

Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis

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Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis

Pragmatics ... the analysis of language in terms of the situational context within which utterances are made, including the knowledge and beliefs of the speaker and the relation between speaker and listener

... the study of meaning in context dependent on the intentions of participants in a conversational exchange.

Not the meaning of single words as we saw in semantics, but the intended meaning of whole exchanges.

[**Context** , **intentions** and **shared knowledge**, ... Also cultural **implications** play an important role.]

Discourse analysis ... a qualitative research technique that uses language in context to draw meaning and understand social problems

Background...

LANGUAGE: Form

Phonetics: Speech Sounds

Phonology: Sound Systems

Morphology: Word Structures

Syntax: Words and Combinations

LANGUAGE: Meaning

Semantics: Meaning...

Pragmatics: Meaning in context

Discourse: Piece of language bigger than a single sentence

LANGAUGE[Semantics]: Meaning

1. Lexical Meaning: Meaning from Vocabulary
2. Grammatical meaning: Meaning from Structure
3. Contextual meaning: Meaning from Context [co-text, setting]

Pragmatics

- the study of how context contributes to meaning.
- related to the study of language in its contexts of use.
- assumes and takes the lower level semantics.

Pragmatics is a field of linguistics concerned with what a speaker implies and a listener infers [when a piece of language is used] based on contributing factors like the situational context, the individuals' mental states, the preceding dialogue, and other elements.

Context

- **Linguistic context [co-text]:** ... the set of other words used in the same sentence

'pupil' ?

1. If it is used in a sentence with words like 'teacher', 'classmates' etc. → meaning 1
2. If it is used in a sentence with words like 'eye', 'dilatation' or 'iris'--> meaning2

Physical context: ... refers to the physical setting in which communication takes place. the location, the time of day, the weather, the noise level, and the presence of other people and physical structures.; ... the state of being in the world.

[Language requires context in order to function as a means of communicating between speakers and listeners, according to widely accepted standards. Because listening entails taking into account of background knowledge – such as the speaker, entities, concepts, or previous utterances – it is critical to infer the intended meaning of a speaker]

Presupposition (Background/Shared Knowledge)

- a presupposition is an implicit assumption about the world or background belief relating to an utterance whose truth is taken for granted in discourse.
- Presuppositions include the preconditions for linguistic interaction, the norms of turn-taking in dialogue, and more particularized information about conversational plans and goals. Pragmatic Presuppositions are something like the background beliefs of the speaker.

Reference

- an act in which a speaker uses linguistic forms to enable the hearer to identify something
- Under the heading of reference we encounter one of the most fundamental and vital aspects of language and language use: the relations between language [as a medium of communication between human beings], and the world [about which we communicate]. One of the most basic things that we do when we communicate through language is to pick out entities in the world and ascribe properties to them, or indicate relations between them. Reference is concerned with designating entities in the world by linguistic means. [Cruse,2000]
- Types of reference: definite reference, indefinite reference, and generic reference

Definite reference

e.g. *The man gave it to her.*

A man gave it to her.

- The intended referential target is necessarily a particular entity;
- The speaker intends that the referential target should come to be uniquely identified for the hearer;
- Hearer can reconstruct the propositions (if needed).

Indefinite reference

e.g. *Here, read a book*

here, read this book

The essence of indefinite reference is that the identity of the referent is not closely related to the message.

Generic reference

e.g. *The tiger is a friendly beast.*

A tiger is a friendly beast.

Tigers are friendly beasts.

... refers to its concrete object or abstraction.

... refers to a class of referents.

Deixis

- **Deixis:** ... the use of general words and phrases to refer to a specific time, place, or person in context; however, it means different things to different people.

person deixis: ... first person, second person and third person

I, we you

he/she/it/they

spatial deixis: ... proximal and distal

this, that

temporal deixis: ... locate points or intervals on the time axis

now, then

social deixis: ... social relationships ... with reference to
the social status or role of participants in the speech event
[between addressor and addressees]

discourse deixis: ... refers to such matters within the
discourse.

this, that, adverbs

Speech Acts

Locutionary, perlocutionary, and illocutionary acts

(a) Locutionary act: The utterance of certain noises [production] . . . certain words in a certain construction [composition], and the utterance of them with a certain sense and a certain reference [contextualization].

(b) Perlocutionary acts: ... acts performed by means of language, using language as a tool.

e.g. ... persuading someone to do something, cheering someone up, etc.

(c) Illocutionary acts ... the act of performance in saying something

... acts which are internal to the locutionary act, in the sense that, if the contextual conditions are appropriate, once the locutionary act has been performed, so has the illocutionary act

Illocutionary force: The illocutionary act aimed at by producing an utterance is known as the illocutionary force of the utterance. [explicit and implicit]

- a. Assertives: ... commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition: *state, suggest, boast, complain, claim, report, warn, ...*
- b. Directives: ... have the intention of eliciting some sort of action on the part of the hearer: *order, command, request, beg...*
- c. Commissives: ... commit the speaker to some future action: *promise, vow, offer...*
- d. Expressives: ... make known the speaker's psychological attitude to a presupposed state of affairs: *thank, congratulate, condole, praise...*
- e. Declaratives: ... are said to bring about a change in reality: that is to say, the world is in some way no longer the same after they have been said.

Conversational implicatures

Implicature: ... is an indirect or implicit speech act: what is meant by a speaker's utterance that is not part of what is explicitly said; ... characterized as propositions or assumptions not encoded, completely or incompletely.

A: Am I in time for supper? □ m1

B: I've cleared the table. □ m2

m2 is not understood rather something else.

What is understood?

Context dependence

The co-operative principle (Grice)

Grice expanded his cooperative principle with the four following conversational maxims [to engage in meaningful, cogent conversation]

Quantity: Say no less than the conversation requires. Say no more than the conversation requires.

Quality: Don't say what you believe to be false. Don't say things for which you lack evidence.

Manner: Don't be obscure. Don't be ambiguous. Be brief. Be orderly.

Relevance: Be relevant.

Politeness

Politeness: ... the way in which language is used in conversation to convey consideration for the feelings and desires of one's interlocutors, to create and maintain interpersonal relationships, and to comply with the rules of what society or one's culture expects.

maxims:

Tact: ... is oriented towards the hearer and has positive and negative sub-maxims: [Minimize cost to the hearer; Maximize benefit to the hearer]

Generosity: ... a sister to the tact maxim, and is oriented towards costs and benefits to the speaker: [Minimize benefit to self; Maximize cost to self]

Praise: The maxim of praise is oriented towards the hearer [Minimize dispraise of the hearer; Maximize praise of the hearer.]

Modesty: ... oriented towards the speaker [Minimize praise of self; Maximize dispraise of self.]

Agreement: ... is a relation between the opinions of the speaker and those of the hearer. [Minimize disagreement with the hearer. Maximize agreement with the hearer.]

Sympathy: ... a matter of a relation between speaker and hearer, and cannot, therefore, be differentially speaker- or hearer-oriented: [Maximize sympathy (expression of positive feelings) towards the hearer. Minimize antipathy (expression of negative feelings) towards the hearer.]

The consideration: ... [Minimize the hearer's discomfort/displeasure. Maximize the hearer's comfort/pleasure.]

Discourse

Discourse: ... any unit of connected speech or writing longer than a sentence

... written or spoken communication or debate

... any type of communication whether written or oral

.... includes argument, narration, description and exposition

[text ↔ discourse]

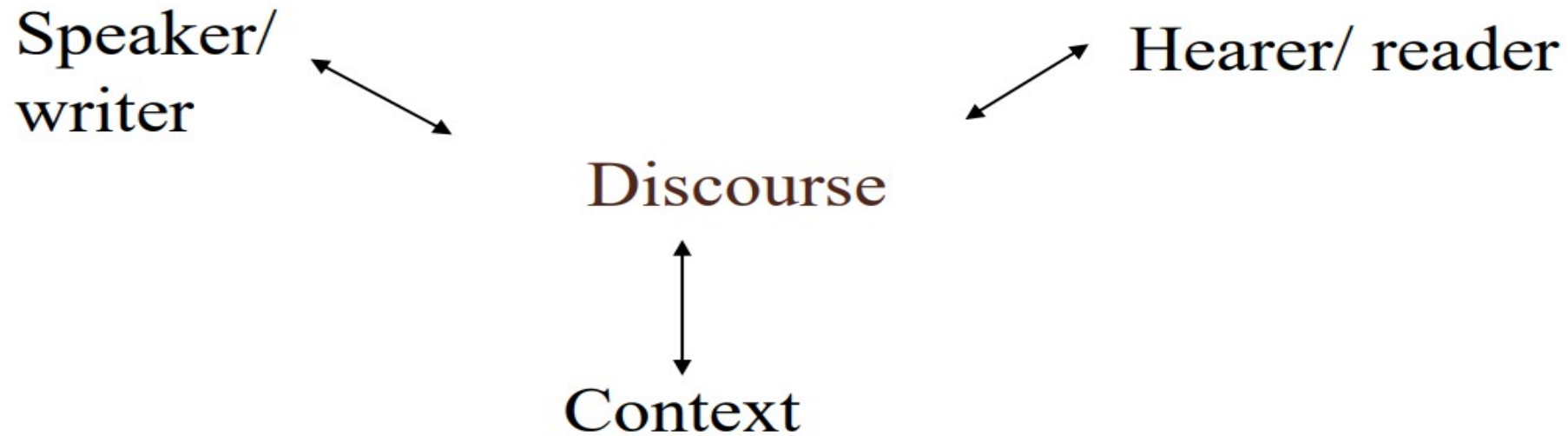
[text linguistics ↔ discourse analysis]

Monologue and Dialogue

Monologue: a speech delivered by a character in order to express his thoughts and feelings to other characters or the audience.

Dialogue: ... a conversation between two or more characters in a work of literature [conversation].

Discourse – written and spoken



1. A set of terms, metaphors, allusions, ways of talking, references and so on, which constitute an object;
2. A to-and-fro of exchanges in talk (or text) that performs social actions

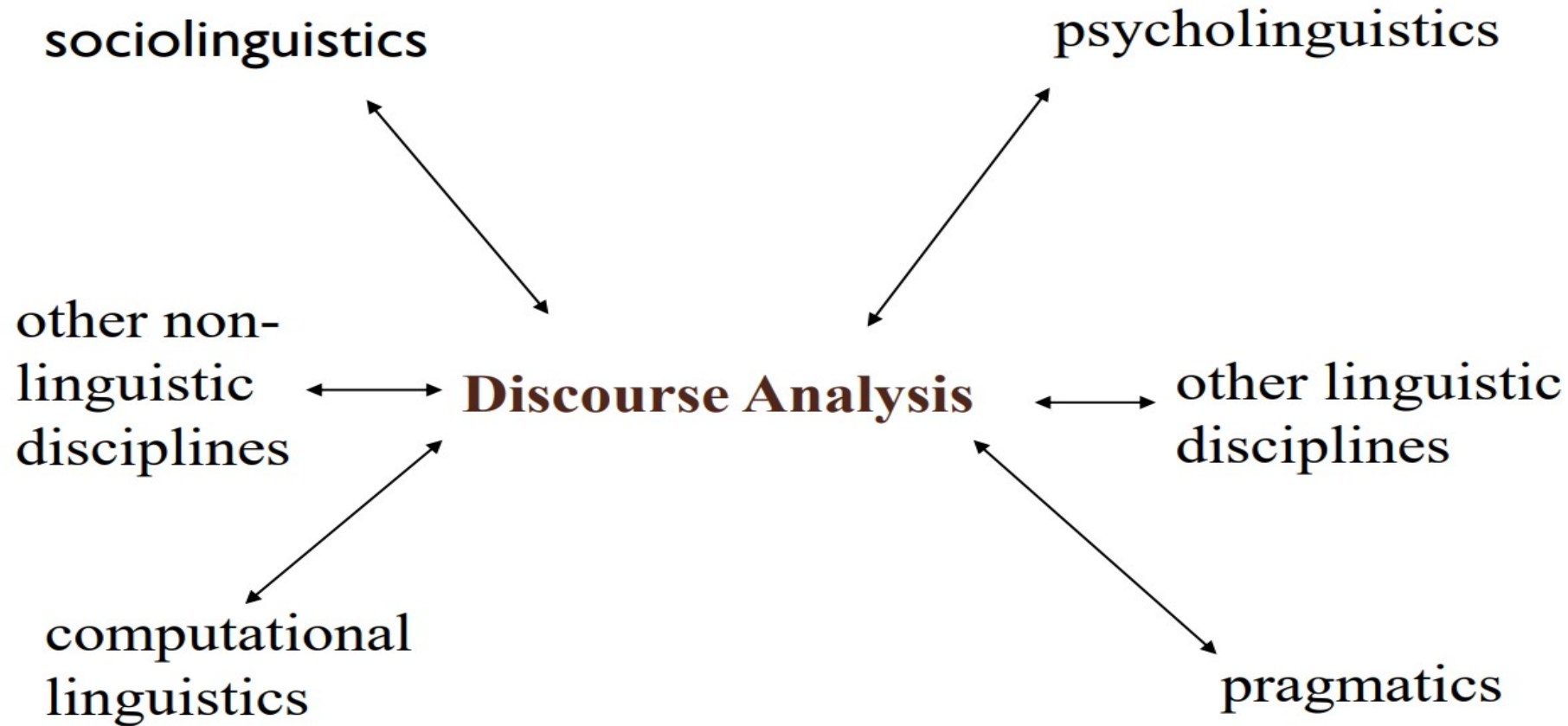
The scope of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is not a discipline which exists on its own. It is influenced by other disciplines and influences them as well. It is a two-way process ...

For this reason discourse analysis examines spoken and written texts from all sorts of different areas (medical, legal, advertising) and from all sorts of perspectives (race, gender, power)

Discourse analysis has a number of practical applications - for example in analyzing communication problems in medicine, psychotherapy, education, in analyzing written style etc.

Influences on discourse analysis



How?

Various ways. Depends on what sort of discourse you're interested in.

a. Constituting an object:

Usually some cultural object (marriage, crime, etc.)

Data:

Media texts (e.g. news reports, magazine articles, newspaper features)

Personal accounts (e.g. in interviews, diaries)

b. Discourse as language-in-interaction

Language in interaction comes through in a sequence, in turns.

Each turn has an implication for the next.

Reference Resolution (Coreference)

Reference has to do with the relations between language and extralinguistic reality. It has to do with retrieving information for referential meaning. Reference can also be seen as a relationship between an expression and what it stands for in the outside world. Basically, there are two types of co-reference relations. These are endophoric and exophoric references.

Endophoric reference: ... lies within a text.

- anaphoric: looking backward

- cataphoric: looking forward

Exophoric reference: ... lies outside the text.

... the task of finding all linguistic expressions (called mentions) in a given text that refer to the same real-world entity.

Anaphora

... the use of a word referring back to a word used earlier in a text or conversation, to avoid repetition;

e.g. *he, she, it, and they*

the verb *do* in *I like it* and so *do* they.

What is anaphora resolution?

Anaphora Resolution == the problem of resolving what a pronoun, or a noun phrase refers to.

Cataphora resolution also follows the same principles.

Cohesion

Sentences are linked by lexical and grammatical items.

Cohesion refers to the surface structure of texts, on how words and sentences are organized to form a cohesive whole.

... the property of unity in a written text or a segment of spoken discourse that stems from links among its surface elements, as when words in one sentence are repeated in another, and especially from the fact that some words or phrases depend for their interpretation upon material in preceding or following text, as in the sequence.

Be assured of this. Most people do not want to fight. However, they will do so when provoked, where *this* refers to the two sentences that follow, *they* refers back to *most people*, *do so* substitutes for the preceding verb *fight*, and *however* relates the clause that follows to the preceding sentence.

Coherence

Coherence refers to deeper structures (not surface structures) in texts. It involves a semantic (meaning) and pragmatic level.

- ... assume that cohesion is a property of the text and that coherence is a facet of the reader's evaluation of a text. In other words, cohesion is objective, capable in principle of automatic recognition, while coherence is subjective and judgments concerning it may vary from reader to reader.
- the property of unity in a written text or a segment of spoken discourse that stems from the links among its underlying ideas and from the logical organization and development of its thematic content.

Discourse Structures

1. Surface Structures: ... usually associated with the forms of the language use one can see or hear such as sounds, intonations, gestures, letters, graphic displays, words and order of words in the language: ... phonology, morphology and syntax.
2. Deep or underlying Structures: ... usually associated with meaning or interaction and sometimes with cognitive phenomena such as mental representations or strategies of understanding and production. >> major part.

Sometimes... Macrostructure [thematic], Superstructure [schematic(how)] and microstructure [syntax, meaning, ...]

Examples

- **Exposition:** The main focus is to make the audience aware of the topic of the discussion.
- **Narration:** This type relies on stories, folklore, or drama as a medium of communication.
- **Description:** This type involves describing something in relation to the senses.
- **Argument:** This type involves presenting a point of view and supporting it with evidence.

Conclusion

Pragmatics is the study of how symbols (words/characters) and meanings are mapped by means of context.

Discourse analysis is an analysis of the flow of the conversation itself (direction, intention, premises, conclusions, etc.)

They are both related to performance

**Thanks
For
Your
Patience**