MORE ON THE TIME REFFERENCE AND THE ANALYSIS OF TENSE

Michael Sharwood Smith

Utrecht University

The main thrust of this paper will be descriptive and focussed on the interaction of punctual time adverbials in English and a number of verb structures. The semantic consequences of such interactions will be discussed and a brief attempt will be made to formalise the findings within the framework of a multi-predicate analysis (see Lakoff 1970, McCawley 1971 and Anderson 1973); a semantically-based approach is favoured as a good basis for cross-language comparisons of either a theoretical or a pedagogical nature.[1]. The assignment of tense morphemes and time adverbials is understood to be a function of various configurations of *temporal markers*: *Past, Present* and *Future*.

The syntactic behaviour of sentences in English containing perfective *have* plus a punctual time adverbial indicates that certain transformational operations like clefting produce a significant change in meaning beyond that which is associated with the notion of 'topicalisation'. Furthermore, negation and question transformations may have the same effect thus also supporting the conclusion that sentences like, *Gerald had left the office at five* are ambiguous and require more than one underlying representation. A consideration of sentences containing no perfective elements but rather different kinds of verbal forms like, *was/were going to* and *will be VERB-ing* indicates that similar distinctions may be relevant although in a less crucial way.

When dealing with perfective *have* in conjunction with time adverbials that refer to a specific point in time (punctual adverbials) we need to examine either *have* following a modal auxiliary (e.g. *will have*) or the past form *had*

since (1) is, of course, unacceptable:

1. *Gerald has left the office at five.

Equivalent sentences in languages like French, Dutch or German are quite acceptable. English, however, allows this type of adverbial in the other above-mentioned contexts. For example:

2. Gerald had left the office at five.
3. Gerald will have left the office at five.

It seems to be the case that the perfective sentence (1) may not have "present orientation" as is the case with the present perfect. Whether this is to be analysed as a result of a restriction imposed by the syntactic source for *have* and *has* rather than *had* in non-modal sentences or by a semnatic representation is an important question.

It should be noted in passing that the restriction is not valid for non-finite versions of perfective *have*.

If we now compare (2) and (3) with (4):

4. Gerald left the office at five.

we may notice that a topicalisation transformation that preposes the time adverbial gives us, as might be expected, no significant change in meaning:

2a. At five, Gerald had left the office.
3a. At five, Gerald will have left the office.
4a. At five, Gerald left the office.

If we then apply cleft, pseudo-cleft, negation or question transformations to (4a) there is still no fundamental change in meaning apart from the meaning intrinsic to negative and interrogative sentences, namely the result of something in the proposition being negated or forming the focus of a question:

4b. It was at five that Gerald left the office.
4c. What Gerald did at five was leave the office.
4d. At five, Gerald did not leave the office.
4e. At five, did Gerald leave the office?

However, this is not the case as regards sentences like (2) and (3) since they are in contrast with (4) and (4a—4e), ambiguous. The ambiguity centres round the question as whether the time of leaving is the same as the time expressed by the time adverbial. In other words, at the time expressed by the time adverbial was it the case (or will it have been the case) that Gerald *left* at that time precisely or was it the case that he had already left prior to that time? That this distinction is syntactically trivial is thrown into doubt by the following facts:

A. When the time adverbial is preposed and the 'sentence' then undergoes

either a negative or a question transformation, the time of leaving is normally understood to be different from the time expressed by the time adverbial. This will be called the *non-simultaneous reading*.

B. If clefting and pseudo-clefting is applied, keeping the time adverbial in the preposed position, the sentence is normally disambiguated in favour of the *simultaneous reading* (time of leaving equals the time expressed by the time adverbial in (2) and (3)).

C. Since the restrictions apply to *had* and *will have*, they may be a function of Perfective *have* in general rather than just the Past form of *have* (had).

D. The simultaneous/non-simultaneous distinction seems to operate although in a different way to explain favoured readings for equivalent sentences with *was/were going to*.

E. The simultaneous/non-simultaneous distinction helps to explain an important but apparently subtle ambiguity in equivalent sentences with *will be V-ing*.

The first observation (A) is evidenced by the following:

5. At five, Gerald had not left the office?? Had he in fact left *earlier*
5a. At five Gerald had not left the office. He had in fact left *later*.

When putting sentences in a discourse context, the convention?? will be used instead of an asterisk (star) to indicate highly unlikely combinations. Since the relations holding between sentences are not as fixed as those holding within sentences (i.e. the speaker can "change tack" before passing to the next sentence without breaking a law) it seems inadvisable to use the inflexible symbol indicating "unacceptable in all contexts". (5) and (5a) should be read without marked intonation and stress patterns for the restriction to hold. If, however, the first sentence in each example is read with contrastive stress on anything except the time adverbial, the reading may be reversed in favour of a simultaneous interpretation. In this case the first sentence ends with a rising intonation anticipating the "resolution" of the problem as in:

5b. At five, Gerald had not LEFT the office: he had in fact ARRIVED then.
5c. At five, Gerald had not LEFT the office but had in fact ARRIVED then.

Note that it is an either/or situation as regard the reading. It is difficult to retain a non-simultaneous reading for (5b) and (5c). This means that the contrastive versions do not reintroduce ambiguity but rather a switch in *un*ambiguous interpretation. Notice also that this is not simply a matter of stress since, when the final part of the intonation pattern for the first sentence involves a falling intonation and not a rising one, then we still have non-simultaneous reading even when *Gerald*, *left* or *office* is stressed. For example:

5d. At five, Gerald had not LEFT the office.

The assignment of various phonological patterns does seem to depend on

the prior establishment of whether the sentence is to be read as simultaneous or non-simultaneous.

The following examples with *will have* give us a similar picture:

6. At five, Gerald won't have left the office.?? He will in fact have left earlier.

6a. At five Gerald won't have left the office. He will in fact have left later.

6b. At five, Gerald won't have LEFT the office: he will in fact have ARRIVED then.

6c. At five, Gerald won't have LEFT the office but will in fact have ARRIVED then.

6d. At five, Gerald won't have LEFT the office.

If we now turn to question forms with the time adverbial preposed we find a parallel situation except we may predict that the rising intonation that the question transformation invokes interferes with the disambiguation illustrated in (5d) and (6d) since it becomes difficult if not impossible to distinguish the question provoked rise with the rise provoked by the contrastive or "concessive" interpretation. Thi s is in fact exactly what happens (see 7d.):

7. At five, hadn't Gerald left the office? (unmarked stress and intonation) ?? Yes, he left later.

7a. At five, hadn't Gerald left the office? (ditto) Yes, he wasn't there at five.

7b. At five, hadn't Gerald LEFT the office? I don't think he ARRIVED there then!

7c. At five, hadn't Gerald LEFT the office rather than ARRIVE there then?

7d. At five, hadn't Gerald LEFT the office?

It is difficult to disambiguate (7d) in favour of the non-simultaneous reading without employing disambiguation via the discourse context. All we might say would be that with the minimal rise at the end of the sentence this would be the most favoured reading.

The same seems to be true of (8), (8a—d):

8. At five, won't Gerald have left the office? (unmarked stress and intonation)
    ?? Yes, he will have left later.

8a. At five, won't Gerald have left the office? (ditto) Yes, he won't have been there at five.

8b. At five, won't Gerald have LEFT the office? I don't think he will have ARRIVED there then!

8c. At five, won't Gerald have LEFT the office rather than ARRIVE there then?

8d. At five, won't Gerald have LEFT the office?

With regard to the second observation (B), we find that clefting seems to disambiguate in favour of the simultaneous reading. Contrastive or concessive versions seems very odd if intended to be non-simultaneous. Thus:

9. It was at five that Gerald had left the office.?? He had in fact left earlier/later.

9a. It was at five that Gerald had left the office. It was indeed at five SHARP.

10. It will have been at five that Gerald will have left the office.
    ?? He will in fact have left later/earlier.

10a. It will have been at five that Gerald will have left the office. He will in fact have left at five SHARP.

Actually, there are two other versions of (the first sentence in) (10) and (10a), namely:

10b. It will have been at five that Gerald *left* the office...

10c. It *will* be at.five that Gerald will have left the office...

The first one (10b) with the simple past *left* in the *that*-clause forces the past time reading whereas (10) and (10c) are ambiguous as to whether the state/event is still to take place or whether it has already taken place and the speaker is simply hazarding a guess about its time in the past (using predictive *will*). All of them, however, (10, 10a—c) must be read as simultaneous. A switch in this reading can only be made, that is in the case of all except the simple past version (10b), by introducing *already* into the *that*-clause.

As regards pseudo-clefting, a similar but not identical situation obtains. With a phonologically unmarked reading, a disambiguation is also achieved in favour of the simultaneous interpretation:

11. What Gerald had done at five was leave the office.?? He had in fact left earlier/later.

11a. What Gerald had done at five was leave the office. He had in fact left at five SHARP.

12. What Gerald will have done at five $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{will be to} \\ \text{will have been to} \\ \text{is} \end{Bmatrix}$ leave the office.

    ?? He will in fact have left earlier/later.

12a. What Gerald will have done at five $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{will be to} \\ \text{will have been to} \\ \text{is} \end{Bmatrix}$ leave the office.

    He will in fact have left at five.

The choice between *will be to*, *will have been to* and *is* does not effect the meaning, that is to say, as the choice of *left* does in (10b). The sentences may still be either future or past referring. However it might be argued that by placing

an extra stress on the verbal form *done* in the *wh*-clause ambiguity is reintroduced as far as simultaneity is concerned:

11b. What Gerald had DONE at five was leave the office.

12b. What Gerald will have DONE at five $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{is} \\ \text{will have been to} \end{Bmatrix}$ leave the office.

In this case DONE could be read as meaning "already done".

However, as indicated above, *will* may be used by itself in the second clause. In this case a stressed *DONE* does not seem to have the same effect: the sentences still seem to be unambiguously simultaneous:

12d. What Gerald will have DONE at five will be to leave the office.?(?) He will in fact have left earlier.

It seems that clefting and pseudo-clefting, at least with time adverbials of this type are not the simple operations they are semotimes made out to be. One should also note, in passing, that time adverbials with *at* are not the same as time adverbials with *by* although in many of the examples here they seem on the face of it to be synonymous. Nevertheless:

13. He had left *at* five (non-simultaneous)

and

14. He had left *by* five.

should be regarded as distinct as:

15. Leave at five.

and

16. Leave by five.

It seems reasonable to suppose that in all cases *at* means "specifically at time X" and *by* means "at some unspecified time in the period leading up to time X". Thus (17) is similar but certainly not the same as (13):

17. He had left by five.

(13) means that specifically at five it was the case we could say "he has left". Observation D may be illustrated by the following examples:

18. At five, he was not going to leave the office.
19. At five, was he going to leave the office?
20. It was at five that he was going to leave the office.
21. What he was going to do at five was leave the office.

It seems to be the case that the favoured if not exclusive reading for (18) and (19) is the non-simultaneous one provided the stress and intonation are kept unmarked. However, if we have the contrastive/concessive reading with the characteristic rising intonation at the end, the situation is reversed:

18a. At five, he was not going to LÉAVE: he was going to STAY.
19a. At five, was he going to LÉAVE or was he going to STAY?

In the case of (20) and (21), the favoured reading is the simultaneous one. Observation E concerns the ambiguity of (22):

22. Gerald will be leaving at five.

One reading would give us the meaning: at five Gerald will be in the process of leaving. The alternative reading would be what Leech calls the-future-as-a-matter-of-course (c.f. Leech 1971) giving us the meaning: "at some time in the future it will be possible to say that Gerald is (future) leaving at five". (cf. Sharwood Smith 1977). This analysis of the second type enables a speaker of English to ask someone:

23. Will you be driving into town tomorrow?

without seeming to force the response:

24. Yes, why, do you want me to give you a lift?

or even "worse":

25. No, but if *you* want to go in, I can, of course.

The inclusion of *will* makes the question more circumspect, distancing the announcement of a present intention or plan by projecting it into the future ("will it be your plan to drive in"). If the time adverbial is preposed giving us, for example,:

22a. At five, Gerald will be leaving.

we seem to get a disambiguation in favour of the first, progressive reading. It is at least a favoured reading out of context. How this ties in with simultaneity is as follows. In the progressive reading the time adverbial expresses the same time as that which the process of leaving is located. In the other "programmed" reading (cf. Sharwood Smith 1977) the time adverbial expresses a time as different from the time at which the "program" is located. This may be clarified in the following way:

At five there will be a process (Gerald leaving)

versus

At some time in the future there will be a program (Gerald leaving at five)

To sum up, in all cases where there is a possibility of two relevant points in the past (or future) being required to explicate the meaning of the sentence, there seems to be a relevant distinction, described here as simultaneous versus non-simultaneous, which mediates between various syntactic and phonological alternatives. In the case of perfective sentences (excluding present perfect examples) the distinction seems to be more crucial. In the case of *was/were going to* and *will be V-ing*, the distinction seems to be at least helpful in explaining favoured readings. In the case of the last construction it may help to explicate a rather subtle semantic distinction. The best and perhaps only way of expressing the simultaneous/non-simultaneous distinction is to use a minimum of two predicates in order to be able to locate the time adverbial in

one rather than the other. The following solution is, tentatively, proposed: All these sentences should be analysed as containing one predicate of the kind: *it be (time adverbial)* and one or more predicates containing the rest of the proposition[2]:

I. (HAD LEFT)
  it *Past* be .... Gerald *Past* leave.
II. (WILL HAVE LEFT)
  it *Fut be* .... Gerald *Past* leave.
III. (WAS GOING TO LEAVE)
  it *Past* be going to be[3] .... Gerald *Fut* leave.
IV. (WILL BE LEAVING)
  it *FUT* be ...⎰there *Pres* be PROCESS ... Gerald *Pres* leave.
           ⎱there *Pres* be PROGRAM... Gerald *Fut* leave.

The second might be expanded to cope more satisfactorily with the past time *will have*, which should be understood as essentially predictive (anyone will be able to see that Gerald left) despite the fact that the event logically took place in the past. Thus:

11a. it *Fut* be ....it *Past* be .... Gerald *Past* leave.

The simultaneous/non-simultaneous distinction may then be expressed by locating the time adverbial in the first or in later predicates:

(I)
  it *Past* be *at five* .... Gerald *Past* leave
  it *Past* be .... Gerald *Past* leave *at five*.
  ("it was the case at five that one was able to say: G. has (already) left versus
  "it was the case that G. left at five")
(II)
  it *Fut* be *at five* .... Gerald *Past* leave.
  it *Fut* be ......it *Past* be *at five*.............. Gerald *Past* leave.
  it *Fut* be .... Gerald *Past* leave *at five*.
  it *Fut* be ....it *Past* be .... Gerald *Past* leave *at five*.
(III)
  it *Past* be going to be *at five* .... Gerald *Past* leave
  it *Past* be going to be .... Gerald *Past* leave *at five*.
(IV)
  it *Fut* be *at five* ...there *Pres* be PROCESS —Gerald *Pres* leave
  it *Fut* be ....there *Pres* be PROGRAM Gerald *Fut* leave *at five*.

---

[2] This analysis is an adaptation and extension of an analysis by J. Thorne of English past tenses discussed in paper on quantifiers in Poznań 1974.

[3] For a further analysis of *Going to* see Sharwood Smith (1977).

(4) would be accordingly analysed as:
  it *Past* be .... Gerald *Pres* leave *at five*.
and the present perfect version (Gerald has left) as:
  it *Pres* be .... Gerald *Past* leave.

The restriction as regards time adverbials (see 1.) could then be expressed as operating on particular combinations of tense markers in the different associated predicates. The existence of *Pres* in the initial predicate could be the element that disallows punctual time adverbials in the surface sentence. However we need to distinguish program and process readings of:

23. He is leaving.

as:

  (?it *Pres* be) ....there *Pres* be PROCESS ....he *Pres* leave
  (?it *Pres* be) ....there *Pres* be PROGRAM ....he *Fut* leave

The punctual time adverbial is allowed in the second reading only so it seems that both *Pres-Pres* and *Past-Past* combinations disallow it but *Pres-Fut* does not.

What this type of analysis has over an orthodox account (cf. Jacobs and Rosenbaum 1968) is that, apart from the fact that the facts referred to in observations A — E are accounted for, the necessity for having a separate category Perfective is eliminated. Moreover, Progressive is reinterpreted as being something distinct from Perfective and not part of a more general category "aspect". This solution seems intuitively to be closer to the facts. Nevertheless something new is introduced, namely the tense marker *Fut*.[4] The ambiguity of sentences like (23) provides the justification for this new distinction despite the fact that the reflexions of *Fut* include auxiliary forms unlike the "orthodox" [±Past] distinction.

For the purposes of contrastive analysis, translation theory and pedagogical grammar, analyses that are not founded on a belief in autonomous syntax would seem to be more viable. Such an analysis as hinted at here would aim to represent more clearly the fundamental conceptualisation of time that a native speaker of English has and that underlies the time-referring utterances that he makes in English. A key factor in this is the *perspective* involved in time reference. Thus a past event may be given a present perspective and its linguistic correlate in the Present Perfect. A future event may equally be given a present perspective and linguistic correlates of this include the present tenses (surface tenses, that is) and *going* to with the present forms of *be*. Languages like Polish have no equivalent to the Present Perfect and in this case

---

[4] c.f. Seuren (1969). Seuren's "tense qualifier" *U*, however, does not seem to be strictly necessary since time-neutral or "universal" readings could better be left to pragmatic/knowledge of the real world interpretation.

present perspective if it turned out to be a valid category for Polish would presumably be expressed via adverbials such as *już* etc. Until such time as autonomous syntax produces a viable theory of universal tense structure that can cope satisfactorily with all time/tense problems, the best methodological starting point for present purpose is assumed to be one that begins at the semantic end.

An analysis of time reference within a clearly semantico-syntactic framework might follow the lines sketched out below:

Every sentence would contain a temporal marker (TM) which ultimately decide the tense marking of any verb in the surface structure. Time adverbs would be understood to derive from sentences and thus would possess their own TM. All TMs in the derivation could be indexed (much the same as underlying NP's in a theory that introduces pronouns transformationally). The syntactic and phonological behaviour described in this paper would then be a function of particular types and combinations of TM. There would be three types, namely *Past, Pres* and *Fut.*

The topmost sentence represents the perspective in which the speaker whishes to place his state/event. Thus all predictions will have the initial (topmost) TM: *Fut* which does not of course preclude the state/event being actually in the past. Here, *Fut* simply means "it *Fut* be the case". Below are same examples:
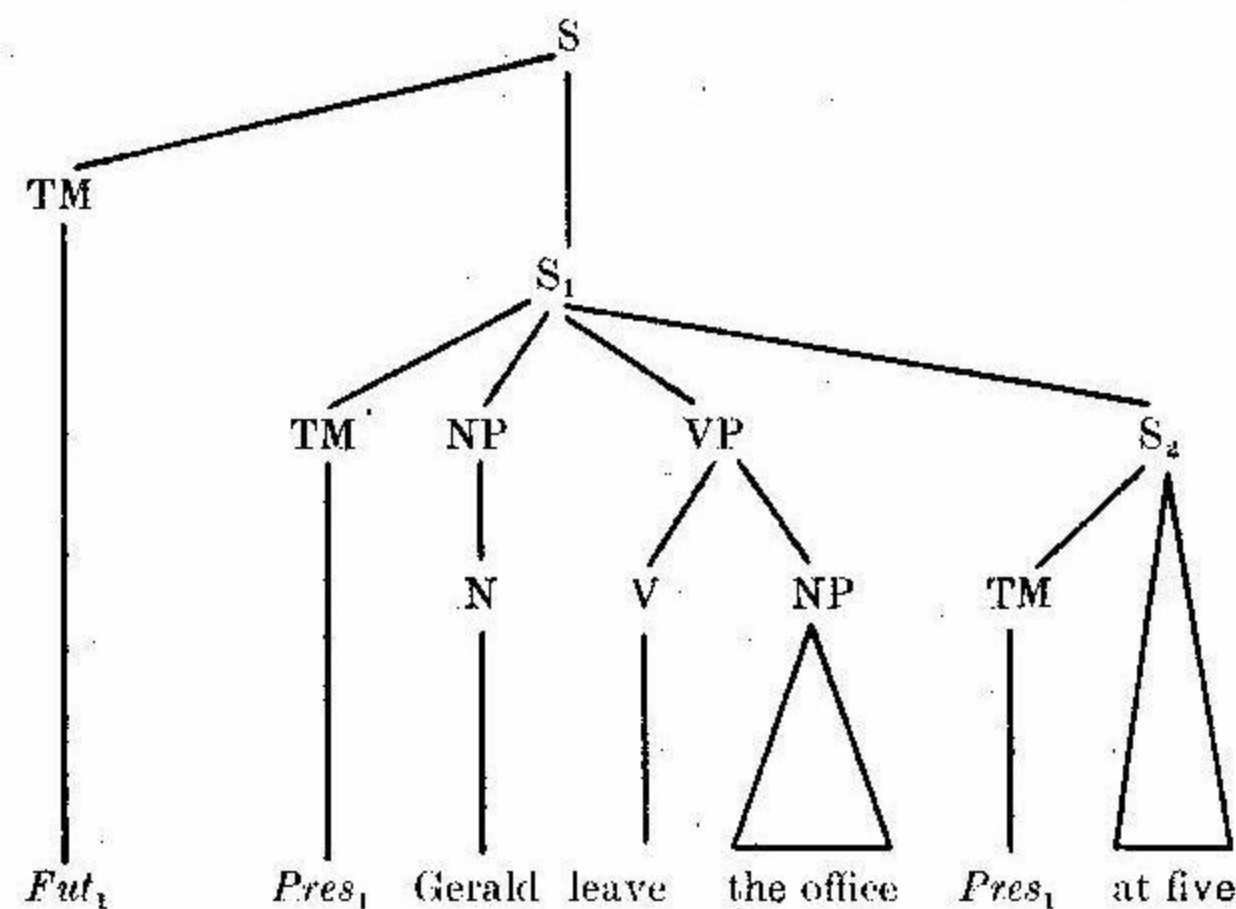
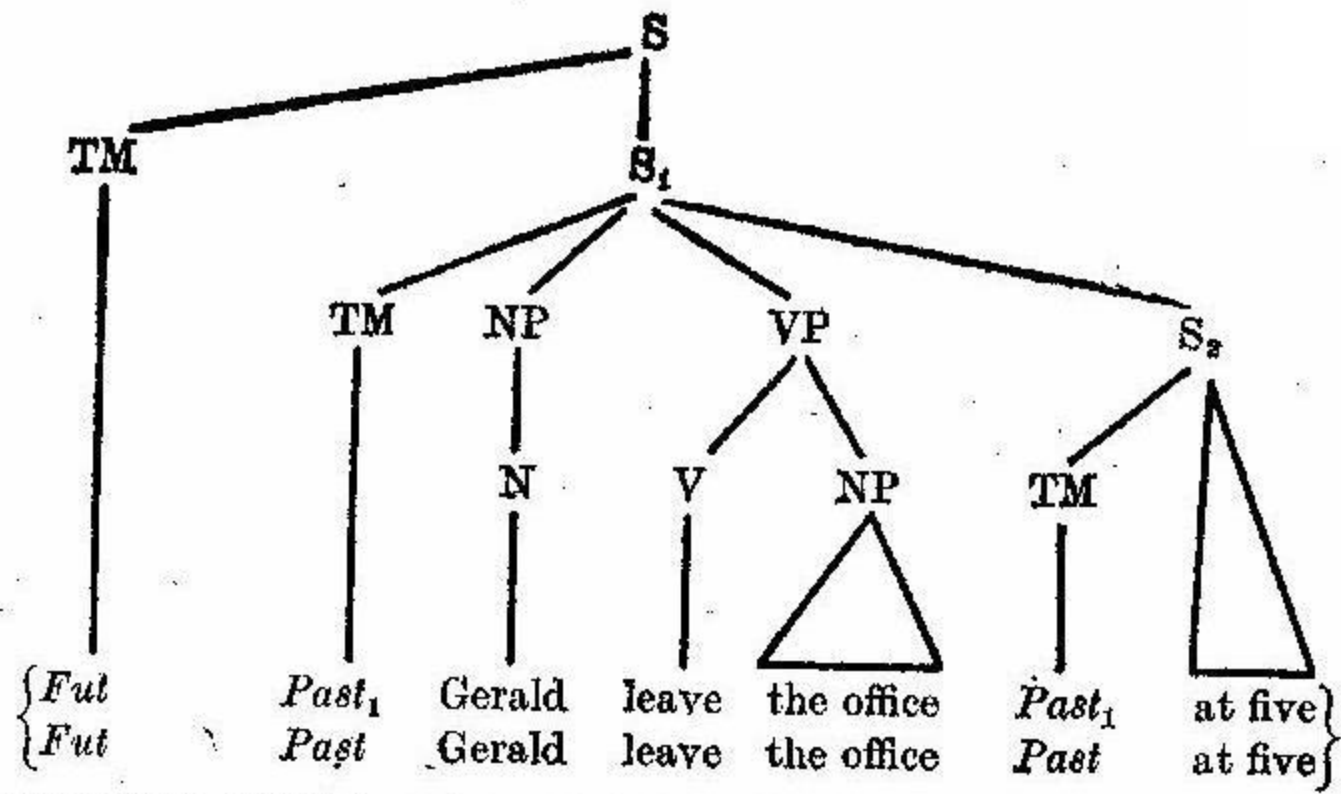N.B. TM's indexed with the same number represent an identical time.

GERALD HAD LEFT THE OFFICE AT FIVE (TWO READINGS)
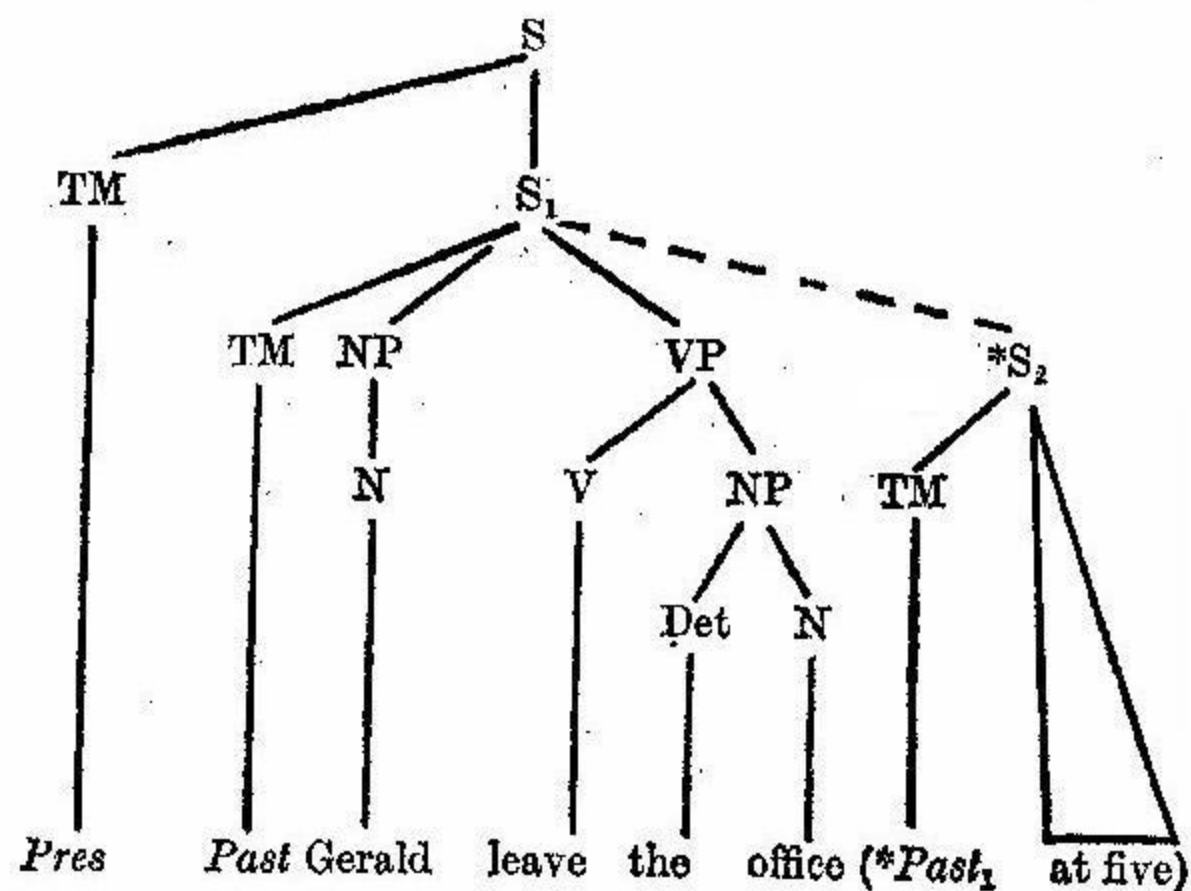
(it is now the case that Gerald left the office — *at five)
GERALD HAS LEFT THE OFFICE (*AT FIVE* DISALLOWED)
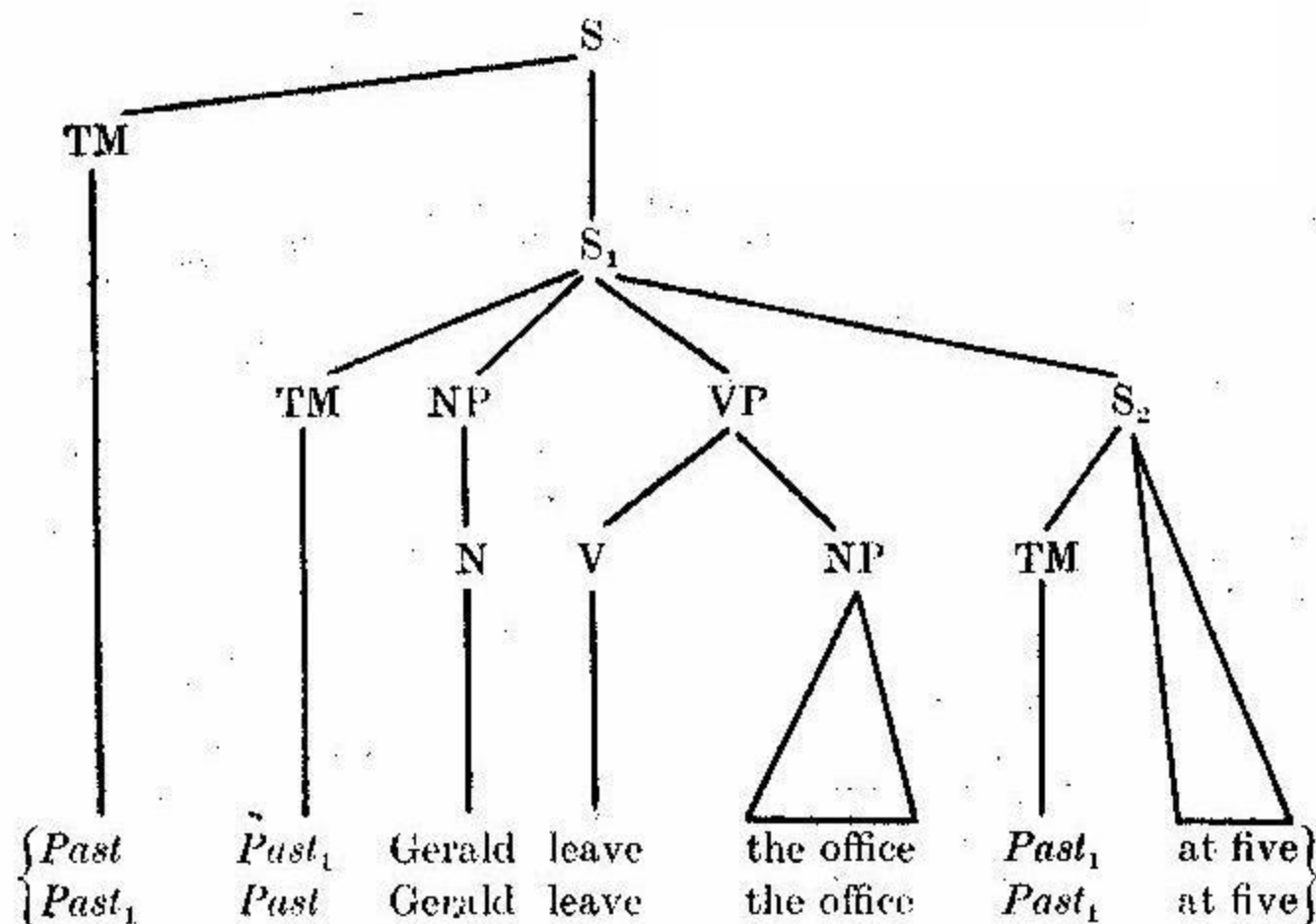
GERALD WILL LEAVE THE OFFICE AT FIVE

Top-left tree:

S — TM, S₁

S₁ — TM, NP, VP, S₂

NP — N, VP — V, NP, S₂ — TM

Fut	*Past₁*	Gerald	leave	the office	*Past₁*	at five
Fut	*Past*	Gerald	leave	the office	*Past*	at five

GERALD WILL HAVE LEFT THE OFFICE (PRESENT AND FUTURE TIME READINGS)

Top-right tree:

S — TM, S₁

S₁ — TM, NP, VP, S₂

Past₁	*Pres₁*	Gerald leave	the office	*Pres₁*	at five

GERALD LEFT THE OFFICE AT FIVE

N. B. Numbering disregards category of TM, i.e. only signals simultaneity.

Bottom-left tree:

S — TM, S₁

S₁ — TM, S₂

S₂ — TM, NP, VP, S₃

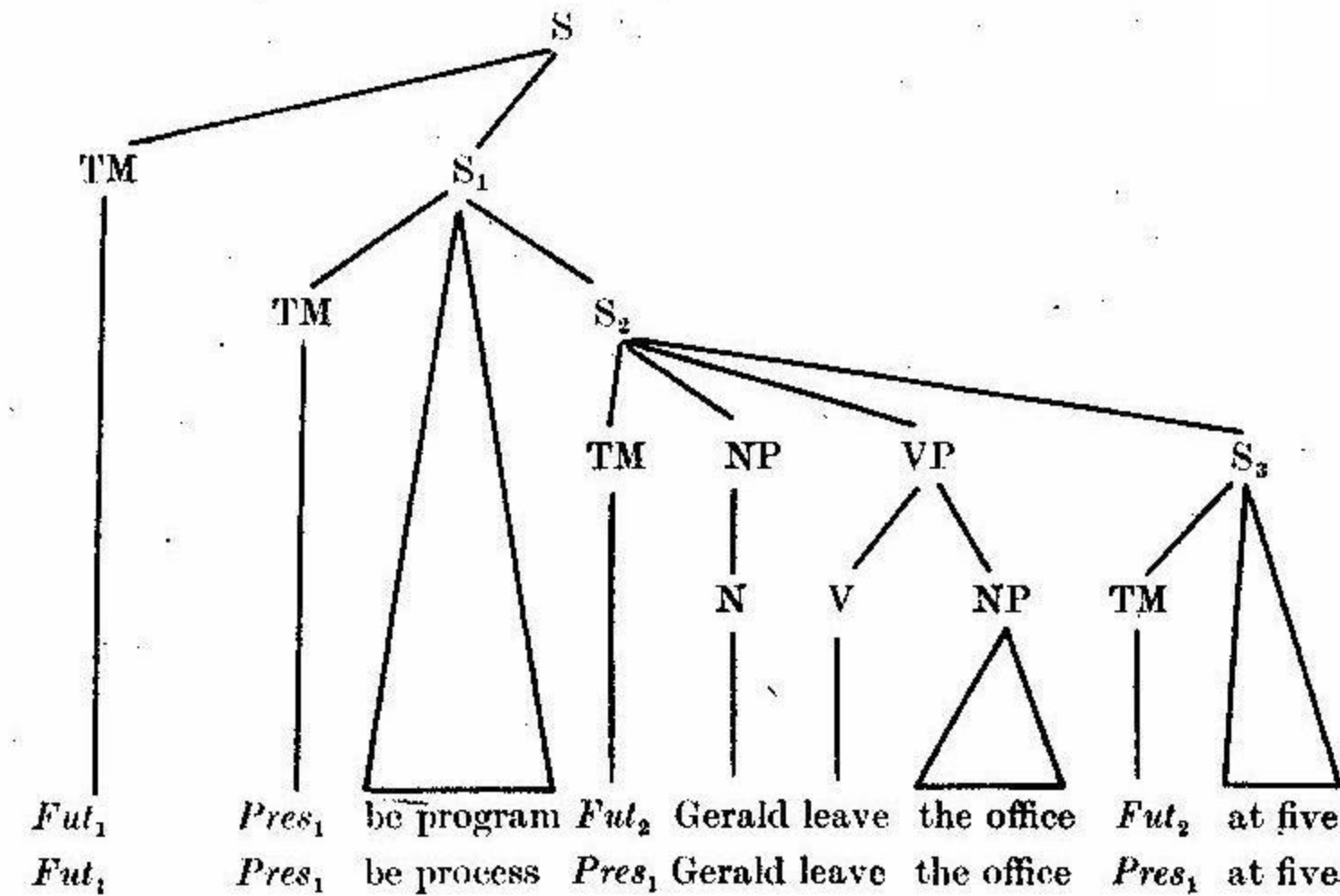|					
Fut	*Past*	*Past₁*	Gerald leave the office	*Past₁*	at five
Fut	*Past₁*	*Past*	Gerald leave the office	*Past*	at five
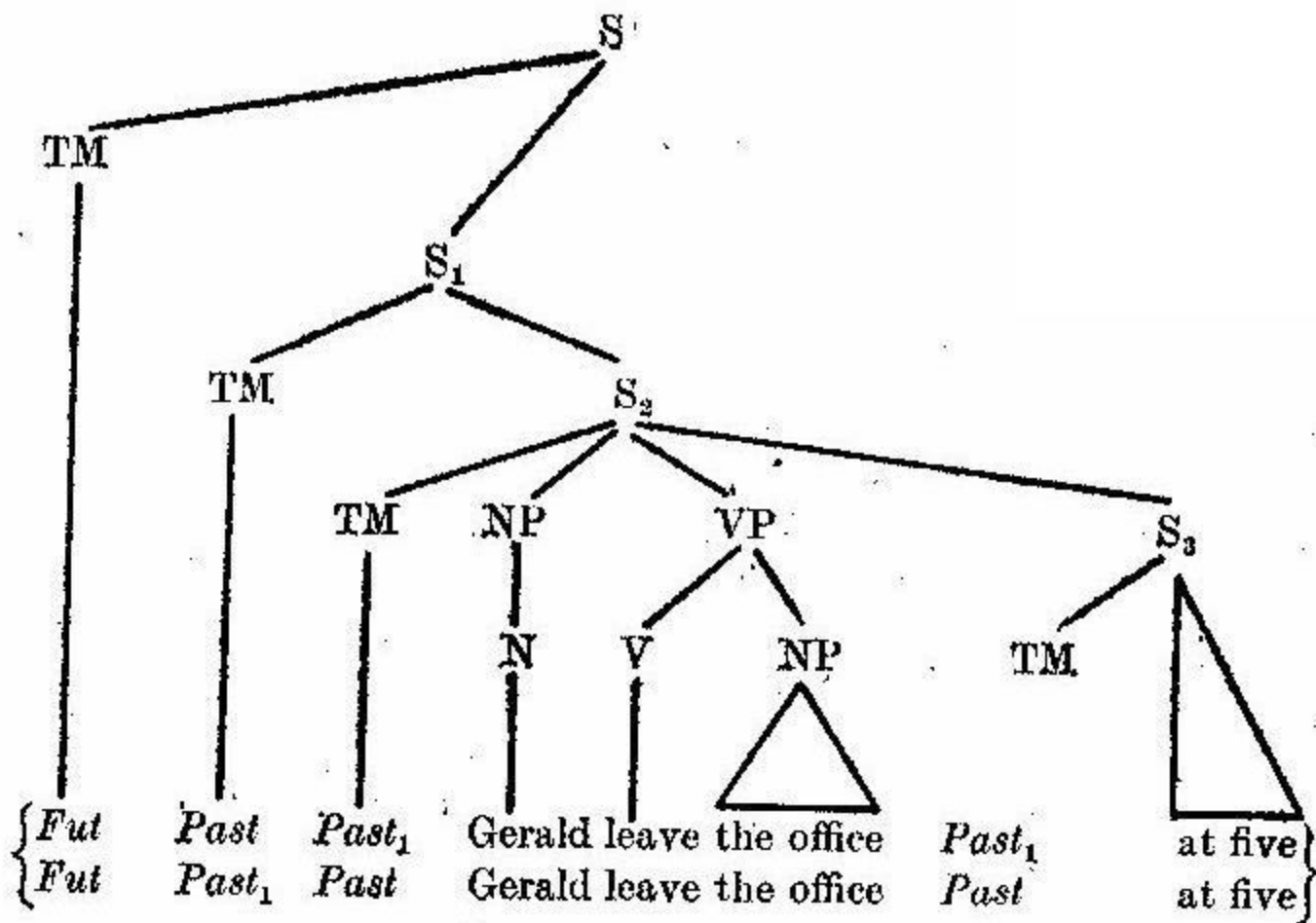
GERALD WILL HAVE LEFT THE OFFICE AT FIVE (PAST TIME READINGS)

N. B. Convention: two *Pasts* immediately following *Fut* locate state/event in speaker's past.
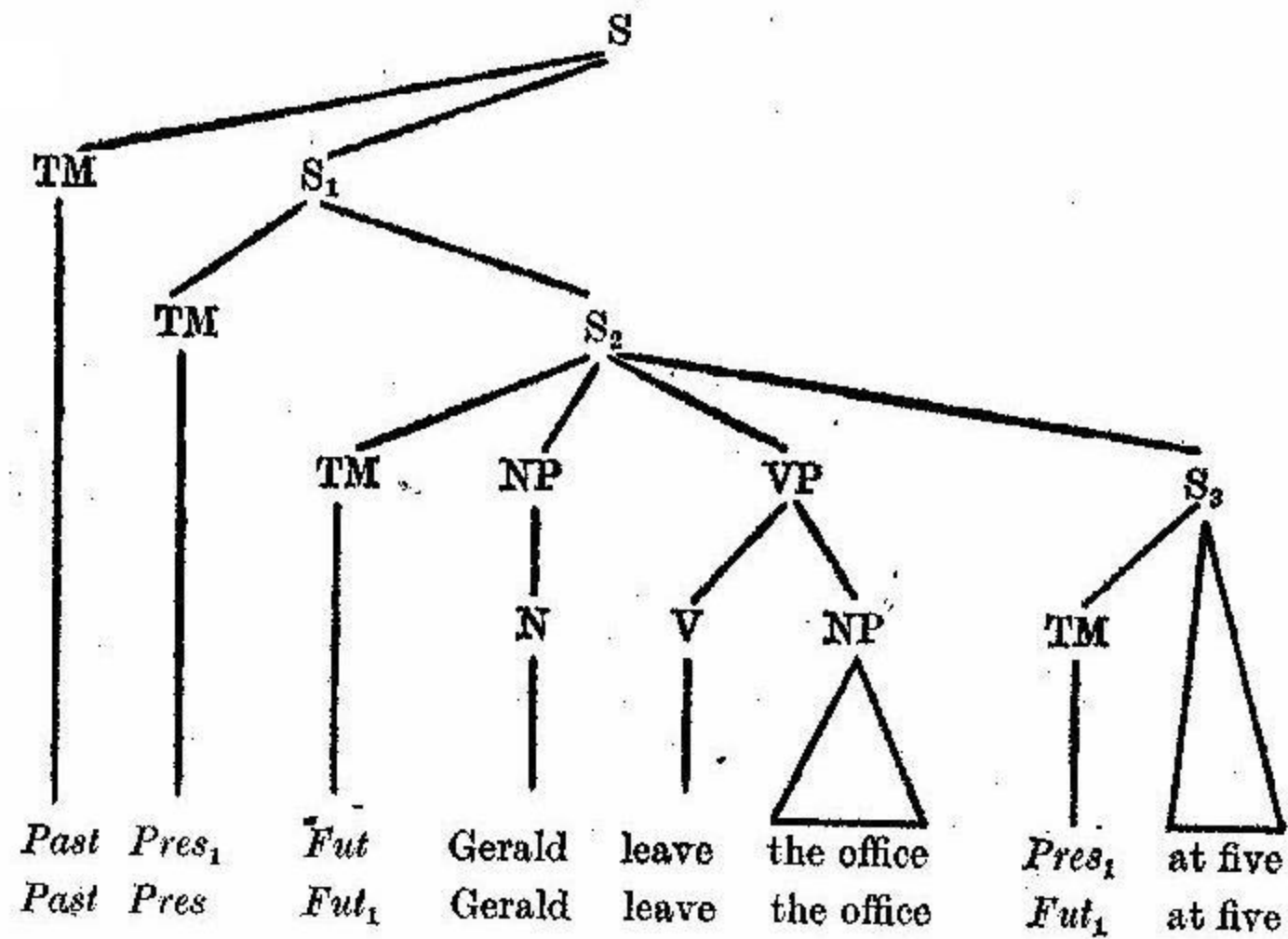
Bottom-right tree:

S — TM, S₁

S₁ — TM, S₂

S₂ — TM, NP, VP, S₃

Fut₁	*Pres₁*	be program	*Fut₂*	Gerald leave	the office	*Fut₂* at five
Fut₁	*Pres₁*	be process	*Pres₁*	Gerald leave	the office	*Pres₁* at five

GERALD WILL BE LEAVING (TWO READINGS)

```
                              S
                        /         \
                     /              \
            TM                      S₁
            |                     /    \
            |                  /         \
            |              TM              S₂
            |              |           /  /  |  \
            |              |         /   |   |     \
            |              |      TM    NP  VP        S₃
            |              |      |     |   / \      /  \
            |              |      |     N  V   NP  TM    \
            |              |      |     |  |   /\   |     \
            |              |      |     |  |  /  \  |      \

          Past   Pres₁   Fut   Gerald leave the office Pres₁  at five
          Past   Pres    Fut₁  Gerald leave the office Fut₁   at five
```

GERALD WAS GOING TO LEAVE THE OFFICE AT FIVE (TWO
READINGS)

N. B. The omission of "program" automatically excludes sentences like:
Gerald was leaving at five.

REFERENCES

Anderson, J. 1973. *An essay concerning aspect*. The Hague: Mouton.

Jacobs, R. and Rosenbaum, P. 1968. *A transformational grammar of English*. Waltham,
     Mass.: Blaisdell.

Jacobs, R. and Rosenbaum. P. (eds). 1970. *Readings in English transformational grammar*.
     Waltham, Mass.: Ginn and Co.

Lakoff, G. 1970. "Pronominalization, negation and the analysis of adverbs". In Jacobs,
     R. and Rosenbaum, P. (eds). 1970. 145—65.

Leech, G. 1971. *Meaning and the English verb*. London: Longman.

McCawley, J. 1970. "Where do Noun Phrases come from?". In Jacobs, R. and Rosen-
     baum, P. (eds). 1970. 106—83.

Pankhurst, J. 1980. "Closer to a theory of tense for contrastive analysis". *PSiCL 12*.
     112—36.

Seuren, P. 1969. *Operators and nucleus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sharwood Smith, M. 1977. *Aspects of future reference in a pedagogical grammar of English*.
     Frankfurt-am-Main: Lang.

GERALD WAS GOING TO LEAVE THE OFFICE AT FIVE (TWO READINGS)

N. B. The omission of "program" automatically excludes sentences like: *Gerald was leaving at five.*

REFERENCES

Anderson, J. 1973. *An essay concerning aspect.* The Hague: Mouton.

Jacobs, R. and Rosenbaum, P. 1968. *A transformational grammar of English.* Waltham, Mass.: Blaisdell.

Jacobs, R. and Rosenbaum, P. (eds). 1970. *Readings in English transformational grammar.* Waltham, Mass.: Ginn and Co.

Lakoff, G. 1970. "Pronominalization, negation and the analysis of adverbs". In Jacobs, R. and Rosenbaum, P. (eds), 1970, 145—65.

Leech, G. 1971. *Meaning and the English verb.* London: Longman.

McCawley, J. 1970. "Where do Noun Phrases come from?". In Jacobs, R. and Rosenbaum, P. (eds), 1970, 166—83.

Pankhurst, J. 1980. "Closer to a theory of tense for contrastive analysis". PSiCL 12. 112—36.

Seuren, P. 1969. *Operators and nucleus,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sharwood Smith, M. 1977. *Aspects of future reference in a pedagogical grammar of English.* Frankfurt-am-Main: Lang.

To continue, according to Austin (1962), performative utterances are not analyzable from the point of their *truth value*. The analysis I am placing beneath seems to confirm this supposition at full length:

(3) a. I *declare* [that you are absent-minded] →
       You are absent-minded and I *declare* it.

   b. I *regret* [that you are absent-minded] →
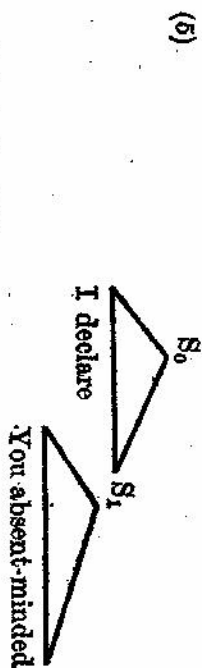   You are absent-minded and I *regret* it.

$$[- \text{Assertion}]$$
$$[+ \text{Assertion}]$$

The point is that in these two utterances, the presupposition 'you are absent-minded' may be asserted only in the one with the non-performative verb — *regret* (3b). It cannot be asserted in the utterance (3a) because *declarations* cannot be *assertions* by nature. Now, if we assume that all modal elements (ME) in performative utterances share the same property of their inability of being asserted, we can generalize that our judgment on the truth value in the performatives — in general — can be referred exclusively to SR, to its descriptive/informative truth value.

The above situation determines a semantic status of the modal part of performative utterances. Strictly, the speaker is left with his optional CHOICE of *potential, intentional*, and *non-asserted* variables, modal in their essence, and functioning as purely semantic concepts. According to Austin (1962), these variables are used by the speaker with a certain intention to express some definite *function*, or *force*, named *illocutionary force*. In the following utterances we may observe how it is possible for the speaker to reveal *various kinds* of IF in the same SR:

(4) I {declare} {guess} {apologize} that you are absent-minded.
                                      for your being absent-minded.

To follow, all these variables of IF are limited in number and their complete inventory is incoded in the minds of both — the sender of the message and its receiver. In abstraction, they constitute the concept of performative SEMANTIC FORM (Jackendoff (1972; Jaranowski (in press)). The SF in view is a potential and optional 'slot' in a conversational procedure since it is up to the speaker's choice whether to fill this slot or to delimit his utterance to its purely descriptive load (SR). Once the speaker has determined to take advantage of ME standing at his disposal, he has determined to 'neutralize' the truth value of SR because the ME is not an assertive element by nature; whenever it appears in a given performative utterance as a dominating ele-

ment, the truth value of its dominated SR gets **decomposed**:

(5).

```
          S₀
         /  \
  I declare  S₁
              \
          You absent-minded
```

— as it is in the dialog:

(6) A. I declare sth.
    B. What do you declare?
    A. That you are absent-minded.
    B. But it's only your declaration. In fact, it's not true.

As it is above, the ME neutralizes the truth-value of SR in a 'linear, horizontal' dimension. However, both the truth-value analysis and the principle of linear evaluation are by no means the only and the most vital data necessary to secure a *full* linguistic insight into the corpus under discussion; much more important is the analysis based on the concept of the above mentioned SE-MANTIC FORM(SF), and on the principle of ANAPHORICITY.

According to the above concept and principle, the application of ME in a given utterance means that the speaker has triggered a chain-reaction of step-by-step *choices*. The sequence of these choices is *anaphoric* in relation to the following, dominated choice in a 'downward' spatial orientation.

In this sense, the basic, initiary *anaphoric choice* will be the choice of SF, which means that the speaker has decided to use ME in his utterance. The SF directly dominates the marker of INTENTION since all the following choices will be intentional on the part of the speaker in the sense of showing his intention to the content of SR, to the listener, or to himself, e.g.:

(7) a. I appoint you (you are) president of our club.
    b. I affirm that you are president of our club.

The next successive slot to be filled by the speaker will be his *choice* on one of the modal variables (e.g. Mood A) indicating whether he intends to *impose* on the listener to do sth.{Imp}, to *ask* him about sth{Q}, or to *make a statement* about sth (SR). Once he has decided on a given variable of Mood A, he must make his successive choice of Mood B, namely, whether he wants (Vendler 1972):

a. — to give a verdict : **Verdictives** -e.g. accuse, charge,
b. — to make a decision in favour or against a certain course of action : **Exercitives** -e.g. command, beg,

To continue, according to Austin (1962), performative utterances are not analyzable from the point of their *truth value*. The analysis I am placing beneath seems to confirm this supposition at full length:

(3) a. I *declare* [that you are absent-minded] →
    You are absent-minded and I *declare* it.

b. I *regret* [that you are absent-minded] →
   You are absent-minded and I *regret* it.

$$[- \text{Assertion}]$$
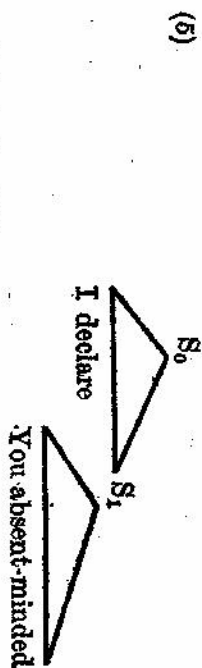$$[+ \text{Assertion}]$$

The point is that in these two utterances, the presupposition 'you are absent-minded' may be asserted only in the one with the non-performative verb — *regret* (3b). It cannot be asserted in the utterance (3a) because *declarations* cannot be *assertions* by nature. Now, if we assume that all modal elements (ME) in performative utterances share the same property of their inability of being asserted, we can generalize that our judgment on the truth value in the performatives — in general — can be referred exclusively to SR, to its descriptive/informative truth value.

The above situation determines a semantic status of the modal part of performative utterances. Strictly, the speaker is left with his optional CHOICE of *potential, intentional,* and *non-asserted* variables, modal in their essence, and functioning as purely semantic concepts. According to Austin (1962), these variables are used by the speaker with a certain intention to express some definite *function,* or *force,* named *illocutionary force.* In the following utterances we may observe how it is possible for the speaker to reveal *various kinds* of IF in the same SR:

(4) I $\begin{Bmatrix} (\text{declare}) \\ (\text{guess}) \end{Bmatrix}$ that you are absent-minded.
    (apologize) for your being absent-minded.

To follow, all these variables of IF are limited in number and their complete inventory is incoded in the minds of both — the sender of the message and its receiver. In abstraction, they constitute the concept of performative SEMANTIC FORM (Jackendoff (1972; Jaranowski (in press)). The SF in view is a potential and optional 'slot' in a conversational procedure since it is up to the speaker's choice whether to fill this slot or to delimit his utterance to its purely descriptive load (SR). Once the speaker has determined to take advantage of ME standing at his disposal, he has determined to 'neutralize' the truth value of SR because the ME is not an assertive element by nature; whenever it appears in a given performative utterance as a dominating ele-

ment, the truth value of its dominated SR gets decomposed:

(5)

S_0 I declare S_1 You absent-minded

— as it is in the dialog:

(6) A. I declare sth.
    B. What do you declare?
    A. That you are absent-minded.
    B. But it's only your declaration. In fact, it's not true.

As it is above, the ME neutralizes the truth-value of SR in a *linear, horizontal* dimension. However, both the truth-value analysis and the principle of linear evaluation are by no means the only and the most vital data necessary to secure a *full* linguistic insight into the corpus under discussion; much more important is the analysis based on the concept of the above mentioned SEMANTIC FORM(SF), and on the principle of ANAPHORICITY.

According to the above concept and principle, the application of ME in a given utterance means that the speaker has triggered a chain-reaction of step-by-step *choices.* The sequence of these choices is *anaphoric* in relation to the following, dominated' choice in a 'downward' spatial orientation.

In this sense, the basic, initiary *anaphoric choice* will be the choice of SF, which means that the speaker has decided to use ME in his utterance. The SR directly dominates the marker of INTENTION since all the following choices will be intentional on the part of the speaker in the sense of showing his intention to the content of SR, to the listener, or to himself, e.g.:

(7) a. I appoint you (you are) president of our club.
    b. I affirm that you are president of our club.

The next successive slot to be filled by the speaker will be his *choice* on one of the modal variables (e.g. Mood A) indicating whether he intends to *impose* on the listener to do sth{Imp}, to *ask* him about sth{Q}, or to *make a statement* about sth (SR). Once he has decided on a given variable of Mood A, he must make his successive choice of Mood B, namely, whether he wants (Vendler 1972):

a. — to give a verdict: **Verdictives** -e.g. accuse, charge,
b. — to make a decision in favour or against a certain course of action: **Exercitives** -e.g. command, beg,

c. —to make a decision on making something the case: Operatives -e.g. appoint, charge sb. with,

d. —to commit the speaker to a certain course of action: Commissives -e.g. accept, agree,
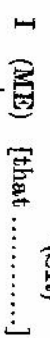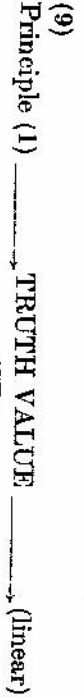
e. —to react to other people's behaviour to express his own attitudes to sb. else's past or immediate conduct: Behabitives -e.g. congratulate, curse,

f. —to expose acts involving the expounding of views, the conducting arguments, and the classification of usages and references: Expositives -e.g. admit.

The choice of one of the above sub-types of Mood B, triggers the next choice of one variable belonging to the inventory of each of the sub-types, e.g.:

(8) Verdictives
$$\begin{bmatrix} \text{accuse} \\ \text{analyse} \\ \text{calculate} \\ : \\ n \end{bmatrix}$$
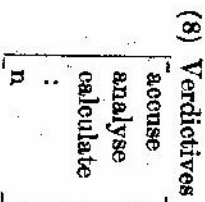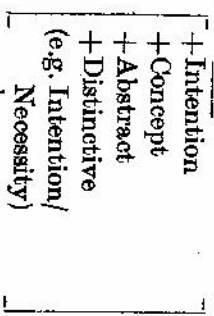
The choice of one of the variables ends the process of CHAIN-REACTIONS in the speaker's mind. As a result, the sequence consisting of ME and SR is *uttered*. The utterance triggers the listener's reaction.
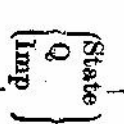
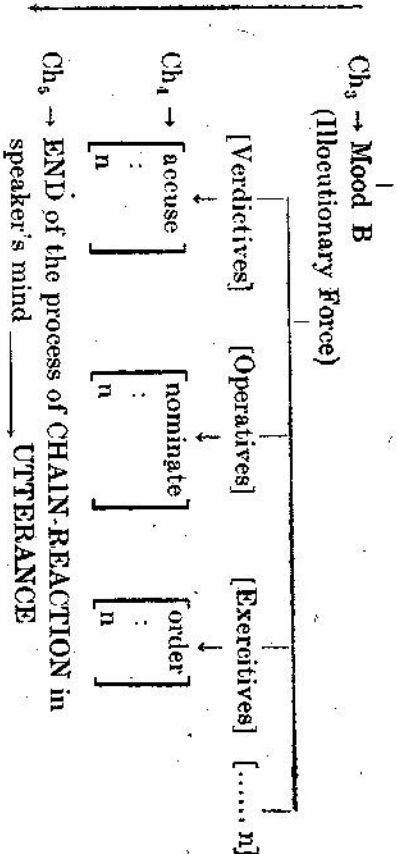The whole CHAIN-REACTION of CHOICES can be diagrammed as follows:

(9)

Principle (1) ————→ TRUTH VALUE ————→ (linear)

I (ME) [that ....]   (SR)

Principle (2) Ch_1 → $\boxed{SF}$ $\begin{bmatrix} +\text{Intention} \\ +\text{Concept} \\ +\text{Abstract} \\ +\text{Distinctive} \\ \text{(e.g. Intention/} \\ \text{Necessity)} \end{bmatrix}$

Ch_2 → Mood A $\begin{Bmatrix} \text{State} \\ Q \\ \text{Imp} \end{Bmatrix}$ (e.g. Intention)

Ch_3 → Mood B (Illocutionary Force)

[Verdictives] [Operatives] [Exercitives] [.......n]

Ch_4 → $\begin{bmatrix} \text{accuse} \\ : \\ n \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{nominate} \\ : \\ n \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} \text{order} \\ : \\ n \end{bmatrix}$

Ch_5 → END of the process of CHAIN-REACTION in speaker's mind ————→ UTTERANCE

(ME)   (SR)
LISTENER'S REACTION
(RESPONSE)

Now, after all these theoretical considerations have been presented, let me expose some observations referring to particular 'levels' of the above diagram.

First, let me stress that a distinctive value of SF cannot be overestimated. I have met with the arguments that the performatives are not or should not be distinguished as a separate grammatical corpus because they function in the same way as many other structures in the sense that their ME may be optionally omitted, e.g.:

(10) a. I *declare* that you are absent-minded.
b. *It is likely* that you are absent-minded.
c. I *regret* that you are absent-minded.

It is obvious that in (10c), the ME does not neutralize the truth value of SR since the presupposition 'you are absent-minded' is asserted by 'regret'. However, both (10a) and (10b) are identical as to the fact that their SR has been neutralized by their ME as to their truth value. What *only* may distinguish these two utterances then, appears on *the deepest level of semantic reality* — which is the value of SF; thus, in (10a), the SF reflects the concept of *intention* on the part of the speaker when, in (10b), it is the concept of *probability*.

The second observation referring to the performatives is that, as Bolinger says — 'natural language has little or no use for pure performatives to introduce something said. It is generally deemed unnecessary when one is saying something, to say that one is saying it' (1977:513—14).

True as this opinion seems to be, let me observe, however, that the above Bolinger's statement should not be generalized too far. In fact, whenever used by the speaker, a chosen performative ME is *instrumental* in its inten-

tional sense — it has some function to take in a given utterance; the point is that the degree of *reliability* of this function and the *necessity* of its usage depend on manifold criteria. For obvious reasons, let us discuss only the most obvious of them.

We already know that SR alone has got all sufficient informational data to be directed to the listener; as a consequence, it may form a message in itself, without any, or with some ME optionally added, as e.g. in:

```
(11) I  declare  │ that │ the earth is round (a)
        find     │      │ (SR)
        hold     │      │ you are an old idiot (b)
        admit    │      │ (SR)
        stress   │      │ your leg has been broken (c)
        postulate│      │ (SR)
        :
        n
```

One should observe, however, that the placement of *identical performatives* (ME) in front of each of the above SR's, chages an instrumental function of these identical performatives according to — to which of the above SR's they have been attached. In such a case, the only logical conclusion is that the function of a given performative verb depends, to much extent, on the informative load of a given SR.

First, let us assume that the speaker has placed one of the performatives listed in (11) in front of the SR presented in (11a) — just to formalize or unnecessarily emphasize this otherwise obvious SR (the earth is round). He might have done so either to enforce his weak authoritative power, or to stress it — just to show that the fact that the earth is round is not complete without his personal declaration on it. To him, his personal evaluation of the fact is more important than the very fact (the domination of his ME over SR), So now the generalization is possible that, whenever referred to any such well-known or even, in a way, trivial SR as the one that the earth is round, the speaker's intention will meet a contradictory reaction on the part of the listener, such as e.g.:

```
(12) I know [that the earth is round] whether you │ declare
                                                  │ find
                                                  │ hold
                                                  │ admit
                                                  │ stress
                                                  │ :
                                                  │ n
```

it, or not; all your declarations are just rubbish, and you yourself are an old block.

As a result, one may conclude that in this contextual situation the effect of the application of one of the listed in (12) performative verbs is inversely proportional to the intention of the speaker, and that these verbs act here as an instrument of an unconscious self-stupefaction on the part of the speaker in his listener's opinion. At the same time the speaker, though again uncon- sciously, has blocked any felicity conditions existing between him and his listener when referred to SR alone. In this case, the listener's objective judge- ment on the user of (11a) would be very pejorative and the only qualitative feature which might be attributed to him by the listener might be [+stupid].

The example (11b) exposes quite a different situation. One may observe in it, at a glance, that the speaker's intention is evident in the SR alone, and that it is, at the same time, intentional to be either abusive, or provocative, or both, towards the listener. In this case, the insertion of a chosen ME may only intensify this intention and, hypothetically, will increase the intensity of the listener's reaction though the latter is, in fact, hardly predictable. However, as few people like to be called old idiots, the reaction of the listener, though it may vary as to its intensity from listener to listener, might often meet the expectations of the speaker because, probably, the SR alone might be less provocative than when supported by ME, as e.g. in:

(13) I stress that you are an old idiot!

— or, even, by some extralinguistic devices, as in:

(14) You are an old idiot, I do stress!

However, regardless of the intensity of the listener's reaction (from a con- temptuous shrugging of his shoulders, through a counter-abusive response, up to the punch on the instigator's nose), all these reactions have one thing in common; contrary to the previous situation exemplified in (11a), the speaker blocks the felicity conditions between himself and the listener intentionally and deliberately. However, from the point of the fulfilment of his subjective intentions, any such non-agreeable reaction of the listener would, in fact, satisfy and not block the felicity conditions in view. This speciality refers to both — SR alone, and when it is accompanied by a chosen ME working as an instrument of the enforcement of the provocative value of SR.

Now, when we compare the above examples (11a, b) with (11c), we can prove that Bolinger's generalization (see p. 85 in this paper) might be too strong:

```
(15) I postulate that your leg has been broken. (11c)
     └→[+surgeon]
```

The example shows that though the SR in (15) (your leg has been broken) cannot be asserted by any performative verb as the performatives are unable to assert the truth value of SR's, the insertion of a well-chosen verb of this

group may be very reasonable and well-motivated. The motivation for the application of the performative in (15) has been enforced by the application of the 'professional' selectional restriction [+surgeon]. In this situation, the felicity condition between the speaker and the listener is fully preserved as the listener usually accepts any professional postulates of this kind without any argument.

As this short and unavoidably incomplete analysis indicates, one should be very careful in one's general rejection of the applicability of the performatives or the delimitation of their usage to formalizing and intensifying purposes. In fact, they form a very special linguistic instrument the effectiveness of which depends on linguistic and mental capacities of their users. On particular occasions, the use of some performatives is well-motivated by either *cultural* or *social* backgrounds, e.g.:

(16) a. I pronounce you man and wife (Bolinger (1977:513))
b. We declare that the treaty has been officially confirmed.

In fact, both Operatives and Exercitives can be applied with sound motivations as well:

(17) a. I appoint you leader of the party.
b. I charge you with a task of councellor.

The speciality of these sub-types is that the applicability of their ME is obligatory in the surface structure because their SR cannot appear alone in the form:

(18) a. *You leader of the party.
b. *You with the task of councellor.

In point of fact, the performatives belonging to these sub-types are not uniform in their functional value as their *performative* function coexists with a *causative* one:

(19) Owing to my {appointment / charging you with this task}, you will

become {leader of the party. / councellor.}

— and this fact determines their closer (than in the other sub-types) relationship with their SR's which, in turn, makes them, as obligatory elements, influence the surface form of these SR's. Compare:

(20) a. I declare that you are absent-minded. →
You are absent-minded and I declare it.
b. I appoint you leader of the party. →
*You are leader of the party and I appoint you.

To end the present discussion on the semantic motivations for a performative usage, there remain two more general observations. First, it seems that the contrast 'general/detailed' has some influence on it. Namely, if the SR is 'less generally' and 'more detaily' oriented, the justification for the application of a given ME increases, as in:

(21) a. I {find / postulate} that the earth is round.
b. I {find / postulate} that your leg has been broken.

(— it has already been explained under (12) why it is unwelcome on the part of the speaker to apply any performative ME's to SR's exposing *truisms* and *generalities*).

Second, it is easy to notice, that the variables belonging to the same sub-type (e.g. Verdictives) reflect different modal (emotive) intensity — from very weak to a very strong one:

(22) a. I *charge* you with a crime.   [Verdictives]
b. I {state / stress} that you have committed a crime.

So, the emotive load in 'charge' is much stronger than in 'find' and, analogically, in 'stress' than in 'state'. The crux of the matter is that the stronger the modal (emotional) intensity of a given variable the stronger the speaker's motivation to express his performative reference towards SR. To confirm this inference, one may notice that it is more probable on the part of the speaker to take advantage of the syntactic or extralinguistic devices to strengthen even more — not emotionally 'weak' variables, but the 'strong' ones:

(23) a. You are right, I dó state!
b. You are right, I dó stress!   [Expositives]

Now, to generalize, the motivation for an overt usage of the performatives depends on:

1. the *type* a given performative verb belongs to. The most applicable are Operatives and Exercitives,
2. the *contents* of SR. The *generality* of the informative load in SR is diversly proportional to the *necessity* of using ME *overtly*,
3. the modal (emotive) *intensity* of ME. This intensity is directly proportional to an *overt* usage of ME,
4. the *manipulatory*, *authoritative* and *mental* powers of the speaker. The weaker his authoritative power, the more powerful motivation on his part to apply an overt ME to well-known SR's.

5. *social* and *conventional* background involving formalization of linguistic usage.

The next point claiming a separate treatment is the motivation for a *syntactic* analysis of the performatives. Strictly, my intention is to show why the syntactic analysis of the performatives is unavoidable if our objective is a complete linguistic description. Actually, there are two main reasons:

a. — there are syntactic constraints placed on the sequence (ME)+(SR) during its transformation to the surface-structure representation so that this representation may appear in a variety of syntactic linear arrangements (Searle 1973):

(24) a.*I apologize that I have come here.
     I apologize for my coming here. →
   b.*I congratulate you that you have completed it.
     I congratulate on your having completed it. →

The examples indicate that the pattern [NP+Perf. V+that] does not work with some performative verbs for purely syntactic reasons.
   b. — according to Kempson (1975:40), 'the performative use of a verb is restricted to first person and simple present'. However, one may distinguish quite a number of utterances which are not performative *formally* but, in spite of that, function as such and are used in non-formal speech on plenty of occasions (e.g. Bolinger (1977:513):

(25) Let's agree that...
     The fact of the matter is that...
     No kidding that...
     Too hard to believe that...
     Might as well tell you that...
     Don't mind saying that...
     Give you my word that...

To my judgement, also the following utterances take the function of the performatives:

(26) To tell you the truth...
     To my judgement...
     It seems to me.
     I'm sure that...
     What I mean is that..., etc.

The variety of syntactic, surface-structure 'non-formal' equivalents stimulates the next problem of importance which is the need for a *contrastive* analysis of these equivalents. Though there is no want for any contrastive evaluation on their deep-structure (semantic) level because all of them share

the same SF in any language, a surface-structure comparison shows syntactic differences of various kinds. Here are some examples:

(27) a. The fact of the matter is...
        Faktem jest, że...
        Fakt (pozostaje) faktem, że...
     b. No kidding...
        Bez żartów...
        (Odłóżmy) żarty na bok...
     c. Too hard to believe that...
        (Zbyt) trudno (w to) uwierzyć że/ale...
     d. Might as well tell you that...
        (Z równym powodzeniem) mógłbym Ci (również) powiedzieć, że...
     e. Give you my word that...
        Daję (Ci) słowo, że...→
        Słowo (Ci daję), że...
     f. To tell you the truth...
        Jeśli mam Ci powiedzieć prawdę...
        Mówiąc prawdę...
        Prawdę powiedziawszy...→
        Powiedziawszy prawdę...
     g. To my judgement...
        Według mnie...
        Co do mnie...

As the examples indicate, the E→P contrasts appear on various levels of linguistic realization, such as *linear arrangement*, *deletion*, *lexical-replacement*, *case*, *category*, etc.

As I have come to a mutual conclusion with D. Preston (private conversation), even very complicated phenomena can be disambiguated by a consistently performed contrastive procedure. To prove that this opinion works also when referred to the performatives, let me reanalyse the confrontation of the phrase *to be afraid* with *to regret* which Bolinger (1977:511) uses to prove that the latter is sometimes elliptical for *regret to say*. The point is that whenever the said *to regret* appears as elliptical for *regret to say*, its function changes from performative into non-performative. The main test Bolinger applies to prove it is:

(28) a. *I'm afraid* I can't help you.
        I can't help you, *I'm afraid*. →

        [+Disjunct.]
        [−Assertive]
        [+Perform.]

   b. I *regret* that I can't help you. →
      *I can't help you, I *regret*. →

        [−Disjunct.]
        [+Assertive]
        [−Perform.]

I can't help you, I *regret to say.*

I think, however, that a *contrastive* analysis of this problem can reveal subtler and deeper distinctions; compare:

(29) a. *I'm afraid I can't help you.*
Obawiam się, że nie mogę Ci pomóc.
I can't help you, I'm afraid.
Nie mogę Ci pomóc, obawiam się.
[+Disjunct. −Assertive +Perform.]

b. *I regret that I can't help you.*
Żałuję że nie mogę Ci pomóc.
I can't help you and I regret it.
Nie mogę Ci pomóc i żałuję tego.
[−Disjunct. +Assertive −Perform.]

c. **I regret to say that I can't help you.*
Żałuję to powiedzieć ale nie mogę Ci pomóc. →
Przykro (mi) o tym mówić ale nie mogę Ci pomóc.
Niestety, Nie mogę Ci pomóc.
I can't help you, I regret to say.
Nie mogę Ci pomóc, {*przykro mi o tym mówić* / *niestety*}.
[+Disjunct. −Assertive +Perform.]

The examples in (29c) indicate that the semantic load of *regret* with *to say*, when, in its performative function, inclines, in English, to the semantic value of *to be sorry* (I am sorry: *przykro mi*), the latter being an equivalental performative phrase also when with *to say*, as in:

(30) {*I regret to say* / *I'm sorry to say* / *Przykro mi (o tym mówić)* / *Niestety,*} but I can't help you. / *ale nie mogę Ci pomóc.*

Now, it is needless to add that no *non-contrastive* analysis could help in coming to the above conclusions.

To sum up the present paper, let us deduce that:

a. — any attempt to analyse the performatives without taking into account all possible semanto-syntactic dependencies must result in a non-complete description, and thus fails to be reliable,

b. —'in spite of the fact that we often evaluate this section of grammar as possessing rather pejorative and redundant quality, and that it escapes any strictly scientific testing and formulation of rules (hence my infer-

ences and regularities instead of rules in the paper), we should not neglect it in our studies as it is an integrated part of our language, no matter whether we like it or not. After all, it depends mainly on the speaker's individual abilities whether he applies a given performative with a sound motivation,

c. — a contrastive analysis of the performatives is very desirable in a surface-structure realization as it may clarify many ambiguous problems in a very clear-cut way.

To add, judging from the fact that we live in our contemporary world of relativization of truth values, when we desperately need any self-confirmation, and when any strengthening of our statements is welcome, we may forsee a growing career for the performatives though, on the other hand, we may realize how inexact and facultative they are.

REFERENCES

Austin, J. L. 1962. *How to do things with words.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Bolinger, D. 1977. "Another glance at main clause phenomena". *Language* 53. 511—19.
Fowler, R. 1971. *An introduction to transformational grammar.* New York: Barnes and Noble.
Jackendoff, R. S. 1972. *Semantic interpretation of generative grammar.* Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press.
Jaranowski, Z. S. 1981. "Definiteness, presupposition, and anaphoricity in there-constructions and adjectival predicate constructions". *PSiCL* 14. 71—82.
Kempson, R. M. 1975. *Presupposition and the delimitation of semantics.* Cambridge: University Press.
McCawley, J. D. 1977. "Remarks on the lexicography of performative verbs". In Rogers, A., Wall, B. and Murphy, J. P. (eds). 1977. 13—25.
Murphy, J. P. (eds). 1977. 27—45.
Rogers, A., Wall, B. and Murphy, J. P. (eds). 1977. *Proceedings of the Texas Conference on performatives, presuppositions, and implicatures.* Arlington, Va.: CAL.
Searle, J. R. 1973. "A classification of illocutionary acts". In Rogers, A., Wall, B. and Murphy, J. P. (eds). 1977. 27—45.
Stenius, E. 1967. "Mood and language-game". *Synthese* 17. 254—74.
Vendler, Z. 1972. *Res cogitans.* Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press.