LLT Journal, e-ISSN 2579-9533, p-ISSN 1410-7201, Vol. 26, No. 2, October 2023, pp. 510-519

LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching
http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/LLT
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

FOUR MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH PRAGMATICS

Manna Dey Dey
North South University, Bangladesh
University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom
correspondence: deymanna113@gmail.com
https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v26i2.6202
received 5 April 2023; accepted 11 October 2023

Abstract
Pragmatics is a linguistic field that explores the complex relationship between language, context, and meaning. It involves analyzing how speakers and writers use language to convey not only literal information, but also social, cultural, and emotional cues that shape communication. Pragmatics examines how language users interpret and infer meaning based on contextual factors such as tone, gesture, and social norms, and how they use language to achieve various goals and outcomes. By uncovering the hidden meanings and intentions behind language use, pragmatics provides valuable insights into human communication and helps us to better understand how language shapes our social interactions and relationships Furthermore, pragmatics plays a crucial role in language learning and teaching, as it helps learners develop their communicative competence and understand the nuances of language use in different contexts. It also has practical applications in fields such as advertising, politics, and law, where the use of language can have significant impacts on audience perceptions and behaviors. Overall, pragmatics is a dynamic and multifaceted field that continues to evolve and shape our understanding of language and communication in diverse contexts.

Keywords: deixis, maxims, negative face, politeness, positive face, speech act

Introduction
Pragmatics is an essential aspect of language that goes beyond the mere exchange of information between speakers and listeners. According to Huang and Yan (2016), pragmatics involves the interpretation of meaning in context, taking into account factors such as the speaker's intention, the listener's expectations, and the social and cultural norms of the communication situation. In this sense, pragmatics can be seen as a dynamic and interactive process that is influenced by a wide range of linguistic and extralinguistic factors.

One of the key areas of interest in pragmatics is speech acts, which are the basic units of communication that involve both the expression of meaning and the performance of a social function (Searle, 1969). For example, when a speaker says "Can you pass me the salt?", they are not only expressing a request for salt but also performing the speech act of making a request. Speech acts can vary in their degree of directness, politeness, and illocutionary force, and their interpretation can depend on the context and the cultural background of the speakers (Austin, 1962).

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Another important aspect of pragmatics is the study of implicature, which refers to the inferred meaning that is not explicitly stated by the speaker (Grice, 1975). For instance, when a speaker says "I don't have any plans tonight", the listener may infer that the speaker is available and willing to do something together. Implicatures can be generated by various means, such as presuppositions, conversational implicatures, and conventional implicatures, and their interpretation often requires the listener to go beyond the literal meaning of the utterance (Levinson, 1983).

Moreover, pragmatics also encompasses the study of discourse, which refers to the extended sequences of language that go beyond the sentence level and involve the interaction between multiple speakers and listeners (Schiffrin, 1994). Discourse can be analyzed in terms of its coherence, cohesion, and genre, and it can reveal important aspects of social identity, power relations, and ideology (Fairclough, 1995).

Pragmatics is a rich and diverse field of study that investigates the complex and dynamic nature of language use in context. By examining how speakers and listeners negotiate meaning, perform speech acts, generate implicatures, and engage in discourse, pragmatics provides valuable insights into the social, cognitive, and cultural dimensions of communication (Dey, 2021). Yes, there is a close relationship between pragmatics and the psychological language learning process. Pragmatics deals with how context influences the interpretation of language, and this is particularly relevant in language learning, where learners must acquire not only the vocabulary and grammar of a language but also the cultural and contextual knowledge necessary to use it effectively.

Psychological research has shown that language learning is a complex process that involves cognitive, affective, and social factors. Pragmatics plays a critical role in the social aspect of language learning, as it involves understanding the communicative intent of others and using language appropriately in different social situations.

Moreover, studies have shown that the development of pragmatic competence is closely linked to the development of overall communicative competence in second language acquisition (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998). Thus, language learners need to have a good understanding of pragmatics to be able to use language effectively in real-world situations.

In summary, pragmatics is a crucial component of the psychological language learning process, as it provides learners with the ability to understand and use language effectively in different social and cultural contexts.

Author's definition

Pragmatics is not just concerned with the meaning-making of a given sentence; it is also concerned with the speaker's concealed meaning. One could argue that pragmatics is the study of what is unsaid. It is dependent on the speaker's concept of what s/he wants to communicate to the listener in various settings. It is through pragmatics that a listener or reader can examine the intended meanings, allowing them to research their purposes, within their assumptions, and to explore them in the shape of behavior in state to various acts they wish to execute when speaking with a front audience.

According to Crystal (1987, p. 62-5), pragmatics is concerned with the elements that influence the language we use and its consequences on others. Thus, the pragmatic variables that influence our choice of grammatical structure are the sound pattern and the meaning that we are making by presenting the vocabulary in the intended manner as a means of communication (Crystal, 1987, p. 62-5). Thus, pragmatics tends to be associated with the meaning of words used by people in their social contexts and their choice of words in a context.

According to Robin, the area of pragmatics is defined as the study of phenomena revolving around the various aspects affecting speech situations (1964, p. 23). Leech (1983, p.13-4), stated that pragmatics is the study of meaning and the way that speech is related to any provided situations, as well as an aspect of how a speech is made in a situation, and it also paves the way for determining a core principle regarding whether it deals with semantic or pragmatic phenomena. The main significant components of pragmatics imply that it is the study of meaning in speech situations.

Pragmatics application linguistics

In addition to the concept of utterance, pragmatics also considers the role of speech acts in communication. Speech acts refer to the intentional use of language to act, such as making a request or giving an apology (Searle, 1969). These acts rely heavily on context and social norms in order to be to. For example, saying "Can you pass the salt?" in a restaurant is a common request, whereas saying the same thing at a funeral may be seen as inappropriate.

Furthermore, the study of pragmatics also involves examining how speakers use implicature to convey meaning. Implicature refers to the meaning that is implied by a speaker, rather than directly stated (Grice, 1975). For instance, when someone says "It's getting late" during a conversation, they may be implying that they want to end the conversation and leave.

Pragmatics also involves examining how language is used to accomplish social goals, such as asserting dominance or building rapport (Brown & Levinson, 1987). These social goals are achieved through the use of politeness strategies, such as the use of indirect language to make requests.

Pragmatics is concerned with how meaning is constructed and conveyed through language, and how this meaning is influenced by context, social norms, and speaker intentions. By examining these factors, we can gain a deeper understanding of how communication works in various settings

In addition to the concepts discussed above, pragmatics also explores the role of context in determining meaning. Context refers to the situation in which a conversation is taking place, including factors such as the physical setting, the relationship between the speakers, and the shared background knowledge of the participants (Levinson, 1983). For example, if someone says "I'm freezing" in a cold room, the meaning of the statement is influenced by the context of the conversation.

Pragmatics also considers how language varies across cultures and social groups. Sociolinguistics, a subfield of pragmatics, examines how language is used to signal identity and social status, and how linguistic patterns differ across different communities (Labov, 1972). For example, the use of slang or dialect can signal membership in a particular social group.

Another important concept in pragmatics is the idea of presupposition, which refers to the assumptions that a speaker makes about their audience's knowledge or beliefs. These assumptions are often implicit in the language used and can be used to convey information indirectly (Stalnaker, 1974). For example, if someone says "I'm going to the gym after work", they may be presupposing that the listener knows where the gym is located and what it is.

Pragmatics is a complex and multifaceted field that explores how language is used in social interaction. By examining the role of context, social norms, and speaker intentions, as well as the ways in which across cultures and social groups, we can gain a deeper understanding of how communication works and how meaning is constructed through language

Speech act

Speech acts have been studied extensively by linguists and philosophers to understand the nature of communication and how it is used to achieve social ends. According to Searle (1969), speech acts can be classified into five categories: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative. Each category represents a different type of illocutionary force or intention that is conveyed through speech. For example, an assertive speech act aims to convey a belief or proposition, while a directive speech act aims to get the listener to do something.

The study of speech acts has been further developed by scholars such as Vanderveken (2014), who emphasizes the importance of pragmatic factors such as context and the speaker's intentions in determining the meaning of speech acts. He argues that speech acts cannot be fully understood without taking into account the social and cultural context in which they are used.

Speech act theory has also been used to analyze the role of language in power relations. For example, Fairclough (1989) argues that speech acts can be used to exercise power and control over others, particularly in the context of institutional and political discourse. Similarly, Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) examine the use of speech acts in the construction of gender identities and the reinforcement of gender stereotypes.

The analysis of speech acts has also been extended to nonverbal communication. For example, Kendon (2004) argues that gestures and other nonverbal cues can function as speech acts, conveying meaning and intention in the same way that words do. Similarly, Krippendorff (1986) suggests that visual and graphic design can be seen as a form of speech act, as it involves the intentional use of symbols and images to convey meaning.

In the study of speech acts has provided important insights into the nature of communication and how it is used to achieve social ends. Scholars from various disciplines have used speech act theory to examine a wide range of phenomena, from verbal communication to nonverbal cues and visual design. By understanding the different types of speech acts and their functions, we can better analyze and interpret the messages conveyed in everyday communication

Different types of speech acts

Another way to understand speech acts is by categorizing them into three levels: the propositional, illocutionary, and perlocutionary levels (Searle, 1969). The propositional level refers to the literal meaning of the utterance, or what is

being asserted. The illocutionary level, on the other hand, refers to the speaker's intention in making the utterance, or what they are trying to accomplish. Finally, the perlocutionary level refers to the effect that the utterance has on the listener, or how it influences their beliefs, attitudes, or behavior (Austin, 1962).

For instance, consider the sentence "Could you pass me the salt?" At the propositional level, the sentence is a request for salt. At the illocutionary level, the speaker is asking the listener to act, namely, to pass the salt. At the perlocutionary level, the effect on the listener could be to comply with the request, to refuse it, or to ignore it altogether.

Understanding speech acts is not only relevant for linguistic theory but also for communication studies, psychology, and philosophy (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000). By analyzing the different levels of speech acts, researchers can better understand how language is used to convey meaning, negotiate social interactions, and shape our experiences of the world.

Speech acts are complex and multifaceted phenomena that involve different levels of analysis, from the literal meaning of the words to the speaker's intentions and the listener's response. By examining these levels, researchers can gain insights into the role of language in social interaction and meaning-making

Implications of conversation in the field of pragmatics

Another influential author in the field of pragmatics is Austin (1962), who developed the concept of "speech acts." According to Austin, language is not merely a tool for conveying information, but also a means of performing actions. In other words, when we use language, we are not only describing the world around us, but also engaging in various kinds of social activities such as making requests, giving commands, or expressing opinions.

Searle (1969) further developed Austin's ideas and proposed the concept of "illocutionary acts," which refer to the intended function of a speech act, as well as "perlocutionary acts," which refer to the actual effect of a speech act on the listener. Searle also identified five basic illocutionary acts: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives.

Levinson (1983) also contributed to the study of pragmatics by proposing the concept of "presupposition," which refers to the implicit assumptions or beliefs that speakers and listeners share during a conversation. According to Levinson, presuppositions are an important aspect of communication because they allow speakers to convey meaning indirectly and avoid being too explicit or confrontational.

Finally, Brown and Levinson (1978) developed the concept of "face," which refers to the social identity or image that a person wants to maintain during a conversation. Brown and Levinson identified two types of face: positive face, which refers to the desire for approval or admiration from others, and negative face, which refers to the desire for autonomy or freedom from imposition. They also proposed various strategies that speakers can use to mitigate face-threatening acts, such as apologies, hedges, and indirectness.

The following are four conversational maxims

a) Quality: Quality is defined as "what speakers say must be presumed to be true."

b) Quantity: Quantity refers to the extent to which speakers must be informative, but not excessively so.
c) Relevance: The speaker must be pertinent to the exchange's aim.
d) Attitude: The speaker's tone must be clear and without ambiguity.

Additionally, Grice has emphasized the speaker's cooperation principle. These tacit agreements during conversations are these maxims. These agreements are made because of these maxims, which make it easy to interpret what the speaker is trying to convey in various contexts.

Grice's maxims are those that can be consciously affected while speaking in a sarcastic or sardonic tone. It is, indeed, a method of deception. Grice has referred to relevance theory throughout his creation of conversational implicatures. Deirdre Wilson and Dan Sperber, two linguists, have been more concerned with the concept of relevance to the structure of a dialogue, which maintains the contribution of relevant processes toward matching a context to the addressee's assumptions.

Apart from Grice's maxims, other theories contribute to the study of pragmatics. One such theory is the theory of politeness by Brown and Levinson (1978), which emphasizes the importance of maintaining face during communication. According to this theory, people use various politeness strategies to save face and avoid threatening their conversational partner's positive or negative face needs.

Another influential theory is the theory of implicature by Levinson (2000), which builds on Grice's conversational implicature. According to Levinson, implicature is a type of inference that goes beyond what is explicitly said in a conversation and relies on the cooperative principle and other contextual cues to interpret the speaker's intended meaning.

Clark and Brennan's (1991) common ground theory is also relevant to the study of pragmatics, as it emphasizes the importance of shared knowledge and assumptions between conversational partners. According to this theory, people use various linguistic and non-linguistic cues to establish and maintain a common ground, which facilitates successful communication.

Finally, Gumperz's (1982) theory of contextualization cues emphasizes the role of situational and cultural factors in shaping the meaning of language use. According to this theory, people use various contextualization cues such as tone of voice, gesture, and social roles to interpret the intended meaning of a conversation.

Politeness

Politeness is an essential aspect of pragmatics, and several scholars have studied the phenomenon from various perspectives. Brown and Levinson (1978) proposed the theory of politeness, which suggests that speakers use different strategies to save face and maintain their own and their interlocutors' positive or negative face needs. These strategies include the use of indirectness, hedges, and mitigators, among others. Similarly, Lakoff's (1975) theory of language and gender highlights the importance of politeness in gendered communication, suggesting that women are socialized to use language that is more polite and deferential than men. In contrast, Holmes (1995) argues that politeness is a universal feature of communication, but that the specific strategies used may vary across cultures. Other scholars, such as Leech (1983) and Watts (2003), have studied politeness in terms of its social and cultural functions, arguing that it serves to establish and maintain

social hierarchies and power relations. Overall, the study of politeness in pragmatics highlights the complex and multifaceted nature of human communication and underscores the importance of understanding the social and cultural contexts in which language use occurs

Politeness is a broad term that refers to a speaker's attitude toward the addressee's differing wishes in various situations. In a year, English linguists Levinson and Penelope Brown will examine the linguistic expressions of politeness (1979). They offered several significant tactics for bridging the disparities maximizing interactions, such as using language in terms of address or indirect speech acts. The purpose of these strategies is to provide a means of accomplishing specific objectives. As a result, there is a predetermined order in which to address an addressee. One of the primary names used to describe these methods is "face," which refers to the face that reflects the speaker's self-image in public and can be classified into two broad categories, namely positive facial expression and negative facial expression.

Positive and negative face

Positive and negative faces are key concepts in politeness theory and are used to describe individuals' desires to be respected and valued by others. Brown and Levinson (1987) define positive face as the desire for inclusion, solidarity, and approval from others, while negative face refers to the desire for independence, autonomy, and freedom from imposition. In conversation, speakers use various strategies to satisfy their own and their interlocutors' face needs, such as indirectness, euphemism, and politeness markers (Goffman, 1967; Pomerantz, 1978). Face-threatening acts, on the other hand, can damage individuals, leading to feelings of embarrassment, offense, or anger (Ting-Toomey, 1994). Therefore, understanding positive and negative facial expression needs is crucial for successful communication and social interaction.

Despite the importance of positive and negative face, the concept has been criticized for being too simplistic and failing to capture the complexity of face needs in different cultures (Ide, 2017; Kádár & Haugh, 2013). Researchers have also highlighted the need to consider other factors, such as power and status, in face-threatening situations (Arundale, 2010). Furthermore, recent studies have explored the role of social media in face-to-face communication and the impact of technology on individuals' face needs (Kim & Lee, 2019; Nguyen, 2017). Overall, the positive and negative face concept remains a crucial aspect of pragmatics and highlights the social and cultural dimensions of communication.

Positive facial expressions convey the individual's wishes and can be acknowledged and respected by others. A negative face expresses the desire to speak about social behavior without being constrained by a limited set of options. As a result, Politeness serves as the face of the other. The act of face-saving is associated with a social action that signifies one's uniqueness. It demonstrates the significance of inner desire and fear. On the other hand, face-threatening conduct might be the actions of others; it may be interpreted as an insult.

There are numerous linguistic ways to diminish a threat's negative face. For instance, to annoy someone or apologize in a positively highlighting a point about a shared interest in something, or to make a proposal to an addressee.

Deixis

Deixis is a fundamental concept in pragmatics that refers to how speakers use language to refer to entities in relation to their context of utterance (Levinson, 1983). Deictic expressions, such as pronouns, demonstratives, and temporal adverbs, have meaning only when they are used in a specific context, as they rely on the speaker's and listener's shared knowledge of the situation (Fillmore, 1971). For example, the pronoun "I" can only be understood as referring to the speaker in a particular context, and the meaning of the demonstrative "this" depends on what the speaker is pointing to at the time of the utterance.

Deixis is crucial in language use, as it allows speakers to refer to entities in a particular space and time and to convey their perspective and stance (Levinson, 1983). Moreover, deixis can also convey social relationships, such as power and solidarity, as speakers can use different deixis to signal their position in the interaction (Verschueren, 1999).

Despite its importance, deixis can also cause confusion and misunderstandings, especially when the context of the utterance is not clear or when the interlocutors have different perspectives (Huang, 2007). Therefore, speakers need to be aware of the contextual information and use deixis appropriately to convey their intended meaning.

In conclusion, deixis is a fundamental concept in pragmatics that refers to how speakers use language to refer to entities in relation to their context of utterance. Deictic expressions allow speakers to convey their perspective, stance, and social relationships, but can also cause confusion and misunderstandings if not used appropriately.

According to Schiffrin (1994), deixis involves the use of linguistic expressions to refer to entities that are located in the immediate physical or social context of the speaker and listener. In other words, deixis is used to locate people, objects, and events in space and time, as well as to establish social relationships and identity.

Deixis can be further classified into three types: person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis (Lyons, 1977). Person deixis refers to the use of pronouns and other linguistic expressions to refer to the speaker and listener, as well as to third parties. Spatial deixis refers to the use of linguistic expressions to refer to physical space, such as demonstratives ("this," "that," "here," "there"), locative adverbs ("above," "below," "next to"), and spatial prepositions ("in," "on," "under"). Temporal deixis refers to the use of linguistic expressions to refer to time, such as adverbs ("now," "then," "soon") and tense markers ("yesterday," "tomorrow").

The use of deixis is highly dependent on the context of the utterance and the shared knowledge between the speaker and listener. This can lead to ambiguity and misunderstandings when the context is unclear or when there are different interpretations of the same utterance (Levinson, 1983). Therefore, speakers must be mindful of the context and use deixis appropriately to convey their intended meaning.

Deixis is an essential concept in pragmatics that allows speakers to locate entities in space and time and establish social relationships and identity. It can be classified into three types: person deixis, spatial deixis, and temporal deixis. The appropriate use of deixis requires an understanding of the context and shared knowledge between the speaker and listener.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study of English pragmatics has broad implications for human communication beyond its specific goals. By developing models for effective speaking and writing in various social contexts, researchers in linguistics can gain insight into the factors that influence speaker choices and how language reflects personal and cultural identities. According to Crystal (2003), pragmatics allows us to understand the deeper meanings conveyed by contextual information, going beyond the surface-level ambiguities of words. This theoretical framework can be useful for applied linguistics researchers seeking to understand the complexities of language use in real-world situations. It is important to note that pragmatics differs from semantics, as it is concerned with meaning beyond the literal interpretation of words (Levinson, 1983). Ultimately, the study of pragmatics offers valuable insights into the role of language in shaping our social interactions and personal identities

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