

*Original Article*

## Main Approaches to Pragmatics

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Within linguistics, the nature of a language exists in both grammar (the abstract formal system of language) and pragmatics (the principles of language use), which are complementary domains. Pragmatics is the interaction between them. In the communication, the process of meaning is a joint accomplishment between speaker and hearer, and that is the interaction between them. Utterance is not only sense but also force (Austin, 1962). The process of performing speech acts was explained by principle and Maxim and of generating implicature by means of 'informal reasoning'. Searle established a set of rule for speech act, and Leech has a complementarist view of pragmatics in a communication system.

**Key Words:** the speech act, Cooperative principle, Maxim, the interaction, a complementarist view of pragmatics

### Introduction

Though computers can only interpret the context as strings of letters, words and sounds, or not as meanings, human beings have the capability of interpreting the context as meanings, not as a string of letters, or sounds. Even if the context entails different senses of polysemous words, phrases, or sentences, they can draw on-line meaning from target contexts.

Within the linguistic framework, human beings have essentially the same cognitive architecture (mental lexicon) and mental processes (Saeed, 1997). But individual languages differ in their societies. Language differences are to exist in semantic structure which produce by grammatical structures. Grammatical structures are composed by the notion of grammar and use of grammar within the context of language in social interaction and

where the effects of that interaction shape the form of language used (Hashiuchi, & Oku, 2003). With regards to the acquisition of L2 linguistic knowledge, the ability to process the L2 effectively and efficiently essentially relied pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic skills that are centered within working memory.

While many aspects of pragmatics are still poorly understood resistly satisfactory formalization (Austin, 1962; Grice, 1975; Guasti, 2002; Searle, 1969) known as 'ordinary language philosophers' and Leech have the great influence on pragmatic researches. This paper describes pragmatics about their theories and is divided into three sections. Section I introduces pragmatics in properties of language. Section II illustrates the theories of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). Grice (1975) and Leech's theories are presented in Section III. The last one is the conclusion.

### 1. Pragmatics in Properties of Language

Evolutionary theory explains why a species always ends up more or less well adapted to its environment. Equally, an animal communication system is successful in

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a biological sense in so far as it promotes the survival of the species that use it (Leech, 1983a). Then again, this biological sense enables human language to function in our daily life. Although genetically inherited, linguistic behavior itself is something that is learned by individual, and is passed on by cultural transmission. Other kinds of functional explanation—psychological and social—are required to account for the successful development of rich and complex linguistic behavior patterns in the individual and in society.

Within evolutionary epistemology and functional theory of language, Popper's hierarchy of the worlds is important for understanding what we are doing when we study linguistics. Table 1 represents a hierarchy of linguistic theory-types wherein the four worlds was attached to Popper's model by Leech (Leech, 1983a). As essential part of this explanation is postulating a progression from lower to higher functions in the evolution of human language. The most basic type, which treats language as

physical phenomena by the American structuralists, belongs to World 1. The second theory-type advocated by Chomsky and others of the generative grammar school, treats language as a mental phenomenon. The third theory-type regards language as a social phenomenon. Linguistic theory is revealed in the world 4 phenomenon.

Within linguistics, there are two approaches: formalism and functionalism. The argument for the both sides is analyzed by Leech (Table 2). As indicated in Table 2, the two approaches are completely opposed to one another. However, each of them has a considerable amount of truth on its side. The both tend to be associated with very different views of the nature of language. Any balanced account of language has to give attention to both: the *internal* and *external* aspects of language. More generally, the correct approach to language is both formalist and functionist (Leech, 1983a).

Before having the discussion of the field, a diagram

Table 1 A hierarchy of the worlds

		World 1	World 2	World 3	World 4
A	The 'intimates' of (these) worlds are :	Physical (including biological) objects, states, etc.	Mental (subjective ) objects, states, etc.	Social objects, states, etc.	Objective facts, existing independently of particular objects, minds, or societies
B	Communication functions :	Expressive	Signalling' or conative	Descriptive	Argumentative (or mentalingual)
C	Historical transmission and accumulation of information :	Genetic	Learning	Cultural Transmission	Linguistic transmission (by texts)
D	Unit of transmission :	Species, etc.	Individual	Society, tribe, culture, etc.	Linguistic community
E	Adaptation to environment by :	Natural selection	Conditioning	Social and technological advance	Error-elimination through argument (scientific method)

Table 2 The difference between Fomalism and Functionalism

language primarily	mental phenomenon	societal phenomenon
linguistic universal	deriving from a common genetic linguistic inheritance of the human species.	deriving from the universality of the uses to which language is put in human societies
children's acquisition of language	a built -in human capacity to learn language	the development of the child's communicative needs and abilities in society
study language	an autonomous system	in relation to its social function

(Fig. 1) is designed to capture the distinction implied between semantics (as part of the grammar) and general pragmatics (as part of the use of the grammar). A familiar and well-established tripartite model of the language system (grammar), consisting of semantics, syntax, and phonology is presented here. These levels can be regarded as three successive coding systems whereby 'sense' is converted into 'sound' for the purposes of encoding a message (production) or whereby 'sound' is converted into 'sense' for the purposes of decoding one (interpretation). In this figure, the grammar interacts with pragmatics via semantics. This view, although a useful stating point, is not the whole story; we may note, as an exception, that pragmatically related aspects of phonology (e.g. the polite use of a rising tone) interact directly with pragmatics, rather than indirectly, via syntax and semantics (Leech, 1983a).

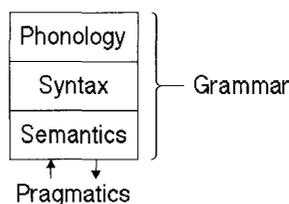


Fig. 1 A diagram of Grammar and Pragmatics.

There is a lot more to a language than the meanings of its words and phrases. The reason that ordinary people deal with their daily communication without serious problems is very interesting. The next section introduces the theories of Austin and Grice that explain the process of performing speech acts and of generating implicature by means of means of 'informal reasoning'.

## 2. The Theories of Austin and Grice

People do not just use language to say things to make statements, but to do things (perform actions) (Austin, 1962). Within linguistic philosophy, Austin's theory examines what kinds of things we do when we speak, how we do them and how our acts may 'succeed' or 'fail' (Thomas, 1995).

In the case of his framework, statements have a performative aspect, and what is now needed is to distinguish between the truth-conditional aspect of what a statement is and the action it performs; between the meaning of the speaker's words and their illocutionary force (pragmatic force). Utterances not only have sense

but also force. Austin (1962), in fact, made a three-fold distinction:

Locution	the actual words uttered
Illocution	the force or intention behind the words
Perlocution	the effect of the illocution on the hearer.

Here some conversations are presented and examined by Austin's three-fold distinctions.

At a shoe shop.	
A customer:	The color and design of the shoes is good.
	But the size is too small. (Locution)
	= > meaning: <i>I want much larger ones.</i> (Illocution)
A clerk:	Here you are.
	These are much larger than those. (Perlocution)

As in the example, all competent adult speakers of a language can predict or interpret intended illocutionary force reasonably accurately most of the time.

However, people simply could not operate if they had no idea at all how their interlocutor would react, although, of course, things can go wrong. And some problems occur due to the fact that the same locution could have a different illocutionary force (speech act or pragmatic force) in different contexts. For example, *what time is it?* could, depending on the context of utterance mean any of the following (Thomas, 1995):

- The speaker wants the hearer to tell her the time.
- The speaker is annoyed because the hearer is late.
- The speaker thinks it is time the hearer went home.

Just as the same words can be used to perform different speech acts, so different words can be used to perform the same speech act. The following utterances illustrate different ways of performing the speech act of requesting someone to close the door (Thomas, 1995).

Shut the door!	Could you shut the door?
Did you forget the door?	Put the wood in the whole.
Were you born in a barn?	What do big boys do when they come into a room, Tom?

Austin (1969) made the distinction between what speakers say and what they mean. But Grice's theory

(1975) evolves Austin's theory and attempts to explain how a hearer gets from what is said to what is meant, from the level of expressed meaning to the level of *implied meaning*. The meaning implies additional or different senses that are conveyed by means of implicature. Implicatures are the property of utterances, not of sentences and therefore the same words carry different implicatures on different occasions (Thomas, 1995). Grice's theory (1975) distinguished two different sorts of implicature: conventional implicature and conversational implicature. They both have the common property of conveying an additional level of meaning, beyond the semantic meaning of the words uttered. They differ in that in the case of conventional implicature the same implicature is always conveyed, regardless of context, whereas in the case of conversational implicature, what is implied varies according to the context of utterance (Thomas, 1995).

Conventional implicatures are the verbs "but, even, therefore, yet (Levinson, 1983), for and as" (Thomas, 1995). Among them, the word *but* is presented in detail. The word *but* carries the implicature that what follows will run counter to expectations—this sense of the word *but* always carries this implicature, regardless of the context in which it occurs. People readily respond to these conversational implicatures in everyday life.

In order to explain the mechanisms by which people interpret conversational implicature, Grice (1975) introduced the Cooperative Principle (CP) and four conversational maxims. For, in setting out his Cooperative Principle, Grice did not assert that people are always good and kind or cooperative in any everyday sense of that word. Wherever the speaker has said something which is manifestly untrue, combined with the assumption that the CP is in operation sets in motion the search for an implicature. The four Conversational Maxims help us establish that implicature might be. Grice's four maxims are Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner, which are formulated as follows:

- Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange)  
Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.
- Quality: Do not say what you believe to be false.  
Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
- Relation: Be relevant.
- Manner: Avoid obscurity of expression.

Avoid ambiguity.

Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)

Be orderly (Thomas, 1995).

However, most of the speech acts are indirect to some degree and performed by means of another speech act. There are a number of problems associated with Grice's theory. The main problems of it have been outlined briefly below:

- A. Sometimes an utterance has a range of possible interpretations. How do we know when the speaker is deliberately failing to observe a maxim and hence that an implicature is intended?
- B. How can we distinguish between different types of non-observe (e.g. distinguish a violation from an infringement)?
- C. Grice's four maxims seem to be rather different in nature. What are the consequences of this?
- D. Sometimes the maxims seem to overlap or are difficult to distinguish from one another.
- E. Grice argued that there should be a mechanism for calculating implicature, but it is not always clear how this operates (Thomas, 1995)
- F. Searles contributed to solve these main problems in pragmatics and developed formal approach to indirect speech act (1975a). The next section deals very briefly with his attempt to establish a set of rules for speech acts (1969).

### 3. The Theories of Searle and Leech

Searle (1979) attempted to systematize and formalize Austin's work. His account of how to calculate the meaning of indirect speech acts is very similar to Grice's method for getting from 'what is said' to 'what is meant'. His theory has some problems with fabricated utterances. One example of the problems is the following: *I promise I'll come over there and hit you if you don't shut up!* Because, although it is an utterance which contains a performative verb and which performs an action, the action it performs is not the one specified by the speech act verb (*promise*) but it is a threat. Searle set out a series of conditions which, properly applied, should exclude such anomalous utterances from the category of promising. Here are Searle's rules for promising:

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|-----------------------|--|
| Propositional act     | Speaker (S) predicates a future act (A) of Speaker (R) |
| Preparatory condition | S believes that doing act A is in                      |

	H's best interest and that S can do A.
Sincerity condition	Speaker intends to do act A.
Essential condition	S undertakes an obligation to do act A.

However, it should, in principle, be possible to establish rules of this nature for every speech act. He offers (1969) eight further categories of rules for speech acts: requesting, asserting, questioning, thanking, advising, warning, greeting and congratulating. However, four interrelated sets of problems arise from this work:

- A. It is not always possible to distinguish fully between one speech act and another (partly because the conditions specified by Searle tend to cover only the central or most typical usage of a speech act verb).
- B. If we attempt to plug all the gaps in Searle's rules we end up with a hopelessly complex collection of *ad hoc* conditions.
- C. The conditions specified by Searle may exclude perfectly normal instances of a speech act but permit anomalous uses.
- D. The same speech act verb may cover a range of slightly different phenomena and some speech acts 'overlap'; Searle's rules take no account of this (Thomas, 1995).

People's reasons for classifying something as a lie or not a lie are extremely complex (Coleman and Key, 1981). There are certain contexts in which we do not expect the truth to be told: satirical comedy and funeral orations are two contexts in which we do not generally expect to hear the whole, unvarnished truth. In some culturally-specific situations, the whole truth is not expected. Indirectness is universal in the sense that it occurs to some degree in all natural languages but that does not mean that we always employ indirectness or that we all employ indirectness in the same way. Individual cultures vary widely in how, when, and why they use an indirect speech act in preference to a direct one. Nevertheless, there are a number of factors which appear to govern indirectness in all languages/cultures will employ indirectness in all languages and cultures. The axes governing indirectness are universal in that they capture the types of consideration likely to govern pragmatic choices in any language, but the way they are supplied varies considerably from culture

to culture. The main factors are listed below:

- The relative power of the speaker over the hearer.
- The social distance between the speaker and the hearer.
- The degree to which X is rated an imposition in culture Y.
- Relative rights and obligations between the speaker and the hearer (Thomas, 1995).

Various reasons compel us to use indirectness in language word from. The universal use of indirectness is employed for three motives: the desire to be interesting, the desire to increase the force of one's message, and the recognition that the speaker has two (or more) competing goals—generally clash between the speaker's prepositional goal and his/her interpersonal goal.

However, grammar (the abstract formal system of language) and pragmatics (the principles of language use) are complementary domains within linguistics. We cannot understand the nature of a language without studying both these domains and the interaction between them. The consequences of this view include an affirmation of the centrality of formal linguistics in the sense of Chomsky's *competence*, but a recognition that this must be fitted into, and made answerable to, a more comprehensive framework which combines functional with formal explanations. At this point, the postulates of this 'formal-functional' paradigm are stated by Leech (1983a).

The postulates are:

- P1: The semantic representation (or logical form) of sentence is distinct from its pragmatic interpretation.
- P2: Semantics is rule-governed (grammatical); general pragmatics is principle-controlled (rhetorical).
- P3: The rules of grammar are fundamentally conventional; the principles of general pragmatics are fundamentally non-conventional, ie motivated in terms of conventional goals.
- P4: General pragmatics relates the sense (or grammatical meaning) of an utterance to its pragmatic (or illocutionary) force. This relationship may be relatively direct or indirect.
- P5: Grammatical correspondences are defined by mappings; pragmatic correspondences are defined by problems and their solutions.
- P6: Grammatical explanations are primarily formal; pragmatic explanations are primarily functional.
- P7: Grammar is ideational; pragmatics is interper-

sonal and textual.

P8: In general, grammar is describable in terms of discrete and determinate categories; pragmatics is describable in terms of continuous and indeterminate values.

Within linguistics, Leech's postulates contribute to analyze a communication system in terms of a complementarist view of pragmatics. Briefly, this approach leads us to the use of a language as a distinct form, but complementary to, the language itself seen as a formal system. Or more briefly still: grammar (in its broadcast sense) must be separated from pragmatics. The domain of pragmatics can then be defined so as to delimit it from grammar, and at the same time to show how the two fields combine within an integrated framework for studying language.

### Conclusion

While Grice developed a series of Maxims and principles (informal generalizations) to explain how a speech act (illocutionary force or pragmatic force) works, Searle attempted to systematize and formalize Austin's work and tried to establish a set of rule. But Leech attempts the rhetorical view of pragmatics that should take a different view of performatives and of illocutionary acts from that which is familiar in the 'classical' speech-act formulations of Austin and Searle. Within linguistics, a complementarist view of pragmatics within linguistics not only cultivates a communication system but also the notion that grammar (in its broadcast sense) must be separated from pragmatics.

Pragmatics can be usefully defined as the study of how utterances have meanings in situations. Pragmatics is by way of the thesis that communication is problem-solving. A speaker, why bring about such-and-such a result in the hearer's consciousness what is the best way to accomplish

this aim by using language? For the hearer, there is another kind of problem to solve: Given that the speaker said such-and-such, what did the speaker mean me to understand by that? This conception of communication leads to a rhetorical approach to pragmatics, whereby the speaker is seen as trying to achieve his aims within constraints imposed by principles and maxims of *good communicative behavior*. Grammar is rule-governed and pragmatics is essentially goal-directed and evaluative.

The domain of pragmatics can then be defined so as to delimit it from grammar, and at the same time to show how the two fields combine within an integrated framework for studying language. As is well known, language use is governed by truth conditions (semantics) and by felicity conditions (pragmatics) (Guasti, 2002).

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