الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
جامعة باجي مختار - عنابة
Badji Mokhtar- Annaba University
Faculty Of Letters And Languages
Department Of Letters and English Language
كلية الآداب واللغات
قسم الآداب واللغة الإنجليزية

A Course in Pragmatics for Master One LMD Students

Polycopié Élaboré en vue de l'obtention du Professorat

Dr. Ouided Sellam

Contents

List of Figures

Introduction of the Pragmatics Module

- **Course Presentation**

Level: First-year LMD students

Unit: Fundamental

Credit: 4

Standard: 2

Course hours: 22h30 hours per semester (1h30 TD per week)

Evaluation mode: Continuous check-up (100%)

- **Course Description**

The pragmatics course equips students with the knowledge and skills to understand how speakers utilize words and sentences to convey meaning in various contexts, along with the foundational principles that guide the interpretation of spoken utterances in specific settings. It familiarises students with essential concepts in pragmatics, highlighting the relationship between language use and context. The curriculum presents a thorough overview of the concepts and tools needed to analyse the functioning of linguistic communication, including cooperative communication, implicature, politeness, illocution, locution, perlocution, performative utterances, and speech acts. The course examines linguistic data from English and other languages that students know, particularly Arabic and French. It considers theories and methodologies regarding how we use language to make requests, pose questions, narrate stories, show politeness, engage in conversation, and participate in institutional dialogue.

- **General Course Objectives**

1- Provide students with the knowledge and skills to grasp how speakers use language to communicate meaning across different contexts.
2- Introduce students to key ideas in pragmatics and how language use relates to context.

3- Present a comprehensive summary of the tools required for analyzing linguistic communication.

4- Examine linguistic data across various languages, emphasizing theories and methods of language application.

5- Improve students' ability to analyze and think critically by engaging them in diverse class activities that focus on practical analysis.

6- Enhance teamwork skills through group projects and collaborative discussions about language theory concepts.

- **Course Structure**

Semester One

- **Course One:** The Origins, History and Evolution of Pragmatics
- **Course Two:** Definitions of Pragmatics
- **Course Three:** Pragmatics vs. Semantics and Syntax
- **Course Four:** Text and Context
- **Course Five:** Deixis

Semester Two

- **Course One: Conversation**
- **Course Two: Conversation and Cooperative Maxims**
- **Course Three: Implicature**
- **Course Four: Politeness**
- **Course Five: Speech Act Theory**

- **Assessment**

- Semester One

  Written assessment/ 10 pts, individual work / 6 pts, attendance /4 pts.

- Semester Two

  Written assessment/ 10 pts, individual work / 6 pts, attendance /4 pts.

Semester One

- **Course One:** The Origins, History and Evolution of Pragmatics
- **Course Two:** Definitions of Pragmatics
- **Course Three:** Syntax vs Semantics vs. Pragmatics
- **Course Four:** Text and Context
- **Course Five:** Deixis

Course One: The Origins, History and Evolution of Pragmatics

Content

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Trace the historical origins of pragmatics from ancient Greek and Roman thought to its formalization in the 20th century.
- √ Explain the influence of philosophical pragmatism on the development of linguistic pragmatics.
- √ Explain the key contributions of major theorists such as Wittgenstein, Austin, Searle, and Grice to the field.
- √ Describe the shift from structural to usage-based approaches in pragmatic research.
- √ Reflect on the contemporary relevance of pragmatics in understanding real-life communication and interdisciplinary research.

Introduction

Pragmatics is a fascinating and often overlooked branch of semiotics crucial in understanding human communication. As one of the three primary branches, it delves into the practical aspects of language use in social contexts. Unlike more established areas of linguistic study, pragmatics grapples with the complexities of how context, culture, and individual choices shape our language. This lecture will explore pragmatics' rich history, its relationship with other linguistic fields, and the ongoing challenges in comprehending the nuanced factors that inform our communication choices.

1. **Introduction to Pragmatics**

Pragmatics, one of the three primary branches of semiotics, has a rich history. In the 19th century, it was not a unified field of study. The practical nature of pragmatics, which directly influences our language choices in social interactions, is a key aspect. This practicality is what keeps us engaged and connected to the subject. It remains a challenge to fully understand the factors that influence our language choices, how they relate to each other, and how they differ from other established areas of linguistic study. Pragmatics overlaps with several main areas, including semantics, stylistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and discourse analysis.

2. **Historical and Philosophical Roots**

Though a relatively recent field within linguistics, the study of pragmatics has deep roots in ancient Greece and Rome. In late Latin, the term 'pragmaticus' and in Greek' pragmaticos' signify ‘being practical’. The modern application and recognition of pragmatics owe much to the American philosophical movement known as pragmatism. This historical connection to ancient civilisations and philosophical movements keeps us connected to the subject's past. Initially focused on practical concerns, pragmatics has become integral to linguistic studies. Early figures in this field were philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Austin, Searle, and Grice.

2.1 Foundational Philosophers and Theories

In the early 1900s, Wittgenstein formulated his atomistic doctrine of meaning, proposing that sentences act as representations or models of objects in the world. The school embraced this concept, which asserted that sentences must state verifiable facts to hold significance. By the 1930s, pragmatics emerged as a response to these theories. Wittgenstein shifted away from his previous stance, demonstrating that utterances serve various functions and that the meaning of many sentences lies in their usage.

2.2 Formalization of Pragmatics

Pragmatics emerged as a field of linguistic study in the 1930s, initiated by Morris, Carnap, and Peirce. They distinguished between syntax, which deals with the formal relationships of signs, semantics, which relates signs to their meanings, and pragmatics, which examines the relationship between signs and their users or interpreters (Morris, 1938). In this program, pragmatics focuses on the context-dependent aspects of meaning typically overlooked in constructing content or logical form. A pivotal moment in establishing a systematic framework for pragmatics occurred during Grice's (1967) William James lectures. This influential, albeit incomplete, framework illustrated how a structured perspective on language use can provide a more precise and elegant understanding of language structure. Consequently, a central aim of pragmatics has been reflected in Bar-Hillel's celebrated warning (1975, p. 405): “Be careful with forcing bits and pieces you find in the pragmatic wastebasket into your favourite syntactico-semantic theory. It would perhaps be preferable to first bring some order into the contents of this wastebasket.”

3. Expanding the Field

In recent years, research in pragmatic theory has evolved from primarily simplifying syntax and semantics to exploring various other linguistic fields. These include historical linguistics, the lexicon, language acquisition, computational linguistics, intonational structure, and cognitive science. Additionally, practical considerations have redirected pragmatists' attention towards analyzing real-life conversations, resulting in significant findings such as Grice's Cooperative Principle, introduced in 1975, and Leech's Politeness Principle, established in 1983. Following this, Green (1989) described pragmatics as the comprehension of natural language utterances.

4. Key Theories and Principles

The influence of pragmatism has prompted cross-linguistic international studies on language usage, leading to significant developments such as Sperber and Wilson's (1986) relevance theory, which effectively clarifies how individuals understand and produce communicative acts. Austin (1962) clearly distinguished between a sentence, a fixed arrangement of words, and an utterance, which refers to its specific usage in a particular context. He demonstrated that many statements, which may appear to be standard assertions, like questions and commands, serve different functions. Examples of these performatives include promising, naming, judging, marrying, and others. For instance, when someone says 'I promise to be there,' s/he is not merely stating a promise but actively fulfilling it. In contexts like a marriage ceremony or a court ruling, uttering certain words constitutes executing a specific act. Searle (1969) further developed this theory of speech acts following Austin's untimely passing.

4.1 Gricean Pragmatics and Implicature

Grice (1975) significantly contributed to understanding that many aspects of communication extend beyond words. Words convey the speaker's intention, and the listener needs to recognise it. Often, the actual words used do not fully capture the intended meaning. Grice introduced the Cooperative Principle in communication, which suggests providing hearers with the precise information relevant to the moment and the conversation's purpose. This principle is elaborated through Grice's maxims, emphasizing truth, providing appropriate information, ensuring clarity and brevity, and maintaining relevance in communication.

Many of our statements break these maxims. Grice observed that when this happens, we look for an ulterior motive, and the speaker might have had to uphold the assumption that the Cooperative Principle remains intact. He termed this implicature. Consequently, irony and metaphor are non-literal; evasive speech conveys less than the speaker's knowledge, and when something seems irrelevant, we seek a connection that could render it relevant. The listener deduces the speaker's intentions using this type of speech instead of the most direct method.

4.2 Relevance Theory

Sperber and Wilson (1986), both anthropologists and linguists, developed Relevance Theory, a prominent modern approach to pragmatics. They propose that humans operate under a fundamental cognitive principle that drives them to seek the most pertinent information for updating their beliefs and planning actions. This sought-after quantity is termed 'relevance,' which fluctuates based on the amount of new information provided and decreases as it becomes more challenging to process or retrieve related existing assumptions. Additionally, they introduce a specific communicative principle of relevance, suggesting that any overt communication- spoken words or actions intended to capture someone's attention- is meant to be relevant and substantially so; a speaker's intent is for the message to merit the hearer's mental effort. While a speaker can choose straightforward communication, the simplest method, opting for indirect, metaphorical, or seemingly unrelated statements, requires additional intention to warrant the hearer's extra processing effort.

5. Contemporary Developments and Global Influence

The Anglo-American tradition of pragmatic study has been greatly enhanced through the contributions of researchers mainly from Continental countries like the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and Belgium. A significant milestone in this evolution was founding the IPrA (the International Pragmatic Association) in Antwerp in 1987. In its Working Document, IPrA suggested viewing pragmatics as a theory of linguistic adaptation and analysing language use from all perspectives (Verschueren, 1987). Since then, pragmatics has been understood to encompass micro and macro elements (Mey, 1993).

Pragmatics evolved under the influence of pragmatism, which guided its development. It has maintained its status as an independent linguistic subfield by focusing on practical approaches to everyday meanings.

Conclusion

Originating from ancient philosophy and practical language application, pragmatics has become one of modern linguistics' most vibrant and interdisciplinary areas. From foundational theories proposed by philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Austin, Searle, and Grice, and evolving to contemporary frameworks like Relevance Theory, pragmatics has broadened our understanding of language functions beyond its literal interpretations. It connects structure and use, meaning and intention, as well as text and context. As communication evolves in increasingly complex digital settings, studying pragmatics is vital for linguistic theory and tangible applications in discourse, culture, technology, and human interaction. Its flexibility and significance guarantee that pragmatics will remain a primary focus in linguistic research and education for the foreseeable future.

Discussion Questions

- How has pragmatics transformed from a philosophical concept into an established linguistic discipline?
- What role did the American philosophical movement of pragmatism play in shaping linguistic pragmatics?
- How did Wittgenstein's view of language change over time, and why was this shift significant?

Suggested Tasks

- Prepare a one-page summary on the contributions of one key figure in pragmatics (e.g., Austin, Grice, Searle), focusing on how their ideas shaped the field.
- Create a timeline highlighting key developments in pragmatics' history, including contributions from figures like Wittgenstein, Austin, Searle, Grice, Morris, and Sperber & Wilson.

Further Readings

Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA0026722X

Mey, J. L. (1993). *Pragmatics : an introduction*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA50191538

Peirce, C. S. (1992). *The Essential Peirce, Volume 2: Selected Philosophical Writings (1893-1913)*. Indiana University Press.

Thomas, J. (1995). *Meaning in interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Routledge.

Wittgenstein, L. (1979). *Philosophical investigations*.

Course Two: Pragmatics: Definitions, Elements, and Approaches

Content

Introduction

1. Pragmatics: Definitions and Perspectives
2. Subfields of Pragmatics
3. Elements of Pragmatics
4. Approaches to Pragmatics
5. Identifying Pragmatic Features

Conclusion

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Define pragmatics
- √ Explain its role within the broader field of linguistics.
- √ Identify key contributors to the field of pragmatics and summarise their perspectives.
- √ Describe and distinguish between the subfields of pragmatics:
- √ Analyse the core elements of pragmatic meaning

Introduction

Focusing on human language, pragmatics has developed over the last fifty years. Initiated by Morris, it represents a branch of semiotics, the general science of signs. A trichotomy of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics has been identified in this field. Since its inception, pragmatics has evolved into a vital and flourishing domain that continues to expand. This lecture will explore the various definitions of pragmatics provided by scholars who aimed to clarify its characteristics and approaches as an independent study area.

1. Pragmatics: Definitions and Perspectives

Morris (1938) describes pragmatics as studying how language and context interact within the language structure. The author explains that pragmatics explores the connections between language and context, which are essential for comprehending language. Essentially, pragmatics investigates how language users formulate sentences and contexts that complement each other appropriately.

Lakoff (1973) notes that understanding meaning through a pragmatic lens encompasses all factors related to the speech situation. He also asserts that pragmatic meaning involves a complex set of relationships among the utterance, its components, and the relevant features of the surrounding environment.

Leech (1983) defines pragmatics as the examination of meaning in the context of speech situations. In the same vein of thought, Crystal (1987) views pragmatics as examining the elements that influence our language choices within social interactions and how these choices impact others. “Pragmatic factors always affect our selection of sounds, grammatical constructions, and vocabularies in producing the meaning we intend to communicate” (Crystal, 1987, pp. 62-5). Therefore, pragmatics focuses on analysing the meanings of words individuals use in concrete social contexts, emphasising words within their context.

Purwo (1990) defines pragmatics as exploring speech meanings within specific contexts. Thus, taking a pragmatic approach to language involves acknowledging its context, particularly in communication situations.

According to Wijana (1996), semantics and pragmatics are fields within linguistics that examine the meanings of language units. Semantics focuses on meanings from an internal perspective, whereas pragmatics explores meanings in context externally.

As Yule (1996) stated, this study examines the connection between linguistic forms and their users. It analyses both the speaker's intention and contextual significance. Furthermore, it examines how much more is communicated than what is directly expressed, along with the notion of relative distance. This concept pertains to the perceived closeness or distance of the listener or reader, influencing the amount of information that must be conveyed.

e.g., A: *There is a store over there* (let's go inside)

B: *No* (I do not want to go inside)

A: *Why not?* (Why do you not want to go inside?)

B: *I'm tired*. (I do not want to go inside because I am tired)

As Subroto (1999) states, semantics and pragmatics both analyse meaning but do so differently. Pragmatics focuses on the external meaning of language units, whereas semantics examines their internal meaning. Mey (2001) considers pragmatics a discipline that explores how context within society influences the use of human language.

2. Subfields of Pragmatics

This section explores the link between pragmatics and linguistics, emphasising the subtleties of language use that go beyond simple words. Leech (1983) investigates pragmalinguistics, revealing how particular grammatical elements engage with a speaker's intentions to enable effective communication. He also examines the interdisciplinary aspects of sociopragmatics, highlighting its connections to multiple fields and its significance in comprehending language dynamics within social contexts. This is illustrated in the following figure:

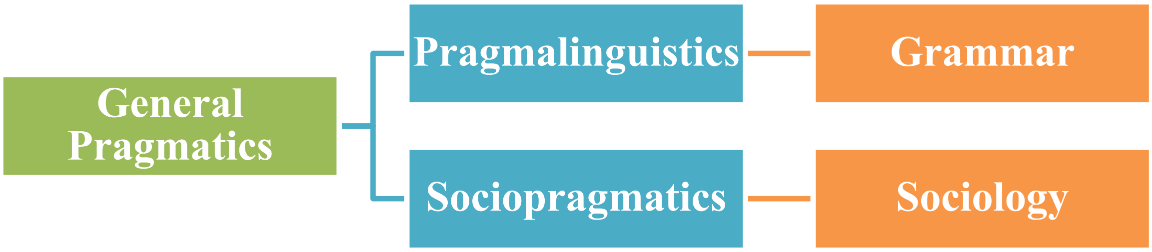

Figure 1. Pragmatics Subfields

Adapted from Leech 1983, p. 11

Pragmalinguistics emphasizes the grammatical elements of pragmatics, as defined by Leech (1983), which involves examining phenomena specific to particular languages. It explores the linguistic aspects of pragmatics and the unique features of a language that aid in conveying specific illocutions. Illocution in linguistics highlights a speaker's intention behind an utterance rather than just the words' meanings. For instance, this includes declarations of personal views or intents, such as in orders: "I order you to go." According to Hymes (1974), sociopragmatics is an interdisciplinary field. Alongside the significance of ordinary linguistics, other areas such as sociology, social anthropology, education, folklore, and poetics are also essential.

3. Elements of Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that examines how meaning and language use are influenced by the speaker, the listener, and the contextual features surrounding the utterances, including the following:

- Context of utterance,

- Generally observed principles of communication,
- The goals of the speaker,
- The treatment of given versus new information, including presupposition,
- Deixis. (The use of a word (pronoun) to refer to something that must be identified from a broader context.),
- Speech acts, especially illocutionary acts,
- Implicature,
- The relation of meaning or function between portions of discourse or turns of conversation.

4. Approaches to Pragmatics

Pragmatics broadly examines how linguistic expressions relate to their users. This concept suggests a dichotomy between language per se, the abstract linguistic competence, and how speakers and listeners utilize that competence. Consequently, the difference between semantics and pragmatics often corresponds to the contrast between competence and performance.

This introduction anticipates discussions about the connection between semantics and pragmatics, which have gained prominence in the history of semantics. Much of this attention on pragmatics can be attributed to the influence of three philosophers: Austin, Searle, and Grice, who have all advocated for a pragmatic perspective on meaning. Numerous linguistic challenges have emerged against the idea that language competence can be examined independently of performance, leading to criticism of formal language theories, including transformational grammar.

Semantics is the branch of linguistics most influenced by pragmatics. Nonetheless, the relationship between semantics (specifically conceptual semantics) and pragmatics continues to be controversial. The key question revolves around the legitimacy of distinguishing pragmatics from semantics. Three logically distinct viewpoints exist in this discussion:

1. Pragmatics ought to be categorized within semantics.
2. Semantics should fall under pragmatics.
3. Semantics and pragmatics are distinct yet complementary fields of study.

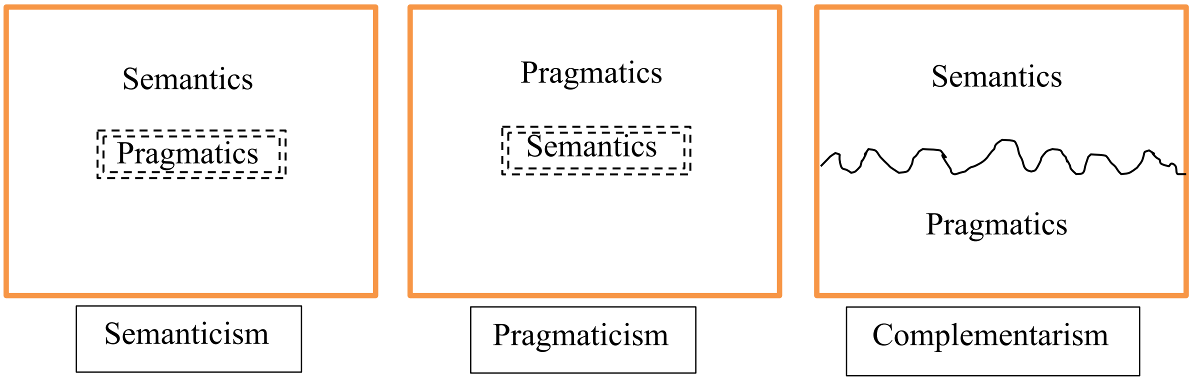

Figure 2. Three Approaches to Pragmatics

Adapted from Leech (1983, p.6)

At an elementary level, the contention between the three positions mentioned above can be traced in the everyday use of the verb *'mean.'* Of the two primary usages of this verb, one is bivalent (two bonds) ('*X*' means '*Y*'), and one is trivalent (three bonds) (the speaker means '*Y* by *X*'). For example:

*1) Door (*a movable structure used to close/ open an entrance*).*

2) *When the teacher says, Maroua! The door!* (She means by this remark that Marowa should close/open the door.)

The second example addresses meaning not just as a feature of language but also as an individual speaker's use of language in a specific context. This particular application of meaning is what we refer to as pragmatic.

The question arises: should meaning (1) be assimilated to meaning (2), or should meaning (2) be assimilated with meaning (1), or are both meanings separate from each other? We may note that *meaning* (2) that:

- It pertains to the speaker's aim to express a particular meaning that might not be apparent from the message.
- The listener's understanding of this meaning will likely rely on context.
- In this context, meaning is an act rather than a static existence. It encompasses *action* (where the speaker generates an effect on the listener) and *interaction* (where meaning is 'negotiated' between speaker and listener based on shared understanding).

5. Identifying Pragmatic Features

Having explored the definitions, elements, and approaches of pragmatics, it is now essential to pinpoint pragmatic features. The criteria outlined below serve as observable indicators to evaluate if a particular exploration of meaning aligns with the field of pragmatics:

a) Does the reference pertain to speakers or hearers?
b) Is reference made to the speaker's intention or the hearer's interpretation?
c) Is reference made to context?
d) Is reference made to the type of act or action (illocutionary force) performed through language?

If the response to any of these questions is affirmative, we have reason to consider that pragmatics is involved.

Conclusion

Pragmatics stands out as a crucial area in linguistics, connecting language structure with practical use. It emphasises how context, speaker intent, and social interactions shape meaning. Scholars like Morris and Mey illustrate that pragmatics is more than just sentence meaning; it involves the dynamic relationship between utterances and their contexts. Through subfields such as pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics, and by differentiating itself from semantics, pragmatics equips us with valuable insights into how language operates in real communication. The ongoing discussions about its overlap with semantics highlight the intricate nature of language, but there is a shared understanding that pragmatic competence is key for meaningful interaction. In summary, pragmatics enhances our grasp of language as an experience that is contextual and socially embedded.

Discussion Questions

- In what ways does Morris's (1938) definition of pragmatics differ from those of other scholars discussed in the lecture?
- What do you consider the key aspect of pragmatics?
- In what ways do sociopragmatic factors shape our interpretation of language across different social contexts?
- Do you think that pragmatics should be seen as a subset of semantics, or are they more effectively viewed as distinct yet interrelated areas? Justify your answer based on the discussed content.

Suggested Tasks

- Demonstrate how various scholars define pragmatics by constructing a table with the following columns: Scholar**,** Year**,** Definition of Pragmatics**,** Key Focus.
- Apply the diagnostic questions for identifying pragmatics by reviewing the criteria listed at the end of the lesson (e.g., Does the reference pertain to the speaker? Is there context involved?), writing a short sentence (e.g., "It's cold in here"), and using the criteria to explain whether the sentence requires pragmatic analysis and why.

Further Readings

Crystal, D. (1987). The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language. Cambridge University, Cambridge.

Hymes, D. (1974). *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA0026722X

Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics: An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing.

Course Three: Pragmatics vs. Semantics and Syntax

Content

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Define semantics and pragmatics using scholarly definitions.
- √ Distinguish between semantics and pragmatics regarding their focus, scope, and contribution to linguistic meaning.
- √ Understand and apply Leech's five criteria to differentiate pragmatic from semantic phenomena.
- √ Compare and contrast syntax, semantics, and pragmatics, highlighting the role of each branch in language analysis.
- √ Value the intricate nature and importance of pragmatics in everyday communication, along with its interpretive challenges.

Introduction

Studying linguistic meaning is fundamental in linguistics, especially within semantics and pragmatics. Although both fields strive to elucidate how meaning is communicated through language, they significantly differ in their focus and scope of analysis. Semantics typically addresses the literal, context-free meanings of words and sentences, while pragmatics investigates how context and speaker intentions influence meaning in real language use. Nevertheless, this distinction is not always clear-cut and remains a topic of ongoing scholarly debate. This course examines various viewpoints and definitions that differentiate semantics from pragmatics, emphasizing the complexities and subtleties of grasping linguistic meaning.

1. Theoretical Definitions and Perspectives

Both semantics and pragmatics pertain to linguistic meaning, making it essential to differentiate between them. However, establishing this distinction is not as simple as it seems. For instance, semantic meaning is often viewed as context-independent, while pragmatic meaning is seen as context-dependent. Additionally, semantic meaning is frequently defined as truth-conditional meaning, whereas pragmatic meaning is generally understood as meaning that does not influence the truth conditions of the utterance. The following definitions contrast pragmatics with semantics and syntax.

According to Morris (1938), semantics focuses on how signs relate to the objects they may denote. In contrast, pragmatics pertains to how signs relate to their interpreters. The term 'pragmatics' refers to studying the relationship between signs and those who interpret them. In the same vein of thought, Carnap (1942) asserts that when an investigation explicitly references the speaker or the language user, it belongs to the domain of pragmatics. We are dealing with semantics if we disregard the language user and focus solely on the expressions and their designata. Ultimately, if we set aside the designata and examine only the relationships among expressions, we enter the realm of (logical) syntax. Similarly, Katz (1977) delineates a theoretical distinction between semantic and pragmatic interpretation. He proposes that the semantic aspect encompasses only the elements of a sentence's meaning that an ideal speaker-hearer would comprehend when reading an anonymous letter. In such a situation, there are no clues regarding motive, the circumstances of transmission, or other pertinent factors to help understand the sentence based solely on its context of utterance.

Kempson (1988) defines semantics as a comprehensive explanation of sentence meaning in a language, recursively defining the truth conditions of those sentences. In contrast, pragmatics explains how sentences function as utterances to communicate information within a context. According to Davis (1991), pragmatics includes speakers' communicative intentions, the linguistic usages that require these intentions, and the strategies listeners employ to determine what these intentions and actions entail, which helps them grasp the speaker's intended message. This corresponds with Fotion's definition (1995), which sees pragmatics as examining language that prioritizes the users and the context of its use, rather than reference, truth, or grammar. Lycan (1995) defines pragmatics as a discipline that examines language use within contexts, emphasizing how contextual factors influence linguistic interpretation. He notes that the field encompasses theories regarding how identical sentences can convey distinct meanings or propositions depending on context, which may arise from ambiguity, indexicality, or a combination of both. Additionally, it covers speech act theory and the theory of conversational implicature.

2. Criteria for Pragmatic Phenomena (Leech's Framework)

According to Leech (1983), different elements of speech situations act as criteria to differentiate pragmatic from semantic phenomena. The presence of any of these elements indicates a pragmatic phenomenon, since pragmatics focuses on meaning within speech contexts. These five elements are:

a) Addressers or addressees (speaker & hearer)

b) The context of utterance: Leech explains that context involves the 'relevant' features of an utterance's physical and social surroundings. He emphasizes that context also incorporates background knowledge expected to be known by both speaker(s) and *hearer*(s), facilitating the *hearer's* understanding of the speaker's intended meaning in a particular utterance.

c) The goal(s) of an utterance: Leech defines the goal(s) of an utterance as the speaker's intended meaning or purpose behind it.

d) The utterance as a form of act or activity: A speech act is an utterance in pragmatics, representing a verbal action carried out in a particular context.

e) The utterance as a product of a verbal act: In this scenario, the utterance emerges from a verbal act referred to as a sentence-instance or sentence-token, yet it cannot be considered a complete sentence. Likewise, the utterance constitutes a piece of language that is either too concise or excessively lengthy to be recognized as a single sentence.

3. Distinction between Syntax, Semantics, and Pragmatics

A traditional approach in language analysis differentiates pragmatics from syntax and semantics. Syntax examines the connections between linguistic forms, their sequence arrangement, and the validity of these sequences. This analysis typically occurs without reference to the real world or its users. Semantics looks at how linguistic forms relate to entities in the world, essentially connecting words to things. It also aims to determine whether the relationships between verbal descriptions and states of affairs in the world hold true or not, irrespective of who creates that description. In contrast, pragmatics focuses on the interaction between linguistic forms and their users. Thus, in this three-part distinction, only pragmatics includes human elements in the analysis.

A speaker may fail to understand what is meant by what is said, especially in cross-cultural communication (Thomas, 1983). This occurs because the hearer can understand the semantic meaning yet fails to grasp the pragmatic one. This situation is called pragmatic failure, when an addressee does not understand the addresser's message. Such a situation can be better illustrated in the following figure:

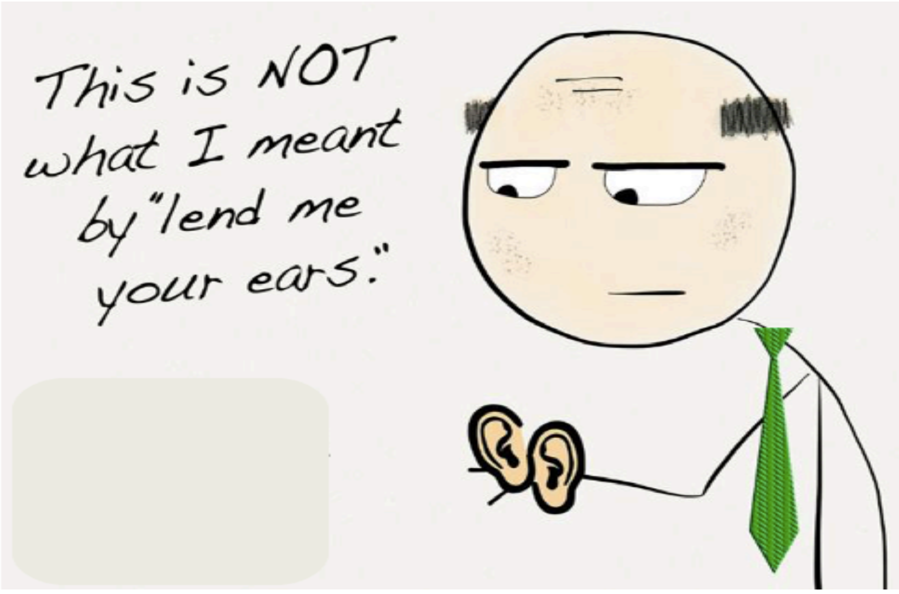

Figure 3. Pragmatic Failure

The character's complaint, "This is NOT what I meant by 'lend me your ears'," illustrates the divergence between literal and intended meanings. Here, the speaker employed an idiom (a figurative expression meaning "listen to me carefully"), but the listener took it literally (semantically), offering physical ears instead. This emphasizes the difference between semantic and pragmatic meaning.

4. **The Complexity and Appeal of Pragmatics**

Exploring language via pragmatics allows for examination of individuals' intended meanings, assumptions, purposes, goals, and actions (such as requests) they perform during conversations. When two friends talk, they might suggest specific meanings and deduce others without explicit linguistic signs pinpointing their interaction's meaning. The example below illustrates this complexity:

Her: So --- did you?

Him: Hey --- who wouldn`t?

You could hear the speakers and understand their words, yet you remained unsure about the message being communicated. Therefore, pragmatics is intriguing as it deals with how individuals linguistically comprehend one another, yet it can also be challenging because it necessitates interpreting people's intentions and meanings.

Conclusion

Pragmatics and semantics are two branches of linguistics that address distinct language aspects. Semantics focuses on the meanings of words and sentences, explores relationships between them, such as synonyms and antonyms, and investigates compositionality principles, which describe how individual meanings combine to create sentence meaning. On the other hand, pragmatics looks at how context impacts language interpretation and how elements like the speaker, the listener, and the surrounding social and cultural settings influence meaning. It extends beyond the literal meanings of words, examining implied or inferred meanings. Pragmatics investigates how speakers use language to achieve their communication objectives and how listeners understand and react to these expressions. In essence, semantics is about the meanings of words, whereas pragmatics studies language usage in everyday situations.

Discussion Questions

- Why is it difficult to draw a clear line between semantics and pragmatics? Can the distinction ever be absolute?
- How do definitions from different scholars (e.g., Morris vs. Leech) help broaden or complicate our understanding of pragmatics?
- Why is it important to consider the speaker's intentions in pragmatics? How does this affect how we interpret what someone says?
- How do syntax, semantics, and pragmatics complement each other in the study of language? Can any of them be studied in isolation?

Suggested Tasks

- Create a table comparing syntax, semantics, and pragmatics in terms of focus, units of analysis, dependence on context, and the involvement of the speaker and hearer.
- Using Leech's five criteria, analyze the following dialogues /sentences and identify which aspects are semantic and pragmatic.

  1- **A:** Are you coming to the meeting later?
  B: I have a dentist appointment at that time.
  2- **Teacher:** Can you open the window?
  Student: Sure. *(Student opens the window.)*
  3- **Friend 1:** It's getting late.
  Friend 2: Yeah, I should go.
  4- The president of the soccer club is a real genius.

- Explain the pragmatic and semantic meanings of the following context-sensitive sentences in various scenarios.

  1- It's cold in here
  2- You're standing on my foot.
  3- Do you know what time it is?
  4- Some people just don't know when to stop talking.
  5- I could eat a horse.

Further Readings

Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic structures*. Walter de Gruyter.

Davis, S. (1991). *Pragmatics: A Reader*. Oxford University Press on Demand.

Grice, H. P. (1989). *Studies in the way of words*. Harvard University Press.

Horn, L. R., & Ward, G. (2004). *The Handbook of Pragmatics*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Morris, C. W. (1938). *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*.

Saeed, J. I. (2015). *Semantics*. John Wiley & Sons.

Course Four: Text and Context

Content

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Define the concept of context in relation to linguistic analysis.
- √ Explain its significance in language interpretation.
- √ Identify the key contributions of scholars regarding the nature of context.
- √ Differentiate between social and interpersonal contexts in communication.
- √ Explain the difference between wide and narrow context, including their roles in pragmatics and semantics.
- √ Describe the features of the context.

Introduction

Context is a crucial, though frequently unclear, concept in linguistics, vital for understanding language in social interactions. Traditional theories tend to confine it to verbal cues, whereas contemporary views highlight its wider social, psychological, and situational aspects. This lecture examines important definitions and frameworks that demonstrate the complexity and importance of context in language use.

1. Introduction to the Concept of Context

The concept of context is relatively flexible and somewhat vague. This flexibility arises primarily from human communication being inherently social and occurring within specific social circumstances. Linguists have repeatedly highlighted that language's functions must occur within a particular context. In traditional linguistics, which persists today, context is frequently limited to the verbal cues surrounding specific words or sentences.

1.1 Broader Definitions of Context

According to Ochs (1979), context encompasses the beliefs and assumptions of language users related to temporal, spatial, and social environments; past, present, and future actions (both verbal and non-verbal); as well as the knowledge state and attentiveness of individuals participating in the social interaction. Similarly, for both Lyons and Ochs, context includes linguistic features since they frequently elicit pertinent contextual assumptions.

Leech (1983, p. 13) defines context as "any background knowledge assumed to be shared by s [speaker] and h [hearer], and which contributes to *h's* interpretation of what s means by a given utterance." According to him, for effective understanding and interpretation of an utterance, both the speaker and the hearer must share certain information.

1.2 Firth's Context of Situation

Firth (1950) presented his description of the context of situation under these headings:

a) The participants in the situation: what the author referred to as persons and personalities, concepts that align closely with what sociologists consider to be the status and roles of individuals involved.

b) The action of the participants: what they are doing, including both their verbal and non-verbal actions;

c) Other relevant features of the situation: the nearby objects and occurrences as they relate to the ongoing events.

d) The effects of the verbal action: what changes resulted from what the participants in the situation expressed.

1.3 Malinowski's Context of Situation

Malinowski (1923) introduced the concept of the context of situation, which denotes the "environment of the text" (Halliday, 1989, p. 6). Consequently, he asserts that "the statement or utterance in everyday life has no meaning except in the context of the situation" (Malinowski, 1923, p. 307). Knowledge is conveyed within a social framework, exemplified by relationships like those between parent and child, teacher and student, or peers. Furthermore, the meanings of words exchanged in these interactions derive from the surrounding activities, which are inherently social and aimed at specific social objectives (Halliday, 1989).

2. Types of Context

2.1 Social vs. Interpersonal Context

Context can be viewed as both social and interpersonal. Socially, it refers to the internal organization within a society, including its intentions, internal distinctions, and subgroupings. Thus, analyzing language within a social framework involves exploring the linguistic output shaped by societal structures. This analysis reveals how societal traits impact language change and variation, while also considering how attitudes toward this variation influence the internal dynamics and forces within the community. In contrast, the interpersonal context is often prioritized in fields like pragmatics, discourse analysis, and conversational analysis. These areas emphasize the individuals engaged in communication, such as the speaker, listener, reader, or writer, over the linguistic structures of society. In this view, the interpersonal context is vital for interpreting the exchanged statements or texts, often rooted in psychological factors like intentions, beliefs, and rationality.

Systemic functional linguistics, while clearly focused on the connections between language and society, defines context by referencing the pertinent elements of the social situation. This approach has its roots in Firth and Malinowski's definition of context (Ghadessy 1999; Leckie-Tarry 1995).

Contextual features, such as the physical environment of utterances, participants' individual knowledge and beliefs (or worldview), their objectives and intentions, mutual attitudes, sociocultural assumptions about roles and status, and the social values linked to different message components, are crucial for interpreting utterances. Nevertheless, the significance of context in language use has been most strongly emphasized in studies of non-traditional linguistics, which often involve scholars like Malinowski, Firth, Goffman, Fishman, Halliday, and Hymes, among others.

2.2 Wide and Narrow Context

Bach (1997) identifies two distinct types of context, each with its own purpose. The wide context encompasses all contextual details necessary for understanding the speaker's intention and ensuring effective speech act performance. In contrast, the narrow context concentrates on information that directly correlates to the semantic values of indexicals. Additionally, the author notes that narrow context pertains to semantics, while wide context relates to pragmatics.

3. Features of Context

Halliday (1989) identified features of the context of the situation under three categories, as shown in the figure below:

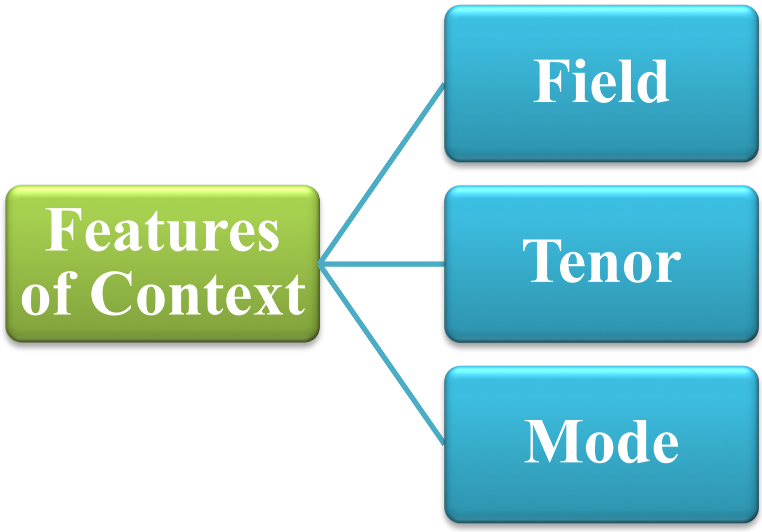

Figure 4. Halliday's Features of Context

Adapted from Halliday (1989, p. 12)

The author states that the field of discourse refers to what is happening and the type of social action involved. The tenor of discourse relates to the participants, including their identities, status, and roles. Meanwhile, the mode of discourse focuses on the purpose of language and the participants' expectations in that context.

In the same vein, Lyons (1977, p.574) has outlined several features of context as universal principles of logic and language usage as follows:

a) Knowledge of 'role and status' (where role covers both role in the speech event, as speaker or addressee, and social role, and status covers notions of relative social standing).

b) Knowledge of spatial and temporal location.

c) Knowledge of the formality level.

d) Knowledge of the medium (roughly the code or style appropriate to a channel, like the distinction between a language's written and spoken varieties).

e) Knowledge of appropriate subject matter.

f) Knowledge of the appropriate province (or domain determining the language register).

Although context has been defined by many linguists and pragmatists who have tried to provide its types and features, context is a complex concept. According to Mey (1993), setting a clear-cut definition poses significant challenges. Linguists have often indicated their struggle to define this notion precisely (Bar-Hillel 1970 & Ochs 1979).

Conclusion

The notion of context is essential for grasping human communication, yet it often remains a complicated and unclear concept in linguistic theory. Grounded in the inherently social aspect of language, context includes the various social, temporal, spatial, and psychological factors that influence meaning in discourse. While traditional linguistics has typically limited context to the immediate verbal surroundings, modern perspectives have broadened this perspective to incorporate wider social and interpersonal aspects. Scholars like Ochs, Leech, Firth, Malinowski, and Halliday have offered detailed definitions and frameworks that emphasize the diverse dimensions of context, encompassing shared knowledge, speaker intentions, societal roles, and situational elements. This developing understanding highlights the crucial role context plays in shaping linguistic interpretation and the difficulties it presents for achieving precise definitions.

Discussion Questions

- Why is context essential for interpreting the meaning of an utterance?
- Explain the differences in focus and application between interpersonal and social contexts.
- In what ways does context change the meaning of an utterance? Can you provide a real-life example where a misunderstanding of context led to miscommunication?
- Do you believe that the meaning of language can ever be completely understood without considering context? Why or why not?

Suggested Tasks

- Construct a concept map showing the relationships between key theorists (e.g., Firth, Halliday, Bach) and their views on context.
- Analyze the following short dialogue and identify elements of wide and narrow context. Explain how each element influences interpretation. (The setting is a university hallway, just before a final exam.)

  Alex: Hey, did you bring *it*?

  Jordan: Yeah, of course. You think I'd forget *that* today?

  Alex: Good. I really hope *she* doesn't notice this time.

  Jordan: Me too. Let's be quick. We only have ten minutes before we go in.
- Below is a list of contextual features. Sort each one into the correct category by placing a ✔ in the appropriate column of the table.

Context Feature	Social Context	Interpersonal Context	Wide Context	Narrow Context
The speaker's intention behind the utterance				
The physical setting where communication occurs				
The status and roles of the participants in the society				
Shared beliefs between speaker and hearer				
The time and location of the interaction				
Whether the conversation is formal or informal				
A teacher speaking to a student during a lesson				
A sarcastic tone used in a response				

Further Readings

Clark, H. H. (1996). *Using language*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511620539

Firth, J. R. (1957). *Papers in Linguistics, 1934-1951*.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1991). *Language, context, and text: Aspects of Language in a Social-semiotic Perspective*.

Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA0026722X

Malinowski, B. (1923). *The problem of meaning in primitive languages*.

Mey, J. L. (1993). *Pragmatics : an introduction*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA50191538

Course Five: Deixis

Content

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Define deixis and discuss its importance in linguistic communication.
- √ Identify and classify different types of deictic expressions.
- √ Examine how context (time, place, speaker/listener roles) influences the meaning of deictic expressions.
- √ Recognize cross-linguistic variations in deixis.
- √ Evaluate how deixis influences interpretation in real-life and recorded communication.

Introduction

Deixis refers to context-dependent expressions in language that point to individuals, locations, or times based on the speaker's viewpoint. Deictic expressions are essential for constructing and interpreting meaning during communication. Deixis challenges the notion of language as an isolated system by linking utterances to the physical and social contexts in which they exist. This lesson examines the various types of deixis: person, spatial, temporal, and social, demonstrating how they operate across different languages and contexts. It emphasizes both the grammatical frameworks and pragmatic significance of deictic expressions, underlining their vital role in human interaction and the creation of meaning.

1. Introduction to Deixis

The term deixis (pronounced 'day-icksis') originates from a Greek word that means 'showing' or 'pointing' through language. Any linguistic expression that serves this purpose is known as a deictic expression. It is typically defined as representing the spatiotemporal context and the encoder's subjective experience expressed in an utterance. Elements like I, here, now, and this, referred to as 'pure deictic terms', are highly context-specific and serve as the speaker's cognitive point of reference. For example, what I perceive as 'here' may be perceived as 'there' by you. These terms create challenges related to reference and meaning, and traditional interpretations have sought a balance between lexical and pragmatic meanings.

1.1 Deixis and Linguistic Context

Deixis fundamentally shapes the structure and meaning of utterances based on their temporal and spatial context, the identities of the speaker and listener, and the surrounding objects and events. For instance, the phrase '*that man over there*' can only be understood through the perspective of someone situated in a specific location at a particular time. This principle similarly applies to terms like '*yesterday*' and numerous other deictic expressions. Many languages encapsulate deixis within grammatical categories of person and tense. In

English, the choice and understanding of words like 'I' or 'you' depend on the speaker's role and the designation of the listener.

Furthermore, the tense selection is influenced by the timing of the utterance, although this process is undoubtedly more complex. The demonstrative pronouns 'this' and 'that' and certain uses of the definite article 'the' are also examples of deixis. Temporal and locative adverbs such as 'now', 'then', 'tomorrow', 'here', and 'there' are likewise deictic. These represent the most apparent instances of deixis, ubiquitous in the grammar and vocabulary of natural languages.

In linguistic anthropology, deixis is seen as a linguistic phenomenon that fundamentally contests the notion of language as a self-sufficient and independent system. Deictic elements connect an utterance to contextually variable factors and can even be said to affect the meaning of other words in the surrounding text.

1.2 The Deictic Center

Deixis refers to a type of reference connected to the speaker's context, with the primary distinction between deictic expressions being 'near the speaker' and 'away from the speaker.' In English, proximal terms that indicate 'near the speaker' include 'this,' 'here,' and 'now,' while distal terms represent 'away from the speaker' with 'that,' 'there,' and 'then.' Proximal terms are generally interpreted in relation to the speaker's location or deictic center, meaning 'now' is typically understood as referring to a point or period in time centered on the speaker's utterance. This can be explained in the following figure:

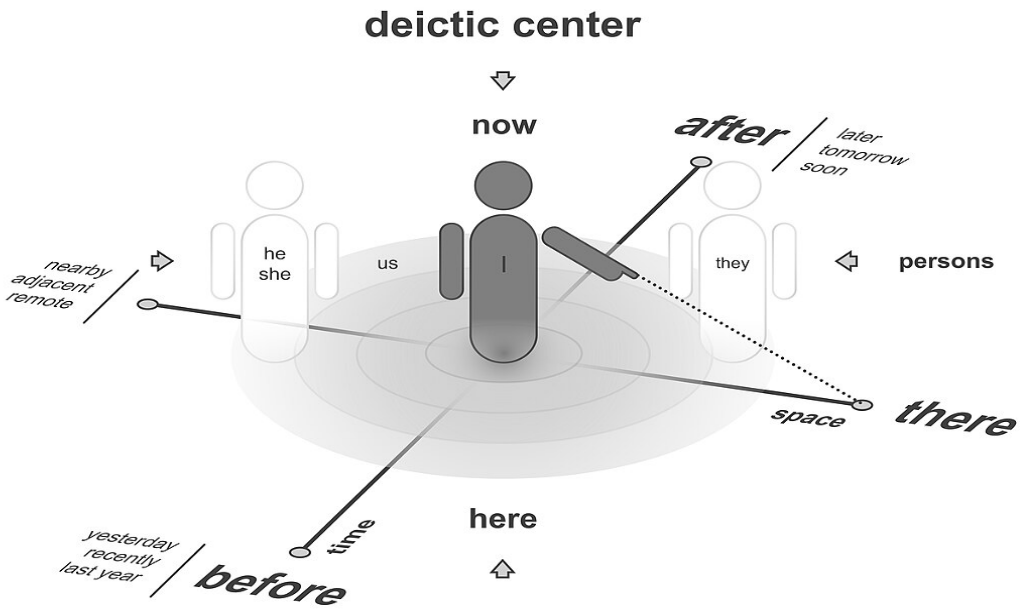

Figure 5. Speaker-Context Reference in Language

Adapted from *ELT Concourse: deixis*. (n.d.).

Distal terms can denote ‘away from the speaker,’ but in some languages, they serve to differentiate between ‘near addressee’ and ‘away from both the speaker and addressee.’ For instance, in Japanese, the pronoun ‘that’ has different translations: ‘sore’ for ‘that near addressee’ and 'a*re*' for ‘that distant from both speaker and addressee,’ while the proximal ‘this near speaker’ is translated as ‘*kore*.’

We can determine if a movement is towards or away from the speaker. If someone is approaching, you might say, ‘*Here she comes!’* On the other hand, if she is moving away, you would probably say, ‘*There she goes!’* This deictic effect also explains why you would tell someone to ‘Go to bed’ instead of ‘Come to bed’.

2. Types of Deictic Expressions

When you spot an unusual object and inquire, ‘What’s that?’, you employ a deictic expression (‘that’) to refer to something in the surrounding context. These expressions, known as indexicals**,** are among the first spoken by young children. They can refer to individuals using person deixis (‘me’, ‘you’), to locations with spatial deixis (‘here’, ‘there’), or to times employing temporal deixis (‘now’, ‘then’). All of these rely on a shared context between the speaker and listener for accurate interpretation. Deictic expressions are primarily utilized in face-to-face spoken communication, where phrases like ‘I’ll put this here’ are readily comprehensible to those present, yet may necessitate translation for others who are absent.

e.g., A: I want to discuss an urgent matter with you.

B: I would be pleased to help you.

The distinction discussed pertains to person deixis, specifically referencing the speaker (‘I’) and the addressee (‘you’). While these forms appear simple, their usage is quite complex. To understand these deictic expressions, we need to acknowledge that individuals in a conversation frequently shift from being ‘I’ to ‘you’. Young children often experience a phase in their development where this distinction poses challenges, leading them to say things like ‘Read you a story’ (instead of ‘me’) when they hand over a favorite book.

2.1 Person Deixis

Person deixis consists of a fundamental three-part division represented by the pronouns for the first person (‘I’), second person (‘you’), and third person (‘he,’ ‘she,’ or ‘it’). In various languages, these deictic categories: speaker, addressee, and others, are often detailed with markers indicating relative social status (for instance, addressee with higher status compared to addressee with lower status). Terms that signify higher status are referred to as honorifics. Analyzing the factors influencing the choice between these forms is frequently termed social deixis.

A well-known example of social contrast featuring person deixis is the difference in address forms for familiar versus unfamiliar individuals in some languages. This distinction is referred to as the T/V distinction, derived from the French terms ‘tu’ (familiar) and ‘vous’ (non-familiar), and it appears in several languages, including German and Spanish. Selecting a particular form subtly conveys the speaker’s perspective on their relationship with the addressee. In social contexts where distinctions in social status are usually highlighted, a higher, older, and more powerful speaker tends to use 'tu' when addressing someone lower, younger, or less powerful, while being addressed with the 'vous' form in return. When social changes take place, such as in contemporary Spain, how do a young businesswoman (who holds a higher economic status) and her older cleaning lady (with a lower economic status) address each other? In this scenario, age proves to be a more significant factor than economic status; the older woman opts for 'tu', while the younger one addresses her as 'Usted'.

In deictic terms, the third person is not a direct participant in basic (I-you) interactions and, as an outsider, inherently maintains a greater distance. Therefore, third-person pronouns serve as distal forms within the framework of person deixis. Employing a third-person form in place of a second-person one can signal distance (and lack of familiarity). This technique can be utilized in English for ironic or humorous effects, such as when one individual, who is busy in the kitchen, addresses another who is being quite lazy, as noted in

(1) Would his highness like some coffee?

The distance created by third-person forms can soften potential accusations (for example, 'You didn't clean up') as seen in (2a), or depersonalize an issue, framing it as an impersonal concern grounded in a general rule, illustrated in (2b).

(2) a. Somebody didn't clean after himself.

b. Each person has to clean up after him or herself.

Indeed, the speaker can express a general 'rule' pertaining to themselves and others by employing the first-person plural ('we'), as illustrated in (3).

(3) We clean up after ourselves around here.

In English, these usages may be ambiguous, leading to two interpretations. There is an exclusive 'we' (the speaker along with others, excluding the listener) and an inclusive 'we' (which includes both the speaker and the listener).

e.g., *We are in this together*. (inclusive we: the speaker + the others + the addressee)

e.g., *Do not worry, we will email you*. (exclusive we: the speaker + the others)

In English, the inherent ambiguity allows the listener to discern the communication's intent. The listener can choose to be either part of the group to which the rule applies (i.e., an addressee) or an outsider to whom the rule does not apply (i.e., not an addressee). Thus, the listener identifies the type of 'more' being conveyed.

The inclusive-exclusive distinction is evident when comparing 'let's go' (to friends) with 'let us go' (to someone who has detained the speaker and friends). In the first instance, the action of going is inclusive, while in the latter, it is exclusive.

2.2 Spatial Deixis

The concept of distance previously discussed is evidently significant to spatial deixis, which indicates the relative positions of people and objects. In English, this is represented by just two adverbs: 'here' and 'there'. However, older texts and certain dialects include a wider variety of deictic expressions. While 'yonder' (indicating a greater distance from the speaker) is still in use, terms like 'hither' (to this place) and 'thence' (from that place) now seem outdated. The latter two adverbs reflect motion toward or away from the speaker. Additionally, some motion verbs, such as 'come' and 'go', maintain a deictic quality when indicating movement toward ('Come to bed!') or away from the speaker ('Go to bed!').

A version of the motion concept toward the speaker (i.e., becoming visible) appears to be the first deictic meaning children acquire. This concept defines their use of words such as 'this' and 'here' (indicating visibility). In contrast, 'that' and 'there' refer to things that have moved out of the child's view (indicating they can no longer be seen).

When examining spatial deixis, it is essential to recognize that a speaker's location can be mentally and physically understood. Consider the example illustrated in the following figure:

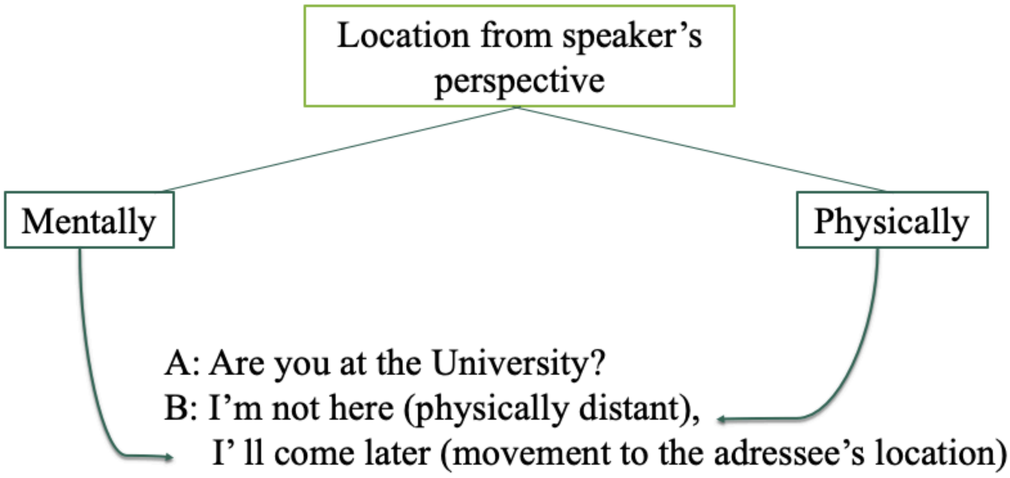

Figure 6. The Importance of Speaker Location

Even when speakers are away from their home base, they often continue to use 'here' to refer to that (physically distant) home location, as if they are still there. Moreover, speakers seem capable of imagining themselves in different places before actually being there, exemplified by phrases like 'I'll come later' (indicating movement to the addressee's location). This is sometimes called deictic projection, and we increasingly utilize this concept as technology evolves, enabling us to manipulate our perceptions of place. If 'here' represents the location of the speaker's utterance (and 'now' signifies the time of the speaker's utterance), then an utterance like (4) would appear nonsensical.

(4) I am not here now.

However, I can speak into a telephone answering machine, indicating that 'now' refers to any moment someone attempts to contact me, rather than just when I record my message. In effect, recording serves as a form of dramatic performance for future listeners, allowing me to project my presence as if I am in the proper place. A similar deictic projection occurs in dramatic performances when I use direct speech to convey another person or entity's perspective, setting, and emotions. For instance, I could describe a visit to a pet store, as shown in (5).

(5) I looked at this little puppy in a cage with such a sad look on its face. It was like, 'Oh, I'm so unhappy here. Will you set me free?'

The word 'here' in the cage does not denote the speaker's physical spot; instead, it indicates the position of the person acting as the puppy.

It may be that the truly pragmatic basis of spatial deixis is psychological distance. Objects that are physically near are often perceived by the speaker as psychologically near. Conversely, physically far away items are usually seen as psychologically distant (e.g., 'that man over there'). Nonetheless, a speaker can also indicate something physically close (such as a perfume they are smelling) as psychologically distant: 'I don't like that.' Thus, a word like 'that' does not have a fixed (semantic) meaning; rather, its meaning is shaped by the context provided by the speaker. Similar psychological processes seem to operate in how we differentiate between proximal and distal expressions that indicate temporal deixis.

2.3 Temporal Deixis

We have observed that the proximal term 'now' signifies both the moment of the speaker's utterance and the moment the hearer perceives the speaker`s voice (the hearer's 'now'). In contrast, the distal term 'then' pertains to both past (6a.) and future (6b.) occasions relative to the speaker's current time.

(6) a. November 22nd, 1963? I was in Scotland then.

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

It is important to recognize that we also utilize complex systems of non-deictic temporal reference, like calendar time (dates, as seen in (6a)) and clock time (hours, as shown in (6b)). Nonetheless, people typically acquire these forms of temporal reference much later than deictic expressions such as 'yesterday', 'tomorrow', 'today', 'tonight', 'next week', 'last week', and 'this week'. All these expressions rely on understanding the relevant utterance time for accurate interpretation. Consider the example highlighted in the following figure:

Figure 7. Ambiguous Temporal Deictic Expression

If we are unaware of the utterance (i.e., writing) time of a note, like in figure 7, placed on an office door, we cannot determine whether we have a short or long wait ahead.

Figure 8. Misleading Temporal Deictic Expression

In the same way, if we go back to a fast-food restaurant the following day, which shows the notice in figure 8, we will still be (deictically) one day early for the free sandwiches.

The psychological foundation of temporal deixis appears akin to that of special deixis. We can perceive temporal events as entities that approach us (into view) or recede from us (out of view). A common metaphor in English describes events arriving towards the speaker from the future (e.g., 'the coming week,' 'the approaching year') and departing towards the past (e.g., 'in days gone by,' 'the past week'). Additionally, we tend to regard the near or immediate future as close to utterance time by employing the proximal deictic 'this,' as illustrated in 'this (coming) weekend' or 'this (coming) Thursday.'

A fundamental, yet frequently overlooked, example of temporal deixis in English is the selection of verb tense. In contrast to other languages, which feature multiple verb forms for various tenses, English employs just two primary forms: the present, as illustrated in (7b).

(7) *a. I live here now.*

b. I lived there then.

The present tense represents a proximal form, while the past tense signifies a distal form. An event that occurred in the past, as shown in (8a), is generally perceived as removed from the speaker's current context. Interestingly, situations regarded as highly unlikely (or impossible) from the speaker's present perspective are also indicated by the distal (past tense) form, as illustrated in (8b).

(8) a. I could swim (when I was a child).

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

In English, the past tense is consistently employed in *if*-clauses that suggest events the speaker views as distant from present reality, as seen in (9).

(9) a. If I had a yacht,..

b. If I was rich,..

Neither of the concepts in (9) should be regarded as referring to past events. They are presented as being deictically removed from the speaker's present context. They are so distant that they convey a negative implication (we infer that the speaker does not own a yacht and is not wealthy).

To grasp various English conditional structures (such as 'Had I known sooner…'), it's important to recognize that in temporal deixis, the remote or distal form conveys not just a sense of time separation but also a disconnection from present reality or facts.

3. Deixis and Grammar

The fundamental distinctions related to person, spatial, and temporal deixis are evident in one of the most frequent structural contrasts in English grammar: direct versus indirect (or reported) speech. As previously mentioned, deictic expressions for person ('you'), place ('here'), and time ('this evening') can be understood within the same context as that of the speaker who expresses them (10a).

(10) *a. Are you planning to be here this evening?*

b. I asked her if she was planning to be there that evening.

When the context changes, as illustrated in (10), to one where I recount the earlier utterance, that utterance is then deictically indicated relative to the circumstances of the inquiry. Notably, the proximal forms presented in (10a) have transitioned to their corresponding distal forms in (10b). This consistent difference in English reported discourse highlights a distinction between the 'near speaker' implication of direct speech and the 'away from speaker' implication of indirect speech. The proximal deictic forms in direct speech reporting convey, often vividly, a sense of sharing the same context as the utterance. Conversely, the distal deictic forms in indirect speech reporting render the original speech event appear more distant.

Conclusion

It should not be surprising that deictic expressions are often overlooked in pragmatic discussions. Their meanings depend significantly on context and the speaker's intent, indicating relative distance. Because of their brevity and extensive applicability, deictic expressions communicate much more than their literal definitions. Deixis represents a crucial linguistic concept highlighting the strong link between language and context. It shows that meaning is not solely confined to words but often varies based on the speaker's identity, location, the timing of the utterance, and their relationship with the listener. By exploring person, spatial, and temporal deixis, along with their grammatical and pragmatic implications, we enhance our understanding of how speakers successfully ground communication in real-world situations. Grasping deixis is vital not just for linguistic analysis but also for appreciating the subtleties of everyday language use across diverse cultures and communicative contexts.

Discussion Questions

- Why is deixis considered context-dependent, and how does this challenge the notion of language as a self-contained system?
- What are the differences in function and usage between person, spatial, and temporal deixis? Include examples from everyday conversations for each.
- What role does deixis play in creating ambiguity in language, and how is this ambiguity usually clarified in conversation?

Suggested Tasks

- Research how deixis is expressed in Arabic, French, Japanese, Spanish, or Korean, and compare it with English. Focus on the different ways social or spatial distinctions are marked.
- Underline the deictic expressions, and state the type of deixis in each case (person, spatial, temporal, discourse, social). In some instances, deixis belongs to more than one type:
    - This ring costs sixty euros.
    - I am looking at those clouds over there.
    - My friend has gone back to Paris.
    - You showed me that picture last week.

- Sorry, sir. We haven't got any more tickets.
- She has finished Chapter 3.
- You are my best friend here.
- Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away.
- Hey you, your seat is right over there!
- My son wrote a novel here two years ago.
- Your daughter found page 33 interesting.
- Do you know whose purse this is?
- Ladies and gentlemen, now I will talk about foreign investments in my country.
- A: I'm sorry I stepped on your toe!
  B: It's all right, madam.

Further Readings

Cutting, J. (2002). *Pragmatics and Discourse: a resource book for students*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA56486975

Fillmore, C. J. (1997). *Lectures on Deixis*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA32748396

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. http://archives.umc.edu.dz/handle/123456789/111528

Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511813313

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

Semester Two

- **Course One:** Conversation
- **Course Two:** Conversation and Cooperative Maxims
- **Course Three:** Implicature
- **Course Four:** Politeness
- **Course Five:** Speech Act Theory

Course One: Conversation

Content

Introduction

1. Pragmatics and Conversation
2. The Importance and Purpose of Conversation
3. Metaphors and Structure of Conversation
4. Development of Conversational Skills
5. Conversation Analysis

Conclusion

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Explain the role of pragmatics in human communication.
- √ Identify the key purposes of conversation.
- √ Describe how conversations are structured.
- √ Discuss the significance of nonverbal cues and context in shaping meaning during conversations.

Introduction

Human communication extends far beyond the literal meaning of words. In everyday life, the subtleties of how we speak and interpret others shape our social interactions, relationships, and shared understanding. At the heart of this complexity lies pragmatics, the branch of linguistics that explores how meaning is constructed through context, intent, and social conventions. One of the most dynamic expressions of pragmatics is conversation; a collaborative and interactive process in which individuals co-construct meaning in real time. This lesson delves into the principles and practices that underlie conversational exchanges, examining how pragmatic competence is developed from infancy and how various disciplines analyze the structure and function of talk-in-interaction. From baby talk to complex discourse strategies, from casual chats to formal discussions, conversational mechanisms reveal much about human cognition, culture, and social behavior.

1. **Pragmatics and Conversation**

Pragmatics examines the meaning behind what speakers intend when communicating and how listeners interpret their words. While the chosen words and their sequence determine a portion of a sentence's meaning, pragmatics extends beyond just the context of speech. It also involves the regulations that guide language interactions, including the need to give the listener sufficient context and to recognize what is socially acceptable.

Horton (2017) defines conversation as encompassing a range of communicative contexts, from late-night dorm discussions and workplace dialogues to ordering meals at restaurants and sending text messages through smartphones. A common thread among these interactions is the interactive exchange between two or more individuals. Importantly, conversations go beyond mere autonomous encoding and decoding of language; it is not just about using utterances as a simple channel for transmitting information between separate speakers and listeners (Cherry, 1966; Reddy, 1979). In most conversational contexts, the communicative actions of participants are closely intertwined (Clark, 1996; Garrod & Doherty, 1994); one person's input is influenced by prior discourse, which significantly impacts subsequent contributions. Consequently, the meanings conveyed during conversations arise from the coordinated verbal and nonverbal efforts of speakers who engage interdependently (referred to by Krauss and Fussell (1996) as the dialogic perspective of communication).

2. The Importance and Purpose of Conversation

Conversation is arguably the most essential way we connect with others. It enables us to share information, build relationships, address challenges, and achieve various daily objectives. From the moment we learn our first words in infancy, much of our lives is spent engaging in conversation, not just face-to-face but also through phone calls, emails, and increasingly, newer online platforms. Given its crucial role as the primary medium for communication and social interaction, conversation in all its forms has been the subject of extensive research. Scholars from various disciplines have aimed to understand how people interact during conversations and the socio-cognitive processes that influence these exchanges.

Human conversation serves one or more of the following purposes:

- Information: to acquire, present, or share knowledge about facts (know-what), processes (know-how), or connections (know-who). It is about learning from one another.
- Sense-making: to understand something deeply (beyond just obtaining facts), especially a complex issue.
- Perspectives or viewpoints: to acquire diverse points of view or reach consensus.
- Change: to confront and alter the perspective or goals of oneself or others.
- Concepts: to create ideas, bring them to light, and imagine futures
- Collaboration: facilitating the efficient creation of shared work products.
- Enhancing or establishing connections: engaging with others, fostering relationships

- Entertainment or enjoyment: enjoying oneself, participating in playful conversation, chatting, flirting
- Recognition, attention, or reputation: to obtain or offer it.
- Appreciation, empathy, or reassurance: to experience or give it.
- Decision-making: to select among options.
- Problem-solving: to tackle challenges or identify the optimal solution.
- Reveal problems: to expose concealed issues or unintended consequences of our actions.
- Search for opportunities: to discover potential prospects.

3. Metaphors and Structure of Conversation

Various metaphors describe the structure of conversations. For some, it resembles a dance where partners synchronize their movements effortlessly. For others, it mimics the flow of traffic at an intersection, highlighting the continual movement that avoids collisions. However, the predominant analytical framework does not rely on dance (as there is no music) or traffic dynamics (with no traffic lights). Instead, it draws an analogy to the operations of a market economy. In this context, a scarce resource known as the 'floor' represents the right to speak, and controlling this resource at any moment is termed a 'turn.' When the control is not predetermined, anyone can seek to gain it, a process known as turn-taking. As a form of social interaction, turn-taking adheres to a local management system that members of a social group understand conventionally. This system comprises guidelines for acquiring, maintaining, or relinquishing turns. It is most essential when there's a potential alteration in turn control, referred to as a Transition Relevance Place (TRP). Within any social group, specific speech patterns (or the lack thereof) are typically linked to a TRP (Malmkjaer, 2003 & Yule, 2010).

4. Development of Conversational Skills

Conversational skills are a crucial component of pragmatic abilities. Even prior to speaking, we begin to grasp the rules of conversation. When parents engage in baby talk with their infants, they do so in a highly organized manner. They employ exaggerated pitch variations to capture the infant's attention and emphasize that 'these sounds that I am making now are important.' They articulate more clearly than they do with older children and adults, helping the baby identify the key sounds in their language. Parents treat these interactions like genuine conversations, following a turn-taking format, even if the baby does not respond. The pauses between the parent's phrases mirror those used in adult conversations. This final aspect of parents is vital in teaching children how to engage in conversations; indeed, children can take turns in dialogue and create nonsensical words that 'sound right' before uttering their first real word.

As we age, we acquire an array of rules governing conversational exchanges: responses typically follow questions, extended pauses imply a need for further commentary from you, and countless other subtle, unspoken language conventions exist. These elements comprise pragmatics. Engaging with someone who disregards the turn-taking aspect of dialogue, who takes excessive time before replying, or who does not signal they intend to continue speaking with an 'um' or 'ah' can be quite frustrating.

5. Conversation Analysis

Conversation analysis (CA) investigates communication during interactions, incorporating verbal and non-verbal components found in everyday life. Its main aim is to outline the organization, structure, and sequential patterns of interactions, whether they happen in formal environments such as schools, medical offices, or courts, or in casual conversations.

Drawing from ethnomethodology, especially the contributions of Harold Garfinkel (1970) and Erving Goffman (1956), Conversation Analysis (CA) emerged in the late 1960's and early 1970's, largely through the efforts of sociologist Harvey Sacks (1972) and his close colleagues Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson (1983). Today, CA is a widely recognized methodology utilized in sociology, anthropology, linguistics, speech communication, and psychology. It carries substantial weight in interactional sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and discursive psychology, and has established itself as a distinct discipline.

Conversation analysis examines social interaction by focusing on recurring speaking practices in diverse contexts and settings. Initial studies primarily analyzed English conversation, but recent research has expanded to include conversations in various global communities. Cook (1989) defines conversation as discourse that is collaboratively constructed and negotiated in real-time by speakers, emphasizing its unplanned and informal nature.

Our discussions show that conversation is a form of discourse that encompasses several strategies important to pragmatics. Each conversation comprises acts that reflect the speaker's intentions, and our attempts to identify and assess these acts and discourse strategies enhance the field of pragmatics.

Conclusion

Conversation is far more than a simple exchange of words; it is a sophisticated, interactive process deeply rooted in the principles of pragmatics. From early infancy, humans begin to internalize communication rules through social interactions, learning how to interpret and respond appropriately within various contexts. As this text has shown, the study of pragmatics and conversation analysis reveals the underlying structures that guide our verbal and nonverbal exchanges, including turn-taking, intention recognition, and the coordination of meaning. These mechanisms are essential not only for effective communication but also for building relationships, solving problems, and navigating the social world. As researchers continue to explore how conversations function across different cultures, platforms, and situations, our understanding of human interaction and the vital role of language within it deepens. Ultimately, mastering the art of conversation is fundamental to both individual development and the collective human experience.

Discussion Questions

- What distinguishes pragmatic meaning from literal meaning in conversation? Can you recall a time when someone misunderstood your intent even though your words were clear?
- Why is turn-taking considered essential in conversation? What occurs when turn-taking norms are violated?
- How does context influence the interpretation of others' words or behavior in a conversation? Could you share a personal experience as an example?
- What role do nonverbal cues play in effective communication, and how could their absence impact interactions?

Suggested Tasks

- Select a cultural context that differs from your own. Investigate and present how conversational norms vary from those you know—such as interruptions, silence, eye contact, or politeness strategies.
- Analyze the following dialogue by identifying turn-taking moments and transition relevance places (TRPs), highlighting examples of pragmatic strategies (e.g., clarifying intent, seeking reassurance, suggesting consensus), and reflecting on how meaning was co-constructed.

Context: Two university students, *Lina* and *Alex*, bump into each other at a coffee shop.

Lina: Hey Alex! I didn’t expect to see you here.

Alex: Oh—Lina, hi! Yeah, I just needed a caffeine boost before the stats exam.

Lina: Ugh, same. I’m actually freaking out a bit. Did you review the regression stuff?

Alex: Kind of... I mean, I skimmed it, but I'm not sure I *really* get it.

Lina: Right? I watched that tutorial Dr. Han posted, but it just made me more confused.

Alex: (laughs) Honestly, same. Maybe we should go over it together after class?

Lina: That'd be amazing. Thank you! I don't want to bomb this.

Alex: No worries—misery loves company, right?

Lina: (laughs) Pretty much!

Further Readings

Barron, A., Gu, Y., & Steen, G. (2020). *The Routledge Handbook of Pragmatics*. Routledge.

Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511813313

Nguyen, H. T., & Kasper, G. (2009). *Talk-in-interaction: Multilingual Perspectives*. Natl Foreign Lg Resource Ctr.

Sidnell, J. (2010). *Conversation analysis: An Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Course Two: Conversation and Cooperative Maxims

Content

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Define Paul Grice's Cooperative Principle and its role in daily conversations.
- √ Describe the four conversational maxims—Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner—and their functions in communication.
- √ Identify and distinguish how these maxims may be violated.
- √ Acknowledge the contributions of Grice's work to the field of pragmatics and its importance for analyzing language use.
- √ Evaluate the cultural and contextual limitations of Grice's theory and its practical relevance in real-world interactions.

Introduction

Effective communication serves as a cornerstone of human interaction, allowing individuals to express thoughts, emotions, and ideas, which fosters mutual understanding and meaningful connections. In the realms of linguistics and communication, British philosopher Paul Grice has significantly influenced the field with his Cooperative Principle, which describes how participants in a conversation typically collaborate to ensure productive discourse. This lesson explores the essentials of Grice's Cooperative Principle, examining how these maxims can be adhered to or intentionally violated, along with the implications of such deviations for interpreting meaning. Additionally, it addresses the cultural and contextual limitations of the principle and its importance within the broader scope of pragmatics.

1. **Introduction to Communication and Grice's Cooperative Principle**

Effective communication and interaction are essential for nurturing healthy social and professional relationships. They promote awareness and knowledge while fostering understanding among people globally. Furthermore, these interactions enable individuals to express their feelings, ideas, and thoughts more freely, while also helping to forge meaningful connections with colleagues, family, friends, and others.

Paul Grice, a British philosopher known for his work on language, developed what is now referred to as the Cooperative Principle: "Make your conversation contribution as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (1975, p. 45). In his William James Lectures, delivered at Harvard and Oxford in 1967, Grice elaborates on the Cooperative Principle. He stresses that its application should be limited to discussions that have the following characteristics:

> The participants have some common immediate aim, the contributions of the participants are dovetailed, mutually dependent; there is some sort of understanding (often tacit) that, other things being equal, the transactions

> should continue in appropriate style unless both parties are agreeable that it should terminate (1989, p. 31).

Grice (1989, p. 29) argues that “Our talk exchanges … are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts and each participant recognize in them … a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction.”

2. Grice’s Conversational Maxims

Grice’s "super principle" (1989, p. 285) integrates four conversational maxims as it follows:

a) Quantity Maxim:

- (Supermaxim): Give the right amount of information
- (Submaxim): Make your contribution as informative as is required; Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

b) Quality Maxim:

- (Supermaxim): Try to make your contribution one that is true.
- (Submaxim): Do not say what you believe to be false; Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

c) Relation Maxim: Be relevant.

d) Manner Maxim:

- (Supermaxim): Be perspicuous.
- (Submaxim): Avoid obscurity of expression; Avoid ambiguity; Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity); Be orderly. (Grice, 1975: 45-46)

3. Expectations and Interpretation in Conversation

Grice (1975) argues that there exists a conventional mode of communication widely regarded as standard behavior. When someone makes or hears a statement, they generally expect it to be true, contain adequate information, remain relevant, and be presented clearly. If a statement deviates from this expectation, the listener does not view it as nonsense; rather, they assume it has a relevant meaning that can be extracted. In Gricean terms, this indicates a maxim has been violated, leading to an implicature.

4. Failing to Observe the Maxims

Often, people paradoxically fail to adhere to the principles of cooperation, either intentionally or unintentionally. This can occur in five key ways: Flouting, violating, infringing, opting out, and suspending.

4.1 Flouting the Maxims

Mey (2000, p. 70) offers a detailed definition of flouting: "we can make a blatant show of one of the maxims ... to lead the addressee to look for a covert, implied meaning."

- Flouting Quantity*:* The speaker provides either excessive or insufficient information.
- Flouting Quality: The speaker uses sarcasm, irony, and hyperbole to exaggerate something that does not reflect their true thoughts.
- Flouting Manner: It reflects a lack of clarity and transparency in communicative intentions.
- Flouting Relation: It occurs when the response is clearly unrelated to the topic, such as a quick shift in topic or a blatant disregard for the interlocutor's purpose in asking a question.

4.2 Violating the Maxims

Violation refers to the subtle, or "quiet" non-observance of a maxim. A Speaker who violates a maxim "will be liable to mislead" (Grice, 1975, p. 49). This act is distinct from flouting a maxim. It hinders or discourages the listener from inferring implicatures, prompting them to interpret statements literally.

When the maxim of quantity is violated, the speaker fails to give the hearer enough information. In terms of the maxim of quality, the speaker lacks honesty and offers false information. A violation of the maxim of manner may occur when the speaker communicates everything except what the hearer wishes to understand. Regarding the final maxim of relation, it can be seen that the speaker attempts to change the topic or divert the hearer's attention.

e.g., A: Did you enjoy yourself at your cousin's wedding?

B: The location was near a lake, and there were many guests, Italian food, and a DJ brought in from France...

B is unclear, providing extensive details about the wedding, but failing to give A the straightforward yes or no answer they were anticipating, thereby violating the maxim of manner.

4.3 Infringing the Maxims

Maxim infringement happens when a speaker does not follow the maxim, despite having no intention to create an implicature or mislead. Infringement typically results from defective linguistic performance**,** such as that of a child, a foreigner, or someone who does not speak the language well, or from impaired linguistic performance caused by emotions and states like excitement, nervousness, and so on.

e.g., Japanese customer: Do you have lice?

English seller: What??

The Japanese often pronounce 'r' as 'l' so he says 'lice' instead of 'rice', thus infringing the maxim and causing misunderstandings.

4.4 Opting out of the Maxims

A speaker chooses to opt out of a maxim when they show reluctance to comply with its requirements.

e.g., Reporter: What information can you share about Mr. Willson's condition?

Doctor: I'm sorry. Such information is confidential.

The doctor intentionally disregards the maxim by withholding the necessary information, citing doctor-patient confidentiality.

4.5 Suspending the Maxims

In specific situations, participants may not anticipate adherence to one or more maxims, and their non-fulfillment does not lead to implicatures. For example, when communicating through emails and notes, the quantity maxim is suspended because these formats are effective due to their conciseness.

5. Support and Criticism of the Cooperative Principle

The majority of leading theorists agree with Grice's theory. Sperber and Wilson (1986, p. 162) analyze the cooperative principle (CP) by employing a system of presupposition, backing it with a "common sense" justification. They present the assumption that the CP requires a significant level of cooperation as common knowledge, rendering it unassailable.

> It seems to us to be a matter of common experience that the degree of cooperation described by Grice is not automatically expected of communicators. People who don't give us all the information we wish they would and don't answer our questions as well as they could are no doubt much to blame, but not for violating principles of communication

6. Limitations of the Cooperative Principle

The first issue relates to the various cultures, countries, and communities, each having its unique methods of observing and articulating maxims. For example, in Britain, if you state: "We'll see...anyway…I'll give you a call tomorrow," and then fail to call, this is seen as a violation of the maxim of quality. Conversely, in other countries, this might be interpreted as a typical way to imply, "I am not quite interested." Another challenge stems from the frequent overlap between the maxims. It can be challenging to discern which maxim is relevant, as two or more may operate simultaneously. Grice's theory of implicature stands as a significant contribution to the field of pragmatics.

Conclusion

To summarize, Grice’s Cooperative Principle and its related conversational maxims establish a crucial framework for comprehending effective communication in daily interactions. By following the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, speakers enhance conversations meaningfully, promoting clarity, relevance, and shared understanding. Nonetheless, communication can be complex; individuals might flout, violate, infringe upon, opt out of, or suspend these maxims for various reasons, resulting in richer implied meanings or potential misunderstandings. Cultural norms and contextual elements can also affect the interpretation and implementation of these maxims. Despite its drawbacks, Grice’s theory remains a cornerstone in pragmatics, providing important insights into the implicit processes that shape human conversation and the understanding of meaning that transcends mere words.

Discussion Questions

- What is the primary purpose of Grice’s Cooperative Principle in communication?
- Can you think of a real-life situation in which someone flouted a maxim? What was the implied meaning?
- Do you believe the Cooperative Principle applies equally across all cultures? Why or why not?
- Do you think it is possible to communicate effectively without following Grice’s maxims? Explain your reasoning.

Suggested Tasks

- Identify which maxims are adhered to or violated in the following dialogue and explain how.

  A: Did you finish the report I asked for yesterday?

  B: Well… I organized the data, and I was planning to write the summary this afternoon.

A: So, it's not done yet?

B: Technically, no. But the graphs look amazing!

- The following dialogue violates one or more maxims. Rewrite it to comply fully with all four conversational maxims.

  A: Are you going to the meeting this afternoon?

  B: I've got a dentist appointment, and I haven't had lunch yet.

- Reflect on how communication styles in another culture might lead to different interpretations of Grice's maxims.

Further Readings

Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In *BRILL eBooks* (pp. 41–58). https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004368811_003

Grice, H. P. (1989). *Studies in the way of words*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA06871034

Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511813313

Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1986). *Relevance: communication and cognition*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA26361813

Thomas, J. (1995b). *Meaning in interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Routledge.

Course Three: Implicature

Content

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Define the concept of implicature and explain its significance in pragmatics.
- √ Differentiate between what is said and what is implicated in a communicative context.
- √ Distinguish between conventional and conversational implicatures**,** noting their features, mechanisms, and implications for meaning.
- √ Classify conversational implicatures as either generalised or particularised.
- √ Recognise scalar implicatures and describe how they are generated through value-based lexical choices.
- √ Apply knowledge of implicature to analyse spoken or written discourse and infer unstated meanings.

Introduction

Language often expresses more than just the literal meanings of words. Speakers lean on shared assumptions and context to communicate indirectly, hinting at meanings that are not explicitly stated outright. This phenomenon lies at the core of implicature, a key concept in pragmatics. Initially examined by philosopher Grice, implicature sheds light on how communication transcends syntactic and semantic rules, focusing on inference, context, and cooperative principles. This lesson delves deeply into implicature, distinguishing its main types, conversational and conventional, and investigating how meaning emerges from conversational norms, contextual cues, and word choices. The discussion, enriched with detailed examples and theoretical insights, illustrates how implicature emphasises the complexity and nuance of everyday language use.

1. Definition of Implicatures

The term implicature comes from the verb ‘to imply’, which is related to ‘implication’. The original meaning of ‘to imply’ is ‘to fold something into something else’, derived from the Latin verb plicare, meaning ‘to fold’. Consequently, what is implied is considered ‘folded in’ and must be ‘unfolded’ for comprehension (Mey, 2001). A conversational implicature refers to what is implied in conversation, essentially, what remains implicit in actual language usage. Pragmatics focuses on this phenomenon because it seems to reveal a consistency that cannot be simplified into a straightforward syntactic or semantic rule, necessitating alternative explanations. As Bilmes (1986, p.27) noted:

> In everyday talk, we often convey propositions that are not explicit in our utterances but are merely implied by them. Sometimes we are able to draw such inferences by referring what has been explicitly said to some conversational principle. In certain cases, we are dealing with 'conversational implicature.

2. Saying vs. Implying

Grice introduces a crucial distinction between an utterance's content and its implications. This concept of implicature allows Grice to explain how we can convey more than our words express. According to him, we achieve this by implying additional meanings. This fundamental distinction is intuitively straightforward. Clark (2022) described it as a difference between our direct communication and our indirect messages. This can be illustrated in the following figure:

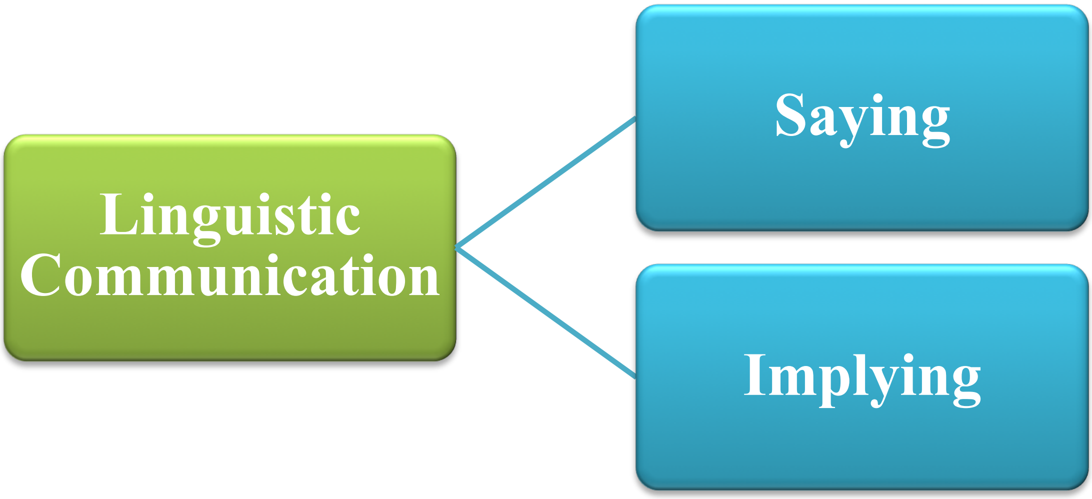

Figure 9. Saying and Implicating Distinction

If participants do not follow the cooperative principle and its maxims, we cannot assume that essential conversation is occurring,

e.g., *(1)John: Did you see Jane and Mary*

Robert: I saw Jane.

Initially, it seems that Robert is breaching the quantity maxim. Yet, upon hearing Robert's reply, John must conclude that Robert is cooperating, overlooking the quantity maxim. Robert believes that John would deduce that the unmentioned person was not seen. In this instance, Robert has communicated more than his words indicate through conversational implicature.

We can represent the structure of what was said with *J* (=Jane) and M (= Mary) as in (2). Using the symbol +> for an Implicature, we can also represent the additional conveyed meaning.

(2) *John: J&M?*

Robert: J (+> Not *M)*

It is essential to recognise that speakers convey meaning through implicatures, while listeners identify those meanings through inference, and chosen inferences uphold the principles of cooperation.

3. Types of Implicature

Grice identified two types of implicature. He initially differentiated between conventional implicature, linked to the inherent meanings of the words used, and conversational implicature, which relies on contextual assumptions and conversational maxims. He further categorised conversational implicatures into 'generalised' ones, typically derived from the act of speaking, and 'particularised' ones, which apply only in specific contexts. This can be shown in the following figure:

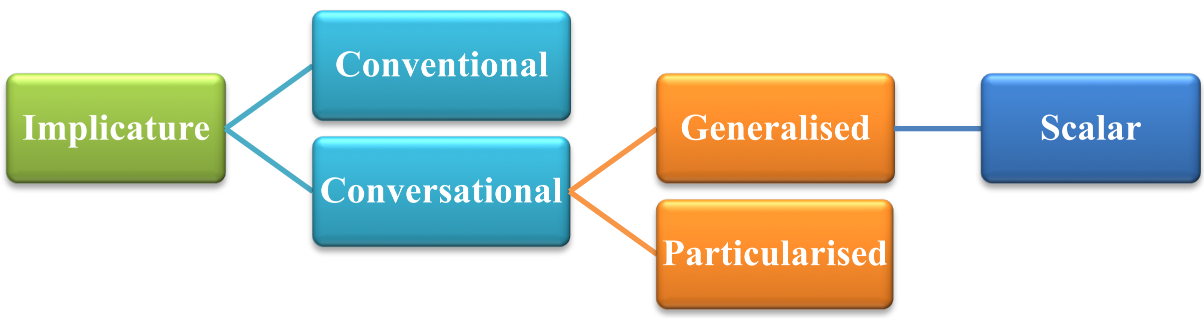

Figure 10. Types of Implicature

In brief terms, conversational implicatures are calculated based on maxims and context. In contrast, conventional implicatures are inferences that are not based on truth conditions and do not depend on cooperative principles. Instead, they are conventionally linked to certain lexical items or expressions.

3.1 Conventional Implicatures

Unlike conversational implicatures, conventional implicatures are not grounded in cooperative principles or maxims. They are not dependent on conversational context for interpretation and do not require specific situations. Instead, they are tied to specific words, leading to extra meanings when those words are employed. These implicatures come from the meanings of select particles, such as ‘but’ or ‘therefore.’ For instance, observe the contrast between (3a) and (3b):

(3) a. He is an English man; therefore, he is brave.

b. He is an English man, and he is brave.

c. His being brave shadows his being English.

Grice asserts that a speaker has *communicated* the same meaning with (3a) and (3b). However, in (3a), he implicates (3c). This represents a *conventional* implicature. The conventional meaning of 'therefore' extends our understanding beyond what is stated, rather than relying on maxims of cooperation.

For instance, understanding any statement, such as the conjunction ‘but’, hinges on an implication of contrast. In the phrase ‘Mary suggested black, but I chose white,’ the suggestion of black by Mary is contrasted, through the conventional implicature of ‘but’, with my choice of white.

Other English words, such as ‘even’ and ‘yet’, carry conventional implicatures. When ‘even’ appears in any sentence describing an event, it carries an implicature of contrary to expectation, as seen in the utterance:

e.g., Even John came to the party

He even helped tidy up afterwards.

The conventional implicature of ‘yet’ suggests that the present situation is expected to change or perhaps be reversed in the future. For example, in the utterance ‘Dennis isn’t here’, the speaker implies that she expects the statement ‘Dennis is here’ to be true later.

Conventional implicatures are expected to differ from conversational implicatures due to their unique characteristics:

- Conventional implicatures are non-cancellable since they do not depend on defeasible contextual assumptions.
- Conventional implicatures will be detachable because they depend on the specific linguistic items used (you cannot substitute and for but without losing the conventional implicature).
- Conventional implicatures will not be calculated using pragmatic principles and contextual knowledge.
- Conventional implicatures may be expected to have a relatively determinate content or meaning.

For several reasons, Grice’s concept of conventional implicatures is the most controversial part of his conversation theory for many followers (Bach 1999). According to some, its application to particular examples runs against common intuitions. By using the word ‘therefore,’ is the speaker not saying there is some causal connection between being brave and being English? Is not he saying and not merely implying that one’s being brave follows from one's being English? Moreover, the category of conventional implicatures blurs the distinction between what is said, usually conceived as determined by the semantic conventions of language, and what is implicated, usually thought of as a matter of inference as to a speaker’s intentions in saying what he or she does. Conventional sentence meaning contributes crucially to what is said, which is considered essentially different from implicatures. Still, some elements of conventional meaning do not contribute to what is said but to implicatures. Finally, it places the study of the conventional meaning of some expressions within pragmatics (study of implicatures) rather than semantics, usually conceived as the home of conventional meaning.

3.2 Conversational Implicatures

Grice (1989) characterises conversational implicatures by saying they are cancelable, non-detachable, and calculable. By cancelable, Grice (1989, p. 44) means that:

> …a putative (supposed/ recognized) conversational implicature that *p* is explicitly cancelable if, to the form of words the utterance of which putatively implicates that *p*, it is admissible (tolerated/ allowable/ acceptable) to add but not *p*, or *I do not mean to imply that p*, and it is contextually cancelable if one can find situations in which the utterance of the form of words would simply not carry the implicature.

Grice considers conversational implicatures to be non-detachable, arguing that it is improbable to find another way to express the same idea that does not carry the implied meaning in question, except when a specific characteristic of the alternative version is relevant to determining an implicature (due to one of the maxims of Manner).

Grice posits that a conversational implicature can be calculated, meaning it should be capable of being worked out; even if it can be understood intuitively, the intuition must be supplanted by an argument. If it cannot, the implicature (if it exists) does not qualify as a conversational implicature. This characteristic is what Grice regards as essential for differentiating conversational implicatures from conventional ones.

Grice made a distinction between ‘particularised’ and ‘generalised’ conversational implicatures. The former pertains to implicatures that arise from specific contextual features, referencing “cases in which there is no room for the idea that an implicature of this sort is normally carried by saying that *p*.” (Grice, 1989, p.37). In contrast, a generalised conversational

Implicature happens when "the use of certain forms of words in an utterance would normally (in the absence of special circumstances) carry such-and-such an implicature or type of implicature" (Grice, 1989, p.37).

3.2.1 Generalised Conversational Implicatures

Generalised conversational implicatures raise important philosophical questions, particularly regarding Grice's key motivation as presented in the introduction to Logic and Conversation. This includes the differences in meaning between the logical constants of formal languages and their natural language equivalents, as well as the implied meanings of verbs such as 'to look like,' 'to believe,' and 'to know.'

In the case of example (1), particularly as represented in (2), no special background knowledge of the context of the utterance is required to make the necessary inferences. The same process of calculating the implicature will take place if Charlene asks Dexter about inviting his friends Bella (=b) and Cathy (=c) to a party, as in (3a.), and gets the reply in (4b.). The context is different from (1), but the general process of identifying the implicature is the same as in (2)

(4) a. Charlene: Did you invite Bella and Cathy? (b & c ?)

b. Mary: I invited Bella. (b +> Not *c)*

When no specialised knowledge is needed to grasp the implied additional meaning, as shown in examples (4) and (5), it is called a generalized conversational implicature. A common illustration in English is any phrase featuring an indefinite article like'a/an X', including 'a garden' and 'a child' as seen in (4). These phrases are generally understood with the implicature that: an X > not the speaker's X.

(5) I was sitting in the park. A boy looked over the window.

The implicatures in (5) suggest that the park and the boy referenced do not belong to the speaker. This is rooted in the principle that if the speaker could provide more specificity (i.e., be more informative, in line with the quantity maxim), he or she would have used terms like 'my park' and 'my boy.'

e.g., I walked into a garden

The house was not my garden. (Implicature)

The implied meaning in this example suggests that the 'garden' referenced does not belong to the speaker. This interpretation is based on the idea that if the speaker could be more specific, being more informative in line with the quantity maxim, he or she would have stated 'not my garden.'

Various other generalized conversational implicatures are typically conveyed based on a value scale, hence they are known as scalar implicatures.

3.2.1.1 Scalar Implicatures

Certain information is reliably communicated by choosing a term that signifies a particular value within a spectrum of values. This is particularly clear when indicating quantity, as shown in the scales in (9), where words are ordered from highest to lowest values.

(9)< *all, most, many, some, few*>

<*always, often, sometimes*>

When producing an utterance, a speaker selects the words from the scale which is the most informative and truthful (quantity and quality) in the circumstances, as in (10).

(10) I'm studying pragmatics, and I've completed some of the required courses.

By selecting 'some', the speaker implies an implicature (+> not all). The foundation of scalar implicature is that when a scale is asserted, the negation of all higher forms on that scale is also implied. For instance, by stating 'some of the required courses', the speaker generates additional implicatures; +> not most, +> not many.

3.2.2 Particularized Conversational Implicature

Particularised conversational implicatures have various applications, as illustrated by Grice himself. The informative functions of tautologies, irony, metaphor, hyperbole, and, in principle, any non-literal use, depend on the particular context of the utterance. In the previous examples, the implicatures were determined without any particular context. Yet, our discussions typically take place within specific contexts that involve certain recognised inferences. These inferences are crucial for understanding the meanings conveyed by specific conversational implicatures. For example, in instance (11), Tom's response seems irrelevant at first glance. (A more relevant answer would be 'Yes' or 'No. ')

(11) Rick: Hey, coming to the wild party tonight?

Tom: My parents are visiting.

For Tom's response to be relevant, Rick must rely on some assumed knowledge that one college student expects another to possess. Tom will be spending that evening with his parents, and their time together will be quiet, meaning Tom will not be at the party.

Because they are the most common, particularised conversational implicatures are typically just called implicatures. A further example in which the speaker appears not to adhere to (i.e. to 'flout) the maxim of manner is presented in (12)

(12) Ann: Where are you going with the dog?

Sam: To the V-E-T.

In the local context of these speakers, dogs are recognised to respond negatively to the word 'vet,' which they dislike in reference to being taken there. Consequently, Sam delivers a more detailed version of his message, suggesting that he prefers the dog not to be aware of the answer to the recent question.

In (13), Leila enters Mary's office and observes the pile of work on her desk. Mary's reply appears to flout the maxim of relevance.

(13) Leila: Whoa! Has your boss gone crazy?

Mary: Let's get some coffee.

To uphold the assumption of cooperation, Leila needs to deduce a local reason, such as the possibility of the boss being nearby, for Mary's seemingly irrelevant comment. This suggests that Mary cannot respond to the question in that situation.

Conclusion

The exploration of implicature reveals the complex ways in which speakers express and listeners derive meanings that go beyond the literal wording of statements. Grice's framework, particularly his differentiation between conversational and conventional implicatures, offers a solid explanation of how implicit communication operates in both everyday conversation and more formal discourse. Conversational implicatures, whether generalised or particularised, strongly depend on shared contextual knowledge and the observance of conversational maxims, while conventional implicatures emerge from the meanings of specific lexical items, functioning independently of context. These distinctions not only enhance our comprehension of meaning in communication but also question traditional separations between semantics and pragmatics. Ultimately, the concept of implicature underscores the nuance and effectiveness of human communication, illustrating how much is often conveyed without being explicitly spoken.

Discussion Questions

- Why is studying implicature important for understanding everyday language use?
- In what ways does Grice's Cooperative Principle clarify conversational implicatures?
- In your opinion, are particularised conversational implicatures are harder to interpret than generalised ones? Why or why not?
- Do you believe that all conversational implicatures are produced consciously by speakers? Why or why not?

Suggested Tasks

- Draw a concept map or flowchart that shows the hierarchy of implications. Include definitions and one example for each branch.
- Read each of the following utterances carefully. Then, determine whether the implied meaning represents conventional, generalised, or particularised conversational implicature. Briefly explain your reasoning.

  - She is kind but strict.
  - I saw a man in the hallway.
  - Even Tom passed the exam.
  - I walked into a garden this morning.
  - I've completed some of the assignments.
  - Mother to child: Someone didn't clean up their toys.
  - He is tall, therefore he must be a basketball player.
  - I'm trying to eat healthy, so I had a salad *instead* of a burger.
  - A: Do you like the movie?
    B: The popcorn was good.
  - A: Are you going to the meeting?
    B: My car broke down.

- In pairs, create short dialogues in which one speaker violates a Gricean maxim (e.g., relevance, quantity, manner) to imply something indirectly. The other participant must infer the implicature and explain their interpretation.

Further Readings

Blakemore, D. (1987). *Semantic constraints on relevance*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Grice, H. P. (1989). *Studies in the way of words*. Harvard University Press.

Levinson, S. C. (2000). *Presumptive Meanings: the theory of generalized conversational implicature*. http://dx.doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/5526.001.0001

Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics: An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing.

Thomas, J. (1995). *Meaning in interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Routledge.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

Course Four: Politeness Maxims

Content

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Define the concept of politeness within the realms of linguistics and pragmatics.
- √ Explain the concept of "face" and differentiate between positive face and negative face
- √ Identify and describe major politeness theories
- √ Compare and contrast different politeness strategies
- √ Discuss and elaborate on Leech's maxims of politeness
- √ Apply Leech's maxims to analyze real or hypothetical dialogues

Introduction

Politeness is fundamental to human communication, influencing how people navigate social interactions and sustain relationships. As a key idea in linguistics and social sciences, politeness theory provides valuable insights into how language mirrors and upholds social norms, values, and interpersonal dynamics. Grounded in pragmatics, exploring politeness focuses on how speakers manage face (an individual's public self-image) when engaging in potentially face-threatening acts (FTAs) using various communication strategies. From the early contributions by scholars such as Goffman and Lakoff to the significant models of Brown and Levinson, along with alternative frameworks proposed by Leech, Spencer-Oatey, and Watts, politeness theories have developed to tackle the intricacies of verbal courtesy and the cultural nuances of social interactions. This lesson offers a detailed overview of key politeness theories, their applications, and their limitations, highlighting the delicate balance between respect, relational harmony, and effective communication.

1. The Dynamics of Politeness in Communication

Politeness principles theory is a key idea in both linguistics and social sciences, investigating the complex dynamics of communication and social interaction. The concept of politeness is varied and ever-changing in human interactions. Politeness in linguistics involves theories about expressions of closeness, solidarity, respect, and consideration, which help individuals save face and uphold relational rapport. In contrast, impoliteness theories, a growing study area, concentrate on verbal aggression and other threats to face. Some linguists propose that social rules of politeness form the foundation for most language analysis approaches, suggesting that conversational conventions are centered on politeness and that the cooperation maxims are essentially politeness maxims (Cutting, 2015). Within pragmatics, politeness is a significant field that looks into how people conduct social exchanges through language, using multiple strategies to uphold positive relationships while addressing possible face-threatening acts. It is essential for maintaining harmony among individuals and encouraging positive connections.

2. The Concept of Face in Politeness

Yule (2017) defines politeness broadly as encompassing traits such as tact, modesty, and kindness towards others. A key concept in the study of linguistic politeness is 'face,' which refers to an individual's public self-image within pragmatics. This encompasses the emotional and social aspects of self that individuals recognize in one another. Therefore, politeness involves being mindful of and respecting another person's face.

'Face' can be divided into positive and negative (Yule, 2017). Negative face refers to the desire for independence and freedom from others' influence, whereas positive face relates to the need for connection, belonging, and group membership. Therefore, a face-saving action that prioritizes a person's negative face demonstrates concern about imposing on them (I'm sorry to bother you…; I know you're busy, but…). In contrast, a face-saving action that highlights a person's positive face expresses solidarity and focuses on shared goals (The same thing happened to me…; Let's do this together…).

3. Major Theories of Politeness

3.1 Goffman's Theory

Politeness research originated in the 1970s, influenced by Goffman (1972, p.5), who characterized face as 'the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself.' He introduced a model of 'social norm' consisting of two key rules: 'show self-respect' (uphold one's own face) and 'show considerateness' (respect the face of others).

3.2 Lakoff's Theory

Lakoff (1973) built upon this model by introducing one of the conversational maxims that encompasses rules of pragmatic competence: 'be clear' (adhere to Grice's four cooperative maxims) and 'be polite' (which includes 'do not impose', 'provide options', and 'ensure the hearer feels good – be friendly').

3.3 Brown and Levinson's Theory

Brown and Levinson's 1987 'face-saving' model remains the most impactful. They defined 'face' as the public self-image individuals project, which others attribute to them. They introduced two key concepts: 'positive face' (the desire to be liked or appreciated) and 'negative face' (the wish to avoid being imposed upon). They suggested that when a speaker must perform a face-threatening act (FTA), such as making an order, request, offer, promise, disagreement, or complaint, they often soften their approach using indirectness and hedging. According to Brown and Levinson, if the potential threat is minimal, speakers may adopt a bald-on-record strategy, while if it is significant, they might avoid the FTA entirely. These strategies can be clarified in the following figure:

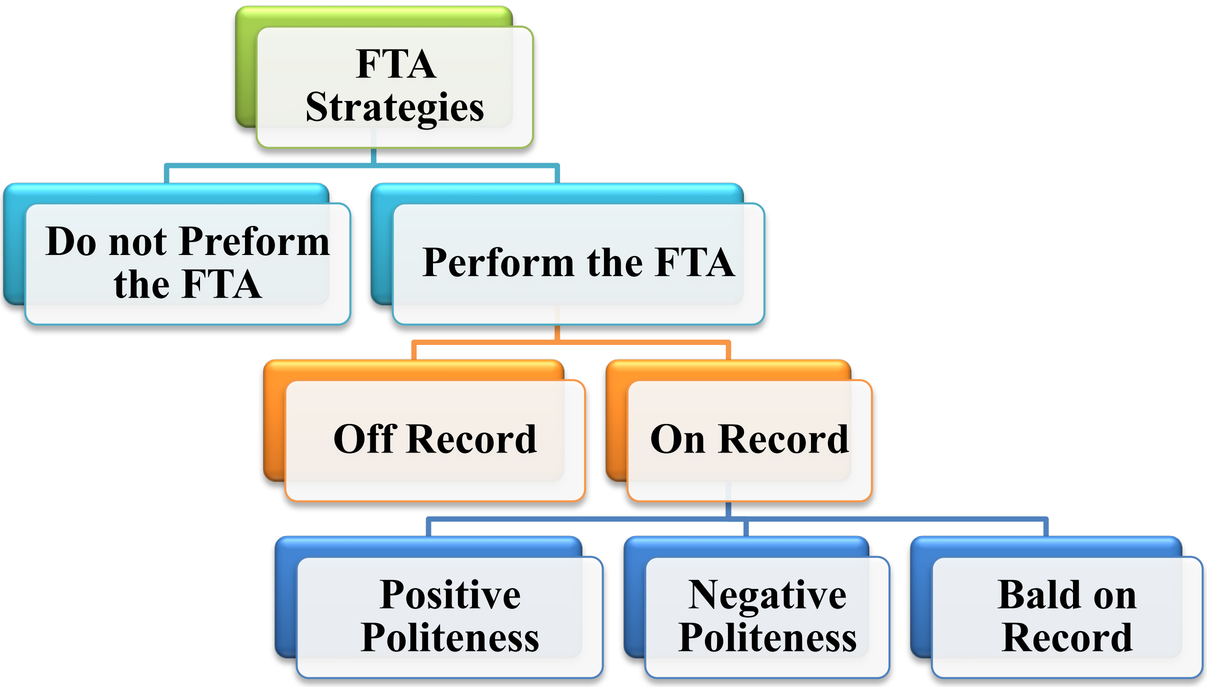

Figure 11. Brown and Levinson's Strategies on Politeness

The following scenario, provided by Cutting (2015), illustrates the range of strategies between these two extremes: a man is at a bus stop, and as a bus approaches, he realizes he cannot read the number in time to determine whether to stop it. He has the option to ask another person for assistance.

3.3.1 Brown and Levinson's FTA Strategies

a) Do not Perform the FTA

The 'do not perform the FTA' strategy involves avoiding it by remaining silent altogether. The issue can be expressed non-verbally; for instance, the man at the bus stop might squint and lean his head forward, or he could 'tut' and sigh, hoping those around him will recognize his situation and offer assistance. If the other individuals at the bus stop do not respond, he has not compromised their face by requesting a favor nor jeopardized his own by inviting non-cooperation.

b) Perform the FTA off Record

The 'perform the FTA off record' strategy suggests employing indirectness or conversational implicature. If he feels that asking for help is not a major imposition, the man at the bus stop can say loudly, 'Oh dear, I've left my glasses at home!' or 'I can't see what that says!' These statements act as commands, subtly instructing others to inform him of the bus number. By doing this, he flouts the cooperative maxims of quantity and manner through suggestion. Should the individuals at the bus stop prefer not to feel imposed upon, they can choose to disregard his hint, avoiding any potential threat to face.

c) Perform the FTA on Record

- **With Positive Politeness**

A commonly employed strategy is to perform the FTA on record with positive politeness. This involvement strategy fosters solidarity and closeness, addressing positive face, the need for acceptance and likability, being treated as part of the group, and knowing that one's desires are shared by others. Sub-strategies in this category include establishing common ground, pursuing agreement, avoiding conflict, emphasizing approval, assuming reciprocity, offering or promising action, maintaining optimism, enhancing interest, joking, and utilizing in-group identity markers such as specific terms and abbreviations, along with inclusive 'we' and 'let's'. For example, when the visually impaired man states, 'Aren't bus numbers small! Can you see what that says?' He is establishing common ground and encouraging agreement.

- **With Negative Politeness**

A commonly employed strategy involves performing the FTA on record with negative politeness. This does not equate to being rude; instead, it is an independence strategy that conveys distance and acknowledges the hearer's negative face, emphasizing their need for autonomy and freedom from external demands. Among the sub-strategies are minimizing imposition, refraining from interference, adopting a pessimistic tone, presenting options, allowing for a 'no' response, demonstrating deference, offering apologies, using impersonal language, framing the imposition as a general practice, acknowledging a potential debt, and incorporating mitigators and hedges (such as 'I mean,' 'you know,' and 'actually') to tone down and soften statements. For instance, a request at a bus stop might be phrased as 'Would you mind telling me that bus number?' or 'Sorry to bother you, could you possibly tell me the number of that bus?'

- **With Bald on Record**

The final strategy discussed by Brown and Levinson is performing the FTA bald on record, without any redress or mitigation. This involves using imperatives like 'Tell me the number of that bus', direct questions such as 'What's that number?', and verbless queries or commands like 'Number of that bus?'. In this scenario, the speaker is straightforward about their intentions and does not take steps to lessen the face threat. However, not all bald-on-record language poses a face threat; it is often acceptable among speakers who view each other as equals or among friends.

3.3.2 Limitations of Brown and Levinson's Theory

Brown and Levinson's 'face-saving' model has notable limitations. One significant issue is its assumption of universality; they claim it draws from studies in multiple cultures, yet the model suggests that each language shares similar linguistic strategies. It presumes that all societies are as individualistic as Western ones, emphasizing the necessity for personal freedom and autonomy. Another critique of Brown and Levinson's framework is its emphasis on the speaker rather than the hearer. Critics point out that speakers are bound by politeness norms embedded in turn-taking behavior and the anticipation that they will react to their interlocutors' cues. They contend that the hearer frequently determines if the speaker's words reflect appropriate politeness, highlighting the significance of the audience factor.

4. Leech's Politeness Maxims

In 1983, Leech introduced a different model of politeness, formulated around six conversational maxims, which can also be articulated using Brown and Levinson's concepts:

a) **Tact:** It is defined as both 'minimising cost to others' and 'maximising benefit to others', aligning with Brown and Levinson's strategies to reduce imposition while respecting the hearer's needs. The man at the bus stop might have inquired, 'Could you please tell me the bus number?'

b) **Generosity:** It involves 'minimizing personal benefit' and ''maximizing personal cost. For instance, the man at the bus stop could express the personal cost of making his request by saying: 'I hate having to do this, but I just need you to tell me the bus number.'

c) **Approbation:** It means to 'minimize criticism of others' and 'maximize praise of others', aligning with Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies aimed at avoiding conflict and fostering goodwill. For instance, the bus stop request could have been phrased as, 'You appear to have sharp eyes – what's that number?'

d) **Modesty:** It involves reducing self-praise and increasing self-disparagement: 'I foolishly forgot my glasses at home, could you please provide the bus number?'

e) **Agreement:** It includes minimising disagreement between self and other while maximising agreement between self and other, reflecting Brown and Levinson's strategies of politeness that encourage consensus: 'Aren't bus numbers small? Can you see what that says?'

f) **Sympathy:** It incorporates minimising antipathy between self and other, and maximising sympathy between self and other. It requires a request such as 'Sorry to be a pain, but you couldn't possibly tell me the number of that bus, could you?' It highlights an awareness of the burden being placed on them.

4.1 Limitations of Leech's Theory

Leech's model does have its drawbacks. Some argue that the list of maxims is not comprehensive. Cruse (2000) introduces an additional maxim of consideration, which emphasizes minimizing the discomfort or displeasure of others and maximizing the comfort/ pleasure of others, which is related to the positive politeness strategy aimed at enhancing others' feelings. Since the development of his model, Leech (2005, p. 12–13) has clarified his stance: "these are not a set of distinct constraints or maxims, but rather variant manifestations of the same super-constraint, the GSP [Grand Strategy of Politeness]," and further elaborates that "to be polite, S [self] expresses or implies meanings which place a high value O [other] or place a low value S."

5. Spencer-Oatey's Rapport Management Theory

Spencer-Oatey (2000, pp. 11–44) presents an interactional model of politeness that extends beyond the individual's face. Her rapport management model emphasizes politeness in a community context and encompasses the management of:

a) **Face**: This denotes the positive social value individuals assert for themselves, encompassing worth, dignity, and both individual and collective identity.
b) **Social rights and obligations**: the social entitlements individuals assert for themselves and the expected normative behavior dictated by a specific context.
c) **Interactional goals**: specific tasks and relationship-building goals within the community.

6. Watts' Theory of Appropriateness

Watts (2003, 2005) proposed a model of 'appropriateness'. He defines 'politic' behavior as aligning with the dynamics of social interactions and is designed to foster and sustain relationships among individuals within a group. Additionally, he characterizes 'polite' behavior as a distinct type of 'politic' behavior that goes beyond what participants expect regarding appropriateness within the social context.

Conclusion

Politeness theory is a crucial subject within linguistics and the broader social sciences, providing essential insights into how language helps navigate social ties, maintain face, and manage interpersonal relationships. From Goffman's key ideas on face and social norms to Brown and Levinson's significant face-saving strategies, numerous models highlight the need to balance respect for others with the speaker's communicative goals. Later theorists, including Leech, Spencer-Oatey, and Watts, further developed these concepts, incorporating elements like conversational maxims, rapport built on community ties, and context-sensitive notions of appropriateness. Despite criticisms, especially about cultural universality and a focus on the speaker, these theories collectively highlight the importance of politeness as a socially constructed, context-sensitive phenomenon. Grasping these principles is vital for linguistic study and promoting effective, respectful, and culturally sensitive communication in daily interactions.

Discussion Questions

- What distinguishes positive face from negative face? Share examples of both in daily conversation.
- Examine the politeness strategies suggested by Brown and Levinson alongside Leech's politeness maxims. In what ways do they correspond or contrast?
- Why might Leech's maxims be considered culturally dependent?

Suggested Tasks

- Identify any Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) and analyse how politeness strategies or Leech's maxims are used to mitigate them in the following dialogue:

Student: "Sorry to bother you, Professor, but I was wondering if you could possibly give me an extension on the assignment? I've been dealing with a personal issue."

Professor: "I see. That sounds serious. Let's talk after class and see what we can work out."

- Look at the following figure, 'How to be Polite', and carry on the task:

a) Discuss the following questions:

- What is the difference between the two panels?
- Which politeness strategies are used in the “Right” panel?
- Why is the “Right” panel humorous or ironic?
- In what real-life situations would the “Wrong” panel be more appropriate?

b) Identify which **Brown & Levinson politeness strategies** (positive, negative, bald-on-record) are being used.

c) Match elements of the "Right" speech to **Leech’s maxims** (Tact, Modesty, etc.).

- Conduct some research on politeness norms in a culture different from your own. How are requests or refusals managed? Which maxims or face-saving strategies appear more or less emphasised?

Further Readings

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge University Press.

Grundy, P. (2008). *Doing pragmatics*. Hodder Education Publishers.

Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA0026722X

Leech, G. N. (2005). Politeness: Is there an East-West divide? *外国语*, *6*, 3–31. http://www.cqvip.com/QK/96948X/200506/20633581.html

Spencer-Oatey, H. (2000). Face, (Im)Politeness and rapport. In *Continuum International Publishing Group eBooks*. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350934085.ch-002

Thomas, J. (1995). *Meaning in interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Routledge.

Watts, R. J. (2003). *Politeness*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511615184

Course Five: Speech Act Theory

Content

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- √ Define the notion of speech acts and differentiate between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts.
- √ Explain the roles played by J.L. Austin and John Searle in developing speech act theory.
- √ Distinguish performative from constative utterances.
- √ Identify the five categories of illocutionary acts proposed by John Searle.
- √ Explain the concepts of direct and indirect speech acts and how they influence communication.
- √ Evaluate the practical applications of Speech Act Theory in real-life communication and discourse analysis.

Introduction

Speech Act Theory has significantly shaped the study of language by shifting the emphasis from the structural components of speech to the roles that utterances play in communication. This approach arose as a counter to traditional linguistic models prioritizing syntax and semantics while often overlooking language's pragmatic and functional aspects. Central to this change was J.L. Austin, whose influential work in the mid-20th century offered a sophisticated understanding of how language describes reality and performs actions. Austin's classification of speech acts and his in-depth analysis of performative utterances established a foundation for a more vibrant and dynamic perspective on linguistic communication. Building upon Austin's ideas, John Searle further developed these concepts, introducing systematic standards for various types of speech acts and tackling complexities such as indirect communication and speaker intent. This lesson examines the historical background, key concepts, and theoretical developments in Speech Act Theory, emphasizing the critical contributions of Austin and Searle and their enduring influence on linguistic and philosophical discourse.

1. Historical Background

For a period, linguistics focused primarily on form, leaving the exploration of meaning to linguistic philosophers. These philosophers examined the sense, reference, and implications of sentences. In 1962, Austin pointed out that philosophers assumed statements only describe states of affairs or facts, which excludes what he termed 'constatives.' These are statements not meant to convey information, such as 'The king of France is bold,' which is nonsensical, and 'ethical propositions,' which express emotions or dictate behavior.

2. Austin's Contribution to Speech Act Theory

2.1 The Concept of Performatives

Austin focuses on 'performatives,' sentences where stating the words executes an action. When saying 'I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth,' the speaker names the ship rather than just describing it. Adding 'hereby''clarifies this, leading to 'I hereby name this ship...'.

2.2 Conditions for Successful Performative Acts

Austin highlights the conventional elements of the performative act and the importance of following a set procedure. Four conditions must be satisfied to ensure the performative act is executed correctly.

a) An established procedure must yield a particular conventional effect, involving the spoken words of specific individuals in defined situations.

There is a formal process for naming babies and ships, but not for dogs or houses. In England, a man cannot simply say 'I divorce you; I divorce you; I divorce you' to divorce his wife; certain actions are permissible in one linguistic community but not in another. For example, one cannot insult someone in English by stating 'I insult you,' as in German communities.

b) The individuals and circumstances in a specific case must be appropriate for using the particular procedure.

The words must be spoken by the appropriate person in the appropriate circumstance. For example, a blacksmith may read the marriage service just as well as any priest, yet the ceremony remains invalid. Similarly, while a priest has the authority to marry individuals, if he does so by threatening to kill someone, the ceremony is still not valid.

c) The procedure must be executed by all participants correctly and completely.

Issues can arise both verbally and non-verbally. While the marriage ceremony includes yes/no questions, answering 'yes' is not permissible; there is a specific moment designated for placing the ring on the finger. Failing to provide the ring or placing it at an incorrect time during the ceremony would lead to a breakdown of the ritual.

2.3 Expositional Performatives and Reinterpretation of Constatives

Austin (1962) defines expositional performatives, or expositives, as statements assessable for truth. They often include a verb phrase such as ‘I argue,’ which may conclude, testify, admit, or predict, meeting performative criteria. All utterances labeled constative, including those in the form ‘I + present simple active verb,’ are primary performatives that can be expanded to ‘I state that I + present simple active verb.’

Austin (1962) argues that any primary performative can be expressed explicitly, suggesting that ‘out’ means ‘I declare, pronounce or call you out’ or ‘guilty’. He presents three explicit performatives as alternatives to a single primary one, illustrating complications. How many distinct functions or performatives are there? Austin claims the number corresponds to the performative verbs, estimated between one and ten thousand.

2.4 Types of Performative Utterances

If performative utterances were limited to specific situations, their existence would be an intriguing but minor aspect of language. However, Austin noted that performing an act through speech, like saying 'I promise,’ ‘I apologize,’ or ‘I warn you’, has broader relevance. These statements enact acts of promising, apologizing, and warning, differing from the initial group because strict conventions do not bind their use; anyone can promise, anywhere, anytime. Moreover, since these utterances lack a conventional framework, their expression is flexible. For example, saying ‘the ice is over there is thin’ to a skater can be a warning without following any specific convention.

2.4.1 Explicit Performatives

Performative utterances can be explicit, like ‘I warn you that x’, or more often, implicit, just stating ‘x’. This poses the question of how to recognize a performative utterance. Even explicit examples can be tricky; a first-person singular subject plus a present simple active verb might suggest performativity, but not all such utterances are performative.

e.g., I promise only when I intend to keep my word

On page 30, I protest against the verdict

Nor do all explicit performatives have this form,

e.g., Passengers are warned to cross the track by the bridge only.

Notice is hereby given that trespassers will be prosecuted.

2.4.2 Primary Performatives

Primary performatives present challenges, making it hard to identify the enacted performative. For example, 'I'll be there first' might be a prediction, promise, or threat. Likewise, 'there's a bull in that field' and 'there's a dangerous bull in that field' can function as warnings or simple statements.

2.5 Problems in Recognizing Performatives

Certain words spoken by the right people in the right contexts can represent conventional acts. How do we identify and differentiate these performative utterances? Austin's early examples include a verb in the simple present with a first-person singular subject, like 'I name this ship.' However, some performative utterances may lack a subject or a verb altogether.

Austin (1962) concludes there are no formal criteria differentiating performative from non-performative utterances. Performative utterances act like idioms, where individual word meanings are insignificant and synonyms cannot substitute them. Performing an action involves uttering specific predetermined words in a fixed sequence during highly conventionalized and sometimes ritualized contexts.

2.6 Interface Between Form and Function

Austin addresses a key concern in discourse analysis: the connection between form and function. How can one realize many discourse functions, and how can listeners and analysts identify the specific function being expressed? He suggests this issue is not complicated, as any performative utterance should be reducible, expandible, or analyzable into a form with a verb in the first person singular present indicative. Thus, ‘out’ translates to ‘I declare, pronounce, or call you out,’ while ‘guilty’ translates to ‘I find, pronounce, or deem you guilty’.

3. Austin’s Model of Speech Acts

Austin (1962) concludes that when a speaker issues an utterance, they can perform three acts at once: a locutionary act (the act of saying something), an illocutionary act (the act carried out in saying something), and a perlocutionary act (the act done by or as an effect of saying). Therefore:

- Act A or Locution

  e.g., He said to me 'Shoot her' meaning by 'shoot' shoot and referring by 'her' to her.

- Act B or Illocution

  e.g., He urged (or advised, ordered, etc.) me to shoot her.

- Act C or perlocution

  e.g., He persuaded me to shoot her.

Austin does not imply that one can choose between these speech acts; rather, one typically performs all three simultaneously. However, examining them separately aids analysis.

3.1 Classification of Illocutionary Acts

Austin proposed around 10.000 different illocutionary acts, which he categorized into five primary classes:

- Verdictives, characterized by issuing a verdict (e.g., diagnose, estimate);
- Exercitives, which involve the use of powers, rights, or influence (e.g., appoint, order);
- Commissives, in which the speaker commits to action and includes declarations or announcements of intention (e.g., promise, guarantee);
- Behavitives, a diverse group related to attitudes and social interactions (e.g., apologize, criticize);

- Expositives, which clarify how utterances integrate into ongoing discourse or their usage (e.g., argue, affirm).

3.2 Distinction between Locutionary and Illocutionary Acts

Austin initially differentiates between locutionary and illocutionary acts. However, executing a locutionary act usually suggests that one is also carrying out an illocutionary act. In 1996, Strawson examines what a listener must understand to grasp the meaning of precisely what was said in context. He argues that mastery of syntax and semantics is insufficient. For instance, if a stranger hears ‘John will get here in two hours from now,’ they may not know who ‘John’ is or the time and place of ‘here’ and ‘now.’ Thus, meaning should be seen as a mix of grammatical, lexical, and extra-textual elements; the locutionary act conveys this meaning from speaker to listener. However, uncertainty remains about whether the listener understood the illocutionary force of John's statement as an assertion, prediction, or warning.

3.3 Illocutionary vs. Perlocutionary Acts

Many utterances simultaneously perform locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. Austin notes that the distinction between illocutionary and perlocutionary acts tends to cause confusion. The illocutionary act, realized through the utterance of specific words, is largely within the speaker's control. In contrast, the perlocutionary act changes the listener's mindset, evoking feelings such as alarm, conviction, or deterrence. This act reflects the impact of the utterance on the listener, but it lacks conventional reliability; there is no standard or dependable method for 'convincing' or 'deterring' someone.

Consequently, Austin emphasizes the need to differentiate between the perlocutionary object, essentially the intended outcome of an illocutionary act, and the perlocutionary sequel, which pertains to the unintended or secondary outcome. For instance, the perlocutionary object of a warning, aimed at alerting someone, can serve as a sequel to another perlocutionary act that alarms them. He contends that certain acts yield only sequels without corresponding objects, leading to reactions such as surprise, distress, or humiliation via locution, even in the absence of an illocutionary formula like ‘I surprise you by.’

3.4 Importance of Speaker’s Intention and Listener’s Interpretation

Austin (1962) does not explore perlocutionary objects and emphasizes the speaker’s intention. Some analysts, especially Sacks and his colleagues (1972), argue that illocutionary force depends on the listener’s perception instead. This view stems from the idea that neither listener nor analyst can verify the speaker’s intention. Instead, listener interpretation emerges through their response, shaping interaction. In contrast, Austin, working with invented sentences, insists that illocutionary force is tied to the speaker’s intention. He argues that if a listener misinterprets an utterance, the speaker should not be seen as having accidentally performed another illocutionary act, but as having produced none.

Searle (1969) provides the following illustration: imagine a party where a wife says, ‘It’s really quite late.’ On one level, this statement is a factual observation; however, to her interlocutor, who just commented on how early the evening is, it could also be interpreted as an objection, a suggestion, or even a request ‘let's go home.’ as well as a warning ‘you’ll feel rotten in the morning if we don’t’. Regrettably, Searle does not delve further into this issue.

3.5 Difficulties in Distinguishing Acts

Austin anticipated challenges with the illocutionary/perlocutionary distinction, but issues have also arisen with locutionary/illocutionary distinctions. Complications arise with statements like ‘I warn you there’s a bull in that field,’ suggesting that understanding the locutionary act includes grasping the illocutionary force. Cohen argues that illocutionary forces do not exist. Strawson (1996) notes that meaning can fully encompass the force in explicit performative utterances. Similarly, Searle (1969) supports Cohen’s view but concludes that only illocutionary acts exist. Forguson (1973) observes that while meaning can dictate force, it is not equivalent to force itself. Despite criticisms, the distinction between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary remains a valuable concept in discussing speech acts.

4. Searle's Contribution

Since Austin's death, speech act philosophy has focused on the principles governing successful speech acts. While he identified four criteria for 'successful' ritual performatives, he did not establish conditions for other performatives.

Searle accepts the illocutionary act concept but rejects the locutionary act, proposing instead the propositional act that captures the content of an utterance. He argues that this act includes the actions of referring and attributing properties. Notably, he emphasizes that the propositional act is not represented by the whole utterance but only by parts that exclude 'the indication of illocutionary force.' Searle states that an utterance consists of a proposition and a device indicating 'illocutionary force.' In English, these devices include word order, stress, intonation, punctuation, verb mood, and performative verbs. He asserts that in the examples given, the speaker conveys the proposition that John will leave the room, attributing the action to John, but only in the second case is the illocutionary act of 'asserting' executed.

e.g., Will John leave the room?

John will leave the room.

John, leave the room!

If John will leave the room I will leave also.

At this point, two questions arise: First, as Searle (1965) asks, can we identify fundamental illocutionary acts that encompass most others? Second, is it prudent to depend on natural language for categorization? Should expressions like 'I order you to', 'I request you to', 'I beg you to', and 'I entreat you to' be seen as distinct speech acts? Denying that all performative verbs serve as labels for different functions implies that certain actions, such as 'insulting', might remain unlabelled due to a lack of corresponding performative verbs, like 'I insult you that.' Searle proposes that we may utilize a rubric, similar to how we reference the color red. Likewise, we have created the term 'macarize' to express making someone happy.

4.1 Regulative and Constitutive Rules

Searle identifies two types of rules: regulative and constitutive. Regulative rules govern specific behaviors, such as 'Children are forbidden to play football on the grass.' Constitutive rules establish the behavior; if the children disregard the notice, they still play football while breaking the rule. If they violate the offside rule, they no longer play football, as the game cannot exist without its constitutive rules. Both types of rules are essential to studying language use, with regulative rules often implied. Hymes (1972) notes that these rules vary by community. Searle aims to elucidate the constitutive rules governing the illocutionary act of promising. He focuses on how an utterance like 'I promise' can be recognized as a promise.

4.2 Rules for Promising

Searle suggests that five rules govern the making of a promise:

- **Propositional content rules** state that a promise act must be predicated of the speaker and refer to a future act; a speaker cannot promise to have done something or that someone else will do something.
- **Preparatory rules -**
  (a) If a promise is defective, the promiser does not believe it will be fulfilled, does not want it completed, or pertains to something the promiser does not want done, regardless of the speaker's intentions, it will serve as a warning.
  (b) A speaker cannot promise to do something he would be expected to do anyway
- **Sincerity rule:** the speaker must intend to perform the action; however, Searle admits that it is possible for someone to promise with no intention of honoring it at all, which constitutes an abuse of the procedure.
- **Essential rule:** uttering the words counts as undertaking an obligation to perform the action.

A key distinction between Austin and Searle is how they derive the illocutionary force of an utterance. Austin believes it depends on successfully executing the speaker's intention, while Searle argues it results from the listener's interpretation. This leads to a situation where the speaker, saying 'I promise I'll be there by three o'clock,' may genuinely believe they have made a commitment but could inadvertently convey the illocutionary acts of 'warning' or 'threatening' if the listener does not actually desire their presence by that time.

4.3 Extending the Analysis to Other Speech Acts

Searle notes that if his analysis of 'promise' is generally relevant, these distinctions should also apply to other speech acts. In his 1969 work on 'ordering', he outlines the preparatory conditions, stating that the speaker must hold authority over the hearer. The sincerity conditions require the speaker's desire to accomplish the ordered action. In contrast, the essential condition revolves around the speaker's intention to persuade the hearer to perform that action. He observes that certain conditions overlap, leading him to ponder whether there are 'some basic illocutionary acts to which all or most of the others are reducible.' Although he refrains from committing to a definitive answer, he believes there are illocutionary acts that can be usefully viewed as specific instances of others. He proposes that asking questions constitutes a particular form of requesting; this explains our instinct that the utterance in the request format 'Tell me the name of the first President of the United States?' carries the same force as the corresponding question form.

4.4 Indirect Speech Acts

Searle explores the more complex issue of how listeners correctly interpret primary performatives, which he terms indirect speech acts. To illustrate, he emphasizes indirect directives or requests and proposes that the potential realizations can be effectively classified into six categories:

i. Sentence concerning Hearer's ability: Can you pass the salt

ii. Sentence concerning Hearer's future action: Will you or are you going to pass the salt
iii. Sentence concerning Speaker's wish or want: I would like (you to pass) the salt
iv. Sentence concerning Hearer's desire or willingness: Would you mind passing the salt
v. Sentence concerning Reasons for action: It might help if you pass the salt. I don't think you salted the potatoes.
vi. Sentence concerning either one of the above or an explicit performative; therefore, not really a separate class: Can I ask you to pass the salt?

The first three types refer to the three felicity conditions on directive illocutionary acts: respectively, preparatory, which concerns the listener's ability; propositional content, which pertains to the futurity of the action; and sincerity, which relates to the speaker's desire for the listener to perform the action. He aligns group iv with group v, arguing that 'both concern reasons for doing A,' since wanting to do something is a reason par excellence for doing it. From the data, he can draw the following generalizations:

S can make an indirect directive by:

a) Either asking whether or stating that a preparatory condition concerning his ability to do A obtains;
b) Either asking whether or stating that the propositional content condition obtains;
c) stating that the sincerity condition obtains, but not by asking whether it obtains;
d) Either stating that or asking whether there are good or overriding reasons for doing A, except where the reason is that H wants or wishes etc., to do A, in which case he can only ask whether H wants, wishes, etc., to do A.

These generalizations define the data and limit methods for indirect directives. However, they do not explain why these options exist or how a listener decides if 'can you pass the salt?' is a question or a request. Searle acknowledges that a listener must determine when the utterance is a factual query and when it serves as a request. He notes that general conversational principles and factual background information are crucial in this determination.

4.5 Felicity Conditions

One of Searle's key contributions to speech act theory is his elaboration on Austin's concept of felicity. Felicity conditions are essential for successfully executing a speech act. Austin (1975) says that when all conditions are satisfied, the speech act is deemed happy; otherwise, it results in an infelicitous act, which may be considered a misfire or abuse. Searle (1969) identified nine conditions for promising, categorizing them into four types: preparatory, propositional content, sincerity, and essential conditions. He also distinguished between regulatory rules that govern an activity and constitutive rules that define a game or activity. Searle asserts that speech act rules are fundamentally constitutive and can be derived from the felicity conditions. Therefore, the rules governing promising also fit into the categories of preparatory, propositional content, sincerity, and essential rules.

Conclusion

Speech Act Theory, developed by Austin and Searle, transforms our understanding of language from merely sharing information to a form of action. Austin identified locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, which investigate how words accomplish actions, emphasizing the performative aspect and the importance of context. He revealed that utterances can perform actions, like promising, warning, or apologizing, challenging the idea that language's role is only descriptive. Searle built on this by defining conditions for successful speech acts and introducing indirect acts. He differentiated regulative and constitutive rules, showcasing language's structured yet adaptable nature. His work illustrates how listeners extract meaning from context and conversation, even without clear performative markers. Austin and Searle demonstrate that understanding language requires considering both the speaker's intent and the listener's interpretation in a shared context. Their theories continue to influence linguistics, philosophy, discourse analysis, and communication studies, providing a framework for exploring form, function, and meaning in conversation.

Discussion Questions

- How did John Searle elaborate on Austin's theory of speech acts?
- In what ways can a sentence's illocutionary force differ from its literal form? Provide an example.
- How can indirect speech acts lead to misunderstandings in communication?
- What distinguishes perlocutionary effects from illocutionary intentions? Provide a practical example.

Suggested Tasks

- Read a dialogue or short script and identify the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts within it.

  Teacher: *"You didn't submit your assignment, John."*
  John: *"I'm really sorry, I had a family emergency."*
  Teacher: *"Alright, make sure you hand it in by tomorrow."*
  John: *"Thank you, I will."*
- Categorize each of the following sentences according to Searle's five illocutionary types.

  "I swear I'll never lie again."
  "Congratulations on your graduation!"
  "Please turn off the lights."
  "The Earth revolves around the Sun."
  "I now pronounce you husband and wife."
- Record a short conversation, transcribe it, and analyze it using Speech Act Theory.

Further Readings

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. http://pubman.mpdl.mpg.de/pubman/item/escidoc:2271128/component/escidoc:2271430/austin_1962_how-to-do-things-with-words.pdf

Cole, P., & Morgan, J. L. (1975). *Speech acts*.

Cutting, J. (2002). *Pragmatics and Discourse: a resource book for students*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA56486975

Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA0026722X

Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics: An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing.

Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139173438

Thomas, J. (1995). *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Routledge.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

Concluding Remarks on the Pragmatics Module

As we wrap up our lectures on Pragmatics, it is important to contemplate the insightful journey we have experienced. This course has delivered more than just linguistic theories; it has deepened our comprehension of how language operates in real-life contexts and how meaning is constructed, interpreted, and negotiated in context.

Over the semesters, we delved into fundamental aspects of pragmatics, such as context, deixis, implicature, politeness, conversation, speech acts, and the distinction between semantics and pragmatics. We studied how communication extends beyond mere literal interpretations, relying on shared assumptions, social dynamics, and cultural norms. From early theorists like Wittgenstein, Austin, Grice, and Searle to contemporary models such as Relevance Theory and Rapport Management, we have witnessed the evolution of pragmatics into a highly interdisciplinary and influential field of linguistic study.

The practical relevance of pragmatics makes it especially valuable. It aids in understanding the origins of misunderstandings, cultural variations in politeness and indirectness, how speakers navigate power dynamics and social interaction, and how language evolves in digital, institutional, and intercultural settings. In our globally interconnected and tech-driven world, possessing pragmatic competence is not merely advantageous but crucial.

As future researchers and language professionals, students are just getting started. Pragmatics presents a rich array of intriguing and socially relevant topics that are perfect for Master's dissertations. Students can think about exploring:

- How politeness strategies differ across languages or cultures
- The role of implicature in advertising, political discourse, or social media
- Pragmatic failure in intercultural or online communication

- Speech act theory in educational, legal, or professional settings
- Deixis and reference in digital, multimodal, or AI-assisted communication
- The pedagogical implications of teaching pragmatics in language classrooms

Delving into these subjects will enhance students' analytical abilities and enable them to make meaningful contributions to a field that lies at the crossroads of language, society, and cognition. In summary, pragmatics extends beyond academia; it is a framework for enhancing our understanding of human interactions. Consider this module a foundation for further exploration. Students can utilize the dissertation to ask bold questions, analyze authentic communication, and offer unique insights into this essential and growing field.

References

Austin, J. (1975). *How to do things with words*. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198245537.001.0001

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. http://pubman.mpdl.mpg.de/pubman/item/escidoc:2271128/component/escidoc:2271430/austin_1962_how-to-do-things-with-words.pdf

Bach, K. (1994). *Thought and reference.*

Bach, K. (1997). The Semantics-Pragmatics distinction: what it is and why it matters. In *VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften eBooks* (pp. 33–50). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-663-11116-0_3

Bach, K. (1999). The myth of conversational implicature. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, *22*(4), 327–366. https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1005466020243

Bar-Hillel, Y. (1970). *Aspects of language: Essays and lectures on philosophy of language, linguistic philosophy, and methodology of linguistics*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA0293992X

Bar-Hillel, Y. (1975). Pragmatics of natural languages. In *Springer eBooks*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-010-1713-8

Barron, A., Gu, Y., & Steen, G. (2020). *The Routledge Handbook of Pragmatics*. Routledge.

Bilmes, J. (1986). *Discourse and behavior*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Birner, B. J. (2012). *Introduction to pragmatics*. John Wiley & Sons.

Birner, B. J. (2021). *Pragmatics: A Slim Guide*. Oxford University Press (UK).

Blakemore, D. (1987). *Semantic constraints on relevance*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge University Press.

Carnap, R. (1942). *Introduction to semantics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA.

Cherry, C. (1966). *On human communication: A Review, a Survey, and a Criticism*. Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press.

Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic structures*. Walter de Gruyter.

Clark, B. (2022). *Pragmatics: The Basics*.

Clark, H. H. (1996). *Using language*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511620539

Cole, P., & Morgan, J. L. (1975). *Speech acts*.

Cook, G. (1989). Discourse. Oxford. Oxford University Press.

Coulthard, M. (2014). *An introduction to discourse analysis*. Routledge.

Cruse, D. A. (2000). *Meaning in language: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Crystal, D. (1987). The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language. Cambridge University, Cambridge.

Cutting, J. (2002). *Pragmatics and Discourse: a resource book for students*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA56486975

Cutting, J. (2015). *Language in context in TESOL*.

Cutting, J. (2015). *Pragmatics: a resource book for students*.

Davis, S. (1991). *Pragmatics: A Reader*. Oxford University Press on Demand.

ELT Concourse: deixis. (n.d.) https://teflconcourse.com/training/inservice/discourse/deixis.com

Emanuel Schegloff

Ferguson, T. S. (1973). A Bayesian analysis of some nonparametric problems. *The Annals of Statistics*, *1*(2). https://doi.org/10.1214/aos/1176342360

Fillmore, C. J. (1997). *Lectures on Deixis*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA32748396

Firth, J. R. (1950). Personality and language in society. *The Sociological Review*, *a42*(1), 37–52. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954x.1950.tb02460.x

Firth, J. R. (1957). *Papers in Linguistics, 1934-1951*.

Fotion, Nick, 1995, "Pragmatics," in T. Honderich (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford. Oxford University Press, pp. 23–43.

Garrod, S. and Doherty, G. 1994. Conversation, coordination and convention: An empirical investigation of how groups establish linguistic conventions. *Cognition*, 53:181-215.

Ghadessy, M. (1999). Text and context in functional linguistics. *Amsterdam studies in the theory and history of linguistic science. Series 4, Current issues in linguistic theory*. https://doi.org/10.1075/cilt.169

Goffman, E. (1972). *Interaction Ritual: Essays on face-to-face behaviour*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA20574367

Goffman, Erving. 1956. The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. New York: Random House.

Green, G. (1989): Pragmatics and Natural Language Understanding. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Grice, H. M. (1967). The Logic of Conversation. William James Lectures. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.

Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In *BRILL eBooks* (pp. 41–58). https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004368811_003

Grice, H. P. (1989). *Studies in the way of words*. Harvard University Press.

Grundy, P. (2008). *Doing pragmatics*. Hodder Education Publishers.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1989). *Spoken and written language*.

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. http://archives.umc.edu.dz/handle/123456789/111528

Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1991). *Language, context, and text: Aspects of Language in a Social-semiotic Perspective*.

Horn, L. R., & Ward, G. (2004). *The Handbook of Pragmatics*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Horton, W. S. (2017). Theories and approaches to the study of conversation and interactive Discourse. In *The Routledge Handbook of Discourse Processes* (2nd ed., p. 47). Routledge.

Huang, Y. (2014). *Pragmatics*.

Hymes, D. (1972). On Communicative Competence. In J. Pride, & J. Holmes (Eds.), Sociolinguistics (pp. 269-285). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Hymes, D. (1974). *Foundations in sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Jefferson, G. (1983). On exposed and embedded correc- tion in conversation. *Studium Linguistik*, 14, 58–68.

Jucker, A. H., Schneider, K. P., & Bublitz, W. (2018). *Methods in pragmatics*. De Gruyter Mouton.

Katz, J. J. (1977). *Propositional structure and illocutionary force*.

Kempson, R. (1988). Grammar and conversational principles. In *Cambridge University Press eBooks* (pp. 139–163). https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511621055.009

Krauss, R. M., & Fussell, S. R. (1996). Social psychological models of interpersonal communication. In E. T. Higgins & A. W. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles* (pp. 655–701). The Guilford Press.

Lakoff, R. (1973). The logic of politeness: Or, minding your p's and q's. In C. Corum, T. Cedric Smith-Stark, & A. Weiser (Eds.), Papers from the 9th Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society. Chicago Linguistic Society, 292-305.

Leckie-Tarry, H. (1995). *Language and context: A Functional Linguistic Theory of Register*. Burns & Oates.

Leech, G. N. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA0026722X

Leech, G. N. (2005). Politeness: Is there an East-West divide? *外国语*, *6*, 3–31. http://www.cqvip.com/QK/96948X/200506/20633581.html

Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511813313

Levinson, S. C. (2000). *Presumptive Meanings: the theory of generalized conversational implicature*. http://dx.doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/5526.001.0001

Lycan, W. (1995): Philosophy of language. In R. Audi (ed.): The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy. Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, pp. 586-589

Lyons, J. (1977). *Semantics*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511620614

Malinowski, B. (1923). *The problem of meaning in primitive languages*.

Malmkjaer, K. (2003). *Linguistics Encyclopedia*. Routledge.

Mey, J. L. (1993). *Pragmatics : an introduction*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA50191538

Mey, J. L. (1998). The pragmatics of transition. In *Pragmatics & beyond. New series* (p. 25). https://doi.org/10.1075/pbns.36.07mey

Mey, J. L. (2000). *Pragmatics: An Introduction.* Oxford and Malden, Mass.: Blackwell. (Second, entirely revised edition)

Mey, J. L. (2001). *Pragmatics: An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing.

Morris, C. W. (1938). *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*.

Nguyen, H. T., & Kasper, G. (2009). *Talk-in-interaction: Multilingual Perspectives*. Natl Foreign Lg Resource Ctr.

Ochs, E., & Schieffelin, B. B. (1979). *Developmental pragmatics*.

Peirce, C. S. (1992). *The Essential Peirce, Volume 2: Selected Philosophical Writings (1893-1913)*. Indiana University Press.

Purwo, B. K. (1990). *Pragmatik dan pengajaran bahasa: menyibak kurikulum 1984*.

Reddy, M. (1979). The conduit metaphor. In A. Ortony (Ed.), Metaphor and thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sacks, H. 1972. An initial investigation of the usability of conversational data for doing sociology. In David Sudnow (ed), Studies in Social Interaction, pp. 31-74. New York: FreePress.

Saeed, J. I. (2015). *Semantics*. John Wiley & Sons.

Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech Acts: An essay in the Philosophy of Language*. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139173438

Searle, J.R. (1965). What is a speech act? in M. Black (ed.), *Philosophy in America*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Senft, G. (2014). *Understanding pragmatics*.

Sidnell, J. (2010). *Conversation analysis: An Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Spencer-Oatey, H. (2000). Face, (Im)Politeness and rapport. In *Continuum International Publishing Group eBooks*. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350934085.ch-002

Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1986). *Relevance: communication and cognition*. https://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA26361813

Strawson, P. F. (1996). Intention and convention in speech acts. *Ciência E Filosofia*, *5*, 221. https://doi.org/10.11606/issn.2447-9799.cienciaefilosofi.1996.105316

Subroto, D.E, dkk. 1999. Study the stilistics of Javanese novels in the 1980s. Jakarta: P3B, Depdikbud.

Thomas, J. (1983). *Cross-cultural pragmatic failure*.

Thomas, J. (1995). *Meaning in interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. Routledge.

Valenzuela, H. (2020). Linguistics for TESOL. In *Springer eBooks*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-40932-6

Verschueren, (1987). IPrA Working Document 2. Concluding Round Table 1987. International Pragmatic Conference. Antwerp. University of Antwerp.

Watts, R. J. (2003). *Politeness*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511615184

Watts, R.J. (2005) Linguistics Politeness Research: Quo Vadis? In: Ehlich, K. and Ide, S., Eds., Politeness in Language: Studies in Its History, Theory and Practice, Mouton de Gruyter, Ber-lin. http://site.ebrary.com/lib/masaryk/docDetail.action?doc

Wijana, I Dewa Putu. (1996). Dasar-dasar Pragmatik. Yogyakarta: Andi.

Wittgenstein, L. (1979). *Philosophical investigations*.

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

Yule, G. (2010). *The study of language*. Cambridge University Press.

Yule, G. (2017). *The study of language*. Cambridge University Press.