
The linguistic notion of pragmatic intentions: theories of intention in communication

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Annotation

This research article aims to explore the notion of pragmatic intentions deeply from both historical and modern approaches. It includes the comparison of previous research studies, highlighting their similarities and differences to clarify evolving new insights and changes. Besides, pragmatic intentions theory is required to be applied in real-life communication. Therefore, this work aims to discover how it works and explore its cognitive and pragmatic mechanisms. In other words, within the assistance of this article, not only verbal implication of pragmatic intentions by following the postulates of Grice's Maxims, but also how the listener or reader interprets the message in communication is explored further with additional evidence and explanations. As the nature of Linguistic research is qualitative, regarding the methods applied vary from Supralinear Analysis - delving into the implicit information in a text for the purpose of finding verbal signals that hint at hidden meanings, to Pragmatic analysis - hypothesizing about the author's pragmatic intention based on verbal signals. Additionally, conceptological analysis is involved in order to achieve a comprehensive, multi-stage analysis of concepts, describing their structure, taxonomy, and distribution of cognitive features. Overall, this article is based on the categorization and exploration of Pragmatic Intentions considering current and previously conducted works so far.

Keywords

Pragmatic intentions, pragmalinguistics, verbal implication, cognitive pragmatics, communicative strategies, gricean maxims, relevance theory, inference in communication

Лингвистическое понятие прагматического намерения: теории намерения в коммуникации

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Аннотация *Данная научная статья направлена на всестороннее изучение понятия прагматических намерений с позиций как исторических, так и современных подходов. В ней проводится сравнительный анализ предыдущих исследований с целью выявления сходств, различий и уточнения новых научных идей и изменений. Особое внимание уделяется применению теории прагматических намерений в живом общении, а также изучению её когнитивных и механизмов. Статья рассматривает не только вербальное выражение прагматических намерений на основе постулатов теории Грайса, но и то, как получатель (слушатель или читатель) интерпретирует сообщение в коммуникации. В методологическом плане работа основывается на качественных методах лингвистического анализа, включая супралинейный анализ – для выявления скрытых смыслов через вербальные сигналы, прагматический анализ – для интерпретации намерений автора, и концептологический анализ, направленный на многоэтапное изучение структуры, таксономии и распределения когнитивных признаков понятий.*

Ключевые слова *Прагматическое намерение, прагмалингвистика, вербальная импликация, когнитивная прагматика, коммуникативные стратегии, максимы грайса, теория релевантности, умозаключение в коммуникации*

**Pragmatik maqsadning
lingvistik talqini:
kommunikatsiyada pragmatik
maqsad nazariyalari**

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Аннотация *Ushbu ilmiy maqola pragmatik maqsadlar tushunchasini tarixiy va zamonaviy yondashuvlar asosida batafsil o'rganishga qaratilgan. Unda hozirgacha olib borilgan ilmiy tadqiqotlar taqqoslanib, ularning o'xshash va farqli jihatlari tahlil qilinadi hamda bugungi kundagi yangi rivojlanayotgan g'oyalar va o'zgarishlar aniqlashtiriladi. Qolaversa, pragmatik maqsadlar nazariyasini jonli muloqotda qo'llanishi yoritib beriladi. Shu sababli, ushbu ish nazariyaning qanday ishlashini va uning kognitiv hamda pragmatik mexanizmlarini o'rganishga yo'naltirilgan. Umumiy xulosalar hisobga olinganda, ushbu maqola nafaqat Grays nazariyalariga amal qilgan holda pragmatik maqsadlarning og'zaki ifodasini ko'rsatib beradi, balki tinglovchi yoki o'quvchining muloqotdagi xabarni qanday tushunishi ham qo'shimcha dalillar va tushuntirishlar bilan tahlil qilinadi. Tilshunoslikdagi tadqiqotlarga tayangan holda, quyidagi keng qo'llaniladigan usullar: keng ko'lamlil tahlildan – matndagi yashirin ma'nolarga ishora qiluvchi og'zaki belgilarni aniqlash uchun noaniq axborotni*

o'rganishga, hamda. Pragmatik tahlil – muallifning pragmatik maqsadini so'zdagi tushunchalar asosida taxmin qilish kabi usullar ishlatiladi. Bundan tashqari, konseptiologik tahlil ham qo'llanilib, tushunchalarning tuzilmasi, tasnifi va kognitiv belgilarining taqsimoti kabi bosqichma-bosqich, keng qamrovli tahlil amalga oshiriladi.

Kalit so'zlar *Pragmatik maqsad, pragmatik lingvistik, og'zaki implikasiya, kognitiv pragmatika, kommunikativ strategiyalar, grays maksimalari, bog'liqlik nazariyasi, kommunikatsiyadagi xulosa chiqarish*

Introduction

As it is known that today's world is fast-paced, the varieties of new concepts are emerging due to modern technologies along with newly-coined terms within scientific breakthroughs. As a result of this, *pragmatics* plays a crucial role in both the representation and interpretation of speaker's message. Therefore, pragmatic intentions in communication are supposed to be clarified and explored deeply. So far, all over the world, several research has been conducted in the pursuit of analyzing the notion of the pragmatic intentions. According to Guizhou Educational Science Planning Program in 2022, many scholars claim that "pragmatics" originates from "How to do things with words" proposed by John L. Austin (1911–1960) in 1962. Herbert Paul Grice (1913–1988), John R. Searle (1932–), Stephen C. Levinson (1947–), Geoffrey Leech (1936–2014), Avram Noam Chomsky (1928–), and others have continuously supplemented and expanded speech act theory, which has developed vigorously and gradually developed to prosperity today. One of the most prominent representatives among them dealing with the definition of pragmatics by stating that "it is possible for different speakers in different circumstances to mean different things using those words. How is this possible? What's the relationship among the meaning of words, what speakers mean when uttering those words, the particular circumstances of their utterance, their

intentions, their actions, and what they manage to communicate? These are some of the questions that pragmatics tries to answer; the sort of questions that, roughly speaking, serve to characterize the field of pragmatics." (Korta, Kepa and John Perry, 2024). As can be seen from this statement, pragmatics functions all the key details while transmitting the information from the speaker or writer to the listener or reader clearly without any ambiguity and confusion in the context.

In terms of the first introduction of this field, in 1938, Charles Morris first distinguished pragmatics as an independent subfield within semiotics, alongside syntax and semantics (Israel, Michael, 2011), however, this was not a single isolated work, meaning that before him, a number of foundational works, several perspectives have been developed. Ferdinand de Saussure's structural linguistics stands out from the others, as Pragmatics was a reaction to structuralist linguistics as outlined by Ferdinand de Saussure. In many cases, it expanded upon his idea that language has an analyzable structure, composed of parts that can be defined in relation to others (Jucker, Andreas H. 2012). This view elaborates how the context influences on the message to be delivered, emphasizing more focus on pragmatic intentions.

Regarding pragmatic intentions which came into existence in the work of Levinson (2006a, 2006b), for instance, has recently

reasserted the centrality of (Gricean) intentions in postulating an “interaction engine” that he argues underpins human interaction (Michael Haugh, 2008). “Interaction engine” is closely related to pragmatic intentions - they are the motives and driving forces throughout the communication. In Levinson’s view, then, human communication is crucially dependent on the existence of communicative intentions, specifically Gricean intentions, which exist in the minds of speakers, and about which addressees make inferences. While analyzing different contexts in communication, pragmatic intentions’ positions are irreplaceable - making them worthwhile to be discussed further on the basis of previously-conducted experiments.

The object of this research is not only pragmatic intentions notion, but also how they are interpreted and understood in communication, especially, in today’s latest technological era with unique way of conveying any messages on social media platforms or any other so-called digital devices. In the last decade, this has provoked a great interest and more plausible reasons for the investigation of the topic, as this communication approach is totally different from the past periods. As an influence of such factors, a number of recently-published works offer a novelty in different regards. Such pragmatic components have been offered under the name of “Understanding Pragmatic Skills: Real-life Examples and Applications” on the official website everydayspeech.com suggesting the following perspective: “Pragmatic skills are crucial in social interactions as they allow us to navigate conversations, understand others’ intentions, and convey our own thoughts and feelings effectively. They help us build and maintain relationships, resolve conflicts, and collaborate with others.” This refers to the conduct of how to deliver the message and its function in communication, as discussed above without the analysis and exploration of pragmatic aspects, pragmatic intentions and the

pragmalinguistic relatedness to the context, it certainly misleads and causes confusions and misunderstandings among communicators.

Research methods

While delivering a particular speech act, the addressee has some aims to realize and they are called as pragmatic intentions, in this article, the types of these intentions are enumerated and analyzed with samples taken from various texts, mostly, related to current usage of notions comparing the ones used in the past periods. To achieve the targets set above, here such methodologies are applied:

Initially, the *Supralinear Analysis* - delving into the implicit information in a text for the purpose of finding verbal signals that hint at hidden meanings, to Pragmatic Analysis - hypothesizing about the author’s pragmatic intention based on verbal signals. This method helps to discover new aspects of pragmatic intentions along with how to comprehend and respond to the speaker or writer- overall interpretation is on top of the functions, thereby, making this research worthwhile.

Additionally, *Conceptological Analysis* is involved in order to achieve a comprehensive, multi-stage analysis of concepts, describing their structure, taxonomy, and distribution of cognitive features. As a human being’s nature different scholars offer various views on the cognition and recognition of pragmatism, particularly, in this digitalized world. This can create a huge gap between a variety of generations in science world how to determine pragmatic intentions notion while taking the communicative context into account. Pragmatics is closely connected with Cognitive Linguistics - they are both multifaceted and can be revealed by paying attention to both the former and latter disciplines.

For the clear analysis of pragmatic intentions and their interpretation, Grice’s Maxim postulates are of significant importance so as to discuss deeply on the issues of relevance and its

place in pragmatic intentions. In fact, without the existence of coherently linked discourse, the communication does not happen at all. This condition makes it necessary for us to involve

and relate how Pragmatic intentions are constructed on the foundation of all four postulates of Grice's Maxims. The following table could illustrate these in detail:

| Postulates | How they serve for the provision of Pragmatic and Communicative intentions |
|------------------|--|
| Quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being truthful. ▪ Not giving false or unsupported information. |
| Quantity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Saying enough information but not too much. |
| Relavance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staying relevant to the topic and pertinent to the discussion. |
| Manner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being clear, brief and orderly. ▪ Avoiding obscurity and ambiguity. |

Table 1. Grice's Maxims Theory (E. Frederking, 2019)

When it comes to the relationship between *Relevance Theory* mentioned above and Pragmatic Inference, without one, the other cannot be achieved, they must exist at once, otherwise, the communicators are confused and cannot grasp the meaning at all, ot vice versa, when the speech is relevant to the context, yet the inference on the interlocutor lacks - this also leads to deviate the rules of pragmatic intentions, thereby, in the discussions section of this article, with more examples, this is discussed further.

Additionally, in order to make pragmatic intentions visibly understandable for future linguists, and other prospective researchers, we choose the way of taxonomical orientation to classify the types of pragmatic intentions in two different periods: between *the century of XX and the recent XXI modern era*. The aim behind this is to identify the differences and how the linguistic notion of Pragmatic Intentions in Communication has changed over time and gained its peculiarities within this period. To achieve this, taxonomical classification is applied, which can not only transfer the full picture of scientists' perspectives on this global issue, but also contribute for future researchers on this area more deeply - as this is not the final work - can be explored and enriched additional details all

the time revealing new perspectives and aspects, especially, in the communicational sphere.

Regarding the unique aspects of this article, the research is well-organized making it easy to follow, avoiding any ambiguity - explaining new terms properly in order. Just as cited by Jacob, 'Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the *intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object*, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction toward an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity') (Bretano 1874: 88-89). This emphasizes the importance of mental inexistence - intentional inexistence, in other words, - the direction towards an object. In the case of communication, this refers to successfully accomplishing targets in the conversations, conveying one's expressions fully and correctly without unclarity and ambiguity, more importantly, staying on the topic, being able to become understandable to the reader or listener.

Besides to these, from the point of view of Robert Craig, the whole *theory of communication is a kind of metadiscourse*, a way of speaking about speaking, which receives most of its credibility and interest through a rhetorical

appeal to the well-known truths of everyday practical metadiscourse. On this basis, the researcher builds a coherent agreed field of a unified *communication theory*, each element of which refers to its own set of "common truths" and critically examines the other elements included in the field. (Craig R.T. (1999), 119-161)

Results

First and foremost, recent perspectives on the issue of pragmatic intentions are supposed to be discussed as they involve quite more modern and facilitated aspects of the topic within the analysis of digitalized world communication. One of the most peculiar factors among them is considered as 'Both the intended and perceived goals of the initial comment are indicative – in potentially different ways – of a conversation's future trajectory. While certain intended goals (for example, sharing an opinion) are more likely to lead to uncivil behavior in the subsequent discussion, even more significant is whether other participants in the conversation perceive those goals as they were intended. For instance, when the initial commenter intends to share a fact, but this goal is misperceived by others, the conversation is more likely to turn uncivil than when that initial intention is correctly perceived.' (Jonathan P. Chang, Justin Cheng, Cristian Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil (2020)). According to their research on Facebook users, English page posts, most people intend differently, yet they are perceived mismatching - consequently leading to misperceptions. From this, it can be inferred that the notions of

Pragmatic intentions and Inference in Communication are interconnected, yet the subjective and objective peculiarities might be challenged by communicators. Thereby, it is claimed that *discourse* involves two perspectives: a person's intention in making an utterance and others' perception of that utterance.

The same view is shared by the study of Pragmatics to Reveal Intent in Social Media Peer Interactions: Mixed Methods lying in understanding the intent of the community users, not just based on one's conversations with their peers, but also based on their self-reported behavior profiles as well as observed engagement levels, thus offering intrapersonal and interpersonal contexts of psychosocial and behavioral domains crucial to self-management of risky behaviors and chronic health conditions. (Tavleen Singh and et. all J Med Internet Res. 2021) Here, we could determine the similar sides on the engagement levels, when both communicators are exposed to the intentions of each other, interpersonal domains can be lost easily making the conversation off misleading and causing misinterpretation to each side.

In terms of *the classification of pragmatic intentions* in the modern era, the following differentiation plays a key role in linguistics and other language-related domains. Differentiation of pragmatic intentions and hierarchical classification of their sorts appear to be crucial in this regard. We define the type of pragmatic intention based on:

| | |
|----------|---|
| a | the analysis of all parameters of a verbal sign, the ways of its introduction, organization, and reorganization in the discourse; |
| b | verbalized in the discourse direct or indirect indication to a pragmatic intention; |
| c | indication of the addressee's verbal and non-verbal reaction |

Table 2. *The linguistic notion of Pragmatic intentions (Inderscience Globe)*

Based on this illustration, it can be referred that Relevance Theory on Grice's Maxims and the

organization of the text or speech to the reader are demanded to be met coherently and

cohesively. Without this, it is almost impossible to meet pragmatic intentions lying on the main target of communication delivering the meaningful conversations between the receiver and the author. On top of that in the discourse, there is either direct or indirect indication to a pragmatic intention. This means the implicitness may influence on the interpretation of the message. Last but not least, the indication of the addressee's verbal and non-verbal reaction to the contextual factors may have an effect too. For example, if an author is foregrounding one

information over time, this means the clue to more significance on this point. As a result of this, inference and interpretation can be achieved via the focus on foregrounding tool, for the sake of pragmatic intention's clarification to the addresser while reading the text or listening to the speech.

Discussions

The analysis of the language material allows the primary categories of pragmatic goals in literary discourse to be defined. These are the details:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | The pragmatic intention "to attract attention" (attention-compelling intention) |
| 2 | The pragmatic intention "to interest the reader" |
| 3 | The pragmatic intention "to exert an emotional impact" |
| 4 | The pragmatic intention "to activate knowledge structures" relevant to the conceptual information |
| 5 | The pragmatic intention "to stimulate the addressee's creativity" |
| 6 | The pragmatic intention "to represent the conceptual world picture" |

Table 3. *The pragmatic intentions classification (Ashurova & Galiyeva, 2016)*

It is important to note that all of these intentions do not necessarily come together, as all of them are distinctive. However, this does not mean that at once pragmatic intentions cannot be applied. Especially, in literary work, it is widespread to face two or more pragmatic intentions implementation so that the author can reach one's intention whether to stimulate an interest on the reader or to activate knowledge structures simultaneously.

When it comes to the comparison of historical views with abovementioned current research, there could be a quite different side between them. As cited globally, when a person is interacting with others, intentions differ from one another. The brightest example here is this saying:

When a diplomat says *yes*, he means 'perhaps';
When he says *perhaps*, he means 'no';
When he says *no*, he is not a diplomat.

– Voltaire (Quoted, in Spanish, in Escandell 1993.)

These lines – also attributed to H. L. Mencken and Carl Jung – may or may not be fair to diplomats, but are surely correct in reminding us that more is involved in what one communicates than what one literally says; more is involved in what one means than the standard, conventional meaning of the words one uses. (Korta, Kepa and John Perry, "Pragmatics") This focuses more on the implicit inference behind the intention - claiming the role in clear communication. It is worth mentioning that indirect meaning may be more challenging to be decoded and confusing the listener or reader in the communicative situation thereby, demands awareness from both sides.

While this work is concerned with the Implicitness, the researcher named Jürgen Habermas coming up with the philosophical

concept of "Communicative Action". This reconstruction proposes "human action and understanding can be fruitfully analysed as having a linguistic structure" and each utterance relies upon the anticipation of freedom from unnecessary dominations. These linguistic structures of communication can be used to establish a normative understanding of society. It is clear from this note that Pragmatics and Cognitive Linguistics align with one another. Understanding the pragmatic intentions is also as much important as communicating effectively.

Conclusion

Although the pragmatic intentions can be defined from different angles in Linguistics, this article has attempted to identify some of the main similarities and connecting with current research along with previously accomplished works on the issue of achieving successful communication. The results outline that pragmatic intentions are closely related to *Grice's Maxim Theory, Communication Act - cognitive*

aspects of interpreting pragmatic intentions, intentional inexistence of an object and others. They are classified as six main groups so as to convey the information from the author to the addresser appropriately. In this digitalized world, effective communication has been affected by online platforms, ruining the norms of cohesive and coherent organization of the conversation. On the research of Facebook users, pragmatic intentions are found to be misled while perceiving and interpreting the message. Thereby, it can be summarized that Perception and Pragmatics, on the other hand, Inference in Communication has had a pivotal position in the transferring process of any speech or text among interlocutors. This article is the main foundation of Pragmatic intentions from linguistic point of view, so it may require to be proven with a large scale experiments further in the future research. Yet it is helpful for those searching for the *comparative analysis of Pragmatic Intentions in Communication.*

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