The Role of Metaforces in Cultural Motion

Greg Urban, *University of Pennsylvania*

ABSTRACT

Exploring interactions among the forces (inertia, entropy, interest, and metaculture) that affect the motion of culture generally, this article focuses on metapragmatic indexicals as well as denotationally explicit metapragmatic signs, whose effects Silverstein dubbed "metaforce." Pitch raising, as a metapragmatic indexical employed in narration, builds excitement in relationship to an unfolding stretch of mythic discourse, thereby contributing to the interest in that discourse that also impels its future replication. The interest in learning something new that drives the processes of replication underlying ordinary conversation can be aided by questions, as explicit metapragmatic formulations projecting the discourse shape of the desired response, just as explicit metapragmatic statements can be used to block expected replication processes in the flow of conversation, exerting a resistance. Interest can also be channeled from one discursive arena (such as wine talk) to another (such as coffee talk) through the process Silverstein calls "emanation," based on similarities in the discourse form and content, a kind of metapragmatic iconicity. The article concludes by suggesting that similar processes are at work in disciplinary arenas, where Silverstein's term "metapragmatics" itself has come to shape the entire field of linguistic anthropology and to be widely replicated elsewhere.

Thanks largely to the path-finding work of Michael Silverstein, the semiotic analysis of linguistic form in relation to its contexts of use is today the dominant research paradigm in linguistic anthropology. Over the past four decades, Silverstein's writings and teachings have rechanneled the course of research in the discipline. They furnish us with the tools to analyze the efficacy of discourse in context. At the same time, because they have reshaped not just research but also writing within the discipline, they themselves illustrate the force discourse exerts over other discourse, how it molds what follows, guides words through pathways of circulation, imparts a kind of impetus.

Contact Greg Urban, University of Pennsylvania, 3260 South St., Philadelphia, PA 19104 (gurban@sas.upenn.edu)

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While Silverstein's recent article "Discourse and the No-thing-ness of Culture" (2013) illuminates the complex processes of signification, circulation, and what he terms "emanation," processes that contribute to the motion of culture as broadly construed, I propose here to focus not on those processes per se, but rather on the forces that bring about cultural motion, impelling or retarding its flow. Why, for example, does wine talk, or "oinoglossia" as Silverstein dubs it, "emanate," that is, get replicated in connoisseurship discourse about, "coffee, beer, cheese, ice cream, olive oil, vodka, et cetera" (349)? That is one of the questions I hope to answer. In this arena—the why culture travels question, and, more generally, the question of what forces are at work on culture—Silverstein's lasting contributions is the development of a concept of metapragmatics (1976, 1993).

I hope to show in what follows that the efficacy of metapragmatic semiosis, that is, the force metapragmatic semiosis exerts on the motion of culture, is closely bound up with and, in some measure, derives from the other classes of force operating on cultural motion. In particular, I will argue that the two basic classes of force are the inertial and the entropic, where the inertial class pertains to the tendency of culture—including perhaps most importantly discourse—to be replicated, while entropic force has to do with the tendency for the replication process to be disrupted, that is, for the replicas to undergo random change relative to the models on which they are based. Metapragmatics is linked to a third class, the reflective or metacultural forces or, for short, metaforces,[1] whereby the replication processes are influenced or shaped by the representation of those processes in metasigns. The metaforces stand in a partially dependent relationship to inertia, since they modify what is already being replicated, and some of them, at least, derive their ability to impart an impetus from the participation of the forms through which they themselves are exerted (metapragmatic or more broadly metacultural forms) in inertial replication. Finally, metapragmatic force also draws upon and interacts with a fourth class, the interest-based affectively charged forces.

The Meaning of "Meta"

For Silverstein, pragmatics concerns signs, principally those that make up actually occurring typically linguistically segmentable discourse, looked at from the point of view of their indexical connections to the contexts in which they

1. The term *metaforce* is borrowed from Michael Silverstein's cult classic (1981), still technically unpublished albeit widely circulated.

occur.[2] Metapragmatics, in contrast, deals with signs that represent or are about pragmatic signs. For example, in the case of reported speech, the markers of direct quotation signal how a particular instance of the first person singular pronoun is to be interpreted. They thus occupy a metapragmatic relationship to the instance of the first-person pronoun as pragmatic, that is, as situated with respect to the context of its occurrence. In English, the formulation "He said, 'I will . . .'" marks the occurrence of the pronoun *I* as co-referential with *he*, rather than indexing the person producing the formulation, the default metapragmatic frame in the absence of other metasigns. The marking of *I* as co-referential with *he* can be made maximally explicit by inclusion of a metapragmatic verb, as in: "He said, and I quote, 'I will. . . .'" The direct quotation form as metasign has practical efficacy in the world. It directs the addressee's attention via indexical connection to the co-referent third-person pronoun *he* in the immediately preceding discourse. It thus exerts a kind of force. It guides listener attention within a stretch of unfolding discourse.

The "meta" part of "metapragmatics" gestures toward the reflective or representational or "aboutness" relationship between two semiotic layers or planes. As I will try to show, the aboutness relationship is key to the kinds of efficacy involved in metaforce. Why, for example, do hearers or readers of the reported speech utterance above have their attention drawn to the co-referential relationship between the "I" and the "he"? The answer would seem to be that the hearer/reader accepts the characterization formulated in the metasignals contained in the reporting frame. The meta layer (the reporting frame) creates an understanding of or an orientation to the object layer (the "I" within quotes) that contributes to the efficacy of that object layer (instead of being directed to the speaker or author of the overall statement, attention is drawn to the reported speaker).

The term *metapragmatics* is constructed on analogy with *metalanguage*, a term dating back at least to Alfred Tarski's ([1933] 1935) formulation of truth in logical systems. An object language, in Tarski's scheme, consisted of a set of propositions. Propositions about the object language, he proposed, should take place in a distinct metalanguage. In working with logical systems, Tarski continued nineteenth-century concerns about the foundations of mathematics, those concerns—such as the Russell paradox ("Does the set of all sets that do

2. "In pragmatics, by our understanding, we encompass the totality of indexical relationships between occurrent signal forms and their contexts of occurrence" (Silverstein 1993, 36). Silverstein (1976, 227–30) draws on Peirce's (*CP*) semiotic framework and terminology in developing his approach to language, especially the icon-index-symbol trichotomy.

not contain themselves contain itself"[3])—leading to the project of David Hilbert to ground mathematics through the creation of a metamathematics, and thence to Gödel's incompleteness and inconsistency proofs (Kleene 1950).

An aspect of the history of the metalanguage concept worth remarking is that it grew out of attempts to solve a problem, namely, the lack of assurance that mathematics was built upon a secure foundation. Hence, it had a pragmatic purpose from the outset. Hilbert believed that he could provide mathematics with a foundation by developing a formal logical system of metamathematics. But he proposed to accomplish this pragmatic purpose by creating a purely axiomatic metamathematical layer. The layer would serve to increase faith in mathematics and thus enhance its credibility and circulation as a basis for universal knowledge. It was designed, in other words, to stimulate the motion of mathematics through the world via processes of social transmission and social learning. The project, of course, produced a quite different finding, namely, that a mathematical system sufficiently rich to contain elementary arithmetic could not be proven to be simultaneously complete and consistent. The result, Gödel's proof, formed a key part of the developments in the mid-twentieth century that created an opening for theories of culture as coming between individuals and absolute knowledge and, hence, for the at least partial relativization of knowledge.[4]

Subsequently, Louis Hjelmslev ([1943] 1961, 1947) imported the concept of metalanguage into linguistics, recognizing its applicability to descriptions of natural languages, as object languages, for which grammars then were metalanguages. Silverstein's immediate influence, however, was Roman Jakobson ([1957] 1971; 1960, 356;), who, unlike Hjelmslev, saw metalanguage in the context of linguistic interactions rather than as a theoretical language for the description of natural language.[5]

3. If the set does not contain itself, then it belongs to the set of all sets that do not contain themselves, that is, it does contain itself, a contradiction. If it does contain itself, then it must be a set that does not contain itself, again a contradiction. See Kleene (1950, 37–38).

4. I am thankful for the opportunity provided to me in 1978 by the Social Science Research Council to undertake a year-long program of postdoctoral study focused on logic, metamathetics, and category algebra. The fellowship enabled me to attend courses and lectures by, among others, David Malament in philosophy and Saunders McLane in mathematics.

5. There is, of course, a venerable history to the study of pragmatics, understood as linguistic or more broadly semiotic efficacy. The history goes back at least to the ancient Greek distinction between logic and rhetoric, where the former dealt with the propositional capacity of words, the latter with, in Aristotle's (*Rhet.* I.2, 1355b27) words, the "means of persuasion." In developing his concept of metapragmatics, Silverstein drew on and criticized the formulations of John Austin ([1962] 1975), who had examined the acts associated with various explicit performative formulations in English, such as "I promise you," "I apologize," "you're fired," and their purported world-transforming efficacy.

Silverstein built upon the growing recognition of the existence in empirical languages and linguistic practices of signs that represent or are about pragmatic signs.[6] However, and crucially, he had the insight that the resulting metapragmatic to pragmatic relationship forms the basis of efficacy of the pragmatic sign, how it is able to bring about effects in the ongoing business of everyday life. Metapragmatic signs imbue the pragmatic signs with meaning, and that meaning guides, or, in Silverstein's terminology, "regiments" the discursive interaction (see, e.g., 1993, 48).

Without reprising Silverstein's "dimensions of contrast" (1993, 38–48)—a kind of typology of metapragmatic signs—I will offer an example of a distinctive type of meta-to-object relationship: "metapragmatic indexicality." This type differs from the direct quotation of explicit reported speech discussed earlier, in that the metapragmatic to pragmatic connection here is "constituted by the indexical signaling of something about indexical signaling" (47), rather than by a semantic representation in segmentable discourse, such as "He said, and I quote. . . ."

An example is the phenomenon known as "microtonal rising" and, more generally, pitch raising, where a speaker elevates the pitch of successive discourse segments, often less than a full musical note in the Western heptatonic scale.[7] The effect is a felt intensification of the unfolding discourse. The rising microtones are part of the unfolding discourse, but they also bring about a kind of indexical commentary on it. What is fascinating is that the microtonal rising and more generally pitch raising pattern is a distinguishable sign that can be deployed in various contexts, yet it occupies a metarelationship to the discourse of which it forms part, affectively commenting on that discourse, so to speak. It thereby contributes to the discourse's interactional efficacy.

Metapragmatic Force in Cultural Replication

Pitch raising, as it occurs in an Amerindian Brazilian myth, provides an example of the role of metapragmatic force in relation to cultural motion, in this case, the circulation through replication of a myth. One myth in which it plays a key role is the origin of honey, a version of which I recorded among the

6. Various works in the ethnography of speaking movement had already drawn attention to the words and phrases in language that referred to acts of speaking. See, e.g., various of the contributions to Bauman and Sherzer ([1974] 1986).

7. Seeger (1986, 88–103) reports his discovery, with the help of Marina Roseman, of microtonal rising in the songs of an Amazonian group, the Suyá. He notes that Densmore (1956) had reported rising pitch in certain Seminole songs. Graham (1984, 167) noted the "gradual pitch ascension" in Xavante ritual lamentation. And Hill (1985) explored the phenomenon in a genre of sacred music among the Amazonian Wakuénai.

Laklãnõ-Xokleng in the southern Brazilian state of Santa Catarina in 1975.[8] I will not reprise the entire myth but instead zoom in on a central episode in which honey has been discovered, but the hive turns out to be encased in stone. The birds take turns attempting to pierce the stone. The discourse architecture is poeticized[9] through repetition with variation of the act of attempting to pierce the hive, marking the stretch of discourse as an instance of metapragmatic form. In each case, I have recorded the pitch, as I perceived it, on the word forms for "to pierce" (*pètï* and *pèzïn*). This does not precisely conform to the overall tonal patterns of the individual segments, but the general rise is palpable to listeners:

glũ wũ pètï	F#	the toucan pierced it
ti ya tẽ to mlòñ		his beak broke against it
kũ wũ culag wũ ti pezïn man	A	the culag pierced it again
ti ya tẽ to mlòñ		his beak broke against it
kagñẽ wũ wèl pezïn man	A	the kagñe really pierced it again
ti ya tẽ to mlòñ		his beak broke against it
cakleguy ti pezïn man	B	the woodpecker pierced it again
ti ya tẽ to mlòñ		his beak broke against it
kïnkïm pezïn	C#	(another) woodpecker pierced it
ti ya tẽ to mlòñ		his beak broke against it

The poetic structure is perfect in this particular telling. In each repeated phrase, the second clause (*ti ya tẽ to mlòñ*) is identical and there is virtually no variation in the pitch pattern. The variation in pitch occurs in the first clause in each case, where one bird after another attempts to pierce the stone-encased hive. The tonal rising pertains to the repeated act of piercing, expressed through the forms *pètï* and *pèzïn*. I have indicated, by alphabetic representations of musical notes, the approximate relative pitch of the second vowel of that verb. The effect of the rising pitch is to increase the excitement of the listener and even of the teller. The tonal rising is indexically metapragmatic, not formulated in semantically decodable forms. The interest it generates, in turn, seems to contribute to the replication of the cultural element (the myth) in which it is deployed.

That tonal rising during repeated action sequences in narratives is a metapragmatic form, in this community, at least somewhat detachable from the specific cultural element is suggested by its occurrence in other narratives involv-

8. See Urban (1994, 158–60) for an earlier account of the structure of repetition in this myth, and also Urban (1981, 326–30).

9. The poetic, that is, parallelistic, organization of discourse is itself an example of metapragmatic indexicality (Silverstein 1993, 48), but one on which I will not dwell here, as Silverstein has covered it so thoroughly (see also Silverstein 1981, 1996, 2005). The parallelism calls attention to the discourse of which it is a part. Like pitch raising, as I propose to argue here, it attaches extra interest to that discourse.

ing repeated actions that become intensified. I give as evidence two tellings of what is understood to be the same myth. The actual wording varies but the noticeable rise is apparent in each case. The episode concerns the ascent of a man to the land above the sky. The man flies up there in search of his brother, who has been snatched and carried away by a giant falcon.[10]

The first excerpt, narrated in 1975 by Wãñẽkï Tèy, is as follows:

kũ tã kulag tẽkũ taplï	A	And the next day he ascended.
yugug zãl tẽ tõ tã è nèga		He put falcon feathers all over
tòg tẽ mẽ tã kòzãg		his arms thusly
tã tẽ kaglòn nẽñã		He tried going (flying)
tã taplï mũ	A	He ascended
taplï ñã tã		He continued ascending
zàg tug klẽ ñã	C	He was over the tops of the dry
klẽ ñã ñã		araucaria pines
kũ taplï		And (he) ascended
taplï ke ñã	D	He was finishing ascending
.		
.		
.		
kòñka lòv tẽ lòla mũ		(He) passed through the hole in the sky

Here is the analogous excerpt from a second rendition, this one by Wãñpõ, son of Kàmlẽn, also recorded in 1975.

kũ è taplï	A	When he ascended
zãl tà ñã		the wing feathers were there
tã zàg klẽ tẽ ñã		He was going above the araucaria pine
zàg klẽ ñã tã tẽ man		Again he went above the araucaria pine
ãta kòwañ tã tã	Bb	thusly again he he
wãñẽ tã	C#	By himself
plï ñã		he was ascending
kòñka lòv tẽ to vèn gèke		On the edge of the hole in the sky he alighted

The tonal rising pattern evokes a sense of excitement on the part of listeners and even that of tellers. I have found myself employing the device in retellings in English. The metapragmatic indexical evidently helps to anchor the denotational text in a particular interactional context. However, or so I am arguing, it not only anchors the story in a context by evoking feelings of excitement; it also contributes to the interest in relocating that contextualized discourse into a new context. That is, it imparts a force to the movement of that discourse across contexts, from individual to individual, group to group, generation to generation, across space and time.

10. I have discussed this particular myth for different reasons in other contexts, notably Urban (1996, 66–98)

The Forces Affecting Cultural Motion

I have suggested that one force propelling the Giant Falcon myth in the Laklãnõ-Xokleng community, as in my own retellings of it, is interest—interest generated in part by the use of metapragmatic indexical pitch raising. However, there are clearly other factors at work. The one class most recognized within anthropology has been the inertial class. This was undoubtedly operative historically in the Laklãnõ-Xokleng community in connection with the Giant Falcon myth. If we ask, why did that story tend to get transmitted, part of the answer is that it was already there to be transmitted. It had already been undergoing replication in the past. A general principle at work here may be formulated as follows: any cultural element (such as the Giant Falcon story) will tend to be transmitted through interactions (such as retellings) at the same rate unless other forces are at work.

As opposed to the question of how semantically segmentable discourse gets anchored in a context, or the question of what semiotic characteristics make a bit of culture appear to be detachable from its context of occurrence,[11] my concern here is with why questions. Even in the brief excerpts of the Giant Falcon story examined above, it is apparent that the two tellings exhibit similarities suggestive of their derivation from a common source, a pool of prior tellings. To be sure, an individual could acquire an element of culture—that is, learn to replicate that element—through interaction with just one other individual. The point here, however, is that part of the explanation for why the Giant Falcon myth gets replicated is that it was there to be replicated already. That is, inertial force was at work on this element.

The diagram in figure 1 attempts to model the process. In the case of the Giant Falcon myth, Wãñpõ (who might be B_1 in fig. 1) would have heard the narrative from one or more others (A in fig. 1) and in turn be able to retell it in the context in which I, the anthropologist (perhaps C_1 in fig. 1), recorded it. The same is true of Wãñẽkï. The recognizable cultural element (what is in linguistics known as the "type" as opposed to "token," or in semiotics as the "legisign" as opposed to the "sinsign") is depicted as e_1 in figure 1. The general element gets encoded in a specific instance or perceptible object o_1, to which the recipient has been exposed. We can study transmission experimentally by using an audio or video recording as o_1.[12] Of course, in real world situations, in-

11. See, e.g., Silverstein's (1996) recovery of distinct interactional texts from an apparently single decontextualized transcription. Reversing his procedure reveals the semiotic processes whereby a text is made to appear transportable between contexts.

12. A report of one such experiment can be found in Urban (2010).

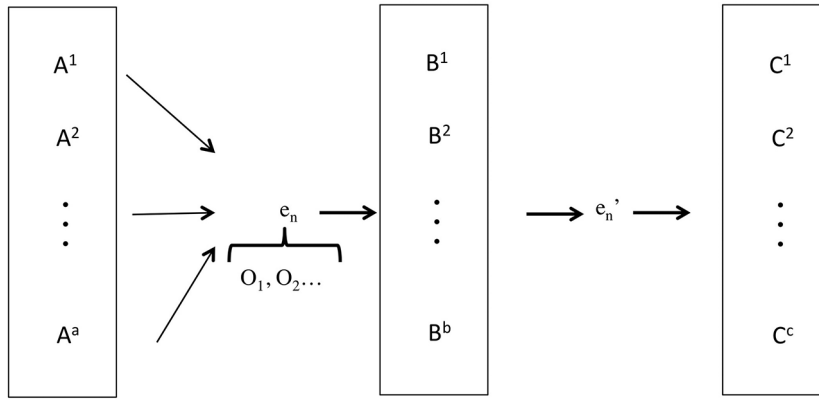

Figure 1. General schema of cultural replication

dividuals may be exposed to multiple instances (o_{1-1}, o_{1-2} . . . o_{1-n}) from a single individual or from many individuals. In general, we can imagine a range of different models of such transmissions as modifications of one sort or another of figure 1, as transmitter A is accordioned out as $\{A_1, A_2, \ldots A_a\}$, B as $\{B_1, B_2, \ldots B_b\}$, and C as $\{C_1, C_2, \ldots C_c\}$.

In the course of inertial replication, changes occur to the tokens produced by B. Those changes, represented by the apostrophe or prime symbol, as used in mathematics, in figure 1, result in something different from the originals that are being copied. The resultant o_1', for example, may be linked to a slightly different version of the element as acquired by B. This is indicated in figure 1 again by the prime, that is, as e_1'. The changes may be due to entropy,[13] that is, the tendency toward disordering of an existing order. In the Giant Falcon myth, for example, the order represented by a stretch of actually unfolding discourse o_1 instantiating the element e_1. The changes may be sufficient to make the o_1' appear distinct from e_1, such that it becomes an e_2, that is, a distinct element. Obvious differences can be seen in the two snippets from distinct tellings of the Giant Falcon myth discussed above, but the overall similarities suggest that the two are related to the same element, the same myth.

Why does the myth get replicated? From an inertial perspective, we can say that it gets replicated because it is already being replicated; it is there to be replicated; it is part of inertial culture. Certainly interest in the story and in its tellings plays a central role. There is the pitch raising mentioned earlier, but also many other aspects of the narrative that make it fascinating for listeners, includ-

13. Entropic force has generally been discussed in the anthropological literature as "drift" (Sapir 1921, 157–82; Herskovits 1949, 580–94), but more recently as risk (Keane 1997).

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ing poetic organization of the discourse. However, it can also acquire an impetus from a semantically explicit stretch of metapragmatic discourse, as in a request from a younger person to an elder in the Lakãnõ-Xokleng community during the time of my field research: "father, tell us the story about the giant falcons." The request exercises a kind of force, pushes the older culture forward, or, better, pulls the older culture out of the past and into the present context.

Such explicit metapragmatic forces are all around us in everyday interactions, even in ordinary conversation, where the main driving force in many instances is interest, as in the conversation analyzed by Silverstein (2013) between two students. The interest is in acquiring some new information, a new bit of culture, one might say.[14] In the particular instance he describes, the conversation focuses on where the two students went to college. I have reanalyzed that conversation elsewhere (Urban 2017), showing that, like all conversation, it is grounded in acts of formal replication. I will not reprise that analysis in its entirety here, but it is important to observe that formal replication takes place by means of presupposition and zero anaphora (Saeboe 1996; Oh 2005, 2006; see also Shopen 1973). Even the markers of assent, like the *uh-huh*s that punctuate segments of ordinary dialogical interactions, are indices signaling that the listener has made a formal even if unspoken copy of what the speaker said. Speakers sometimes actively elicit the formal replica, for example, when the speaker is momentarily distracted, and asks the listener, "What was I saying?" The listener typically replicates at least some of the words the speaker had uttered. Of course, the formal copy can also fade rapidly, such that it can no longer be summoned after the dialog has moved on, though some aspects of the dialog may persist and be retrievable in the form of reported speech for a considerable time after the speech event, especially, for example, any new information coded in segmentable discourse, but even pragmatic effects, such as discourse interpreted as praise or criticism or insult.

If interest in the new is the general driver of such cultural transfers, however, it is often the case that explicit metapragmatic utterances are used to pull out the transferred material. We see this in the very first exchange Silverstein (2013) reports:

A: and you went to [undergraduate] school here or

B: [I went to [undergraduate] school] in Chicago at, uh, Loyola

14. In Silverstein's (2013) own analysis, the emphasis is not on the superficial information discussed here, but on the deeper inferentially derived information regarding social status, so that the microinteraction also becomes an instantiation of social organization and hierarchical structure.

In my rendition here, I've included the presupposed word *undergraduate*, placed in brackets. A uses a question to pull information out of B, so to speak. That information is in the form of an utterance that replicates some of the material contained in A's question, although it does so through zero anaphora, which I have indicated by putting the segment in brackets: "[I went to [undergraduate] school]." The implicitly replicated representation is a copy of A's question: "you went to [undergraduate] school . . ." with the appropriate deictic recontextualization. However, importantly, the replica also adds something new, contained in the words: "in Chicago at, uh, Loyola."

We can think of conversation as analogous to the replication of DNA. Where one of the speakers is the primary speaker, with the other uttering markers of assent, such as "uh-huh," nodding the head, and so on, the latter indicate that the listener has been heard, that is, the listener has made an internal copy of what the speaker said. The copy can be accessed on demand if needed. In such instances, culture passes in one direction without the need for explicit metapragmatic discourse involved in questioning. However, the markers of assent are themselves also metapragmatic indexicals, signaling that a copy of what the speaker has just said has been created. They are necessary for the flow of the culture through the conversation. When they do not occur, the flow is often disrupted, with the speaker attempting to elicit the metapragmatic indexical with a statement such as "Do you know what I mean?" Correspondingly, the markers of assent exercise a metaforce, pulling the discourse out of the speaker. They help to drive the motion of culture. So when one of the younger members of the Laklãnõ-Xokleng community implored one of the elders, "Father, tell us the story about the giant falcons," the effect was not so different from the application of metaforce in conversation more generally through questions or through markers of assent.

Resistance to Metaforce

I have briefly outlined what I regard as the forces operating on the replication of discourse, and, I believe, of culture more generally. The forces fall into four classes: inertial, entropic, interest-based, and metacultural. I want now to focus on the last of these—metaforces. I propose to explore these forces, and, in particular, explicit metapragmatic discourse such as is encoded in commands, requests, and questions, by examining resistances to the movement of culture even when the metacultural form is employed. This will lead me to trace the connection between metaforce and two of the other three classes of force: the inertial and interest-based forces.

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In the excerpt above from Silverstein (2013), the question projects the shape of the response. Speaker A asks, "and you went to [undergraduate] school here or." For the question to succeed in exerting a metaforce on the hearer B, a response from B of the form "I went to [undergraduate] school at" plus the name of the college would suffice. The question constrains the set of text artifact forms that would count as complying, along with the deictic anchoring needed in that context. In this way, the question occupies a metasemiotic relationship to the answer that follows. The question thus effects a micromovement of culture, even if only the replication contained in the realization of the projected answer. More broadly, however, it also effects a movement of semantically encoded information from a previous context into a present one. It applies a metacultural force to old information.

To get a handle on the operation of metaforce on the movement of culture, it is useful to look at situations where a counter-metaforce opposes the impetus applied to the movement of culture, in the form of old information, by the question. Such opposing metaforces are stereotypically employed in police and other interrogations, an excerpt from one such interview going as follows:

Female officer: I guess what I'm getting at is was it emailed, was it given to you as an actual file on a USB or was it given to you on a CD?

Ben Grubb: So I guess I'm only prepared to say that what is in the article. My public information. Because we as journalists kind of keep our sources.

The interchange—and several like it occur in the course of the unfolding dialogue—forms part of an Australian police questioning of *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist Ben Grubb about his reporting of a Facebook "break-in." Note that the question sets up an expected replica response such as one of the following that does not, however, in fact occur; I indicate as much by the use of an asterisk:

Ben Grubb1:* It was it emailed to me.

Ben Grubb2:* It was given to me as an actual file on a USB.

Ben Grubb3:* It was given to me on a CD.

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Instead of one of these responses, however, Grubb comes up with a statement about the question and its contextual sequelae, namely, it instructs the questioner not to anticipate utterances of the sort indicated in Ben Grubb 1*–3* above. Hence, it is a metapragmatic statement, one indicating that the usual movement of culture in the form of new information will not take place. Had this been a maximally denotationally explicit metapragmatic interchange, it would have gone something like the following:

Female officer (Explicit): I order you to tell me whether it was emailed to you [etc.].

Ben Grubb (Explicit): I refuse to tell you whether it was emailed to me [etc.].

In this analysis, the force of interest plays a key role. Here the interests of the interlocutors are at least somewhat opposed. In contrast, in the case of the where-did-you-go-to-college interchange from Silverstein (2013), the interests are at least somewhat aligned. Indeed, we can conceptualize a continuum in alignment around such question-answer interchanges from aligned (the answerer wants to supply the new information that is of interest to the questioner) to opposed (the answerer wants to withhold the information that is of interest to the questioner). The former facilitates the motion of culture (the information); the latter impedes it.

The actual Ben Grubb interchange is closer to the latter pole, since, while Grubb is cooperative, he is also leery, not wanting to self-incriminate or expose his source to legal harm. The questioners are similarly generally accepting, but there is also information that they want but find hard to get. Closer to the side of opposed interests would be an interchange in which the interrogator threatened consequences for not complying, such as, "If you don't answer this question, you will go to jail," or "I will break your finger." Here the metapragmatic force of the threat is to rechannel the answerer's interest, since presumably the answerer has an interest in not going to jail or not having their finger broken. The self-defensive interest might outweigh the desire not to provide the requested information.

An analysis of such interchanges from the perspective of interest as a force driving the motion of culture might lead one to wonder what role the metapragmatic formulation plays in such instances. Here it is important to underscore the fact that the metapragmatic statement does have efficacy. It is what

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sets up the contextual expectations about the subsequent discourse that ensues, in just the way that the statement: "Father, tell us the story about the giant falcons" sets up expectations, drawing the old culture out of the past and into the present context. Interest without metapragmatic impetus has no effect. At the same time, the metapragmatic utterance is not the bearer of a force sui generis. Rather, it draws upon and channels other forces, in particular, those of interest and inertia.

The role of inertia can be seen most clearly in friendly interchanges where interests align. Some questions, for example, are expectable and routine when two individuals meet and get to know each other for the first time. For middle- and upper-middle-class Americans, for example, a question about where the other person went to college, as in the interchange described by Silverstein, would be considered normal. The metaforce of the question derives in part, at least, from the inertial motion of this kind of question-answer frame (Goffman 1974). Similarly, in that context, certain questions would break the inertial frame, and, hence, be unable to draw on the force of momentum, for example: "What is your name as it appears on your credit card, and what is the card number and expiration date?" The latter, however, is routine in making phone purchases and so draws upon the inertial force within a distinct frame to move the information across the dialogical encounter.

The experience of business people reveals the fact that apparently similar frames, such as the getting-to-know-one-another frame of the dialogue analyzed by Silverstein (2013), can vary from place to place. In an American business context, for example, it is normal and expectable (read: inertial) to offer information about one's personal life and to similarly ask questions about the personal lives of others. In many other parts of the world, notably East Asia, the passage of such information in these contexts may be considered inappropriate, so that resistance to the movement occurs.

Indeed, even in Silverstein's (2013) analysis of the where-did-you-go-to-college dialogue resistance to the flow of information can be detected. This has to do with the negotiation of social status reflected in the encounter, whereby the individual from the lower ranking school, having been asked whether he went to undergraduate school "here"—ambiguously interpretable as the University of Chicago or the city of Chicago—elicits the response "in Chicago at, uh, Loyola." Looked at from the point of view of the forces affecting cultural motion, we might say that the interest of this individual was at least somewhat opposed to that of the questioner, albeit nowhere nearly as opposed as Ben Grubb's interest was to his police interrogator. The metapragmatic force of

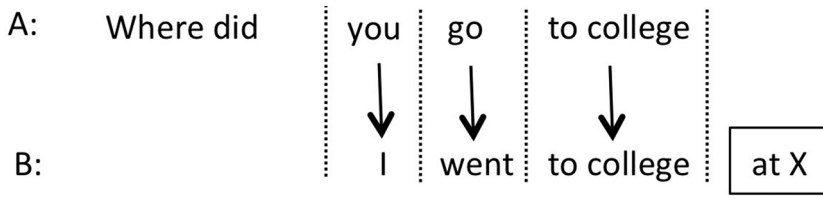

Figure 2. Metapragmatic indexical projections from question to expected replica response.

the question in the Silverstein case does result in the movement of the desired information, whereas in the Grubb case it does not. Indeed, as Silverstein (2013, 332–34) notes, this interaction also places the two individuals in relative positions within a status hierarchy and, hence, results in reproduction of the hierarchy itself.

The force driving the movement of culture is thus partially interest (the interest of the questioner in the new information; in relative social status), and it is partly inertial (the inertia associated with the existing patterns of interaction within a frame). However, it is also importantly metapragmatic. First, the question stimulates the flow of information that might not otherwise have taken place, just the way the request to tell a traditional story stimulates the flow of myth that might not have gotten narrated at that time. But, also, second, it sets up expectations via indexical projections as to what the form of replica response will be, as in the variant of the empirical dialogue analyzed by Silverstein depicted in figure 2.

The metaforce in this case guides the movement of culture in a specific direction, giving shape to the response and so to the unfolding dialogue. Neither interest nor inertia alone or in combination accomplishes this feat. The question form, as metapragmatic, contributes this specific summoning of an expectable contextual replica response to the process of cultural motion.

Metaforce and Collateral Replication

In the getting-to-know-each-other inertial frame, a token of the question type "where did you go to college" is normal and expectable, and answering the question is also normal and expectable—that is, inertial. But metaforces can operate through relatively creative metapragmatic statements. Why might such statements work if they are not simple replicas of expected statements? The answer I propose is that they work when they do—and, to be sure, they are susceptible to failure—because of their similarity, however remote, to other statements that have already achieved inertial status. Indeed, part of the broader

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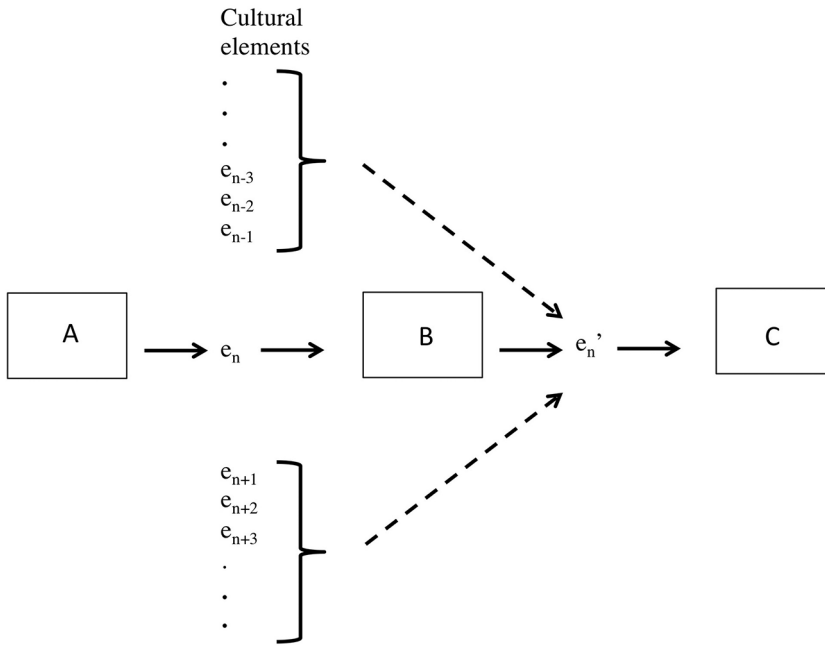

Figure 3. Schematic representation of collateral replication, in which *B* imparts extra inertial force to an element e_1 by modifying it to create the element e_1', which more resembles other elements around it that are already in motion.

claim I wish to make is that, in replicating a specific cultural element, people end up replicating aspects of other elements that are in some way analogous. I will call this "collateral replication." It is because of collateral replication that a group in relative isolation tends to develop within itself patterns of cultural elements or a distinctive style. Figure 3 is an attempt to depict the process.

Silverstein's (2013, 346ff.) concept of "emanation" exemplifies the phenomenon of collateral replication. As described by Silverstein (see also 2003, 222ff.), wine talk, or "oinoglossia," forms a kind of recognizable and reproducible cultural element. It is already in motion, and so has some measure of inertial force or momentum. It is undoubtedly also propelled by the force of interest, since wine talk is, as Silverstein (2013, 246) argues, a way of "constructing prestige," a mark of connoisseurship and refined taste, and thus an index of status. Hence, for those interested in elevating their status in this realm, fluency in both producing and consuming wine talk acts as a creative index.

However, wine talk also exercises a metaforce—in this case, a metacultural force imparted to the commodity it is about. As Silverstein (2013, 356ff.) shows, wine talk is part of the brand and the advertising that sells the commodity.

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Since the commodity is one way in which culture moves through the world, advertising is a quintessential example of metaculture and of the metaforces that move culture through the world. My purpose here, however, is not to analyze that force, that is, the role of wine talk in advertising and of advertising as a stimulus to sales of commodities which are in turn bearers of culture; nor to understand precisely how and why the metaforce works in the case of wine talk. Rather, my purpose is to point out that emanation, as Silverstein calls it, of wine talk is an example of how advertising as creative metaculture operative in other nonwine commodities draws its force in part from (meta)culture that is already in motion, in this case, wine talk.

Silverstein (2013, 357–59) traces the presence "early on in the Starbucks phenomenon" (357) of coffee connoisseurship talk directly analogous to oinoglossia. The question is: why does coffee talk come to so strikingly resemble wine talk? We can think of coffee advertising as cultural element e_n in figure 3. It moves along through processes of inertial replication, but also at the behest of a metacultural idea that one must produce new advertisements, ones that, while resembling earlier ones, are in some respects distinct. That is, B does not only slavishly copy e_n. One seeks to create a somewhat different e_n'. What is the source of that difference, the prime in e_n prime?

In this case, there are other collateral streams of advertising under way. One of those, which might be e_{n-1} in figure 3, is wine advertising. The idea of collateral replication is that in trying to produce an exemplar of an e_n', the advertisement producers draw on or replicate aspects of collateral streams of culture that are already in motion. In this case, according to Silverstein (2013, 357), "the company circulated a 'take one' newsletter [read advertisement] educating its consumer-customers about the rarified purchasing experience they were having at Starbucks." That newsletter described coffee in much the way wine talk relates the experience of wine tasting. I won't reprise the details of Silverstein's convincing analysis here. The point is rather that emanation, in this case, involves collateral replication, in which the replica draws on collateral lines of cultural motion, drawing thereby the force propelling those lines into the future replication of the new element.

I have said that coffee advertising forms a somewhat distinctive cultural element that had been undergoing replication before the emanation from wine talk occurred. William H. Ukers (1922, 431) refers to the earliest advertisement for coffee as dating back to the 1587 book (in Arabic) by Abd-al-Kadir titled *Argument in Favor of the Legitimate Use of Coffee*.[15] He also mentions a

15. I have not yet been able to locate a copy of this book.

1652 handbill "issued by Pasqua Rosée from the first London coffee house in St. Michael's Alley, Cornhill." It begins: "The Grain or Berry called *Coffee*, groweth upon little Trees, only in the *Deserts of Arabia*. It is brought from thence, and drunk generally throughout all the Grand Seigniors Dominions."

Some of the 1652 words get replicated virtually verbatim in later ads. A 1672 Parisian broadside, for example, opens: "*Coffee* is a Berry which only grows in the desert of *Arabia*, from whence it is transported into all the Dominions of the Grand Seigniour." There is, to be sure, nothing about wine in these early ads. The point is rather that coffee advertisement, as a kind of cultural element, has been moving through the world for quite some time, undergoing replication and change along the way.

Advertisements for coffee have long appealed to taste and, indeed, to discriminating taste. An 1854 St. Louis handbill, for example, proclaimed, "An equal amount of tact and skill is required in order to secure for the customer a full, rich, mellow, fine flavored Berry, from which alone a good cup of this delicious beverage can be extracted" (Ukers 1922, 436). Much has been made of the sexism of 1950s, 1960s, and even early 1970s TV advertisements for coffee in the United States, especially the Folgers commercials, which can be found through Internet searches. In these commercials, the husband is dissatisfied with his wife's coffee. What is interesting about these, in light of Silverstein's argument, is that the advertisement has to do with discriminating taste. The husband finds the wife's coffee unpalatable. In many of the Folgers commercials in the 1960s and 1970s, the wife gets help from an older "Mrs. Olson," who teaches her the secret of making good coffee.

The connoisseurship can be seen also in ads for Yuban coffee in the 1950s. One ad, for example, declares, "Yuban, richest because it is blended with rare aged coffee beans, fresh roasted at peak flavor."[16] This ad is particularly interesting because, unlike so many of the others, it makes explicit reference to related comestibles toward the end: "Yuban ads to its blend beans that are aged to peak flavor, like vintage wine, the choicest cheese, the finest steak." The point here is that we are dealing, in viewing coffee advertising as a cultural element, with a long history of replication with variation, in which the line of replication rubs up against the lines of other cultural elements. By a process I am calling collateral replication, the element from one line takes on characteristics of elements in other lines, drawing unto itself the forces propelling that other line.

16. See ad 49 at http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/adviews_highlights/.

There is another matter worth remarking here as well. Advertisements exert metaforce. As quintessential metaculture, they are about commodities as culture. They are designed to stimulate interest in the commodities, to imbue them with an attractive force capable of enticing consumers, thereby contributing to the motion of the culture that is bound up in them. How do they imbue the commodities with attractive force? I am suggesting here that successful advertisements embody aspects of other representations that have already proven to be of interest through their connection to other commodities. In other words, the advertisement as metaculture channels existing forces of inertia and interest into a modified version of an older element, an e_n in figure 3, producing a somewhat different e_n' that shares certain characteristics with other successful elements e_{n-1}, e_{n-2}, and so on.

Lest one imagine that collateral replication is a factor only in cases of advertising, I note that something like it underlies Benjamin Lee's (1997, 243–51) analysis of the intellectual force behind Descartes' celebrated *cogito*. Intellectual force here not only produces something convincing; it also results in the tendency to replicate the statement. Hence, it is a metaforce impelling the replicative motion of culture. A measure of the replicative force is the prominence of the *cogito* even on the Internet today. An exact word search for "cogito ergo sum" as I write yields 507,000 hits, while the English translation "I think therefore I am" yields 485,000. By comparison, Rousseau's celebrated line "Man is born free but everywhere he is in chains" produces just 13,500, and even the truncated version, "Man is born free," returns only 139,000 hits. The *cogito* rivals the line from the US Declaration of Independence, "all men are created equal," which gets 510,000 hits. One can even find t-shirts and tattoos with the widely disseminated phrase.

What is interesting about Lee's argument, however, is not just the observation that the phrase has intellectual force. Rather, in this context, it is that the intellectual force derives from the parallelism with explicit performative utterances, such as "I now pronounce you X," "I swear that X," "I bet you five dollars that X," "I order you to X," which were first named—naming being another performative act—by the philosopher John Austin ([1962] 1975) and later taken up by Searle (1969) and many others. The analysis of such explicit performative utterances is also central in Silverstein's (1976, 1993) development of the concept of metapragmatics.

I won't reprise Lee's well-known analysis, but instead focus on his conclusion, namely, that "Descartes's cogito argument . . . is based on an analogy with the 'performativity' of the 'dico' verbs" (Lee 1997, 249), that is, on analogy with

verbs of saying, for example, "I order you to . . . ," "I swear that . . . ," "I promise you," "I dub you . . . ," and so on. A key characteristic of such performative constructions is that the verb of speaking framing the utterance gives an explicit semantic characterization of the utterance's anchoring in the context in which it occurs. In such cases, a semantically encoded consciousness of speaking forms part of the act of speaking itself, so that the utterance is maximally self-reflexive. Moreover, it is one in which there appears to be a causal relationship between uttering the performative frame and the effect of the framed utterance. That is, it appears that by saying that one is "ordering," one is therefore ordering; by saying that one is "swearing," one is therefore swearing; and so forth.

The cogito contains not a verb of speaking but rather a verb of inner thought. However, there is an analogy to be had here as regards both the maximally self-reflexive character of the cogito (I think that I am) and also the causal character (I think therefore I am). In the motional framework I am proposing, the cogito can be understood through the lens of collateral replication. Because the constructions associated with the performativity of the verbs of saying—swearing, dubbing, ordering, and so on—are already in motion and propelled by inertia, the cogito is able to draw the force of that motion in some measure unto itself. That force in turn propels its own replication.

It is not just the replication of the cogito utterance per se that is of interest to Lee. Additionally, he suggests that cogito in turn is part of a much wider developing discourse about mind/body dualism. From the perspective of motion, the force powering the cogito contributes to the force behind a broader worldview as it manifests itself in philosophical writings and other discourse. Evidently, there is a similarity here to the rechanneling of the force propelling wine talk through talk about other commodities to interest in the commodities themselves. The force propelling the cogito, in this respect, is a metacultural force affecting other discourse.

It can perhaps now be appreciated that Silverstein's own formulation of the concept of metapragmatics occupies a similar position relative to the history of discourse within linguistic anthropology that the cogito does within philosophy or that the creation of coffee talk out of wine talk plays in relationship to commodities. I have already pointed out that the term "metapragmatics" is constructed on analogy to the term metalanguage. If my argument is correct, it gained momentum through this collateral replication. An Internet search of the term yields 25,400 hits—not up to the half a million hits for the cogito, but remarkable given that the term is a relatively technical one and that Silverstein first used it in a major publication in 1976, although he had been using it less formally well

before then. Indeed, the term is now listed in the Oxford English Dictionary, where its definition is given, somewhat inaccurately, as "The awareness of a speaker of the pragmatic functions of a speech act."[17] As further testimony to the replication of the term, there is an edited volume entitled *Metapragmatics in Use* (Bublitz and Hubler 2007), in which some of the chapters make use of the term without apparent reference to Silverstein.

Silverstein's role in transforming linguistic anthropology over the past several decades is hardly confined to his development of the metapragmatic concept. However, much of the transformation he stimulated and to which he also contributed concerns the contextual analysis of language use. The term metapragmatics, construed broadly and loosely, to be sure, does seem to sum up that transformation. Perhaps it is not too much of an exaggeration to say that its role in relationship to linguistic anthropology—the metaforce it exerts—is reminiscent of the role that the cogito has played in philosophical thought about mind/body dualism.

Conclusion

The meta-to-object relationship, as I have been discussing it in connection with metapragmatics and also, more generally, with metaculture, involves some measure of force exerted by the meta representation on the object plane, some influence or control by the one plane over the other. What is the source of that influence? When the meta layer involves explicitly semantic representation, the control appears to derive from the ability of the meta plane to define the object plane in a distinctive way—whether markers of reported speech signaling how an instance of the first person pronoun *I* is to be interpreted, wine-talk-like coffee talk affecting a coffee drinker's selection and enjoyment of coffee, or a performative-like statement directing those philosophically inclined to think of and talk about existence in a certain way. The awareness of the object plane as having certain characteristics suggests the actions in relation to it that would be appropriate.

To truly comprehend even that world-defining character of the explicitly semantic aspects of the meta plane, however, we need to ask further why that meta characterization gets accepted. Forces other than metaforce lie behind that acceptance. I have been suggesting that one class of force in this case is the inertial. People accept the meta characterization because it has been accepted in similar circumstances in the past. In certain respects, of course, the inertial character of

17. Online resource at http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2440/view/Entry/245268?redirectedFrom=metapragmatics#eid, accessed through the library of the University of Pennsylvania.

the meta-to-object relationship, and so the awareness associated with it, is reminiscent of the more traditional cultural anthropology understanding of the worldview as a determinant of action.

I have also suggested, however, that other forces are at work on the motion of culture, not just the inertial. In particular, interest as affective force plays a key role. The metapragmatic indexical of pitch raising, for example, can be used to generate excitement during an unfolding narrative. It helps to render the discourse interesting, and so contributes to the motivation behind its replication. Or a threat appended to a request for information in the course of an interrogation can motivate the movement of the information in the form of a response. In such cases, it is a matter not only of awareness of the object plane per se, but also of feeling about it. At the same time, like awareness, the affective orientation to the object plane stimulates actions in relationship to it. In these cases, the meta plane can be seen as channeling affect to the object plane.

Correspondingly, insofar as the meta plane itself participates in inertial replication, it can be seen as effective if the actions in relation to the object plane it provokes are themselves inertial, as, for example, when in a getting-to-know-one-another conversation one interlocutor asks the other, "Where did you go to college." A response in the form resembling "I went [to college at] X" is the inertial one. The meta plane (the question) stimulates the inertially-driven response (the object plane).

What I have attempted to explore in this essay, however, are meta-to-object relations that are not only grounded in inertial motion and interest directly, but also those in which a gap, so to speak, opens up between the meta and object planes such that something new emerges. The relationship between the planes gets, in some measure at least, realigned. If I am correct, this happens in the course of Silversteinian emanation. It happens, I am suggesting, thanks to collateral replication processes. In the latter, the force behind the movement of a seemingly related line of culture is borrowed from a different line by the use of similar metasigns, as when characteristics of wine talk are employed in coffee talk.

My contention here also is that a similar process is at work when strikingly new intellectual insights catch on and gain circulatory life. Such is the case with the Cartesian cogito, as argued by Lee (1997) and extended here to replicatory processes not only of the words themselves but of their contribution to discourse about a mind-body dualism. If I am correct, something similar is operative as well in the case of the insights about language use stemming from Silverstein's formulation of metapragmatics. Those insights, for which the term

itself is shorthand, redirected the flow of research and discourse within the field of linguistic anthropology. From there, they emanated to adjacent disciplines—not only linguistics (Bublitz and Hubler 2007), but also literary criticism (Lucey et al. 2017),[18] and beyond. They now help to define the field of linguistic anthropology itself.

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