Discourse analysis is the study of language in use. It rests on the basic premise that linguistic items cannot be understood without reference to the context, both linguistic and extra-linguistic, in which they are used. It draws from knowledge and methodologies from a wide range of fields, such as anthropology, philosophy, sociology, social and cognitive psychology, and artificial intelligence. At the same time, the lines between certain linguistic subfields, in particular psycholinguistics, anthropological linguistics, and cognitive linguistics and discourse analysis overlap, and approaches to the study of discourse are informed by these subfields, and in many cases findings are independently corroborated. Accordingly, discourse analysis itself is a broad field comprised of a large number of subfields, including speech act theory, conversation analysis, pragmatics, and the ethnography of speaking. Because it draws so much from other subfields of both linguistics and anthropology, the boundaries of this field are fuzzy.\footnote{1} Discourse analysis rests on the fundamental assumption that language must be studied as it is used, in its context of production, and so the object of analysis is very rarely in the form of a sentence. Instead, larger texts, written or audio recordings, provide the data. In other words, the discourse analyst works with naturally occurring corpora, and with such corpora come a wide variety of features such as hesitations, non-standard forms, self-corrections, repetitions, incomplete clauses, words, and so—all linguistic material which would be relegated to performance by Chomsky (1965) and so stand outside the scope of analysis for a generative linguist. But for the discourse analyst, such “performance” data are indeed relevant and may in fact be the focus of research.

In this paper I will first present an overview of discourse analysis and its general goals. I then discuss some of the key theoretical frameworks in discourse analysis, their foundations and methodologies, and provide sample analyses\footnote{2}. It has been my experience that certain topics are more fruitfully analyzed in one or the other frameworks, and I attempt to identify topics for future research. My arguments are illustrated by Russian examples, because that is the language I work on. But I should emphasize from the outset that all of what I say is relevant to Slavic. First and foremost, discourse analysis is an active and dynamic discipline, and Slavic data are seriously underrepresented. At the same time, American Slavists (with a handful of notable exceptions) are curiously absent from the field of discourse analysis. Furthermore, I will argue that discourse analysis is one field of linguistic inquiry where the traditional distinction between a general and a Slavic linguist breaks down: this is a discipline which aims to analyze the total

\footnote{1} It is interesting, in this light, to compare the contents of several standard handbooks of discourse analysis. Brown and Yule (1986) focus heavily on pragmatics and information structure, while Schiffrin (1994) includes several chapters directly related to sociolinguistic methodologies (i.e. chapters on interactional sociolinguistics, ethnomethodology and variation analysis). Mey (1993) has three chapters on conversation analysis (a topic which Schiffrin also covers) and a chapter on “societal pragmatics.”

\footnote{2} All data, unless otherwise noted, are taken from my own field recordings in Moscow and St. Petersburg and transcribed by native speakers of Russian. This research has been funded by the John Sloane Dickey Center for International Understanding and the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX).
picture of natural communication, examining how all of language comes together in its linguistic
and extralinguistic context. In discourse analysis, no part of language and the communicative
situation is off limits: the analyst may potentially need to take into account phonetics,
morphosyntax, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and paralinguistic features in addition to real
world knowledge, as I will demonstrate below. For this reason, discourse analysts either work on
their native language, or on a language they know very well. And so discourse analysis and
Slavic training should be a very convivial match: the Slavist is traditionally trained in all levels
of analysis, and knows the language of research well.

1. Discourse Analysis: An Overview

The term discourse was first used by Zellig Harris who, interestingly enough, specifically ruled
out the kind of study which discourse analysis fundamentally aims to do. Instead, Harris argues
that linguistic research focuses on the elements within an utterance; discourse can be considered,
quite simply a sequence of utterance. He argues that the study of the interrelations between
utterances within a discourse; the scope of a discourse analysis required much more information
than the theoretical apparatus of that time could handle. While this held true for the 1950’s and
1960’s, roughly, the 1970’s already saw an emerging body of different approaches to the study of
language use in context. Key approaches include pragmatics, conversation analysis, textual
linguistics, relevance theory and, in Slavic, the transactional discourse model. This is by no
means an exhaustive list of different approaches to discourse analysis. Rather, it includes specific
trends in American and European linguistic theory which I find particularly useful in the analysis
of Slavic data. I would suggest that these areas all provide particularly fertile research ground for
American Slavists, areas that demand a thorough knowledge of linguistic theory and the
language of study. Research in discourse analysis cannot be undertaken with a very solid
proficiency in the language of study.

There are two large issues in Slavic discourse analysis. One the focus of this conference, is
the position of the American Slavist with respect to the general discourse analyst. I will argue
that discourse analysis is a branch of linguistics which requires a full knowledge of the language
under study, and by full knowledge I mean not only relative fluency, but also an understanding
of literary and social traditions. Discourse analysis is always situated in a context of some sorts;
the analyst must be in a position to understand that context. A Slavist quite naturally can fill that
role. The second issue is the position of discourse analysis with relation to the dichotomy
between functionalism and formalism. Here, while I can only again emphasize that discourse
analysis is functional in spirit, it must be informed by and rely on the advances in formal
linguistics. A good example is provided by the study of clitics. While a generative syntactician
might ask about the position of clitics on a tree, and a phonologist might ask how to incorporate
clitics into optimality theory, a discourse analyst will ask a very different question: why use
clitics? Or, more accurately from the Slavic viewpoint anyway, why use full forms when clitics
are available? So, for example, it can be said that in Serbo-Croatian clitic forms are in a specific
syntactic position (in CZ), and that their distribution differs from full, non-clitic forms in that the

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3 Harris (1951:11–12) states that “stretches longer than one utterance are not usually considered in current
descriptive linguistics. [...] the linguist usually consider the interrelations of elements only within one utterance at a
time. This yields a possible description of the material, since the interrelations of elements within each utterance (or
utterance type) are worked out, and any longer discourse is describable as a succession of utterances, i.e. a
succession of elements having the stated interrelations. This restriction means that nothing is generally said about the
interrelations among whole utterances within a discourse.”
latter do not undergo prosodic inversion (Holloway King 1996) but if we want to account for the functional difference between (1a) with a clitic and (1b) with a full form, this doesn’t buy much:

\[(1)\]

\[a. \text{ Svjedok te je okrivio.} \quad \text{‘The witness accused you’}\]

\[b. \text{ Svjedok je TEBE okrivio.} \quad \text{(Browne 1975: 124)}\]

The difference has to do with what Browne calls *emphasis*: emphasized forms must be accented, and clitics do not carry an accent. Thus at some level the use of the full terms can be explained prosodically, but the notion “emphasis” is clearly a discourse concept, and warrants a separate explanation.

Another example is provided by the Russian interrogative *li*, which must come after the first prosodic word. Franks (1999: 118) accounts for this by asserting that the focused constituents are in specifier position to the right of CŽ and again due to prosodic inversion, *li* is displaced to the right edge of the first prosodic word, producing (2a), and not (2b) or (2c):

\[(2)\]

\[a. \text{ Na ètom li zavode on rabotaet?} \quad \text{‘Does he work at this factory?’}\]

\[b. *\text{Na ètom zavode li on rabotaet?}\]

\[c. *\text{Na ètom zavode on li rabotaet?}\]

This is a convincing account, and useful in describing the distribution of *li*. It does not, however, answer the question the discourse analyst must ask, namely, why form interrogatives such as (2a) with *li* in the first place, given that the question without *li* (On rabotaet na Ètom zavode?) is grammatical and more frequent. The difference in the research questions belies a fundamental difference between functional and formal approaches to language analysis, a difference which I examine in greater depth in §5.

2. Discourse Analysis and Slavic Linguistics

American Slavists are well positioned to discourse analysis because of their training in the Slavic languages, and access to current theoretical approaches. Most (if not all) graduate programs in Slavic linguistics in the US are at universities with sizable programs in general linguistics. American Slavists should be using American theoretical approaches as fully as possible: that is the edge we have, and if you consider the position of American linguistic theory in the world today, it is a considerable advantage. I am not advocating dispensing with the traditions of Slavic linguistics, but rather building on them and integrating more general theory, or specifically, more general discourse theory. I see the possibility of redefining Slavic linguistics as a kind of language-family linguistics, this would be a part, or a subdivision, or general linguistics. In the most extreme terms a general linguist might look at analyzing a given linguistic structure in a range of unrelated languages which the analyst does not know, or does not know well (a methodology best exemplified by typology). The language-family linguist would approach the same construction from a different angle.

Discourse analysis is one area where the difference in training between a general linguist and a Slavist can be crucial: it differs from a large number of other linguistic subfields in the basic requirement that the analyst must know the language of analysis very well; while it is possible for one person to study the syntax or phonetics of a range of languages, aiming at typologies and universals, without knowing these languages fluently, this does not hold for discourse analysis. A
thorough knowledge of the language, of its cultural contexts, register and stylistic variations, is crucial. For this reason, contrastive discourse analysis is an open field at the moment; very little work has been done, and most of it centers around English compared to another language. To the extent that the aim of linguistics in general is the elucidation of typologies and universal grammar, contrastive discourse analysis between closely related languages (such as two languages on the same branch in Slavic, or from two different branches) would do much to inform what little knowledge we have of discourse universals.

And yet they don’t seem to be doing it. A survey of key journals devoted to discourse analysis and pragmatics shows little work on Slavic languages, both by Slavists and non-Slavists, and American Slavists are minimally represented. Pragmatics 1990–1999 has only a handful of articles on Slavic languages: one on Bulgarian (Choi 1997); one on Polish (Galasinski (1997); two on Russian (Grenoble 1995; Rathmayr 1999). The Journal of Pragmatics shows roughly the same picture, with five articles on Russian (Grenoble and Riley 1996; Israeli 1997; Kresin 1998; Yokoyama 1994; Zaitseva 1994). At the same time, I should point out that Voprosy jazykoznanija regularly has articles that fall under the rubric of discourse analysis and much work is being done in a variety of frameworks by Czech linguists, in a continuation of the Prague functionalist tradition. In sum, this field seems to be dominated by general linguists, and yet it is here that American Slavists can make a real contribution.

3. Approaches to Discourse Analysis

There are a large number of different theoretical approaches to discourse analysis, ranging from what might be called loose, functionally-based approaches to very formal theories, with Discourse Representation Theory4 providing the best example of the latter. Most approaches lie in between the strictly formal and the strictly functional theories, with representative examples being Relevance Theory and the Transactional Discourse Model (Yokoyama 1986).

3.1 Pragmatics, Grice, and Speech Act Theory

Pragmatics as a general term can be understood in at least as many ways as discourse analysis; the two terms are equated by some linguists. In its narrower sense, it refers to linguistic theory that has been directly influenced by the philosophy of language. Here I will define it extensionally, understanding pragmatics to include reference and deixis, implicature, presupposition, Gricean pragmatics and speech act theory. In what follows I will focus on the latter two, and return to questions of reference in the discussion of information structure (§4.2)5. Davis (1991) is a collection of seminal papers in pragmatics; standard textbooks of pragmatics are Leech (1983), Levinson (1983) and Mey (1993).

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4 Discourse Representation Theory (DRT) is a formal approach to the study of discourse meaning, aiming at a formal semantic representation of the discourse. The basis of the theory, model-theoretic semantics, was initially applied to sentence-level structures only; DRT expands it to a system which is used to “process” discourses into what are called discourse representation structures. The scope and goals of DRT differ rather radically from the other methodologies I outline here: it is not concerned with interactive discourse or with non-linguistic context, which are central to these other theoretical frameworks. DRT is presented in Kamp and Reyle (1993), a hefty, two-volume introduction; shorter representative works can be found in the papers in Blaser (1988); see also Kamp and Reyle (1996) or Kamp (1981), to name just a few.

5 Thanks in large part to Jakobson’s seminal paper on shifters (1957/1971), deixis is one are in which American Slavists have worked extensively and have been very influential. See, for example, Chvany (1988); Grenoble (1999, 1998, 1996, 1995, 1994); Yokoyama (1991), as well as the papers in Andrews and Tobin (1996), to name just a few.
3.1.1 Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory finds its foundations in the philosophy of language. The philosopher John Austin was the first to point that language can “perform” certain functions, bringing together a series of lectures on the topic in his collection from the 1955 William James Lectures at Harvard, published in 1962. Austin recognized that certain sentences differ from other declarative, or constative, sentences, in that they do not assert truth values or have informative communicative value; they do not say things but rather do things. This class of performatives includes such sentences as the following:

(3) a. Ja obeščaju
   ‘I promise’
 b. Ja daju slovo
   ‘I give my word’
 c. Ja izvinjajus’
   ‘I apologize’

In uttering such sentences, one performs a certain act. These performatives\(^6\) cannot be either true or false—truth conditions are irrelevant— but they can misfire. For example, in uttering I pronounce you man and wife, a couple will not be married if the speaker is not licensed to marry people, if the couple hasn’t filled out the necessary paperwork, etc., in other words, if certain felicity conditions have not been met.

Each utterance has three underlying component acts: a locutionary, an illocutionary and a perlocutionary act. The locutionary act involves the actual speech production of sounds, i.e., the act of uttering; the illocutionary act is the force or the act that is performed in the locution; and the perlocutionary act is the “consequential effects” (Austin 1962:102) of the locution on the addressee. For example, the lines between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts are not always clear, and have been the subject of much discussion.

Austin’s theory is extensively developed by Searle (1969) to extend Speech act theory to linguistic analysis. Searle’s contributions are extensive and cannot be treated with justice here; for a more complete discussion see Levinson (1983, chapter 5) or Mey (1993, chapters 6–8). He established a taxonomy of speech acts and, crucially, defines conditions for determining speech act types and making explicit the rules governing their use. For example, he provides a detailed analysis on “how to promise” (Searle 1965). Searle (1976) argues that illocutionary force can be divided into five subcategories or, in other words, that there are just five types of utterances with which five types of basic actions can be performed: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Representatives commit the speaker to a certain state of affairs; these include assertions of facts. Directives “direct” the addressee toward performing some act.; examples include orders, requests and questions. Commissives are the speech act whereby speakers commit themselves to something; this category includes promises and threats, for example. Expressives express a psychological state; prime examples are apologizing, welcoming and so on. Declarations bring about changes in states of affairs; christening and declaring war are two clear examples.

\(^6\) A standard test for performatives in English is the insertion of hereby, which does not combine with non-performatives. Note that in uttering I hereby promise you a $10 reward, the speaker has made a promise, while in *I hereby write my paper, the speaker has not written a paper.
A certain group of speech acts are of special interest: indirect speech acts, where one appears to be saying one thing but says another. The classic example is *Can you pass the butter?* which is not an information-seeking question (an answer of *yes* or *no* is interpreted as a wisecrack), but rather has imperative force (*Pass me the butter*). The category of indirect speech acts rests on the notion that sentences have a literal force and an additional inferred force. One goal of Speech act theory, then, is determining which acts are indirect speech acts, and further determining how their inferred force is to be interpreted. How to interlocutors identify and then interpret indirect speech acts? The answer is by no means trivial. One possible explanation is that such indirect speech acts as *Can you pass the butter?* are formulaic. Note that the tense/mood of the verb can be altered (*Could you...*, please can be added, and yet we are essentially left with the same request, or the same illocutionary force. Thus one could argue that *Can you please VP?* is an idiom for the request. Another possible explanation, and one which philosophers such as Searle would advocate, is that the meaning can be derived by a series of rules, and Searle contributed much to the discussion of just how this can be done; Gricean pragmatics (§3.1.2) can be invoked to account for the interpretation as well. (See Searle 1975; Levinson 1983, chapter 5, presents a thorough review and discussion of the literature. Bulygina and Šmelev 1992 give an overview in Russian, with a discussion of the distribution of *razve* and *neuželi* in terms of Speech act theory.)

Consider one very common example, the use of what appears to be a question in public transportation: *Vy ne vyxodite?* (*‘Are you getting off?’*) On the surface, this would appear to be an information-seeking question and, in fact, if the answer is affirmative, either a verbal response (*da* ‘yes’) or kinesic one (as in a head nod) is appropriate. But when the answer negative, the perlocutionary force is manifested by the addressee stepping to the side, for the illocutionary force is something along the lines of ‘I am getting of at the next stop and need to make my way to the door; are you getting off too or will you step aside to make way for me?’ This is an interesting example because, judging by the response, it appears to either as an interrogative, or as a request, depending upon whether the response is affirmative or negative. Furthermore, like *Can you pass the butter?*, *Vy ne vyxodite?* is a formulaic linguistic exchange, rooted in modern Russian culture. This suggests that the interpretation of speech acts is, at least to a certain extent, dependent upon the culture of their usage. In fact, speech acts vary from language to language, making it difficult to determine a taxonomy of all speech acts. Nonetheless, this variation is in and of itself interesting. A pan-Slavic taxonomy of speech would be an admirable, albeit ambitious, goal, which would do much to inform our understanding of how speech acts vary among language/culture groups.

A major problem in Speech act theory for discourse analysis is that it appears to be impossible to determine an exhaustive list of the mapping relations between utterances and actions. We can question the extent to which Speech act theory can provide an adequate theoretical framework, a point which Levinson (1983) amply discusses. Searle himself has suggested that discourse can be better understood in terms of speaker goals than in terms of rules and responses. I can only agree with this view. But while Speech act theory may not provide an adequate framework of discourse analysis as a whole, speech acts are an important part of language use and fulfill important functions in the discourse. Crucially, while they may not account for the discourse in its entirety, they can account for how some parts of the discourse develop. An example is provided by adjacency pairs, such as Question—Answer sequences (see §3.2). Now, adjacency pairs raise questions for speech act theory inasmuch as, while there is an illocutionary act of asking, there does not appear to be any act of answering (Levinson 1983:293). Consider the following example where the third line, which is morphosyntactically a question, comes as a response to the customer’s request:
(4) (adapted from Yokoyama 1990:1)
Sales clerk  Čto vam?  ‘What do you need?’
Customer  “Ogonek” i…  ‘An “Ogonek” and …’
Sales clerk  gde vy tut vidite “Ogonek”?  ‘Where do you see an “Ogonek” here?’

Such responses are commonplace in colloquial Russian and may even be the norm. Here the clerk’s response is perceived not as an interrogative, but rather as a declarative statement (‘there is no milk’). As Yokoyama points out, the response is received as rude, in large part because a declarative response would in fact be possible. As this example illustrates, the illocutionary force of speech acts is achieved over extended stretches of discourse, not just over adjacency pairs (Clyne et al. 1991)

It is also clear that speech acts differ between cultures and languages; Searle himself (1975) points out that while Can you hand me that book? functions as a request in English, the Czech translation (Mužete mi podat tu knížku?) is infelicitous. Much of the literature on intercultural communication examines speech acts (see Clyne 1994 for an introduction and overview; see also Platt 1989). An example is provided by Mey (1993: 153) points out that in the same situation, an American and a Frenchman could respond somewhat differently:

(5)  a. I’m afraid I didn’t express myself too clearly.
    ‘But you don’t understand!’

Here the idea is that the American might address the issue of misunderstanding indirectly, with a ‘self-correcting’ speech act, while the Frenchman makes a declarative statement. Crucially, for the American the French can be interpreted as an insult, although in French (4b) is not insulting.

Despite the linguistic and pedagogical importance of this kind of work, we are currently lacking good cross-cultural comparisons of speech acts, and there is a general lack of empirical research in the field of cross-cultural communication as a whole. There are a few comparative studies involving Slavic data, such as Durst-Anderson (1995) on Russian, Danish and English, or Ronowicz (1995) on Polish and Australian English. But these are just the beginnings of a larger research agenda. Slavic data are particularly timely, and can be approached from two angles. The first is that of elucidating the native Slavic speech act strategies in the homeland, and the second involves examining miscommunications involving Slavs who have emigrated.

### 3.1.2 Gricean Pragmatics

H. P. Grice (1975/1989) argued that conversational participants adhere to what he calls the Cooperative Principle which states, in essence, that the interlocutors have an unspoken agreement to talk cooperatively, in a mutual way, with each contributing to the conversation and speaking on topic. Grice formulates this principle as:

Make your conversational contribution such as required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

(Grice 1989: 26)

Grice develops this idea in his Maxims of Conversation:
**Maxim of Quantity**

1. Make your contribution as informative as required.
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

**Maxims of Quality**

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

**Maxim of Relation**

Be relevant.

**Maxims of Manner**

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief.
4. Be orderly.

These maxims of conversation are more informative when, at first glance at least, it appears that one of the conversation participants is not adhering to them, or flouting them. For example, in the following excerpt, Speaker B appears to be flouting the Maxim of Relevance:

1. A. A vy vot xotite buterbrodik? ‘Do you want a little sandwich?’
2. B. Čto, uže? ‘What, already?’
3. A. Uže vot Anjuša prišla ‘Anjuša has already arrived.’

Here the difficulty is that line (3) does not appear to respond to line (2), which could be expanded to something along the lines of ‘what, is it already time to eat lunch?’ A Gricean approach would go something like this: I (speaker A) assume you (speaker B) to be adhering to the Cooperative Principle, and since you did not directly say that it is time to eat lunch, but did say that Anjuša has arrived, so it must be that her arrival is somehow related to lunch time. In sum, the response is taken to be relevant, and so provides enough information for the addressee to derive an explanation. (Levinson 1993, chapter 3, provides an excellent critical discussion of Gricean pragmatics and implicatures. Israeli 1997 uses the cooperative principle to explain syntactic reduplication (repetition of a word or modified word within the same prosodic unit), but finds the principle too limited to account for all the data.)

### 3.2 Conversation Analysis

Conversation analysis stems from the initial work of a group of ethnomethodologists (notably, Harvey Sacks and Emanuel Schegloff) who began, in the 1960’s, examining what happens in real, actual talk. This is an interesting bit of linguistic history in that, at a time when many linguists were examining isolated and often invented sentences, their work focused on non-scripted, spontaneous speech. They discovered that, contrary to previous claims/expectations, conversation is rule-governed; the trick is that the rules look quite a bit different than phonological or syntactic rules. That is to say that we do not have—and probably never will have—a formal set of rules which can generate all and only “correct” conversational structures. That does not mean, however, that conversation is unstructured. Rather, the structure is of a very different nature than that of a clause or sentence, in large part due to the fact that conversation involves not a single speaker but rather speakers. It is mutually developed and the rules for
conversation resemble the rules for other social interactions. From this we can derive the two basic premises of conversational analysis: (1) language is a form of social interaction; and (2) conversational structures are rule-governed.

Thus conversation analysis maintains that verbal interactions are both structurally organized and contextually oriented (Heritage 1984), and a primary goal of the analysis is elucidating these structures and determining how they are interrelated. Conversation analysis is often viewed as being the most “hard core” branch of discourse analysis, and its general approaches and tenets will be convivial to linguists who are oriented toward more formal linguistic approaches. For example, it can be said that each level of linguistic analysis is typically seen as having a “basic unit,” e.g., the phoneme is “basic” in phonology, the morpheme in morphology, and the clause in syntax. Conversation is not different: the fundamental unit in conversation is the turn. Conversation analysis has been extensively involved in examining the organization of turn-taking.

Turns are analyzed as consisting of turn-constructional units (TCUs) where a TCU is defined as a “unit-type with which a speaker may set out to construct a turn” (Sacks et al. 1974: 702). Unlike other linguistic units (such as phonemes, morphemes, clauses and phrases), the TCU is a dynamic kind of unit which is jointly created by the interlocutors; in this way it fundamentally differs from other linguistic units. This feature also makes it notoriously difficult to define, because it is both expandable and stoppable, a point which Sacks et al. make explicit:

The turn-unit is of a sort which (a) employs a specification of minimal sizes, but (b) provides for expansion within a unit, (c) is stoppable (though not at any point), and (d) has transition places discretely recurring with it, (e) which can themselves be expanded or contracted; all of these features except the first are loci of interactional determination. By virtue of this character, it is misconceived to treat turns as units characterized by a division of labor in which the speaker determines the unit and its boundaries, with other parties having as their task the recognition of them. [...] That is, the turn as a unit is interactively determined.

[Sacks et al. 1974: 726–27]

The TCU is seen as having an identifiable trajectory or, in other words, conversational participants identify a beginning, middle and end to a TCU. Just how this comes about is a continuing focus of current research in conversation analysis, which addresses issues of how interlocutors project transition-relevance places (TRPs).

Although not explicitly stated, Sacks et al. do implicitly treat the turn unit as consisting of one or more syntactic units; they do define it as consisting of “sentential, clausal, phrasal and lexical constructions” (p. 702). Further research has shown that syntactic completion alone is not sufficient in the definition of a TCU; as a look at any conversation will show, a TCU can consist of multiple syntactic units. Both prosody and semantic completion are clearly involved, and more recent research points to the importance of gaze, body movements and gestures in face-to-face interaction.

Turns are organized and co-ordinated in sequences of exchange. An exchange is the basic unit of interaction (Sinclair et al 1972; Coulthard and Brazil 1992:64): it is “basic” because it consists minimally of contributions by two participants and combines to form the largest unit of interaction, the transaction. There is some discussion whether exchanges should be seen as basically organized in terms of two parts (e.g. adjacency pairs such as question—answer) or as consisting of three parts (question—answer—acknowledgment).
will treat them as part of a group of “special” turns. Adjacency pairs are “special” in the sense that, by and large, there is a rule governing them: once the first part of the adjacency pair has been produced, the current speaker must stop talking, and the next speaker must produce the second part of the pair. Both two-part and three-part exchanges are found in natural conversation:

(7) two-part exchange: Question—Answer
A. skol’ko vremeni? ‘what time is it?’
B. pol pjatogo ‘4:30’

(8) three-part exchange: Question—Answer—Acknowledgment
A. a ty nikogda ni kurila? ‘and you never smoked?’
B. nu net, gospodi, ‘well, no, good lord,
probovala kak vse probujut tak I tried it like everyone tries it’
A. ponjatno (3.0) ‘I see’

There are certain speech acts which are problematic for the interpretation of adjacency pairs as existing of two parts. These include accepting requests (where the second pair part may be missing, if the second pair part must be a verbal response, as opposed to an action), and accepting or refusing invitations. There is evidence that the nature of the speech act/adjacency pair relation differs across different cultures (Platt 1989). Some of this has been investigated in Slavic in relation to politeness strategies (Mills 1992; Suszczynska 1999), but by and large this is all open territory.

Furthermore, adjacency pairs do not always follow the strict ordering anticipated by the rule which governs their use. For example, the pairs in the following excerpt do not follow the sequence Q(uestion)1—A(nswer)1, Q2—A2, but rather Q1–Q2–Q1[A2]–Q3–A3, Q4–A4–A1:

(9) (Zemskaja and Kapanadze 1978:144)
Q1 A ty oktuda Êti slova vzjal? A? ‘where did you get these words from? huh?’
Q2 çto? ‘what?’
Q1/A2 Otkuda ty Êti slova vzjal? where did you get these words from?
Q3 kakie? ‘which ones?’
A3 nasãet spravki about the certificate.
Q4 spravki? ‘the certificate?’
A4 da. yes.
A1 (smeetsja) sam pridumal (laughs) I made them up myself.’

While it has been frequently observed that turn changes tend to occur smoothly, without overlap and with no pauses, or at least minimal pauses, it is less clear how that comes to be or, in other words, how all participants “know” when a turn change will occur. Finally, to take this from the opposite side, why does overlap occur when it does, if the mechanical structure of the conversation functions? These are key questions for conversation analysis. It is important to note that because conversational structure is a central issue for this kind of analysis, it needs to investigate certain topics which are out of bounds for other subfields of linguistics. I have in mind topics like eye gaze, body position and gesture, the general speech tempo, and pauses, hesitations and overlaps, and even laughter. From a Chomskian standpoint, many of these would be relegated to the area of performance, and are just irrelevant to the analysis. But for a conversation analyst, these are issues of crucial concern.
An example is provided by pauses. Despite claims that the turn-taking structure operates without pauses and overlaps, in point of fact one finds a large number of both in Russian discourse. To date there is no adequate theory of pauses and silence in discourse, and here cross-linguistic information is critical. We do know that the amount of silence, or non-speech time, that is tolerated in a conversation varies greatly in different cultures, with Native Americans being relatively tolerant of silence, and certain Europeans (perhaps Anglo-New Yorkers) less tolerant. But there is no good, hard core quantitative data on the subject. How long can a pause in conversation be and still be a pause, as opposed to a period of silence? If we turn to pauses in Russian conversation, two things are immediately clear: (1) pauses do in fact occur at the end of turns; (2) pauses—even relatively long ones—can be found turn-internally. In (10), shorter pauses (less than 1 second) occur turn-internally, while pauses of longer than 1 second are found at TRP’s, suggesting a correlation between pause length and the turn-taking structure:

(10) 1. A. a god u nas živet kot (0.51)  
      2. i každyj raz kogda na nego sps- nu straxoljud (0.77)  
      3. nu strašnyj (0.62)  
      4. ryžij takoj oj morda naglaja (0.69)  
      5. boka vpalye (0.22)  
      6. šerst’ vot tak vot [ ???] oj (0.84)  
      7. B. [xorošij]  
      8. A. vsja otrava (1.56)  
      9. B. kak ona tak ljubimogo kotik[a  
     10. A. [ja ego obožaju=  
     11. =ja ego s”est’ gotova (1.13)  

1. A. the cat has been living with us for a year now  
2. and every time{you look at} him..well, he’s a monster  
3. well ugly  
4. he’s red, oj, with an insolent mug  
5. his sides are sunken in  
6. his fur’s like this, oj  
B. [good]  
8. A. pure poison  
9. B. how can she {talk like that about} her beloved c[at  
10. A. [I adore him=  
11. =I’m ready to eat him up

However, an excerpt from another conversation demonstrates that pause length alone does not suffice to account for the placement of turn transitions:

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7 These excerpts are transcribed according to the standard conventions of conversation analysis, given in Jefferson (19XX), with one exception: curly brackets {} are used in glosses to differentiate ellided material from overlap. Following convention, square brackets [] are used to indicate overlapped speech, = indicates continuing speech, and ??? indicate incomprehensible speech.

8 Pauses and pitch track for these excerpts were measured on a wide band spectogram with the Computerized Sound Lab by Kay Elemetrics.
Here we see that the relatively lengthy pause of 1.54 seconds at the end of line 2 is not interpreted by the addressee as occurring at a TRP; it is not until after line 4 that the addressee begins to speak. Clearly, the lack of syntactic and semantic completion plays a role in the interpretation of this first pause; a change of speakers at this point would leave something unsaid. Moreover, the distribution of these pauses is directly related to the information structure of the discourse: the text is segmented into what Chafe (1994: 57–70) calls intonation units, where approximately one chunk of new information is found in each unit, and each unit acts as a prosodic unit. Although Chafe’s intonation unit refers to the perceptual qualities of intonation, acoustic measurements of each of these excerpts also show a declination of fundamental frequency over each “unit” as segmented here in the paper.

A final point should be made with regard to the overall methodologies of conversation analysis, and that is that because it investigates actual speech, studies are generally based on talk which occurs in very particular settings. For example, early work looked at transcripts from a suicide crisis center (Sacks 1972) or calls to the police (Schegloff 1968). This in part stems from the history of conversation analysis, deriving from ethnomethodological work in language and language use. But in large part it also stems from the recognition that the setting and context can and do influence conversational structures. Still, as Schegloff himself emphasizes, this in no way entails that the resulting analysis pertains only at the microlevel of very specific speech settings. Rather, general rule that apply to the description of global levels can be extracted; the elucidation of the overall structural organization of conversation with work done “in service of the situated particulars of the originating data, not in contrast to them” (Schegloff 1999:144; original emphasis). In his position paper on the future directions of conversation analysis, Schegloff (1999) calls for research aimed at identifying how conversation is organized at a more global level of interaction. I take this to strongly support research on languages other than English, and to support contrastive conversation analysis. In order to answer the global-level questions which Schegloff poses, we need more data to enable us to identify what is culture specific, and to determine cross-linguistic, cross-cultural rules of conversation.

**Future Directions in Conversation Analysis**

A number of issues are central to current research in conversation analysis, and studies of all the Slavic languages would do much to inform current theories and to establish future research goals. One issue is the role on non-linguistic features in the turn-taking structure of conversation. Fox et al. (1996) argue that points of possible turn completion are determined on the basis of both sequential location and “interactional import,” by which they refer to the pragmatics of the utterance sequences. Their study shows the TCU to be determined by a “constellation” of
gesture, gaze and body position, in combination with syntactic and semantic completion and prosody. This study is based on American English and, as they themselves point out, comparative research is needed on other languages. Predicting that in general their findings will apply to other languages, they also suggest that exactly how these linguistic and non-linguistic strategies are used in turn-taking may vary from language to language.

The role of intonation in conversational structure itself remains to be fully understood for all languages, and very little research has been done on Slavic prosody from this perspective. We do know, of course, that word order is in large measure discourse determined, and that there is a strong link between word order and intonation (Yokoyama 1986). We know considerably less, however, about how all this comes together in conversation. Key issues include not only an expansion of the work on intonation and information structure, but also particular attention to such questions as determining the relationship between intonation and TCU9s, interruptions, overlaps. It is clear that there is general downdrift of F0 over the course of a turn, with F0 reset occurring at the beginning of the new TCU9, and that a misinterpretation of prosodic cues can account for at least some instances of overlap (Wells and Macfarlane 1998). Exactly how prosody functions over the course of long turns, and over the course of long conversations is unclear. It is uncertain to what extent downdrift plays a role in signaling an upcoming TRP to the interlocutor(s), and to what extent such other factors as syntactic and semantic completion are involved.

A recent issue of *Research on Language and Social Interaction* (1999, 32/1–2) was devoted to the special topic of future directions for research. Heritage (1999) points to the need for more quantitative analyses in CA and predicts that

3.3. Relevance Theory

Relevance Theory was developed by Sperber and Wilson (1986), at least in part as a reaction to Gricean Pragmatics, stemming from the idea that Grice’s Conversational Principle leaves many basic questions about human communication unanswered. For example, Grice sees his Maxim of Relevance (*be relevant*; §3.1) as fundamental to the conversational principle, but does not really define what relevance is. Sperber and Wilson (1986) develop a theory of relevance which rests on the claim that such relevance is grounded in human cognition; their goal is to identify a set of mental processes which are encaptured by this notion of relevance and to show how these come into play in ordinary language usage. The essential claim of Relevance Theory is relatively straightforward: in any given context, the addressee assumes that what the speaker is saying is relevant. That is to say, the utterance is expected to be relevant, and conforms to a general relevancy principle. In the postface to the second edition of their founding work, Sperber and Wilson (1995:260–1) address certain confusions from their initial formulation of a single relevance principle but restating the original claims in terms of two principles:

1. **The First (Cognitive) Principle**
   
   Human cognition tends to be geared to the maximization of relevance.

2. **The Second (Communicative) Principle**
   
   Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance.

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9 There is a large body of literature on this topic for English; see especially Couper-Kuhlen 1993, 1996; a variety of articles in Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 1996a; Schuetze-Coburn et al. 1991. *Language and Speech* (1998, 41/3–4) is a special (double) issue devoted to the topic of prosody and conversation.
It is this second, communicative principle which was defined as the Relevance Principle in the original edition of this work (renamed here because of confusion which resulted from some linguists equating the Cognitive Principle with the Relevance Principle). Sperber and Wilson argue that the relevance principle is “more explicit” than Grice’s cooperative principle and maxims (1995:161).

Relevance theory is useful in analyzing those kinds of linguistic items and strategies which are more pragmatic than lexical or syntactic in nature; it has much to say about why a particular entity is chosen by the speaker. That is to say, it works well with entities that can only be understood with reference to the communicative situation. These includes a broad range of devices, such as discourse particles and markers, parentheticals, modality:, as well as such aspects of communication as humor, irony, metaphor and implicature.

In order to understand how Relevance theory might be useful, we can briefly examine its application to discourse particles. I should point out that it has been applied to studies of particles in a number of languages, such as English, Greek, Hebrew and Japanese, to name a few.10 The use of particles can be explained in terms of the different kinds of meaning they encode: there is a distinction between conceptual and procedural meaning (Blakemore 1987). In a nutshell, utterances with conceptual meaning have propositional value and affect truth conditions. Items with procedural meaning do not have propositional content; they say more about how information is to be processed or situated. Some Russian discourse particles (such as k tomu z&e, znaãit) carry both conceptual and procedural meaning, while others (such as z&e, -to) carry procedural meaning only.

The usefulness of this approach can be illustrated with a sample analysis of the Russian particle ved’. In an approach that was fairly typical of earlier work on particles, Vasilyevna (1972:46) classifies ved’ with other polysemantic particles, asserting that its “princuipal function is to emphasize the obviousness of a fact or truth contained in an utterance.” It is not clear why ved’ is “polysemantic,” if this can be seen as its principal or perhaps even invariant meaning, but she does continue to provide a taxonomy of six uses of ved’, given here in abbreviated form, stating that it:

1. lends the idea expressed the tone of an argument requiring no proof;
2. may emphasize the significance of a fact or the importance of an utterance;
3. is used in general questions when the speaker tries to prompt his interlocutor to give the answer he wants to hear;
4. is used for emphasis in expressing a prediction, warning or reproach;
5. emphasizes the unexpectedness of finding out a fact, the discovery of a plain truth, the detection of a hidden contradiction, etc., or expresses a guess:
6. in rhetorical questions is used merely to draw the interlocutor’s attention to the thought which is to follow and to which the particle actually refers.

(Vasilyeva 1972: 46–50)

These definitions fall short in two crucial ways: on the one hand they fail to capture an important generalization about the use of ved’, while on the other hand they do not provide enough information as to how to use the particle felicitously. These shortcomings stem from a failure to examine how ved’ operates with the information structure of the text, and by failing to analyze it within a clearer theoretical framework. While such taxonomies may be useful for lexical items which have unambiguous referential value, they cannot adequately account for items which carry

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10 See the collection of articles in Rouchota and Jucker (1998).
procedural meaning; the distinction between conceptual and procedural meaning is not recognized.

In the following excerpt, we see the use of *ved*′ to link information from the previous discourse to that of the upcoming discourse:

(12) Ėto lučšaja situacija po sravneniju s prošlým godom, no, v kakom smysle, tjaželo skazat′.
Dlja bednyx, konečno, lučše bylo togda, oni lučše v očeredi postojat dva časa, no kupjat
deševlo, a dlja ostal′nyx lučše sejčas, navernoe, *ved*′ rabotajut u nas po nočam vozle metro
Žti kioski, kotorye prodajut importnye tovary tam, vypivku, edu, zakusku, a … pokupajut
vse ravno, pokupajut. (Moscow, 1992)
‘It’s a better situation compared to last year but, in just which sense, it’s hard to say. For
the poor, of course, it was better then—*they’re* better off standing in line for two hours but
buying cheaply, but for the rest of us it’s better know, probably. After all those kiosks are
open at night by the metro, the ones that sell imported goods, drinks, foods, a bite to eat,
and ... people buy [things] anyway, they buy them…’

In the first three lines of this excerpt, the speaker is talking about the relative standard of living in
Moscow after the downfall of Communism. She appears to change topics at the end of line 3,
when she says that the kiosks work all night. What *ved*′ does here, to oversimplify a bit, is to
signal to the interlocutors that this is not a change of topic at all, but rather relevant to the
discussion of the standard of living. It fulfills this function through a combination of its
conceptual and procedural meanings. As is known, this particle is etymologically related to the
verb *vědati* ‘to know’ and so has conceptual meaning: it signals knowledge of some kind. It also
carries procedural meaning: it asserts that the information is relevant to the current discussion. In
so doing, it provides a link between the prior discourse and upcoming discourse, but it is more
than a conjunction: it is a signal of relevance.

This is not presented as a complete analysis of this particle, but rather the sketch of an outline
of how that analysis might proceed in Relevance Theory. This brief sketch runs the risk of
implying that *ved*′ has not been examined elsewhere, which is not the case. For more complete
studies, see Bonno and Kodzasov (1998) and Paillard and Markowicz (1986).

3.4 The Transactional Discourse Model

In a framework which she has dubbed the Transactional Discourse Model, Yokoyama (1986)
proposes a model of discourse where the minimal communicative unit is made up of four
components: the two interlocutors (A and B) and their “matters of current concern” (C_A and C_B).
The intersection of A’s and B’s knowledge sets, which constitutes their joint matters of concern,
is traditionally represented by a Venn diagram in TDM. In analyzing discourse, the interlocutors
themselves are treated as their respective sets of knowledge. That is, discourse is conceptualized
in pragmatic terms characterized by the interlocutors, their knowledge sets, and the interrelations
between them. In TDM, this is generally represented as a Venn diagram, to illustrate the
intersection of the A and B’s knowledge sets.

The Transactional Discourse Model is the one model to discourse by an American Slavist,
coming directly from the American Slavic tradition. Although it has been applied effectively by
Yokoyama and a number of others (see, for example, Moon 1995; Robblee 1991; Zaitseva 1994,
1995), to the best of my knowledge it has not been used by other (non-Slavic) linguists. This
failure to catch on, as it were, may stem from the fact that TDM has much in common with
Relevance Theory, which has gained widespread recognition. Integral to TDM is the notion of
shared knowledge sets and an intersection of common concerns which is, in principle, largely in agreement with the foundations of Relevance Theory. The model itself is amply described in Yokoyama (1986), which I assume to be standard reading in any Slavic graduate program. Therefore, I will not describe it here in detail, although I would like to raise one additional point. Specifically, it is based on the premise that the explanation of many discourse phenomena (such as word order) can only be found with reference to the psychological states of the interlocutors. In this the model has much in common with other theories of information structure (§4.2).

4. Future Directions

In the discussions of different theoretical approaches to discourse analysis, I have attempted to identify a number of different areas for future research by American Slavists. In this section I discuss two major topics which are currently of great interest in general linguistics, intonation in discourse and information structure. Both of these deserve to be singled out because, beyond being “hot” topics, their study potentially involves a number of different subdisciplines in linguistics. That is, the study of both will result in research of interest to a broad range of linguists.

4.1 Intonation in Discourse

Intonation in discourse has become a major topic in linguistics over the last few years. The timing on this stems from a number of events which more or less coincided: (1) large theoretical advances in both the study of intonation and of discourse, meaning a broader research base and a much larger array of theoretical tools for analysis of both; (2) significant technological advances, in particular in terms of computer software, which has simplified the instrumental measurements of the sound waves and greatly increased accuracy.  

Intonation has been studied from two essentially different views: the acoustic approach measures intonation in terms of changes in fundamental frequency (F0), while the perceptual approach relies on auditory perception, and intonation can be defined in terms of pitch. Changes in F0 can be tracked through conversation with reference to a declination unit (DU), a term which refers to the downdrift phenomenon of F0 over the course of speech (Cohen and ‘t Hart 1967; see Ladd (1993) for discussion). In terms of both kinds of work—acoustic and perceptual—much work is needed in Slavic. Sentential-level intonation has been studied for a number of Slavic languages, most primarily Russian (see Odé 1987, 1988, 1988, 1990; Yokoyama 1985, 1986), and there has been significant work on Czech and Polish. Yokoyama (1986) is particularly successful in applying Pierrehumbert’s framework to Russian. Still most of that work on non-Russian is quite dated, in particular in terms of linguistic theory.  But if further work is needed on sentential-level intonation, I can only say that intonation in discourse is an open field. The groundwork is in place, in particular as laid out by Yokoyama (1986). (See also Schallert 1990 for a brief introduction to the use of intonation in monologue.)

Intonational studies of discourse are concerned with a number of questions about which Slavists have much to say. One very important is the role of intonation in information structure.

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11 I have worked with three different computer programs for analyzing sound waves: SoundScope, the Computerized Sound Lab by Kay Elemetrics, and Praat for the Macintosh. All vary in terms of user-friendliness, but all are relatively simple to use.

12 I am not forgetting the work by Bryzgunova and a number of other Russian linguists but I am intentionally ignoring it. It is outdated and has little to say to Western linguists.
Here Slavic is of course particularly interesting in terms of the role of intonation and word order (see especially Yokoyama 1986). Another aspect involves questions of intonation and speech acts. I have in mind here the role of intonation in determining speech act type and illocutionary force. Of course intonation is crucial in the straightforward cases, where intonation alone determines differences between declarative sentences and interrogatives. But from a discourse perspective intonation will provide many more clues in terms of interpretation of illocutionary force in such examples as (3), where the intonation of is morphosyntactically a question aids in the interpretation of it as a representative illocutionary act (with the speaker asserting that there is no milk).

4.2 Information Structure

Much of the research on Slavic discourse has focused on information structure. The term *information structure*, or *information packaging*, is used to refer to various ways in which information, which includes propositional information as well as real-world knowledge, is linguistically encoded. That is, information structure examines how information is “packaged,” or linguistically encoded, and why one or another structure might be selected to convey a given chunk of propositional knowledge. From this view, then, one asks why a passive construction is used instead of an active one, for example: in both constructions the propositional value is arguably the same, with agent/patient relations unchanged; what differs is the information structure. Word order differences provide prime examples of information packaging in Slavic. Note that this approach to information structure differs fundamentally from some of the other approaches outlined here. If we consider Gricean pragmatics, for example, one needs to account for why a sentence like *už je volt Anjuša prišla* ‘Anjuša has already arrived’ [line 3, (5)] can be used in answer to the question *Is it already time to eat?* In analyzing information structure, we are concerned with the conditions under which certain structures are felicitous, and when they are not, and what they say about the packaging of propositional content.

Areas of special interest in information structure are topic/comment, focus, grounding, transitivity (as defined by Hopper and Thompson 1980), givenness, reference and anaphora, deixis, and so on. These can be addressed either from function to form (from the stance of the information structure), or from form to function (from the linguistic encoding to its function). An example is provided by the study of grounding and transitivity, versus the study of aspect in the text. (For the use of aspect in grounding, see Chvany 1985a, 1985b; for a brief discussion of the form/function issue, see Nichols 1985.) Importantly, there is an entire range of devices and structures which have to do with the varying means for encoding information and relating it to the larger discourse as a whole. This latter point is crucial, that information status is determined by the position in the discourse and so, from the point of the view of the discourse analyst, such entities as topic and focus cannot be studied based on isolated sentences. Furthermore, the study of information structure cuts across a number of subdisciplines of linguistics. While certain topics—such as reference, deixis, and definiteness—overlap with pragmatics and the philosophy of language, much of information structure is territory shared with cognitive linguistics and cognitive science. In fact, the two disciplines (cognitive science and discourse analysis) may approach the same issues in language data but from different angles, and the results of each approach inform the other. An example is provided by discussions of givenness, definiteness and recoverability. In a now classic study, Haviland and Clark (1974), tested pairs of sentences such as the following:
They found that comprehension times for the target sentence *The beer was warm* were shorter when the context in (12) is supplied, and longer when (13) is supplied. This can be explained in that *beer* is explicitly given in (12), while in (13) the addressee must go through an inferential process (what Brown and Yule 1986: 257 call a *bridging assumption*) whereby *beer* is construed as part of the picnic supplies. It can be further noted that beer in 12b) can be pronominalized (and probably would be in natural speech), while it cannot be pronominalized in (13b). But the basic point here lies not in the details of the analysis, but rather in the fact that data coming from psycholinguistic perceptual experiments can do much to validate what may otherwise appear to be intuitive interpretations on the part of the analyst. Moreover, discussions of information structure quite naturally and inevitably relate to mental states, as any discussion of accessibility, topicality, givenness, and so on at least presuppose the accessibility of referents by the interlocutors. It is not without reason that some recent major works in this field include overt reference to mental processes in the title, such as *Discourse, Consciousness, and Time* (Chafe 1994) or in the subtitle of Lambrecht (1994): *Topic, focus and the mental representations of discourse referents*. In fact, Lambrecht’s definition of information structure includes specific ties with mental states and representations:

INFORMATION STRUCTURE: That component of sentence grammar in which propositions as conceptual representations of states of affairs are paired with lexicogrammatical structures in accordance with the mental states of interlocutors who use and interpret these structures as units of information in given discourse contexts.

Lambrecht (1994:5)

Lambrecht’s book presents a ground-breaking view of information structure. Lambrecht argues against the traditional view that information can be segmented into ‘old’ and ‘new’ parts which are mapped onto the syntax. Crucially, he sees information as a property of denotata, not of lexical items and/or syntactic constituents. This has serious consequences for the definitions of topic/comment and focus: topic cannot be identified with ‘old’ information and focus cannot be identified with ‘new’. Moreover, with this view of information as a foundation, Lambrecht is able to argue that information is a separate level of linguistic representation. He does not define how this information-structure component is to be integrated into existing theories of linguistic analysis, but explicitly states that his goal is to lay the theoretical groundwork which will make such an integration possible. From that standpoint, Lambrecht has clearly defined a goal for future research. Ultimately, a comprehensive theory of how the information-structure component fits into linguistic analysis is a job of mutual cooperation between linguists working in a number of subfields: discourse, semantics, syntax and phonology.

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13 I would advise readers to approach Lambrecht’s book by first reading a comprehensive review article of it (Polinsky 1999), which provides an excellent overview.
5. Functionalism Meets Formalism

[To be provided later]

6. Conclusion

Throughout this discussion I have attempted to point out areas needing research both in terms of individual theoretical approaches to discourse, and in terms of a more-issue oriented discussion. It should be clear that there are a great many topics in need of research, essentially all of discourse analysis stands wide open. But for the work of American Slavists in this field to be successful and influential, it must meet certain requirements. First of all, it must be framed in a way that is both accessible and of interest to other discourse analysts. It must use current terminology, current methodologies, and current theoretical frameworks. Moreover, it must address the larger issues which will interest other analysts, by providing data that will have an impact on linguistic theory, or by providing data for cross-linguistic comparison. It is the mission of Slavic linguists not only to give good descriptive analyses of Slavic data, but to inform linguistic theory. Recent years have seen a number of theoretical claims making cross-linguistics generalizations that do not stand the test of Slavic languages.

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