ON THE ANALYSIS OF
COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

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I

This paper has a double purpose. On the one hand I want to discuss some properties of communicative action and try to state some of the *components In* a model of communication. On the other hand I want to try to show how these properties and components can be used to give an analysis of the verbs of communication as a semantic field.

I use the label verbs of communication to designate verbs of the following type*: warn, admit*, *threaten*, *state*, *deny*, *request*, *guess* and *assert*. All of these are verbs which refer to some aspect of an interaction between persons which at least partly involves communication. The term "verbs of communication" has been chosen rather than the otherwise common term "speech act verbs" since those aspects of communication to which the verbs refer are far from always connected with speech. One can quite well warn, threaten" request, reject and order without using speech or even gestures with conventional meaning. Without any act conventional significance. a fist raised spontaneously as though to strike can by virtue of its natural connections with anger and pain be quite sufficient to threaten somebody.

Before I continue I would like to say a few words about the method I use in order to achieve the two purposes I have mentioned above. I think the method quite well illustrates a common procedure among linguists which can be called the linguistic phenomenological observational method. The purpose of this method is to make explicit as much an possible of one's intuitive common sense knowledge about a certain phenomenon. In this case the phenomenon in question is communication. At least the following stages can be distinguished analytically in the application of this method:

1.   I am interested in communication and want to know something more precise and explicit about this phenomenon. I increase my insights by:

    (i) analysing the meaning of a subset of all the expressions of everyday language which refer to aspects of communicative activities,

    (ii) trying to become conscious of my own ideas concerning how one communicates,

(iii) making unsystematic observations of how people I meet conduct themselves in order to communicate.

2.   I start to put together my insights from these three sources of knowledge and construct a tentative model for certain aspects of what it is to communicate.

3.   I start to test and extend my model by:

(i) sharpening my intuitions about communicative activities, by formalizing or quantifying aspects of the model or by providing explicit or operational definitions of certain concepts,

(ii)making more systematic observations of the communication of others. Both non-interfering observation and experimental observation can here be used,

(iii) last but not least exposing my model to renewed conceptual testing by taking more of the expressions of everyday language for communicative activities and seeing if what I know about the meaning of these words matches the underlying parameters for communication that I work with in my model.

4.   One or more of these steps is repeated, yielding on the one hand a better understanding of communication and on the other a better lexical analysis of the terms of communication in everyday language.

Thus, the methodology espoused is a very pluralistic one, making simultaneous use of experimentation observation, formalization and lexical analysis and for that matter computer simulation. As far as I can see there is no evidence to indIcate that these methods are not compatible with each other.

On the contrary a methodological pluralism of this type seems to be supported by two underlying assumptions which to me seem fruitful in the study of language and communication. The first is that scientific thinking differs from everyday thinking only by gradual refinement and the other is that there is no sharp distinction to be drawn between meaning and belief. [1] These two assumptions are quite in harmony with a phenomenologically based investigation if one admits a place for scientific refinement of intuition, i.e. no ontological chasm is imposed between the world of common sense reality and the analysis and explanation of phenomena in this world. The assumption concerning the relationship between meaning and belief allows for an investigation of common sense beliefs starting in language, i.e. no clear line is drawn between lexical analysis and an analysis of the phenomena being designated by the linguistic expressions.

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[1] Cf. W.V.O. *Quine's Word and Object* for an elaborate defense of this view.

The analysis presented in this paper is at a relatively early stage in the research process which has been outlined above and has been done entirely within the confines of the above mentioned linguistic phenomenological observational method. The later stages of more explicit formalization and experimentation have not yet been attempted. However, I think, the analysis has some value in that it opens a fruitful but infrequently utilised perspective on linguistic communication to linguists and others interested in communication.

II

The fundamental traits of this perspective are arrived at by viewing communication as a type of action and cooperation. Action should here be perceived as intentional behavior directed at a certain goal. Behavior which is not intentional as for example patellar reflexes or breathing is therefore not viewed as actions. [2]

To investigate what factors are relevant for our conception of a certain type of action it is often helpful to study the "felicity conditions" of the action. That is to say those conditions which have to be met for the action to be considered ideally felicitous.

Intuitions about ideal felicity are perhaps hard to swallow for those with a positivistic inclination, but to some extent such intuitions can be justified by attempts at behaving infelicitously with regard to the conditions given below. The reactions of other persons should then provide indirect behavioral support for the existence of the conditions if the intuitions are correct.

Below I list some of the conditions a communicative action must meet in order to be felicitous. Some of these conditions are not unique to communicative actions but apply to action in general.

(i) Intentionality and voluntariness: The behavior should be voluntary and intentional. Within the framework of this paper those intentions which are connected with communication are of special interest and they will therefore be treated below in section IV.

(ii) Rationality: The action should be "adequate" i.e. as effective and efficient as possible and "competent' [3] i.e. should only be performed if there is a likelihood of success. Actions which are not intentional and rational in the sense intended here are likely to be seen as irrational or even irresponsible, and can be subject to social sanctions. thus giving some behavioral support for the status of rationality and *intentionality as* felicity conditions.

(iii) Ethical considerations: Perhaps the most important ethical requirement on communication is genuineness. Senders should possess those feelings, attitudes or

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[2] For a more thorough analysis of the relation between action and behavior see Allwood (1976) Chapter 2
[3] The concepts of adequacy and competence are presented more carefully in Allwood (1976) Chapter 5.

intentions which usually are connected with the behavior of the sender on natural or conventional grounds by a receiver. For example, my questions should express my desire for information and my statements should express what I believe to be true. Here common sanctions against dishonesty and deceit provide support for genuineness as a condition of felicity. But there are also other ethical considerations which bear on communication. In general the consequences of the so called "golden rule" - Do unto others what you would have them do unto you - seems to apply in as great a force to communicative behavior as to other behavior. An analysis of the forms of politeness in ordinary language provides some illustration of this. [4]

(iv)   The form of the behavior: Communicative behavior should be conventionally correct with regard to (a) the correspondence between units of expression and desired content [5] (lexical conventions) and (b) the joining together of units of expression to bigger units (syntax). Furthermore the behavior must sometimes possess other traits; as for example a certain speed or strength of movement. In general one can view the form of the behavior as a result of the coordination of sequential and simultaneous aspects of behavior.

(v)   Relation to context: The behavior should be adapted to context with regard to both its external form and to the content it expresses (e.g. feelings, attitudes, subject matter or intentions to affect). Certain contents can only be expressed in certain contexts.

(vi)   Success: In order to be felicitous the purpose of an action must be achieved. For a communicative action this usually means that a sender by transferring information to a receiver is able to affect the receiver in the way he had intended. For some communicative actions, however, the main purpose seems to be to achieve a certain social effect. Paradigm examples of this are communicative actions which are performed with the help of institutionalized performative expressions of the type *I baptize* or *I excommunicate.*

By contemplating these six types of felicity conditions and possibly some more we arrive at a host of relevant facts and conclusions about communicative actions. Some of these conclusions seem to me especially important and will therefore be discussed below.

III
The first conclusion concerns the criteria we use to identify a certain communicative action or analogously the criteria we use to determine the correct application of a certain term of communicative action. These criteria cannot be identical to the felicity conditions since an action can very well occur without being completely felicitous. One can for example give an order which is ignored or warn somebody without

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[4]   Cf. Aijmer (1977) and Brown and Levinson (1978). In both of these papers it becomes clear that both ethics and rationality play a role for politeness.
[5]   Expression and content are here used in the sense of Hjelmslev (1943)

having intended to do so. The order and the warning are not ideally felicitous but can in spite of this be said to have occurred.

How should the identification criteria of a communicative action be characterised? (If one preferred to see matters from a purely linguistic perspective one could here ask: how should the application criteria of a certain term of communication be characterised?) Unfortunately it does not seem to be possible to give a simple answer to any of these two variants of the question. There seem to be at least four different factors which can be used to identify a certain action. Furthermore, it seems to hold that each of the four factors is sufficient without it being true that any one of these factors is necessary to identify certain actions.

I think this laxness with regard to what factors can be used to identify a communicative action is connected with a lack of clarity in our ordinary concept of action, i.e. it is not clear with respect to ordinary actions and action-terminology what the essential properties of an action are supposed to be. It is possible to speculate that this is one of the reasons behind disagreements between behavioristic and mentalistic accounts of action. We have intuitions about action which support both types of a analysis. As we will see, one of the consequences of this lack of clarity in our ordinary concept of action is that several of the verbs of communication can be claimed to be ambiguous.

The four factors which most commonly seem to be used to identify behavior as a certain type of action are:

(i)   the intentional phenomena governing the behavior
(ii)   the form of the behavior (conventional or non-conventional)
(iii)   the result which is achieved through the behavior
(iv)   the context in which the behavior occurs.

As we see these four types of criteria of identification are related to the felicity conditions (i), (iv), (vi) and (v). This is what one should expect since an ideal occurrence of an action should be a special case of the general occurrence of that action. i.e. an action does not need to be felicitous to occur.

It should also be made clear that the four types of criteria are criteria of identification but not necessarily of identity. [6] They are properties we use to ascertain the presence of a certain phenomenon but they are not necessarily therefore the properties of the phenomenon which give it its identity. For example the context sometimes makes it possible for us to identify an action without it being true that the context is an essential property of the action itself.

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[6] The utility of this distinction has been explored in Ballmer (1976) in terms of a distinction between ontic and epistemic criteria. However, the philosophical problem of deciding whether or not proposed ontic criteria really make up a subset of the possible epistemic criteria remains

The first type of identification is dependent on the intentions and purposes a certain agent is tying to his behavior irrespective of whether these are achieved or not. This type of identification can therefore be used before the purpose that a certain action is intended to achieve has been achieved. A carpenter can for example be said to be producing a chair before it is finished.

The form of the behavior is used for identification especially when the behavior follows a conventional pattern. For example a rhetorical question can be said to be a question by virtue of its conventional form even if it is not at all intended as a question but rather as a statement.

The third type of identification uses the actual result of the behavior and does not at all need to consider the kind of -action that a certain agent is intending to perform. For example a farmer is cultivating his land in the most modern way with chemical fertilisers and insecticides in order to get as big a harvest as possible. One of the results of his activities is environmental pollution. It now seems to be in accordance with normal linguistic usage to claim that what the farmer was doing was to pollute the environment. An identification of action of this third type thus relies completely on the interpretation that an observer or the agent himself can give of the actual effects of a certain behavior irrespective of whether this interpretation corresponds to the real intentions of the agent.

The fourth type of identification makes it possible to identify a certain type of behavior by using the context it occurs in. Identifying something as an *answer* illustrates this. It seems possible to consider any verbal utterance which follows a question as an answer. For example sentence (2) below could in spite of its irrelevance be said to be an answer to sentence (1), since sentence (1) is a question.

(1)   What time is it?
(2)   I have a stomach ache.

There are, of course, other more restricted notions of answering for which more than just following a question would be required. Notice here how the different notions of answering illustrate the role of the context for identity and identification. With a very lax notion of *answer*, the question-context would be sufficient to call any following verbal utterance an answer. If one in addition claimed that something like a question was necessary for the occurence of an answer - an answer presupposes something to be answered (a problem or a question) - the tie between a question and a following verbal utterance with regard to its status as an answer would be analytic. The question-context would then be one of the identity-requirements for lax answers as well as an identification criterion. However, this would not be the case with a more substantial notion of *answer* where a question could help to identify a certain verbal utterance as an answer without thereby giving the utterance its identity.

The four identification criteria that have just been mentioned clearly differ in epistemological status. While all four criteria in principle are available to the agent

performing the action to be identified, only the latter three are available to an outside observer. As is well known this provides one of the strongest motivating forces for those who hold that an intersubjective account of human action can only be given in behavioral terms. But since it seems very difficult if not impossible to give an interesting account of human action in non-intentional terms, intentionality is a phenomenon I think we must accept. Intentionality seems to have not only a special epistemological status but also a special ontological status with regard to human action. See Von Wright (1971).

Thus, I think. as observers we must accept the double task of finding identification criteria both for actions and for intentions while as performing agents our intentions are at least sometimes, but by no means always, directly available. To the extent that intentions can have a low degree of consciousness or perhaps even be subconscious the agent will have an identification problem which is similar to that of the observer.

Let me now return to the four proposed criteria types in order to illustrate how they on the one hand can be used to provide an explanation of how a sentence out of context can be regarded as several clearly differentiated communicative actions [7] and on the other hand how many verbs of communication can be claimed to exhibit a systematic ambiguity with regard to the four types of criteria. As an illustration of the first phenomenon we consider sentence (3) below (context free).

(3)   It is slippery outside.

We see that many different intentions could be connected with the use of (3) for example the intention to warn or to inform. Using the type of identification relying on intention, (3) will then be a *warning* or a *statement.* If we instead use the conventional form of the sentence - the indicative - we perhaps want to classify the sentence as a *statement.* If we use the reaction which could have been aroused in some receiver upon hearing the sentence we might instead choose to say that the sentence was used to *frighten* the receiver. Finally we could quite well classify the sentence as an *answer* if it occurred after a question.

As an illustration of the second phenomenon we will consider a certain type of systematic ambiguity in the verbs of communication produced because the unclarity in our concept of action occurs especially often with regard to a result interpretation and an intention interpretation. Consider the sentences (4) and (5) below.

(4)   I warned Bill but he did not even hear me.
 (5)   I warned Bill without intending to do so.

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[7]   For the reader who is acquainted with the linguistic literature of the last twenty years there should be no difficulties in remembering a host of examples of this type. See especially those examples which have been discussed in connection with the so-called performative hypothesis

In (4) it is my intention of warning Bill which gives me the right to claim that I have warned him. In (5) it is the fact that the result of my action was that Bill was warned which gives me the same right.

IV

Very much of our thinking about action and communication presupposes the notion of intentionality. In the discussion above I have certainly taken intentionality to be perhaps the most important notion, even if I admit that not all traits of our common sense thinking about action and communication point to this. However, it seems important to study in a little more detail how intentionality plays a role for communication. Below I will therefore outline what seems to me to be some of the most crucial features of intentionality in communication. [8]

First, there is the concept of a communicative act itself. I would like to define a *communicative act* as an *occurrence of behavior* connected with a *parcel of communicative intentions.*

Maybe the first thing to note about this definition is that it allows a communicative act to be connected with several different intentions, i.e. with a parcel of intentions. I think, some reflection on the following example of a dialogue or on other similar examples will make it clear that such multi-intentionality is the normal case in communication.

(6)   A: Stop flirting with my wife.

       B: I've got something in my eye.
       A: I know you are lying.

We see that there are many ways of construing A's first remark. For example, it could be a request and an accusation. B's first remark qualifies as a statement, an extenuation and an explanation. A's second remark could be a statement, an objection and a renewed accusation. The point here is that many so-called speech act labels fit one and the same communicative act simultaneously. There are at least two types of reason for this. One has already been discussed above. The ordinary concept of action makes it possible for an observer to classify an utterance from many different points of view, some of them having nothing to do with intentions and we will see in section V how the semantics of communicative expressions helps to preserve this possibility by making the perspective through which a certain communicative action is designated a part of the meaning of the expression.

The other type of reason is that even if we view a communicative act from a wholly intentional perspective the same act can be compatible with many different intentions. E.g. the intentions of stating, objecting and accusing are all compatible

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[8]   A more detailed argument for some of the features can be found in Allwood (1976 .

with A's second utterance above. To the extent that the multiple of compatible intentions is not just a product of the observer's interpretation, the agent can then be said to have several different intentions connected with one and the same communicative act.

Mutually compatible intentions connected with one act of behavior can be structured in two ways logically. They can be subordinate to each other, as when I state in order to object, or coordinate as when I simultaneously object and accuse. Parcels of intentions are thus assumed to be complex structures of mutually compatible intentions which are either coordinate or subordinate. It is also possible that a parcel of intentions could contain incompatible intentions but such intentions would then be connected with behavior, which would seem irrational.

Let me now continue by taking a look at the three major types of intentionality I want to suggest are connected with communication.

I.   First there are intentions connected with the *content communicated*. I suggest that the following three dimensions of content are useful to consider.

1.   *The expressive dimension*: By the expressive content of a communicative act is meant the information a sender gives about his *physical* and *social* identity and the information he gives about his *emotions* and *attitudes*. Both interpersonal and cognitive attitudes are meant to be included, where cognitive attitudes are such things as beliefs, desires and hopes. Thus, the expressive content of a communicative act is not always intentional since it is easy to see that one could betray one's emotions, attitudes, social and physical status unintentionally. But they could also be communicated intentionally. To the extent that a sender betrays this type of information unintentionally to a receiver, he functions as a natural sign. [9] The expressive dimension of content, thus, encompasses most information that a sender expresses in his communicative acts. However, there are two types of information which seem important to me, which are not included in the expressive dimension. They are both, of course, in some sense also expressed by the sender but play enough of an independent role to merit attention as separate dimensions of content.

2.   *The evocative dimension*: The first of these dimensions is the evocative dimension. By *evoking* in this context I mean the intention to influence another person through communication. In communicating we normally intend to influence other persons in many different respects. At the very least we want them to notice, *apprehend* or attend to some information. But very commonly we also want to influence their *understanding, emotions, attitudes* (including beliefs*)* and *behavior*. Sometimes we want to influence other persons in several ways simultaneously. E.g. if I make an objection I might intend the other person to firstly notice a certain fact, and secondly to understand that the fact contradicts a belief he has expressed and thirdly to change his belief and fourthly to evoke his admiration of my acumen. Thus

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[9] See Grice (1957) for a discussion of the concepts of natural and non-natural meaning.

it is easy to see how evocative intentions can be hierarchically embedded in each other in the accordion-like fashion discussed above.

3. The *obligative dimension*: The obligative dimension is intended to capture what I take to be the most important intuition behind J.L. Austin's (1962) notion of performative utterances. The intuition is that social obligations are created by communication. Communicative acts commit you to social consequences. Some of these social consequences are connected with communication by strong conventional ties; some are not. Sentence moods such as the indicative, the interrogative and the imperative and institutionalized performatives provide examples of the conventionally created obligations I have in mind.

It is important to stress that the expressive, evocative and obligative dimensions of content are only analytically distinct and that they de facto always occur together in one and the same act. Let me illustrate this by analyzing the dimensions of content of an indicative sentence used as a statement.

(7) It's five o'clock.

The expressive dimension of the content of the act performed by (7) is an attempt to express one of the sender's beliefs. The evocative dimension of the act is an attempt to influence the receiver's system of beliefs and the obligative dimension of the act is an attempt to take responsibility for a certain representation of reality. Thus, one states in order to take responsibility for an expressed belief which one intends the receiver to accept as his own.

II. But the content communicated is only one of the intentional phenomena that seem to play a role in communication. A different type of intentionality is connected with what I would like to call *communicative status*. Under this heading I want to discuss two types of phenomena.

1. *Communicative awareness*: A sender can transmit information with varying degrees of intentionality. This variation in the degrees of intentionality I refer to as communicative awareness.

Although communicative awareness is a matter of degree, I would like to suggest that the following three stages are useful to distinguish.

A. Indication: A sender functions as an *indicator* of information iff he has no intention at all of transmitting the information an observer picks up from him, i.e. he functions as a natural sign.

B. Displaying: A sender is displaying information iff he acts in order to make a receiver aware of the information.

C.   Signalling: A sender signals information iff he intends that the receiver should apprehend the information and further realize that it is displayed to him by the sender.

Indication is the level of no communicative awareness. Displaying is the lowest stage of communicative awareness where the sender is trying to bring something to a receiver's attention. It is only with signalling that we reach what I would claim to be normal communicative awareness, where a receiver is intended to be aware that a certain sender is *communicating to* him. This is the type of communicative awareness I think we find in normal linguistic communication.

Even though these distinctions might seem simple they have sometimes been overlooked. Thus, in Bühler (1934) - both an instinctive reflexive reaction and the utterance *I am in pain* as responses to the infliction of pain would be classed as examples of what Bühler called the symptom [10] function. In the present framework the reflexive reaction would be classified as an expressive indication of emotion while the utterance would be classified as an expressive signal of belief (and possibly also of emotion). The differences and similarities both in communicative status and content between the two responses would thus be brought out more clearly.

2.   *Prominence of Information*: The second phenomenon relating to communicative status that I would like to discuss is prominence of information. By this term is meant the news-value, importance or interest that the various parts of an utterance have in relation to each other. Some information the speaker regards as more important. This is therefore put in the foreground by means such as word order, intonation o*r* special morphemes. Other information is seen as less important. This is kept in the background by similar means. Often terms such as *focus* and *comment* or *theme* are used to refer to parts of or all of the information which is foregrounded. Terms such as *presupposed, topic* or *theme* have been used for that information which is in the background.

It is possible that there is a relation between communicative awareness and prominence of information, so that the information which is foregrounded is the information of which one has the greatest degree of awareness.

III.   Besides content and communicative status there is a third type of intentionality involved in communication which I would like to refer to as *instrumental.* Instrumental intentionality is what connects the various types of content and communicative status with overt behavior. The connection is achieved through a successive integration of simultaneous and sequential verbal and non-verbal elements of behavior. On the verbal side the three main parameters are word order, morphology and prosody. On the non-verbal side there is movements of the head,

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[10]   In Bühler (1934) the following three main functions *of* linguistic communication are given: 1. The symptom function - information pertaining to the speaker, 2. The symbol function - information pertaining to the world, 3. The signal function - information pertaining to the hearer.

face, shoulders, arms, hands and feet, non-verbal sounds such as grunts, snorting and hissing and finally various effects of touch, smell, taste and spatial positioning.

Thus, to summarize I suggest there are three main types of intentionality involved in communication, the first having to do with content, the second with communicative status and the third with instrumentality. There are three main dimensions of content; expression, evocation and obligation and there are two aspects of communicative status; communicative awareness and prominence of information.

I would now like to make some brief comments about how this account of communicative intentionality compares to Bühler's account of speech functions, Austin's account of the locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary dimensions of meaning and Grice's account of non-natural meaning and conversational maxims. For more detailed arguments in support of several of the comments see Allwood (1976) and Allwood (1977),

In Bühler's account of speech functions, what I have called communicative status and the obligative dimension of content are not considered. Bühler's functions (see footnote 10 above) relate in a more general fashion to the speaker, hearer and subject matter than is the case in my analysis. In one respect I have been more general than Bühler. I have lumped his symbol and symptom functions into one category - the expressive dimension, since it seems to me that the symbol function is always mediated by the sender's beliefs and attitudes.

In comparison to Austin's account of meaning, perhaps the most noticeable difference is that his central notion -illocutionary force - is in my account split up into the three dimensions of expression, evocation and obligation. His notion of perlocution, at least in my interpretation of this concept, very closely corresponds to what I would call the actually evoked response. Locutionary meaning has not been treated in the account so far provided but would be dealt with in the context of how various dimensions of content are codified as conventional meaning. In Austin's just as in Bühler's, account there is no treatment of what I have called communicative status.

With regard to Grice, his ideas about the notion of non-natural meaning have been perhaps the most important source of inspiration in developing the concept of communicative awareness. An important difference between my account and Grice's is that the problem of conventional meaning has explicitly been left out of my discussion. Finally, I have also drawn upon Grice's ideas about conversational maxims in the discussion of felicity conditions above.

In closing this section I would like to briefly remark on the relationship between felicity conditions, identification/ identity criteria and the intentional parameters of a communicative act that I have discussed above. The six mentioned felicity considerations are intentionality and voluntariness, rationality, ethical considerations. form of the behavior, relation to context and success. The four suggested

identification criteria are intentionality, form of the behavior, achieved result and contextual cues. If one wants a distinction between criteria that identify and criteria that give identity, it seems that the three first identification criteria would also be acceptable as identity criteria.

All but two of the felicity conditions, namely, rationality and ethics have been made criteria of identification. It is possible that also these two types of conditions will be needed as identification criteria in a more extended analysis. For example it seems difficult to do justice to the difference between threatening and promising without bringing in ethical considerations. One commits oneself to something which is in the interest of a receiver by promising him something but one commits oneself to something which is against his interests by threatening him. Thus, to determine whether a certain communicative act is to count as a promise or a threat, we will have to determine whether the action a sender commits himself to is in the receiver's best interest [11] or not.

As for the intentional parameters mentioned, they are all, of course, related to intentionality. But they are also, in so far as they are connected with achieved purposes, related to result, where the result can be both of a social institutional kind and of a more private kind. Instrumental intentionality is particularly closely related to the form of behavior and to the way in which behavior is contextually adapted. In fact, with regard to the relationship between external behavior and intentonality one could say that behavioral commands are hierarchically organised from content by way of communicative status to instrumental intentionality which then determines the external form of behavior.

V

Another conclusion which a study of the felicity conditions of communicative action seems to justify can perhaps be expressed in the following manner. Verbs of communication do not usually refer to a communicative action in toto but rather they could be said to refer to certain definite aspects of a communicative action from a certain perspective [12].

The aspects of communicative actions which seem to be relevant for capturing the referential orientation of the verbs of communication are all related to the felicity conditions, identification criteria and intentional parameters. Below, I will exemplify how these aspects can be used to organize a semantical field for the verbs of communication. The fact that the aspects can be used in this way provides confirmation that they play an important role in our conception of communication. They can be used as semantic parameters in a conceptual field where verbs of communication are organized according to their referential orientation and they can be

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[11]   I leave aside the problem of whether what is relevant is actual best interests or the interests sender and receiver take to be their best interests

[12]   For a similar view of verbs as perspective inducing, see Fillmore (1977).

used as components in the model of communicative action which I have tried to outline above.

The semantic parameters should be regarded as features of the meaning of the verb rather than as class labels for a class of verbs. In other words one verb will be related to several of the semantic parameters. Often one parameter will be more central than the others. This is the aspect of a communicative act which the verb primarily designates. But there will always be contexts in which the verb can be made to designate other aspects. If such other aspects seem relevant the verb will be listed several times. The list of semantic parameters is not exhaustive. This also applies to the verbs [13] which are mentioned in connection with the various *parameters*. The purpose of the account is exemplification.

A.   *The instrumental behavioral parameter.*
Here we find verbs which are primarily oriented towards the external behavioral side of communication. The verbs are oriented towards both conventionally and non-conventionally regulated aspects of the organisation of the behavior.

(i)   *Purely phonetic orientation:* whistle, lisp, mutter, mumble, snort, sniff, sigh. grunt, gasp, gurgle (and bridging the gap to the animal kingdom bark and neigh).

(ii)   *Linguistic phonetic orientation*: shout, whisper, bellow, scream.

(iii)   *Syntactic orientation:* state, question, request. The verbs are here taken to indicate the mood-forms indicative, interrogative and imperative which in the paradigm cases are connected with the communicative acts designated by the verbs. The verbs will appear again below under other semantic parameters, since their referential orientation is by no means limited to syntactic organisation.

(iv)   *Orientation to lack of organisation*: babble, stammer, chatter, stutter. prattle.

B.   *The parameter of information organization*
The verbs which have been related to this parameter all have to do with the way the information is organised either in terms
of logical relations or in terms of prominence of information. Almost all of the verbs function as technical terms in linguistics.

Refer, predicate, stress, emphasise, focus, presuppose, imply, entail, suggest, hint, highlight, indicate.

C.   The *expressive parameter*

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[13]   As a source for verbs I have used the Merriam Webster Dictionary.

The verbs which are related to this parameter denote actions which characteristically express a certain emotion or attitude. [14] However, many verbs which are listed under this category are not primarily oriented towards an expressive aspect. This is due to the fact that emotions and attitudes seldom seem to be used to identify an action. Maybe this is due to the fact that the relation between external behavior and emotion or attitude is not one to one. One and the same behavior can express several different emotions or attitudes and a certain emotion or attitude can be expressed through several different types of behavior. Below follows a number of examples of how emotional states or attitudes can be connected with characteristic expressive actions or expressive types of behavior.

Fatigue:	yawn, sigh
Dissatisfaction:	groan, whimper, swear, complain, grumble
Sorrow:	cry, wail, sigh
Belief:	state, assert, claim
Curiosity:	question, enquire
Wish:	order, request, bese ch
Dislike:	accuse, blame, criticise, condemn

D.   *The evocative parameter*

The verbs which can be related to this parameter fall into two groups. 1. Those verbs which are oriented towards a *result* - an actually evoked reaction in the receiver, irrespective of whether this reaction was intended or not and 2. Those verbs which are more oriented towards *the intention to affect* a receiver, irrespective of whether the receiver is affected or not. The result verbs have much in common with Austin's perlocutionary verbs, but the status of the second group is more uncertain in relation to Austin's framework. For the second group of verbs it holds that the relation between a communicative action and an evoked reaction is not one to one. A certain reaction can be evoked by many different communicative actions and a certain communicative action can give rise to many different reactions. Just as with the expressive aspect this has as a consequence that many verbs can be related to several different evoked reactions. It is also possible even if not necessary for result verbs to be used about intentional actions and for verbs with an intentional orientation to be used about achieved results.

1.   *Result verbs*, *orientation towards actually evoked reaction:*
       Irritate, surprise, astound, shock, anger, frighten, scare, convince.

2.   *Verbs with orientation towards intended reaction*:

Evocation of belief:	state, assert, lie
Evocation of admiration:	boast
Evocation of informative answer:	question, interrogate

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[14]   Actions which manifest physical or social characteristics have been left out for convenience. Further, expressively relevant activity which is not acoustic, such as blushing, has also been left out.

Evocation of irritation:	tease, irritate
Evocation of alertness to danger:	warn, threaten

E.   *The obligating parameter*
The verbs connected with this parameter all designate actions which create social obligations. Most of these occur in institutionalized contexts but some occur in everyday life.

Juridicial:	accuse, sentence, testify, appeal
Religious:	bless, baptize, excommunicate, swear
Everyday:	state, recommend, ask, request, advise

F.   *The contextual orientation parameter*
Verbs which are connected with this parameter denote communicative acts which for their occurrence are bound to very specific contexts. The notion of context is taken in a wide sense to include both the sender's and the receiver's history of interaction, the physical and social environment and those beliefs of the sender and the receiver which can influence their communication. Some typical examples of contexts are given below.

(i)   Discourse context:

Preceding argument:	draw a conclusion, conclude
Preceding discourse:	repeat, quote
Preceding suggestion:	approve, accept, reject

(ii)   Presupposition and expectations:

Negatively evaluated action on the part of the speaker**:** apologise
Negatively evaluated action on the part of the hearer: blame, accuse
Sensitive content: confide
Superior social status: command, order

(iii)   Physical surroundings: show*,* point

VI

By reflecting on the felicity conditions of communicative actions and the application criteria for verbs of communication, I have tried to draw conclusions, on the one hand, about the criteria we use to identify communicative actions, and on the other hand about what fundamental dimensions there are underlying communicative actions, especially with regard to intentionality. I have used these dimensions to give a sketch of how the semantic field of verbs of communication could be analysed. The paper can in its whole be seen as an attempt to show how an analysis of

communicative acts based on observation and conceptual analysis can be combined with a lexical analysis of the verbs of communication. I think that such attempts are important if one wants a correct picture of communication, since they allow one to tap the enormous sources of implicit knowledge we have about everyday communication from a very natural starting point - our intuitions about everyday linguistic expressions for communication. We should not neglect to make use of this implicit knowledge before we start grandiose empirical statistical surveys. It is important to have hypotheses which are worthwhile investigating before one starts rigid formalization or empirical surveys.

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