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presence, indirect co-presence, and community membership. To keep track of these various co-presences, Clark & Marshall also propose that we must carry a mental diary, as well as an encyclopedia containing knowledge ordered by social-group membership.

Webber notes that, when new referents are introduced in indefinite NP's, they may be either 'rigid' or 'parameterized'. Rigid initial descriptions maintain their surface number in subsequent reference (e.g. *the bearer ... it,* and *bearers ... they*); but parameterized initial descriptions can change number (e.g. *Every man who owns a donkey beats it. However, the donkeys are planning to get back at them.*) Disjunction can also lead to a certain parameterization of the initial description (e.g. *Bruce can choose between a bike and a car, but he must keep it in the garage.*)

Prince analyses the semantics of the demonstrative article *this* when used to introduce a new referent as a new topic, as in *There was this hippie, you see.* She argues that *this* is here indefinite but specific. The specificity of *this* is illustrated by these sequences:

(1) a. John wants to marry a Norwegian.
     b. Is she tall? (specific uptake)
     b'. Must she be tall? (non-specific uptake)
(2) a. John wants to marry this Norwegian.
     b. Is she tall? (specific uptake)
     b'. *Must she be tall? (non-specific uptake)

Prince demonstrates the indefiniteness of *this* by showing how it patterns like the indefinite (rather than the definite) article. Finally, she shows that, although *this* carries a presupposition of existence, it does not carry the presupposition of familiarity conveyed by the definite article. Thus, in 3 we assume that an Eskimo restaurant existed, but in 4 we do not:

(3) John dreamt that he was in the Eskimo restaurant.
(4) John dreamt that he was in this Eskimo restaurant.

Finally, there are chapters by G. Miller & D. Kwilosz, S. J. Kaplan, and M. Marcus. Miller & Kwilosz present experimental evidence dividing the English modal auxiliary system into modals of necessity and of possibility. Cross-cutting this distinction is another, separating modals with a broad scope of negation (de dicto) from those with a narrow scope of negation (de re). Kaplan shows how a data-base query system can give appropriate answers to inappropriate questions. When asked *Which departments that sell knives also sell blade sharpeners?*, it can say *No departments sell knives,* rather than simply misleading the questioner by saying *None.* Marcus presents a computationally simple mechanism that parses a sentence without backtracking or erasure. He shows how this parser obeys the Specified Subject Constraint and the Subjacency Principle.

Although many of these articles present little in the way of new findings, the book is easy to read. It presents a nice snapshot of current work on the theoretical bases of discourse comprehension.

Conversational routine: Explorations in standardized communication situations and prepatterned speech. Edited by FLORIAN COULMAS. (Rasmus Rask studies in pragmatic linguistics, 2.) The Hague: Mouton, 1981. Pp. xii, 331.

Reviewed by PENELOPE BROWN, *Australian National University*

This collection of essays addresses the notion of 'conversational routine', and explores the characteristics of some of the more prepatterned, formulaic, and conventionalized aspects of conversational activity from a variety of perspectives. In his preface, Coulmas claims conversational interaction has its own rules, different from a linguist's notion of 'rule', and that 'conversational rules and routines purport to structure and make possible both the predictable

and the non-predictable aspects of conversation' (p. x). Hence the importance
of this relatively unexplored side of conversational patterning.

Of the thirteen papers included here, three have been previously published
in academic journals; the rest are new. Half the authors are European, half are
North American; and their disciplines range through linguistics, English, ed-
ucational linguistics, language teaching, sociology, and psycholinguistics. A
list of the contents will indicate the routine aspects of conversation that they
consider:

As this list suggests, the topics covered range across a variety of politeness
formulae and polite strategies, greetings and farewells, thanks and apologies,
compliments, stereotyped utterance openers and closers—as well as proce-
dures for announcing, for conducting classroom teaching, for small talk; 'gam-
bits' for signaling conversational strategies; and, in Verschueren's paper, the
metalinguistic terminology for conversational routines.

Rather than examine each article briefly, I will make some general comments
about the papers. Although these comments are largely critical, I will say at
the outset that I find the book well worth reading for anyone interested in
conversational analysis or in speech-act analysis: the issues addressed are of
concern to anyone with an interest in these aspects of language usage.

My critical remarks fall into three areas. First, despite the fact that many
of the essays address closely-related topics (e.g., three examine the nature of
apologies), the volume as a whole is a rather heterogeneous collection of dis-
parate views which do not speak to one another or complement one another
in any coherent way. One of the reasons for this heterogeneity is the failure
to establish a common domain of discourse: 'routine' in conversation is con-
ceptualized in varying and inconsistent ways.

C, in his introduction, opts for a loose bipartite definition: on the one hand, 'routine formulae
... [are] highly conventionalized prepatterned expressions whose occurrence is tied to more or less
standardized communication situations' (2–3); on the other hand, routine in discourse organization
is found where standardized strategies have evolved for dealing with recurrent communicative
goals—so that wording may vary across performances, but sequential organization is the same.
The former notion of routine focuses on lexical conventions; it encompasses formulae for greeting,
parting, apologizing, thanking, wishing health, warding off evil etc. The latter notion refers to
sequential routines such as those in which acts like those named above, as well as others, are
embedded. According to C,

'routines are kinds of interactions where no "negotiation" ... is necessary between individuals. In the enactment of verbal routines, the creativity of language is socially canalized according to successful solutions of recurring verbal tasks, fixed by functional appropriateness and tradition.' (3)

C has divided the book into two sections: the first addresses routine expressions as lexical items per se (in the articles from Ferguson to Verschueren), while the second addresses routine strategies and action patterns. With the exception of apologies, the issues dealt with in these two sections have little relationship to one another.

There is also the problem that some of the contributors to the volume do not share C's view of the bounds of routine in conversation, and there is continual slippage into the domain of more creatively constructed utterances. This is particularly evident in the papers on 'gambits' and 'stereotypes', only some of which seem to me routinized or prepatterned. Similarly, the polite strategies for requesting examined by House & Kaspar are vastly less routinized than the formulaic expressions for thanking examined by others. One might imagine a continuum of rigidity ranging from formulae like *God bless you* (said when someone sneezes), through conventional or stereo-typed expressions and ritualized strategies like greeting or thanking sequences, to general con-versational predictability resulting from basic constraints on topic and sequential organization; different authors address different points on the continuum. The most extreme position is taken by Edmondson, who argues that

'all (interpretable) conversational behavior is based on routine, if we can relate procedures to rules, i.e., explicitly relate conversational strategy both to rules which encapsulate our notion of communicative competence, and to conventions or norms which describe a com-munity's concept of what is and what is not socially acceptable behavior.' (275)

It is a long way from this view—that all unmarked or socially expected utterances are routines—to the polite formulae examined in the first section of the book.

Not only is there inconsistency across authors in what is considered to be conversational routine, but a number of the categories are extremely ill-defined; even within an article, an author frequently wobbles from one definition to another. The worst culprits here are Keller on conversational 'gambits'—which he defines as verbal signals which speakers use to structure their content and their conversational procedure—and Drazdauskienė on conversational 'stereotypes', defined as 'segments of speech identical to or larger than a word combination which recur syntactically and even lexically unchanged generally in identical contexts of situation' (67). Both authors cover phenomena so diverse as to have little in common, and both ramble uncomfortably in their ill-defined domains.

A second limitation of this book is that the contributions are extremely heterogeneous theoretically. They are written from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives, some grossly incompatible—speech-act analysis of conversation (Verschueren, Fraser); psycholinguistic theory (Keller); con-versation analysis in the ethnomethodological style (Griffen & Mehan); con-versation analysis à la Sinclair & Coulthard (Edmondson); and the ethnography of communication (Ferguson, Tannen & Öztek, and Coulmas). Furthermore, the papers are almost entirely descriptive and classificatory; there is little theoretical elaboration on the observations described.

Despite the promise of C's introduction that the study of routine in conversation should contribute to our understanding of meaning—as routines have special conventionalized meanings differing from their literal meanings—none of the papers show how the meanings of routine expressions are especially enlightening for a theory of meaning. C's passing attempt to treat them as conventional implicatures (7–8) does not go far, since many of the phenomena under consideration do not have that sort of conventional meaning. The prediction that the study of routines should shed new light on the relation of language system to language use is, likewise, not carried out in any direct way. Most frustrating is the fact that no one takes up the question of what is special about routine expressions or routinized sequences in conversation: Do they have any special effects on the

sequential organization of conversation? Is there any reason to treat them differently from fully
creative utterances? C's claim that the study of conversational routine requires 'a sociolinguistically
informed pragmatic investigation' (16) of language use in context is certainly true; but this maxim
is not always attended to in the papers.

A third source of the heterogeneity of the volume is in the handling of data. The data examined
come from a wide variety of sources; comparative cross-linguistic data are drawn from intuitions
and participant observation; examples are constructed from native-speaker intuitions; data are
derived from role-play in artificial situations; random collections of examples heard in the course
of everyday living are reported; and some (too little, for my taste) tape-recorded data of actual
language usage appear. Many of the authors display little sensitivity to the implications of these
different data sources or to the limitations of constructed data, although sometimes the data source
is inadequate for the conclusions derived from it. (Thus, in Manes & Wolfson's article on com-
pliments, the discovery that compliments in English are extremely formulaic might well result from
the fact that the data came from students' reports of compliments they had heard; such reports
would be likely to over-emphasize the conventional, expectable compliment form at the expense
of uniquely created forms.) Methods for handling the data are also extremely varied; some papers
are quantitative (e.g. counting instances of politeness usages); some involve model-building with
constructed examples; some analyse actual language-usage data; some consist of hair-splitting
classification; and some involve analysis of the sequencing of routines in conversation (Ed-
mondson's paper is good here, as is that by Griffen & Mehan on classroom teaching routines.) But
the lack of attention to the kind of data, the kind of evidence used to make arguments, and the
nature of proof in their arguments, generally speaking, means that many papers are methodolog-
ically weak, and so of limited interest to those who study conversation in the American ethno-
methodological tradition.

A further disparity among the papers is in the degree of sensitivity to the culture-bounded nature
of conclusions. A number of them are comparative, and draw some interesting contrasts between
linguistic routines in different cultures (Ferguson, Tannen & Öztek, and Coulmas are especially
good here). Others are cross-culturally inaccurate (e.g. Laver's claim, p. 301, that utterances of
'phatic communion' are most often about the weather)—or even downright biased (e.g. Fraser's
remark, p. 265, that the strategy of 'recantation' as a mode of apologizing is infrequent in English-
speaking countries, and so needn't be examined in his typology).

Finally, a very irritating aspect of the data presentation must be mentioned:
the frequent failure to translate non-English examples (especially in the papers
by Drazdauskienė, House & Kaspar, and Rehbein). This is perhaps forgivable
for the German and French examples, which literate linguists should be able
to understand (though the difficulties in interpreting the subtleties of conver-
sational sequences are greater than for isolated sentences); but it is inexcusable
for Lithuanian. This, in addition to frequent failures to cite data sources, or
to explain conventions of transcription, makes the data presented much more
difficult to process and assess than it should be. I would stress that, in this
kind of linguistic research—where both sequential and social context are cru-
cial for interpreting the data—it is essential to be explicit about the source of
the data, the manner and circumstances of its collection, and the conventions
adopted for its representation in written form.

These shortcomings make the book as a whole disappointing. After the
stimulating and provocative introduction, which promises much, relatively little
is delivered. Nevertheless, I commend this volume to the attention of anyone
interested in conversation analysis: it is a contribution to an important and
little-explored topic in the study of the systematics of conversation. Although
the papers are uneven in quality, and heterogeneous in approach, and although
the editorial hand was altogether too light for my taste (cf. the papers by

Drazdauskienė, Rehbein, and Keller, in particular), many useful insights are given into particular kinds of routine acts in conversation. The papers by Ferguson, by Tannen & Öztek, by Coulmas, by Griffen & Mehan, and by Edmondson are particularly rewarding. As a beginning in the exploration of routinized aspects of conversation, the book is certainly worth examining.

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Speech, writing, and sign: A functional view of linguistic representation. By NAOMI S. BARON. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981. Pp. xiv, 303. $22.50.

Reviewed by WILLARD WALKER, *Wesleyan University*

Baron here 'poses hypotheses and presents evidence about relationships between spoken, written, and signed languages' (xii). She loses no time in establishing her credibility as an interpreter of American linguistics as it has developed over the past century, as well as her credentials in such other fields as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, semiotics, philosophy, and the history of science. Rejecting both the Bloomfieldian and the Chomskyan variants of structuralism, she takes the position that language can best be understood as a functional device which takes various forms to transmit information in ways appropriate to relevant social contexts. Drawing on her knowledge of semiotics and sociolinguistics, she launches a concerted attack on 'oralist' linguistics, in the course of which she calls into question many of the basic tenets of the historical, structural, and TG traditions. And, as if to dispel any lingering doubts as to her audacity, she straps herself to the mast in her preface by proclaiming that she will use 'the pronoun *he* throughout as the unmarked indicator of *he* or *she*' until English develops 'a common gender third person singular pronoun' (xiv).

In developing her case for visual as well as oral language, B addresses three major problems: (1) 'What is a linguistic representation?'; (2) 'What are the expressive or perceptive channels (or modalities) through which these representations can be made?'; and (3) 'In what ways are the choices of linguistic representations (with respect to modality, lexical item, and grammatical patterning) derivable from the functional contexts in which the linguistic interchange occurs?' (15). These three problems, she contends,

> 'constitute a coherent nexus which should be considered together, and ... an examination of these problems is as fundamental to understanding human language as is an understanding of phonological and grammatical structures of human utterances. What is more, by locating these problems at the very core of a study of human language, we will derive not only a clearer understanding of human speech but also a more solid base ... for building linguistic theories.' (14)

B points out that the classic Boasian stricture—that each language be analysed on its own terms—was never applied to graphic or to signed representations of language:

> 'No ... provisions were made in the American descriptivist tradition for considering the integrity of either written or sign languages as forms which needed to be recognized and analysed