COURSE GUIDE

ENG833

PRAGMATICS

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Introduction

You are to welcome ENG 833: Pragmatics. This is a course that is available to students of English Language in the Masters programme. The course provides an opportunity for postgraduate students to build upon their knowledge of pragmatics at the undergraduate level. It evaluates the theoretical issues in pragmatics and pays closer attention to the interaction between pragmatics and societal issues. It introduces students to new concepts and advances in the field of pragmatics and examines the relationship between pragmatics and other linguistic disciplines. Students who have gone through this course will be able to apply different approaches in Pragmatics to different contexts in the society. Students will also be expected to know how to apply the different pragmatic approaches to solve specific language problems in the society, particularly, in a multilingual and multicultural society such as Nigeria.

This Course Guide furnishes you with the essential information about the contents of this course and the resources you will need to be familiar with for a good understanding of the subject matter. It is intended to help you get the best of the course by enabling you to think productively about the principles underlying the issues you study and the projects you will carry out in the course of your study. The Course Guide also supplies some guidance on the way to approach your Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs). Of course, you will, receive on-the-spot assistance from your tutorial classes, which you are encouraged to approach with all seriousness.

Above all, this course material will fill an important niche in the study of pragmatics as a sub-field of linguistics that focuses on language use beyond the sentence in different social situations. Students will also acquire more tools which will enable them to carry out research projects, considering that the masters programme is a research based programme.

Course Aims

This course has twenty-one study units and each of these units has its objectives. You should ensure that you study the objectives of each unit so that they can serve as a guide as you go through the units. The general aims of this course are to

(i) expand your knowledge of pragmatics;

(ii) deepen your knowledge of the major concepts and theories in pragmatics;

(iii) help you understand the relationship between pragmatics and the society;

(v) introduce you to new concepts in pragmatics;

(vi) help you learn how to carry out research in pragmatics.

Course Objectives

Based on the aims stated above, some objectives for this course are set out below. These are the things you are expected to be able to do at the end of the study. These objectives should be able to guide you to know how much you have learnt and where you need to improve on your learning. At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- explain what pragmatics entails;
- describe the relationship between pragmatics and other linguistic disciplines;
- elaborate on the different concepts in pragmatics and the theories that guide them;

- apply the different concepts in pragmatics to real life situations such as politics, the law, medicine and the Internet

- discuss other dimensions to pragmatics such as metapragmatics, literary pragmatics and interpersonal pragmatics.

- carry out a research using pragmatic principles.

Working through the Course

In this course, we will re-examine the concept of pragmatics and its relationship with other sub-linguistic fields. The course will take you through the major concepts and theories in pragmatics such as context, speech acts, implicature, presupposition and reference. We will also examine the application of pragmatic principles to different contexts such as politics, then law, medicine and the Internet. In the last section of the course, you will learn about other dimensions to pragmatics such as metapragmatics, interpersonal pragmatics, literary pragmatics, and intercultural pragmatics. You will also be taught how to carry out research using pragmatic principles.

You have twenty-one study units to go through in this course. In each of the study units, you are to systematically study the contents. You are expected to concentrate on the objectives of each study unit as they will serve as your guide in knowing what is expected of you. You are also expected to read, review and recall what you have studied. At specific points in each unit, you will be assessed through Tutor Marked Assignments. You are also expected to write a final examination based on the entire course.

Course Materials

You should get the following materials that will help you in expanding your knowledge of pragmatics:

(a) Course Guide
(b) Study Units
(c) Textbooks
(d) Assignment Files
(e) Presentation Schedule

Study Units

ENG 833 is a 3-credit unit course for English language students in the MA English programme. There are five modules in this course. Some modules have more units than others, depending on the scope of the module. The five modules are as follows:

Module 1 Understanding Pragmatics

Unit 1 Pragmatics: An Introduction
Unit 2 Pragmatics and other disciplines
Unit 3 Context
Unit 4 Research Methods in Pragmatics

Module 2 Major Concepts in Pragmatics

Unit 1 Deixis and Reference
Unit 2 Inference and Presupposition
Unit 3 Pragmatic Markers
Unit 4 Politeness and Impoliteness

Module 3 Major Theories in Pragmatics

Unit 1 Speech Acts
Unit 2 Pragmatic Acts
Unit 3 Implicature
Unit 4 Relevance

Module 4 Pragmatics and Society

Unit 1 Pragmatics and Politics
Unit 2 Pragmatics and the Law
Unit 3 Pragmatics and Medicine
Unit 4 Pragmatics and the Internet

Module 5 Other Dimensions to Pragmatics

Unit 1 Metapragmatics
Unit 2 Intercultural Pragmatics
Unit 3 Interpersonal Pragmatics
Unit 4 Literary Pragmatics
Unit 5 Critical Pragmatics

In each module, you will be given the list of units contained in the module. In each unit, you will be given the content, introduction, objectives and the main content. You will also find different Self-Assessment Exercises and Tutor-Marked Assignments, which you are expected to do.

References

Each unit contains a list of reference materials that you can read in addition to the study units. These may be textbooks or journal articles. These references are meant to enhance a better understanding of the course.

Assignment File

Your assessment in this course will be based on Tutor-Marked Assignments and the final examination, which you will write at the end of the course.

Tutor Marked Assignments

Every unit contains some assignments. You are expected to work through all the assignments and submit them for assessment. This will constitute 30% of your final grade. The Tutor-Marked Assignments may be presented to you in a separate file. Just know that for every unit, there are some Tutor-Marked Assignments for you. However, it is pertinent to state that the University currently conducts TMA assessment though Computer Marked Assignments. You are expected to attempt these.

Course Marking Scheme
The total marks accruable to you from this course are broken down as follows:

Assessment	**Marks**
Assignments	30% of the total marks
Final Examination	70% of the total course marks
Total	100% of course marks

Course Overview
This table brings together the units, the number of weeks you should take to complete them. However, this presentation is just an estimate.

Unit	**Title**	**Week's Activity**	**TMA**
	Course Guide	1	
MODULE 1: UNDERSTANDING PRAGMATICS			
1	Pragmatics: An Introduction	2	
2	Pragmatics and other Linguistic	3	

	Disciplines		
3	Context	4	TMA1
4	Research Methods in Pragmatics	5	
MODULE 2: MAJOR CONCEPTS IN PRAGMATICS			
1	Deixis and Reference	6	
2	Inference and Presupposition	7	
3	Pragmatic Markers	8	
4	Politeness	9	TMA2
MODULE 3: MAJOR THEORIES IN PRAGMATICS			
1	Speech Acts	10	
2	Pragmatic Acts	11	
3	Implicature	12	
4	Relevance	13	
MODULE 4: PRAGMATICS AND SOCIETY			
1	Pragmatics and Politics	14	
2	Pragmatics and the Law	15	TMA3
3	Pragmatics and Medicine	16	
4	Pragmatics and the Internet	17	
MODULE 5: OTHER DIMENSIONS TO PRAGMATICS			
1	Metapragmatics	18	
2	Intercultural Pragmatics	19	
3	Interpersonal pragmatics	20	
4	Literary Pragmatics	21	TMA4
5	Critical Pragmatics	22	
	REVISION AND EXAMINATION		

Final Examination and Grading

At the end of the course, you will write a final examination, which will constitute 70% of your final grade. In the examination, which will last two hours, you will be requested to answer three questions out of at least five questions.

How to Get the Most from this Course

It the undergraduate level to help refresh your mind about what pragmatics entails. Moreover, you may need to access quite a number of the recommended texts as support for your mastery of the course content. You need quality time in a study-friendly environment every week. You can also visit the internet where you can obtain new resources and the latest information on the course. You should also cultivate the habit of visiting reputable institutional or public libraries accessible to you.

Tutors and Tutorials

There are fifteen (15) hours of tutorials provided in support of the course. You will be notified of the dates and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. You will also see the phone numbers and email addresses of the course team on the credit page of the Course Material. These may be used to contact the members for any clarification that you seek on the course content. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments and keep a close watch on your progress. Be sure to send in your Tutor-Marked Assignments promptly and feel free to contact your tutor in case of any difficulty with your Self-Assessment Exercise, Tutor-Marked Assignment or the grading of an assignment. In any case, you are advised to attend the tutorials regularly and punctually. Always take a list of such prepared questions to the tutorials and participate actively in the discussions.

Conclusion

This is both a theory and a practical course. Thus, you must learn and be prepared to apply this theory to different situational contexts that you may come across. You should also be able to assess the criticisms raised against some of the theories and see if there are further problems raised when analysing your data.

Summary

This Course Guide has been designed to furnish you with the information you need for a fruitful experience in the course. At the end, how much you obtain from the course is based on how much you put into it in terms of time, effort and planning.

I wish you all the best in ENG 833 and in the whole programme!

COURSE MATERIAL

ENG 833
PRAGMATICS

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MODULE 1 STARTING POINT: UNDERSTANDING PRAGMATICS

In this module, you will come across an account of the term, 'pragmatics'. The aim of the module is to present to you the historical background of pragmatics as a linguistic discipline and how it has evolved over the years. In this module, which is made up of four units, you will focus on what pragmatics entails, its relationship with other linguistic disciplines, context and research methods in pragmatics. In the first unit, you will refresh your minds and expatiate on what pragmatics is all about, its history, development, approaches and scope. The second unit focuses on the interaction between pragmatics and other disciplines such as semantics, phonology and sociolinguistics, while unit three focuses on context. Unit four reveals the research methods that are used in the field of pragmatics. After you have gone through the four units, the stage would have been set for you to discuss the term 'pragmatics', its approaches, scope and the importance of context in a pragmatic study.

The four units that constitute this module are thematically linked. At the end of this module, you will have refreshed your memory on the linguistic discipline called 'pragmatics' and understand its history and development, the relationship between pragmatics and other linguistic disciplines. You will also understand the pragmatic concept of context and be able to carry out research works in pragmatics. The module comprises the following units:

UNIT 1 PRAGMATICS: AN INTRODUCTION

CONTENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics is taken from the Greek word *pragma* which means to act. It focuses on the study of meaning in interaction. In this unit, you will be introduced to its history and development as well as different movements that led to the development of pragmatics as a linguistic discipline. You will also be introduced to different approaches to pragmatics such as *pragmalinguistics*, *sociopragmatics* and *cognitive pragmatics*.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- define pragmatics;
- discuss its history and development as a linguistic study;
- explain the different approaches in the study of pragmatics; and
- discuss the scope of pragmatics.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What is Pragmatics?

You may have some background knowledge, based on your study of pragmatics at the undergraduate level, of what pragmatics is all about.

However, you still need to look at other issues to help deepen your understanding and appreciation of the subject. As you may have learnt before, the word 'pragmatics' was used in Charles Morris' (1938) tripartite division of semiotics, which is the study of the theory of signs. He divided semiotics into syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Pragmatics, according to Morris, is the relationship that exists between the sign and the interpreters. This is a definition that is not limited to linguistic signs and which is open to many interpretations, even within linguistics (see Archer, Aijmer & Wichmann, 2012). This definition of pragmatics has been redefined to suit linguistic pragmatics.

Pragmatics is concerned with how we produce and understand everyday use of language (Grundy, 2008). Atkinson et al (1988:217) as cited in Grundy (2008) defines pragmatics as being concerned with "the distinction between what a speaker's words (literally) mean and what the speaker might mean by his words". In a different vein, Ariel (2010:3) suggests that pragmatics "deals with the relationship between grammatical products and extralinguistic contexts".

Archer et al (2012:11) defines pragmatics as "the study of how language is used to express meaning in context." Nerlich (2010:192) as cited in Archer et al (2012) defines pragmatics as the study of language use in social situations. From the different definitions, you will see that context is central to the understanding of pragmatics and that is why it is treated in unit 3 as part of this first module. Again, meaning is also central to pragmatics which you know is also in the purview of semantics. The issue then is that meaning must be linked to context in pragmatics. In semantics, meaning is considered as the truth conditions of utterances. In reality, you know that sometimes people say what they do not mean and mean much more than what they say. Thus, you must look into the context of interaction to arrive at the meaning of utterances.

Thomas (1995) defines pragmatics as meaning in interaction. Here, meaning is viewed as "a dynamic process, involving the negotiation of meaning between the speaker and the hearer, the context of utterance (physical, social and linguistic) and the meaning potential of an utterance" (Thomas, 1995:22). In other words, when you want to derive the meaning of utterances, you have to find out what the speaker means, the interpretation the hearer gives to the utterance and the context in which the utterance is made. In addition, you have to consider the other possible meanings that the utterance could have, which will help us to determine both speaker meaning and hearer interpretation.

Thomas (1995) posits that pragmatics is **motivated** since people have reasons for doing things such as using a particular lexical item rather than another. She opines that pragmatics is **dynamic** as people may use language to change situations rather than use language as set down by social and contextual variables. Pragmatics, she posits, is about meaning making. For example, a speaker who says 'This soup is bland' may be asking the cook to pass him some salt. Pragmatics will focus on the reasons why the speaker cannot explicitly say that the cook should give him some salt. The reasons could be based on the kind of relationship that exits between the speaker and the hearer, the physical environment of the interaction, the culture of the participants and so on.

Pragmatics is a growing area of research because of a number of reasons. As you have seen, a lot of issues depend on context for their interpretation (Archer et al, 2012). Such issues include presupposition, reference, prosody and power. As we look at these concepts in the succeeding modules, you will see why context plays important roles in pragmatics

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Discuss the term pragmatics.

3.2 History and Development of Pragmatics

As discussed in Section 3.1, the term 'pragmatics' can be dated to the 1930 work of the semiotician Charles Morris. The term is taken from the Greek word *pragma* which means 'to act' and it is seen as a study of linguistic action and interaction in society. As a linguistic discipline, the foundations of pragmatics are rooted in the works of language philosophers and speech act theorists such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, John Austin, John Searle and Herbert P. Grice. The first three became notable for the formulation of the speech act theory while Grice formulated the theory of implicature. Nerlich (2010) opines that five movements were instrumental in the development of the field and these include:

- the British approach which emerged from the works of language philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Austin and Searle. This resulted in the development and focus on speech acts, meaning, use and intention. In fact, Verschueren (2009) posits that the theory of speech acts is the driving force behind the Anglo-American prominence in pragmatics.

- the British school of contextualism and functionalism that resulted in the focus on context, situation and function. this approach was influenced by systemic functional linguistics.

- the French movement, which is based on the theory of enunciation elaborated by Emile Benvenise. This focused on subjectivity, markers of subjectivity, indexicals and enunciation. Benviste's work was influenced by British analytical philosophy and his work has also helped in the study of the self-referentiality of explicit performatives.

- the German approach which is associated with the critical social theory movement of Jurgen Habermas and Karl Otto Apel. This theory saw pragmatics as a part of a general theory of communicative action. This focused on agenthood of subject, dialogue, pronouns and speech acts. the approach reintroduced the concept of *frame* which is used in frame analysis (see also Verschueren, 2009).

- the American approach, which made the three-way split between syntactic, semantics and pragmatics. This paved way for meaning as action. This approach was influenced by the work of Morris (1938).

Thus, we can see that pragmatics as a linguistic discipline has benefited from the works of various scholars and movements. This makes it a rich and versatile area to carry out different research in different human endeavours. Thus, you can work within any of these schools of thought or use two or more of these approaches in your research.

In a different vein, Ariel (2010) suggests that there are two types of approaches in pragmatics. These include the Anglo-American school and the Continental pragmatic approach. She calls the Anglo American pragmatists, linguistic problem solvers who were interested in classifying any linguistic problem that cannot be solved under grammar as part of pragmatics. Such pragmatists include Charles Fillmore, George Lakoff, Robin Lakoff and Jerrold Sadock. They tend to analyse linguistic problems that cannot be handled by grammar and search for reasons for such problems, which is a bottom-up approach. Their analysis is empirically based and they do not use any specific theory. However, the linguistic problems are explained in 'extralinguistic terms' (Ariel 2010: 7).

On the other hand, the Continental pragmatists also called border-seeker pragmatists, focus on those aspects they believe are strictly pragmatic in nature. Prominent in this approach is H.P. Grice with his inferential theory and conversational implicature. Others include neo-Griceans such as Laurence Horn, Stephen Levinson, and relevance theorists such as Dan Sperber, Deidre Wilson and Robyn Carston. Pragmatists of this school are interested in using specific theories (such as Grice's theory) in distinguishing between what is stated and what is implied. The data they use for analysis are usually intuition-based and establish the border between grammar (semantics for them is part of grammar) and pragmatics. For them, pragmatics is extragrammatical (see Ariel, 2010). They use a top-down approach in their analyses.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Explain the five schools or movements in pragmatics.

3.3 Approaches to Pragmatics

There are different approaches to the study of pragmatics. Some of these approaches include:

- pragmalinguistics: this is the study of pragmatics which focuses on the linguistic features used for a particular task. Thus, it focuses on the types of lexical choices such as the use of ellipsis, conjunctions and reiteration; and syntactic features such as the use of imperatives rather than declaratives, which encode pragmatic meaning.

- sociopragmatics: this is the study of pragmatics from a sociological view where sociolinguistic variables such as speaker's age, gender and social status are brought to bear on the analysis. This area shows an interplay between pragmatics and sociolinguistics. For example, this approach will consider how age, gender and ethnic background may influence the type of utterance that a speaker makes or how a hearer will interpret a speaker's utterance based on the aforementioned variables.

- cognitive pragmatics: this is the study of pragmatics which focuses on how utterance meaning is interpreted through mental effort of processing in a most economic way.

As you will see from the succeeding units, pragmatic theories follow one or more of these approaches. Austin's speech act theory is pragmalinguistic in nature as it considers the linguistic structures that are used to perform different functions in language. For example, imperative sentences are called 'directives'. In addition, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory is pragmalinguistic in nature as its emphasis is on the grammatical structures used in marking politeness such as the use of questions rather than commands to indicate politeness.

On the other hand, Hymes' ethnography of communication is sociopragmatic model. Mey's pragmatic act theory is also sociopragmatic as it places priority on contextual and societal factors in explaining the functions of utterances. Sperber and Wilson's Relevance theory is within the purview of cognitive pragmatics. It is important to note, however, that these approaches to pragmatics are a matter of convenience rather than a hard and fast rule. Thus, it is expected that you see these approaches as complementary approaches and combine them to get better results.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss some of the approaches to pragmatics.

3.4 The Scope of Pragmatics

As you will have noticed by now, pragmatics is a growing field of study which shows how language is used to construe meaning in various contexts. Pragmatics studies concepts and social principles such as conversational implicature, inference, context, reference, speech acts, deixis, politeness, and relevance. These aspects are briefly discussed in this section and further explained in the two succeeding modules.

Conversational implicature deals with indirect or non-literal meaning as people usually mean more than what they say. Sometimes, the non-literal meaning is a lot different from the literal meaning of the utterance. For example, the typical question ‘Can you pass me the salt?’ is not a question but a request to pass the salt. Thus, it will be strange for the addressee to say, 'Yes, I can pass the salt' without passing the salt across to the addresser. What usually happens is that the addressee passes the salt without saying anything.

Inferences deal with the way that people gain understanding or get the indirect meaning from an utterance that seems to have a literal meaning. For example, adapting Grundy's example, to say '*Omo* removes stains <u>**AND**</u> odour’ infers that other detergents remove stains but not odours.

Context deals with the physical, social and psychological background from which a word can be understood. Pragmatics focuses on the relationship between language and context as context can be used to determine language use and also be determined by language use. Context includes participants, location, time and channel. For example, to say 'I'm tired' in the morning could mean 'I don't want to go to school' and in the night, it could mean, 'I want to go and sleep'.

Relevance looks at the mechanisms that enable us check that we have achieved the most relevant understanding from an utterance. It accounts for the way we understand language. Grundy (2008) cites the example of a broken chair with a notice pinned to it: 'Sit down with care. Legs can come off.' He points out that that it is "more relevant to assume" that 'legs' belongs to the chair than to the person who wants to sit on it.

Reflexivity deals with the way addressers indicate how they want what they say to be understood. For example, a speaker who says, 'I did tell her to come,' makes use of the verb, 'did', for emphasis in order to show that s/he actually told the lady to come.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Describe the scope of pragmatics. Identify other aspects that you think are covered by pragmatics.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can see that pragmatics is a linguistic discipline that is interested in language use and how addressers produce utterances and addressees arrive at meaning interpretation in different social situations. It is a subject which has been developed by different schools of thought at different points in time. The field is still a growing area as the theories that guide it have been continually evaluated, criticised and improved on in order to ensure that it properly accounts for the ways in which humans use language in diverse situations.

5.0 SUMMARY

Pragmatics is the study of language in use. It is a field that has grown through the works of scholars such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, John Austin and Herbert Grice. There are different approaches to the study of pragmatics including pragmalinguistics, sociopragmatics and cognitive pragmatics. Pragmatics addresses concepts such as context, deixis, inference, reference, presupposition, implicature and politeness.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Choose any three headlines in a Nigerian newspaper and analyse the headlines using the different concepts in pragmatics.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 PRAGMATICS AND OTHER LINGUISTIC DISCIPLINES

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we discuss the relationship that pragmatics has with other linguistic disciplines such as semantics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, phonology and nonverbal language. This is important because there are certain aspects of pragmatics that are studied in these other fields and you need to know those areas of convergence and divergence. This is necessary so that you do not end up carrying out a research in sociolinguistics or discourse analysis and assume that we are carrying out a pragmatic research!

2.0 OBJECTIVES

You should be able to realise the following objectives at the end of this unit:

- identify the relationship between pragmatics and semantics;
- explain the interaction between pragmatics and discourse analysis;
- describe the interface between pragmatics and sociolinguistics;
- discuss the connection between pragmatics and phonology;
- explain the link between pragmatics and nonverbal language.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Pragmatics and Semantics

Pragmatics and semantics are complementary and related fields of study that are both concerned with the study of meaning (Thomas, 1995). Semantics is the linguistic study of meaning. It also deals with the truth conditions of grammatical structures such as words, phrases and sentences. You already know that pragmatics is the study of meaning in interaction.

Thus, you have areas of similarities and differences between semantics and pragmatics. The first difference between semantics and pragmatics is in the area of usage (Archer et al 2012). Semantics deals with meaning that is independent of any particular usage. It deals with abstract meaning or literal meaning. It does not focus on the context of use.

On the other hand, pragmatics deals with the study of meaning in interaction Thomas, 1995). It focuses on the context of interaction, utterance and implicit meaning. It also deals with speaker's intention and hearer's (mis)interpretation of that intent. These are issues that semantics does not focus on. Both areas share some characteristics such as reference, deixis and presupposition which will be studied in the next module.

Self assessment Exercise 1

Describe the interface between pragmatics and semantics.

3.2 Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis focuses on the structure of discourse while pragmatics places emphasis on social principles. Such principles include conversational principles, politeness principles and relevance theory amongst others, which you will be exposed to in the next two modules.

Discourse analysis and pragmatics are related fields for a number of reasons because they both focus on text, context and function (Cutting, 2002). Both fields focus on discourse or language use as well as text, which are chunks of written or spoken discourse. They focus of how stretches of language become meaningful and unified. While discourse analysis refers to this aspect as coherence and cohesion, pragmatics refers to it as relevance.

In addition, both fields focus on context. In discourse analysis and pragmatics, the linguistic, the socio-cultural and the psychological contexts are considered in analysing various texts. Furthermore, the function of language is important to both fields. Discourse analysis refers to the functions as discourse acts while pragmatics refers to it as speech or pragmatic acts.

The interaction between pragmatics and discourse analysis with other disciplines such as anthropology has also led to the development of an area called interactional sociolinguistics. Thus, field combines the study of structural patterns of conversation, the study of context, function and social principles in examining various texts.

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Elaborate on the connection between pragmatics and discourse analysis.

3.3 Pragmatics and Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics and pragmatics are both interested in the effect of context on language. On the one hand, sociolinguistics studies the interaction between language and society; and examines how fixed variables such as age, gender, ethnicity, and social class affect language. On the other hand, pragmatics focuses on the changeable features of the same person and how s/he exploits the sociolinguistic variables to achieve a goal (Thomas, 1995). You know, age, gender, and social status are features of context which are important both to sociolinguistics and pragmatics. If you remember, in the last unit, we discussed sociopragmatics which focuses on how sociolinguistic variables are made to operate in the use of language by speakers.

As Thomas (1995) points out, sociolinguistics describes the linguistic tools that a person has while pragmatics describes what the person does with the linguistic tools. Thus, pragmatics utilises the tools described in sociolinguistics to discuss how the individual uses them to change or maintain the state of affairs. For Thomas, sociolinguistics is static while pragmatics is dynamic. One theoretical framework in sociolinguistics that is used by pragmatists is Dell Hymes' ethnography of communication which will be discussed in the next unit. Some of the differences between sociolinguistics and pragmatics form the basis of the criticisms laid against the use of this theory in a pragmatic inquiry. As earlier mentioned, the interaction between sociolinguistics and pragmatics has led to the development of the sociopragmatic approach to pragmatics.

Self Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the connection between pragmatics and sociolinguistics.

3.4 Pragmatics and Phonology

Pragmatics and phonology deal with language. Language includes both verbal and nonverbal codes. While pragmatics focuses on language use, phonology deals with the scientific study of sounds (see Yule, 1996). The implication is that while phonology deals with verbal codes, pragmatics deals with both verbal and non-verbal codes. Thus, there are areas in which phonology and pragmatics intersect. For example, the interaction between the two will indicate how the context of interaction affects prosodic features such as tone of voice, pitch and pause. As you know, you can say the same thing using different tones of voice depending on the message you want to pass across. Evidence can be found in literature texts when a writer uses certain adverbs such as *she said firmly* and *he spoke hurriedly* (Archer et al, 2012).

Aspects of phonology can have pragmatic functions. For example, prosody expresses emotional and attitudinal meaning. Also, it has other elusive meanings such as focus of information, utterance type, topic structure and turn taking procedures. As Archer et al (2012) opines, prosody belongs to the field of pragmatics because it does not focus on propositional meaning but on emotive or attitudinal meaning.

In writing, breaks between words, phrases, clauses and sentences are indicated by punctuation marks. In speech, pauses perform this function. Pauses usually occur between sentences and paragraphs. Pauses can be silent or filled with gap fillers such as *um* and *ehh*. They also cover false starts.

Scholars have noted that pauses occur before words that are less predictable such as nouns and other lexical items than functional words. Thus, pauses indicate a sign of mental planning (see Archer et al, 2012). Pauses are used to direct the listener to something interesting and important. For example, if you want to dictate a telephone number, you will likely pause just before you say the number as in "write the number down[ ] 08056794674. "

Pauses and an unfinished sentence can be used to elicit a response. This usually occurs in a classroom where a teacher might say:

Teacher: A noun is [...]
Pupil: the name of any person, animal, place or thing.

A pause can be a turn in its own right. This can occur in a conversation where a silent pause can indicate agreement or lack of interest.

Apart from pauses, pitch is another aspect of prosody that has some pragmatic functions. Pitch is the prominence on a syllable which is used to highlight a part of a sentence to match informativeness. Prominence is usually placed on the last lexical word or the stressed syllable in the last lexical word. You can have high or low pitch.

Another important aspect of phonology that can play a pragmatic role is intonation. We can have a falling tone and a rising tone. Certain words do not have a fixed intonation contour. It is the context of the utterance that determines the tone that will be used. For example, the expression of *thank you* in a falling tone indicates genuine gratitude while the same words with a fall-rise tone is an acknowledgment of receipt rather than gratitude (Archer et al, 2012). Knowles (1986) as cited in Archer et al (2012) suggests that a serious apology has a falling tone (i.e. \I'm sorry) while a casual apology has a fall-rise tone (i.e. \ / I'm sorry).

Self Assessment Exercise 4

Discuss the relationship between pragmatics and phonology.

3.5 Pragmatics and Nonverbal Language

Another important aspect of interaction is the body movement of the interlocutors. This covers the expression on our faces, the direction of our gaze, the gestures we make and "the spatial orientation of our bodies in relation to others" (Archer et al, 2012: 96). These are non-verbal codes which can have pragmatic functions.

Gaze is used to gather information and to convey it. You know that in Nigeria, for example, parents may warn or command their children or wards through their gaze and gestures. The gaze can be a long and focused stare or repetitious blinking of the eyelids. You can get information from the facial expression of another person such as surprise, interest and agreement. Gaze can also be used to manage a conversational interaction. You can use a gaze to signal to the next person to take the floor or to elicit a feedback from the person.

Gestures can come in form of scratching one's leg or scratching one's face. A child is expected to understand the implied meaning of these gestures if they are carried out by his/her parents. Of course, there is no one-to-one relationship between the gesture and the warning. It is simply a code between the parent and the child. So just as verbal codes have functions, gestures and facial expressions may have the function of warning, commanding and disagreeing. In fact, the pragmatic act theory which is a development of the speech act theory incorporates non-verbal acts in determining the pragmatic act of an utterance. You can also tap the person to speak or gently step on the person's foot in a situation where you do not want others to know that you want the person to speak.

The same goes for dressing, appearance, time and space. One can convey one's interest or disinterest in a particular activity by dressing according to or against the codes of that activity. For example, a child who does not want to attend school or an educational programme may leave his/her shirt flying in order to send a message to the authorities. S/he may also come late and walk sluggishly to the venue. A person may also dress or move very close to another person in order to indicate an interest in that person.

The use of gaze, facial expressions, gestures and spatial orientation are different across cultures and may be the source of misunderstanding in cross-cultural interaction. For instance, you know that kissing may not indicate an intimate relationship between a man and a woman in some cultures while this can be frowned upon in some communities in Nigeria.

Self Assessment Exercise 5

Expatiate on the link between pragmatics and nonverbal language.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, pragmatics is a linguistic discipline that connects with other linguistic disciplines in arriving at the meaning of utterances. Since it focuses on language use, there is no way it can stand independently of other linguistic fields. The tools used in other linguistic subjects can be used in pragmatics in arriving at the implied meaning of utterances. Thus, you are encouraged not to discard what you have learnt in other areas of language when carrying out a pragmatic analysis, particularly when you are examining implied meaning.

5.0 SUMMARY

Pragmatics is a linguistic discipline that shares some analytical tools with other linguistic disciplines such as semantics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, phonology and nonverbal language. Both semantics and pragmatics focus on areas such as deixis, reference and presupposition. Discourse analysis and pragmatics both focus on texts, context and functions of utterances. Pragmatics and sociolinguistics focus on contextual factors that affect utterance production and interpretation. Intonation is an area of phonology that can have pragmatic meaning while nonverbal language can be used to express implied meaning.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Using Wole Soyinka's *The Trials of Brother Jero*, discuss how the interplay between pragmatics, nonverbal language and sociolinguistics can be used in analysing the text.

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UNIT 3 CONTEXT

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

In this unit, we expatiate on the concept of context in pragmatics. As you have been shown earlier in the first unit, context is an important tool in arriving at the meaning of utterances. To arrive at the meaning of an utterance, the context of that utterance needs to be examined before the meaning is understood. Thus, we will look at different types of contexts and the different theories of context that exist.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to accomplish the following objectives:

- understand the concept of context;
- describe the different types of context that exist; and
- explain the different approaches to context.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 What is Context?

Context, as a pragmatic concept, covers the linguistic, social-cultural and psychological "background from which the meaning of a word springs" (Odebunmi, 2006a:25). Lyons (1977) submits that the features of context include the knowledge of role and status, knowledge of spatial and temporal location, knowledge of formality level, knowledge of medium, knowledge of appropriate matter and knowledge of appropriate province.

Mey (2001: 39) opines that context is a dynamic concept and should be understood as “the continually changing surroundings, ... that enable participants in the communication process to interact, and in which the linguistic expressions of their interaction become intelligible.” He posits that context provides a complete pragmatic interpretation of utterances and allows the utterances to be recognised as true pragmatic acts. Mey (2001) posits that contextual features also include assigning proper value to implicature, reference, pragmatic acts, presuppositions and register.

Similarly, Roberts (2006:197) asserts that the context of an utterance influences the interpretation of that utterance. He reports that the notion of context can be understood on three levels: the actual discourse event, the linguistic content of the verbal exchange and “the structure of the information that is conveyed by the interlocutors in the exchange.” He opines that the dynamics of discourse context consists of a set of discourse referents known by the interlocutors; the set of recognised domain goals; the set of accepted discourse goals and the interlocutors’ propositions that reflect the common ground or shared beliefs of the interlocutors.

In different vein, Allott (2010) defines context as a “source of clues that aid the hearer in working out what the speaker intended to convey.” He posits that without context, it is impossible to get the illocutionary force or the implicature of an utterance. Thus, context is central in deriving meaning from an utterance (Allott, 2010). For this study, context is a combination of both linguistic and non-linguistic features that help speakers and hearers in determining the meaning of utterances.

Self Assessment Exercise 1

Define context.

3.2 Types of Context

According to Odebunmi (2006), there are two types of context: linguistic and social contexts. Linguistic context comprises the phrases, clauses and sentences that surround a particular word, which is also called the co-text. In contrast, social context comprises the socio-cultural, religious, political and historical aspects of an interaction. According to Allott, context covers the knowledge of previous discourse, immediate physical environment as well as subsequent discourse. Thus, he states that context is made up of the physical context and the co-text. The co-text refers to the knowledge of both previous and subsequent discourse.

Self Assessment Exercise 2

1. Discuss the types of context that you know.
2. Pick a headline in a nationally daily and discuss how context has influenced the writing of that headline.

3.3 Approaches to Context

A number of contextual models have been proposed in linguistics. The earliest which has been used in sociolinguistics is Dell Hymes' ethnography of communication. Although the theory is not generally taken as a pragmatic theory, it has been influential in the study of context in pragmatic studies. Ethnography of communication is concerned with the rules of speaking, topics or message forms, with particular settings and activities (Hymes (1964) as cited in Coulthard (1977)). Schiffrin (1994) explains that it is an approach to discourse that examines the structure and function of language in communicative events. Ethnographers are concerned with the writing of 'rules of speaking' for a particular group of speakers. Such a group is referred to as a speech community 'which shares both linguistic resources and rules for interaction and interpretation' (Schiffrin, 1994:185). In the Igbo community of Nigeria, English is used for official purposes while the Ibo language is used informally.

Hymes also suggests the categories of speech events and speech act. Speech events are the largest units for which one can discover linguistic structures and these occur in speech situations which are non-verbal contexts. Several speech events can occur successively or simultaneously in the same speech situation e.g. different and distinct conversations in a party. Speech acts are functional units which are similar to Austin's speech acts such as requests and commands and they derive their meaning from the speech community's rules for interpretation. Speech events are comprised of one or more than one speech act. Rules of speaking are written for speech events and speech acts. Hymes (1974) proposes a SPEAKING model which is realised by:

- **Setting**, which is the specific place and time that a speech event takes place. For example, the hospital is the setting for a medical consultation.

- **Participants**, which include the speakers, listeners, addressers, hearers or the audience. For example, the participants in a medical consultation include the doctor, nurses and patients.

- **Ends** refer to the purposes and goals for which a speech event has been constituted. For example, the goals of a defendant differ from that of a witness in a courtroom.

- **Act** refers to the message forms and content. This also includes the issue of topic and topic change. For example, a change in topic can lead to a change in the style of speaking where a topic can determine whether a speaker should speak in English of Pidgin English.

- **Key** involves the tone, manner or spirit with which an event or act is performed. The tone can be mocking, serious or perfunctory. Hymes believes that a key can be in conflict with the overt content of an act. The signaling of a key may be non-verbal e.g. a wink, smile or gesture as well as speech units such as aspiration and vowel length which can be used for emphasis in English.

- **Instrument** refers to the channel or choice of transmission of a message which can be verbal or non-verbal. e.g. radio adverts deals with the use words and music while television stations make use of words, music and pictures.

- **Norms** refer to the specific proprieties which are attached to speaking. It also includes the interpretation of norms within cultural belief systems. For example, it is the norm in the courtroom that witnesses may have to submit exhibits to support their oral submissions.

- **Genre** refers to the textual categories in the text. The kinds of words, phrases and sentences used in a court will differ from that used in the medical consulting room.

As wonderful as this theory sounds, it has been criticised based on the fact that it has been used in the description of ritualised events such as weddings and funerals. The theory will not be appropriate in examining non-ritualised interactions such as hospital consultations and job interviews. As Thomas (1995) points out, the theory does not account for individual contributions. Odebunmi (2006a) asserts that the theory is too broad-based. This, he believes, makes the results of the analysis generalised.

Another contextual model is Levinson's (1979) activity type which he defines as:

> … a fuzzy category whose focal members are goal-defined, socially constituted, bounded, events with *constraints* on

participants, setting, and so on, but above all on the kinds of allowable contributions. Paradigm examples would be teaching, a job interview, a jural interrogation, a football game, a task in a workshop, a dinner party and so on (p. 368).

Levinson's notion of activity type is divided into six parts, namely:

- the goals of the participants rather than that of the event. For example, the goals of a student in a class may be different from that of the teaching activity itself. The goal of the teacher may be to ensure that the student understand the lesson while a student may be in class just to avoid spending time with his parents.

- allowable contributions which focus on social and legal constraints on participants intended utterances. For example, it ill be wrong for a student to starting making a comment in a class without taking permission from the teacher.

- the degree to which Gricean maxims are adhered to or are suspended depending on the culture and the activity type. For instance, you may need to examine if the maxims of relevance and quantity have been adhered to or flouted in the interaction.

- the degree to which interpersonal maxims are adhered to or suspended depending on the culture and the activity type. These maxims refer to politeness strategies. For example, politeness may be suspended in a dangerous situation such as an accident.

- turn taking and topic control which can be exploited to achieve control of a situation or establish a personal agenda. For example, a speaker in a group may control the topic in a discourse in order to ensure that other opinions are not aired or recognised.

- the manipulation of pragmatic parameters which focuses on the extent to which language can be used to effect social distance, power, rights, obligations and the formality of a situation (Thomas, 1995). For example, a speaker can create social distance between him/herself and his/her hearer by avoiding the use of personal pronouns such as 'you' or 'I'.

Self Assessment Exercise 3

Explain the different theories of context that you know.

3.4 Contextual Beliefs

Contextual beliefs are assumptions that interactants hold before interacting with others. They are assumptions that may have been developed or maybe an on-going acquisition process during an interaction (see also Van Dijk, 2001). Odebunmi (2006b: 39) posits that context “presupposes mutual contextual beliefs on which participants relate and make inferences.” This point has already been emphasised by Levinson (1983: 49) who opines that contextual assumptions refer to ‘the facts about spatial, temporal and social relationships between participants and their requisite beliefs and intentions in undertaking certain verbal exchanges.’ Odebunmi (2006a) opines that contextual beliefs have been developed and utilised under inference, entailment, and presupposition.

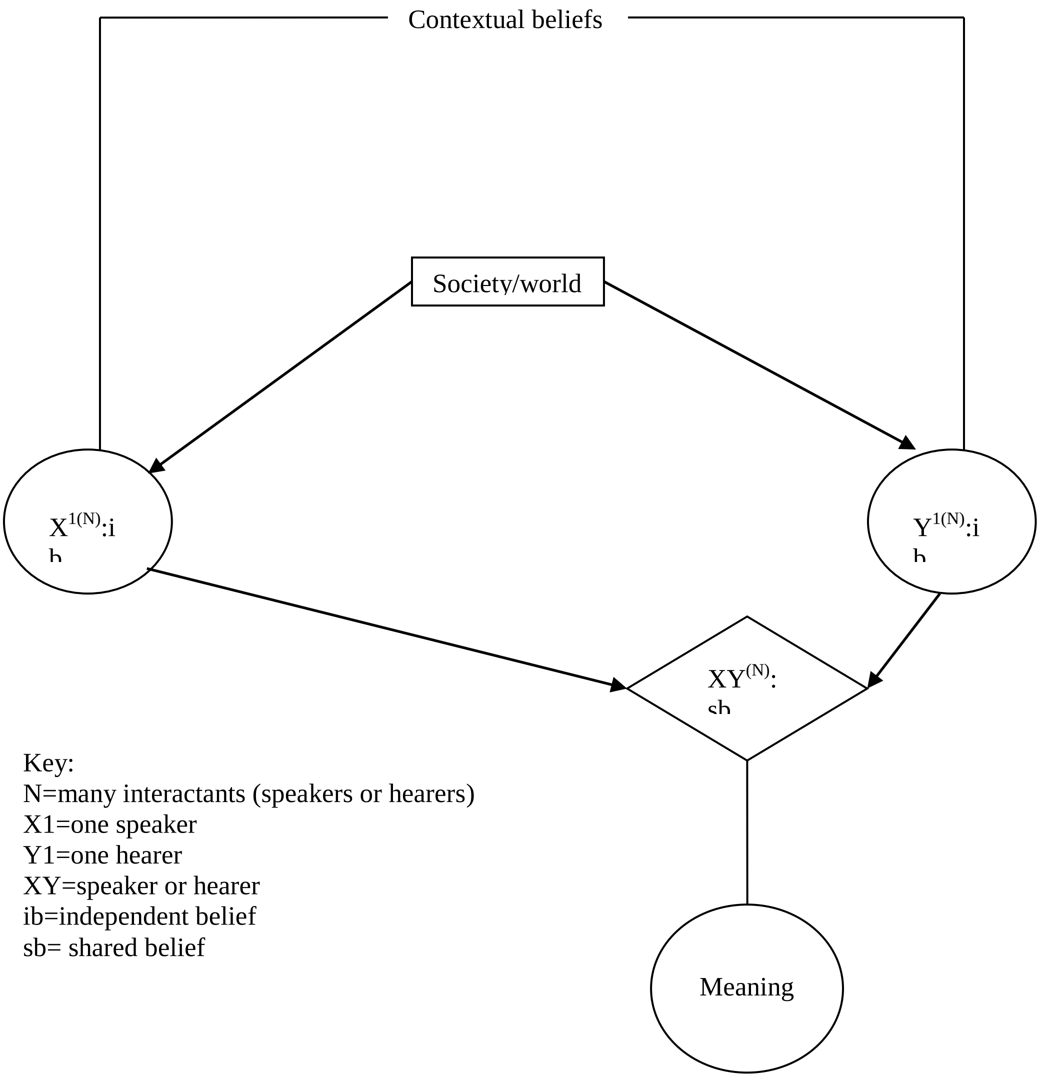
Allott (2010) suggests that it is necessary to take into consideration what the speaker and hearer know or believe. Hence, when analysing context, it is important to focus on the contextual beliefs of the speakers and hearer which are influenced by what they know. Allott explains that these opinions, beliefs, and habits are important to the understanding of implicature and reference to pronouns. For example, context will determine the reference of the pronoun and deictic expression in the utterance, “he's here.” In this case, the previous knowledge of the interactants and preceding discourse will specify the referents of ‘he’ and ‘here.

Hence, the notion of context embraces the physical environment, discourse, knowledge and beliefs of speaker and hearer, which they both have access to. In fact, Allott posits that for communication to be successful, the notion of context is the knowledge or beliefs that the speakers and hearers share.

Contextual beliefs, according to Odebunmi (2006: 26) consists of two levels of beliefs which comprise language level and situation level beliefs. Language level beliefs are indicated by interactants’ understanding of the language of communication. For example, communication between two people will only be successful if they share the same language i.e. Igbo. This will also include the knowledge of the gestures associated with the culture of that language.

The situation level deals with the assumptions which “are held on the basis of interactants’ shared code (linguistic and non-linguistic) and experience” (Odebunmi, 2006:28). Odebunmi posits that it is at this level that the variety of the “language selected and other situational variables are used to process meaning.”

The figure below shows Odebunmi's concept of beliefs at the level of situation. The diagram shows that interactants have their own independent knowledge and experiences about the world which may be personal to them or shared with a group such as lawyers, chemists, farmers and teachers. In interacting with other people, participants make use of those aspects of their knowledge which they know that the other interactants have access to or those aspects of their knowledge that they share.



Key:
N=many interactants (speakers or hearers)
X1=one speaker
Y1=one hearer
XY=speaker or hearer
ib=independent belief
sb= shared belief

Contextual beliefs (Odebunmi, 2006:29)

Odebunmi (2006) explains that beliefs at the situation level includes participants' shared knowledge of subject or topic; shared knowledge of word choices, referents and references; and shared knowledge of previous and immediate socio-cultural experiences. Shared knowledge of subject or topic helps interactants to understand utterances and contribute to a discourse. For example, for a friend to understand a colleague's text message, s/he must have shared knowledge of the subject or topic. Shared knowledge of word choices, referents and references applies to the knowledge of jargon, referents of pronouns and indexicals used in a discourse. For example, in a conversation between two pharmacists, the use of the term *metronidazole* will pose no problem to any of the interactants as they are expected to know the meaning of the word.

Shared knowledge of previous and immediate socio-cultural experiences relates to the knowledge of the culture, norms, socio-economic and socio-political experiences of the interactants. For example, an American or European may not understand the expression, “This is my husband” when a Yoruba/Igbo woman from Nigeria refers to her husband's female relatives. The person will need to understand that the term ‘husband' does not only mean a woman's male partner in a marriage but also refers to the husband's female relatives (and sometimes friends) in the Yoruba/Igbo culture.

Odebunmi & Alo (2010:470) suggests that interactions move on easily when participants share the same linguistic codes; and when they are conversant with the lexical choices and what “referring expressions point to in the real world.” Shared contextual beliefs are important in understanding the utterances that interactants make in different situations. These shared beliefs determine the types of utterances made by interlocutors and these beliefs also help meaning comprehension as participants make use of those aspects of their knowledge that the other parties have access to.

Self Assessment Exercise 4

What are contextual beliefs?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, context is a core concept in pragmatics that distinguishes it from other disciplines such as grammar and phonology. It is an important concept that helps other pragmatic concepts in arriving at the meaning of utterances. Although there are different models of context, these models have at their centre the core fields of participants, physical setting, social activity, and medium of interaction. For interactants to arrive at meaning production and interpretation, contextual beliefs need to be shared amongst interactants.

5.0 SUMMARY

Context focuses on the linguistic, physical, psychological and socio-cultural background from which an utterance is produced. Different approaches to the study of concept include Hymes' (1974) ethnographic approach and Levinson's (1979) activity type. The concept of contextual beliefs are assumptions that people share about one another prior to interacting with them. Contextual beliefs involve shared knowledge of topic, word choices, referents, references and shared socio-cultural experiences.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Using Odebunmi's model of context, analyse any of the convocation speeches given by the pro-chancellor of your university.

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UNIT 4 RESEARCH METHODS IN PRAGMATICS

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be provided with the main concerns of research methodology and types of data collection. These are important aspects because the masters programme is research based. You need to know how to carry out a research in pragmatics.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

You should be able to achieve the following objectives at the end of this unit:

- explain the main concerns of carrying out a research in pragmatics
- discuss the types of data that can be used in a pragmatic research
- elucidate the kinds of problems that can be encountered in a pragmatic research.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Data Collection in Pragmatics

As you have learnt, pragmatics deals with how language is used to express meaning in different contexts. This means that language is the data for the researcher in pragmatics. One major problem associated with language data is the issue of observation. You know that once you are being observed you may change your tone, act formally and so on. However in pragmatics, you want to consider how people communicate naturally. Depending on the kind of research that you are doing, you may want to use questionnaires and interviews. Let us now consider the types of data that you can use in pragmatics.

3.2 Types of Data

There are different types of data that can be used in pragmatics. These generally includes authentic data and elicited data (Archer et al, 2012).

3.2.1 Authentic data

Authentic data is the data that is collected without the intervention of the researcher. This is the kind of data that is not formulated for the purpose of research. You can refer to it as naturally occurring discourse. Such data can be **written** or **spoken**. Written data include newspaper reports, newspaper headlines, literature texts, drug information leaflets, political adverts and mission statements. However, within written data, you can find data that are written to be spoken. These include speeches, lecture notes, play texts, television scripts and so on. These also cover data that are retrieved from the internet which combine features of written and spoken discourse. These include newspaper comments, weblogs, chats, facebook and twitter comments.

Spoken authentic data can appear in three forms: **broadcast data, recording** and **field notes** (Archer et al, 2012). Broadcast data are data collected from television and radio stations such as talk shows, debates, news, interviews, magazine programs and call-in programs. Although the data may have been scripted, they are not meant for the purpose of research. Again, they serve as a huge amount of data for the researcher. They are relatively easier data to collect because you do not need the permission of the media houses to use them since they are already in the public domain. Although, a lot of research have been carried out on print media, there is still a wide room for research in television. Quite a number of studies have been carried out on newspaper reports and newspaper headlines using different pragmatic theories. You may for example, consider the application of relevance theory in newspaper headlines. You may also focus on speech acts in television talk shows.

Recording of utterances can take place at different points. You can record lectures, conversations between friends, courtroom meetings and parties. One problem with this kind of data collection is the interference with noise which can make some utterances unintelligible. Also, movements by the speaker can also make some utterances unintelligible. In addition, one may have to take permission from the interactants and this may affect the quality of the interaction. Of course, you know that once a person knows that s/he is been recorded, there is the tendency that the person will not speak naturally. S/he may for example, avoid swear words or pronounce words with greater emphasis.

The use of field notes is another way in which spoken data can be collected. This involves observing or listening to what is being said and writing down what has been said and the ways in which the words have been said. As Archer et al (2012: 13) observes, the advantage of taking 'field notes is that the subjects are not aware of being observed. The disadvantage lies in the fact that the researcher may not be able to put down all the relevant information and accuracy of the observation cannot be verified.

Self Assessment Exercise 1

Discuss the different types of authentic data that you know. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages associated with each data type.

3.2.2 Elicited Data

Elicited data is the kind of data that are collected for the benefit of the researcher. They are not ideal and should not be used alone because people do not know what they will say in a real situation or may not remember exactly why they acted in a specific manner. Examples of elicited data come in form of **questionnaires, post-event interviews,** and **discourse completion tasks** (Archer et al, 2012).

Post-event interviews are interviews conducted with the subjects by the researcher after an event has taken place. For example, as a researcher working on speech acts, you may have recorded a courtroom trial and observed the perlocutionary effects of some speech acts. You may then approach the lawyer or the witness and ask him or her questions related to the utterances and perlocutionary acts. You may ask them why they reacted in the manner in which they had or perhaps, ask them if a different utterance would have elicited different perlocutionary effect or response in the same situation. The advantage in this method is that the assumptions of the researcher are removed from the analysis. Since you are focusing on language use by interactants, you can get the views of the interactants. Sometimes, assumptions made by the researcher may be different from what the subject has to say on a particular linguistic behaviour. Spencer-Oatey (2011) utilises this kind of method in the study of rapport management in workplace discourse.

You can also give out questionnaires to subjects to elicit data on discourse behaviour. For example, you may be conducting a research on Nigerian headlines. You can set questions that focus on speech acts and presupposition and attach the headlines to the questionnaires. Just as you have in post-event interviews, you can also obtain the views of the subjects and not impose your own assumptions on the analysis. You can also use questionnaires to obtain data on specific items such as the local names given to HIV/AIDS in Nigeria and the pragmatic import of such names. Odebunmi (2006) also used this method in obtaining technical terms used in hospitals.

Discourse completion tasks involve "giving a written description of a communicative situation to the subject and asking them to write what they will say in that situation". This can also be done orally when the "subjects listen to a recorded description of the situation and they say aloud what they will say in that situation" (Archer et al, 2011: 15)

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Explain the different types of elicited data that you have learnt. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages linked with each data type.

3.3 Transcription Conventions

You will also notice that in pragmatics and in linguistics generally, you can deal with written and oral data. For oral data, you will have to transcribe the data. In transcribing the data, you will have to put on paper, conversational features such as pauses, interruptions, repetitions and filled pauses i.e. *mmh, and ur*. In addition, you may also have to indicate tone unit and stress if it is necessary for your work. This is important because these may have pragmatic implications.

You can make use of a broad orthographic transcription where you only have pauses, repetitions and unclear elements indicated. You can also have a transcription system which covers a large number of prosodic and conversational features (Archer, et al, 2012).

Below is a list of some transcription conventions taken from Crystal and Davy (1969) as cited in Archer et al (2012:18):

#	tone unit boundary
{ }	subordinate tone unit
^	onset
' "	degree of stress
\	fall
/	rise

\ /   fall-rise
(( ))   incomprehensible speech
. -   pauses of different length
_ : !   degrees of booster

Others include:

(*hh*)   audible breathing
//   overlap
< >   non-linguistic features such as raising a finger or typing

Just as you learnt in unit 2, under the section that deals with the relationship between pragmatics and phonology, pauses and intonation express emotional and attitudinal meaning. Thus, it will be important to indicate when pauses occur and the kind of tone that a speaker uses. These may have effect on the message being passed across and how the hearer interprets the message of the speaker. For example, if you transcribe the words of a speaker when he says he is sorry without using a transcription notation, another person reading your work will find it difficult to understand why the hearer still feels offended. A notation showing a fall rise tone will explain why the hearer still feels offended.

It is also important to indicate when there is an interruption as this may show the power status of the interactants. In addition, it is important to indicate non-verbal acts which may have significant effects on the utterance of the speaker.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss some of the transcription notations that you know.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, carrying out a research in pragmatics is not as simple as it is. It involves ensuring that the 'best' data are collected in such a way that the relevant pragmatic issues are foregrounded. You are, therefore, encouraged to utilise at least two of such data types when conducting your research.

5.0 SUMMARY

Research methods focuses on the types of data that can be used in a pragmatic research. Types of data include authentic data and elicited data. Authentic data deals with the kind of data that are not primarily meant for the benefit researcher. They can be written or spoken. Elicited data are the types of data meant for the benefit of the researcher. They include questionnaires, interviews and discourse completion tasks. Transcription conventions are used to capture conversational features such as pauses, interruptions and repetitions.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Choose a research topic of your own in the area of politics or in the media. Discuss the type of methodology that you will use and explain why you will use that methodology**.**

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 2 MAJOR CONCEPTS IN PRAGMATICS

In this module, you are provided with an in-depth understanding of some of the major concepts in pragmatics. You are expected to have background knowledge of some of these concepts already. Thus, we will pay attention to the criticisms of some of these concepts. There are four units in this module. In the first two units, you will be taken through two concepts per unit. The last two focus on one pragmatic concept each.

The concepts studied in this module are important aspects of pragmatics that were instrumental in the development of the subject. Deixis focuses on how language is used to refer or to point at things while reference deals with the reflexive nature of language. Inference deals with the mechanism deployed by interlocutors in understanding utterances while presupposition concentrates on assumptions that speakers and hearers have about one other on a subject matter in a discourse. Pragmatic markers address different kinds of linguistic structures that reflect the speaker's attitude towards the content of the message and the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. (Im)politeness is a linguistic concept that deals with how interpersonal relations are maintained or threatened.

UNIT 1 DEIXIS AND REFERENCE

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will focus on two salient aspects of pragmatics which deal with how objects are referred to. These depend on the context in which they are found. This means, for example, that an object can be said to be *here* or *there* depending on *who* and *where* the speaker is. In addition, reference deals the lexical items that are used to refer to things or ideas.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objections:

- explain the term deixis
- discuss the different types of deixis
- explain the term "reference"
- discuss the different types of referents and referring expressions in English

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What is Deixis?

Deixis is the grammatical encoding of features of a speech event which include the role or status of participants, the activities being discussed and the spatio-temporal context (Archer et al, 2012). Thus, deictic expressions include social deixis, time deixis, place deixis, person deixis and discoursal deixis. These are explained in the next section.

Sometimes, deictic words may be used in a non-deictic way. That is they do not point to or refer to something. Consider the example below:

He came into the room going <u>here</u> and <u>there</u>.

The items underlined do not refer to anyplace in particular. In this case, the expression, <u>here and there</u> is an idiomatic expression that means different places.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Define the term deixis.

3.1.1 Types of Deixis

- Time deixis includes temporal adverbials (today, tomorrow) which represent time in relation to the roles of participants. They may also point backwards (yesterday), focus on the present (now) and point to the future (tomorrow). Time deixis also includes demonstrative expressions such as *this month* and *that year*; adjectival phrases such as *last Thursday* and *next year*; and verbs of motion such as *the coming year* and *the following Monday* (Archer et al, 2012).

- Place deixis encodes the spatial locations in relation to the location of the interactants or speech events and these include demonstratives (this, that) and place adverbials (here, there). Indexicals such as *this, these* and *here* indicate proximity, while *that, those* and *there* indicate distality.

- Person deixis concerns the participant roles which are expressed through personal pronouns. The first person pronoun includes the speaker, the second person includes the addressee, but the third person excludes both the speaker and addressee (see Levinson, 1983; Goddard, 1998; Odebunmi 2006).

- Social deixis encodes or points to the social identities and/or relationships between speakers and addressees and others. There are two types: **absolute** and **relational** social deixis. Absolute expressions are fixed across different contexts and they include items such as *Mr, Mrs* and *Miss*. Relational expressions are not fixed. They are used based on the social relationship between speaker and referent, speaker and addressee or speaker and bystander (someone who is in an event but does not participate in that event). They are also determined by the degree of (in)formality of the context of utterance (Levinson 1983, Archer et al, 2012). They include honorifics and kinship terms. You may for example address an academic lecturer as either *Professor Ajayi*, or *Prof* depending on the relationship you have with the person and the (in)formality of the context of the utterance.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the different types of deixis in English.

3.2 Reference

Reference is the relationship that holds between a linguistic expression (i.e. a name) and what it stands for in the real world (i.e. an object or idea). In other words, it deals with the relationship between linguistic items and non-linguistic items. However, what a name means may be subject to time and place. For example, the reference the President of Nigeria may refer to Goodluck Jonathan if you are writing between 2010 and 2014. Thus, you have to examine the context to get the object or thing that is being referred to**.** This leads us to two concepts**: referring expression and referent.**

A **referring expression** or **reference** is "a piece of language, a noun phrase, that is used in an utterance and is linked to something outside language" (Kreidler, 1998:130). This 'something' could be dead, living, abstract or a group of such entities. The 'something' here is called the **referent**. For example, River Niger is a referring expression or a name which refers to a particular river in Nigeria. The physical river itself is the referent.

It should be noted that two or more referring expressions may have the same referent but may not mean the same thing. For example, consider the following utterances:

General Olusegun Obasanjo
Iyabo Obasanjo's father
The owner of Otta Farm

As you can see, these referring expressions refer to one particular person or referent. However, the context will determine the particular expression that should be used. This shows that reference is pragmatically determined as it depends on the context of situation. For example, addressing Olusegun Obasanjo as 'Iyabo's father' will be inappropriate in a military ceremony.

This leads us to the concept of **reference assignment**. This is the process through which a hearer assigns objects to indexical words such as pronouns (Allott, 2010). For example, when you hear the sentence, "He will see her", you have to find the referents for 'he' and 'her', you have to look into the context of the utterance to understand its meaning. The context may then tell you that 'he' refers to 'President Jonathan' and 'her' refers to 'the First Lady'. As you will see in this next module, reference assignment is one of the processes through which explicatures are enriched.

Self Assessment Exercise 3

What is reference? Define the concept of reference assignment.

3.2.1 Types of Referents

There are different kinds of referents and these include *concrete and abstract referents; unique and non-unique referents; and countable and uncountable referents* (see Kreidler, 1998). They are discussed below:

Concrete referents are referents that can be seen or touched and they include items such as 'boy', 'cat', 'stone' and 'bulldozer'. Abstract referents are referents that cannot be perceived directly through the senses. They include lexemes such as 'reason', 'joy', 'knowledge' and 'idea'. It is important to understand this because of the kind of effect they have on the linguistic context. Consider the following utterances taken from Kreidler (1998: 136):

the key to the front door/ the key to success
a bright light/a bright future

In the examples above, *key* and *bright* have literal meanings when used with concrete referents and have figurative meanings when used with abstract referents. Since language is fluid, lexemes that have concrete referents may be given abstract ones and vice versa. For example, a *character* is a kind of a mark, perhaps on paper or any other surface and it is also the totality of a person's qualities (see Kreidler, 1998).

Countable referents can either be concrete or abstract referents. Concrete countable referents are referents that can be separated from one another i.e. 'eggs', 'shoes' and 'babies'. Abstract countable referents include an idea, a problem and a suggestion.

Concrete non-countable referents are of three types: those that can not be separated such as palm oil and honey; those that have many particles not worth counting such as 'hair' and 'rice'; and those that are a collection of parts with different names such as 'furniture', 'jewellery', and 'luggage'. Abstract non-countable referents include items that cannot be divided such as 'advice', 'information' and 'beauty'.

Unique referents are referents that have a fixed reference. For example, River Niger is a unique referent and has a fixed reference. Non-unique referents are referents that have a variable reference. They are referents that can change each time the referring expression is used. For example, the reference 'a river' is a variable reference which has a non-unique referent because the referent may change each time the expression 'a river' is used. 'A river' could refer to River Niger today and River Benue tomorrow.

However, fixed references may be used as variable references. In the utterance, 'We need an Awolowo today,' *Awolowo* has a non-unique referent because the person it refers to is not the Late Chief Awolowo but any person who has his qualities.

Self Assessment Exercise 4

Explain the different types of referents in English.

3.2.2 Types of Referring Expressions

There are three types of referring expressions and they include

- proper names with unique referents such as *Nnamdi Azikiwe* and *Obafemi Awolowo University*;
- pronouns such as *she, we* and *us*; and
- noun phrases with non-unique referents such as *the boy, that broom in the kitchen, my car, every donkey* and *five people*.

Noun phrases with variable referents employ demonstratives, possessives and quantifiers and these lead to certain kinds of references which include:

- generic and non-generic reference
- specific and non-specific reference; and
- definite and indefinite reference.

A generic reference is the kind of referring expression that refers to a particular class of referents in general. Consider this utterance:

A dog is a man's best friend.

The noun phrase, 'a dog' is a generic reference because it refers to dogs in general.

A non-generic reference is one that refers to a particular referent. For example, consider 'a dog' in the next sentence:

A dog is in my room.

'A dog' here refers to a particular dog and not all dogs in general.

A specific reference is one that refers to a particular referent while a non-specific reference refers to any referent. Consider 'a cat' in the example below:

I have a cat.

A cat here is a specific reference because it refers to a particular cat. This is not the case of 'a cat' in the next sentence which refers to any cat:

I want a cat.

Please, you need to understand that in generic reference, you are referring to the whole class of referents. In non-specific reference, you are referring to any referent, not the entire class.

Definite reference is the kind of referring expression that refers to a referent that can be identified for one of the following reasons: the referent is fixed, it can be obtained from the context and through implicature. The following examples illustrate these:

Put the cups on the table. (context)
This is my office. The shelf is over there. (through implicature, the shelf is relate to the ones in 'my office').

An indefinite reference is the type of referring expression which refers to a referent that has to be chosen by the addressers from a class of referents. As Kreidler (1998: 144) posits, "an indefinite noun phrase presupposes the existence of more than its referent, a class of referents to which this one belongs." Kreidler gives us an example:

I saw a strange painting on the wall.

The fact that there is a stage painting presupposes that there are other paintings on the wall.

Self Assessment Exercise 5

Explain the different types of referring expressions in English.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, deixis and reference are two concepts that are studied both in semantics and in pragmatics. From the study, you can see that the two concepts depend on the context of interaction to determine what the deictic item points to and the referent of referring expressions. To arrive at the full meaning of deictic words and referring expression, you have to look at the context of situation.

5.0 SUMMARY

Deixis addresses how words are used to point at things in a particular context. Types of deixis include time deixis, place deixis, person deixis and social deixis. Reference deals with the relationship that holds between a linguistic expression and what it stands for in the real world. Reference deals with concepts such as referents and referring expressions. Referents can be concrete or abstract; unique or non-unique; and countable or uncountable. Referring expressions include proper nouns, pronouns and noun phrases with non-unique referents.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Define deixis. Discuss the different types of deixis
What is reference? Explain the different types of referents in English.

Examine the use of references in President Jonathan's first presidential inaugural speech and determine the function of these references.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 INFERENCE AND PRESUPPOSITION

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will concentrate on another two aspect of pragmatics which include inference and presupposition. Inference is the kind of assumption that a hearer deploys in order to arrive at the meaning of an utterance while presupposition is the assumption that interactants have about each other's knowledge in any given context. In this unit, you are expected to study and consider the functions of these concepts in a pragmatic examination.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following goals:

- explain the term 'inference'
- discuss different types of inference
- explain the term 'presupposition'
- expatiate on the types of presuppositions that exist

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Inference

Inference is a process through which a hearer works out the meaning of an utterance from what is stated and unstated using the hearer's general knowledge and context. Such a process goes through a number of stages. The first stage is to understand the observation or stated information. The second is to form a hypothesis that attempts to describe the above information in relation to the person's general knowledge. The resulting conclusion goes beyond the initial information by incorporating the hearer's general knowledge in the result. The third step is to evaluate the validity of the conclusion that has been reached.

3.1.1 Types of Inference

There are two kinds of inferences: **deductive** and **abductive** inferences. Deductive inferences are inferences that are demonstrative, certain and cannot be revised. They are inferences that are conclusions from a series of premises (see Allot, 2010). For example, if a car is overheated, it infers that there is no water in the radiator.

Abductive inferences are assumptions that are made based on the best explanation for a particular cause. They are non-demonstrative, uncertain and open to revision. For example, if there is water on your kitchen floor, you may infer that your son poured water on the floor, the roof is leaking or a water bag is leaking. As Allot (2010: 17) posits, a hearer "seeks an explanation that would explain the utterance, in terms of what the speaker intended."

Self Assessment Exercise 1

What is inference? Discuss the types of inference that you know.

3.2 Presupposition

Presuppositions are "propositions whose truth is taken for granted as opposed to being explicitly stated" (Archer et al, 2012).They are assumptions that the speaker and hearer have about each other's knowledge of the proposition. For example, the question, 'When did you eat the apple?' presupposes that you ate some apples and the statement, 'My son is here' presupposes that I have a son. Presuppositions are typically generated by lexical items or linguistic constructions which are called presupposition triggers (Levinson, 1983) and they include:

- definite descriptions such as *Musa* in 'Musa visited the farm' presuppose that Musa exits.
- factive verbs such as *know* in 'I know Chika left the country' presuppose that Chika left the country
- change-of-state verbs such as *repeated* in Obi has repeated the experiment' presuppose that Obi has performed the experiment before.
- implicative verbs such as *managed* in 'Oma managed to go to the school' presuppose that Oma went to school.

- temporal clauses which begin with items such as *after* in 'Bisi went to the library after she visited the zoo' presuppose that she went to the zoo.
- cleft sentences such as 'It was Ehis that cleaned the shoe' presuppose that Ehis cleaned the shoe
- comparatives such as 'Rose is more beautiful than Binta' presuppose that both Rose and Binta are beautiful.

Self Assessment Exercise 2

What is presupposition? What are presupposition triggers?

3.2.1 Types of Presupposition

There are five types of presupposition and they include:

1. existential presupposition, which include definite noun phrases, names and possessive constructions such as *the Ooni of of Ife, the woman next door* and *my book.*

2. factive presupposition, which refers to assumptions that are true based on some particular verbs such as *know realise* and *regret* before the presupposed information i.e. I did not realise that Bola was the singer. This presupposes that Bola is a singer.

3. lexical presupposition, which refers to particular expressions which are taken to presuppose another concept that is unstated i.e. 'the student started complaining'. The presupposition is that the students were not complaining initially.

4. structural presupposition, which involves the structure of a sentence or some tangible part of it that can have a traditionally recognised structure like a question i.e. 'Who brought the car?' presupposes that a car was bought.

5. counteractive presuppositions which are assumptions that are not only untrue but are contrary to fact. They include 'if' clauses such as 'If I were the vice-chancellor...' This presupposes that I am not the vice-chancellor.

6. non-factive presupposition, which are assumptions that are not true based on the use of certain verbs such as *dream, imagine,* and *pretend*. For example, 'I dreamt I bought a car' presupposes that I did not buy a car.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss the different types of presuppositions that exist.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, inference and presupposition are two concepts that enhance the retrieval of information from speakers' utterances. They serve as the bedrock of other pragmatic concepts. For example, conversational implicature and relevance are built on inference. Thus, you should focus on the way inference and presupposition are employed in the production and interpretation of utterances.

5.0 SUMMARY

Inference is the assumption that a hearer deploys to arrive at the meaning of an utterance. It includes abductive and deductive inferences. Presuppositions are assumptions that a speaker and a hearer have about each other's knowledge of a proposition. Types of presuppositions include existential, factive, lexical, structural and counteractive presuppositions.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the types of presuppositions that you find in two newspaper reports on politics in Nigeria.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 PRAGMATIC MARKERS

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In everyday conversation, you make use of small words that seem to have no meaning or does not affect what you are really saying. Sometimes, you make use of them when you are at a loss of what to say or when you are still thinking of what you ought to say exactly. These words are referred to as pragmatic markers because they tell you something about the attitude of the speaker and indicate the relationship between the speaker and the hearer. In this unit, you will focus on pragmatic markers, the different types, features and functions of pragmatic markers.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- explain what pragmatic markers are;
- discuss the different types of pragmatic markers;
- assess the different approaches to the study of pragmatic markers;
- describe the features of pragmatic markers; and
- expatiate on the functions of pragmatic markers.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What are Pragmatic Markers?

Pragmatic markers are words or phrases that stand alone in utterances which do not contribute to the content of the discourse, but have textual and interpersonal functions. They are 'short elements which are not integrated syntactically with the rest of the sentence' (Archer et al, 2010: 76). Examples include words such as *well, like, yeah* and comment clauses such as *you know, I mean,* and *you see*. They are sometimes referred to as discourse markers, connectives, fillers, discourse particles, and so on. Although they look meaningless, they have very important roles in spoken interaction (Archer et al, 2012). They are also defined as 'linguistically encoded clues which signal the speaker's potential communicative intentions (Fraser, 1996:168)

Some scholars see discourse markers as a subclass of pragmatic markers which is used to show a relation between utterances. Such relations can indicate elaboration, contrast or inference. Thus, it is taken that the term, pragmatic markers, is an umbrella term to cover such words and structures that do not contribute to the content of the discourse but are inserted in order to organise the discourse. They signal how utterances fit into the context and are usually located at the initial part of an utterance (Archer et al, 2012).

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Define pragmatic markers.

Types of Pragmatic Markers

There are different types of classification of pragmatic markers provided by different researchers. Generally, we have the following:

- vocatives
- silence fillers such as *um, uh, erm*;
- adverbs such as *well, so*;
- adjectives such as *fine, good, great;*
- interjections which include *oh,*
- expletives (swear words) such as *shit*,
- hedges and vagueness markers such as *sort of, like, kind of;*
- comment clauses such as *I mean, I think, you know, you see*; and
- certain speech acts such as thanking (thank you) and apologising (excuse me).

Fraser (1996) identifies four categories or pragmatic markers including:

- basic pragmatic markers such as please indicate the type of message which the speaker intends to pass across;
- commentary pragmatic markers signal a comment on the message conveyed by the speaker i.e. *frankly* and *indeed*;
- parallel pragmatic markers signal a message which is different from the main message such as *now* and *sir*;
- discourse markers signal a relation between a prior part of an utterance and another part of the utterance such as *equally* and *despite*.

Based on Fraser's (1996) classification, Han (2011) provides a different classification, and this includes the following:

Elaborative markers are used to 'explain the reason for a message in discourse'. They include examples such as *and, besides* and *firstly*.

Contrastive markers show that there is a denial or difference between a prior utterance and an upcoming one. They include items such as *but, although* and *however*.

Temporal markers indicate the time or sequence of time in which an event or series of events occur. Example include *firstly, at the moment, now, then*, etc.

Inferential markers are markers which suggest a conclusive relationship between discourse segments or indicates that the succeeding utterance is an inference or conclusion of the preceding discourse segment.

Assessment markers are markers which indicate the speaker's assessment or evaluation towards some messages or comment on certain events. Examples include *in my opinion, I think, as for me* and *(un)fortunately*.

Deference markers are markers used to signal a message of deference. They are separate from and parallel to the basic message of the discourse. Examples are *madam, your excellency*, and *gentlemen*.

Emphasis markers are markers used to highlight the basic message in the discourse. Examples include *definitely, indeed, really, to say the least*, etc.

Conversational management markers are used to signal a shift in context, a warning signal, repair mechanism of what has been said, and sometimes to indicate the speaker's response his/her own talk. Examples include *now, well* and *ok.*

Other markers refer to all the other categories of markers not mentioned above.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss types of pragmatic markers.

3.3 Approaches to the Study of Pragmatic Markers

There are three main approaches to the study of pragmatic markers. They include the **discourse-coherence approach, the grammatical-pragmatic approach** and **the cognitive-pragmatic approach** (see Han, 2011).

The proponents of the discourse-coherence approach include Schiffrin (1987), Redeker (1991) and Lenk (1998). They posit that markers contribute to discourse coherence semantically and pragmatically. For example, Schiffrin (1987) focuses on the discourse functions of pragmatic markers which include functioning as markers of connections and markers used in introducing topics.

The grammatical-pragmatic approach focuses on the grammatical and syntactic status and properties of pragmatic markers with emphasis on their word class, syntactic collocation or constraints. Scholars include Brinton, (1996), Fraser (1990, 1996, 1999, 2006). For example, Brinton (1996) focuses on the use of first person present tense forms such as 'I guess' and how they become decategorised from a subject full verb construction to particle- like parenthetical which are sub-categories of adverbs.

The cognitive approach utilises the relevance theory of Sperber and Wilson (1987) and maintain that pragmatic markers are used to indicate the relations between utterances, and 'to constrain the relevance of the utterance in discourse' (Han, 2011: 2777). This is done in order to guide the hearer to achieve more successful understanding with less cognitive processing effort. Scholars in this school include Rouchota, (1996), Unger (1996) and Blakemore (2002). For example, Blakemore (2002) posits that discourse (pragmatic) markers such as 'well' indicate the procedures for the recovery of implicatures or the constraints or limitations on pragmatic inference.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss some of the approaches to pragmatic markers.

3.4 Features of Pragmatic Markers

Pragmatic markers have the following features which are based on Brinton (1996):

- Syntactically, they usually occur at the beginning of a sentence, they are optional and can be attached loosely to the sentence.

- Semantically, they have little or no propositional meaning.

- Stylistically, they are usually associated with oral and informal interaction in high frequency.

- Sociolinguistically, they are usually associated with non-fluency.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Discuss four features of pragmatic markers.

3.5 Functions of Pragmatic Markers

There are two major broad functions of pragmatic markers and these include the interpersonal and textual functions:

The textual function is usually done in order to organise or create structural boundaries in discourse. They could point forward or backwards or show a relation between the utterances. They can be used to perform the following textual functions:

- initiate or close discourse i.e. *well*, let's get started.
- serve as a filler or turn-holding device; I will see the man tomorrow,... *but* you have to discuss the matter with him first.
- mark a boundary in the discourse i.e. *Now*, we have to focus on another group.
- signal transitions between one element and another in the discourse i.e. *On the one hand*, discourse analysis deals with discourse structures, *on the hand,* pragmatics deals with social principles.
- repair one's own discourse i.e. I saw, *I mean,* I read in the papers...

Interpersonally, pragmatic markers perform the following functions:

- express emotion i.e. *Surprisingly*, he did not react negatively to the news.

- indicate an attitude or reaction to the hearer or text; i.e. *Unfortunately*, the man died.
- express shared knowledge or solidarity i.e. *You know,* children can be naughty
- hedge or express politeness i.e. *I am sorry,* I have to leave tonight.

Self-Assessment Exercise 5

Discuss the different functions of pragmatic markers in English.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, pragmatic markers are words which do not add any meaning to the main propositions but are used by interlocutors to organise their utterances and foreground the kind of relationship that exits between them. They are little words that help in the management of discourse and interpersonal relations. Thus, it is important, as students of English, to pay more attention to these little words in human interaction.

5.0 SUMMARY

Pragmatic markers are little items that you use to organise your utterances. They have both textual and interpersonal functions. There are different types of pragmatic markers which include vocatives, silence fillers, adverbs, adjectives, hedges and certain speech acts. Pragmatic markers have been studied from different angles including the discourse-coherence approach, the grammatical-pragmatic approach and the cognitive approach.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Identify types and functions of pragmatic markers in any presidential speech.

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UNIT 4 POLITENESS AND IMPOLITENESS

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

You may have been introduced to politeness strategies in your undergraduate study of pragmatics. In this unit, you will be exposed to different scholars and models that have expanded the concept of politeness. You will also learn about some of the criticisms of earlier models of politeness.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this study, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- ✓ explain the term 'politeness';
- ✓ elaborate on Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies;
- ✓ discuss the criticisms of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies;
- ✓ explain Leech's politeness model; and
- ✓ elucidate the concept of impoliteness.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What is Politeness?

Politeness is defined as a set of verbal routines and strategies which are used to enhance co-operative interaction by establishing and maintaining personal relationships. It is a social and linguistic device that is used to avoid conflict in human interaction (Lakoff, 1989). Brown and Levinson (1987) treat politeness as the avoidance of face threatening acts. Politeness, thus is sometimes linked with the concept of face.

Goffman, a sociologist, defined face as the positive social value a person effectively claims for him or herself. He believes that face is on loan from the society. It is only within the society that the issue of face or what you can call a person's status is granted. Thus, the society can withdraw a person's face if the person conducts him/herself in a manner that is unacceptable by the society. A person can only talk about face in a social interaction. Thus, the concept of face cannot come up within a person (see Archer et al, 2012).

Every society has a set of norms that prescribe a certain behaviour or way of conducting oneself in the society. For example, it is expected in some Nigerian communities that a young person should obey an elderly person, stand up for an elder where there are lack of seats. A young person may lose his or her face if s/he contradicts these sets of rules. Thus, it is normal behaviour for a person to cooperate with these rules.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Define politeness using your own words?
What is face? Using your own ethnic group as a case study, discuss how a person's face can be threatened.

3.2 Brown and Levinson's Politeness Strategies

Brown and Levinson (1987.61) consider the concept of politeness in relation to face which they describe as the 'public self image that every member wants to claim for himself' and this involves positive and negative face. **Negative face** is the basic claim to territories, personal preserves of freedom of action and imposition. **Positive face** is the positive self-image of a person which includes the desire to be appreciated or approved of. Brown and Levinson (1978) posit that there are acts that threaten both the positive and negative face of both the speaker and the hearer. They suggest that any rational human being would want to avoid such face threatening acts (FTA's) or at least deploy some strategies to minimise the threat. A rational human being will have to consider the **power, social distance** and **ranking of the imposition** to obtain the weightiness of the act which will determine the strategy to be used.

Brown and Levinson (1987) posit that a speaker can perform an FTA by going **on record** or **off record**. When a speaker goes on record, s/he states his intention unambiguously in such a way that there is only one interpretation of the speaker's intention. A speaker goes off record when there is more than one interpretation of the speaker's intention (Brown and Levinson, 1987).

A speaker can go on record in three ways. The speaker can perform **an act on record without redress** when it is direct, clear, unambiguous and concise. Here, the FTA is performed baldly without redress if the speaker does not fear retribution from the hearer in cases where there is a matter of urgency or efficiency; where danger to the hearer's face is small; and where the speaker is vastly higher than the hearer. Imperatives are typical examples of such acts. For example, a judge can order a witness to speak without any fear or retribution. The judge also has more power than the witness in a courtroom. Thus, there is no need to minimise the threat to the witness' face.

The speaker may also perform the **FTA on record with redressive action** by making use of **positive politeness strategies** that mitigate the FTA. Here the speaker indicates that the face threat is not intended or desired and that the speaker recognises the hearer's face and s/he wants them to be achieved. Brown and Levinson (1987) provide fifteen strategies of using positive politeness and these include:

- notice and attend to the hearer's interests

For example, *'I don't want to waste your time* but could you translate this letter for me?'

- exaggerate the hearer's interests

This strategy is performed with exaggerated intonation, stress and intensifiers. For example, 'How delicious this food tastes!'

- intensify interest to the hearer

For example, 'Please can you help me edit this work? *You will find it interesting and it can help you in your research too.'*

- use in-group identity markers,

For example, 'Honey' in *Honey, let us have some doughnut* is an in-group marker.

- avoid disagreement

One can avoid disagreement by pretending to agree. An example is taken form Brown and Levinson (1987:114):

A: So is this permanent?
B: Yeh, it's permanent - permanent until I get married again.

- seek agreement

This can be done through the use of repetitions, pseudo agreement and hedging opinions such as *sort of, kind of* and *in a way*. For example, the use of a repetition can be seen in the next example:

S: I gave him some butter
H: Yeah, butter.

This situation can occur when the hearer is not really interested in the conversation. But to save the face of the speaker, he may show emotional agreement.

- presuppose/assert common ground

You may consider this utterance, *You know we are both in the same office so help me write the letter*. In this statement, the speaker asserts the fact that the speaker and the hearer share common ground.

- joke

Jokes are based on shared background knowledge which is a positive politeness strategy that is meant to put the hearer at ease. Consider the next example taken from Brown and Levinson (1987: 124):

How about lending me this old piece of junk (H's new Cadillac)

- assert or presuppose the speaker's knowledge of and concern for the hearer's wants

Consider the example, 'I understand that the boy is not serious but I want you to pay more attention to him in class.' Here, the speaker acknowledges the concerns of the hearer while making a request.

- offer/ promise

A speaker may make a promise when making a request which is an FTA. For example, politicians make promises to electorates when they request for their votes. In such a situation, the hearers' desires are approved.

- be optimistic

A speaker may be optimistic about getting a request done. For example, s/he might say: *I know if I ask this from you, you will help me.* Please, can you babysit my son?

- include both the speaker and hearer in the activity

For example, in a situation where two friends are watching a film in the sitting room and one of them wants a doughnut, s/he can give a command, *Let us have some doughnut.* What the speaker means to say is that he or she wants some doughnuts but uses 'let's so that the hearer will feel appreciated as s/he will benefit from the activity.

- give or ask for reasons

This kind of strategy can be used for example, when a person wants to borrow some money from a friend. The person may give reasons in order to show that the request (an FTA) is made in order to save a situation.

- assume or assert reciprocity

This indicates cooperation between the speaker and hearer. For example, *'Wash these plates for me, I'll clean your table while you are doing that.*

- give gifts to the hearer

You can give gifts (not necessarily material) such as acknowledging that the hearer would not want his/her time to be wasted.

The speaker may also perform the FTA with redressive action by making use of **negative politeness strategies** which focus on the hearer's negative face: 'the want to have his freedom of action unhindered and attention unimpeded' (Brown and Levinson, 1987:129). They give ten strategies:

- be conventionally indirect

The utterance, *can you pass the salt?* is a negative politeness strategy. We all know that the utterance is a request to pass the salt and not a question as to the ability of the hearer to pass the salt. This is an example of the strategy of being conventionally indirect.

- question/hedge

The utterance, *can you bring the shoes, if you don't mind?* is a question with the hedge, *if you don't mind*.

- be pessimistic

In the example below, the speaker indicates pessimism about the ability of the speaker to grant the request. This is done in order to show that the speaker does not want to impose on the hearer.

I don't know if you can help me but could you borrow me some money.

- minimise the imposition Rx

The italicised words in this utterance shows how an imposition can be minimised: 'Could you help me with a *tiny bit* of paper?'

- give deference

The use of a person's title, such as *Mr chairman* and *Dr sir* are examples of giving deference.

- apologise

One can apologise by saying, *I'm sorry but could you help me with the chair?*

- impersonalise S and H;

This is done to distance the action from the speaker. Consider the use of the cleft sentence: 'It is regretted that the news was not given to the students.'

- state the FTA as a rule

You can state the FTA as a rule by stating, 'It is against the rule to smoke here,' instead of 'You should not smoke here.'

- nominalise;

You can nominalise by making use of nouns rather than verbs i.e. 'Smoking is not allowed here.'

- go on record as incurring a debt or as not indebting H.

You can go on record as to incurring a debt when you say, *Thank you for listening.*

Brown and Levinson (1987) suggests that **off-record politeness strategy** is carried out by violating Gricean conversational maxims. Off-record utterances help the speaker avoid the responsibility of performing an FTA by leaving the hearer to determine the meaning of his/her utterance. In such a situation, he can deny that he did not have the intent to perform the FTA. They list fifteen linguistic realisations of off-record strategy which include:

- hints

These involve the use of indirect speech acts i.e. 'It's quite hot in here' is a hint to switch on the fan.

- association clues

These deal with implicatures that arise when the use of certain statements is associated with actions that are mutually understood by the interlocutors. For example, 'I have a class now' implies that the hearer should leave the speaker's office.

- presuppositions

'You made that mistake again' presupposes that the hearer has made this mistake before. This can occur as a complaint especially if the speaker does not want to explicitly state that the hearer is used to making such mistakes.

- understatement

Brown and Levinson (1987) posit that this strategy is done by violating the maxim of quantity. Here the speaker says less than what is required. For example:

A: Do you like my bag?
B: It's okay.

- overstatement

This strategy violates the maxim of quantity by stating more than is required. For example, 'A thousand people were in the bank today' can be an excuse for returning home late.

- tautologies

These involves repeating truth that is evident, i.e. 'A promise is a promise.' The implicature is that the hearer should not break the promise.

- rhetorical questions

Rhetorical questions involve asking questions that do not require answers and these can be used to perform FTAs i.e. excuses. For example:

What can I say?

The implicature is that the speaker has no excuse to give. To say that the speaker has no excuse will serve as a threat to the hearer's face. With the statement as an off record strategy, the speaker can not be held responsible that he has no excuse.

- contradiction

The use of contradicting statement is to raise some implicature in the mind of the hearer and usually, the negative part is usually the real answer. For example:

A: Are you happy about this news?
B: Yes and no

In this case, speaker B tries to save A's face by giving two contradicting answers. He cannot be held responsible for saying that he is not happy with the news, which will serve as a complaint.

- irony

This involves stating the opposite of what the speaker intends which is an indirect way of conveying the speaker's message. For example:

Jane is very intelligent (she had the last position in the class)

- metaphors

Metaphors are literally false and may not have a single connotative meanings. The speaker can therefore decide to attribute a different meaning to what he has said which may be different from that which he originally has in mind.

She's a dog is a metaphor for saying that a person is promiscuous.

Here, the speaker can say that dog does not mean a promiscuous person but someone who can find out information.

- ambiguity

The use of ambiguities raises some implicature that are raised when the maxim of manner is flouted, as ambiguities are not perspicuous or clear. For example, 'She's a politician' can be an insult or a compliment as the word 'politician' also connotes being a trickster.

- vagueness

Being vague also raises some implicature that are raised when the maxim of manner is flouted. Consider the example taken from Brown and Levinson (1987: 222):

I'm going you-know-where.

This answer is vague as you cannot determine where exactly *you-know-where* is. Thus, in order not to disclose to the hearer where s/he is going, the speaker gives a vague answer. The refusal of the speaker to inform the hearer of his/her destination is an FTA.

- overgeneralisation

Overgeneralisation involves giving a general rule about a situation with the intention that the hearer will recognise it and decide whether that rule applies to him. Consider the next example:

Good children always go to bed early.

In this situation, the aunt may say this without placing it on record that the hearer should go to bed. The hearer may decide that such a rule applies to him/her and go to bed early. This situation also applies to the use of proverbs.

- displace H

In this situation, the speaker talks to a different person with the hope that the intended hearer will understand that the speaker has a need or is making a complaint. For example, a child may complain to his/her father that he is hungry with the idea that the mother will hear and give him a meal.

- incomplete statement/ellipsis

Elliptical statements involve incomplete utterances which can be used to mitigate the force of an FTA. An example from Brown and Levinson (1978: 227) illustrates this:

Oh sir, a headache...

Here, the speaker uses this to ask her uncle for an aspirin without explicitly doing so.

3.2.1 Criticisms of Brown and Levinson Politeness Strategies

Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory has been criticised on the grounds that the theory is western-based and that it cannot account for all politeness strategies in different cultures such as the Japanese society (Ide, 1989). However, some scholars have suggested that the theory can be used to account for politeness and facework in non-western societies (e.g. Fukada and Asato, 2004; Kiyama, Tamaoka and Takiura, 2012),

In addition, the model has been criticised because it does not properly account for other acts which may be politic, appropriate or impolite (Culpeper, 2006; Locher, 2008). Thus, newer models which have been constructed to address these inadequacies include rapport management (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, 2011), relational work (Watts, 2003; Locher & Watts, 2005; Locher, 2006) and face constituting theory (Arundale, 2010). Some of these models will be discussed under interpersonal pragmatics in module 5, unit 3.

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Explain Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies.
Discuss the criticisms of Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies

3.3 Leech's Politeness Model

Leech (1983) proposes a conversational maxim view to politeness which he feels should complement Grice's CP. Thus, the principle of politeness is based on the maxims which seek to minimise the expression of impolite beliefs and to maximise the expression of polite beliefs. The maxims are stated briefly:

Tact Maxim: Minimise the cost to other and maximise the benefit to other'. they can be seen in directives and commissives

Generosity Maxim: Minimise benefit to self and maximise cost to self.

Approbation Maxim: Minimise the expression of beliefs which express dispraise of other; maximise the expression of beliefs which express approval of other.

Modesty: Minimise the expression of praise of self; maximise the expression of dispraise of self.

Agreement: Minimise the expression of disagreement between self and other; maximise the expression of agreement between self and other.

Sympathy Maxim: Minimise the expression of antipathy between self and other; maximise the expression of sympathy between self and other.

Scholars have criticised these maxims because Leech expanded the number of maxims to be followed by people which is also an expansion of Grice's conversational principles (Thomas, 1995).

As a reaction to these criticisms, Leech (2007) refers to these politeness maxims as constraints which seek to avoid discord first and seek concord second. These constraints are manifestations of the super-constraint: the Grand Strategy of Politeness (GSP). The GSP states: in order to be polite, a speaker communicates meanings which place (a) a high value on what relates to the other person (typically the addressee); and (b) a low value on what relates to the speaker. He suggests that that constraint (a) is more powerful than constraint (b). The GSP is exemplified in polite speech acts such as requests, offers, compliments, apologies, thanks, and the responses to these (Leech, 2007).

Scholars have also criticised this new model on the basis that both self and other should be considered in interactions because self-politeness is a display of self-confidence (Spencer-Oatey, 2008).

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Elucidate Leech's politeness model.

3.4 Impoliteness

Today, research has gone beyond the investigation of politeness strategies to cover impoliteness strategies because it has been observed that interlocutors may sometimes be impolite based on genuine reasons in an interaction. Interlocutors may use language to create disharmony. Archer et al (2012) for example suggest that in army training, sergeants use impoliteness in a methodical way in order to change recruits into real soldiers. There is also the example of a teacher who would never commend the actions of her best student just to ensure that the student keeps on working hard at her studies. Thus, Culpeper (1996) develops certain impoliteness strategies and these include:

- bald on record impoliteness
- positive impoliteness
- negative impoliteness
- sarcasm or mock politeness
- withholding politeness

The first three are influenced by Brown and Levinson's politeness strategy while the last two are influenced by Leech's (1983) politeness model. The bald on record impoliteness strategy deals with the explicit creation of maximum face damage. The FTA performed here is direct, clear, unambiguous and concise. For example, 'You idiot'.

Positive impoliteness strategy focuses on the explicit damage of the addressee's positive face wants. This includes behaviours such as ignoring the addressee, being disinterested, unconcerned, unsympathetic, not using identity markers , using vague or secretive language, seeking disagreement, using taboo words and calling the addressee names (Culpeper, 1996; Archer et al, 2012).

Negative impoliteness strategy includes behaviour that is designed to damage the addressee's negative face wants explicitly. This covers behaviours such as scaring the other, condescending, despising or mocking the other, being scornful, not treating the other seriously, belittling the addressee, invading the other's space, explicitly associating the other with a negative aspect and putting the other's indebtedness on record.

Sarcasm or mock politeness outlines the use of superficial politeness for impoliteness strategies. It is ironical in nature. Archer et al (2012) cite the example of the utterance 'You're so kind' said by someone expecting a door to be held open shortly after it closed on them.

Withholding politeness occurs when politeness is withdrawn in a place where it should have occurred. An example is failing to thank someone for carrying out a particular duty.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Elaborate on Culpeper's impoliteness strategies.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, you can see that the concept of (im)politeness in linguistics is an area that has been explored by different scholars. It is an area that focuses on interpersonal relations and is important particularly in intercultural contexts which we will consider in the last module. It is necessary therefore, as a student of pragmatics that you consider how some of these concepts are enacted in different professional contexts in your society.

5.0 SUMMARY

Politeness as a pragmatic concept focuses on how linguistic devices are used in establishing and maintaining personal relationships. Different scholars such as Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983/2007) have formulated different theories of the concept and have given us different politeness strategies. Scholars such as Culpeper (2006) have also studied impoliteness strategies such as bald on record impoliteness, positive impoliteness and negative impoliteness.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Analyse any play text of your choice using Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies.

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MODULE 3 MAJOR THEORIES IN PRAGMATICS

In your undergraduate study of pragmatics, you were introduced to theories such as speech acts and implicature. In this module, you will learn more about these concepts and focus on the criticisms of these theories and revisions of the theories. In addition, you will be introduced to two theories based on the criticisms of the speech act theory and conversational implicature. These are pragmatic acts theory and relevance theory respectively.

The module is made up of four units which include:

UNIT 1 SPEECH ACTS

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Based on your study of pragmatics in the introduction, you already know that the speech act theory is one of the foundations of pragmatics that helped in its development. In this unit, we focus on the speech act theory. We will examine the types of speech acts that exist and the different scholars that have contributed to the speech act theory. We will also look at the criticisms levelled against the theory.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to realise the following objectives:

- explain what speech acts are;
- discuss the different kinds of speech acts that exist;
- examine the different classifications of speech act proposed by different scholars; and
- assess the criticisms of the speech act theory.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What are Speech Acts?

The speech act theory was formulated by the Oxford philosopher, John Austin in his posthumous book, *How to do things with words* (1962). The theory has been studied in different fields. In Social Psychology, it looks at how language is used as an intentional and social action (Holtgraves, 2001). In Philosophy, it is used in the description of ethical statements (Searle, 1969); and in clinical linguistics, it has been used to analyse communication disorders (Perkins 2007). Literary critics see it as a tool which can be used to understand the nature of literary genres and can be used to read literary texts (Miller, 2001). In pragmatics, it deals with the roles that utterances perform in any text.

The speech act theory arose as a challenge to the restrictive view of a philosophical doctrine called logical positivism that centred on the truth conditional analysis of sentence meaning (See Tarski, 1933). For logical positivists, a sentence is only meaningful when it can be verified as being either true or false. For example, 'Goodluck Jonathan is the President of Nigeria,' is a meaningful sentence since it can either be true or false. However, it is evident that not all sentences are formed in this way. Sentences such as 'Can I go to the bathroom?' or 'Thank you' have meaning even though they cannot be verified as true or false. Austin (1962) explains that every utterance made, such as stating a fact, confirming or denying something, making a prediction, thanking or giving a piece of advice is a speech act.

Austin (1962) opines that there are two kinds of utterances, namely constatives and performatives. Constatives are statements that describe situations, events and states of affairs and have the property of being either true or false. For example, 'Atiku is the Vice-president of Nigeria.' Performatives are utterances used in performing actions rather than merely saying them. These include utterances such as 'I warn you not to come here' and 'I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.' These two utterances show the performance of the acts of warning and baptising.

Austin (1962) asserts that performatives are identifiable because they have the form of declarative sentences with a first person subject in simple present tense form, which can be collocated by the adverb, 'hereby' e.g. I (hereby) promise to come here tomorrow. However, these conditions are not the only necessary ones for making the sentences performative. One can also find explicit performatives such as 'Buyers are requested to pay for their purchases here' with the absence of the first person singular subject and the occurrence of the performative verb in the passive form.

Austin drew a distinction within performatives. These are primary (explicit) and implicit performatives. For example, one can perform the act of promising in two different ways:

1. I will go to the department tomorrow.
2. I promise to go to the department tomorrow.

The first sentence is an implicit performative while the other which contains a form of the performative verb ‘promise’ is an explicit (primary) performative. Lyons (1977) opines that the assertion that a primary performative and an implicit performative may be used to perform the same speech act does not imply that the sentences in question have the same meaning. An explicit performative is typically more specific in meaning than an implicit performative. If a person says, ‘I promise to go to the department tomorrow,’ he cannot deny that he made a promise. But if he says, ‘I’ll go to the department tomorrow,’ he might claim that he failed to carry out the action due to forces beyond his control. The only exception is ‘if the context is such as to exclude the possibility of any other interpretation’ (Lyons, 1977:728).

Thomas (1995) opines that while there are no substantial distinctions in meaning between explicit and implicit performatives, there are distinctions in the way they are used. Depending on the context of situation (i.e. formal) a specific form of language may be used e.g. ‘I hereby pronounce you husband and wife’. In other cases, a stylistic difference or a difference in emphasis may be implied; for example:

a. I bought a book.
b. I said I bought a book.

He further asserts that speakers tend to use an implicit performative and later move on to an explicit performative if the first attempt fails. This usually occurs since an explicit performative may imply ‘unequal power relationship or a particular set of right on the part of the speaker’ (Thomas, 1995:48).

Thomas (1995) classifies performatives into four groups. These include metalinguistic, ritual, collaborative and group performatives.

Metalinguistic performatives are those that are (a) self-referential i.e. the verb refers to what the speaker of the utterance is doing and (b) self-verifying i.e. they contain their own truth and are non-falsifiable. Examples include ‘I say’, ‘I vote’, ‘I plead’, etc. She also adds that metalinguistic performatives are always felicitous and that they do not depend on any external condition for their success.

Ritual performatives are those that are highly culturally dependent and they occur in ritual or very formal events. An example is ‘I name this baby Kemi.’

Collaborative performatives are performatives in which the specified person must utter the words in particular circumstances and there must be the uptake of another person. For example, ‘I bet you a hundred naira that the Eagles will win.’ The bet is successful if the hearer accepts the bet. Others include ‘to challenge’, ‘to bequeath’, etc.

Group performatives are those that are produced by more than one person e.g. a communiqué from a summit or a conference, a report of a committee and a verdict of a jury. The group performative is only successful when it is on behalf of the group and not an individual. For example, the text below is taken from a communiqué of the G20 summit is Australia in September, 2014:

> "*We* welcome recent signs of improvement in the global economy, in particular, growth strengthening in the United States..."

You will notice the first person pronoun is used because the communiqué is written on behalf of a group.

Thomas (1995: 42) observes that ritual performatives are also collaborative in nature. For example, ‘I baptize you’ is only successful if the participant is willing to be baptized. Also, a collaborative performative can be a ritual performative i.e. to bequeath or to announce. According to Thomas (1995:43), 'there are cross-cultural differences in the range and use of performatives particularly in the use of ritual performatives.'

Some performatives may not exist in some communities e.g. to baptize in a Moslem community. If they are used, they are used non-performatively. It is also possible for a performative to be subject to certain felicity conditions in one language/culture and not to be subject to any felicitous condition in another culture. Thomas (1995) gives the example of a Muslim who divorces his television wife who also happens to be his real wife. The *ulemas* in that community claim that any utterance on marriage, even if said unintentionally, is binding on the speaker. In another Muslim community, such utterances may not be binding on the speaker.

Austin (1962: 14) gives the following felicity conditions for performatives:

A (i) there must be a conventional procedure having a conventional effect i.e. there are conventional ways of naming a baby. The act will be infelicitous if the procedure is not followed.

(ii) the circumstances and persons must be appropriate i.e. it is only an authorised person in an authorised place that can carry out a marriage ceremony.

B The procedure must be executed (i) correctly and (ii) completely. For example, in a marriage ceremony, a man has to say 'I do' and must produce a ring to make the act felicitous.

The distinction between constatives and performatives rests upon the distinction between saying and doing something. Austin later abandons the untenable distinction between constatives and performatives since saying something is an action in itself, which can affect or change the world in some way. Thus, constatives are just one kind of performatives and they may be primary or implicit. For example, the sentence, 'The book is on the shelf,' is a constative and an implicit performative statement. It is a constative because the proposition can be true or false. It can also be an implicit performative statement because the speaker may indirectly be telling the hearer to pick the book from the shelf.

In her own opinion, Thomas (1995) observes that the notion that only performative verbs can be used to perform actions are untenable on the grounds that:

1. there is no formal (grammatical) way of distinguishing performative verbs from other sorts of words;
2. the presence of a performative verb does not guarantee that the specified action is produced i.e. there may be no uptake by the other person;

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What are speech acts?

What are performatives?

3.2 Types of Speech Acts

Austin (1962) draws a three-fold distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts. The locutionary act is the actual words uttered, the illocutionary act is the force or intention behind the words while the perlocutionary act is the effect of the illocution on the hearer. Kempson (1975:57) puts the distinction thus, 'a speaker utters sentences with a particular meaning (locutionary act) and with a particular force (illocutionary act) in order to achieve a certain effect (perlocutionary act) in the hearer.' For example, a speaker might say, 'There are mosquitoes entering the room' (locution) meaning: 'Please, could you shut the door' (illocution) and the perlocutionary effect may be that the person coming in shuts the door.

3.2.1 Locutionary Acts

Austin (1962) states that the locutionary act covers the phonetic act, phatic act and rhetic act. The phonetic act is marked by the uttering of certain noises; the phatic act is indicated by the uttering of certain vocables or words while the rhetic is marked by using the vocables with a particular sense or reference. Levinson (1983:237) notes that the illocutionary act is achieved by a conventional force with a conventional procedure which makes it determinate.

Odebunmi (2006b:26) views "locutions as vocabulary items that have certain senses and references when engaged in certain contexts by interactants." In other words, locutions are lexical choices which carry semantic properties when used in a context of interaction. Odebunmi (2006b) argues that the operational meaning of an utterance should be complemented with insights from theories of lexical description. This includes the knowledge of collocations which covers terms such as nodes, collocates, spans, clusters and sets. Nodes are headwords of collocations, collocates are items that occur with a node, and spans determine the range of words that can function around a particular node. "A cluster is a list of the lexical items which can be collocated with a particular lexical item" while a set is a collection of a number of clusters that are alike (Berry, 1977: 59).

Fraser (1986) asserts that the sense(s) of an utterance is difficult to determine as an utterance may have different senses but only one is meant to be understood. This depends on the context of use which includes the speaker, the hearer and the circumstances leading to the utterance, the time and place of the interaction. Thus, locution relates to reference which refers to the knowledge of the operational meaning of a word and this also relates to deixis which focuses on the "relationship between the structures of languages and the contexts in which they are used" (Levinson, 1983:55). Deictic expressions are words which are used in pointing at things. They identify referents and relate such referents to the knowledge shared between the speaker and the hearer (Grundy, 1995).

The reference of indexicals shifts based on the context of the utterance which includes the speaker, hearer, time, and location (Odebunmi, 2006b). Deictic expressions include deixis of time, place and person (see Levinson, 1983; Goddard, 1998; Odebunmi 2006b). In addition, a consideration of the locutionary act will require a consideration of the kinds of sense relations that words have with other lexical items within a discourse (Palmer, 1999 and Akande, 2003). These sense relations include antonymy, synonymy, hyponymy, polysemy, homonymy, homophony and homography.

Also, a study of the locutionary act will include a consideration of how words are formed in order to express particular meanings. It is important to note that the way a word is formed and its acceptability depend on the context of the speech event, which covers the participant roles, the location as well as the genre of the interaction. Word formation processes include affixation, abbronymy, compounding, clipping, blending, and conversion among others (see Yule, 1996; Odebunmi, 2006a). From the foregoing, it is evident that the analysis of a locutionary act involves a detailed description of the grammatical and semantic properties of an utterance.

3.2.2 Illocutionary Acts

Austin proposes five classes of performatives with an acknowledgement of overlapping possibilities. These include:

- Exercitives: These deal with the exercising of powers, rights or influence e.g. appoint, order, advise, warn, etc;
- Verdictives: These deal with the giving of a verdict by a juror or an umpire e.g. acquit, grade, estimate and diagnose;
- Commissives: These commit the speaker to do something e.g. promise, guarantee and bet;
- Behabitives: These deal with attitudes and social behaviour e.g. apologize, criticize, bless and challenge.
- Expositives: These clarify how utterances fit into the course of an argument e.g. argue, postulate, affirm and concede.

Searle (1969) proposes five categories of illocutionary acts. They are as follows:

- **Directives:** These acts attempt to get the addressee to do something e.g. commanding, ordering, requesting and questioning. For example, the utterance, "Sade, open this door" is an example of a command while "Where are you gong?" is an example of a question.
- **Commissives:** These commit the speaker to do something e.g. promising, vowing, guaranteeing, threatening and offering. For instance, "I will see you tomorrow" is an example of a promise while " I will never speak to you again" is an example of the speech act of vowing.
- **Expressives:** These express the psychological state of the speaker. They include thanking, greeting, condoling and welcoming. "I am sincerely grateful" is an example of thanking while "Please accept my sympathy" is an example of the speech act of condoling.
- **Representatives:** These undertake to represent a state of affair: past, present, future or hypothetical e.g. stating, explaining, telling, informing, and suggesting. "The President is speaking" illustrates the speech act of stating while "You may give him the book" exemplifies the speech act of suggesting.
- **Declarations:** These effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and they tend to rely on social events. Examples include declaring, firing, baptizing, naming and bidding. "I declare him the winner" is an example of the speech act of declaring while "I name you Bola Ajayi" is an example of naming.

Bach and Harnish (1979) present an alternative classification of communicative illocutionary acts into four and these include constatives, directives, commissives and acknowledgements.

- **Constatives** express the speaker's belief and his/her intention or desires that the hearer has. Here, we have disputatives, assertives, retractives and suppositives." I assume he may be the leader" is an example of suppositives while "I disagree with you" is an example of a disputative.
- **Directives** express the speaker's attitudes towards some protective action by the hearer and the speaker's intention that the utterance should be taken as a reason for the hearer's action. Here, we have requestives, advisories, prohibitives, questions and requirements. An example of a requestive is "Please, give me your ruler."
- **Commissives** state the speaker's intention and belief to do something. Here, we have promises and offers. "I can take to the playground" is an example of an offer.
- **Acknowledgements** express feelings regarding the hearer. Such utterances may be perfunctory and they satisfy a social expectation to express feelings and beliefs to the hearer. This class includes apologies,

congratulations, greetings, thanks, bids, acceptance and rejections. An example of an apology is "I am sorry."

Bach (2006) asserts that there are conventional illocutionary acts, which are based on convention rather than the intention of the speaker. These are acts, which meet certain social or institutional conditions. These include **effectives,** which affect ‘an institutional state of affairs’; and **verdictives**, which ‘merely make an official judgment as to an institutionally relevant state of affairs’ (Bach, 2006:466). Examples of effectives include banning, bidding, dubbing, suspending, and sentencing. Examples of verdictives include acquitting, grading, judging, ranking, and rating.

Allan (1986) classifies speech acts into interpersonal illocutionary acts and declaratory illocutionary acts. Interpersonal illocutionary acts occur in interactions between speakers at individual levels. Interpersonal illocutionary acts are divided into six groups which include **constatives,** under which we have assertives, informatives, retrodictives, dissentives, suppositives and constative verdicts; **predictives; commissives,** under which we have offers and promises; **acknowledgements,** which include apologies, condolences, congratulations, greetings, thanks, farewells, acceptance and rejection of acknowledgment; **directives,** which are made up of requestives, questions, requirements and prohibitives; and **interpersonal authoritatives**, under which we have permissives and advisories. Declaratory illocutionary acts occur when the hearer’s interaction is not required for the act to take place. Here, we have **effectives** and **verdictives.**

There are areas of convergence and divergence between Austin’s illocutionary acts and Searle’s illocutionary acts. These are shown in the table below:

Table 2.1: Comparison between Austin’s and Searle’s Illocutionary Acts

Austin’s Illocutionary acts	**Searle’s Illocutionary acts**
Commissives	Commissives
Behabitives	Expressives
Part of exercitives	Directives
Part of exercitives and part of verdictives	Declarations
Expositives and part of verdictives	Representatives

The areas of convergence and divergence between Bach and Harnish (1979) illocutionary speech acts and Allan (1986) speech acts are shown in the table below.

Table 2.2: Comparison between Bach and Harnish's (1979) and Allan's (1986) Illocutionary Acts

Bach and Harnish's (1979) Communicative illocutionary acts	**Allan's (1986) Interpersonal illocutionary acts**
Constatives: assertives, predictives, descriptives, disputatives, retractives and suppositives Commissives: promises and offers Directives: requestives, advisories, prohibitives, questions and requirements Acknowledgments: apologies, condolations, congratulations, greetings, thanks, bids acceptance and rejection of acknowledgments	Constatives: assertives, informatives, retrodictives, concessives, dissentives, suppositives and constative verdicts Commissives: promises and offers Directives: requestives, questions, requirements and prohibitives Acknowledgments: apologies, condolations, congratulations, greetings, thanks, bids acceptance and rejection of acknowledgments Predictives Interpersonal authoritatives: permissives and advisories
Bach and Harnish's (1979) Conventional illocutionary acts	**Allan's (1986) Declaratory illocutionary acts**
Effectives and Verdictives	Effectives and Verdictives.

In addition, Searle (1969) discusses the issue of indirect speech acts. These are acts whose force results from the functional extension of their literal meaning. There is a combination of two acts, a primary illocutionary act and a secondary one. Here, the primary act is non-literal while the secondary act is literal. A direct speech act is one in which there is a direct correlation between the form of the utterance and the structure. For example, an imperative sentence is used in making orders such as 'Shut up!' An indirect act is one in which there is no direct relationship between the structure and the form of the utterance.

The (non-literal) primary illocutionary act is the indirect speech act. This can be seen in the conversation written below:
Speaker A: Follow me to the market.
Speaker B: I am going to the class.

From the conversation above, Speaker B is literally stating that she is going to the class. Non-literally, s/he is rejecting the offer to go to the movies. This depends on the contextual belief that if s/he is going to the class, s/he cannot go to the movies.

Aijmer (1996:25) opines that the indirect meaning can be inferred on the basis of the utterance meaning, the preceding discourse, setting and the general principles of politeness and rationality. Mey (2001:112) adds that indirect speech acts occur more frequently than direct ones in conversations. Imperatives, for example, are rarely used to command or request. She opines that one recognizes indirect speech acts and processes them properly on the basis of the context of utterance. She adds that it is the indirect speech act that is known as the illocutionary force.

According to Sadock (2006:68), the effects that are achieved by getting the hearer to recognize that the rules governing the use of an illocutionary force indicating device are in force is the illocutionary effect. Others are achieved indirectly as by-products of the total speech acts. He calls these perlocutionary effects. He gives this example: ‘Can you pass the salt?’ He states that this appears to be question at the diner table; however, it arouses the obligation to pas the salt. This shows that it is a request. One could add ‘please’ intentionally. This indicates the intention of the speaker to produce the kind of effect that the illocutionary act of requesting typically does. However, he notes that not all kinds of questions can invoke such feelings e.g. ‘*Isn’t it please cold here?’ Sadock (2006:71) explains that politeness can be part of the reason for the use of indirect speech acts, e.g. one of the rules of politeness is ‘don’t impose.’ A request or a command can be an imposition. Thus, a direct imposition can be reduced by asking whether the addressee is willing or capable of carrying out the act.

Although Bach and Harnish’s (1979) and Allan’s (1986) illocutionary acts are detailed, the categories can be found in Searle’s typology of illocutionary acts. Also, the former’s illocutionary acts are too cumbersome for the analysis of a large amount of data. For example, Searle’s representatives cover Allan’s constatives and predictives while Searle’s directives cover Allan’s directives and interpersonal authoritatives.

Austin (1962) notes that the distinction between the locutionary and illocutionary act may be easy while that of the illocutionary act and perlocutionary act may not. For him, an illocutionary act is a linguistic act performed which is under the control of the speaker while the perlocutionary act is under the control of the listener. Bach (2006) opines that speech acts are distinguished by their illocutionary type such as asserting and apologizing and this is further distinguished by the type of attitude expressed in the act. He adds that the perlocutionary act is ‘essentially a matter of trying to get the hearer to form some correlative attitude.’

While Austin sees the speaker’s intention as important, Sacks et al (1974) opines that the illocutionary force should come under the control of the listener since it is the listener’s interpretation of the utterance that is available for examination, and that is what determines the progress of the interaction (See Coulthard, 1977). Since Austin worked with isolated invented sentences, the illocutionary force is linked with the speaker’s intention. In the view of Coulthard (1977:20), the performance of an illocutionary act involves the securing of an intended uptake. To achieve an uptake, the speaker has to make his intention clear to the listener. One of such ways is through the use of explicit performatives. An illocutionary uptake occurs when an addressee recognises that a particular illocutionary act has been performed. For example, if an addresser says, ‘I’ll come tomorrow,’ the addressee must be able to recognize that the intention is a promise and not a warning.

Searle (1969) accepts the illocutionary act and not the locutionary act. He proposes the existence of the propositional act, which carries the content of an utterance and an illocutionary force-indicating device, which marks the illocutionary act. These function-indicating devices in English include word order, stress, intonation, punctuation and the performative verbs (see Coulthard, 1977). For example, in the sentences below, there is a proposition that Kemi will close the door. However, the illocutionary force of each sentence is determined by its intonation pattern and word order.

> Kemi will close the door.
> Will Kemi close the door?
> Kemi, close the door.

The illocutionary force of the first sentence is asserting, the second sentence is that of questioning while the third one is that of ordering.

Searle (1969) opines that there are two kinds of rules that govern utterances, and these are the **constitutive** and **regulative** rules. Regulative rules are concerned with conditions on the occurrence of certain forms of behaviour. For example, the sentence, ‘Children are forbidden to play football on the grass’ is a regulative rule of football. A constitutive rule of football is the offside rule. If the children break the law by playing on the grass, they have broken a regulative rule but they are still playing football. If they ignore the offside rule, they are not playing football at all. In conversations, constitutive rules are those which control the ways in which ‘a given utterance of a given force is heard as realizing a locutionary act' (Coulthard, 1977:23). Searle (1969) adds that felicity conditions are jointly constitutive of the various illocutionary forces.

Mey (2001:103) asserts that a constitutive rule is what makes up a particular speech act. The regulative rule regulates or controls the behaviour of an act and this can be changed at will but the regulative rule does not alter the nature of the act. For example, for a promise, the constitutive rule is that one cannot utter a promise when its content is scheduled to happen e.g. 'I promise that the sun will rise.' For a request, the constitutive rule is that the addresser wants the addressee to do something for him or her. However, he opines that one cannot request for anything at all times and in all places.

However, Mey (2001:104) observes that the constitutive and regulative rules are not as separable as one thinks. This is because 'the regulative rules define what the constitutive rules do while the constitutive rules determine the weight that is given to those rules in the daily exercise of them.' Mey (2001) believes that the difficulty in distinguishing between the constitutive rule and the regulative rule lies in the fact that the speech act theory is in reality, all about propositions, since the action is based in an encoded proposition. He reports that the illocutionary force-indicating device (IFID) that carries the force of the utterance is speaker-oriented. He adds that they are not strictly pragmatic in nature and it is this propositional content of the speaker's act that is subject to the constitutive and regulative rule. Mey (2001) therefore, opines that Searle's IFID are abstract devices or general rules and are not particular to any type of speech act.

Felicity Conditions

Searle (1969) gives four kinds of conditions that guide any utterance and these include:

- The propositional content: The propositional content deals with the real world prerequisites to each illocutionary act. It specifies the restrictions on the content of the sentence. For example, for a request, it is the future act of the hearer.

- The preparatory content: This specifies the features of context required for the performance of the action. For a request, this includes the ability of the hearer to perform the action.

- The sincerity conditions: These show the requisite beliefs, feelings, and intention of the speaker. For a request, a speaker wants the hearer to perform an action.

- The essential condition: This refers to the conventional way in which the utterance should be taken. For a request, the speaker must intend that the utterance count as an attempt to get the hearer to do something.

Palmer (1981:165) opines that one can only establish the felicity conditions when one determines the speech act. Levinson (1983:245) agrees with this opinion and establishes that the classification of the felicity conditions, rather than performative verbs alone, will help in providing a better classification of speech acts.

Searle (1969) places emphasis on communicative intention. That is, the assumption that a speaker has wants, beliefs and intentions, which are embedded in the performance of utterances. Levinson (1983:3) agrees with Strawson (1964) that human communication is carried out, not only by conventions or culture bound illocutions, but also by specific classes of communicative intention. In his own opinion, Mey (2001:94) asserts that the intentions of the speaker and hearer are relevant and indispensable to the understanding and descriptions of utterances. Intentionality depends on the relationship between the individuals and the way interactants perceive one another as people who have intentions in a wider social context. Sadock (2006) opines that there is a conventional and intentional aspect to speech acts. It is conventional to say ‘Thank you’ when given a gift while it is unconventional to show that one wants a piece of cake when one is asked if one wants it.

Searle (1969) notes that Austin did not pay attention to the difference between speech acts and speech act verbs. He believes that the existence or non-existence of speech act verbs should not be a criterion for the existence or non-existence of a particular speech act. In a related perspective, Mey (2001:106) notes that not all speech acts are represented by a specific speech act verb; they can be represented by several verbs. For example, the speech act of requesting can be expressed in different ways:

I request that you see me tomorrow.
Can you see me tomorrow?
I hope you will see me tomorrow.

He correctly notes that not every speech act has a corresponding speech act verb. For example, the act of pronouncing a jury’s finding is to render a verdict but there is no verb ‘to verdict’. This is evident in the case of implicit performatives. Mey (2001) observes that the adverb ‘hereby’ is an indication of a speech act verb in general and not exclusively for performativity. Thus, speech acts and speech act verbs do not necessarily coincide. Mey (2001:108) also observes that there are some verbal expressions that have the property of denying what they are doing or what they are explicitly denying e.g. ‘I don’t want to bother you but can you give me a glass of water?’ Here, the speaker explicitly performs an act of not bothering, yet he/she actually does that. Here, ‘to bother’ is not taken to have the same effect it ordinarily has.

3.2.3 Perlocutionary Acts

A perlocutionary act is a non-linguistic act performed as a consequence of the locutionary and illocutionary acts (Coulthard, 1977). Perlocutionary acts are unconventional but they are achieved through conventional acts which may be verbal or non verbal, for example ‘shutting the door.’ It is also possible that the intended effect desired by the speaker may not be produced by the hearer. A speaker may intend to surprise a hearer but may end up frightening him/her. Thus, a perlocutionary act may not always be successful (Fraser 1986). According to Odebunmi (2006b citing Fraser, 1986), perlocutionary effects have two kinds of association with illocutionary acts and these include associating intended effect with the act itself as in apology, forgiving and promise; and associating intended perlocutionary effect with the content of the act itself and this can be seen in insults.

3.4 Criticisms of the Speech Act Theory

The criticisms of the speech act theory include the following:

- it does not take care of the ‘messiness’ of spoken language which often include fillers, silence, overlaps, backchannels and incomplete sentences (Cutting, 2002).

- the speech act theory is deficient because it lacks an action theory and even if it does, it is individual based rather than society-centered (Mey, 2001)**.**

- There are also problems associated with the classification of the speech acts.

- The theory tends to centre on single and isolated utterances without attending to the discourse context (Geis, 1995).

Self Assessment Exercise 3

What are the criticisms of the speech act theory? Can you think of other problems associated with the speech act theory?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the speech act theory is one of the concepts of pragmatics that helped in establishing the field. It is an important aspect because it deals with the functions of utterances. Indeed, people have intentions and reasons why they say what they do and this is usually informed by the context of interaction.

5.0 SUMMARY

The speech act theory focuses on how people use words to do things. Initially there were two types of speech acts: constatives and performatives. These were abandoned for a new categorisation where the speech act theory was divided into three parts: locutions, illocutions and perlocutions. According to John Searle, types of illocutions include representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Pick one of the speeches of President Goodluck Jonathan and carry out a speech act analysis of the speech.

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UNIT 2 PRAGMATIC ACTS

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

You must have read the Course Guide and have familiarised yourself with the introductory comments in Module 1. You must have also familiarised your self with the criticisms against the speech acts theory in unit 1. This is the basis of introducing you to pragmatic acts in this unit. At the end of this unit, you should be able to explain the advantages in using the pragmatic act theory in arriving at the functions of utterances.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able achieve the following objectives:

- define what pragmatic acts are;
- discuss the features of pragmatic acts; and
- explain the differences between pragmatic acts and speech acts.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What are Pragmatic Acts?

The pragmatic act theory provides a socio-cultural interactional view of pragmatics as it emphasises “the priority of socio-cultural and societal factors in meaning construction and comprehension” (Kecskes, 2010: 2889). According to Mey (2001), speech acts are not effective as they are not situated and that there are no speech acts but situated speech acts or instantiated pragmatic acts. He introduces the terms *pragmeme, pract* and *allopract*.

A pragmeme is a general situational prototype which is instantiated through individual pragmatic acts or practs. In other words, these are acts that incorporate the context of situation (Allan, 2010). In a similar vein, Capone (2010: 2964) asserts that "pragmemes are speech acts whose effects obtain through the use of language as situated in culture." Capone (2005: 1357) states:

> A pragmeme is a situated speech act in which the rules of language and of society synergize in determining, intended as a socially recognized object, sensitive to social expectations about the situation in which the utterance to be interpreted is embedded.

One can infer from the above that the pragmeme depends on the situational context of an utterance for its production and interpretation. The instantiated pragmatic acts, the ipras or practs are "concrete occurrences of a pragmeme" (Odebunmi, 2006c: 158). The pract is also an allopract as no two practs can be exactly identical (Tseng, 2010: 1985). In other words, the pragmeme is an abstract phenomenon while the pract is its actual representation.

Kecskes (2010: 2890) posits that a pragmatic act is "situation-bound and situation-constrained." Odebunmi (2008a: 77) opines that "what determines a pract is solely the participants knowledge of the interactional situation and the potential effect of a pract in a particular context" and these are responsible for resolving "the problem of telling illocutionary force from perlocutionary force." A pragmatic act may or may not contain a speech act but "it is the context that determines the nature of the pragmatic act" (Mey, 2001:211). For example, in a conversation between two lovers, the lady may perform the pragmatic act of "fishing for compliments" without mentioning the word 'compliment'. She may for example request:

> Nick, tell me that you really love about me.

Here, the speaker wants the hearer to say positive things about her. In this case, she may be batting her eyelids.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Define pragmatic acts.

3.2 Features of Pragmatic Acts

The pragmatic act has two parts which include the activity part and the textual part (Figure 2.1). The activity part is concerned with other acts or options that are available to the language user such as direct and indirect speech acts, conversational acts, psychological acts, prosody, body movements, facial expressions and other extra linguistic acts. All these indicate that the pragmatic act theory does not focus on utterances alone. It incorporates both verbal and non-verbal acts. The direct and indirect speech acts are verbal while the conversational acts, and physical acts are non-verbal in nature. We have already dealt with direct and indirect speech acts in the previous unit.

As you will notice, when people speak, they make gestures, and facial expressions which may reinforce or complement what they are saying. In pragmatic acts, non-verbal acts are taken into consideration in arriving at the type of act being performed. Dressing, for example, can constitute a pragmatic act. One's dressing can be used to flaunt, invite or deter someone from approaching the speaker.

The textual part is concerned with contextual features which influence communication. This includes inference (INF), reference (REF), relevance (REL), voice (VCE), shared situation knowledge (SSK), metaphor (MPH) and metapragmatic joker (‘M’), an element which represents ‘something happening on the metapragmatic lane’ Mey (2001: 222). The metapragmatic joker points to metapragmatic activities which can be seen in the use of indexicals. Mey cites the example of Biblical Pilate’s “What I do, I do” (John 19:22) whose meaning depends on the indexical context rather than the structural repetition.

As you will notice, the contextual features are aspects of pragmatics that we have studied in the preceding module and units. The point here is that there is an interaction of some or all the concepts of pragmatics when an utterance is made. This explains why the act is called a pragmatic act, rather than a speech act.

The activity part and the textual part interact in order to produce the pract or allopract. In writing, Tseng (2010:1986) posits that conversational acts, prosody and physical acts are downplayed since they are “normally associated with face-to-face conversation or non-face-to-face oral communication” such as telephone conversations. However, these are realised through appropriate textual strategies such as typographical features, exclamation marks and deviant spelling. For example, the use of capitalisation may mean that the writer is serious about what s/he is writing while the use of deviant spelling may indicate that the writer is challenging the status quo in an organisation.

PRAGMEME

ACTIVITY PART
(INTERACTANTS)

TEXTUAL PART
(CO(N)TEXT

SPEECH ACTS
INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS
CONVERSATIONAL (DIALOGUE) ACTS
PSYCHOLOGICAL ACTS (EMOTIONS)
PROSODY (INTONATION, STRESS,…)
PHYSICAL ACTS:
  BODY MOVES (INCL. GESTURES)
  PHYSIOGNOMY (FACIAL EXPRESSIONS)
  (BODILY EXPRESSIONS OF) EMOTIONS
  …
Ø (NULL)

INF REF REL VCE SSK MPH ‘M’…

PRACT

ALLOPRACT

PRAGMEME, PRACT, ALLOPRACT

Figure 2.1: A model of pragmatic acts (Mey, 2001: 222)

Capone (2005) submits that the same utterance may have different meanings based on the context of speaking, which includes speaker roles and expectations. He gives an example of the utterance “I saw you” which may have the force of an accusation when used by a teacher in relation to pranks made by classroom children. The illocutionary force of the same utterance in a hide and seek game can be a call for the children to start running. Thus, it is the context that determines the kind of pragmatic act that is performed in the utterance. In a public hearing for example, the pragmatic act of denying may be expressed differently by complainants and defendants.

Tseng (2010) notes that the pragmatic act theory explains utterances that cannot be explained by the speech act theory. He submits that the theory is useful in analysing a string of utterances longer than a sentence. This can be seen in the case of co-opting in advertisements. The pragmatic act theory “points to the subtlety and covert action implicit in much communication which the theory of speech act has not fully considered or cannot explain" (Tseng, 2010:1984).

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the features of pragmatic acts.

3.3 Differences between Pragmatic Acts and Speech Acts

1. One of the major differences between the pragmatic act theory and the speech act theory is that the pragmatic act theory analyses the functions of utterances together with the context. On the other hand, the speech act theory focuses on the utterances separately from the context.

2. The pragmatic act theory recognises that non-verbal codes can be used to pass across messages while the speech act theory focuses on oral interactions alone.

3. The pragmatic act theory recognises that other pragmatic theories/concepts such as relevance and shared situational knowledge are relevant in arriving at the meaning or functions of utterances. The speech act theory does not pay attention to other pragmatic principles.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Utterances are made in context and to understand the functions of utterances, You have to understand the context in order to assign the proper function to an utterance. Thus, pragmatic acts are important for consideration in arriving at the functions of utterances. You are, therefore, encouraged to utilise this theory in describing the functions of utterances.

5.0 SUMMARY

From the foregoing, you can see that the pragmatic act theory is a theory that considers the functions of utterances in relation to the discourse context. A pragmeme is a situated speech act with the pract as its actual representation. The pract is made up of a textual part and an activity part which are made up of acts produced by the individual and the contextual factors that surround the acts. The pragmatic act theory is different from the speech act theory because it pays attention to the context of utterance.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

Analyse ten Facebook posts related to a particular discussion of your choice using the pragmatic act theory.

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UNIT 3 IMPLICATURE

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

You should have been introduced to the theory of implicature in pragmatics. In this unit, you should expect an expatiation on the definition and types of implicature. You would also focus on Grice's Cooperative principle and conversational maxims. You will also study the neo-Gricean pragmatics of Horn, Levinson, Sperber and Wilson.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- explain what implicature is
- discuss types of implicature
- expatiate on the cooperative principle
- discuss Neo-Gricean pragmatics

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What is Implicature?

Implicature is a concept in pragmatics that deals with implied meaning. It focuses on how a hearer understands what is meant from what is said. The words 'implicate' and 'imply' both deal with 'the action of suggesting information as opposed to stating information explicitly' (Archer et al, 2012: 47). Grundy (2008: 92) defines it as 'a meaning that is conveyed but not explicitly stated.' For example, the utterance 'The dress seems rumpled' may imply that the addressee should iron the it.

Grice opines that implicatures do not contribute to the truth condition of propositions. They depend on inferences. Sometimes as Archer et al (2012) state, a hearer's inference may not be the same as the speaker's generated implicature. For example, when the speaker says that the dress is rumpled, his/her intention or generated implicature is that the hearer should iron the dress. The hearer's may infer that s/he should change the dress.

Self Assessment Exercise 1

Using your own words, define implicature.

3.2 Types of Implicature

There are two types of implicature and these include: **conventional** and **conversational** implicatures. Conventional implicatures are those that are 'derived directly from the meaning of the words in use' (Archer et al, 2012). Such implicatures arise due to the use of certain words such as 'but', 'okay really', 'so' and 'therefore'. For example, the utterance 'She's a lecturer but she's fashionable,' implicates that lecturers (particularly if you consider lecturers in the 1980s in Nigeria) are usually not fashionable.

Conversational implicatures are those that are derived from contextual clues. That is, you have to look at the context of the utterance in order to get the correct inference. For example, consider the statement, "Have you gone to the bank?" in a situation where a friend A borrows some money from another friend B with the promise that she would return the money when she collects some money from the bank. The implicature or implied meaning of the question is an inquiry of the time the money would be returned.

There are two types of conversational implicature and this includes **generalised** and **particularised** implicatures. Generalised implicatures are those implicatures that arise regardless of the context in which the utterance occurs (Grundy, 2008). They occur out of a direct association between the what is said and what is in the context of use. For example, the statement, "Few people believe in fate," has the implicature that not many people believe in God.

Particularised implicatures are those that arise out of an extra-contextual association. where the immediate understanding of the context of use is important. For example, depending on the context, the utterance "Few people believe in fate" may imply <I believe in fate>, <You believe in fate>, <Some believe in fate>.

Some of these examples indicate another type of implicature called scalar implicature which indicates a scale or ranking of items. For example, 'few' in "few people believe in faith" has scalar properties. There is a scale from 'all', 'many', 'some', 'few', to 'none'. The item one chooses in the scale implies that the items below or above would not project the exact meaning being passed across.

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Using different examples, discuss the different types of implicature.

3.3 The Cooperative Principle

Grice suggests that in an interaction interlocutors, to some degree, tend to cooperate or observe what he calls the cooperative principle which states:

> Make your contribution such 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.

This Cooperative Principle (CP) has four maxims:

Quantity: Be informative
(1) Make your contribution as informative as required (for the purpose of the exchange).
(2) Do not make your contribution more informative.

Quality: Be truthful. Try to make your contribution one that is true.
(1) Do not say what you believe is false.
(2) Do not say that for which you lack evidence.

Relation: Be relevant

Manner: Be perspicuous
(1) Avoid obscurity of expression
(2) Avoid ambiguity.

(3) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
(4) Be orderly.

As Archer et al (2012) point out, Grice was not stating interaction rules but was suggesting that conversations were governed by conventions. He also suggested that hearers tend to assume that speakers were conforming with these conventions and that speakers must have good reasons when they do not conform to the conventions. These conventions help in explaining how conversational implicatures are generated.

Thomas (1995) also suggests that conversational maxims can be broken and the different ways include:

Flouting: This occurs when the speaker intentionally fails to observe a maxim as a way of prompting others to look for a meaning different from or in addition to the expressed maxim. For example, refusing to answer a question and discussing another topic is a way of indicating that the addressee does not want to provide any information on the matter.

Violation: This occurs when the speaker makes a deliberate attempt to mislead the hearer, which may be done for selfish reasons on the part of the speaker or for the benefit of the hearer. For example, a doctor may violate the maxim of quality by telling a female patient that her husband is fine when he is dead for her benefit at the time, if there is no one to support the wife when she receives the news.

Opting Out: This takes place when the speaker explicitly indicates his or her unwillingness to cooperate in the way the maxims require. For example, the statement, 'let us not speak ill of the dead,' is an explicit indication to opt out of responding to a question.

Infringement: This constitutes a non-observance on the speaker's part which stems from imperfect linguistic performance. This can occur if the speaker is an L2 speaker, very young or has an impaired brain damage or pre-existing condition that may affect his or her linguistic performance. For example, aphasiac patient may not observe the maxim of quantity because of the difficulty in producing certain linguistic items.

Suspension: This occurs when the speech event requires that the maxims should not be in operation. Here, there is no expectation that the maxims should be fulfilled. For example, it is expected that in a conversation with a depressed patient that the maxim of relation will probably be suspended.

In some other cases, you can have **hedging of maxims**, where speakers make use of certain grammatical structures to indicate to the hearer the extent to which they are fulfilling the maxim. Such grammatical structures include, 'to my own knowledge', 'as he said', 'according to the book' and 'to cut the long story short'.

3.4 Neo-Gricean Implicature

Different researchers have suggested changes to Grice's implicature and notable among these are Horn (1984), Sperber and Wilson (1986) and Levinson (1995). Let's discuss them.

3.4.1 Lawrence Horn's (1984) Reductionist Approach

Horn (1984) places importance on the quality maxim to the extent that it becomes a kind of felicity conditions for all implicatures as it is assumed that without the observance of the quality maxims, other maxims cannot be satisfied. He then reduces the other maxims to two principles; Q principle and the R principle. They are stated thus:

Q Principle:

> Make your contribution sufficient; say as much as you can (with R in mind: Horn, 1984: 13 as cited in Archer et al, 2012: 55)

This principle equals the first part of Grice's maxim of Quantity (make your contribution as informative as is required) and the first two parts of the Manner maxim (avoid obscurity of expression and avoid ambiguity).

R Principle:

> Make your contribution necessary; say no more than you must (with Q in mind: Horn 1984: 13 as cited in Archer et al, 2012:55)

This principle equals the second part of Grice's maxim of quantity (Do not make your contribution more informative than is required); the last two parts of the Manner maxim (Be brief and Be orderly) and the maxim of Relation.

The Q principle is hearer based. It centres on the assumption that the speaker will provide sufficient information for the speaker in a way that eases the hearer's processing effort. For example, when the speaker says *my* children, the speaker should take it that the speaker is not speaking about another person's children.

The R principle focuses on the reduction of the speaker's effort and centres on the assumption that the speaker should say no more than is necessary to achieve his or her goals as his or her minimal forms will invite pragmatic strengthening. For example, 'can you pass the salt?' means that the hearer should pass the salt and not the ability to pass the salt.

3.4.2 Deirdre Sperber and Dan Wilson (1986) Relevance Theory

Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory is a post-Gricean and cognitive pragmatic theory that proposes that all of the Gricean maxims can be reduced to the maxim of relation, "on the assumption that relevance is a natural feature of all successful communication" Archer et al (2012: 58). It is an approach to communication and utterance understanding based on a general view of cognition (Blakemore, 2011: 120).

Thus, relevance theory focuses on the recovery of intended contextual assumptions and conclusions and also the identification of explicitly communicated propositions. These give rise to implicatures and explicatures which depend on inferences. An implicature is a proposition that is not explicitly communicated while an explicature is an enrichment of an original utterance which can be carried out through decoding, disambiguation and reference assignment. The theory is guided by two principles: the cognitive and the communicative principles. The theory is further explained in the next unit.

3.4.3 Stephen Levinson's (1995, 2000) Revisionist Approach

Levinson redefines Grice's distinction between what is said and what is implied. He distinguishes between three levels of meaning:

- **Entailment**: This is meaning derived from truth relations. It is the kind of meanings that is present when an utterance occurs (Grundy, 2008).
- **Utterance-type meaning**: This is the interpretation that does not require contextual cues (compare Grice's generalised conversational implicatures).
- **Utterance-token meaning**: This is the interpretation that requires contextual cues (compare Grice's particularised conversational implicatures).

Levinson posits that utterance-type meaning can be accounted for through three heuristics or rules which are related to Grice's Quantity and Manner maxims (Archer et al, 2012). They include:

- H1: What isn't said, isn't.

- H2: What is simply described is stereotypically exemplified.
- H3 What is said in an abnormal way, isn't normal.

These heuristics have led to the formation of three principles:

Q principle

> S: Do not say less than is required (i.e. provide a statement that is informationally weaker than one's knowledge of the world allows, bearing in mind the I-principle.
>
> H: what is not said is not the case (i.e. assume S has made the strongest statement consistent with what she knows).

Compare this with Grice's maxim of Quantity (Make your contribution as informative as required) and Horn's Q Principle.

I-principle

> S: Do not say more than is required (bearing in mind the Q principle)
>
> H: What is expressed simply is stereotypically exemplified (i.e. read as much into an utterance as is consistent with what you know about the world)

Compare this with Grice's maxim of Quantity (Do not make your contribution more informative than is required) and Horn's R Principle.

M- principle

> S: Do not use a marked expression without reason.
> H: What's said in an abnormal way isn't normal (i.e. assume that if what is said is communicated in a marked way, it is designed to convey a marked message.

Compare this with Grice's maxim of manner (Avoid obscurity of expression and Be orderly).

As Archer et al (2012) point out, Levinson's Q-, I- and M- Principles contain both a speaker and hearer component like Horn's Principles. This is useful as they explain why stereotypical aspects of meaning are left implicit such as the question/request, 'can you pass the salt?'

Levinson suggests that the Principles give rise to the implicatures but that Q and M implicatures have priority over I- implicatures. Q- implicatures are triggered by Horn's scale or by choosing an expression from a contrastive set. For example, if the speaker says, 'My mother is here', then the hearer is entitled to assume that the person is a female parent not the father or sister.

Archer et al (2012) also suggest that I- implicatures stand in contrast to Q implicatures in that they implicate a wider range of interpretation. Thus the utterance, 'The bag fell down. The lady picked it up' implicates that the 'bag' and 'lady' are related. The M- implicature is usually used when a correspondingly unmarked expression would not successfully signal the intended message. Although Levinson extends Grice's notion of what is said, he does not discuss the level that exists between what is said and what is explicated.

Self Assessment Exercise 4

Discuss the contributions of two neo-Gricean scholars.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, implicature is a pragmatic concept that focuses on implied meaning which is one of the core areas of pragmatics. It is a concept that has evolved over time leading to neo-Gricean implicature and relevance theory. As a graduate student of English, you should be concerned with how implicature aids the comprehension of utterances.

5.0 SUMMARY

The theory of implicature, which was developed by H. P Grice, deals with the study of implicit meaning. Implicature comprises conventional and conversational implicatures. Conversational implicature involves generalised and particularised implicatures. Grice suggests that interactants follow the Cooperative Principle which is made up of four maxims: quality, quantity, relation and manner. Neo-Gricean pragmatists include Lawrence Horn, Stephen Levinson, Deidre Sperber and Dan Wilson.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss Grice's Cooperative Principle and the various ways of breaking the conversational maxims.

Elaborate on the similarities and differences between Grice's implicature and Levinson's implicature.

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UNIT 4 RELEVANCE THEORY

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you learnt about the Grice's conversational maxims. In this unit, you will learn about the concept of relevance, which is a reformulation of Grice's cooperative principle. You will also learn about the principles and criticisms of the relevance theory.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- explain what relevance theory is;
- discuss the principles of relevance theory
- explain the concept of implicature and explicature

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What is Relevance?

Relevance theory is a post-Gricean and cognitive pragmatic theory that proposes that all of the Gricean maxims can be reduced to the maxim of relation, "on the assumption that relevance is a natural feature of all successful communication" Archer et al (2012: 58). In other words, hearers can understand speakers by selecting the relevant contextual features and acknowledging that what speakers say is relevant to the conversation. According to relevance theorists, interlocutors draw on the co-text of utterances and their own background knowledge in order to interpret utterances.

The central claim of RT is that the expectations of relevance raised by an utterance are precise and predictable enough to guide the hearer toward the speaker's meaning. For RT, any external stimulus or internal representation which provides an input to cognitive processes may be relevant to an individual at some point. Utterances raise expectations of relevance because the search for relevance is a basic feature of human cognition which communicators may exploit.

An input (a sound, voice, utterance) is relevant to an individual when it connects with background information s/he has available to yield a conclusion that matters to him or her. i.e. by answering a question he has in mind or confirming a suspicion, settling a doubt or correcting a mistake.

For relevance theorists, the degree of relevance is governed by contextual effects and processing effort. Contextual effects include the addition of new information, the strengthening or contradiction of existing assumption and or the weakening of old information.

Blakemore (2011:120) posits that relevance theory considers 'pragmatic interpretation as a psychological matter' which involves inferential computations, that are 'performed over mental representations governed by a single cognitive principle.' She posits that the difference between semantics and pragmatics relies on 'the psychological distinction between linguistic and non-linguistic computations and representations.'

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What is relevance theory?

3.2 Principles and Concepts in Relevance Theory

Relevance Theory is based on the broad understanding of relevance and its two principles. It covers all 'external stimuli or internal mental representations capable of providing an input to cognitive processes'. This includes 'sights, smells, utterances and thoughts, memories or conclusions of inferences' (Wilson 2010: 394 as cited it Archer et al, 2012). The two principles include:

- The Cognitive Principle: This principle is based on the hypothesis that human cognition tends to maximise relevance. Thus, the hearer "will only pay attention to an input that seems relevant enough" (Sperber and Wilson, 2001: 611).
- The Communicative principle: This comes about because of the first and it is specific to communication. This is based on the fact that by communicating something, the interlocutor is implicitly asserting that they have something significant to communicate.

3.2.1 Cognitive Environment and Mutual Manifestness

A cognitive environment covers the facts that are manifest to an individual at a given time. An individual's cognitive environment is a function of his/her physical environment and cognitive abilities. It also covers the facts that s/he is capable of becoming aware of in his/her physical environment (Sperber & Wilson, 1986).

A mutual cognitive environment is a shared cognitive environment that is manifest to two or more individuals at a given time. Here, the same facts and assumptions are manifest in the cognitive environment of two or more different people. For example, two persons, 'Kemi' and 'Sade' are in the same class. Thus, they share a cognitive environment. In a mutual cognitive environment, every manifest assumption is called mutual manifest. For example, if a book fell from the shelf in the classroom, it becomes manifest to both Kemi and Sade that a book fell from the shelf in the class. It is also manifest to both of them that it is manifest to both of them that a book fell from the shelf in the classroom.

3.2.2 Ostentative-inferential Communication

Wilson & Sperber (2001: 610) suggest that "the universal cognitive tendency to maximise relevance makes it possible for people to predict and manipulate the mental states of others". Thus, a speaker may utilise certain words or ostensive stimulus in order to help the hearer to arrive at an intended conclusion.

An important concept in RT is inferential communication which RT calls ostentative-inferential communication because it involves an extra layer of intention. Ostentative-inferential communication is made up of two aspects:

a. The informative intention which is the intention to inform an audience of something.

b. The communicative intention which is the intention to inform the audience of one's informative intention.

3.2.3 Implicature and Explicature

According to relevance theory, implicatures are 'intended contextual assumptions and conclusions' (Blakemore, 2011:120). Sperber and Wilson posit that any assumption that is not explicit is implicit. In the use of irony and metaphors, the assumptions are implicit (Blakemore, 2011, Carston, 2011).

An explicature is "an enrichment of an original utterance... to a fully elaborated propositional form (Archer et al, 2012: 137). In other words, it is the explicit content of an utterance that is guided by the communicative principle of relevance. It is an inference or a series of inferences that enriches the underdetermined form produced by the speaker to a full propositional form. It is motivated by indeterminacy of language and economy of expression as these can create potential ambiguity. Explicatures preserves and elaborate the form, of the original utterance An explicature must be recovered in order to understand a proposition in a most relevant way. Explicatures are achieved through decoding, disambiguation, resolution of vagueness and reference assignment. For example, consider the utterance and a set of assumptions that can be derived from the utterances.

Rita told Kate, "The bus will leave in the next one hour."
a. Rita has said that the bus will leave in the next one hour.
b. Rita believes that the bus will leave in the next one hour and not at a later time.
c. The bus will leave in the next one hour.
d. Rita wants Kate to be ready in order not to miss the bus.

The assumptions in a-c are sub-parts of the logical form which are encoded by the utterance. They are enrichments or developments of the logical form in order to form a complete proposition form. They are derived by using contextual information However, assumption d is not an enrichment of the logical form but information that is possibly recoverable from the understanding of what should happen when a bus will leave in an hour's time.

Thus, relevance theory focuses on the recovery of intended contextual assumptions and conclusions and also the identification of explicitly communicated propositions. Both depend on inferences which is governed by the same principle of relevance. Sperber and Wilson argue that deductive inference plays a crucial role in the interpretation of utterances.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discus the principles and concepts in relevance theory.

3.3 Criticisms of Relevance Theory

Scholars have posited that the fact that the principle accounts for all of Grice's principles makes it 'so encompassing that it loses its explanatory force' (Cutting, 2002: 44). Also, the theory does not account for the interaction between utterances and socio-cultural factors such as age, gender, status, etc (see Cutting 2002).

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, relevance theory is an important theory in handling utterance production and interpretation. As you would notice in previous units, it has been used in analysing linguistic concepts such as pragmatic markers. Thus, you should pay more attention to this area of pragmatics which is increasingly used in analysing linguistic phenomenon.

5.0 SUMMARY

Relevance theory is a theory that proposes that only relevance is needed in order for a hearer to understand the meaning of a speaker's utterance. The theory is guided by two principles: cognitive and the communicative principles. An implicature is a proposition that is not explicitly communicated while an explicature is an enrichment of an original utterance which can be carried out through decoding, disambiguation and reference assignment.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the principles and concepts in relevance theory.

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MODULE 4
PRAGMATICS AND SOCIETY

Pragmatics is the study of meaning in interaction. Interactions between speakers and hearers occur in different informal and formal situations. The general aim of this module is to help you understand how concepts in pragmatics are utilised in different contexts in the society. Certain key contexts in the society such as politics, law, medicine, and the Internet.

There are four units in this module. After you have gone through this module, you should be able to investigate any research field using any of the pragmatic principles earlier studied in this book. The units include:

Unit 1	Pragmatics and politics
Unit 2	Pragmatics and the law
Unit 3	Pragmatics and medicine
Unit 4	Pragmatics and the Internet

UNIT 1 PRAGMATICS AND POLITICS

CONTENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

I believe by now that you have fully understood the different concepts and theories in pragmatics. I also assume that you have familiarised yourself with the introductory comments in Module 4. Political discourse has been studied from the perspectives of syntax, rhetoric, stylistics, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis and pragmatics. The main goal of this unit is to help you understand how pragmatic concepts can be used in analysing the field of political discourse.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit , you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- discuss what political discourse entails;
- elaborate on the speech acts that are found in political discourse;
- discuss the politeness strategies used in political discourse;
- explain how reference is utilised in political discourse; and

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Political Discourse

Opeibi (2008a:99) posits that political discourse involves a process of "informing, educating, and persuading people to participate" in a social and political event. He adds that the system of democracy has made political communication to occupy a centre stage in discourses on governance.

Political discourse is concerned with the ways in which language is manipulated for specific political effects within different political contexts. The political contexts through which political actors communicate include political speeches, cartoons, debates, posters, polls, press conferences and campaigns. Opeibi (2008: 94) expatiates that "politics does not function independently of the instrument of communication." He reiterates the fact that political communication and education are necessary in achieving stability in the governance of a country.

Schaffner (1996) suggests that there are internal and external political communication, which are based on the setting and the communicative patterns involved. Internal political communication refers to all forms of discourse that concern the functioning of politics within political institutions such as governmental bodies, parties or other political organisations. It involves political ideas, beliefs, and practices of a society or some part of it. External political communication deals with the general public, that is, non-politicians.

Based on the submissions of these scholars, you will see that political discourse focuses on how language is used to effect changes in the behaviour of politicians and the public towards governance in a society. Thus, the study of political discourse is necessary in order to understand how language is manipulated by interactants in order to achieve their goals and how the discourse can be further utilised to attain political stability in a society.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What is political discourse?

3.2 The Origin of the Study of Political Discourse

The study of political discourse in general can be dated to the 5th century in the Greek society where there was a great emphasis on rhetoric. Wilson (2001) opines that modern rhetorical studies have links with aspects of communication science, historical construction, social theory and political science. The linguistic study of political discourse can be dated to the late 1970s and these included the works of Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew (1979), Geis (1987) and Chilton (1985, 1987 and 1990). For example, Goodman (1996) suggests that the system of transitivity can be manipulated to hide the persons who are responsible for killing citizens (see Wilson, 2001).

Wilson (2001) also points out that the relative distribution of particular syntactic selections may have political implications. He submits that issues of textual production are of utmost importance to political discourse. For example, utterances in political contexts “operate within historical frameworks and are frequently associated with related utterances or texts.” Single words and sets of collocational relationships are important as they “produce and draw upon ideological schemas in confirming or reconfirming particular views of the world” Wilson (2001: 406). However, Wilson points out that specific biases may override structural representations, as views may be reformulated and represented through different linguistic manipulations.

Also, contextual factors may affect the interpretation of lexical choices and it is the context that carries the political message. Wilson (2001: 406) asserts that “everyday words which are organised and structured in particular ways may become politically implicated in directing thinking about particular issues” and may have ‘devastating results.’ He notes that political language is used for “manipulation and politicians seem to want to hide the negative within particular formulations so that people will not be able to see the truth in them.” This shows that every aspect of language study has implications for the understanding of political discourse in different political contexts such as political speeches, debates, campaigns, interviews and hearings.

Opeibi (2004) posits that language is the instrument through which political thoughts and ideologies are expressed and further translated into social actions for social change and continuity. He adds that political interactions require “language structures and political talks which play a role in shaping and transforming political ideals into political realities” (p. 97 as cited in Opeibi, 2008).

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the origin of the study of political discourse.

3.3 Political Discourse in Nigeria

The study of political discourse in Nigeria may be said to have started in the colonial period. Political discourse in Nigeria has been influenced by the incursion of the British in the 18th century. The British colonised the country and forced her language on the Nigerian people. English became the language of government in the 19th century (Akindele and Adegbite, 1999). English was the language with which the early politicians fought for the independence of the country.

Today, English still serves as the official language in post-independent Nigeria (Akindele and Adegbite, 1999; Opeibi, 2008a). In States' Houses of Assembly, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, in some cases are used (Akindele and Adegbite, 1999). In recent times, Nigerian politicians 'marry' and exploit the resources of English and other Nigerian languages to communicate their messages (Opeibi, 2007). This can be seen in the use of code switching and code mixing in political jingles, adverts and campaigns. Thus, he posits that English is inadequate as the language of political mobilisation in Nigeria. One could then say that the English language has greatly influenced how political discourse is shaped in Nigeria, and that it is necessary to exploit the rich resources of both the language and other indigenous languages in Nigeria in order to effect positive socio-political changes in the society.

Political discourse in Nigeria has also been greatly influenced by the incursion of the military into politics (Daramola, 2008). Ayeomoni (2006) posits that the high occurrence of simple and short pronominal items reflects the simple and less bureaucratic structure of the military administration. Ayeomoni (2007) posits that while civilian rulers rely on cohesive ties for appeal and cohesion, military rulers in Nigeria rely on them in order to achieve elegant variation, informativeness and forcefulness. He suggests that the language of Nigerian military rulers is often very dictatorial, forceful and absolute. He, therefore, submits that there is an interconnecting relationship of words and political ideologies, and the functions of lexical relations in achieving persuasiveness and cohesion in political discourse.

Opeibi (2008a) notes that language is used to obtain and maintain political power. He, equally, observes that politicians make use of innovative methods during campaigns in order to obtain power. Opeibi (2008a) observes that in the third world countries, the role of political communication in developing a strong tradition of democratic practices has been overlooked. However, this may not be entirely true in Nigeria as political leaders also depend on their Information Ministers and press secretaries to deliver messages on their behalf and the use of political debates in the 2011 elections as instruments of political campaign.

The idea that political discourse is used to achieve political stability in a country has been emphasised by Taiwo (2010), who submits that political discourse in Nigeria is replete with the conceptual metaphor of the nation as a family. This is because Nigeria has gone through and is still going through a number of ethnic, religious, economic and political conflicts. This may indicate why politicians in their discourses portray themselves as builders. However, these politicians also see politics as a battle or war and this is evident in their discourses (Taiwo, 2010: 171). In essence, political discourse in Nigeria has been shaped by the different internal conflicts the country has experienced and the need by politicians and the public to rebuild the nation.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the state of political discourse in Nigeria.

3.4 Speech Acts in Political Discourse

The theory of speech acts has been used in analysing political discourse. For example, Opeibi (2008a) affirms that in the maintenance of power, the Nigerian ruling party, People's Democratic Party (PDP) makes use of the speech acts of coercion, resistance, opposition, power, dissimulation, legitimisation and delegitimisation. These speech acts may have been used due to the incursion of the military into politics.

In a different vein, Fetzer & Johansson (2007) examine the context-dependent nature of the speech act of confiding in British and French political interviews. They opine that the communicative act of confiding is compared and contrasted with disclosure, self-disclosure and revelation, and the necessary and sufficient conditions required for confiding in a felicitous manner are examined. They also compare and contrast the implicit and explicit realisations of acts of confiding as well as their communicative functions in the data.

Adetunji (2009) investigates the speech acts in President Olusegun Obasanjo's and William Bush's second term inaugural speeches. He suggests that while Obasanjo's macro acts focused on support solicitation, Bush's macro acts focused on the invocation and characterisation of American values and ideals He posits that assertives have the highest frequency in Obasanjo's speech followed by commissives, verdictives, expressives and directives. President Bush's speech also reflect similar frequency of speech acts.

In another study, Ayeomoni & Akinkuolere (2012) examine the speech acts in the victory and inaugural speeches of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. The study shows that Umaru Musa Yar'Adua relied more on sentences that performed assertive acts than other speech acts. He uses sentences that are vindictive and directive to assert his authority and exercise his power as the President. Sentences that are expressive had the least frequency. It is observed that the President exploits sentences which are meant for indicating the sincerity of his intentions.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Discuss the kinds of speech acts that can exist in political speeches.

3.5 Politeness in Political Discourse

The concept of politeness in political discourse has not been largely explored in the Nigerian Society. However, there is the work of Odebunmi (2009) where he studied political interviews from the perspective of politeness. Odebunmi (2009) explores print media political interviews in two Nigerian news magazines, *TELL* and *The News,* using a revised version of the theory of relational work. He opines that to achieve politeness, participants in print media political interviews in Nigeria work on three contextual beliefs, namely, shared knowledge of subjects, shared knowledge of political gimmicks, and shared knowledge of ideological expectations. He shows that participants in the interviews put up politic, polite and impolite verbal behaviours, which are respectively indexed by confrontations and criticisms, veils, and condemnations and accusations. These indexes are respectively achieved with context-based understanding of discourse and activity types, face-threatening acts with redress, and face threatening acts without redress.

Let us also consider this extract taken from a public hearing conducted by legislators and the discussion following it. In this extract, the speaker is the chairman of a panel that is investigating cases of victimisation among government officials. The hearer is a government official who is in the hearing to defend himself.

> Chairman: We want to thank you and welcome you to this public hearing eh Mr Usmaila [not the real name]. Eh Last week, when family of Sam Bassey [not the real name] were testifying, they mentioned the fact *that you were so kind* to the Late Sam Bassey… That is why as true Nigerians, we want you to come and shed light on these...

In this example, the chairman invites the defendant to defend himself. Perhaps, because of the political status of the defendant, the chairman makes use of positive politeness strategies in mitigating the effect of the FTA. When the chairman says 'they mentioned the fact that you were so kind,' he makes use of the positive redress strategy of exaggerating interests and approval which is part of the strategy of claiming common ground. Here, he makes use of the intensifier 'so' with the adjective 'kind' which enhances the defendant's positive face. The chairman also makes use of the strategy of claiming in-group membership by using an in-group identity marker, 'true Nigerian'. The term indicates that the chairman(S) and the defendant(H) belong to the same country. The speaker also makes use of the strategy, presuppose H's knowledge, which is one of the strategies of conveying that S and H are co-operators. In this excerpt, the chairman presupposes that the defendant knows who Sam Bassey is. The chairman also makes use of the strategy of claiming reflexivity by giving reasons why he is inviting the defendant to defend himself.

Self Assessment Exercise 5

What are some of the politeness strategies used in print media political interviews?

3.6 Discourse Reference in Political Discourse

You learnt about referring expressions in module 2 which include proper names, noun phrases and pronouns. Referring expressions are concepts that are well manipulated by political actors and critics in political speeches and interviews. For example, Rendle-Short (2007) analyses Australian political news interviews, using conversation analysis, to show the multiple interactional uses of address terms. She shows that both journalists and politicians address their co-participants by name and posits there are differences both in choice of address terms and in the positioning of address terms within the news interview. She posits that journalists tend to use pre-positioned address terms when addressing politicians either by their institutional role or by title plus last name. Politicians, on the other hand, always address journalists by their first names. In addition, whereas journalists tend to use address terms as a technique for managing the organisational aspects of the political news interview, politicians tend to use address terms as a resource for taking the turn, for resolving overlapping talk, or for delaying an unwanted response.

Fetzer & Bull (2008) investigate the use of pronouns in televised political interview broadcasts during the 1997 and 2001 British general elections and just before the war with Iraq in 2003. Question-response sequences are identified in which politicians made use of pronominal shifts as a form of equivocation. The analysis reveals that references to participants can be expressed explicitly by proper nouns and forms of address, and they can be expressed implicitly by personal pronouns and other indexical expressions. They opine that the meaning of personal pronouns is context-dependent and retrievable only by inference, and therefore is less determinate and can shift according to the status of the participants in interaction.

Self-Assessment Exercise 6

Discuss the use of pronouns and proper nouns in political discourse.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, you can see that pragmatics is a useful linguistic tool in analysing language in the political terrain because it puts into consideration the social, historical and cultural context of the interaction. It also helps in analysing the functions of political utterances and its effect on the citizenry. However, particularly in the Nigerian context, we need more studies on various political contexts such as political debates, political conferences and parliamentary discourse. You can carry out your research work in any of these areas.

5.0 SUMMARY

Political discourse focuses on the interactions that take place in the political arena. Pragmatic principles such as the speech act theory, politeness and discourse reference have been used in analysing political discourse. In Nigeria, speech acts of coercion, resistance and opposition occur due to the role of the military in politics. Interactants in political interviews exhibit polite, politic and impolite verbal behaviour. References to participants in political interviews involve the use of proper nouns and personal pronouns.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Study a political speech and bring out the pragmatic markers in the interview.

Examine the speech functions of utterances in a political poster.

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UNIT 2 PRAGMATICS AND THE LAW

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Legal interaction basically rests on the use of words, whether written or spoken. A lawyer tends to use utterances in peculiar ways in order to defend a witness, accuse a witness and convince the judge. This, perhaps, accounts for the reason why students of law are expected to take courses in English Language in their first year. In this unit, you will examine the field of legal discourse and explore the ways that pragmatics has been used in analysing legal contexts. You are expected to learn how to use pragmatic principles in analysing legal interactions.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you are expected to achieve the following objectives:

- define legal discourse
- discuss the ways in which pragmatic principles can be used in analysing legal discourse
- analyse a legal text using pragmatic principles

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What is Legal Discourse?

The law primarily rests on words, whether written or spoken. In fact, a court trial is a speech situation, as lawyers have to depend on words to present their evidence and convince the court to rule in their favour. Crystal and Davy (1969) assert that legal language in English is conservative and reluctant to adopt new and untested models of expressions. Historically, legal English was influenced, mainly, by French and Latin. The area referred to as England today was originally inhabited by the Celts, who were invaded, first, by the Romans in BC 55 and later by the three Germanic tribes, the Angles, Jutes and Saxons in the 5th century.

These tribes settled in the Celtic region and were later invaded by the French in the 11th century (Barber, 1999). All these had great effect on the English language which is spoken today. In the area of vocabulary, certain words from the Anglo-Saxons that are still used today in legal English include *writ, ordeal, witness, deem, oath* and *moot.* From Latin, words such as *clerk, impedit, habeas corpus and nisi piritus* were introduced (Crystal and Davy, 1969). From the Scandinavians, we have the word *law* itself. Although French had been the language of power from the 11th century, Latin was used by lawyers and was called 'Law Latin'. Other words such as *mandamus, certiorari, versus* and *ex rel* amongst others are still used today in Legal English.

French later became the language of lawyers and was called 'Law French'. Some of the characteristics of Law French that are in today's legal language include the addition of initial ***e-*** to words like *squire,* creating *esquire*; adjectives that follow nouns (attorney general); and addition of *-er* to verbs in order to have words such as *demurrer* or *waiver* (Tiersma, 1999). By the 18th century, English rose to be the language of lawyers and this was due to several developments such as the invention of the printing press which ensured that linguistic errors were removed from written texts in order to ensure that there was standardisation. This, also, added to the conservative nature of legal English. English was also taken to other parts of the world such as North America, Australia and Africa. This led to the adoption of the English common law (Tiersma, 1999).

Thus, the English legal language developed naturally, under the influence of diverse languages and cultures, as well as the growing complexity of the legal system and the shift from predominantly oral to mainly written communication. However, Tiersma (1999) posits that legal language ensures that lawyers retain their virtual monopoly on providing legal services.

There are some linguistic markers that make legal language different from ordinary language. These include lengthy and complex sentences; foreign pronunciation of English words that are from French or Latin; wordiness and redundancy such as *at slow speed* instead of *slowly*; conjoined phrases such as *I give, devise and bequeath the rest;* and *residue and remainder*. Others include unusual sentence structures, such as *a proposal to effect with the Society*; and impersonal constructions such as the use of *the court* rather than *I* by judges, in order to give an impression of legitimacy, objectivity and authority (Tiersma, 1999).

Legal discourse is concerned with the analysis of the language of law and other related issues. It is classified under forensic linguistics, which is the study of language in the context of law (Farinde, 2008). Forensic linguistics covers wide areas such as language and the law as well as language and bilingualism in the courtroom (Shuy, 2001). Other areas include legal interpretation, police investigations, management of prisons, child witness, authorship and statements (Farinde, 2008). Although linguists had been invited by lawyers to help in the identification of dialects of defendants and to assist in interpreting and evaluating issues related to new laws, it was not until the 1980's that the documentation of these analyses were done.

Scholars have also distinguished four major variants or sub-varieties of legal language in the written form: (1) legislative language, e.g. domestic statutes and subordinate laws, international treaties and multilingual laws, and other laws produced by lawmaking authorities; (2) judicial language produced in the judicial process by judicial officers and other legal authorities; (3) legal scholarly texts produced by academic lawyers or legal scholars in scholarly works and commentaries; and (4) legal language used in private legal documents, e.g. contracts, leases, wills and litigation documents (see Cao, 2007a). These sub-text types have their own peculiarities as well as sharing similarities unique to all legal texts. Maley (1994:13) notes that legal language is not homogenous legal discourse, but 'a set of related legal discourses'. Legal language does not just cover the language of law alone, but all communications in legal settings.

Studies in recent times have focused on topic and response analysis in criminal cases. Attention has also been paid to the use of contracts, warning labels, and other written documents in civil cases. The discourse analysis of legal interaction also focuses on voice identification, thereby, opening up the area of forensic phonetics and defamation of character either by libel or slander (Farinde, 2008). Farinde (2008) posits that power is more obvious in the courtroom and police interrogation. This is based on institutional roles and procedures. Thus, the police determine the topic of interrogation, ask questions, interrupt, challenge, accuse and give directions. Farinde (1998) as cited in Farinde (2008) suggests that acts in the police/suspect interrogation include elicitation, prompt, directive, accusation and evaluation. These all symbolise power.

In pragmatics, Thomas (1986) as cited in Farinde (2008) suggests that discoursal indicators, metadiscoursal and interactional controllers are used by the police in their interrogations. Discoursal indicators are surface level markers of the speaker's discoursal intent, which are used to establish the purpose and nature of the talk as well as define topic boundaries of interaction. Metadiscoursal comments are employed to mark new stages in the development of the interaction or signal that the interaction is about to end. Interactional controllers are used by the dominant participants in order to secure a particular response (Farinde, 2008).

In the courtroom, judges, barristers, magistrates and prosecutors, in most cases, dominate the discourse while witnesses and defendants are placed in subordinate positions. The former wield quantitative dominance, which deals with who speaks most; topical dominance, which is concerned with who controls the topic of discourse; and interactional dominance, which is concerned with who controls the initiation-response pattern.

Thus, there is an uneven power distribution in the court (Farinde, 2008). He suggests that power is displayed through the control of testimony by insisting on role integrity, topic control and the use of structural questions. In order to exhibit power, Farinde (2008) suggests that lawyers make use of loudness, higher pitch range, repetition, silent pauses, interruptions, fluency and coherence. He opines that hedges, hesitations, uncertainties, intensifiers, mitigation, and time token are used by less powerful speakers. Although power is laden in the courtroom, lawyers make use of mitigating forms and other politeness strategies to avoid face threatening acts. In the courtroom setting, powerful interactants employ fewer redressive forms and engage in explicit face threatening acts, which seem to be in accordance with institutional norms.

The power of lawyers rests in their use of questions. Lawyers exploit different types of questions in order to present their own side of the story to the court. The turn-taking system also reveals the power wielded by judges and lawyers. Speakers' turns are pre-allocated and fixed instead of being randomly distributed among the interactants. The judge is the most powerful and can interrupt at will or speak at any time during the proceedings. On the other hand, witnesses and defendants can be sanctioned, if they speak out of turn.

Lawyers also switch styles in order to achieve their aim and say indirectly what they cannot say directly in court. They switch phonological style such as pitch, rhythm and intonation as well as questioning styles such as Wh-questions, yes/no questions and declaratives with tag questions. Switching is successful because of the asymmetrical relationship between lawyers and witnesses (Farinde, 2008). Berk-Seligson (1999) cited in Farinde (2008) suggests that low control questions include Wh-questions, modal questions and embedded questions while high control questions include alternate, yes/no, factual and declarative with tag questions. Also, Rigney (1999) cited in Farinde (2008) posits that in legal interpretation, discourse markers are ignored and these affect the pragmatic force of the utterances, even when the grammatical structure is still the same.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What is legal discourse?

3.1.1 Legal Discourse in Nigeria

The colonisation of Nigeria by Britain in the 18th century led to the nation's use of English as the official language (Akindele & Adegbite, 1999). Subsequently, this led to the adoption of English as the language of the court. Thus, the Nigerian legal system is patterned after the British legal system, apart from the adoption of the Sharia law in some states in the northern part of the country (Farinde, 2008). Thus, the linguistic patterns in British legal documents are evident in Nigerian legal texts. These include the preponderance of French, Latin and old English words, nominalisations, double negatives, passive constructions, intrusive phrases, inversion of word order as well as the dearth of pronouns amongst others (see Alabi, 1997; Okolo, 2001 and Opeibi, 2008b). Although defendants and witnesses are allowed to speak in any of the three major ethnic languages - Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba, the law is still coded in English (Farinde, 2008 and Opeibi, 2008b). Courtroom clerks act as interpreters for defendants/complainants who cannot speak English. Opeibi (2008b) posits that Nigerian Pidgin is sometimes allowed in some South-South regions of Nigeria.

Farinde (2008) suggests that lawyers exploit the knowledge of English to intimidate witnesses that are illiterates or semi-literates. On interpretation in the Nigerian courtroom, Farinde (2008) notes that Nigerian court interpreters omit discourse markers used by lawyers which have pragmatic effect on the discourse. There are also omissions, deletions, and wrong translations. These court interpreters are actually the clerks of the court who are not professional interpreters. Thus, they are not trained in the act of interpretation.

Farinde (2008) opines that the system of interrogation between the police and suspects in Nigeria is different from what obtains in western countries. Interrogation in Nigeria includes force, coercion, torture and threats. People are also killed without trial. He suggests that there is a need for a body of scholars of law and language that will address the linguistic situation in the Nigerian court room. This is because a large number of the populace is not communicatively competent in English. In the first place, legal English is not usually comprehensible to lay men. Thus, he posits that it is important to empower the three major languages: Hausa, Ibo and Yoruba to be used as official languages in the court. Of course, there is also a need to empower some of the other minority languages in the country. He also notes that there are people who exercise power over the rulings of the court. He calls this power behind discourse as against power in discourse, which is wielded by lawyers and judges in the courtroom.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the main concerns of legal discourse in Nigeria.

3.2 Speech Acts in Legal Interaction

The speech act theory is one aspect of pragmatics that has been widely used in the study of legal interaction. For example, Habermas (1998), drawing on speech act theory of Austin (1976) and Searle (1969) classified speech acts in legal discourse into the following:

- constative speech acts;
- regulative speech acts; and
- expressive speech acts.

In another vein, Cao (2007) classified legal speech acts into the following:

(1) legislative speech acts;
(2) judicial speech acts; and
(3) other legal utterances.

Legislative speech acts operate in statutory laws which are used in producing and establishing legislative force. Legal speech acts are illocutionary acts that produce legal facts as legal speech acts. Such illocutionary acts can be broken down into permission, rights, obligation and prohibition.

Kurzon (1986) wrote a wide-ranging dissertation on legal speech acts. In his argument, performatives are not uniquely capable of exerting illocutionary forces. He believes that legislative sentences containing modals and even the statutes as a whole can also function as speech acts. With the intent to regulate human relations, performatives function as directives. In the context of degrees of imposition, there are speaker based and hearer-oriented directives (Leech, 1983).

Hearer-oriented directives concern the ability or willingness of the addressee to perform a certain action, whereas speaker-based directives express the addresser's desires and needs. Furthermore, legislative sentences that contain finite modal verbs in the main clause, such as 'may' or 'shall', also act as legislative speech acts. Such sentences contain speech acts with illocutionary forces, such as permission (may), obligation (shall) or prohibition (shall not).

There are two types of strategies, namely, indirect and direct strategy, available in the choice of modals to carry legal force in legislative discourse (Trosborg, 1995). Using a direct strategy, sentences use modal verbs to establish legal power in an explicit and direct manner. They are expressed ''on record'' (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and thus impose a high degree of legal force. An indirect strategy involves the integration of face redress techniques into the expressions of legal force, thereby leading sentences to be phrased ''off record''. The choice is determined by the socio-pragmatic characteristics of the legislative discourse.

Context is thus suggested to be a vital constituent of any attempt to comprehend an utterance's performative strength, and the performance of legal speech acts depend not on purely linguistic competence but rather on socio-linguistic, political and legal facts of the world (Cao, 2007).

In the Nigerian context, Farinde (2008), using the speech act theory of Thomas (1985), observes that commands have a high distribution, followed by encouragement, information, summons, clarification. Commands are used to direct the witnesses. These acts are witness oriented because they are beneficial to the witnesses. Metapragmatic speech acts such as discoursal indicators are used to dominate and minimise the contribution of witness. Metadiscoursal comments are used to correct witnesses and guide them along the lawyers thoughts while reformulation is used as a coercive tool to confront and intimidate witnesses. The speech acts of promising, offering, denying, agreeing, threatening, warning and apologising are found in criminal cases (Farinde, 2008).

Agangan (2007), using Austin's speech act theory, also posits that directives have the highest occurrence, followed by assertives, commissives and declarations. Expressives did not feature in the lawyer/witness interactions. In a different vein, Ezeife (2010) investigates the speech acts used in Nigerian affidavits which focus on the loss of items, declaration of age and personal identification. She observes that the speech act of reporting has the highest frequency while the speech act of soliciting had the lowest frequency. Other speech acts found in the affidavits include the speech acts of asserting, informing, swearing, imploring, and declaring. She posits that these speech acts occur due to the ideological stance in legal procedure which depends on the conservative nature of legal discourse.

Mey (2012) opines that there are non-verbal legal acts such as breaking a seal or showing of hands which may have the effect of speech acts if the context of the act recognises such in line with societal conventions. Mey (2012) posits that in the legal contexts saying something makes things happen. The act could affect the speaker or the hearer. For example, a judge's sentence will make the defendant guilty or innocent.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss some of the types of speech acts found in the legal context.

3.3 Politeness in Legal Interaction

Politeness is another pragmatic principle that has been studied in legal interactions. For example, Kurzon (2001) investigates the politeness behaviour of American and English judges in judicial opinions. \he posits that when there is disagreement between the opinion of the judge with that of other judges, English judges tend to tone down disagreement by expressing regret in disagreeing with their colleagues. They also impersonalise the whole matter by criticising the court and not the judge. In case of lower judges, they mitigate the criticism by maintaining that it is his/her view and only in relation to the present case. American judges express politeness by placing the criticism in an initial subordinate clause.

Archer (2011) examines lawyers' face work activities during cross-examination in the courtroom, using a modified form of Goffman's face threat levels. She posits that the lawyers' face work falls between Goffman's intentional and incidental level which she calls strategic ambivalence. She suggests that strategic ambivalence level accounts for situations where lawyers use an indirect approach to threaten the face of the witness in a way that indicates some level of contempt on the lawyer's part but which does not constitutes impoliteness in that context. This is to maintain that the lawyers are not attacking the witness but seeking to get the truth (Archer, 2011:3220).

Self- Assessment Exercise

What are some of the politeness strategies used by lawyers and judges?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, you can see that pragmatics is an important linguistic tool in analysing language in the legal field because it puts into consideration the social, historical and cultural context of the interaction. However, you can see that there is not enough pragmatic studies in legal interactions, both written and spoken in Nigeria. You are therefore encouraged to investigate pragmatic phenomena in Nigeria legal interactions.

5.0 SUMMARY

Legal discourse centres on both oral and written interactions that take place in judicial circles such as courtrooms, contracts, judgements and wills. It involves forensic linguistics which focuses on the study of legal language and cover areas such as police investigation and management of prisons. Pragmatic theories, especially the speech act theory has been used in the investigation of legal language. While directives feature a lot in Nigerian courtrooms, expressives are not existent.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Analyse a judge's speech in a law court using the pragmatic principles of speech acts and reference.

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UNIT 3 PRAGMATICS AND MEDICINE

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Medical interaction involves both verbal and non-verbal communication. To achieve the purpose of diagnosing and treating a patient, a doctor has to ask questions and give certain information to the patient. The patient also has to ask questions and give information to the doctor. However, the interaction is not as simple as it looks. Sometimes, patients do not disclose the real situation relating to their health. Thus, it is imperative that communication skills are developed by the medical team. In this unit, you will explore the concept of medical discourse and how the principles of pragmatics can help in revealing the functions of utterances, and how doctors and patients follow the principle of cooperation.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should have achieved the following objectives:

- define medical discourse
- discuss the use of speech acts in medical contexts;
- explain how implicature is demonstrated in medical settings; and
- elaborate on the use of politeness strategies in hospital interaction.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Medical Discourse

Medical discourse deals with the interactions that take place between health workers (i.e. doctors and nurses) and patients and/or patients' relatives. It deals with interpersonal communication. According to Collins (1983:69), interpersonal communication deals with a ‘shared process of transmitting facts, feelings and meanings by words, gestures and other actions.’ He opines that effective communication depends on knowing the purpose of the message, communicating what one really means to a patient and comprehending what the patient is intentionally or unintentionally saying. He reports that practitioners have problems in communicating with their patients and observes that they ‘need high levels of competence in communication’ Collins (1983:70). Ong et al (1995:1) assert that medical communication is concerned with ‘creating a good interpersonal relationship, exchanging information and making treatment related decisions.’

There are two kinds of communication in the medical field. These include verbal communication and non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication in the medical field can be achieved through body language, touch and active listening while verbal communication can be achieved through the ‘use of questions, clarifying issues, paraphrasing, reflecting and summarizing’ Collins (1983:84). Communication in the medical context occurs between doctors and patients; doctors and nurses; doctors and doctors; and nurses and patients.

Odebunmi (2005a: 29) opines that hospital interaction is engineered towards ‘the transactional and interactional functions of language as well as the speech acts that accompany these functions.’ The transactional function ‘captures the actual business of talk in the hospital’ such as diagnosis, prescription and treatment while the interactional function deals with interpersonal features such as establishing and cementing relationships, which may be casual, cordial or professional. He points out that ‘the transactional or interactional role played by language in the hospital environment depends on the nature of the interaction.’ This depends on the kind of ailment being treated, the personalities of the interactants and the kind of information being sought in the encounter. He opines that the interactional mode can be used to achieve a transactional end. In other words, the exchange of pleasantries can be used to get information about a patient's ailment.

Tanner (1976) observes that lack of communication skills is one of the weaknesses of modern medicine. He opines that medical communication is concerned with the development of professional skills such as diagnosis and surgical procedures with the exclusion of the communicative skills needed by medical practitioners. Myerscough (1992:1) asserts that skilful communication should be learnt as a basic part of professional training. He notes, however, that most patients usually complain about this aspect of doctors' professional competence. He opines that the teaching of communicative skills to medical students in Britain is a recent development. This is also supported by Shachar (2001) who affirms that the recently redesigned curriculum in some American medical schools includes electives in arts and literature.

Lewin et. al (2001) observe that communication problems in health care may arise as a result of health care providers focusing on the diseases and their management, rather than people, their lives and problems. They note that patient-centred approaches to health care are increasingly advocated by patients and clinicians, and this should be incorporated into the training for health care providers.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What are the concerns of medical discourse?

3.2 Speech Acts in Medical Interaction

The speech act theory has been extensively used in the analysis of medical interaction. For example, Odebunmi (2006) examines the locutions used in doctor-patient interactions in southwestern Nigeria. The study reveals that there are three institutional acts and four general speech acts. These include diagnosing, treatment and reporting; and representatives, directives, commissives and expressives respectively. Similarly, Faleke (2005) posits that the institutional acts of tentative diagnosing and treatment, which are also characterised by the general acts of directives, commissives, representatives and expressives occur in the nurse-patient interaction.

Odebunmi (2006a) explores the pragmatic roles that locutions play in understanding doctor-patient communication in Southwestern Nigeria. He observes that two kinds of locutions occur in these hospitals. These include locutions intended to be understood by non-professionals and those not intended to be understood by non-professionals. Locutions intended to be understood by non-professionals include plain words and these are used when doctors talk about patients' conditions of health, treatment, follow-up care and respond to patients' complaints. Locutions not intended to be understood by non-professionals include using jargon, codes and slang. These occur during discussions of the diagnosis of unsavoury conditions of patients and when certain treatment procedures are judged to be incomprehensible to patients (Odebunmi 2006a).

Odebunmi (2006a:37) observes that locutions in medical discourse bring standard lexical choices and local lexical items of medical practitioners into a pragmatic union in Southwestern Nigeria. He opines that a good mastery of the locutions and their pragmatic functions will aid the effective management of patients.

Salami (2007) examines the speech acts used in doctor-pregnant woman interactions. The analysis of the speech acts reveals, at the locutionary level, that plain words and medical jargon are used in doctor-pregnant woman conversational interactions. Hyponymy, synonymy and antonymy dominate the lexical relationships found. Both free and fixed collocations are also found. The word formation processes found include compounding, affixation, abbronymy and clipping. Both minor and major sentences are also found in the conversations. The illocutionary acts feature three institutional acts (diagnosing, follow-up and treatment) and four general acts (representatives, directives, commissives and expressives).

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the use of speech acts in Nigerian medical interactions.

3.3 Implicature and Explicature in Medical Interactions

Odebunmi (2005a) observes that Grice's Cooperative principle is of central relevance to the majority of the utterances that are exchanged between doctors and patients. He also observes that the quantity and relation maxims are largely unobserved while the maxims of quality and manner are usually observed. He opines that a communicatively skillful participant has the tendency to interpret the intention of the co-participant correctly once a non-observance is noticed. He adds that 'the observance and non-observance of maxims allow for information to be shared freely between participants, with the interactions moving on a common assumed background. This facilitates history taking and hastens consultations in the hospital' (Odebunmi 2005a: 249).

Adedoyin (2012) explores explicit meaning in doctor-patient interactions in HIV/AIDS clinics in Lagos, Nigeria. She posits that explicatures are derived through enrichment with the use of reference assignment, procedural encoding, saturation and bridging. She explains that the explicatural enrichments involve cognitive processes, implicit meanings and pragmatic implications which help in the recovery of optimally relevant utterances.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the how Grice's maxims are deployed in Nigerian hospitals.

3.4 Politeness in Medical Interaction

Odebunmi (2005c) examines politeness and face management in the conversational interactions between doctors and patients in Southwestern Nigeria. The study observes that the interactants employ generosity maxim, sympathy maxim, the Pollyanna maxim, tact maxim, face threatening acts without redress and face threatening acts with redress. He opines that politeness and effective face management exert positive influence on medical procedures and determine the extent to which orthodox medicine can be acceptable in Southwestern Nigeria.

Ojwang, Matu & Oputu (2010) examine face attacks in a Kenyan hospital. They show how nurses initiate conflict and how patients respond to the face-attacking moves. They posit that nurses use a high rate of utterances that infringe on the dignity of patients while the latter employ conflict avoidance strategies. The nurses do not make attempts to lessen the impact of most of their face-threatening utterances while patients express awareness of the need to preserve mutual face and reclaim dignity. The nurses perform face-threatening acts such as criticisms, blame, rejection, reprimands, sarcasm, orders, insults and warnings. The patients employ three strategies in order to reclaim their dignity – silence, retaliatory face damage and face repair. They show that patients usually remain silent while retaliatory face acts are done when there is a high degree of the nurses' face attacks which usually takes place in front of other patients.

Odebunmi (2013) examines the roles that greetings play in achieving politeness in doctor-patient encounters in Nigeria. He posits that institutional and cultural (dis)alignments occur in respect of adjacency and non-adjacency pair greetings. In both greeting types, face support, threat and stasis are conjointly co-constituted by doctors and Yoruba clients within the affordances. These interactions are influenced by the cultural, institutional and situational context of the Southwestern Nigerian hospital setting. He opines that adjacency pair greetings attract mutual interpretings between the parties; interactive disalignments are differentially pragmatically accommodated by doctors and clients.

Self-Assessment Exercise 4

Discuss the politeness strategies utilised in Nigerian hospitals.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the pragmatics of medical communication is an important aspect that needs to be studied by linguists so as to derive the meaning of utterances in hospital interaction. It is also significant to understand how pragmatic principles are employed by participants to achieve their interactional goals. It is expected as students of pragmatics, that you pay closer attention to how pragmatic principles are negotiated in hospital settings particularly in cosmopolitan societies where people come from different socio-cultural backgrounds.

5.0 SUMMARY

Medical discourse deals with the interactions that take place between health workers and patients/patients' relatives. Pragmatic interventions in the area of medical discourse have focused on the speech acts, implicatures and politeness strategies employed in the interactions. Diagnosing, treatment and follow-up are the major institutional acts that take place in doctor-patient interactions. While the maxims of quantity and relation are rarely observed, the maxims of quality and manner are usually observed. Politeness and facework management in the hospital setting have a great effect on medical procedures in the hospitals.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Think about your experiences in the hospital. Using the Brown and Levinson's theory, discuss how politeness and implicature are negotiated in hospital interactions.

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UNIT 4 PRAGMATICS AND THE INTERNET

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

Computer-mediated discourse (CMD) is an aspect of communication-mediated Communication (CMC) that focuses on language use in computer mediated interactions. It is the kind of interaction that employs features of both spoken and written discourse. In this unit, you will be exposed to this type of interaction that has greatly influenced our everyday lives and how pragmatics can serve as a tool in analysing the kinds of communication that occurs through the computer.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- explain the term computer mediated discourse
- identify the kinds pf (im)politeness strategies in CMD;
- discuss the types of speech acts that are performed in CMD;
- elaborate on how contextual beliefs play a role in CMD; and

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Computer-mediated Communication

Computer-mediated communication (CMC), in simple terms, is the kind of communication that takes place between addressers and addressees through the internet. An aspect of CMC which is of importance to you is computer-mediated discourse (CMD) which focuses on language and language use in the interaction between addressers and addressees in a network environment (Herring, 2001).

CMC is a form of writing that is transmitted by electronic means (Herring, 2001). It combines features of both written and spoken communication. It is a medium of communication that is faster than written discourse but slower than spoken discourse. You can edit your emails just as you can do when writing letters and receive the reply almost immediately. Yet, you have to type it which makes it slower than spoken discourse even when you use text language such as *ur*, *4u* and *btw*.

Also, several people can communicate at the same such as you will find in discussion forums. Although information can only be passed across through visual means at the initial stages of CMC, presently, information can be transmitted through auditory channels with the advent of video chat and internet calls on devices such as *skype*. Even when information is transmitted visually through typed messages, interactants compensate textually for missing auditory and gestural cues with the use of emoticons and punctuation marks such as questions marks, exclamation marks and bold fonts.

There are two types of CMD which include synchronous CMD system such as chats and asynchronous CMD systems such as emails. Synchronous CMD system are systems where the users have to be logged in at the same time in order to receive and send messages. Usually, new messages replace the older ones. In asynchronous CMD systems, the users do not necessarily need to be logged on at the same time as messages can be saved in the addressee's site or email.

Several studies have been carried out on computer-mediated discourse which have focused on emails (Kirkgoz, 2010; Bou-Franch, 2011; Chejnová, 2014), social network (Caroll & Landry, 2010; Sanderson & Cheong, 2010; Maíz-Arévalo, 2013; Mak & Chu, 2013), discussion forums (Prentice, 2010; Shum & Lee, 2013), weblogs (Lehti, 2011; Bolander, 2012; Perelmutter, 2013), text messages (Sotillo, 2010; Bernicot, et al., 2012) and chats (Silva, 2010 Fernandez & Yuldashev; 2011). In Nigeria, there is a growing number of research works on CMD which have focused on text messages (Akande & Akinwale, 2010; Odebunmi & Alo, 2010; Abioye, 2012), emails (Ofulue, 2010; Olateju & Adeleke, 2010; Onadeko, 2010), blogs (Ifukor, 2010) and discussion forums (Taiwo, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2012; Ifukor, 2012).

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What is computer-mediated communication?

3.2 (Im)politeness on the Internet

(Im)politeness is another issue that is being studied on the Internet. You have to remember that the internet contains platforms such as emails, discussion groups, media feedback forums, and other social media such as twitter and facebook. At such forums, interactions occur among people who may or may not know one another and among people who belong to different cultural and ideological groups. It is necessary to understand that (im)politeness on the internet is indeterminate, however, you can get pointers to (im)politeness strategies through some linguistic structures.

A lot of studies have considered (im)politeness in different western societies. For example, Graham (2007) shows how the expectations of (im)politeness are negotiated in an e-mail community. She observes that the use of inappropriate responses to e-mails result in conflict as other members of the e-mail community attack the person who sends the inappropriate responses. You can attest to this when a person on facebook sends a post that in considered inappropriate. This usually leads to disagreements and people taking sides with one another.

In Nigeria, Ifukor (2012) considers face in Nigerian discussion forums and observes that face is co-constructed through the use of typographic registers of social network media such as RT, #, @; the use of greetings (Igbo kwenu); codeswitching between English, Nigerian pidgin and a Nigerian language.

Shum & Lee (2013) identify disagreement strategies in internet forums of Hong Kong users. These strategies include giving negative comments; using short vulgar phrases; raising rhetorical questions; making a personal stance; making an ironic statement; cursing; giving opposite opinions; rewording; giving personal stance; giving facts; and reprimanding.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Using Brown & Levinson's politeness theory, discuss some examples of (im)politeness on Facebook.

3.3 Speech Acts on the Internet

Oni and Osunbade (2009) suggest that speech acts in synchronous computer-mediated communication include four general acts of representatives, directives, commissives and expressives with a wide range of sub acts such as describing, inviting, greeting, proposing, apologising and promising. Some of the utterances depicting these acts found in their texts include the following:

- complaining (but you kept me waiting);
- confirming (are you there???? BUZZ);
- empathising (Oh, sorry!!)
- thanking (Thanks, Tx)
- apologising (sorry for keeping u waiting)

Chiluwa (2010) explores the speech acts used in hoax email business proposals (419 emails) which involve email business proposals and money transfers/claims of dormant bank accounts overseas. Using Searle's speech act theory, he maintains that the hoax emails involve the use of expressive, representative, commissive and directive acts. Representatives have the highest rate of occurrence, expressives have the lowest frequency. He posits that representative are structured as narratives, appear as greetings and polite address forms while commissives are used as a persuasive strategy and suspicious promises to the receiver. The directive act is used to urge the receiver to act promptly.

In a different vein, Unuabonah (2012) analysed two Nigerian online news media feedback forums. She suggests that through the comments, the readers use pragmatic acts which praise, accuse, condemn, blame, apologise, pray, thank, advise, lament and warn. The text below represents some of the utterances made by the writers which depict the pragmatic acts of praising and warning:

> You are witnessing before your own very eyes how a courageous Ibo woman is going to get you all (Nigerians) out of a dangerous pickle…This time it is NOT a myth such as is filled in your heads. And you Yoruba people insulting the Igbos know you are cowering in your knees. Stop insulting the Igbos in this forum!
>
> (Unuabonah, 2012: 162)

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss some of the speech acts used in computer-mediated communication.

3. 3 Contextual Beliefs on the Internet

Contextual beliefs are also relevant for communication on the internet. There must be shared knowledge between interactants on the internet for there to be any meaningful communication. This is important particularly because communication on the internet, sometimes, is carried out in a non-face to face interaction and there may not be time to be explicit or ask questions. It is important to note that beliefs on the internet are indeterminate, however, you can get pointers to them through some linguistic structures.

For example, Odebunmi and Alo (2010) examine text messages sent by academics in two Nigerian Universities. They posit that these text messages are written based on shared knowledge of subject matter, shared professional knowledge and in-group membership. The implication of these aspects of shared knowledge leads to the use of abbronyms, ellipsis, informal tokens such *L11* for lecturer *11* and *2ru* for *through*.

You will agree with me that when you send or receive text messages, you make use of linguistic items such as clipped forms, abbreviations and contracted forms and figures such as *4* for *for* and *2* for *to*. You do these based on shared knowledge between you and the recipient. In fact, these linguistic items are referred to as text language and are peculiar to computer-mediated interaction.

In a similar vein, Unuabonah (2012) in her analysis of comments on online forums suggests that interactants write based on shared knowledge of subject/topic, referent/reference, word choices, shared socio-cultural knowledge. For example, when the writer says, 'You are witnessing before your own very eyes how a courageous Ibo woman'. He does so based on the assumption that there is shared knowledge of who the referent is, in this case, Dora Akunyili. You need to remember that in this online interaction, there is usually a topic that is discussed. Thus, the writer makes use of the reference *Ibo woman* based on the shared knowledge that the addressers know that the referent (Akunyili) is an Ibo woman.

Unuabonah (2012) also opines that the interactants in these online feedback forums make use of Nigerian languages and Nigerian pidgin based on shared knowledge of these linguistic codes. The assumption is that most people that will read the article and comment will be Nigerians who understand some Nigerian languages.

Self Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the concept of contextual beliefs in the writing of text messages.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, computer-mediated communication is a new, evolving and interesting field that linguists can analyse since they involve interaction among interactants who are usually in a non-face-to-face interaction. Sometimes, the interactants are people who do not even know each other physically and do not share the same socio-political background. The interactants include commentators in Yahoo or MSN news forums who may come from any part of the world. Thus, issues such as transcultural communication may become significant. Pragmatic principles, therefore, become relevant in understanding online interaction.

5.0 SUMMARY

CMC addresses different kinds of online communication and pragmatic studies in this field have focused on the speech acts, contextual beliefs and politeness strategies that are deployed in CMC. Representatives, directives, expressives and commissives play major roles in CMC interactions. Face is through the use of typographic registers, greetings and codeswitching in Nigerian internet forums, which are base on shared contextual beliefs among the interactants.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Examine the speech function of utterances in *Nairaland*.

Analyse any newspaper weblog of your choice from the perspective of Grice's implicature.

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MODULE 5 OTHER DIMENSIONS TO PRAGMATICS

Any living thing must evolve and adapt in order to stay alive and be relevant. This is true of the field of pragmatics which is evolving and adapting to its environment. Again, in order to find answers to both old and new questions, new theories and concepts are developed. Thus, in this module, you will be introduced to other areas in the field of pragmatics.

You have five units in this module. Each of these units attends to specific fields in pragmatics. This is an important unit because the postgraduate programme is a research-based programme. The units are listed below:

UNIT 1 METAPRAGMATICS

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Metapragmatics deals with the linguistic resources that speakers use in order to guide their addressees in the way they want to be understood. This is important because hearers may interpret speakers' utterances differently from the speakers' intention. In order to avoid communication breakdown, speakers make use of certain words to facilitate smooth communication. In this unit, you will learn about metapragmatic resources.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- define metapragmatics;
- discuss the different types of metapragmatic markers
- discuss the concept of metasequential awareness

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Metapragmatics

Metapragmatics has been explained by Caffi (1994) in three senses: as an approach to the theory and methodology of describing pragmatics; as the conditions under which communication is carried out; and as the "management of discourse"(Caffi 1994: 2464) Our focus in this unit will be based on the management of discourse.

Metapragmatics deals with the way in which addressers make use of certain words to guide their addressees in the way in which they want the addressees to understand their utterances (Grundy, 2008). This is because utterances have different meanings and functions in different contexts. The implication is that metapragmatics deals with interpersonal relations because it focuses on addresser/addressee relations (see Hubler & Bublitz, 2007).

As Verschueren (2000:439) suggests, it is the "crucial force behind the meaning-generating capacity of language in use." For him, metapragmatics is the study of the metalinguistic dimension of language as metalanguage is seen as a dimension of language use which is in the purview of linguistic pragmatics. Metapragmatics affords interactants ways of signalling their awareness of what they do with words to accomplish acts and to convey meanings beyond what is uttered literally.

Verschueren (2000) argues that any item that reflects awareness of pragmatic effect has metapragmatic function. Such words include *as you know, but, since*, and *basically*. These will be further explained in the next section. For example, consider the conversation used by Grundy (2008):

A: Branka: When will you be back?
Peter: I should be back by eight *but* you know what trains are like.
(p. 155; italics mine)

If you consider this example, you will notice that Peter's utterance has two clauses and there is no direct relationship between the time he would be back and the characteristics of trains. However, the use of the conjunction *but* informs the addressee that there is an implicit relationship which can be drawn out through inference: that trains are usually late and could delay the speaker from returning by eight.

If the speaker had said, "I should be back by eight. You know what trains are like", there is no way in which the addressee can make the kind of inference stated above. Thus, 'but' is used to guide the addressee on the way in which the addresser wants to be understood. Therefore, you can talk about **metapragmatic awareness** which deals with the knowledge and understanding of the pragmatic effect of what you say (Grundy, 2008). Indeed, the meta-function of language deals with both the literal and the pragmatic levels. Thus, you can ask what a particular utterance means literally or what a speaker means by using that utterance. The first one is labelled **metalinguistic enquiry** while the second is named **metapragmatic inquiry**. Metalinguistic inquiry focuses on sentence meaning while metapragmatic inquiry focuses on speaker meaning

As Gundy (2008: 156) points out:

> If we define pragmatics as the study of what we do with words in the contexts in which we use them to accomplish acts and to convey meanings beyond what is stated literally, then metapragmatics affords us ways of signalling our awareness of what we do with words to accomplish acts and to convey meanings beyond what is stated literally.

The focus here is on indicating our awareness of language use and its appropriate use in a given context.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Define metapragmatics in your own words.

3.2 Types of Metapragmatic Resources

Verschueren (2000) argues that any item that reflects awareness of pragmatic effect has metapragmatic function. Metapragmatic items are markers that provide comments 'on how a speaker wants to be understood' (Grundy, 2008:156). Verschueren (2000) posits that there are two types of metapragmatic items and these include explicit and implicit items. These are further explained:

Explicit metapragmatic items include:

- metapragmatic descriptions which includes performative verbs and speech act descriptions.
- self-referential expressions such as *my opinion, this way* and *my word.*
- pragmatic markers such as *you know, by the way* and *like*
- sentence adverbs such as *fortunately, obviously*, and *luckily*.
- hedges such as *in a sense*, *as far as I know* and *a sort of.*
- explicit intertextual links such as *namely, chiefly*, *for example* and *the former.*
- quoted and reported speech. These are included because "quoted speech and encodings of reported speech reflect the deictic centres of the original speech and the reporting speaker" (Grundy, 2008: 158). In other words, the use of quoted and reported speech point to the time, the utterance was made as well as the position of the reporting speaker either as a second or third person during the original speech. For example, *Bola said that he didn't eat the food.*

- mention, which is an occurrence of an item with overt metalinguistic marking such as quotation marks as in *The name 'UPS' is a contraction for Uninterrupted Power Supply.*
- evidentials which mark the source or reliability of an utterance such as *I suppose, I assume,* and *as far as I know*.
- contextualisation cues such as *right, okay, oh,* and *sorry.*

Implicit metapragmatic items include

- deictics as they make reference to the speech event itself such as *here* and *there*.
- aspect since they provide a link to the time of a speech event including present perfect, past perfect and progressive aspect.
- mood and modality as they indicate the speaker's knowledge of the degree of probability of an event i.e. *can, will* and *may*.
- contextualisation cues such a prosody, intonation, codeswitching, fillers (e.g. uh), hesitation markers (e.g. em) and pauses.
- implicit voice, which indicates the extent to which a speaker indicates self or other ownership of content and his/her commitment to it.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the different types of metapragmatic items discussed in this section.

3.3 Metasequential Awareness

Sequentiality deals with "the way in which contributions to talk construct the events of talk as movings-on, formulations, etc" while metasequentiality signals the speaker's awareness "of the way contributions to talk construct the events of talk as movings-on, formulations, etc" (Grundy 2008:161). Thus, metasequential markings are linguistic forms used to guide the hearer's understanding of the way a turn contributes to a conversation. In other words, they contribute to the organisation of talk.

For example, adverbs such as *so*, *because* and *therefore* have metasequential function because they indicate how the discourse is to be understand. Thus, they have what is said to be a procedural function. They are both metapragmatic and metasequential because they indicate pragmatic awareness and also indicate an awareness of how the talk contributes to the speech event. Other examples include speech act descriptions, turn taking, repairs, illocutionary force, indexicals, maxim hedges and procedural encodings.

In written forms of conversations, you may find transcription keys that indicate pause, silence, and hesitation. These are also sequential because they create an awareness of the organisation of talk.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, you can see that metapragmatics is important in the meaning-generating capacity of language in use. It deals with the interpersonal and textual functions of utterances. However, this is an area that lacks adequate attention in Nigerian linguistic scholarship. You are, therefore, encouraged to pay close attention to the use of these markers in conversations and other professional contexts.

5.0 SUMMARY

Metapragmatics deals with the linguistic structures that addressers use to guide their addressees' understanding of their utterances. Metapragmatic markers are either explicit or implicit. Metapragmatic markers include pragmatic markers, hedges, evidentials, deictics, mood and modality. Metasequential markers such as adverbs, turn taking and repairs guide the hearer's understanding of the way a turn contributes to a conversation. Thus, metapragmatic markers and metasequential markers deal with interpersonal relations and the organisation of talk respectively.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Study the first chapter of Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and bring out three examples each of explicit and implicit metapragmatic items from the text.

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UNIT 2 INTERCULTURAL PRAGMATICS

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be introduced to the field of intercultural pragmatics which focuses on the pragmatic interpretation of interaction that involves people of different cultures. You will be introduced to the different approaches and types of intercultural contexts that can occur. I believe that at the end of this unit you will appreciate and be able to evaluate the kind of interactions that occur in multicultural and multilingual societies such as Nigeria.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- define what intercultural pragmatics entails;
- describe the approaches to intercultural pragmatics;
- discuss pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure; and

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Intercultural Pragmatics

Culture is an important aspect of context and the culture of a person or groups of persons affect the production and interpretation of utterances. Pragmatic principles such as speech acts, implicature and politeness do not always operate in the same way in different societies. You will notice that different societies have different cultures and this affects how linguistic items are used. In Nigeria alone, we have so many cultures and this may pose challenges for people when they have to interact with people who belong to a different culture.

Consider the Yoruba culture where anyone that is older than you must be addressed as a brother or a sister. This also flows into a marriage relationship where a woman is expected to refer to anyone in her husband's family as 'sister' or 'brother' (apart from parents, aunts and uncles, who would be addressed as mummy or daddy) even when the person is younger by age. This may pose a challenge for an Igbo woman who marries a Yoruba man and does not refer to her husband's siblings as a brother and a sister. Such a lady will be regarded as an impolite or rude person who lacks manners. Indeed, such a lady is not necessarily rude because in her culture, such an address for a younger person is not used.

Consider also a situation where an American student in any Nigerian university will refer to his/her professor as Kola or Tunde. This will also be considered an impolite form as professors and elderly people or people in positions of authority are not addressed by their first name. In fact, in Nigeria, a professor will be addressed as Prof by a student and not Prof + first name or even with the surname.

Thus, intercultural pragmatics deals with the realisation of pragmatic principles among people of different cultures. In other words, intercultural communication explores the ways in which culture specific knowledge is encoded in utterances (Grundy, 2008).

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Describe intercultural pragmatics using other examples that can occur in the Nigerian society.

3.2 Approaches to Intercultural Pragmatics

There are two approaches to the study of intercultural pragmatics. They include:

- intercultural communication and
- cross-cultural communication

Intercultural communication is the study of representatives of different groups in the process of interacting with each other to see how differences are negotiated (Archer et al, 2012).

Cross-cultural communication is the study of pragmatic phenomena in different cultures in order to set up comparison and predict possible misunderstandings (Archer et al, 2012). This is what obtains in a contrastive analysis of pragmatic principles in different cultures.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Identify other studies that have used either of the approaches discussed and review them.

3.3 Types of Intercultural Contexts

Grundy (2000:228) suggests that there are four types of intercultural contexts that could occur when there is an interaction between communication and culture. They include:

- intracultural communication;
- intercultural communication;
- cross-cultural communication; and
- trans-cultural communication

Intracultural communication occurs when there is communication between interactants who share the same culture. Thus, they share the same cultural knowledge. For example, two Efik ladies communicating in Efik.

Intercultural communication occurs when there is communication between interactants who do not share the same culture. This can arise when someone from one culture meets another person of another culture in a different location and they communicate in a different language. This can occur when a Yoruba woman and an Ijaw man meet in Enugu and communicate in Igbo.

Cross-cultural communication involves communication where a non-native member interacts with a native member in a particular culture. An example is when an Hausa man travels to Benin City and communicates with an Edo man in the Edo language.

Grundy (2008) opines that there is a thin line between cross-cultural and intercultural communication since they are sometimes faced with the same challenges and advocates for trans-cultural communication which covers any type of communication that occurs between interactants who do not share the same culture.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the different types of pragmatic communication that can occur using different real life situations.

3.4 Pragmalinguistic and Sociopragmatic Failure

Pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge are often needed in intercultural context. Leech (1983) posits that there are two types of pragmatic knowledge: pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge.

- Pragmalinguistic knowledge deals with the kind of knowledge of the "particular resources which a given language provides for conveying certain illocutions" (Leech 1983:11).

- Sociopragmatic knowledge is the kind of judgement that these illocutions have which vary from culture to culture.

Pragmalinguistic failure could occur when a speaker does not understand the pragmalinguistic item that could be used to perform such illocutions. As Archer (2012) posits, they occur as a result of the use of apparently synonymous structures. An example is the use of 'sorry' in British English and Nigerian English.

Sociopragmatic failure captures misunderstandings that arise as a result of culturally different perceptions of different situations. For example, what constitutes an imposition in the Nigerian context may not be considered an imposition in an American or British society (Archer et al, 2012). Sociopragmatic failure occurs due to lack of knowledge of sociolinguistic variables such as *age*, *sex*, and *class* (Cutting, 2002). The following are types of misunderstanding that can occur:

Misunderstandings that occur as a result of inappropriate use of apparently synonymous structures *of course* in English and *da* in German.

Misunderstandings that arise out of linguistic phenomena with pragmatic consequences This for example covers the address system such as the use of titles, first names and surnames which you have learnt in section 3.1.

Another one is the pronominal system. In English for example, there is only one pronominal address, 'you'. In French, you have *tu* and *vous. Tu* is used for close associates and younger persons while *vous* is used for people who are superior or distant socially. This concept is evident in some languages in Nigeria. For example, in Yoruba, there is the distinctions *iwo* and *eyin. Iwo* represents singular. *Iwo* is used for singular you, younger and close associates while *eyin* is used for plural you, superiors, older and distant persons.

Also, you have *o* and *won*. O represents third person singular pronouns such as 'she', 'he' and 'it' (gender is not marked), younger and close associates while *won* is used for third person plural 'they', older and distant associates. This is the reason for the third person singular honorific 'they' (Yusuf and Olateju, 2005) which is used to represent *won* in Nigerian English. Thus, superiors and older persons are referred to as 'they' . So, 'they' in 'They will give you food' does not refer to two or more persons but to a superior or an older person. This may be confusing to a native speaker of English especially if the person does not have any knowledge of the use of 'they' in Nigerian English.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Intercultural pragmatics is an important aspect of pragmatics that should be studied in human interactions, particularly as the world has become a global village. Due to the cosmopolitan nature of many cities in the world, people from different parts of the world do communicate. In order to avoid conflicts and enhance cooperation in different sectors, people need to be exposed to the basic and underlying principles that occur in intercultural interactions. Nigeria is a multicultural and multiethnic society, thus, it is imperative that interactants be prepared for the kinds of principles that need to be understood in such interactions.

5.0 SUMMARY

Intercultural pragmatics deals with the ways that pragmatic knowledge is encoded in interactions that occur between people of different cultures. Intercultural pragmatics can be studied from two perspectives: intercultural communication and cross cultural communication. Intercultural contexts include intracultural, intercultural, cross-cultural and trans-cultural communication.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the concept of intercultural pragmatics using Ola Rotimi's 'Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again' and Chimamanda Adichie's *Americanah.*

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UNIT 3 INTERPERSONAL PRAGMATICS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be introduced to a new perspective in pragmatics called interpersonal pragmatics, which considers the pragmatic explanation of interpersonal communication. You will also be exposed to theoretical models such as rapport management, relational work and face constituting theory within the scope of interpersonal pragmatics.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

You should be able to achieve the following objectives at the end of this unit:

- discuss the term interpersonal pragmatics;
- expatiate on the theoretical model of rapport management;
- explain the perspective of relational work; and
- discuss the theory of Face Constituting Theory.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Interpersonal Pragmatics

Interpersonal Pragmatics is concerned with the investigation of 'interpersonal aspects of communication and interaction' from a pragmatic perspective (Haugh, Kadar & Mills, 2013:2). It focuses on the exploration of the ways in which interactants use language to shape and form relationships in different situational contexts (Locher and Graham, 2010). Interpersonal communication is a broader discipline that focuses on the process of the creation of personal relationships, nonverbal behaviour, privacy, cognition, conflict, cooperation, and social problems such as incivility (see Haugh, Kadar & Mills, 2013).

It is a multidisciplinary perspective that builds interfaces between pragmatics, communication and other related fields. "It is used to designate examinations of the relational aspect of interactions between people that both affect and are affected by their understandings of culture, society and their own and others' interpretations" (Locher and Graham, 2010:2 as cited in Locher, 2012).

There are three major areas that are of interest in interpersonal pragmatics and these include the relational, attitudinal/emotive and evaluative aspects of language use (Haugh, Kadar & Mills, 2013:2). Interpersonal relations focuses on the mutual social connection between people which are mediated through interaction, power, intimacy, roles, rights and obligations. Interpersonal attitude considers perspectives which are emotionally charged and covers attitudes such as generosity, sympathy, disgust and fear. Interpersonal emotion focuses on feelings which can be irrational, subjective and unconscious. Interpersonal evaluations covers the assessment of persons and relationships with persons which affect the way people think or feel about such persons, relationships and actions. Different theoretical models have been developed in the area of interpersonal pragmatics. These models are discussed in the succeeding units.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What is interpersonal pragmatics all about?.

3.2 Helen Spencer-Oatey's Rapport Management

Rapport management deals with the way that 'language is used to construct, maintain and/or threaten social relationships' (Spencer-Oatey, 2008: 12). It also deals with' the management of sociality rights and interactional goals'. For Spencer-Oatey, rapport management is the (mis)management of harmony and disharmony among people. Thus, it looks beyond the politeness/impoliteness divide to consider the bases of rapport which include face sensitivities, sociality rights and obligations as well as interactional goals.

Face sensitivities cover the concept of face which is the positive social value that a person claims for his/herself and expects that such a claim is respected by others. Such values may be personality traits, physical features, beliefs, language affiliations and these vary from person to person and context to context. The concept of face is closely related to identity which may be self-identity, group identity or relational identity.

Sociality rights and obligations deal with "social expectancies and reflect people's concerns over fairness, consideration and behavioural appropriateness." Interactional goals focus on the "specific tasks and/or relational goals that people may have when they interact with each other" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008: 14).

The implication is that that there are three main ways in which rapport can be threatened and these include face-threatening behaviour, rights-threatening/obligation-omission behaviour and goal-threatening behaviour. Thus, rapport management deals with the interlocutors' assessments of the 'affective quality they experience in their relations with others' (Spencer-Oatey, 2011:3567). In addition to discourse data, post-event interview comments are important in this model as these bring out the perspectives of the participants (Spencer-Oatey, 2011).

In rapport management, all levels of language and domains need to be properly managed as they can affect rapport between interlocutors. These domains include

- illocutionary domain which focuses on the management of speech acts that can create, maintain or threaten harmony;
- discourse domain which deals with the management of topic choice and topic organisation;
- participation domain that focuses on turn-taking rights, inclusion/exclusion of people present as well as use/non-use of listener responses;
- stylistic domain which focuses on the management of choice of tone, genre-appropriate lexis and syntax and use of address terms and honorifics; and
- non-verbal domain which focuses on the management of gestures, eye contact, proxemics and other body movements. In the context of CMC, non-linguistic cues such as fonts, capitalization and emoticons are studied.

Spencer-Oatey (2008) also posits that contextual variables such as the participants, setting, time; pragmatic principles such as conversational principles; and conventions as well as rapport orientation may influence people's use of management strategies. Spencer-Oatey (2008) suggests that there are four types of rapport orientation which may influence interactants' use of rapport management strategies. These include rapport enhancement, rapport maintenance, rapport neglect and rapport challenge orientations. Spencer-Oatey (2008:32) states that rapport enhancement orientation is "a desire to strengthen or boost harmonious relations" between interactants while rapport maintenance orientation is "a desire to maintain or protect harmonious relations between interlocutors." She equally adds that rapport neglect orientation indicates "a lack of interests in the quality of relations" between interactants while rapport challenge orientation signifies "a desire to challenge or impair harmonious relations" between the interlocutors.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the concept of rapport management. What are the domains in which rapport strategies can be carried out?

3.3 Miriam Locher & Watt's Relational Work

Locher and Watts' (2005) relational work theory is a discursive approach to politeness which stipulates that (im)politeness should be studied in relation to relational work. The underlying concept of the model is the notion of face which is seen as discursively negotiated (Locher, 2006:251). As Locher and Watts (2008: 96) posits, relational work is "the work invested by individuals in the construction, maintenance, reproduction, transformation of interpersonal relationships among those engaged in it". Thus, it focuses on "the relational and interpersonal side of communication and on the effects linguistic choices may have on relationships" (Locher, 2012). The concept of face in relational work is defined in relation to Goffman's concept of face as a positive and public self image.

Interpersonal effects include face-enhancing, face maintaining and face challenging behaviour. Thus, relational work does not only focus on polite and impolite behaviour, it also considers a spectrum of behaviour such as rudeness, refined and affectionate. They also posit that some forms of social behaviour are neither polite or impolite and these are termed appropriate and politic. Thus, examples of forms of social behaviour include the following:

Judgement (a):	impolite	+ inappropriate/non-politic	+ negatively marked
Judgement (b):	non-polite	+ appropriate/politic	+ unmarked
Judgement (c):	polite	+ appropriate/politic	+ positively marked
Judgement (d):	over-polite	+ inappropriate/non-politic	+ negatively marked

Politic behaviour is that linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour that participants judge as appropriate in an ongoing interaction (Watts, 2003). Negatively marked behaviour is that which has breached a social norm and evokes negative evaluations such as impolite, over polite, rude and aggressive (Locher and Watts, 2008).They are judged as second-order approach because it does not occur in everyday language use.

Self Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the concept of relational work. How different is it from Brown and Levinson's politeness theory.

3.4 Robert Arundale's Face Constituting Theory

Face Constituting Theory (FCT) is an interactional model that focuses on the conceptualisation of face as a non-summative and relational phenomenon. This implies that face does not reside in a person but is co-created, co-constituted and co-constructed among participants (Arundale, 1999; 2010). The concept of face in this model is different from the concept of face in Brown & Levinson's politeness theory where face is seen as the public self-image of a person.

FCT employs two models in communication: **the Conjoint Co-constituting Model** (CCM) and a new conceptualisation of **face**. CCM utilises current theory and research in communication and conversation analysis to explain how meaning and action are achieved "in everyday talk and associated with non-linguistic conduct" (Arundale, 2010: 2078). Certain principles are deployed in CCM and these include **adjacency in talk, recipient interpreting** and **speaker designing**.

The new conceptualisation of face is taken as "the relationship two or more persons create with one another in interaction," which is different from the conceptualisation of face as the public self image of an individual (Arundale 2010: 2078). This new conceptualisation of face depends on current theory and research in interpersonal communication in explaining face as a relational and interactional phenomenon. Face in FCT is not a psychological construct that is exogenous to language but a dyadic accomplishment that is endogenous to language. This implies that the co-construction of face is not outside of language but is achieved through language by at least two persons.

Self Assessment Exercise 4

Discuss the concept of face constituting theory. How different is the concept of face in this theory from Brown and Levinson's concept of face.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, you can see that interpersonal pragmatics attends to a pragmatic explanation of interpersonal communication which exists between persons in naturally occurring discourse. You can also see that it has its origin in politeness research which focuses on interpersonal relationships. Within interpersonal pragmatics, concepts such as face, identity, (im)politeness, relations and rapport are explored. This is an area that is largely unexplored in Nigerian linguistic studies. You are therefore encouraged to focus on this aspect in your MA research.

5.0 SUMMARY

Interpersonal pragmatics focuses on the pragmatic interpretation of interpersonal communication. Interpersonal pragmatics deals with the relational, attitudinal, emotive and evaluative aspects of language use. Theoretical models under interpersonal pragmatics include rapport management, relational work and face constituting theory.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Analyse any selected conversation of your choice in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* and employ the tools of rapport management theory in analysing the text.

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UNIT 4 LITERARY PRAGMATICS

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be taken through an area of pragmatics called literary pragmatics. Literary pragmatics, as you would notice, deals with the pragmatics of literary texts, focusing on their production and consumption.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- define literary pragmatics;
- discuss voice and vocality literary pragmatics;
- voice change in literary texts;
- perspectives in literary texts

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Literary Pragmatics

Literary pragmatics is an aspect of pragmatics that focuses on the pragmatic processes that take place in the production and interpretation of a literary text. It is an area of pragmatics developed by Jacob Mey in his famous book, *When voices clash.* Mey (2000) posits that literary pragmatics considers the kinds of pragmatic effects that authors, as text producers, want to achieve, using the resources of language in their efforts to establish a relationship with their audiences, who are the text consumers. Thus, both linguistic resources and contextual factors are exploited in order to achieve the relationship between the text producer and consumer (Mey, 2000). Context helps in determining owners of voices in literary texts and enhances their pragmatic interpretation (Adeniji, 2010: 208).

Issues that are studied in literary pragmatics include the language of the text, voice, and perspective. Under language, linguistics structures such as reference, deixis, anaphora and tense are significant items discussed in literary pragmatics.

For example, authors may make use of different referring expressions to refer to the same person in a literary text. This is done in order to help the reader understand the character of the person. It is a way of building up the character. An example is taken from Femi Osofisan's *Kolera Kolej* (2001: 10):

> The Prime Minister, *a cunning man*, was killing two birds with one stone.

The italicised words is a noun phrase, a referring expression that refers to the Prime Minister and helps us to understand the behaviour of the character.

Deixis is another important aspect that is studied in literary pragmatics which indicate the point of view in the text. In particular, personal pronouns determine the perspective or point of view in the text. This will help us know the speaker. For example, consider this extract from Femi Osofisan's *Kolera Kolej* (2001: 3):

> But as soon as a quorum was formed the Prime Minister got up to address *his* men. "Gentlemen of the Cabinet," he said, *I*'m sure you've all heard the news...

The change from the third person to the first person helps to ondicate a change in perspective.

Anaphora focuses on keeping the relationships between objects and persons within the text straight and instantly recognisable. It also makes language in texts less boring, less repetitive and more interesting. Consider the extract below which is also taken from Osofisan (2001: 8):

> Only the **Okitipupa Minister** smiled with condescension...*His* village was after all close to the sea. What *he* did not see however was the relevance of such things...

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

What is literary pragmatics and its main concerns?

3.2 Voice and Vocality in literary texts

One of the ways to understand and interpret a literary text is to determine voice ownership as "authors project their perspectives through the utterances of their characters" (Mey, 2000:162). Mey (2000) posits that voice is a vocalised perspective. Voice gives expression to the inner thought and feeling of an author which is expressed by the characters in a literary text. It can be determined in texts through linguistic and extra-linguistic devices. Vocality focuses on the attribution of voices to one or more agents in a narrative. It deals with how different voices are managed in a text.

Voice management is "the result of a cooperative effort between the two text-producing instances, author and reader" (Mey, 2000:127). They both co-create the text. The implication is that the author presents different utterances and different voices and the reader utilises textual and contextual factors in determining the meaning of utterances and the voices that are speaking in the text. The different techniques used in the management of voice include:

- The **alternation of voices** such as in a two party conversation which can be seen in the use of adjacency pairs in conversational analysis. Sometimes, thee can be many voices in a conversation

- The use of **deictics** is also important in distinguishing the different speakers, their voices, points of view and personal beliefs.

- The use of **content or theme** is another important voice management technique. Different characters are associated with specific stories in a text. Thus, you can know who is speaking based on the theme or story that is being discussed.

- The use of **voice shifts** is also important as voice can change from that of the omniscient narrator to free indirect discourse to direct discourse.

3.3 Voice Change

There is voice shift or voice change when there is a change from the author's voice to a character's voice or a change from a character's voice to another character's voice (Adeniji, 2010:409). Sometimes, the transition could be from a character's voice to an intruding author's voice. Usually, the author notifies the reader of the change in voice. Usually, line spaces and punctuation marks such as the dash and quotation marks are used to indicate a change in voice.

However, there are situations in which voice change is not announced. Such a situation may lead to **voice clash**. Voice clash "occurs whenever voices don't match" (Mey, 2000:189). It occurs when the narrator gives information that is different from that given by the characters in the text. Thus, the voices are said to be disharmonious. Mey (2000) posits that there are different sub-categories of voice clash: **voice trash, voice mash and voice crash**.

Voice trash occurs when the author's voice eclipses that of the character such that the character's world is expressed through the author's voice. Lexical choices used to achieve this includes metalanguages, metaphorical allusions and descriptions of events and experiences of the character which betray an overlaying voice of the author. Consider the next extract from Osofisan's 'Many Colours make the Thunder-King', p. 57.

> Alagemo: Rascals interested only in their own ambition. *Politicians scheming for power*. Generals with their eyes on the throne!

The story told in the play takes place in the pre-colonial period in Nigeria. The lexical item, *politicians* (Yoruba, *oṣelu*) did not exist in the pre-colonial days Thus, this item is that of the author. The implication is that the author's voice trashes that of the speaker. The author is speaking about the current political situation in Nigeria.

Voice mash occurs when the voice of the character is not clearly distinguished from that of the author. This occurs when there is no clear-cut demarcation between when the voice of the author ends and when that of the character begins. Pragmatic markers of voice mash include free direct discourse, free indirect discourse and reported speech and thought (Adeniyi, 2010). An extract that illustrates voice mash is taken from Osofisan's Women of Owu, p.45:

> Gesinde: *It is hard, this life of a soldier, when one has to witness a scene like this.* And it is going to be harder still, I know when we bash the child's head against a tree.

In this excerpt, the author's voice is not clearly demarcated from that of the speaker. The author gives his own opinion of the situation which merges with that of the speaker.

Voice crash occurs when the author intrudes into the line of the narration which is done to reveal important information about characters, their experiences, and reactions. This may sometimes confuse readers and readers may not be able to identify the speaking voice. Pragmatic markers of voice crash include the use of first and second person narrative techniques, free direct discourse and free indirect discourse. The extract below is taken from Osofisan's 'Women of Owu', p. 67:

> Anlugba: *Poor human beings! War is what will destroy you! As it destroys the gods.* But I am moved and I promise: Owu will rise again!

The use of the first and second person narrative techniques indicates voice crash between the author's voice and the speaker's voice. The author intrudes into the narration to reveal the thoughts and experiences of the speaker.

Self Assessment Exercise 2

Discuss the concept of voice in literary pragmatics.

3.4 Perspectivisation

Perspectivisation deals with communication in a textual world and two perspectives are considered: dialogic and reader perspective. The dialogic perspective focuses on the idea that there is a dialogue between the author and the reader of the text. Here, the reader has an active role to play in the production of the literary text. The reason is that in a dialogue, there must be two entities and the dialogue is not complete until the two are present. When a writer sets out to write, he has a reader in mind. Thus, there is an implied reader when the text is being produced. The implied author is the central authority behind the creation of the textual meaning that can be inferred from the text. The implied author is the one that has the omnipotent and omniscient roles to play in the text and determines the extent to which you can know the thoughts and inner consciousness of the characters.

The reader perspective focuses on the idea that the reader of a text approaches a text with a set of preconditions which enable the reader to interpret the text. Thus, the reader's point of view becomes relevant in the interpretation of the text. Without the reader, the text is only a possibility. It is the reader that makes the text real. This, of course, is the case when you read a text. For example, the way a secondary school student will interpret a novel will be different from the way a grandmother will interpret the same novel. Different readers will interpret texts differently. This is because readers bring their knowledge, beliefs and socio-cultural experiences into the reading and interpretation of the text.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3

Discuss the concept of perspectivisation in literary pragmatics.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, literary pragmatics is an area that focuses on how authors and readers are involved in the cooperative effort to produce and interpret a literary text. It is an area that is receiving increasing attention in the field of linguistics. Thus, as graduate students, you should pay more attention to how textual mechanisms are employed in literary texts for meaning production and interpretation

5.0 SUMMARY

Literary pragmatics deals with the textual mechanisms that aid text production by the author and its interpretation by the reader. It addresses issues such as language, perspectivisation and voice. Language focuses on the use of reference, deixis, anaphora and tense. Voice deals with the expression of the authors' inner thoughts which are expressed by the characters in the literary text and which can be managed through alternation of voice, deictics and content. Literary pragmatics recognises dialogic and reader perspectives in the literary text.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the concept of voice in Wole Soyinka's *The Interpreter***.**

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UNIT 5 PRAGMATICS, IDEOLOGY AND POWER

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will be taken through, a recent trend in Discourse Analysis called Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which you may have been introduced to at the undergraduate programme. In actual fact, some of the theories used in CDA have been taken from Pragmatics. In this unit, you will learn more about the relationship between pragmatics, power and ideology.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to achieve the following objectives:

- discuss the relationship between CDA and pragmatics;
- discuss the concept of power; and
- discuss the role of ideology in pragmatics.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Critical Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics

Before you learn about the relationship between pragmatics, power and ideology, let us briefly examine CDA and its relationship with pragmatics. CDA describes and explains discourse structures in terms of the properties of social interactions and social structure. It, therefore, focuses on the way discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce or challenge relations of power and dominance (van Dijk, 2001b). It concentrates on the relationship between language, power and ideology (Archer et al, 2012).

There are different approaches to the study of CDA and these include Norman Fairclough's socio-semiotic approach, Teun van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach, Ruth Wodak's discourse-historical approach and Gee's socio-literary approach (see Wodak, 2001 and Gee, 2004). These different approaches utilise aspects of pragmatics in their analyses.

Let us consider the issue of context. In Wodak's approach, the different aspects of context: socio-cultural, political and historical are made to bear upon the analysis of any data. Also, in van Dijk's approach, he posits, that contextual categories are relevant in the description of discourse. He opines that CDA studies 'many forms of implicit meanings such as implications and presupposition' (van Dijk, 2001: 104). You know that the concept of implicit meaning is within the purview of pragmatics. In fact, he goes on to suggest that context models "control the pragmatic part of discourse" (112). Thus, there is a connection between pragmatics, power and ideology. In fact, Mey (2001) discussed the possibility of a *critical pragmatics* which was roughly in the same period that CDA was developed.

Thus, it is important to investigate how power and ideology are enacted in language using pragmatic tools in different institutional contexts such as courtroom, medical and police interactions (Archer et al, 2012). This indicates that ideology and power are important concepts in the study of pragmatics. Therefore, you need to know what they are.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Discuss the relationship between CDA and pragmatics.

3.2 Pragmatics and Ideology

Van Dijk (2000) defines ideology as general and abstract mental representations which govern shared mental representation such as knowledge, attitude and opinion of social groups. This is different from earlier sociological approaches which define ideology as 'prevailing ideas', 'false idea', 'belief systems' or 'false consciousness' (see Eagleton 1991). Thompson (1990) opines that ideology first appeared in the 18^{th} century France. The term has been given different functions and meanings at different times (See Wodak, 2002). For Thompson, ideology refers to social forms and processes within which and by means of which, symbolic forms circulate in the social world. Wodak (2001) opines that ideology is an important tool for establishing and maintaining power relations. Eagleton (2000) suggest that to understand ideology, one has to situate it in discourses and its impact on listeners, viewers and readers. Ideologies should be equated with intended or non-intended meanings, with illocutionary and perlocutionary force, as this will help to detect ideological dilemmas, basic contradictions and different readings due to different contexts and audiences.

Kress (1990) asserts that any linguistic item that is considered in isolation has no specifically determinate meaning neither does it possess any ideological significance or function. Language appears as a representative of a system of linguistic terms which themselves realise discursive and ideological systems. For example, the initial position of a specific ideological selection reflects the meaning or content of that ideological choice. The content and structure of texts are selected as to reflect the ideological organisation of a particular area of life (See Delinger, 1995). Delinger (1995) suggests that in order to control people, it is effective to try and control their group attitudes and their even more fundamental attitude-producing ideology. As such, people will behave out of the interest of their free will in line with the interest of the powerful. This implies that the exercise of power in modern democratic societies will be persuasive. In other words, it will be ideological.

Fairclough (1995) suggests that there are features or levels of language and discourse where ideology may be invested. These include lexical meanings, presuppositions, implicatures, metaphors, coherence and all aspects of meaning. He adds that formal features of text may be ideologically invested as well as turn-taking systems and even the style of a text may be ideologically important. Thus, pragmatics concepts such as presupposition, implicit meaning can be ideologically biased. For example, the ideology of a group of people can determine the kinds of speech acts and inferences that they make.

Fairclough (2001) asserts that ideology is tied to power relations and ideological struggle pre-eminently takes place in language. He posits that that there are variable meanings of ideology which correspond to different ideological positions For example, the way a Marxist will see ideology will be different from the way capitalist will view ideology. Fairclough (2003) sees ideologies as 'representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation.' He opines that this is the 'critical' view of ideology as against the 'descriptive' views of ideology as positions, attitudes, beliefs and perspectives of social groups without reference to relations of power and domination among such groups', Fairclough (2003: 9). He suggests that ideological representations can be identified in texts and textual analysis will reveal their effect on power relations. For him, ideology is the causal effect that beliefs, judgments, and claims have on specific areas of social life. A claim is ideological if it is represented in discourses, genres and styles of individuals or groups.

Van Dijk's (2006) multidisplinary approach views ideology as a type of belief system which should be described in cognitive terms and not reduced to social practices, societal structures and discourses. They are forms of shared societal cognitions. Ideologies are formed by both dominant and dominated groups. Ideologies help groups to organise the shared social representations and social identities of a group. They also control intra-group action and cooperation as wells as inter-group perception and interaction of group members. Ideologies serve as a basis for competition, conflict, struggle, differences of opinion and knowledge between groups. They are constituted by basic propositions that represent what is good or bad for a group. Thus they are based on values and norms that social groups develop or borrow from more general cultural values such as freedom, liberty, autonomy and truth.

3.3 Pragmatics and Power

Power is the ability of a person to exercise his or her will in a social action, even against the will of other people (Weber, 1947). It is also constituted through processes of negotiation between individuals in society. Locher (2004) suggests that power is mostly expressed through language and cannot be explained without contextualization. Power is relational, dynamic and contestable (Locher, 2004). Sometimes, the amount of power possessed by a person corresponds to the status of the interactants in relation to the others in the social group (Watts, 1991).

Power can be exhibited through different concepts in pragmatics. For example, a speaker with a higher social status may perform the speech act of commanding rather than requesting. S/he may say "Shut the door" rather than "Please, can you shut the door?" This also relates to the concept of politeness. In the first example, "Shut the door," the speaker has perform the FTA baldly. In the second example, the speaker has performed the FTA using negative politeness. In a courtroom for example, the judge will perform an FTA baldly because of his/her status and because s/he does not fear any form of retribution from the hearer.

Archer et al (2012) discusses French and Raven's (1995) types of power which include:

Reward Power: This involves X controlling Y's positive outcomes by providing things that Y desires or removing things that Y dislikes. For example, the realisation of promises made by political aspirants for the electorate.

Referent power: This involves Y's desire to become like A which could occur in a religious context. This is the kind of power that a priest could have over is or her parishioner.

Expert power. Here, X possesses specialist knowledge that B wants or needs. An example is the power possessed by medical doctors.

Legitimate power: This involves X having the legitimate right to prescribe or request certain things of B which could be exercised by a judge over a witness.

Archer et al (2012) explain that all these power scenarios could take place in an institutional context and could either be used positively (legitimate) or negatively (legitimised). For example, a lawyer can possess all these types of power over a client.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Explain the term power and its sub-types in pragmatics.
Discuss different contexts in which these different types of power can be enacted.

3.3 Pragmatics, Ideology and Power in Institutional Contexts

The pragmatic investigation of power in different institutional contexts relate to the issue of power, ideology and domination which can be revealed in language use. Concepts such as the use of certain speech acts and politeness strategies are instrumental in projecting certain ideologies, maintaining power and projecting a positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation (van Dijk, 2001).

For example, Ojwang et al (2010) illustrate how social power is exercised by face attack where power differentials are sufficiently great and significant retaliations and sanctions are usually not given. This is evident in Kenyan hospitals where power is exercised by nurses through the attack of patients' faces.

Unuabonah (2011), in her investigation of investigative public hearings, illustrates how pronominal reference used by the hearing panel members exhibit protective ideology. She posits that the use of ‘we’ by the chairman and members of the HP shows that the Senate members are out to protect the rights of the citizenry. This protective ideology is shown in order to influence the mental models of the entire populace and foreground the positive self-presentation of the hearing panel members

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the exploration of power and ideology through pragmatic theories is an area that is receiving increasing attention in the field of linguistics. Thus, as graduates students, you need to focus on how power and ideology are produced and enacted in different human interaction, whether natural or mediated.

5.0 SUMMARY

Critical pragmatics focuses on the pragmatic interpretation of power, ideology, conflict and hegemony in human interaction. Ideology and power can be expressed through pragmatic principles such as speech acts, presupposition and politeness. Power is expressed through language and it is constituted through processes of negotiation. Forms of power include reward, referent, expert and legitimate power. Ideologies are belief systems which can be described in cognitive terms and not reduced to social practices, societal structures and discourses.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the concept of power in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart.*

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