

Logic, subjectivity, and the semantics/pragmatics distinction

*Frank Brisard**

1. Introduction

This paper deals with two separate yet related problems in semantic theory, and in the study of meaning change. It confronts Traugott's conception of "subjectivity", and of the processes of grammaticalization that lead to the establishment of subjective meanings, with received views on this topic in the paradigm of Cognitive Semantics (CS). It is argued that neither Traugott's approach to subjectification, nor her account of the "pragmatic strengthening" involved in its earliest stages (section 2), lend themselves easily to a straightforward implementation in cognitive terms.

The problems, of subjectivity and of pragmatic strengthening, are related, at least in the outstanding functionalist and cognitive-linguistic literature, mainly because of Traugott's highly influential views in this respect. The first problem relates to the status of subjectivity in semantics, and particularly in the semantics of grammar. I will argue that Traugott's position in this, while semantically motivated, takes too much of a psychological turn, where the notion of "subject" is substantiated almost exclusively in relation to the actual speaker as a person, and to acts of self-expression (section 3.1). In addition, it does not pay sufficient attention to the formal properties of certain highly grammaticalized elements, and confounds what specific linguistic expressions are actually *about* with what is needed to explicate their conceptual background (section 3.2). This last point was explicitly addressed by Langacker (1997: 70), whose approach to subjectivity is argued here to be preferable to Traugott's in many important respects. This is a very difficult issue, because there are obvious points of agreement between them, and Langacker (1999a: 150) has at one point suggested that the disagreement is terminological only, while Traugott and Dasher (2002: 97–99) maintain that there is a significant difference.

* The author is a Postdoctoral Fellow of the Fund for Scientific Research – Flanders (Belgium).

I will also try to demonstrate how Traugott's story of subjectivity crucially relies on a conception of pragmatics, as a separate domain of linguistic analysis, that seems to clash with the conceptualist and encyclopedic assumptions of standard CS. Traugott, in fact, conjures up a strictly modular notion of pragmatics to help her explain the transition from propositional and textual to expressive or nonreferential meanings that appears typical of grammaticalization (section 4.1). The increased expressivity/informativeness that results from this transition is then directly and exclusively related to the speaker's (explicit) stance, and thus to a rather restricted reading of linguistic subjectivity. The formalist streak in Traugott's work can be seen in her deployment of the term "implicature", as well as in the underlying adoption of a false dichotomy between a speaker-external, logical semantics and an internal pragmatics. In CS, in contrast, there is no inherent opposition between the linguistic function of expressing information and that of regulating communication. It is the latter function that is traditionally treated as theoretically marginal or derivative, but which surfaces in CS in the form of "construal", a central semantic notion that acknowledges the import of strategy in describing acts of meaning. I will finally suggest that some conception of strategy, or the exploitation of shared expectations, may serve as a nonarbitrary basis for defining the scope of pragmatics (section 4.2).

2. The setting: Early processes of grammaticalization

Historically, Traugott's empirical work on semantic change may count as an important contribution to the analysis of polysemy.¹ Her focus on the initial stages of subjectification reveals a plethora of dynamic and interactive patterns of behavior on the part of the (mostly grammatical) expressions at stake. The need to show systematically attested connections among meanings is far from evident in the theoretical climate of the time, the 1980s, and the extant practice of representing ambiguous expressions in

1. In the early 1980s, one of the few contemporaneous endeavors comparable to Traugott's basic research program was Sweetser's (e.g., 1984) inquiry into the structural polysemy of expressions ranging over various worlds of reference, including the propositional, the epistemic, and the level of the speech act. It is not entirely clear where the dividing line between semantics and pragmatics, if any, should fall in Sweetser's work.

the form of discrete categories was accordingly perceived by functionalists and cognitivists alike as less than satisfactory. Moreover, in contrast to the relative lack of interest shown by much of formal semantics in issues of diachronic change, the mechanisms of polysemy cannot be fully understood without the assumption of a historical stage in which meaning categories that can be attributed to one form also overlap synchronically, such that “one meaning influences the other as they coexist in time” (Traugott 1989: 33). This stage, in any case, must be situated before “bleaching” occurs, when new meanings become more or less automatic choices, or routines.

Traugott (1988) distinguishes two general types of process involved in early meaning change. One type covers processes of *generalization* over contexts, where grammatical restrictions are progressively loosened, as well as instances of *metaphorization* (e.g., the spatial marking of temporal categories). Both of these mechanisms are in principle semantic, according to Traugott, insofar as no account of pragmatic inferencing is needed to describe them. Metaphor, in fact, is explicitly portrayed as a mechanism of “semantic transfer through a similarity of sense perceptions” (Traugott 1988: 411; see also Traugott and König 1991), in spite of Traugott’s simultaneously claiming an effect of strengthening (as opposed to bleaching), and thus some kind of pragmatic status, for metaphor. Now, it should be clear here that Traugott favors micro-analyses of subjectification in terms of “(re)alignment”, rather than the coarser mechanism of bleaching that may go on in subsequent stages, and that for her the standard picture of metaphorical relations between polysemous meanings poses too few constraints in this regard — cf. Langacker (1997: 66) for a similar critique of metaphor as a tool of analysis for raising constructions and other cases of semantic “transparency”. At the same time, however, Traugott keeps insisting on a separate treatment of metaphor *qua* informative strengthening, which she contrasts with metonymic implicatures. The latter are merely associative and not based on similarity, but on (perceptual) contiguity, and we should therefore conclude that metaphor as such does *not* give rise to implicature in Traugott’s eyes. An implicature, then, is surely not just any type of (context-induced) inference, at least as Traugott uses the term, but it is difficult to reconstruct the rationale behind this decision (cf. section 4.1). We should also note in passing that insofar as conventionalized linguistic metaphors are based on “conceptual metaphors” (e.g., TIME IS SPACE; Lakoff and Johnson 1980), they are not at all pragmatic from a cognitive point of view. This goes against pragmatic accounts of metaphor,

as described for instance in Levinson (1983), and any a-priori conception of literal meaning that may be implicit in them.² And so it is not evident how the “semantic” qualities of a cognitive theory of metaphor should be reconciled with the “pragmatic” orientation of a Gricean explanation. Yet Traugott cites both paradigms approvingly and seems to presuppose a unified basis for them. This is the first problem we encounter in examining Traugott’s theoretical position, one to which I shall devote considerably less attention in the present paper (but see section 4 on the analytical use of implicature).

The second type of process involved in meaning change essentially depends on acts of (initially defeasible) *inferencing*, usually at the level of *metonymy* (see also Dahl 1985 and Taylor 1989 for parallel examples of the conventionalization of implicatures in morphology and syntax, as well as several contributions, including the theoretical introduction, to Panther and Thornburg 2003). This kind of inference is inherently characterized as pragmatic by Traugott and is deemed more complex than the processes of metaphorization and generalization. Pragmatic inferencing is supposed to lie at the basis of the development of connectives (*while*), scalar particles (*very, mere, just*), evidentials, etc. from their respective lexical origins. It is argued that it produces a strengthening of informativeness or informational relevance, whereby the hearer is invited to infer more than what is directly communicated. On the part of the speaker, this kind of strengthening also implies that there is more of a subjective involvement in what is being communicated, i.e., that the speaker chooses to encode her own position or attitude with respect to what is said. The latter category, “what is said”, is implicitly taken by Traugott in Grice’s (1989: 25) sense of referring to the conventional meaning of words and the sentences they form, even if this reading is not wholly uncontroversial in the ensuing post- and neo-Gricean literature.

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2. Hopper and Traugott (1993: 78) refer to Green (1989: 122) to support their claim that “metaphors often involve propositions that are intended to be recognized as literally false [...] but conversational implicatures do not”. They prefer this claim “at a superficial level”. Again, it is not obvious to me why, in a Gricean framework, metaphors should not be seen as producing conversational implicatures, when Grice (1989: 34) clearly does grant them this status. Moreover, there are certainly conversational implicatures to be found that are not metaphors yet that are not literally true, either (irony, hyperbole, etc.).

In the following sections, I will deal with two problems which may arise in the confrontation of Traugott's views with a cognitive approach to meaning. One, discussed in section 3, concerns the status and substance of subjectivity as the explicit expression of grounding in the speaker's perspective (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 6). The other scrutinizes Traugott's account of "invited inferencing" against the backdrop of a truly usage-based model of CS (section 4). Invited inferences, Traugott's theory claims, move from being properties of discourse understanding to being properties of encoded meaning.

3. Subjectivity

3.1. Speaker and linguistic perspective

Subjectivity in epistemic modality can be regarded as a gradable notion of which several subregions motivate a cluster of related analytical uses of the term. There is a real sense in which linguistic expressions can be analyzed as indicating more or less subjective meanings. Largely, the two ends of this cline are identified as representing "weak" vs. "strong" subjectivity, with the former pertaining to an assessment of reality with minimal intervention from the speaker, and the latter referring to the speaker's own beliefs (about some state of affairs obtaining in reality). Lyons (1982) uses "objective" vs. "subjective" modality to mark the same distinction, whereby we may observe that with objective modality, the speaker is wholly committed to the factuality of the information she is providing — Lyons (1977) calls this the "I-say-so component" of an assertion — and is therefore not to be construed as simply absent from the conceptual background.³ Thus, the epistemic interpretation of example (1) is taken to be ambiguous between a strong and a weak subjective reading (cf. also Traugott 1989: 36):

3. Accordingly, objective statements can be denied, questioned, accepted as facts by the hearer, hypothesized in a real conditional, and embedded under factive predicates, which is by definition awkward with subjective ones. Lyons (1977: 797) points out that the difference between objective (weak) and subjective (strong) epistemic modality "is not a distinction that can be drawn sharply in the everyday use of language; and its epistemological justification is, to say the least, uncertain". I tend to agree with this statement and intend to show that the same holds for Traugott's treatment of the contrast, i.e., that it cannot be clarified from the explicit form of an utterance.

- (1) *You must be very careful.* (Lyons 1982: 109)
- a. 'It is obvious from evidence that you are very careful.' (weakly subjective)
 - b. 'I conclude that you are very careful.' (strongly subjective)

Traugott presents this contrast primarily in terms of the instance that is deemed (by the speaker, presumably) to have the authority to warrant the epistemic status of the proposition at issue, with the appropriate modal force. In the case of (1b), it is the speaker herself who assumes this role, though implicitly so (for she is nowhere mentioned in the original utterance). In (1a), the authority comes from an impersonal *it*, which may be interpreted as representing some setting relative to which an event is being construed, rather than one of the participants in this event.⁴ In the case of (1a), too, this information remains implicit.

In Langacker's (e.g., 1991b, 1999c) terms, the contrast relates to the "locus of potency" that is assumed for each usage. In fact, in moving from strictly deontic or dynamic ("root") modal uses to epistemic ones, the interpretation of this locus presents itself as the major semantic change involved. The difference between a deontic reading of (1) and an epistemic one resides in the alignment of the force that is targeted at the propositional content, which is itself construed as potential in both readings: a potential real-world fact in the case of a deontic use, and a potentially valid conclusion (following some inference chain) with an epistemic use. For deontics, that force is no longer located in the "objective scene" itself, as it was with the original, lexical uses of such modal verbs, but should be associated with some aspect of the ground (possibly the speaker), such that it is this very ground which is conceptualized as exerting the social force necessary for the actualization of the desired state of affairs. Epistemics take this process of subjectification one step further and locate the force at issue in the "evolutionary momentum" of reality itself, as it is assessed by the

4. One could describe this type of "active-zone" phenomenon (Langacker 1984) as a case of metonymy in its own right, whereby the subordinate *that* clause, the actual focus of the proposition, is metonymically represented by the grammatical subject. We should not forget, however, that we are dealing with a paraphrase here, and that it is not very revelatory to have aspects of the actual analysis of these examples depend on the relatively arbitrary grammatical form of the paraphrase (cf. below).

speaker. The modal force relevant to these uses is one where the speaker indicates the relative ease or difficulty with which she can “mentally extrapolate” the envisioned event, given what she knows about ongoing reality. However, it is not clear how, within these epistemic uses, a further strict differentiation can be made between weakly or strongly subjective meanings, except to say that the source of potency can sometimes be construed in a maximally diffuse and impersonal way, referring to “some nebulous, generalized authority” (Langacker 1999c: 308). It is exactly these cases which, counter to the claims made by Traugott regarding weak subjectivity, may arguably be regarded as extremely (strongly) subjectified.

Traugott’s emphasis in this on the speaker, as a psychological entity central to the notion of subjectivity, comes from a process-oriented view, in the psycholinguistic sense of online processing, of meaning change.⁵ The move to more subjective meanings is typically meant to convey that an expression becomes “more anchored in the context of the speech act, particularly the speaker’s orientation to situation, text, and interpersonal relations” (Traugott 1982: 253). On the whole, the resulting configurations can indeed be qualified as involving nonreferential or “procedural” (cf. Blake-more 1987) elements of meaning that may justifiably be called more pragmatic than their objective, “declarative” counterparts, but the point remains that even these highly pragmatic elements need not be substantively psychological in their conceptual import. That is to say that the pragmatic meanings that Traugott identifies as typifying subjectification are nevertheless not automatically to be associated with the speaker as a real and actual person, but rather with the evocation of a subjective conceptualizer. The position of this conceptualizer or “self” may naturally correspond with the speaker’s own epistemic stance, possibly by default, but this particular association can be overridden at any time, given that the essence of linguistic subjectivity seems to be about expressing *a* point of view (not necessarily the speaker’s, though). Moreover, inasmuch as the construal of maximal subjectivity involves a total loss of self-awareness on the part of the conceptualizer, who is focusing on the objective target of conceptualization, we cannot maintain that subjectification entails an increase in the explicitness with which the conceptualizer is linguistically represented, even if that role is to be equated with the speaker. Thus, we are faced with

5. Traugott does not, of course, mean to imply that meaning change itself is necessarily personal in the sense of “individualized”, where one speaker should initiate such changes on her own.

two directly conflicting suppositions about the effects of subjectification: one where the speaker assumes a central position that is taken to be explicitly encoded and that is treated as part of an “enriched” propositional content, vs. one where speaker and subject are not always identified with each other, and where they should in any case be conceived as part of an expression’s conceptual background (unless one or the other, or both, are also portrayed as objective participants). This is particularly clearly illustrated in the following pair of examples, which Langacker (1991b: 328) uses to discuss the distinction between a subjective and an objective construal of the speaker:

- (2) a. *Vanessa was sitting across the table.*
 b. *Vanessa was sitting across the table from me.*

In (2a), the speaker is implicitly present as the conceptual starting point from which the locative relation at issue is to be calculated, whereas in (2b), this same reference-point relation is brought onstage and, accordingly, is objectively construed. For Traugott, examples such as these would not even count as prototypical instantiations of the objective/subjective contrast, and in fact, sentence (2b) would, if anything, have to be much more subjectively than objectively oriented, since it introduces a subjective element (the speaker) explicitly within the proposition. The deeper reason for Traugott’s difference of opinion is that her approach, whose specific subject is change of meaning, looks at how much speaker-oriented meaning is part of the explicit content. A major point in her theory is to show that over time, objective meaning — i.e., referential meaning that is a property of the “external described situation” — is replaced by subjective meaning — i.e., meaning that describes speaker-internal features of the encoded situation (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 94).

It seems that we are certainly in need of an additional distinction over and above the one between “syntactic subject” and “speaker” (as an actual person physically producing an utterance). For this third role, Benveniste (1966; and, largely following him, Langacker 1985) recognized a covert “subject of utterance”, for which one could also propose such terms as conceptualizer or “viewer”, since it refers to the instance that defines the (conceptual) viewpoint or perspective on a given scene. This type of subject is not psychological in any personalized sense (even when the perspective can be attributed to this or the other actual or fictive person); rather, it pertains to what Lyons (1995) refers to in terms of the “subjectiv-

ity of consciousness”, as distinct from the “subjectivity of agency” (and in particular, from that of speaking).⁶ It is about speakers accessing “worlds” (including the perception of “immediate reality”, i.e., the ground) and referring to them “from the viewpoint of the world that they are in” (Lyons 1995: 341–342). The main reason why Traugott does not distinguish consciousness from the agentivity of speaking, which is also the chief cause of the antagonism vis-à-vis Langacker’s proposals in this respect, appears to lie in an overly rationalist approach to semantics, in which an undivided self *either* operates dispassionately upon a mental proposition (objectivity), *or* explicitly judges a proposition (subjectivity as a form of token-reflexivity).⁷ The apparent inadequacy of truth-functional semantics as a complete theory of meaning, which is the cause of this exclusive vision of linguistic objectivity/subjectivity, is nowadays being taken up through the conceptualist underpinnings of CS (cf. section 4.2), inscribing the notion of perspective, and thus of subjectivity, into the very fabric of both lexical and grammatical meaning.

How, then, are we to reconcile the idea that subjectivity correlates with implicitness or at least a lack of conceptual salience with Traugott’s claim that the speaker occupies a *more* prominent role in cases of subjectification? There is no evident way out of this conflict, I suggest, because it arises out of a fundamental clash between a rationalist (“formalist”) and an empiricist (“usage-based”) approach to language structure and use. Still, it is possible to revalidate Traugott’s systematic focus on the speaker in matters of subjectivity, provided that we move to a different level of analysis, as Langacker does. In Cognitive Grammar (CG), the notion of subjectivity always invokes an entity (be it a process or a thing) that is “real” only

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6. On a tentative note, I would propose that the proper philosophical conception of this kind of linguistic subjectivity be metaphysical, rather than psychological. The essential role of the subject(ive) would then consist in its definition of a “horizon” as the prerequisite to meaning. See Wittgenstein (1963: §§ 5.63–5.64) for a presentation of the subject as a viewer not unlike Langacker’s.
 7. While Traugott frequently denies the relevance of a purely objective epistemic modality to the study of natural-language semantics, she remains committed, I believe, to the theoretical position that there can be communicative styles, linguistic varieties, and even whole language systems which are less deeply imbued with subjectivity than others (cf. section 3.2). Such a typology would be completely absent in CS, since this model acknowledges the perspectival nature of meaning at all levels, and in every instance of language use.

at a processing level, for which the speaker is the obvious reference point. At this level of mental occurrences, the speaker is the only relevant locus of analysis, as the obvious *origo* of all acts of meaning. We could call this the neurological component of subjectivity, which I will illustrate below. There is also a phenomenological side to subjectivity, however, which describes aspects of an abstract viewing perspective (including the construction of utterly “virtual” worlds) that may or may not be the speaker’s, but that in any case remains backgrounded or unprofiled by virtue of its procedural function.⁸ From the hearer’s point of view, subjectivity in CG deals with the instructions needed to view some conceptual content under the right *construal*. Crucially, what is profiled (conceptually designated) in the message delivered by the speaker — what the message is invariably about — is the content, not the way in which it is construed.

Let us look at an example of objective vs. subjective motion in English, as characterized in CG. Consider utterances (3a) and (3b), involving a directional and a locative use of the preposition *across*:

- (3) a. *Vanessa jumped across the table.*
 b. *Vanessa was sitting across the table.*

In (3a), there is an objective path invoked by the meaning of *across* that takes an objective participant, the grammatical subject or trajector (tr), from a starting point, ‘across’ the landmark (lm) object, to an endpoint at the other side. This configuration, including the subjective process of scanning the objective path, is diagrammed in Figure 1(a).

8. “We can [...] characterize a semantic structure at either the phenomenological level—by describing essential aspects of a conceptualization in any way that proves revelatory—or else with respect to the neurological processing whose occurrence constitutes the mental experience.” (Langacker 1991a: 513) While analyses at the two levels are not to be separated but are meant to inform one another (convergence), there are good indications to believe that Traugott’s fixation on the speaker betrays a processing perspective that is only partially motivated by detailed phenomenological analysis.

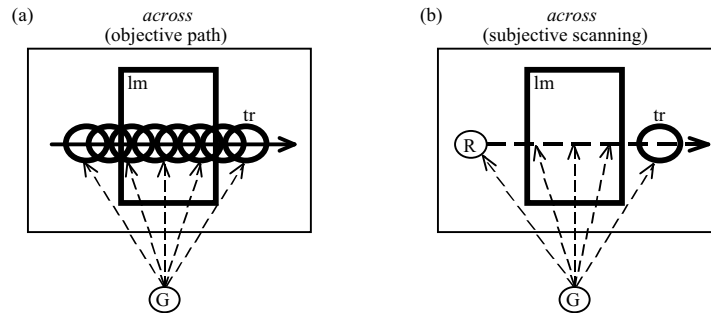


Figure 1. Objective and subjective construal (Langacker 2002a: 21)

The objective path in its entirety describes the actual motion of the entity represented by the trajector (to the extent that we accept the proposition as true). In Figure 1(b), we see the diagram for the objectively static meaning of *across* in example (3b). There, only the conceptualizer's scanning operation immanent in the dynamic meaning of *across* is retained, in that it is the speaker as viewer who still performs a sequence of acts of mental scanning on an objectively presented content (starting with a reference point R, to be identified with the ground G). Accordingly, in the subjectified uses the motion component that is otherwise objectively profiled is lost: instead of the trajector construed as controlling the motion in Figure 1(a), it is the speaker who mentally controls the scanning process in Figure 1(b). In the latter case, the whole subjective motion component, with the speaker occupying a central role in it, is not profiled, i.e., it does not deserve enough attention to be encoded. As there are no dynamic elements as such left in the objective scene, in contrast with directional uses, the result, in terms of what is profiled, is a static scene. While in processing terms the speaker, as a subjective element, might be said to become more actively, or at least more centrally, involved in the construction of a meaning, in terms of reference and interpretation the element that is subjective gets backgrounded and attenuated.

3.2. Complications and objections

Certainly, Traugott and Langacker share a keen interest in fairly subtle matters of semantic realignment, which seems to occur before, and might actually be a prerequisite for, the more patently visible changes in meaning

that have typically been observed in historical studies. Such realignment tends to take place from features of the situation to features of the speaker's or some other party's position, and that makes it tempting to see the two theories as directly comparable. And hence at odds. Let us remember, though, that Traugott's first concern goes to whether expressions historically move towards an increasingly speaker-oriented content, and that she can therefore rightly dismiss cases like in (2a/b) as largely irrelevant to her own goals. The least one could state, in response to this position, is that her theory simply does not capture the dimension of subjectivity that is Langacker's main interest.

What further divides Langacker and Traugott in their discussion of subjectivity is that only the former, in describing semantic structure, seems to pay close enough attention to language form and to properties of grammar which, even if functionally motivated, may not be entirely predictable on the basis of *choices* (made by speakers) alone (Langacker 1999a: 18ff). Traugott's focus on the speaker as the main actor in subjectivity is perhaps warranted, but partially directed at the wrong level of analysis and not sufficiently backed by a formal means of representing linguistic meaning. If we return to example (1), and specifically to the paraphrases cited by Traugott, we are bound to notice that these can only be rough approximations of the two meanings of (1). For one, the paraphrases do not even indicate which units are to be associated with the various formal elements that constitute sentence (1). In addition, they provide us with no information as to the relative prominence that should be given to the different composing units (what is focused on? what is backgrounded? etc.). In short, this type of paraphrase may be useful in determining semantic ambiguities, but it does not constitute a valid tool of grammatical analysis, if it is the only one referred to. The problem is identical to Langacker's objections against Sweetser's (1990: 61) rendition of the meanings of various English modals. While these verbs are certainly force-dynamic in the way that Sweetser portrays them, including the epistemic use in (4), they cannot be meant to convey that the first part of their paraphrase (the main clause) should receive as much attention as the proposition that it qualifies:

- (4) *You must have been home last night.*
 'The available (direct) evidence compels me to the conclusion that you were home.'

As Langacker (1997: 70) notes, “this is problematic because the characteristic feature of grammaticized modals is precisely that the speech event participants and the modal force are offstage and subjectively construed” (on the resulting semantic transparency, see also Langacker 1995b). As a general point of methodology, we might add Lyons’ (1982: 110) cautionary remark “that subjectively modalized utterances cannot be translated or paraphrased by means of unmodalized declaratives and that any attempt to do so (without making use of intonation or optional modal particles which carry over the subjectivity, more or less satisfactorily) has the effect of adding to, or subtracting from, what is said”.⁹

If, in epistemic terms, a single, wholly, or nearly completely, objective utterance may be difficult, if not impossible, to find,¹⁰ there can be no wholly objective language as a rule, and not even as a particular stylistic variety. Such an objective code would require that the speaker is nowhere to be found “onstage” or “offstage” in the complex of meaning configurations that need to be constructed for each usage event. Any typology of natural languages, moreover, in which languages become increasingly (not cyclically!) “pragmatic” (see, e.g., Lyons 1995: 341) would have to presuppose that “true” semantic and grammatical functions are not originally pragmatic in any conceivable sense. But if pragmatics, dealing with the demands of communication, is inscribed into the principles of language use from the outset, as in a usage-based model, then semantics and grammar can be construed as the structural (nonautonomous) reflexes of these demands, and there can only be shifts in how languages, or one language at different points in time, manifest pragmatic motivation at various levels of organization. This would not make them more or less pragmatic, only more or less dependent on diverse (implicit, explicit) types of “conceptual grouping” (Langacker 1999b), in which languages may and do indeed differ typologically. Now, regardless of which linguistic typology one wishes to propose in this context, it cannot have anything to do with the presence vs. absence of the speaker’s involvement, because, next to being the

9. See also Pelyvás (1996: 150ff) for an indication of how elements related to the speaker in so-called subjective usage types must already be immanent in earlier, more objective uses as well, suggesting that this cannot be what differentiates an utterance like (4) from its paraphrase.

10. Such an expression could in any case not be “grounded” and thus not occur in any reasonable stretch of ordinary discourse, for grounding always involves subjectivity in CG.

mouthpiece for her own utterances, the speaker as an “author” is also always involved in the construction of a perspective on what she says. This cannot be avoided — subjectivity resides in the use of every nominal and finite clause and is thus just a matter of grammatical habit —, and so it is not as if the speaker is investing much personal energy in her use of, for instance, a deictic tense marker (which may have subjective uses in both Traugott’s and Langacker’s accounts). It is not clear, moreover, in which sense such a tense marker might be more subjective than, say, a non-grounding aspect marker (e.g., English *-ing*), if we are to stick to Traugott’s thesis of subjectivity as personal self-expression.

This is not to deny that self-expression by the speaker motivates many constructions in language, but we should beware of linking this type of expressivity too easily to the core workings of grammar. Rather, all linguistic reflexes of subjectivity seem to be about the “ground”, in Langacker’s sense, and only some of them can be said to concentrate on the specific position of the speaker within that ground. What is more, from a CG perspective those predications that incorporate a general, impersonal notion of the ground can reasonably be taken as *more*, not less, subjectified than their expressly speaker-oriented counterparts. Some of the specifics of examples given by Traugott and her colleagues themselves already point to the nonpersonal character of more evolved manifestations of subjectivity. Thus, Traugott (1995: 39) acknowledges that the loss of referential properties linked to the subject referent of (parenthetical) *I think* paves the way for the use of this construction to express *a* perspective, not necessarily the speaker’s. I would not consider this an atypical or marked case, in contrast with Traugott’s appreciation of the same example (in terms of a “realignment of the syntactic subject”). Similarly, Traugott and Dasher’s (2002: 96) description of the “humiliative honorific” uses of the Japanese verb *agaru*, meaning ‘visit the place of one’s/the speaker’s superior’, focuses excessively on the personal nature of the choices associated with such uses. In general, though, it would seem that such grammatical types as honorifics, precisely by virtue of their highly conventionalized status, do *not* call upon the speaker’s individual decision to recognize or indicate someone else’s symbolic position in some particular context, but instead bestow this position on the basis of *social* rules and norms (whether or not the speaker actually identifies with these on each and every occasion).

By themselves, positing a typology of languages based on subjectivity, and studying the processes of change that may lead a language from one type to another, should not be problematic, if the relevant concepts are

sufficiently clarified. The scientific merits of positing such typologies and then associating them with moral predicates (even if they are not the author's, who is merely mentioning them), are much less obvious, though. Traugott and Dasher's (2002: 31ff) discussion of "objectification" as a language-external, deliberate intervention is particularly challenging in this regard. We are considerably removed from any strict grammatical conception of the subjectivity/objectivity contrast, if an objective language is associated with products of technological and cultural progress, such as science and education. We are definitely not talking about grammar, if objectivity is described as nonconnotative, neutral, transparent, even morally superior (because there is no concealment). Once more, these are not Traugott and Dasher's own terms, and they, for one, clearly position themselves on the side of "natural" linguistic subjectivity. Yet such partisanships, whichever side they may be on, are not to be considered in the first place, because the domains where these very broad uses of "objectivity" and "subjectivity" would actually make sense, are not situated anywhere in the study of grammar, but rather in literary and cultural studies and related disciplines.

In the end, both Langacker and Traugott acknowledge the central import of subjectivity to grammar and lexicon. They probably also agree on the typically abstract nature of subjective meanings, comprising epistemic meaning types and, more generally, nonreferential or "expressive" elements of semantic construal. At the same time, their very real disagreements on a number of other, theoretically and methodologically significant aspects of the study of linguistic subjectivity appear virtually insurmountable, because, as I will argue next, they involve conflicting orientations towards even such basic analytical constructs as "context" and relevant levels of linguistic choice-making. Traugott and Dasher (2002: 97–99) list a series of objections to Langacker's treatment of subjectivity that is supposed to illustrate this rift. They include the following:

- Langacker's examples are usually constructed out of context and disregard situated qualities of linguistic style and genre;
- they focus on "choices" of form (e.g., syntactic subject), rather than content;
- they deal with event (and argument) structures of situation types, which is again a formal concern — as manifested in, e.g., the analysis of "raising" constructions;

- CG is rather silent on the matter of discursive “intersubjectivity”¹¹; and
- it does not methodically zoom in on the historical mechanisms of semantic change (even if these can be seen as subsumed under CG’s more general formulation of subjectivity).

Still, it should be clear that most of these objections do not primarily target the analysis of subjectivity in CG, but the very apparatus of that theory itself. It should be evident from this and the previous discussion that, for Traugott, Langacker’s conception of subjectivity is too narrow in scope, as it only looks at a subset of purported subjectification processes, and that his conception of subjectification as attenuation should contradict her own critique of diachronic analyses of early semantic change in terms of a loss of meaning (and not a strengthening, as Traugott proposes). Problems like these cannot be remedied by adjusting a few terms or tinkering with definitions. In fact, I suggest that the rift only grows as we go into more elementary (pre-)theoretical assumptions and details of methodological orientation, both effectively separating the two models.

11. See Traugott and Dasher (2002: 40): there can be no non-truthconditional intersubjectification, i.e., the signaling of the hearer’s (or of the hearer’s and speaker’s) point of view, without some prior degree of subjectification. Nuyts (2001) is a cognitive(-pragmatic) study of epistemic modality that makes extensive use of this notion of intersubjectivity as well, and defines it as relating to evidence that is accessible to a larger group of people sharing the same conclusions as the speaker. This is, however, a very consensual view of intersubjectivity that does not seem to acknowledge elemental forms of disagreement or epistemic conflict (and *their* relevance to intersubjectivity). It would seem, furthermore, that the linguistic domain of intersubjectivity is not entirely constituted by the mere “adding together” of the opinions and beliefs of speaker, hearer, and other parties to a discourse; issues of face management and politeness, marking many instances of linguistic intersubjectivity, cannot be reduced to such quantitative interests alone. Importantly, both authors also seem to presuppose a contrast between strategic discourse and some conceptual structure that is properly decontextualized (see, e.g., Nuyts 2002: 452ff, and Traugott and Dasher 2002: 98), a claim that would be decidedly unwarranted in CG.

4. Semantics and pragmatics

4.1. Formal pragmatics

I will first demonstrate, in this section, that the subjectivity debate between Langacker and Traugott potentially triggers two very different notions of “pragmatics”. On one hand, subjective expressions may have a pragmatic function to the extent that they symbolize those meanings that are typically called expressive, including attitudinal and affective types. Subjectivity, insofar as it also deals with epistemic modality, arguably comprises quite abstract meanings that are not so much about propositional contents, but about ways of presenting them, and which might be called pragmatic in a broad sense as well.¹² On the other hand, many instances of (grammatical) subjectivity crucially relate to indexicality, a domain traditionally relegated to pragmatics by formal semanticists. This style of analysis, however, mostly starts from explicit encodings of contextual features, calling them pragmatic but for reasons that may matter solely within a formalist framework.¹³ A formalist will call any meaning pragmatic that is not logical (or logically related, through entailment, to some literal content), and that is exactly why implicatures belong in this category, too. I will use the term “logic” to evoke the complex of truth-functional approaches to semantics in the predicate calculus, as well as quantificational theories of (definite) description, such as Russell’s, together with the theoretical variants, elaborations, and challenges that have been proposed by analytic philosophers and linguists in the course of the past century or so.

12. In CG, not all subjectivity is expressive in this sense, though. In an example like (3b), involving implicit or subjective motion, it would be very difficult to establish a strict division between propositional and expressive elements of meaning.

13. These are some of the central presuppositions, it seems, of any formal-cognitive approach to language: “it assumes that the mind is, at least in part, a system of (subsystems of) representations which have syntactic and semantic properties, and that mental processes are computations driven by the formal (syntactic) properties of these representations, it recognizes a conceptual language of thought which is distinct from any particular natural language, and it adopts the view that the mind is to some extent modular in structure.” (Carston 2002: 2) Insofar as his Conversationalist Hypothesis, and its sub-hypotheses concerning the nature of implicated meaning, partake in this scientific project, Grice’s program and its many elaborations are fully embedded within this generative (“Chomskyan”) paradigm.

In Traugott's (e.g., 1989: 49; Traugott and König 1991: 194ff) account, subjectification implies an *increase* in the coding of speaker involvement or, in other words, an externalization of the speaker. (As we have seen, this goes directly against Langacker's discussion of the same phenomenon in terms of an attenuation of the speaker's prominence within a given scene.) Objectivity, to Traugott, then serves to name the kind of coding that requires the least amount of inferencing, whereby a strong correlation is noted between objective expressions and a mode of speaking that is characterized as literal. This literal quality is in turn linked to a conservative heuristic in semantic processing which Horn (1984) called the "Q Principle" of informativeness and which acts as a counterforce to the innovating pressures of subjectification.¹⁴ The latter is connected with increased levels of informativeness or expressivity, and correspondingly follows a complementary "R Principle": 'Make your contribution necessary; say no more than you must.' The process of pragmatic strengthening associated with this strategy is held responsible for effects of subjectification.

[N]ew and innovative ways of saying things are brought about by speakers seeking to enhance expressivity. This is typically done through "deroutinizing" of constructions, in other words, through finding new ways to say old things. Expressivity serves the dual function of improving informativeness for the hearer and at the same time allowing the speaker to convey attitudes toward the situation, including the speech situation. This very process of innovation is itself typically based on a principle of economy, specifically the economy of reusing extant forms for new purposes [...]. (Hopper and Traugott 1993: 65)

What is being concretely suggested here, in a slightly different terminology, is that "conversational implicatures" that are particularly salient or

14. In the wake of Grice's own preliminary analyses, a number of authors have proposed to collapse his non-Quality maxims of conversation into two basic principles regulating the economy of linguistic information: a Q Principle of informativeness and brevity and an R Principle of least speaker effort and minimal form. Without exception, an author adopting this style and terminology will easily find herself entangled in the intricate web of meaning types and subtypes typical of post- and neo-Griceanism. For an interpretation of Horn's R Principle in terms of relevance (and specifically in terms of Relevance Theory *à la* Sperber and Wilson 1986), see Traugott (2003).

stereotypical may be conventionalized¹⁵ and thus become part of the encoded meaning of a linguistic item (its semantics). Correspondingly, implicatures have a bridging role in semantic change, as follows: “particularized” invited inferences lead to “generalized” ones, establishing a temporary state dubbed “pragmatic polysemy”, where a new meaning remains coexistent with an item’s original (lexical) meaning. Only then can this new meaning be “semanticized”, when the original meaning giving rise to the inference disappears in certain contexts. Semanticization thus depends on a reanalysis¹⁶ (leading to *semantic* polysemy), whereby “inferences do become references” (Bolinger 1971: 522). As an example, consider the contrast between contemporary English *since*, indicating a temporal *or* an inferred causal relation (semantic), and *while*, possibly expressing both time *and* concession as these are always available together (a case of “merger” in the words of Coates 1983, and presumably fully pragmatic for Traugott).

In the rise of new, subjective meaning, this is supposed to be a typical path of evolution: from conversational over conventional implicature (or possibly presupposition), to semantic content. The first two stages in this process do not represent semantic mechanisms, mainly by definition. Firstly, all Gricean implicatures are “defeasible” (nonmonotonic) and consequently do not belong to the semantics of the inference-inviting item proper. (Presupposition is not semantic because it remains constant under negation, unlike genuine semantic entailments.) Moreover, conventional

15. The suggestion is presented as following up on Grice’s (1989: 39) tentative statement that “it may not be impossible for what starts life, so to speak, as a conversational implicature to become conventionalized”. Grice’s statement here, incidentally, was meant as a strictly methodological comment, not one of historical substance.

16. See Hopper and Traugott (1993: section 3.3). Reanalysis of an old form, unlike (deductive) analogy, is thought to be based on “abduction”, which is probably the pragmatic/pragmatist principle *par excellence* in accounts of inferencing, if only because of its close association with the philosophy of Charles Peirce. Andersen (1973), for example, discusses instances of language change involving a variant interpretation of the same surface form as arising from the discontinuity of transmission between generations, thus allowing grammars, or aspects of the code, to be inferred on the basis of the context-specific usage phenomena constituted by speech (as outlined with reference to phonological change in Czech, but very relevant for syntax/grammar; McMahon 1994: 92–95 contains a useful summary).

implicature is not semantic either because, in spite of its regular association with an item, the postulated meaning is still not part of “what is said”. This is in practice either defined in terms of a logical meaning (for those expression types seen as the natural-language counterparts of logical operators, for instance), or it is identified with an utterance’s literal configuration (contributing some referential substance to a propositional structure). Take the case of *after* (as a connective), which may, but need not, implicate a causal relation on top of its temporal meaning (Hopper and Traugott 1993: 74). It is rightly argued that this inference is not a conventional implicature, since it does not occur with each usage event of the item under consideration. Rather, the inference represents an instance of pragmatic polysemy for Traugott, because the second, causal meaning is not at all established (in contrast to what is the case for a word like *since*). However, to insist on calling this inference an implicature after all, if not conventional, would amount to an inflated use of the term, which would come to be synonymous with “inference” and lose all the special characteristics that are justifiably assumed to mark real implicatures. And this is the first major problem with Traugott’s “semantic-pragmatic” account of meaning change: given the lack of formal constraints informing her story of indirect meaning, how are we to differentiate between implicatures and other, looser types of (pragmatic) inference? For example, how can we distinguish some of Traugott’s more dubious “implicatures” (like the “pragmatic” causal reading of *after*) from, say, a plain gerund that is able to generate the same inference: **Reading** / **After we read your novel, we felt greatly inspired?** And why would *any* kind of sequencing between clauses not potentially do exactly the same? But if the mining of world knowledge that motivates these readings is sufficient to call such phenomena pragmatic, then perhaps we have left the strictly regimented realm of Grice’s conversationalist proposals (where emphasis is put on specific uses of specific expressions in specific contexts, and their generalizations).

Referring to Horn’s heuristics as underlying the semantic changes that Traugott is interested in, could be a dangerous move *if* the changes in question are seen as the results of implicature. For it is not clear, first of all, whether Horn himself considers such inferences to be real implicatures¹⁷: his Q and R principles are more like overarching principles that

17. Horn (1989: 194) states that the interaction between his Q and R heuristics covers a wide span of diverse phenomena, “ranging from implicature and politeness strategies to the interpretation of pronouns and gaps, from lexical

operate on language in its entirety and that are not confined to implicature (see Kearns 2000: 9). Now, the problem with calling just about any more or less systematic (and defeasible) inference an implicature is that no specific type of implicature unites all the features mentioned by Traugott throughout her many analyses. And so we are forced to determine which kind(s) of implicature may be relevant to all or most of Traugott's claims, and whether that tells us something about the division of labor that is presumed to hold between semantics and pragmatics. The crucial point to remember about Grice's discussion of implicatures is that they need an *argument* going from the utterance of proposition *p* to the assumption of a different proposition *q*, in order to safeguard certain basic expectations of discourse cohesion and relevance. Therefore, not any contextually driven enhancement of lexical and grammatical meaning should count as an implicature. If, in fact, a new element of meaning emerges (through an expression's interaction with context or world knowledge, or simply through relatively automatic mechanisms of association) that does not need any such argumentation, i.e., that is not to be linked to the original meaning through a series of implicit (propositional) assumptions, then we might not be faced with implicature, but rather with a case of (cognitively grounded) semantic extension (see section 4.2). If, moreover, there is no real or apparent reason for the hearer to suspect the need for additional argumentation in the interpretation of utterance tokens (because the interpretation would be markedly deficient without it), then we might ask what is specifically conversational about possible (subpropositional, associative) inferences arising under these conditions. I believe that a majority of Traugott's examples of subjectification-through-conventionalization (of implicatures) suffers from both problems, and that this calls for a reappraisal of the data in a radically different theoretical light.

Technically, these issues manifest themselves with respect to various levels of meaning analysis. There is, to begin with, the uncertain relation between Horn's principles and the status of an inference *qua* implicature. This is echoed in Geis and Zwicky's (1971) original observations on the concept of invited inferencing, which are restricted to *generalized* implicatures, i.e., to those (conversational) implicatures that apply regardless of any specific contextual conditions (see Traugott and Dasher 2002: 5).

change to indirect speech acts [and so on, FB]". The implication here is clearly that implicatures are *not* routinely to be equated with other types of inference, including those pertaining to meaning change (narrowing and broadening).

Hopper and Traugott (1993: 75) do also note that “for inferences to play a significant role in grammaticalization, they must be frequently occurring, since only standard inferences can plausibly be assumed to have a lasting impact on the meaning of an expression”. But the recourse to “standard inferences” (see also Levinson 1983: 104) clashes, in a way, with Traugott’s repeated insistence on the initial generation of implicatures leading to semantic change in *local* contexts. So there must be a stage of inferencing preceding the establishment of standard implicature that is in effect local and that consequently leads to generalizable semantic change. Several candidates present themselves here. Conventional implicatures, for one, are attached to one, local form, but they do not arise in any historical sense within the standard Gricean picture — the conventional implicature of contrast associated with *but* (Grice 1961), for one, is stipulated for reasons of logical analysis, and not as reflecting historical processes. Next, we might turn to particularized conversational implicatures, which augment an original meaning but are typically not attached to one form (by definition; see Grice’s feature of “nondetachability”). The only suitable remaining candidate, then, comprises the class of so-called generalized conversational implicatures (GCIs; cf. Atlas and Levinson 1981, Horn’s 1984 discussion of Q-based scalar and clausal implicatures, and Levinson 2000). On the neo-Gricean view, GCIs are reconceived as contents that a speaker directly communicates, rather than being merely conversationally implicated. Levinson’s own view is that GCIs are default inferences that will be drawn unless something unusual in the context blocks them. Still, this does not solve Traugott’s problem of finding the originally local basis for such GCIs, and it certainly does not square with the observation that any good paraphrase of an utterance with an implicature (including a generalized one) will still carry that same implicature: why, then, would *since* carry a causal implicature while *after* would not? Incidentally, GCIs are generally called in to explain the conflict between logical and natural-language meanings (as with Horn’s scalar implicatures), but the issue of logical meaning is not exactly foregrounded in Traugott’s own work, or so it seems.

A problem that is heavily correlated with the previous discussion concerns the “exploiting” nature of conversational implicatures. Let us first assume that the exact status (i.e., particularized vs. generalized) of such implicatures remains undecided for now. Still, what they are thought to share, at least in Grice’s conception, is the idea that a hearer *needs* more information than what has been “said” in order to make sense of an utter-

ance, and that she will therefore engage in a rational argument to arrive at that additional information. This is usually associated with Grice's (1989: 30ff) discussion of the conversational maxims elaborating his Cooperative Principle: it is the flouting of a maxim, i.e., the blatant failure to fulfill it, that characteristically leads to implicature, as the hearer must assume some extra bit of information *q* to maintain the supposition that the speaker is conversationally cooperating. None of this, now, is systematically available in the range of studies presented by Traugott. That is to say that some of the cases adduced do, while others do not, conform to Grice's descriptions. One might counter that Grice left room for implicatures that do not betray any violation of maxims: the class of GCIs would be a case in point, but there we are stuck with the local origins of Traugott's inferential meanings, which do not go well with the default status of GCIs. And even an example like (5), involving a particularized inference following an apparently unproblematic exchange, still assumes that there is a connection between A's remark and B's reaction that is not present in the explicitly coded utterance parts:

- (5) A: *I am out of petrol.*
 B: *There is a garage around the corner.* (implicature: the garage is, or may be, open, has petrol to sell, etc.)

Not to assume such a relation (e.g., of relevance) would amount to losing obvious pieces of information and would effectively render the exchange incomprehensible. So it is not so much the obviousness of inferences, but rather their necessity or inevitability in the course of interpretive work, that seems to determine whether or not such inferences might be labeled implicatures, at least in Grice's view. In view of the fact that many of the semantic extensions identified by Traugott do not show this kind of necessity (e.g., it is *not* necessary to assume a causal relation between the two events in the temporal reading of *Since we read your novel, we felt greatly inspired*, although such an assumption could in many cases be *useful*), it might be reasonable to suggest that this type of additional information enters the picture regardless of what the hearer does or does not assume with respect to the speaker's intentions. It is, in other words, information that is relatively cheap in the automaticity with which it presents itself, and that should therefore be treated as somehow associatively related to an explicit content (rather than being discovered through something like a rational argument, as with canonical implicatures). Such associations may have

greater or lesser degrees of prominence, depending on things like frequency and context, and thus they may vary in the necessity with which they are felt to accompany the use of a particular item. But that is no reason to call them pragmatic, if pragmatics is the study of particular meaning effects related to a speaker's intentional, strategic behavior.

Two main conclusions can be drawn at this point. Either Traugott calls an implicature conversational if it is "not part of the meaning of any particular element in the utterance" (Traugott and König 1991: 194), but then the term is used as a synonym of inference and there is really no need to go into all of the technical subtleties marking present-day (formal) pragmatics. Or she is, in certain cases, effectively talking about standard implicatures that are generalized and do not involve any violation of maxims. But then the explicit analytic appeal to Gricean principles of relevance (and others) looks awkward and actually takes the focus away from the speaker's intentionality (e.g., in performing acts of conversational breaching), in favor of the inference-drawing hearer — whereby it does not really matter what the source of an inference is: a speaker's decision to communicate or imply it, or its quasi-automatic association with a given item's use. This, in turn, seems to clash with Traugott's outspoken concern with the speaker as the prime locus of meaning change (cf. the discussion of subjectivity as personal self-expression, as well as the emphasis put on Horn's R Principle of least speaker effort and related claims about the speaker as a central force in semantic innovation¹⁸).

4.2. Conceptualist semantics

In what follows, I will very briefly sketch an alternative to the theoretical model adopted by Traugott as a background in her description of pragmatic enrichment and subjectification. This alternative issues from Cognitive Semantics and its appeal to usage-based mechanisms of linguistic organization (see especially Langacker 1987; other useful overviews can be

18. Thus, Traugott and Dasher (2002: 5) do not take up Heine, Claudi and Hünnemeyer's (1991) term "context-induced inference" because it would underexpose the speaker's intentional makeup, they explain: "the latter term suggests a focus on AD/Rs [hearers] as interpreters and appears to downplay the active role of SP/Ws [speakers] in rhetorical strategizing, indeed indexing and choreographing the communicative act."

found in Rudzka-Ostyn 1988, Tomasello 1998–2003, and Barlow and Kemmer 2000). In CS, there can be no contrast between an external (logical) semantics and an internal pragmatics, because the externalist (“objectivist”) basis of semantics is basically not recognized. The dichotomy, as conjured up by Traugott and many of her colleagues in functionalist circles, is fallacious from a cognitive standpoint, because it assumes a fundamental difference between expressing information and regulating communication. Such a contrast is not provided for, however, in any conceptualist model of linguistic meaning, like CS, where the notion of construal serves to indicate an element of negotiation in communication that is *always* available, both in lexical and grammatical meaning and at all conceivable levels of structure. In this sense, there is no tension between linguistic representations and their (strategic) uses. Such a cognitively informed picture of pragmatics, furthermore, cannot possibly be reconciled with a notion of communication that is inherently severed from some decontextualized understanding of linguistic meaning.

In a usage-based model with partial sanctioning of fully specified established units, there is always meaning beyond structure. If “pragmatic” is then identified with what has not been explicitly encoded, it will also have to denote purely associative aspects of meaning, which come with the use of a linguistic item regardless of whether the speaker intended them or not. This, in fact, would amount to a trivial use of the term. Nonconventional meanings that are mere associations of use are in principle covered by CS in its account of semantic extension. Such extensions of meaning are governed, according to cognitive linguists, by a set of readily identifiable conceptual mechanisms, including metaphor, metonymy, and various so-called image-schema transformations, but also subjectification/grammaticalization. These extensions may be labeled semantic simply because they belong to the realm of linguistic meaning; there is no need to devise a special term for them. And even if they are defeasible at some point in their evolution, that should not necessarily make them pragmatic, either. For instance, the causative meaning of *since* may have been lingering right below some threshold of unit status without ever being pragmatic in any formal sense. It was just part of the conceptual background and gradually became “semantic”, i.e., conventionally associated or entrenched and thus less and less defeasible.

Context, insofar as its relevance for a given meaning is frequently re-established, may be represented in a predication's "base space"¹⁹, i.e., "those portions of active cognitive domains that a predication specifically invokes, providing the background against which some entity stands out as the [designating] profile" (Langacker 1991a: 544). In general, any type of implicit notion, traditionally a good candidate for pragmatic analysis, can be represented thus in CS. This constitutes its "encyclopedic" span. Any attempt to grant this type of meaning a distinctive status would have to come up with principled ways of differentiating between essential (semantic) and nonessential (pragmatic) elements of meaning construction, yet such principles are nowhere to be found in CS. But is everything encyclopedic semantics, then, and, in particular, is subjectification, too, a mere process of "partial sanctioning" (the cognitive mechanism behind semantic extension)? The answer to the first question is negative, I believe: there is still room for elements of pragmatic meaning, which may comprise subjective ones. However, not every subjective meaning, at least in the sense of Langacker, is pragmatic.

Certain meaning types may resort to the *exploitation* of conventionalized expectations with regard to "what is the case" (as expressed in the form of a proposition). This type of exploitation may be taken in the Griecan sense, without thereby co-opting the logical underpinnings of his conversationalist program (particularly noticeable in the explication of "what is said"). Other labels to refer to phenomena crucially linked to linguistic acts of exploitation include "accommodation" (Lewis 1979) and context creation, which depend on the availability of shared knowledge or, in its absence, on the readiness of discourse participants to behave *as if* there were something to be shared. Such uses may all eventually give rise to instances of semantic extension, but, importantly, the pragmatic element in

19. This solution holds for other phenomena as well that are typically considered pragmatic, like presupposition. In Langacker (2002b), the speaker's implicit acceptance of a proposition as real with the use of factive verbs like *know* is described in terms of the offstage and subjective construal of the speaker and her epistemic attitude. This represents a general analytic strategy in CG, where implicit or indirect meaning, including certain kinds of implicature, is said to be evoked in the background, as a "virtual" foil of the actual entities and relations at issue (see also Langacker 1999d). The idea of background conceptions is also essential for describing the workings of linguistic negation, including matters of scope, polarity, and the special behavior of presuppositions (Langacker 1991a: 134–135).

them does not just disappear after they have been conventionalized. That is to say that conventionality, a very moot point indeed in any typology of meaning, is not and cannot be the decisive factor in calling something semantic or pragmatic. Instead, since exploitation is not a matter of adding or subtracting some conceptual content at the level of semantic representations, but of adopting a certain marked *stance* toward such representations, it constitutes a genuine *qualitative* (and hence not entirely fuzzy) cut-off point between different types of meaning, one which cannot be provided by the quantitative notions of convention or conceptual entrenchment. Semantics is thus not left to deal with “underdetermined” meanings that are pragmatically enriched. In CS, semantics is as rich as it gets and comprises those instances of “sense addition” that may be covered by general principles of cognitive organization. Exploitation, in contrast, is not a case of adding representational material, but rather of treating a given content conspicuously differently.²⁰

Consider the next two (rather unrelated) illustrations. It is not that I am adding anything to the meaning of *block of ice* when I call somebody that; I am rather using the term, with its conventional meaning, in a somewhat surprising way (where “surprise” itself is a relative and highly individualized notion, much like the idea of metaphorical “tension” in the extant psychological literature on metaphor comprehension). The idiomatic status of this expression, used figuratively, does not detract from its special character, most speakers of English would agree; probably, it is only with very strongly conventionalized, “dead” metaphors like *the foot of a mountain* that the pragmatic aspect of a figurative use, or its tension, can be lost, which would make the metaphor truly semantic — not on any grounds of frequency, though, but based on a category change, frequency-driven, in what speakers feel they are “saying” when they use the expression. Likewise, I am not changing (adding to or subtracting from) the established

20. This formulation might be seen by some to invite all sorts of methodological difficulty, related to issues of truth and interpretive authority. However, I do intend this claim to be understood from an “emic” perspective, that is, from the perspective of discourse participants ostensibly generating meaningful categories and contrasts. It is they, and not the analyst, who decide what counts as “different” and thus pragmatic, and what does not. Evidence for the pragmatic status of a linguistic element should thus be found in the utterances, behaviors, and orientations of (real or idealized) discourse participants, not in any logical analysis of propositions.

meaning of the English present tense, which is that an event coincides with the time of speaking (“is true right now”), when I use it to refer to a situation that is obviously nonpresent — say, in generic contexts, or with the historical present —, or when I ask a question about a present-time event that seems obviously observable — my asking *Do you smoke?* when I see someone enjoying their cigarette. What *needs* to be added, in the course of interpretation, to the conventional knowledge of the meaning of this tense, is the realization that its use in these particular contexts is less than felicitous unless the hearer mentally assumes a viewpoint from which she *can* make sense of the utterance. Characterizing this viewpoint is not a matter of adding representational content but of describing a certain attitude toward some “original” content: there is nothing that needs to be put into the semantics of the English present tense to explain how, in certain contexts of use, the phrase *Do you smoke?* can come to mean something like ‘are you a smoker?’. Exploitation, thus defined, appears everywhere in language and completely redrafts traditional dividing lines between linguistic semantics and pragmatics: it includes typical examples of Gricean implicature but also forms of subjective meaning that rely on mental acts of footing and positioning, and it excludes those meaning types whose only claim to pragmatic fame lies in the fact that they happen to be somewhat less entrenched (within a polysemy network), or that they are presumed, purely on speculative grounds, to derive from an underlying logical meaning that is “timeless”.²¹

21. Two important implications follow from this. In CG, the analysis of the alleged natural-language counterparts of logical operators (mostly involving so-called GCIs) and of conventional implicatures is handled by the usual cognitive mechanisms, deemed semantic. Thus, the exclusive (logical but counterintuitive) meaning of *or* is treated by Langacker (2003: 43) as a specialized, not basic, sense that may indeed be “implicated”, but not conventionally. Secondly, it should be realized that, in the present proposal, pragmatic meaning is necessarily a feature of (quasi-)propositional structures (Gricean “utterances”), not of individual lexemes in abstraction. Although pragmatic effects can be located at the level of words, as in many cases of metaphor, it is only the use of such words in the utterances they are part of that calls for a pragmatic analysis. As indicated, principles of extension governing the meaning changes that occur in lexicon can arguably be called semantic in CS. This picture corresponds, though in very rough ways and with possibly minimal philosophical overlap, with Recanati’s (2002) distinction between “subpropositional associative primary processes”, driven only by considerations of cognitive effort and efficiency, and properly inferential “propositional secondary processes”, which are

Measures of semantic “distance”, “networks” of polysemies, and other “maps” will not help establish the semantics/pragmatics distinction, because these all tend to be situated in, and describe, the semantic component of CS anyway. Any cut-off point within these models would be, in a way, arbitrary, as there exists no absolute motivation to choose a degree of distance great enough to start talking about pragmatically related/derived meanings. One could conceivably wonder, then, to what extent Levinson’s (2000: 243) rather uncharitable critique of cognitive-linguistic “pragmatics” may be warranted after all: “Pragmatics can be avoided if we can find a way of accounting for pragmatic intrusion into truth conditions while maintaining the modularity of a distinct pragmatics (built on non-monotonic principles) and semantics (built on monotonic principles).” I have just tried to argue, though, that there might very well be a principled motivation — that is nonmodular — for differentiating between a cognitively based style of semantic analysis, and the pragmatic analysis of utterances in context (which is presumably also, if only partially, cognitively informed). It is true, of course, that terminology is *only* terminology. We should not be surprised to see Langacker (1995a) appear in a *Handbook of Pragmatics*, when many of the concerns of CG (its encyclopedic view of meaning, its interest in construal as a matter of perspective or position-taking) are also seen as valid research objects in different strands of contemporary linguistic pragmatics. If meaning is the object of study, it has not generally mattered in cognitive linguistics whether “semantic” or “pragmatic” was chosen as the appropriate adjective. I think this has been a healthy attitude. It is only when prompted by heated debates on the supposed semantics/pragmatics interface that cognitive linguists may take a more explicit stand, lest they be accused of only making a mess of things.

5. Conclusion

There is every reason to retain a lively interest in Traugott’s findings, as well as in her general story of semantic change as involving a conventionalization of (often abstract) inferentially or associatively generated meanings. That has not been the point of this paper. Rather, I have opted to present two good reasons for cognitive linguists to beware of uncritically

nonlogical, utterly strategic, and guided by the standard Gricean maxims (and possibly others).

adopting the theoretical frame into which some of these findings have been put. The first of these reasons concerns the (psychological) substance to be suspected behind linguistic manifestations of subjectivity, where I suggest that Traugott takes a process-oriented view that is not entirely consonant with some of the phenomenology of linguistic subjectivity, as portrayed in CG. The second reason pertains to the status of the inferences typically giving rise to subjective meanings, and their relationship with speaker intentions. This is more of a methodological question, though with serious ties to underlying theoretical presuppositions regarding the “architecture” of linguistic meaning and its relation to context.

The case to be made in this paper has only been directed at Traugott’s work as a paradigm example, and nothing more, of what can go wrong in the scholarly interaction between cognitivism and various types of functionalism in linguistics. There is no denying that the two paradigms should be seen as largely compatible, but at the same time many functionalist models today are still tributary (particularly in some of their more implicit orientations) to formerly dominant logicist conceptions of language structure, and to referentialist assumptions about (basic) linguistic functions. Traugott illustrates this tendency most *explicitly*, I suppose. It also goes to show that Cognitive Grammar, and the collection of analytic tools and protocols that might be distilled from it under the heading of Cognitive Semantics, constitute more of a radical linguistic approach than is often acknowledged. In its rejection of both grammatical formalism and semantic correspondence theories, the cognitive-linguistic paradigm presents new useful ways of dealing with old, insightful observations, provided that the truly usage-based character of the data is thoroughly thought through.

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