(Re)visiting Pragmatics Through the Lenses of Communication Skills

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ABSTRACT

The studies conducted on pragmatics suggest that defining the borderline of pragmatics has always been a challenging task for scholars. Demarcating the definition of the term itself only to 'the study of the relation of signs' to interpreters has proved ineffective in interpreting the term from a wide variety of perspectives. On the other hand, removing the boundaries leads to varying interpretations on pragmatics. As a subfield of linguistics and somewhat semiotics, pragmatics studies how the transmission of meaning depends not only on structural and linguistic knowledge of the speaker and listener but also on the context of the speech, the pre-existing knowledge and the values of receiver and sender as well as the implicit or explicit intent of the speaker among many other factors. Accordingly, this paper firstly attempts to identify and demarcate the borderlines of pragmatics. Secondly, it attempts to uncover the semantic pace of discourse that is a closely knitted term with pragmatics. Thirdly, it analyses pragmatics in terms of aforementioned communication skills through a wide range of examples by considering the principles of George Yule (1986), which are narrated and exemplified in his notable work entitled *Pragmatics*, particularly in interpreting the 'use of language' concerning speech acts and events; the 'change of language' concerning cooperation and implicature, and 'following rules in language' concerning politeness and interaction.

Key Words: Pragmatics, communication skills, conversational implicature, meaning.

1. Introduction

Language, a semiotic system of meaning, is '*almost certainly the most complicated semiotic system… both in the sense that its own limits are unclear and in the sense that its internal organisation is full of indeterminacy*' (Halliday 2003: 2). Language, the supreme power of all human semiotic system, is a system of communication that enables humans to exchange both verbal and symbolic utterances in a socio-cultural context. Accordingly, '*language is a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value*' (Kramsch 1998: 3). In other words, language, either be it spoken, written or visual, generates meanings through a wide range of mediums such as voice, accent, the tone of voice, gestures, facial expressions, manners of conversation by embodying its own context. However, it must be noted that '*Human language is neither universal nor individual, but each language is rooted in a specific culture, as dialects or as national languages* (Kvale 1992: 35). In other words, the language used is meaningful only in its own socio-cultural context for the simple reason that several ways of using the language exist among different dialects and national languages.

As the definitions of language suggest, the language used in a socio-cultural context mainly employs the basic premises of pragmatics. Thus, pragmatics is defined as '*the study of the way humans use their*

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language in communication' and in a wider sense, it '*bases itself on a study of those premises and determines how they affect, and effectualize, human language use'* (Mey 2005: 6). Moreover, Verschueren makes a more explanatory definition on pragmatics, '*a general cognitive, social and cultural perspective on linguistics phenomena in relation to their usage in forms of behaviour'* (1999: 7). Conversely, Mey also reveals that a discursive interpretation on pragmatics is often defined as the 'waste-basket' of linguistics (2005: 19), to borrow Yehoshua Bar-Hillel's phrase.

As indicated, imposing a boundary to the definitions of pragmatics is the first commitment to this paper. Such an attempt suggests that pragmatics be considered its borders with other interrelated fields of research within linguistics. However, sharply demarcated boundaries for the definition of the term may also be either too restrictive or comprehensive. Accordingly, it would not be improper to assert the idea that a wide variety of definitions on pragmatics that have been offered since then are confined to either linguistically oriented definitions or semantically oriented definitions that clarify the distinctions between semantics and pragmatics (Morris, 1937, 1938; Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969; Grice, 1975; Leech, 1983; Levinson, 1983). While linguistically oriented definitions particularly focus on the structure rather than the use of language, semantically oriented definitions predominantly centres on the issues of meaning making by discriminating the differences and similarities between pragmatics and semantics. For instance, while Lakoff argues that '*syntax could not be legitimately separated from the study of language'* (Leech 1983: 2), Chomsky strongly maintains '*the independence of a grammar… from consideration of the use and the functions of language'* (Leech 1983: 3). Additionally, the semantically oriented definitions specifically put forward by Leech attempts to define both of the terms as such: "*… meaning in pragmatics is defined relative to a speaker or user of the language, whereas meaning in semantics is defined purely as a property of expressions in a given language, in abstraction from particular situations, speakers, or hearers*" (1983: 6). In contrast to semantics, which concerns the way people deal with the speech acts, pragmatics focuses on the effect that our words have when uttered.

The word 'pragma', which takes its root from Greek language and refers to activity, deed and affair (cf. *prassein, prattein, to pass through, experience, practice*) (Webster's third new international dictionary, 1976), stands as an archaic word for pragmatic theory. Initially pragmatic theory, originated as a philosophical theory by the works of Morris (1938), Wittgenstein (1953), Austin (1962), and Strawson (1964) and placed as a relatively new discipline compared to syntax and semantics, commonly refers to '*The branch of linguistics which studies how utterances communicate meaning in context'* (Trask 2004: 243). A more explanatory definition on pragmatic theory is that it '*… is [actually] the study of deixis (at least in part), implicature, presupposition, speech acts, aspects of discourse structure'* (Levinson 1983: 27). In other words, '*it [pragmatics] deals with the biotic aspects of semiosis, that is, with all the psychological, biological, and sociological phenomena which occur in the functioning of signs'* (Morris 1938: 108). Furthermore, "*It [pragmatics] consists largely of a cluster of approaches which cohere around the preoccupation with the contextual constraints on meaning. In its origin, [sic] it owes much to the perceived shortcomings of formal logic in coping with natural language*" (Finch, 2000, 149).

2. Literature Review

As indicated in the introduction part, even though many attempts have been made to identify and clarify the borderlines of pragmatics, the definition of Searle, Kiefer and Bierwisch simply suggests, "*Pragmatics is one of those words that give the impression that something quite specific and technical is being talked about when often in fact it has no clear meaning*" (1980: viii). Another explanation implies both

implicit and explicit nature of the utterances; "*pragmatics concerns itself with the meaning of utterances in specific contexts of use. It is one thing to understand a phrase as far as the individual meanings of its words and its referential meaning is concerned, and quite another to know what its intended meaning may be in context*" (Jawarski and Coupland 2004: 14-15).

Pragmatics, placed within linguistics, defines its functions and tasks as solving traditional problems in areas such as '*problems of conversation and turn-control; problems of argumentation; problems of language use in educational settings; problems of interaction between humans and computers, and all sorts of communication problems in anthropology, ethnography, psychiatry and psychology, the public language inside and outside of social institutions, rhetoric, the media sciences, educational sciences, and so on…*' (Mey 2005: 11).

Pragmatics goes beyond the structural study of the phrases and sentences, and it rather focuses on higher units such as speech acts and conversation turns. Additionally, it focuses on its purpose of study on the examination of the context and its construction, the identification and appreciation of speaker intention, and the (de)codification of the implicit elements in different context. Thus, before unearthing the concept of pragmatics profoundly, it is of great significance to deal with the concept of 'discourse', which has a growing prominence in diverse academic disciplines.

Recently the concept of 'discourse' has been commonly used in human and social sciences in order to define and address problems in their own domains of research. However, the deployment of 'discourse', as it underlines many different definitions, has mostly been implicit and conceptually problematic. The term itself has been defined by a wide variety of perspectives such as structuralism, post-structuralism and post-Marxism. For instance, the writings of Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Levi-Strauss, Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Michel Peêheux, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe have contributed to the concept of discourse. Additionally, Paul Ricoeur with his hermeneutical studies, Jürgen Habermas with his communicative language model and, Jean-Françoise Lyotard and Norman Fairclough with their critical discourse analysis approach have widened the scope of discourse's deployment.

As has already been stated, discourse plays a crucial role particularly in contemporary social sciences as well as pragmatics itself. However, discourse is generally used as an umbrella term in many disciplines such as linguistics and literature. It has recently been deployed in many branches of human and social sciences such as anthropology, history, sociology, psychology as well as social psychology, cultural studies, gender and postcolonial studies, political science, public policy analysis, political theory and international relations (Howarth 2012). Linguistically, "*discourses are 'incomplete' linguistic systems that are produced by the 'play of differences', and which mediate and organize our experience of the world*" (Howarth 2012: 42).

The term 'discourse' has been interpreted in various forms. For instance, Derrida uncovers the term by revealing its symbolic structure that is embedded in every code among the parties and states that '*there is no code… that is structurally secret. The possibility of repeating, and therefore of identifying the marks is implied in every code, making of it a communicable, transmittable, decipherable grid that is iterable for a third party, and thus for any possible user in general*' (1982: 315). Furthermore, Foucault makes an emphasis on the dynamism of discourse by declaring that discourses are '*tactical elements or blocks operating in the field force relations*' (1979: 101-102). Besides, Foucault goes further and reveals the *sine qua non* relationship between discourse and power, "*[i]n every society the production of discourse is controlled,*

organized, redistributed, by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its materiality" (Foucault 1981: 52).

According to Marxist theory, the term 'discourse' is related to the struggle between social classes, namely the bourgeoisie and the proletariat that can be explained by understanding political and ideological phenomena in terms of economic relations and logics. Whereas Marx '*tends to view ideologies and discourses as secondary to more essential phenomena, such as the laws of economic development and class conflict, thus neglect[s] their own autonomy and materiality*' (Howarth 2012: 88), Gramsci (1971) puts ideologies and discourses differently, and envisions that it must be the ruling class which is required to achieve intellectual and moral leadership rather than political leadership. Apart from Marx and Gramsci, Althusser, as a reductionist and humanistic critic of Marxism, interprets discourse as an ideology that is vital for the reproduction of society and produces real material effects. Thus, he claims that ideology neither involves an abstract set of ideas detached from the social world nor it reflects an already existing reality (1969, 221). Contrastively, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, regarded as post-Marxist critics, argue that there is no ontological difference between '*the linguistic and behavioral aspects of a social practice*' (1985, 107) with respect to discourse. Additionally, they state that all objects and actions are meaningful in discourse and that objects have extra-discursive meaning. They also affirm that material rather than mental character of discourse exists (1985). A more general definition for discourse is suggested by Fairclough, "*Discourse is … more than just language use: it is language use, whether speech or writing, seen as a type of social practice*" (1992: 28).

Theories of discourse have mainly experienced three different kinds of transformations. Firstly, traditional discourse analysis, heavily dealt with the examination of '*language in use*', covers the analysis of '*talk and text in context*' (van Dijk 1997: 3) and emphasizes the significance of rules on connected sentences in both speech and writing. Analytical philosophers such as J. L. Austin (1975) and John Searle (1969) have studied on the complex typologies of different sorts of speech acts and explained different aspects of communication. Moreover, Labov and Fanshel (1997) have attempted to identify the intended meanings of speaker's utterance and the responses of hearers. Additionally, conversation analysis largely highlights the sociological method of ethnomethodology, '*the study of how individuals experience their everyday activities and the attempt of inferring from observations what speakers are actually doing and how they are doing it*' (Trask 1999: 57). In this vein, discourse analysts such as Schegloff and Sacks (1973) have focused on the organization of logic of 'turn-taking' in conversations.

Secondly, during the 1960's and 1970's with the emergence of structuralism, post-structuralism, hermeneutics and Marxism in the social sciences, the studies on discourse have been extended to a wider perspective of social phenomenon. In this respect, Foucault examines the difference between the grammatically well-structured statements and '*what is actually said*' at a specific time and place (1991: 63). In some sense, Foucault himself is concerned with the discourses, which are formed by social practices and which shape social relationships and institutions. And last of all, the third type of theories of discourse analysis, which emerged out of both Foucault's and Derrida's contributions as well as Marxist and post-Marxist approach in some sense, expands the range of discourse analysis to a point where non-discursive practices and elements are significant. In this sense, Fairclough (1989) have widened the discourse theory to include political analysis of texts and speeches including the contexts where the texts and speeches are produced.

Apart from theories of discourse mentioned above, there have been mainly three different kinds of traditions such as '*structuralist*', '*hermeneutics*' and '*Marxist*' traditions of thinking in discourse theory. The structuralist tradition, which is developed by philosophers such as Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson, and Louis Hjelmslev, emphasizes that meaning depends on relations between different elements of a system. For instance, in order to understand the meaning of the word 'book', one must also understand related terms such as 'pen', 'paper', 'notebook' and so on. These first period structuralists have mainly dealt with meaning and signification as a product of a system of a sign. The second period structuralist theorists such as Claude Levi-Strauss, Jacques Lacan, Louis Althusser and Roland Barthes have employed the structural model of language to reveal a wide range of social phenomena, that is to say, these have mainly dealt with the role of myths in society, the significance of human subjectivity in language, the importance of different modes of production and social construction, and the influence of various symbolic codes of everyday life in society such as cooking, eating and shopping. Immediately after the structuralist traditions of thinking had been questioned particularly in some certain aspects such as historical construction of the system, the unchanging relations between elements of systems and the exclusion of human subjectivity from the social phenomena, post-structuralist tradition have emerged by the contributions of Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Ernesto Laclau, and Chantal Mouffee. In the second tradition, namely hermeneutical tradition, particularly the writings of hermeneutical philosophers such as Martin Heidegger, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Charles Taylor and Peter Winch are analyzed in order to provide new interpretations of social practices by placing the meaning in a broader historical and structural context. And, lastly, the third major influence on the emergence of discourse theory is apparently Marxist tradition, namely by the works of Karl Marx, Louis Althusser, Antonio Gramsci and Michel Pêcheux, in which ideas, consciousness and language are all considered as a part of ideological phenomena that are related with economic and political processes as well as social processes such as economic production and class struggle. In sum, discourse is defined as '*the ensemble of phenomena [universe of discourse] in and through which social production of meaning takes place*' (Mumby and Stohl 1991: 315).

It must be noted that the purpose of this paper is to redefine 'pragmatics' in terms of meaning transmission between a speaker and a listener by (re)considering the pre-existing knowledge and values of receiver and sender, and by inferring the implicit or explicit intend of the speaker and then by appreciating the intend among many other factors. Since '… *spoken language is typically associated with short turns and frequent turn-taking, pausing, false starts, hesitations, fillers, backchannels, negotiation, repairs, communication strategies, the use of deictic pronouns, ellipsis, questions, negatives, or disjuncts…*' (Pawlak 2011: 6), the meaning or the references transferred between the speaker and the listener can easily become opaque or oblique as well as direct and definite.

3. Language in Use

In general, "Language, apart from the important role it plays in thinking, is used primarily to increase the amount of knowledge that is shared by separate minds" (Chafe, 1974, 111). Thus, 'language in use', which refers to the communicative meaning of a language, can also be considered as the product or output of these separate minds in the guise of independent individuals. Fundamentally, pragmatics involves many research studies such as deixis and distance, reference and inference, presupposition and entailment, cooperation and implicature, discourse and culture (see, Yule 1996) as subtitles and metapragmatics, pragmatic arts and literary pragmatics (see Mey 2005) as titles among many others. Yet, this part of the paper will focus on 'language in use' by considering the principles of George Yule

(1986), which are narrated and exemplified in his notable book entitled *Pragmatics*, in interpreting the 'use of language' concerning speech acts and events; the 'change of language' concerning cooperation and implicature, and 'following rules in language' concerning politeness and interaction.

In sum, since one of the main purpose of this paper is to uncover the semantic pace of discourse, which is a closely knitted term with pragmatics, the following schemata with their related illustrations indicate how pragmatics functions in relation to communication skills.

3.1. The 'use of language' concerning speech acts and events

The use of language involves a wide range of purposes. However, the utterances that include irony, sarcasm, metaphor, and hyperbole can obtain completely different effects in terms of 'using language'. Mey gives such an example in order to draw attention to the use of language. If one says 'Great!' to the airline agent who just told him that- he can not get a seat on the plane and will have to spend the night at the airport due to double booking, by that utterance 'great!' what he is saying is something like 'This is the worst thing that could happen to me right now' (2005: 44). Furthermore, the speaker who says to the hearer "*- Oh, you have broken another pair of sun glasses? You are a walking disaster*", actually attempts to mean, "*How careless s/he is*". As is the case, the use of language has different commitments in terms of meaning making. Hence, communication skills require using language for different purposes, the functions of these situations are exemplified below in detail.

a. Greeting:

Conceivably, regarded as one of the first acts of communication, greeting gives clear messages to speakers mutually in terms of distance. Consider the conversation example below between two friends that meet in the street (an informal greeting).

Illustration 1:

- Hello!
- Hi!
- How are you?
- Great, thanks and you?
- Fine, thanks.

In this example, as seen, instead of 'hello', 'hi' or 'hey' is used. And yet, instead of 'fine thanks', 'thanks', a more informal way of saying 'thank you' is used.

Consider the conversation below between two other people who do not know each other and are meeting for the first time. This example is a more formal greeting than the previous one.

Illustration 2:

- *How do you do? My name is Michael.*
- *Pleased to meet you. My name is Hayek.*

In this example, 'how do you do', a set phrase that requires no explanation how listener really is, is used in order to save the distance between the speaker and the listener. The listener simply answers with the same expression as 'How do you do?' or with 'pleased to meet you'. Moreover, it must be noted that "*The utterance How do you do?, although itself mandatory [as the speaker's intention is to save the*

distance] in the context, may be pronounced in a variety of ways- 'politely', 'casually', 'scornfully', 'condescendingly' etc.-and these different 'modalities' of utterance may be 'expressed' by 'tone of voice' or accompanying gestures (or both simultaneously)" (Lyons 1968: 414). Such an utterance can be regarded as 'mandatory' from the perspective of the speaker as his/her main intention is to save distance between himself/herself and the listener. While the speaker tries to keep a certain distance with his/her utterance, his/her manner of speech, whether be it casual, polite, scornful and so on, is also functional in revealing his/her real intention, namely his/her attempt to keep a certain distance.

b. Informing:

Among the communication skills, informing takes place as one of the acts of communication, which helps the speaker while providing some information to the listener. Either be it written or verbal, using straightforward language, avoiding technical words, jargon and words that are not commonly understood, being clear, providing a reasoned argument or a viewpoint, and illustrating some examples of being described can be considered as some of the forms of informing. For instance, Mey gives a written text as an example on informing. The text "PLEASE USE THE TRASH CONTAINER FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN TOILET PAPER", which was attached to the back wall of an airline toilet, could even mean that it would be OK to deposit all sorts of rubbish in the trash container. In order to understand this notice properly, one has to be familiar with the airline mores. (2005: 60). In other words, the message stressed in this situation is inaccurate as it includes 'pragmatic ambiguity' (See Smith: 1989; Wertheimer: 1972) as it can even mean that toilet tissue is the only thing that should go in the stool.

c. Demanding:

When the requester wants somebody to do him/her a favour and also imposes on the requestee in some way to demand goods or services, it is called *impositive speech acts*. Impositive speech acts, as defined by Haverkate, '*are described as speech acts performed by the speaker to influence the intentional behaviour of the hearer in order to get the latter to perform, primarily for the benefit of the speaker...*' (1984: 107). For instance, when the speaker says '*I demand you close the door*' it means that s/he conveys a request simply by using a performative verb, which explicitly signals the illocutionary force. Furthermore, in a given communicative act, inherent politeness level, in other words 'absolute politeness' by Leech (1983) is distinguished between polite and non-polite acts. Conversely, Lakoff questions the demand for politeness, which may either be inherent in the communicative situation or not and in order to clarify his claim he gives the courtroom discourse as an example. As known, courtroom discourse do not demand politeness, on the contrary, non-polite behaviour can be regarded as quite normal (1989: 101-103).

d. Promising:

Since language is a part of theory of action, and speech acts can be regarded as verbal acts, more precisely illocutionary acts, such as promising, threatening and requesting. Depending on the situation, '*[a] successful performance of speech acts depends on whether the constituent conditions of a particular speech act are fulfilled, and on whether a particular speech act is realized in a contextually appropriate way. Consequently, the accomplishment of speech acts is inextricably related to socio-cultural factors*' (Trosborg 1995: 8). For the accomplishment of speech acts in a contextually appropriate way, an example can be

given. In Western cultures, if one says, "I hereby divorce you" to his wife, it would mean nothing since there is simply no such procedure in that culture whereas if the same utterance takes place in Muslim cultures, namely one says this statement consecutively three times, the divorce would be constituted.

Moreover, promising also takes place in "the form of solemnization of Matrimony" (see: http://www.episcopalnet.org/1928bcp/Matrimony.html). The following statement taken from a marriage ceremony in the Church of England suggests that the receivers would never response to the Minister as "Yes", both bride and bridegroom are expected to answer as "I will".

WILT thou have this Woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and keep her in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?
 (The Man shall answer),
I will.
(Then shall the Minister say unto the Woman),
WILT thou have this Man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love him, comfort him, honour, and keep him in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?
(The Woman shall answer),
I will.
e. Requesting:

Requesting, the act of asking for something to be given or done, covers many psychological manners such as courtesy, solicitation or petition. Here is an example originally due to Mey (2005: 111-112). If an interlocutor says to somebody: "Could you move over a bit?" The interlocutor never expects that person to answer his/her question with: "Yes" or "Yes, perhaps I could" and not budge an inch. Conversely, the interlocutor would certainly consider such an answer highly inappropriate, neither "Yes" nor "No" type. Contrastively, if the person did move, never answered the question, the interlocutor would appreciate his/her reaction.

In sum, it must be noted that even though 'using language' for different purposes such as greeting, informing, demanding, promising, requesting are the key concepts in terms of pragmatics, the 'utterances', defined as '*any stretch of talk, by one person, before and after which there is silence on the part of that person*' (Harris 1951: 14) that include irony, sarcasm, metaphor and hyperbole can obtain completely different effects in 'using language'. Thus, it would be proper to assert the idea that the utterances are merely meaningful in their contexts.

3.2. The 'change of language' concerning cooperation and implicature

As it has already been noted, changing the manner of speech, tone of voice, and intonation while speaking to some sorts of people on a particular point is considered natural pace of speaking such as one talks differently to a manager or someone official than to a little baby, or one gives a background information to an unfamiliar listener, or one speaks differently when at a schools' playground, or at a court, or else at official institutions.

In the play entitled *The Doll's House* (reprinted in 2008) by Henrik Ibsen, the conversation between the married couples named Nora and Helmer reveals the fact that Nora speaks like a small squirrel or

twittering lark with her husband, particularly when she spends much more money than her husband expected and when she becomes demanding a little bit, as the following extraction illustrates:

Helmer: [calls out from his room]. Is that my little lark twittering out there?
Nora: [busy opening some of the parcels]. Yes, it is!
Helmer: Is it my little squirrel bustling about?
Nora:Yes!
Helmer: When did my squirrel come home?
Nora: Just now. [Puts the bag of macaroons into her pocket and wipes her mouth.] Come in here, Torvald, and see what I have bought.
Helmer: Don't disturb me. [A little later, he opens the door and looks into the room, pen in hand.] Bought, did you say? All these things? Has my little spendthrift been wasting money again?
Nora: Yes but, Torvald, this year we really can let ourselves go a little. This is the first Christmas that we have not needed to economise.
Helmer: Still, you know, we can't spend money recklessly (Ibsen 2008: 3).

Nora in the play compares herself to a doll, a doll in the hands of men in her life. As the doll represents her role as a woman in man's society like something cute, fragile, and brittle. Thus, her manner of speech changes while she is talking to either her husband, -as the example above indicates- or her father, as she is sure that her ideas will be disregarded or suppressed in a male-oriented world. She finds a solution, speaking differently like a bird or a squirrel while she is communicating particularly with her husband in order to overcome her desperate situation.

Pragmatics involves cooperation and implicature in changing the language. Thus, it must be noted that it is of great significance to deal with '*conversational implicature*', as this paper suggests uncovering the conversational implicature in terms of syntactic and semantic maxims. Therefore, before dealing with 'conversational implicature', a concept heavily dealt with pragmatics, 'implicature' is to be elucidated firstly in order to appreciate the relationship between semantic and syntactic maxims. Hence, the term 'implicature' is derived from the verb 'to imply', as is its cognate 'implication' in general sense. In the broadest sense, "… *implicature stands as a paradigmatic example of the nature and power of pragmatic explanations of linguistic phenomena… The concept of implicature, therefore, seems to offer some significant functional explanations of linguistic facts*" (Levinson 1983: 97). In other words, "… *it [implicature] provides some explicit account of how it is possible to mean (in some general sense) more than what is actually 'said' (i.e. more than what is literally expressed by the conventional sense of the linguistic expressions uttered)*" (Levinson 1983: 97). If implicature is related with 'linguistic phenomena' and 'linguistic facts', ipso facto, then, 'conversational implicature' may also be about utterances, inferences, and references, as Bilmes explains the concept as such: "*In everyday talk, we often convey propositions that are not explicit in our utterances but are merely implied by them. Sometimes we are able to draw such inferences only by referring what has been explicitly said to some conversational principle. In certain of these cases, we are dealing with 'conversational implicature'*" (1986: 27).

In sum, conversational implicature is '*something which is implied in conversation, that is, something which is left implicit in actual use*' (Mey 2005: 45).

In order to understand how conversational implicature functions consider the following examples:

(1) A: Can you tell me when the sit-com *Friends* appears on TV?
     B: Well, it's on usual time when I take my dog out for a walk every day.

In this example, the interlocutor A asks a simple question about the starting time of the sit-com to interlocutor B. However, response of the interlocutor B is more than what is literally expressed. Since interlocutor B never tells the exact time but makes an inference on the usual time when he takes his dog for a walk. Such a conversational implicature clearly indicates the power of pragmatic explanation.

In terms of semantic maxims, such a minimal exchange might be paraphrased more than one, as the following example indicates:

> (2) A: Do you have the ability to tell me the time when the sit-com *Friends* appears on TV?
>   B: [pragmatically interpreted particle]. The sit-com usually starts at the exact time when I

take my dog out for a walk.
Yet again, it is clear to native speakers that what would normally be communicated by such an exchange involves considerably more along the lines of the italicized words in (3) and (4):

> (3) A: Do you have the ability to tell me the time *of the sit-com named Friends, which I usually follow among many other sit-coms, as standardly indicated on a watch, and if so, please do tell me the time of the sit-com.*
> (4)   B: *Yes, I actually know the exact time of the sit-come named Friends, which I don't like watching, as it never attracts my attention. The reason why I always take my dog out for a walk at the time of soup-opera is that in fact, I do not like it at all. Actually, I hate it. But I can provide you some information from which you can actually make an inference the approximate time when the sit-com starts. It is the usual time where I take my dog out for a walk every day.*

Noticeably, such a minimal exchange, namely a request for specific information and an attempt to provide as much of that information as possible, is not straightforwardly expressed in (2) at all; therefore the gap between what is literally *said* in (2) and what is conveyed in (3) is so significant that one can not expect a semantic theory to provide more than a small part of an account of how communication can be realized by using language.

Additionally, the concept of *implicature* seems likely to effect substantial simplifications in terms of syntactic maxims. For example:

4) Jane got married and had a baby.
5) The Central Park is in New York and Hyde Park is in London.
6) Jane had a baby and got married.
7) Hyde Park is in London and the Central Park is in New York.

The meaning of (4) and (5) seems to be rather different: in (4) it seems to mean 'and then' and thus (6) is oddly enough to imagine that the reverse ordering of the two events would possibly mean the same. But in (5) there is no 'and then' meaning, and here seems to mean that whole is true in case both conjuncts are true; thus the reversal of the conjuncts in (7) does not affect the conceptual meaning at all in terms of semantics.

As the examples above simply indicate that conversational implicatures are functional in dealing with '*a regularity that cannot be captured in a simple syntactic or semantic rule, but has to be accounted for in other*

ways' (Mey 2005: 45). One example, if one says, 'This essay is killing me', the speaker does not normally mean that s/he is going to die but rather the task itself is difficult or somewhat demanding. And one more example for 'a simple syntactic or semantic rule' can be 'accounted for in other ways', as the explanation of Mey suggests as well as Grice's theory, which explains the discrepancy between speaker-meaning and sentence-meaning. For instance, if one says 'Maths is fascinating', ironically intended by the speaker to mean 'Maths is deadly boring'. Thus, the use of language, which includes a certain degree of implicitness in communication, is mostly concerned with the intention of the speaker in a given context.

The study of conversation simply includes two basic approaches such as discourse analysis and conversation analysis. Bygate comments that '*The study of speaking like the study of other uses of language is properly an interdisciplinary field. It involves understanding the psycholinguistic and interpersonal factors of speech production, the forms, meanings and processes involved, and how these can be developed*' (2002: 27). Accordingly, in a conversation, 'implicated premise' and 'implicated conclusion' drawn from 'pragmatic inference' may not purport to indicate sameness. For instance,

A: Have you watched the movie by Jackie Chan?
B: I don't watch kung-fu comedy.
Pragmatic inference: B does not watch kung-fu comedies.
Implicated premise: Jackie Chan's movie is kung-fu comedy.
Implicated conclusion: B has not watched Jackie Chan's movie.

Another example, which simply denotes conversational implicature, may indicate an act of promising that is not limited to or conditioned by speech act's canonical expression. If one says to a friend when making plans to go to a pub for a drink, 'I'll be there at eight', that may count as a perfectly good promise even though one does not respond in relation to speech act verb 'to promise'.

3.3. 'Following rules in language' concerning politeness and interaction

Following rules in conversational skills have been evaluated under five subheadings such as turn-taking, introducing topic, staying on topic, reinterpreting when misunderstood, using verbal and non-verbal signals, using facial expressions and eye contacts by considering politeness and interaction between the speakers.

a. Turn-taking:

As has been known, the basic unit of a regular conversation is called as 'turn'. Namely, it is in some way a shift in the direction of the speaking 'flow' (Sacks 1995). The point where turns occur normally in a certain well-defined junctures in a conversation is called 'transition relevant places' (Lerner 1991). Thus, as the extraction below indicates, both of the participants taking part in this conversation clearly obey speaking, particularly while taking part in 'transition relevant places' in order to make the speech more meaningful. The following extraction taken from *The Birthday Party* (1960) by Henrik Ibsen clearly shows the turn-taking between Meg and Petey's conversation. Such a kind of conversation is based upon mutual understandings of both speaker and listener.

Meg: Is that you, Petey? Petey, is that you? Petey?
Petey: What?

Meg: Is that you?
Petey: Yes, it's me.
Meg: What?[…] Are you back?
Petey: Yes.
Meg: I've got your cornflakes ready. […] Here is your cornflakes. […] Are they nice?
Petey: Very nice.
Meg: I thought they'd be nice. […] You got your paper?
Petey: Yes.
Meg: Is it good?
Petey: Not bad (Ibsen 1960: 9-10).

b. Introducing topic:

While carrying out a meaningful conversation, initiation is regarded as the first step taken by the speaker in order to convey the intended meaning to the hearer. Thus, starting with a logically well-formed conversation gives the listener a sense of safety to obey the rules of turn-taking. The extraction below taken from *A Room with a View* (1908) by E. M. Forster overtly introduces the topic. In this extraction, Miss Bartlett points out a room problem she has had to deal with. The agreement between Signora and Miss Bartlett on the south rooms of a hotel has just turned out to be north rooms, which is against their contract. Thus, the interlocutor narrates the very beginning of the problem thoroughly.

'The Signora had no business to do it,' said Miss Bartlett, 'no business at all. She promised us south rooms with a view close together, instead of which here are north rooms, here are north rooms, looking into a courtyard, and a long way apart. Oh Lucy!' (Forster 1908: 7).

c. Staying on topic:

In order to carry out a meaningful conversation, among many other aspects, 'staying on topic' can be considered as one of the main facets of following rules for conversation. For instance, the extraction taken from *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990) by Hanif Kureishi reveals the persistence of one the interlocutors' staying on the topic. The conversation between Eva and Charlie simply indicates how one is temporarily digressing from the topic and the other one is attempting to make the interlocutor stay on the topic. When Eva asks Charlie where his father is, Charlie responds her what his father is actually doing or what type of situation he is in, however, all of these responses do not meet the expectations of the interlocutor, namely Eva herself. In order to understand whether Charlie's father is there or not, she keeps asking a more specific and explanatory question to him. Then she gets the answer she wants.

'Where's your dad?'
'He's having a nervous breakdown.'
'Does that mean he's not here?'
'He's gone into a kind of therapy centre where they allow it all to happen' (Kureshi 1990: 11).

c. Reinterpreting when misunderstood:

In some occasions, the interlocutors' speech can be misunderstood partly or wholly by the others. In such situations, the interlocutor attempts at redefining or identifying the thing that is misconstrued. The extraction taken from *A Passage to India* (1924) by E. M. Forster illustrates a misunderstanding. In

other words, the conversation, which takes place between Mrs. Moore and Dr. Aziz, clearly indicates how an occurrence is reinterpreted when the interlocutor misunderstands it.

"Madam! Madam! Madam!"

"Oh! Oh!" the woman gasped

"Madam, this is a mosque, you have no right here at all; you should have taken off your shoes; this is a holy place for Moslems."

"I have taken them off."

"You have?"

"I left them at the entrance."

"Then I ask your pardon." […] "Yes, I was right, was I not? If I remove my shoes, I am allowed?" (Forster 1924: 17-18).

d. Using verbal and non-verbal signals:

While carrying out a conversation, using verbal and non-verbal signals denote the interlocutors' manner particularly, whether they are agreeable or disagreeable in terms of obeying the rules for conversation. The extraction below from Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1955) reveals the significance of verbal signals as well as non-verbal ones. The conversation, which takes place between Estragon and Vladimir, depicts the contemplations of both of the characters. However, the way each character represents and behaves indicates much more than the verbal signals as shown in the stage directions, namely in parenthesis. As all these non-verbal signals are regarded as the indicators of the characters' manners not only to each other but also to the world they appreciate.

Estragon: People are bloody ignorant apes.

[*He rises painfully, goes limping to extreme left, halts, gazes into distance off with his hand screening his eyes, turns, goes to extreme right, gazes into distance. Vladimir watches him, then goes and picks up the boot, peers into it, drops it hastily.*]

Vladimir: Pah!

[*He spits. Estragon moves to centre, halts with his back to the auditorium*.] Inspiring prospects. [He turns to Vladimir.] Let's go.

Vladimir: We can't.

Estragon: Why not?

Vladimir: We're waiting for Godot (Beckett 1955: 15).

e. Using facial expressions and eye contacts:

According to Goffman's sociological notion, 'face' means '*the positive social value of a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self-delineated in terms of approved social attributes…*' (1967: 5). Using facial expressions and eye contacts are the two basic indispensable conditions for following the rules of conversation. However, face can '*be lost, maintained, or enhanced, and must be constantly attended to in interaction'* (Brown-Levinson 1987: 61). As Brown and Levinson suggested people are expected to defend their own faces if they are threatened, and while they are actually defending their own faces they are liable to threaten other people's faces in turn. Thus, the mutual interest of the participants' determination maintains each other's faces. Only in such a case they are expected to cooperate in maintaining face in interaction (Brown-Levinson 1987: 61). Conversely, some speech acts, which are referred to as 'face-threatening

acts', are intrinsically threaten face. As Trosborg indicates, "*In order to achieve smooth and successful communication, the participants in an interaction should be concerned continually with maintaining each other's face*" (1995: 27). In other words, an even and effective communication depends upon the continuance of face interaction.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, a number of issues concerning the relations between pragmatics and discourse; pragmatics and communication skills; and pragmatics and conversational implicature have been presented from a wide variety of perspectives including syntactic and semantic maxims. It is concluded from the extracted examples that the interaction of the two components paves the way for many inferences. More specifically, '…*separating semantic and pragmatic accounts of presupposition is futile. Meaning in discourse arises through the interpretation of sentential, co-textual and contextual links*' (Jaszczolt, 2002, 189).

In considering pragmatics, it is important to remember that defining the borderline of pragmatics, as the definitions of pragmatics and semantics are somewhat elusive, plays a significant role in (re)visiting pragmatics through the communication skills. Even though discriminating the concepts of semantics and pragmatics is considered as a challenging task, many attempts have been made for this. For instance, Leech attempts at distinguishing 'language' (langue) and 'language use' (parole) in terms of semantics and pragmatics aspects in his work entitled *Principles of Pragmatics* (1983). According to him, '*semantics traditionally deals with meaning as a dyadic relation*' such as 1] *What does X mean?* Whereas '*pragmatics deals with meaning as a triadic relation*' such as 2] *What did you mean by X*? (1983: 6). Geoffrey Leech, the most prominent representative of pragmatics, acknowledges the *complementarity* characteristics between pragmatics and semantics and states that '*The view that semantics and pragmatics are distinct, though complementary and interrelated fields of study, is easy to appreciate subjectively, but is more difficult to justify in an objective way*' (1983: 3). Furthermore, George Yule attempts to define the borderline of pragmatics in his work entitled *Pragmatics (*1996). For him, "*[Firstly], Pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning; [secondly], Pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning; [thirdly], Pragmatics is the study how more gets communicated than is said; [fourthly], Pragmatics is the study of the expression of the relative distance*" (1996: 3). After defining the borderline, Yule asserts the idea that studying language through pragmatics has both advantages and disadvantages. For him, whereas the advantage of it is that '*one can talk about people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions (for example, requests) that they are performing when they speak*', the disadvantage of it is that '*all these very human concepts are extremely difficult to analyze in a consistent and objective way*' (1996: 4).

Fundamentally, this paper aims at providing a detailed initiation into the definitions of pragmatics by highlighting its indisputable position with semantics. As suggested, the purpose of this paper is to provide a more oriented sphere for the term pragmatics in linguistics. In this paper, it is highlighted that putting a barrier or defining a borderline for the term pragmatics firstly initiate the use of the term in its own context and sense by leaving out any misunderstandings. Such a kind of placement of the term in its proper place leads the precise use of the term in discourse either for practical or formal purposes. Besides, it is found that the elucidation of the term 'discourse' with its historical background has played a significant role in interpreting the close relationship between pragmatics and semantic. Likewise, the exemplifications of the major communication skills, which are examined under the headings of 'use of language', the 'change of language', and the 'following rules in

language' and which are all related with Yule's (1986) speech acts and events, cooperation and implicature, and politeness and interaction respectively help appreciating both written and verbal utterances as well as extractions from literary texts on how meaning is constructed in a contextual setting. It is also found out that the exemplars taken from a wide variety of perspectives are functional in interpreting both linguistic and paralinguistic features of pragmatics. Lastly, the attempt to unveil the conversational implicature regarding the syntactic and semantic maxims paves the way for a more detailed familiarization with pragmatic inference and implicated premise in discourse.

In conclusion, as Sapir reveals "*… the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously build on the language habits of the group… We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation*" (Sapir 1929: 207). Thus, under the light of many interpretations, it would be proper to state that utterances are exposed to many different interpretations as they are largely influenced by the intended meanings and contextual meanings in a discourse. In other words, the main purpose of pragmatics is to unveil the secrecy of the utterances in discourses in order to appreciate both the speakers' and the listeners' intend. Yet, it is also revealed that many different kinds of agents such as using verbal and non-verbal signals, using facial expressions and eye contacts as well as conversational implicatures are also functional in interpreting the meaning.

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