

# LINGUISTICS

**FOURTH YEAR**

**LECTURE (2): PRAGMATICS**

**ASST. PROF. MUSTAFA A. ADDULKAREEM (PHD)**

# ***KEY CONCEPTS***

- **What is Pragmatics?**
- **Context: Linguistic and Physical**
- **Deixis: personal, temporal, and spatial**
- **Reference**
- **Anaphora**
- **Inference**
- **Presupposition**
- **Speech Acts:**
  - ❑ **Direct and indirect speech acts**
  - ❑ **Types and Categories of speech acts**
- **Politeness:**
  - ❑ **Face-threatening act Vs. Face-saving act**
  - ❑ **Negative Vs. Positive face**

# WHAT IS PRAGMATICS?

- **Pragmatics** studies **invisible meaning** how language is used in context to convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of words and sentences.
- It focuses on the relationship between **what is said** and **what is meant**, considering **the speaker's intentions**, **the listener's interpretation**, and **the situational context**.

## What does this mean?!

- Are they selling babies?
- We understand the message although the word '**clothes**' is not there



# CONTEXT

➤ **Context** refers to the **background** or **situation** in which communication occurs. It helps determine **the intended meaning of an utterance**.

➤ **There are two kinds of context:**

1. **Linguistic context (co-text):** The set of other words used in the same phrase or sentence. The surrounding co-text has a strong effect on what we think a word means. **For example:**

- I need to **withdraw** some **cash** from the bank. (Financial institution)
- Most of Ancient Egypt's historical sites are **located** along the banks of **the Nile River**. (Side of river)

we have no problem deciding which type of bank is meant.

2. **Physical context:** It is **our mental representation** of those aspects of what is physically out there that we use in arriving at an interpretation. Most importantly, the **time** and **place** in which we encounter linguistic expressions. **For example:**

➤ If we see the word **“BANK”** on the wall of a building, the physical location will influence our interpretation.

# DEIXIS

- **Deixis** are technically known as **deictic expressions**, from the Greek word **deixis**, which means “**pointing**” via language.
- They are **words** or **expressions** that require **contextual information** to understand their meaning.
- Such words are **Here, there, this, that, then, now, yesterday, today, tomorrow, you, me, she, him, it, them...etc.**
- A sentence like “*you’ll have to bring it back tomorrow because she isn’t here today*” is **vague** because their interpretation relies on the knowledge of the immediate physical context.

□ Deixis are of **three types**:

- 1. Person Deixis:** To point to **things** and **people**. For examples: **it, this, these, him, them, those...etc.**
- 2. Spatial Deixis:** To point to a **location**. For examples: **here, there, near that... etc.**
- 3. Temporal Deixis:** To point to a **time**. Those are of three types:
  - a. **Present Deixis** (now, today)
  - b. **Past Deixis** (then, yesterday)
  - c. **Future Deixis** (tomorrow, soon)

➤ Those types can also be categorised in terms of what is **close to** or **distant from** the speaker:

- 1- Proximal Deixis:** **Near** the speaker. For examples: **This, here, now...etc.**
- 2- Distal Deixis:** **Away** from the speaker. For examples: **That, there, then... etc.**

# DEIXIS ANALYSIS

## The Discovery

That was the day I found the treasure. I was digging right here when my shovel hit the box. You can still see the mark there. Now, the box sits in this museum, but then, it was my greatest moment.

## The Promise

I told you this yesterday: we will meet at that bench tomorrow. Now, I'm here, but you are not. Next time, I will wait for you in this spot. I hope you come.

# ASSIGNMENT (1)...



Analyze the use of **deixis** in a selected story  
taking into account its different types, presented  
in the text

# REFERENCE

- **Reference:** is the **act of using language** by **a speaker** (or writer) to enable **a listener** (or reader) to **identify someone or something** in the world.
- It is **not just about words themselves**, but about **how speakers use words** to make listeners recognize what they are talking about.
- To make reference, we use: {Referring Expressions}

  1. **Proper nouns:** e.g. Chomsky, Diana, Ahmed..etc.
  2. **Nouns in phrases:** e.g. a writer, my friend, my cat...etc.
  3. **Pronouns:** e.g. he, she, it, her ...etc.

- We can also **describe things** when we **are not sure what to call them**.
  - ❖ The blue thing
  - ❖ The icky stuff

# ANAPHORA

- **Anaphora:** a **subsequent reference** where a word or phrase refers back to a **previously mentioned entity**.
- The first mentioned reference is called an **antecedent**
- The second (subsequent) referring expression is an **anaphora**.

**For example:**

- ❖ We saw a puppy in a home video. (antecedent)
- ❖ The puppy was struggling and shaking. (anaphor)
- ❖ It jumped out of the bath and ran away. (anaphor)

Such connections are often based on **'inference'**

- ❖ We found a house to rent but the kitchen was very small. (if X is a house then X has a kitchen)
- ❖ I caught a bus and asked the driver if it went near the downtown area.

# REFERENCES ANALYSIS

Lina met Omar at the bookstore yesterday. He was looking for a novel that she had already read. When Lina told him about the story, he seemed very interested. Later, they went to a nearby café to talk more about it. Omar thanked her for the recommendation, and she smiled, saying she hoped he would enjoy the book.

---

Leo was building a tall tower with his colorful blocks. His little sister, Mia, pointed and said, "That's so high!" Leo smiled proudly. Just then, their mom walked in. She looked at the wobbly tower and said, "Be careful with that, honey, it might fall." But it was too late. Mia, trying to help, bumped the table. The tower crashed, scattering blocks everywhere. "Oh no," Mia whispered, her eyes filling with tears. Leo sighed and said, "It's okay. We can build a better one together."

# ***INFERENCE***

- **Inference:** The **additional information** used by **the listener** to create a connection between **what is said** and **what must be meant**.
- It is the process by which **the listener** **interprets** and **understands what the speaker means**, even if **it is not directly stated**. **For example:**
  - ❖ Can I borrow your **Chomsky**? (A book)
  - ❖ We saw **Shakespeare** in London. (A play)
  - ❖ Jennifer is wearing **Calvin Klein**. (A shirt)
  - ❖ **Picasso** is in the museum. (A painting)
- **References** are made by the **speaker**, and **inferences** are made by the **listener**.

# ***PRESUPPOSITION***

- **Presupposition (assumption):** is the **background assumption** that a speaker makes and expects the listener to accept as true or known. **For example:**
  - ❖ **Your brother is waiting outside.** (there is an obvious presupposition that you have a brother)
  - ❖ **When did you stop smoking?** (you used to smoke, and you no longer smoke)
  - ❖ **Mary's dog is cute.** (Mary has a dog)
  - ❖ **My car is a wreck** (you have a car, and you have an accident)

## ❑ **Characteristics of Presupposition**

### *1. Survives negation (called constancy under negation):*

- **John stopped smoking.** → presupposes John used to smoke.
- **John didn't stop smoking.** → still presupposes John used to smoke.

### *2. Backgrounded information:*

- The presupposed content **is not the main focus** of the sentence.
- It forms part of what is taken for granted.

### *3. Shared knowledge:*

- It is something the speaker assumes the listener **already knows or accepts.**

# ***EXERCISES ...***

**1) Identify the anaphoric expressions and the antecedents in this sentence:**

❖ I saw a black horse running. It took my breath away.

**2) What is presupposed by the following sentences?**

❖ Fred's wife is 6 feet tall.

❖ Your lunch is getting cold.

**3) What kind of inference is involved in interpreting the following:**

❖ Have you seen my Galaxy? I need to make a call.

# ***SPEECH ACTS***

- **Speech act** is a theory developed originally by J.L. **Austin** in 1930s, later expanded by **John Searle** 1950s.
- It studies how utterances function as **actions** in communication.
- Each utterance **does not just convey information** but also **performing actions** such as **making requests, giving commands, making promises, apologizing,** and more. **For example:**
  - ❖ **I' ll be here at five.**
- You are not just speaking, you are performing the speech act of '**promising**'

# ***DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH ACT***

We usually use certain **syntactic structures** to do certain **functions** as listed in the following table:

<b>Utterances</b>	<b>Structures</b>	<b>Functions</b>
Did you eat the pizza?	Interrogative	Question
Eat the pizza (please)!	Imperative	Command (Request)
You ate the pizza.	Declarative	Statement

## **Direct Speech Act**

Example: Can you ride a bicycle?

We use such **interrogative structure** to ask someone to provide the information, as the **function** of a question.

## **Indirect Speech Act**

Example: Can you pass the salt?

We **are not** really asking **a question** about someone's ability. But, we normally use it to make **a request**.

i.e., we are using a **syntactic structure** associated with the function of a **question**, but with the function of a **request**.

*It's cold outside.*

I am telling you that it is cold outside.  
**Statement** (direct speech act)

I am asking you to close the door.  
**Request** (*indirect speech act*)

# ***DIRECT AND INDIRECT SPEECH ACT***

- It is possible to have **strange effects** if one person **fails** to recognize another **person's indirect speech act**.
- Consider the following scene: A visitor to a city, carrying his luggage, looking lost, stops a passer-by.
  - ❖ **VISITOR:** Excuse me. **Do you know** where the Ambassador Hotel is?
  - ❖ **PASSER-BY:** Oh sure, **I know** where it is. (and walks away)
- In this scene, the visitor uses a form normally associated with **a question (Do you know...?)**, and the passer-by answers that **question literally (I know...)**. That is, the passer-by is acting **as if the utterance was a direct speech act instead of an indirect speech act** used as a request for directions.
- **The indirect speech acts** (e.g., **Could you open that door for me?**) are generally considered to be **more gentle or more polite** in our society than **direct speech acts** (e.g., **Open that door for me!**).

# ***TYPES OF SPEECH ACTS***

**1. Locutionary Act:** The **actual act of saying something**, including the utterance's linguistic and semantic content. It's simply **what is said**.

❖ For example: "**The window is open**"

**2. Illocutionary Act:** **The speaker's intention behind the utterance**, which can vary (such as asking, promising, ordering, warning, or apologizing). This is **what the speaker is doing** with their words.

❖ For example: Saying "**The window is open**" could be an indirect **request** to close it because it might be cold.

**3. Perlocutionary Act:** **The effect of the utterance on the listener**, which may include persuading, scaring, or encouraging the listener to take action. This focuses on **the listener's response** elicited.

❖ For example: After hearing "**The window is open**," the listener may feel a need to close it.

➤ The term '**speech act**' is generally interpreted quite narrowly to mean only the ***illocutionary force*** of an utterance.

# ***CATEGORIES OF ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS***

➤ Searle classified illocutionary acts **into five main types**:

**1. Assertives:** Statements that **describe reality**, which the speaker believes to be true. (e.g., **"It is raining."**)

**2. Directives:** Attempts to get the listener to **do something**, like **warning, suggesting, requesting,** or **commanding**. (e.g., **"Please close the door."**)

**3. Commissives:** Commit the speaker to some **future action**, like **threatening, promising,** or **offering**. (e.g., **"I will help you with your homework."**)

**4. Expressives:** Express the speaker's feelings or attitudes, like **thanking, apologizing** or **complaining**. (e.g., **"I apologize for being late."**)

**5. Declarations:** Change the reality simply by being uttered in the right context, like **pronouncing** someone married. (e.g., **"I now pronounce you husband and wife."**)

# SPEECH ACT ANALYSIS

□ Identify the speech acts in the following sentences:

1. **The Earth revolves around the Sun.**
2. **The meeting will start at 3 PM.**
3. **Please pass the salt.**
4. **Close the door.**
5. **Why don't you try restarting your computer?**
6. **Don't go in there!**
7. **I'll send you the report by 5 PM.**
8. **If you do that again, I'm telling Mom.**
9. **I offer my full support.**
10. **Thank you for your help.**
11. **I'm so sorry for your loss.**
12. **This soup is too salty!**
13. **I name this ship the Voyager.**

# ***POLITENESS***

- **Politeness** can be defined as **showing awareness of and consideration of another person's face**.
- **Face** is your **public self-image**. This is the emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize.

☐ Face is of **two types**:

1. **Face-threatening act**: saying something that represents a **threat** to another person's self image.

❖ **For example**: Give me that paper!

Behaving as if you have more social power than the other person. If you don't actually have that power (your mom, a military officer), then you are performing a face-threatening act.

2. **Face-saving act**: say something that **protects** another's self-image (or "face") in social interactions, especially when a face-threatening act (FTA) has occurred. Face-saving acts are designed to **minimize** potential embarrassment, offense, or threat to a person's positive or negative face.

❖ **For example**: Indirect speech act (**Could you pass me that paper?**) removes the assumption of social power.

# ***NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE FACE***

There are two main types of face-saving acts:

**1. Positive Face:** The desire to be **liked**, **approved of**, **appreciated**, and **accepted** by others.

- When a speaker tries to make the hearer feel **good** about themselves, **included**, or **respected**.
- It is used to **reduce** the **threat** to the listener's self-esteem and build **solidarity** or **friendship**.

**For examples:**

- ❖ **Using compliments:** “**You did a great job on that presentation!**”
- ❖ **Showing agreement:** “**Yes, I think that's a wonderful idea.**”
- ❖ **Using friendly language:** “**Hey buddy, could you help me out?**”

**2. Negative Face:** The desire to have **freedom of action**, to be **independent**, and **not imposed upon by others**.

- When a speaker tries **to avoid imposing** on the listener.
- To **respect** the listener's personal space and **minimize** imposition.

**For examples:**

- ❖ **Being indirect:** “**Could you possibly lend me your notes?**”
- ❖ **Using hedges or apologies:** “**I'm sorry to bother you, but could I ask a quick question?**”
- ❖ **Using respectful titles:** “**Excuse me, sir, would you mind if I sat here?**”

***Thanks***