless of theoretical persuasions or interests to read it.

The next paper 'Outline of a practical frame of reference for a sociolinguistic analysis in an African context' by Suzanne Lafage is, as the title suggests, one of the papers which properly belongs
to sociolinguistics. Lafage discusses a number of social variables in the African context which must be taken into account in any analysis of the social basis for variation in African languages. The social factors she mentions will by and large be familiar to sociolinguists from studies done in other parts of the world, but this paper provides still more useful input for the eventual articulation of a full sociolinguistic theory of language use.

The final essay in the volume is 'Social context and Mampruli greetings' by Anthony Naden. This is a very detailed and careful description of the proper performance of greetings, both linguistically and paralinguistically, in this West African society, using flow charts as a (somewhat confusing) formalism in which to couch his description. Naden provides a great deal of social information which is necessary to explain the form and context of the greeting rituals, and because of the careful description of the paralinguistic features of the rituals, provides data that students of proxemics will find interesting. Many of these features can be compared usefully with greeting rituals in other, very different societies, such as Japan.

In sum, this is a volume of articles which cohere rather loosely under the rubric of pragmatics. Some articles are brilliant, others, middling, but all present some data or analyses which are worthwhile. Linguists will find one or two articles in this volume which will pique their interest and which will profit them, and so I feel no qualms in recommending it generally.

REFERENCES