
BOOK REVIEW

INTRODUCING PRAGMATICS IN USE (2ND EDITION)

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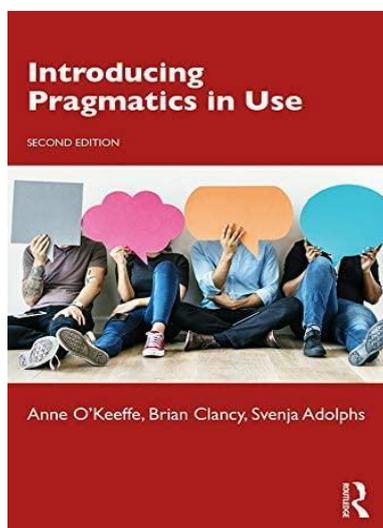
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1. Introduction

Among the array of textbooks on linguistics in general and of pragmatics in particular, *Introducing Pragmatics in Use (2nd edition)* has emerged as a user-friendly guide to the field of pragmatics as it has been described as “a lively and accessible introduction to pragmatics” (O’Keeffe, Clancy & Adolphs, 2020). As its name suggests, the book is designed with the combination of theoretical and practical aspects of pragmatics by not only

introducing theories but also guiding the employment of the theories to examine real or naturally-occurring data in spoken and written forms. *Introducing Pragmatics in Use (2nd edition)* makes systematic use of several language corpora and related software programs. The adoption of the corpus technique to investigate key component areas, namely reference, speech acts, linguistic politeness, language variety, and register is its central focus. By analyzing various language settings offered by spoken and written corpora, the book aims at contextualizing pragmatics in linguistic study as well as making suggestions concerning applying pragmatics to teaching languages. It seeks to provide an introduction to the key theoretical and methodological issues in the study of Pragmatics; therefore, it is a good choice for senior undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in the courses of TESOL, applied linguistics, discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, or research methods in applied linguistics so that they can enhance their understanding of corpus pragmatics and apply its methodology to serve their researching and teaching purposes.

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2. Notable Values of the Book

The textbook *Introducing Pragmatics in Use* (2nd edition) covers a wide range of topics, ranging from researching pragmatics to pragmatics and language teaching. With a total number of 260 pages, the book is comprised of nine chapters, which can be grouped into four sections. In the first section of the book (also Chapter 1 - Introduction), the authors attempt to equip readers with information regarding the history, genesis, and advent of pragmatics. In detail, the chapter works towards tracing the origin of pragmatics in philosophy and indicating its appearance as a sub-field of linguistics. Chapter 1 also makes a brief distinction between two schools of thought, namely the *Anglo-American tradition* and *Continental European tradition*, which results in the discrepancies between the “component view” (micro-pragmatic view) and “perspective view” (macro-pragmatic view) of pragmatics (pp. 1-2). These two traditions are also elaborated by Huang (2017, pp. 2-4), in his book *The Oxford Handbook of Pragmatics*. Trying to be specific and comprehensive as much as possible, Huang (2017) provides definitions of pragmatics as seen from each school of thought; however, a succinct common definition of pragmatics is not suggested for the readers to grasp, especially for those in the initial stages of studying pragmatics. Moreover, the book by Huang (2017) focuses largely on *macro-pragmatics* – “the study of language use in all aspects”, with its detailed description being offered (Huang, 2017, pp. 4-17), coupled with the two major parts of the book devoted to discussing macro-pragmatics, Part 4 (Macro-pragmatics and cognition) and Part 5 (Macro-pragmatics and society/culture). Another standpoint of looking at Pragmatics is recommended by Chapman (2011) in the book entitled *Pragmatics*. She considers two types of

Pragmatics, “theoretical pragmatics” and “social pragmatics”; the former concentrates on “the analysis of particular aspects of meaning, and on how these might be explained within more general formal accounts of language use”, while the latter concerns “various aspects of the relationship between language use and more general social and cultural factors” (Chapman, 2011, p. 5). Chapman (2011) organizes her book – *Pragmatics* in a manner whose focus is placed on *theoretical pragmatics*, whose starting points can be rooted in the philosophy of the Anglo-American tradition of pragmatics.

Section Two involves methodological approaches to pragmatics, and this part is covered by both Chapter 2 – Researching Pragmatics, and Chapter 3 – Corpus Pragmatics. In general, Chapter 2 explains how pragmatics might be explored, whereas Chapter 3 concentrates on the methodological techniques of corpus pragmatics. Chapter 2 examines in depth the methods for doing pragmatics research and demonstrates the wide range of tools available for collecting information for empirical pragmatics research. By contrasting the opposing perspectives from which pragmatics study and corpus linguistics approach their work, Chapter 3 primarily introduces two different approaches in pragmatics (*form-to-function* versus *function-to-form*). The devotion of a particular section to methodologies in pragmatics is what makes the book stand out from the other textbooks of pragmatics. Furthermore, *Corpus pragmatics*, a novel concept in comparison with the incorporation of corpus linguistics in other fields, is introduced by an entire chapter – Chapter 3 in this book, which helps portrays a vivid picture of this approach and contributes to realizing the potential of applying corpora for the study of pragmatics. Corpus pragmatics is also mentioned but not extensively explained in other textbooks,

including Huang (2017, pp. 13-14), Chapman (2011, pp. 187-189).

Reference, politeness, speech acts, and register – which are either essential components of pragmatics or pervasive in language use – are the fundamental component areas of pragmatics that Section Three, Chapters 4 through Chapter 8, centers on. The main focus of Chapter 9 is pragmatic instruction in language teaching, which is also Section Four of the book, even though it also involves the use of the corpus pragmatics technique. The area of pragmatics and language learning is also investigated in *Pragmatics: A resource book for students* by Cutting and Fordyce (2021), in units 8A – “Pragmatics and language learning” (pp. 84-99), 8B – “Teaching Pragmatics” (pp. 131-135), 8C – “Pragmatics online and learning” (pp. 166-171), and 8D – “Pragmatic development, ELF, and TBLT” (pp. 248-262). Cutting and Fordyce (2021) structure the book in a way that aims to facilitate readers’ cross-reference purpose among the four sections of the book. The four sections are termed Section A – Introduction (Concepts in pragmatics), Section B – Development (Studies in Pragmatics), Section C – Exploration (Data for investigation), and Section C (Readings); each section consists of eight corresponding units, ranging from “context and structure”, “speech act theory” to “intercultural pragmatics” and “pragmatics and language learning”. However, this type of organization seems to hinder the in-depth analysis of research methodologies in pragmatics, and it cannot equip the readers with the synopsis of clear procedures and steps to follow in conducting research in the areas of pragmatics as presented in its first section.

Introducing Pragmatics in Use (2nd edition) is the updated version of its first edition which was published in 2011, and several meaningful changes have been made to this edition. The book draws on corpus

linguistics and, as the authors note in the prologue to the second edition, “both covers theory and applies it to real spoken and written data” (p. i). The book is a “lively and accessible introduction to pragmatics” due to the dominance of corpus-based analyses across the chapters (p. i). The most notable modification in this version is that the authors give specific attention to corpus pragmatics (Chapter 3) to make readers aware of the book’s primary focus, which was not done in the original edition. The vertical (quantitative) technique common in corpus linguistics is combined with the horizontal (qualitative) methodology typical of pragmatics to create *corpus pragmatics*, which is a combination of *corpus linguistics* and *pragmatics*. In a *form-to-function* approach (pp. 51-56), corpus pragmatics normally operates from form frequencies to pragmatic function. This is demonstrated through sample analyses. The *frequency lists* and *concordance lines* in this approach eventually lead us toward a conclusion regarding the utilization of a form. The opposing method is to commence with a function, such as a speech act, and attempt to minimize the range of potential forms utilized to perform the act, then use these forms to identify language cases in a corpus. For example, the words and phrases that are commonly connected with a speech act (as a result of experimental studies, such as Illocutionary Force Identifying Devices (IFIDs)) can be used to examine a vast corpus for examples. This method is known as a *function-to-form* method (pp. 56-67). Form-to-function is the standard methodology for corpus linguistics, although pragmatics scholars typically take the opposite approach (function-to-form). Because there appears to be no one-to-one relationship between form and function, the function-to-form approach is employed to limit the likelihood of mismatching research methodologies and pragmatic phenomena. As a result, the

function-to-form approach is dependent on *pragmatic annotation*, which is not generally employed because automatic tag assignment typically lacks precision, whereas human tag implementation is inevitable but requires a significant amount of time and effort (p. 60). The third chapter of this book discusses the procedures of conducting corpus pragmatics research in a way that allows both form-to-function and function-to-form perspectives. It observes that pragmatically-annotated corpus data aid function-to-form techniques by allowing all examples of a given pragmatic phenomenon to be readily retrieved, and that further work on pragmatic annotation is critical. According to Chapter 3, when corpus linguistics and pragmatics are to fully integrate as corpus pragmatics, we should not be afraid of the obstacles of constructing a technique that can embrace both form-to-function and function-to-form approaches. It must be methodologically inclusive for corpus pragmatics to be truly helpful to all pragmatics scholars. Maintaining a focus on pragmatically annotated corpora while improving and creating tools to automate this process is the key difficulty. However, regardless of the methodology, it is critical to have methodological consciousness – adopting proper methods based on the specific study themes and, in certain situations, employing multiple techniques to attain the research objective.

Chapter 4 of the book has been entitled “Reference,” and non-deictic expressions are not covered as in its first edition. The authors add a broad definition of *reference* to this chapter to alleviate terminology confusion and to describe the discrepancy between *reference* and *deixis*. The relationship between a linguistic expression and the concrete entity or abstract thought that it describes is referred to as reference (pp. 69-72), whereas *deixis* is the utilization of a word or phrase whose

meaning relies on context (pp. 72-74). The research on reference largely analyzes the different classes of *deixis* by scrutinizing extracts in this chapter (pp. 78-91). However, as indicated in the original edition, the *deixis* can act non-deictically at times, which is known as a non-deictic expression. In contrast to deictic expression, which requires immediate context or immediate setting, non-deictic expression is recognized to be a non-obligatory component and is thus frequently eliminated. This is not to indicate that non-deictic expression has no significance; conversely, it may communicate the speaker’s stance or perspective. Non-deictic expression is erased because researchers are focusing less on non-deictic expression and more on non-deictic function and the value of demonstratives throughout languages. Furthermore, the non-deictic expression should be addressed in relation to other dimensions of pragmatics.

The focus movement in Chapter 7 of the second edition, from pragmatic variance across cultures and languages to pragmatic vibration within language variations, is another characteristic worth considering. The concentration of the first version, pragmatic variation across cultures and languages, shifts to pragmatic vibration within language varieties because the unequal development of theories necessitates scholars taking actions, despite the fact that there is too much investigation in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, language teaching, and so forth. That the title “Pragmatics and linguistic variation” (Chapter 7 of the second edition) is employed instead of “Pragmatics across languages and cultures,” (Chapter 6 of the first edition) renders pertinent studies of pragmatics across cultures and languages left out, and the emphasis placed on pragmatic variation within a specific language. Since every component of

pragmatics can be analyzed across cultures and languages, researching pragmatic diversity across cultures and languages can be highly challenging, or in other words, an infinite process. The writers were already conscious of the challenges in investigating pragmatics across cultures and languages in the first publication of the book, and they provided the following explanations. First, there is a scarcity of literature discussion, despite extensive empirical study. Furthermore, this domain is complex to define in terms of terminology, and even current definitions frustrate scholars and have operational limitations. Additionally, there is disagreement regarding the generality of pragmatic rules. On the one hand, pragmatic norms do benefit pragmatic research. Conversely, research on pragmatics across cultures questions pragmatic norms. It can be said that pragmatics across cultures is a rapidly expanding area, and more theories need to be developed based on actual studies concerning the comparison of important pragmatics concepts including politeness and speech acts. Because some elements are simpler to investigate than the theoretical construction, it makes sense for the writers to commence with the aspects that are significant to pragmatics. Additionally, by concentrating on pragmatic variance within a single language, stereotypes and ethnocentrism can be avoided.

The design of many activities is what characterizes the second version. The text is complemented by related study activities, as each chapter demonstrates. On the one hand, pertinent research tasks can help enhance the knowledge of readers regarding the core tenets and phenomena in pragmatics. On the other hand, related research assignments that follow the authors' discussion of the research process offer readers the chance to hone their application skills, allowing them to integrate what they have gained from the chapter into practice. The authors' intention

for the book to provide examples for both self-study and classroom practice is supported by the incorporation of a variety of exercises. The inclusion of multiple exercises corresponds to the authors' intention that "the book is offering models for both self-study and classroom practice" (p. 226). Besides, the authors employ a substantial amount of language data to illustrate the effectiveness of different approaches because the corpus methodology is the main emphasis of the entire book. Deixis (Chapter 4), politeness (Chapter 5), speech acts (Chapter 6), language variation (Chapter 7), and register (Chapter 8) are just a few examples of the fundamental component areas where a variety of corpora are used in both the theoretical overview and the analysis of the methodological techniques. Another noteworthy aspect of the book is its insights into research areas that merit further investigation. On the one hand, Chapter 4 to Chapter 9 are salient themes in pragmatics and related fields such as reference, politeness, and speech acts. The authors infer that the corpus pragmatics technique is relevant and effective in the aforementioned disciplines, which gives an excellent example for readers who are intrigued by these domains. On the other hand, based on the research situation, the book highlights various subjects in pragmatics that are either understudied or from an emerging discipline, such as discourse and empathetic deixis in Chapter 4. Meanwhile, obstacles in the subject of pragmatics are clearly recognized, which may eventually constitute research topics. In comparison with the first edition, the second edition presents the updates of relevant studies in light of recent developments in the pragmatics sector. Latest findings have been introduced into the field of pragmatics due to ongoing investigations that improve comprehension of some themes or raise doubts about earlier studies. Each chapter also includes a list of related, annotated

references that serve as a springboard for future investigation.

A few suggestions, nevertheless, would enhance the chapters and make the book more thorough and helpful. First, written forms of language are presented infrequently and briefly, with an excessive emphasis on spoken language. This could give inexperienced readers the impression that pragmatics is solely concerned with speech, which is misleading. Although they only briefly discuss written registers in this book, the authors make the case in Chapter 8 that employing corpus linguistics is essential to studying pragmatics in both spoken and written registers. For instance, Chapter 6 is titled “Speech Acts,” while “Pragmatic Acts” may be a more inclusive title. Culpeper and Haugh (2014) argue that “the term ‘speech act’ is something of a misnomer ... [because] we can do communicative acts in writing or even non-verbally (p. 182)”. Second, unlike the other chapters, Chapter 7 does not have a conclusion. Despite these problems, the book is nevertheless a great resource for students, teachers, and pragmatics researchers.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be highlighted that corpus pragmatics forms the basis of this book. The book combines an overview of significant theories and models with corpus methodological applications to

study interesting concepts and phenomena in pragmatics, including reference, politeness, and speech acts. The authors also directly identify several difficulties and suggest several areas for additional research.

For individuals who are interested in corpus pragmatics, this book is a wonderful addition. It can be viewed as a manual for both self-study and classroom instruction because it not only offers a solid theoretical foundation but also thoroughly explains this novel methodology. Readers can learn the methodology and increase their methodological awareness for using appropriate methodologies and carefully planning the research process by studying essential concepts, large amounts of corpus data, and pertinent assignments in every chapter.

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