'and', not as logical &, but as the sequential expression 'and then'. This is another example of more being communicated than is said. We might propose that there is a regular principle of language use which can be stated as in [7].

[7] Interpret order of mention as a reflection of order of occurrence.

What is expressed in [7] is not a rule of syntax or semantics. It isn't a rule at all. It is a pragmatic principle which we frequently use to make sense of what we hear and read, but which we can ignore if it doesn't apply in some situations.

There are many other principles of this type which will be explored in the following chapters. In Chapter 2, we will start with a really simple principle: the more two speakers have in common, the less language they'll need to use to identify familiar things. This principle accounts for the frequent use of words like 'this' and 'that' to refer to things in a shared physical context (for example, 'Would you like this or that?'). Exploring this basic aspect of language in use is the study of deixis.

2
Deixis and distance

Deixis is a technical term (from Greek) for one of the most basic things we do with utterances. It means 'pointing' via language. Any linguistic form used to accomplish this 'pointing' is called a **deictic expression**. When you notice a strange object and ask, 'What's that?', you are using a deictic expression ('that') to indicate something in the immediate context. Deictic expressions are also sometimes called **indexicals**. They are among the first forms to be spoken by very young children and can be used to indicate people via **person deixis** ('me', 'you'), or location via **spatial deixis** ('here', 'there'), or time via **temporal deixis** ('now', 'then'). All these expressions depend, for their interpretation, on the speaker and hearer sharing the same context. Indeed, deictic expressions have their most basic uses in face-to-face spoken interaction where utterances such as [1] are easily understood by the people present, but may need a translation for someone not right there.

[1] I'll put this here.

(Of course, you understood that Jim was telling Anne that he was about to put an extra house key in one of the kitchen drawers.)

Deixis is clearly a form of referring that is tied to the speaker's context, with the most basic distinction between deictic expressions being 'near speaker' versus 'away from speaker'. In English, the 'near speaker', or **proximal** terms, are 'this', 'here', 'now'. The 'away from speaker', or **distal** terms, are 'that', 'there', 'then'. Proximal terms are typically interpreted in terms of the speaker's location, or the **deictic center**, so that 'now' is generally understood as referring to some point or period in time that has the time of the speaker's utterance at its center. Distal terms can simply

indicate 'away from speaker', but, in some languages, can be used to distinguish between 'near addressee' and 'away from both speaker and addressee'. Thus, in Japanese, the translation of the pronoun 'that' will distinguish between 'that near addressee' 'sore' and 'that distant from both speaker and addressee' 'are' with a third term being used for the proximal 'this near speaker' 'kore'.

Person deixis

The distinction just described involves person deixis, with the speaker ('I') and the addressee ('you') mentioned. The simplicity of these forms disguises the complexity of their use. To learn these deictic expressions, we have to discover that each person in a conversation shifts from being 'I' to being 'you' constantly. All young children go through a stage in their learning where this distinction seems problematic and they say things like 'Read you a story' (instead of 'me') when handing over a favorite book.

Person deixis clearly operates on a basic three-part division, exemplified by the pronouns for first person ('I'), second person ('you'), and third person ('he', 'she', or 'it'). In many languages these deictic categories of speaker, addressee, and other(s) are elaborated with markers of relative social status (for example, addressee with higher status versus addressee with lower status). Expressions which indicate higher status versus lower status are described as **honorifics**. The discussion of the circumstances which lead to the choice of one of these forms rather than another is sometimes described as **social deixis**.

A fairly well-known example of a social contrast encoded within person deixis is the distinction between forms used for a familiar versus a non-familiar addressee in some languages. This is known as the **TV distinction**, from the French forms 'tu' (familiar) and 'vous' (non-familiar), and is found in many languages including German ('du/Sie') and Spanish ('tú/Usted'). The choice of one form will certainly communicate something (not directly said) about the speaker's view of his or her relationship with the addressee. In those social contexts where individuals typically mark distinctions between the social status of the speaker and addressee, the higher, older, and more powerful speaker will tend

to use the 'tú' version to a lower, younger, and less powerful addressee, and be addressed by the 'vous' form in return. When social change is taking place, as for example in modern Spain, where a young businesswoman (higher economic status) is talking to her older cleaning lady (lower economic status), how do they address each other? I am told that the age distinction remains more powerful than the economic distinction and the older woman uses 'tú' and the younger uses 'Usted'.

The Spanish non-familiar version ('Usted') is historically related to a form which was used to refer to neither first person (speaker) nor second person (addressee), but to third person (some other). In deictic terms, third person is not a direct participant in basic (I–you) interaction and, being an outsider, is necessarily more distant. Third person pronouns are consequently distal forms in terms of person deixis. Using a third person form, where a second person form would be possible, is one way of communicating distance (and non-familiarity). This can be done in English for an ironic or humorous purpose as when one person, who's very busy in the kitchen, addresses another, who's being very lazy, as in [2].

[2] Would his highness like some coffee?

The distance associated with third person forms is also used to make potential accusations (for example, 'you didn't clean up') less direct, as in [3a.], or to make a potentially personal issue seem like an impersonal one, based on a general rule, as in [3b.].

[3] a. Somebody didn't clean up after himself.
   b. Each person has to clean up after him or herself.

Of course, the speaker can state such general 'rules' as applying to the speaker plus other(s), by using the first person plural ('we'), as in [4].

[4] We clean up after ourselves around here.

There is, in English, a potential ambiguity in such uses which allows two different interpretations. There is an **exclusive 'we'** (speaker plus other(s), excluding addressee) and an **inclusive 'we'** (speaker and addressee included). Some languages grammaticize this distinction (for example, Fijian has 'keimami' for exclusive first person plural and 'keda' for inclusive first person plural).

In English, the ambiguity present in [4] provides a subtle opportunity for a hearer to decide what was communicated. Either the hearer decides that he or she is a member of the group to whom the rule applies (i.e. an addressee) or an outsider to whom the rule does not apply (i.e. not an addressee). In this case the hearer gets to decide the kind of 'more' that is being communicated.

The inclusive–exclusive distinction may also be noted in the difference between saying 'Let's go' (to some friends) and 'Let us go' (to someone who has captured the speaker and friends). The action of going is inclusive in the first, but exclusive in the second.

Spatial deixis

The concept of distance already mentioned is clearly relevant to spatial deixis, where the relative location of people and things is being indicated. Contemporary English makes use of only two adverbs, 'here' and 'there', for the basic distinction, but in older texts and in some dialects, a much larger set of deictic expressions can be found. Although 'yonder' (more distant from speaker) is still used, words like 'hither' (to this place) and 'thence' (from that place) now sound archaic. These last two adverbs include the meaning of motion toward or away from the speaker. Some verbs of motion, such as 'come' and 'go', retain a deictic sense when they are used to mark movement toward the speaker ('Come to bed!') or away from the speaker ('Go to bed!').

One version of the concept of motion toward speaker (i.e. becoming visible), seems to be the first deictic meaning learned by children and characterizes their use of words like 'this' and 'here' (= can be seen). They are distinct from 'that' and 'there' which are associated with things that move out of the child's visual space (= can no longer be seen).

In considering spatial deixis, however, it is important to remember that location from the speaker's perspective can be fixed mentally as well as physically. Speakers temporarily away from their home location will often continue to use 'here' to mean the (physically distant) home location, as if they were still in that location. Speakers also seem to be able to project themselves into other locations prior to actually being in those locations, as when they say 'I'll come later' (= movement to addressee's location).

This is sometimes described as **deictic projection** and we make more use of its possibilities as more technology allows us to manipulate location. If 'here' means the place of the speaker's utterance (and 'now' means the time of the speaker's utterance), then an utterance such as [5] should be nonsense.

[5] I am not here now.

However, I can say [5] into the recorder of a telephone answering machine, projecting that the 'now' will apply to any time someone tries to call me, and not to when I actually record the words. Indeed, recording [5] is a kind of dramatic performance for a future audience in which I project my presence to be in the required location. A similar deictic projection is accomplished via dramatic performance when I use direct speech to represent the person, location, and feelings of someone or something else. For example, I could be telling you about a visit to a pet store, as in [6].

[6] I was looking at this little puppy in a cage with such a sad look on its face. It was like, 'Oh, I'm so unhappy here, will you set me free?'

The 'here' of the cage is not the actual physical location of the person uttering the words (the speaker), but is instead the location of that person performing in the role of the puppy.

It may be that the truly pragmatic basis of spatial deixis is actually **psychological distance**. Physically close objects will tend to be treated by the speaker as psychologically close. Also, something that is physically distant will generally be treated as psychologically distant (for example, 'that man over there'). However, a speaker may also wish to mark something that is physically close (for example, a perfume being sniffed by the speaker) as psychologically distant 'I don't like that'. In this analysis, a word like 'that' does not have a fixed (i.e. semantic) meaning; instead, it is 'invested' with meaning in a context by a speaker.

Similar psychological processes seem to be at work in our distinctions between proximal and distal expressions used to mark temporal deixis.

Temporal deixis

We have already noted the use of the proximal form 'now' as indicating both the time coinciding with the speaker's utterance and the time of the speaker's voice being heard (the hearer's 'now'). In contrast to 'now', the distal expression 'then' applies to both past [7a.] and future [7b.] time relative to the speaker's present time.

[7] a. November 22nd, 1963? I was in Scotland then.

    b. Dinner at 8:30 on Saturday? Okay, I'll see you then.

It is worth noting that we also use elaborate systems of non-deictic temporal reference such as calendar time (dates, as in [7a.]) and clock time (hours, as in [7b.]). However, these forms of temporal reference are learned a lot later than the deictic expressions like 'yesterday', 'tomorrow', 'today', 'tonight', 'next week', 'last week', 'this week'. All these expressions depend for their interpretation on knowing the relevant utterance time. If we don't know the utterance (i.e. scribbling) time of a note, as in [8], on an office door, we won't know if we have a short or a long wait ahead.

[8] Back in an hour.

Similarly, if we return the next day to a bar that displays the notice in [9], then we will still be (deictically) one day early for the free drink.

[9] Free Beer Tomorrow.

The psychological basis of temporal deixis seems to be similar to that of spatial deixis. We can treat temporal events as objects that move toward us (into view) or away from us (out of view). One metaphor used in English is of events coming toward the speaker from the future (for example, 'the coming week', 'the approaching year') and going away from the speaker to the past (for example, 'in days gone by', 'the past week'). We also seem to treat the near or immediate future as being close to utterance time by using the proximal deictic 'this', as in 'this (coming) weekend' or 'this (coming) Thursday'.

One basic (but often unrecognized) type of temporal deixis in English is in the choice of verb tense. Whereas other languages have many different forms of the verb as different tenses, English has only two basic forms, the present as in [10a.], and the past as in [10b.].

[10] a. I live here now.

    b. I lived there then.

The present tense is the proximal form and the past tense is the distal form. Something having taken place in the past, as in [11a.], is typically treated as distant from the speaker's current situation. Perhaps less obviously, something that is treated as extremely unlikely (or impossible) from the speaker's current situation is also marked via the distal (past tense) form, as in [11b.].

[11] a. I could swim (when I was a child).

    b. I could be in Hawaii (if I had a lot of money).

The past tense is always used in English in those *if*-clauses that mark events presented by the speaker as not being close to present reality as in [12].

[12] a. If I had a yacht, …

    b. If I was rich, …

Neither of the ideas expressed in [12] are to be treated as having happened in past time. They are presented as deictically distant from the speaker's current situation. So distant, indeed, that they actually communicate the negative (we infer that the speaker has no yacht and is not rich).

In order to understand many English conditional constructions (including those of the form 'Had I known sooner …'), we have to recognize that, in temporal deixis, the remote or distal form can be used to communicate not only distance from current time, but also distance from current reality or facts.

Deixis and grammar

The basic distinctions presented so far for person, spatial, and temporal deixis can all be seen at work in one of the most common structural distinctions made in English grammar—that between direct and indirect (or reported) speech. As already described, the deictic expressions for person ('you'), place ('here'), and time ('this evening') can all be interpreted within the same context as the speaker who utters [13a.].

[13] a. Are you planning to be here this evening?
b. I asked her if she was planning to be there that evening.

When the context shifts, as for example in [13b.], to one in which I report the previous utterance, then the previous utterance is marked deictically as relative to the circumstances of asking. Note that the proximal forms presented in [13b.] have shifted to the corresponding distal forms in [13a.] This very regular difference in English reported discourse marks a distinction between the 'near speaker' meaning of direct speech and the 'away from speaker' meaning of indirect speech. The proximal deictic forms of a direct speech reporting communicate, often dramatically, a sense of being in the same context as the utterance. The distal deictic forms of indirect speech reporting make the original speech event seem more remote.

It should not be a surprise to learn that deictic expressions were all to be found in the pragmatics wastebasket. Their interpretation depends on the context, the speaker's intention, and they express relative distance. Given their small size and extremely wide range of possible uses, deictic expressions always communicate much more than is said.

3
Reference and inference

Throughout the preceding discussion of deixis, there was an assumption that the use of words to refer to people and things was a relatively straightforward matter. It is indeed fairly easy for people to do, but it is rather difficult to explain how they do it. We do know that words themselves don't refer to anything. People refer. We might best think of reference as an act in which a speaker, or writer, uses linguistic forms to enable a listener, or reader, to identify something.

Those linguistic forms are **referring expressions**, which can be proper nouns (for example, 'Shakespeare', 'Cathy Revuelto', 'Hawaii'), noun phrases which are definite (for example, 'the author', 'the singer', 'the island'), or indefinite (for example, 'a man', 'a woman', 'a beautiful place'), and pronouns (for example, 'he', 'her', 'it', 'them'). The choice of one type of referring expression rather than another seems to be based, to a large extent, on what the speaker assumes the listener already knows. In shared visual contexts, those pronouns that function as deictic expressions (for example, 'Take this'; 'Look at him!') may be sufficient for successful reference, but where identification seems more difficult, more elaborate noun phrases may be used (for example, 'Remember the old foreign guy with the funny hat?').

Reference, then, is clearly tied to the speaker's goals (for example, to identify something) and the speaker's beliefs (i.e. can the listener be expected to know that particular something?) in the use of language. For successful reference to occur, we must also recognize the role of **inference**. Because there is no direct relationship between entities and words, the listener's task is to infer correctly which entity the speaker intends to identify by using a