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THE RHETORIC OF DISCOURSE AND PRAGMATICS IN LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

Abstract. *This study aims to explore the contributions of pragmatics to the development of discourse-analysis mechanisms by examining the interaction between linguistic structure and pragmatic context in the production of meaning. The research is based on the assumption that discourse comprehension cannot be achieved solely through linguistic elements; rather, it requires consideration of the communicative circumstances and contextual factors related to both the speaker and the listener. The analytical method was employed to examine a set of discourses, with a focus on key pragmatic concepts such as intentionality, implicature, and presupposition. The findings reveal that pragmatics provides precise tools for discourse analysis and for understanding its communicative and persuasive dimensions, making it one of the fundamental approaches in contemporary linguistic studies.*

Keywords: *pragmatics, discourse, context, intentionality, communication.*

INTRODUCTION

After structuralism became renowned for studying the internal worlds of the text in isolation from all its surrounding internal and external thresholds, and likewise apart from the intentions of the recipient and of the author himself, there was born a wholly different approach and an entirely new way of understanding texts and studying language in all its aspects aesthetic, semantic, and psychological and in its relation to the comprehension of both the recipient and the sender, together with its intentions connected to interpretation, meaning, and signification: namely, the science of pragmatics. This is

regarded as a field for studying how language is used in its contexts, and as an applied analytical method that helps to analyze and understand texts and discourses on the basis of what the context dictates.

Pragmatics studies the relations between linguistic signs and their users, and is concerned with investigating speakers' intentions and the implicit meanings that words do not state explicitly. Pragmatics thus restored consideration to the reader and the author and to what relates to their intentions toward the text.

How, then, do this science and this method contribute to the pragmatic reading and understanding of texts within the depths of the fields of discourse analysis?

MAIN PART

The process of discourse analysis whatever its type rests essentially on two principal pillars: description and analysis. The former always precedes the latter, since description aims to uncover the elements of discourse, proceeding from individual units to the minor predicative structures (the sentence), then to the major one (the text), along with the connectors that achieve the coherence and consistency of these structures, down to the themes and significations to which these structures refer. All of this falls within textual studies, with which pragmatic studies were not content; they called for the necessity of uncovering the external connectors and constituents of the text by identifying the elements that compose it functionally and structurally, which makes discourse analysis a second process of production.

With the development of studies in the linguistic field, many linguists became interested in linguistic structures in terms of their composition and significations, and modern linguistic study began to attend to another aspect termed, in Anglo-Saxon research, "pragmatics" (pragmatique), which was later rendered by the term *al-tadawuliyyat* by many Arab researchers among them Taha Abd al-Rahman, who says in this regard: "Since 1970 our choice has fallen upon the term *al-tadawuliyyat* as the equivalent of the Western term 'pragmatica,' because it does justice to what is required, given its denotation of the two meanings of use and interaction together..." (Abd al-Rahman, 1992:28).

Pragmatics has been concerned with the relation of the linguistic sign to its user, and with the connection of its forms to what they refer to in particular situations and

contexts. The occurrence of the process of making-understood and of understanding in these situations can therefore be uncovered only by relying on this method, which allows the sender to utter his discourse by employing all the interpenetrating levels that form a discourse one that is not content with syntactic description but goes beyond it to the study of the speech acts performed in particular contexts, under specific choices made by a sender in whose mind the image of the recipient is formed before he utters his discourse.

Thus, pragmatic linguistic study examines and analyzes the linguistic act within the framework of communication and not in isolation from it; and this is achieved only by taking the context into account, studying its elements, and uncovering the best ways for the sender to produce a discourse more influential upon the addressee, and for the addressee to arrive at the sender's intentions as he wills them when producing his discourse at the moment of utterance.

Since context plays this leading role in the production and interpretation of discourse and in determining the sender's intention and the reference of signs, it has received great attention from researchers since antiquity, among the Arabs as among the West. The idea of the "situation" (the requirement of the case, *muqtada al-hal*) thus attracted the attention of many Arab theorists of Arabic rhetoric, both ancient and modern, as "a heading for the relation between the orator and the listener. Although the Arab rhetoricians did not greatly concern themselves with the psychological and ethical study of the sender and the recipient, they tried to include under the heading of situation and circumstance many observations on what the orator ought to be or to take into account regarding the states of his listeners" (al-Umari, 1993:142).

Among these are the choice of graceful, pleasant wording and clear, manifest meaning, and consideration of the class of the listeners and their social rank. This is the idea that dominated rhetorical thinking as they treated the notion of "the requirement of the case" (*muqtada al-hal*), which aims at securing benefit from the addressee and avoiding his anger on the one hand, and at using comprehensible expressions to avoid that strangeness which leads to confusion and ambiguity making the idea of "for every situation a discourse" (*li-kulli maqam maqal*) a spokesman that proclaims their theoretical and applied orientations alike.

This is what Abu Hilal al-Askari confirms when he says: "If the aim of speech is to make understood, then it is incumbent to apportion speech according to the classes

of people: one addresses the townsman with the speech of the commoners and the Bedouin with the speech of the Bedouin ... and one does not pass beyond what he knows to what he does not know, lest the benefit of the speech be lost” (al-Askari, n.d.:33) which confirms the dominance of the normative method and the didactic aim over these theorizations, and which led to confining the situation and fixing it in the form of a strict rule: “If the situation is such, then the requirement is such.” Some later rhetoricians added to the previous equation another term, namely “conformity” (mutabaqa), which means “the agreement of the text with the aim, the intent, and the purpose, corresponding to the goals of the skilled one (the orator) and the need of the recipient” (Abu Ali, 2003:75).

Not far from this proposition, but without that normativity which made “these situations abstract models, general frameworks, and static states whereby the situation becomes, for the rhetoricians, something static” (Hassan, 1990:332), we find that modern linguistic study has given great attention to context in its broadest sense, going beyond the typical definition to a more spacious one, so as to denote the continuous practice of the act that goes beyond the mere utterance of discourse beginning from the moment the mind is engaged in thinking about its production, so as to ensure its pragmatic appropriateness. From this perspective, context has been defined as the formal signs occurring in the actual linguistic environment, encompassing the language environment, the user (speaker/hearer), the event he performs, the linguistic system used, the positions of the language users, the social systems, customs, and so on which makes context a principal pillar in pragmatic studies, owing to its connection with an important part of these studies, by which we mean the performative aspect of discourse, on the basis that “the states of the speaker and the addressee ... are only states of performance” (van Dijk, 2000:261).

Modern critical approaches have concerned themselves with questions of context and with interpretive readings that investigate the implicit value within the framework of language and meaning. This investigation is represented in the study of discursive intentions, or specifically in the term “intention” (al-qasd) and its concept, which is among the most important problems occupying the modern researcher in identifying meaning and approaching understanding. In light of this conception, there arose the idea of the meanings afforded by intention in its types: the manifest and the implicit, or the unstated.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it becomes clear that pragmatics and discourse analysis constitute two complementary fields that contribute to understanding language as a communicative activity transcending the limits of linguistic structure toward the study of the intentions and contexts in which discourses are produced. The study has shown that pragmatics provides effective methodological tools for uncovering implicit meanings and elucidating speakers' intentions through concepts such as speech acts, presupposition, and conversational implicature, while discourse analysis is concerned with studying the linguistic and communicative structures organized within various texts and discourses. The findings also confirmed that understanding discourse is not achieved by relying on the manifest meanings of words alone, but requires consideration of the social, cultural, and communicative context surrounding the act of communication. Hence, the pragmatic approach represents an essential tool for analyzing discourses and interpreting their semantic and persuasive dimensions, contributing to a deeper understanding of linguistic and communicative phenomena. Accordingly, it may be said that pragmatics has brought about a qualitative shift in modern linguistic studies and has contributed to enriching the methods of discourse analysis and broadening its research horizons. The need remains for further applied studies that invest pragmatic concepts in analyzing various types of discourse, in a way that contributes to developing linguistic research and keeping pace with the accelerating transformations in the fields of communication, media, and culture.

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