Let S be a sentence containing no indexicals (or is semantically incomplete in some other way).

The “traditional” view of the relation between semantic content and assertion is that if one assertively utters S in context C, one asserts a proposition p that is the semantic content of S in C (i.e., the proposition expressed by S in C), plus obvious consequences, etc.

The “pragmatic enrichment” view of the relation is that the semantic content of S comprises “a set of constraints on what normal, literal uses of S … assert”, and that when one assertively utters S in context C, one asserts a proposition that is almost always a pragmatically augmented version of the semantic content of S in C.

Both of these can be supplemented by pragmatic machinery of the sort that Grice supplies to get at aspects of the “total content” that are non-truth-conditional and go beyond what is asserted.

Consider the following two examples and indicate what the traditional view and the pragmatic enrichment view would say about them.

1. The student I spoke to in my office this morning wants to go to graduate school.

   Context: “I know that you saw me speaking to a student s in my office this morning … even if I spoke to other students after s left (and you realize that I had other meetings, but don’t know whether they involved students)” (153). Here I say (1) to you in the afternoon.

2. (a) I have had breakfast.
   (b) I have had chicken pox.

   Context: I say these things to you in the normal course of the day, (2a) coming at 10 in the morning as we pass near a diner, and (2b) coming over lunch.