# Knowledge of Language Pragmatic is Helping Mass –Communication Professionalism

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to highlight that Language is a major element through ideas, thought, opinions, messages and information specifically are exchanged between group of people to ensure interpersonal relationship. It is a symbol of people's identity and a means of identifying people's value system. This is particularly through pragmatics competency in adding value to understand the hidden intended meaning of some language utterances. In line with the media houses professionalism in Nigerian context. The study is to deploy the used of linguistics theory for the contextual analysis. Using descriptive research approach based on adaptation pragmatic model version of Lawal's (1997). The findings reveal that there is needs for mass-communication respected personals to understand the primary, secondary and Tertiary levels of meaning of some selected language utterance in the process of conducting the interview, or media report writing.

**Key Words:** Language, pragmatics, competency, Mass-Communication and Professionalism

## 1. Introduction

Pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics and semiotics that studies the ways in which context contributes to meaning. This is in line with the speech act theory, conversational implicative, talk in interaction and other approaches of language: Crystal (1987) states that "pragmatics is not only the study of the aspect of meaning and language use that depend on the speaker to the addressee, but also a study of investigating how sense can be made during the communication process". This is deals with the systematic way of explaining language use in context towards meaning because in some cases what people said may not  be what they really mean. This is because people have many strategies of manipulation in the process of communication more especially in the aspect of intended meaning. That is why there is needs for mass-communication respected professionalism to understand the different types of pragmatics competency in adding the glamour and colour towards their profession.

## 2. Literature Review

Iyanda (2015:9) notes that the possibility of providing an all-encompassing definition of pragmatics has been a great challenge to many linguists around the world. One reason for this could be traced to the argument on specifying the domains of meaning pragmatics as a sub-field of linguistics circle. As a matter of fact, the definitions of pragmatics that we have today

have been given by many scholars around the globe. But based on different ideological point of views, from which they have considered it to be However, in the work of Levinson (1983), several definitions of pragmatics have been given by many notable linguists and with intellectual reviewed in related works.

Generally, pragmatics has been seen as "the study of language use" (Levinson 1983:5) but in the earlier work of Morris (1938) it is explained in relation to syntax and semantics as an aspect of semiotics – study of signs. In the distinction he makes, "the formal relation of signs to one another" and the study of the "relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable" are syntax and semantics respectively. While "Pragmatics concern the studies of signs in relation to interpreters".

Davis (1991) defines "Pragmatics as a domain of speakers' communicative intentions, the use of language that require such intentions and the strategies that hearers or readers employ to determine the meanings". In a nutshell, many people believes that pragmatics can be viewed as a subfield of linguistics that studies the way in which contexts contribute to meaning. Similarly, crystal (1997) views that "Pragmatics as the language filed that studies the factors that govern the choice of language in social interaction and the effect of such choices on others". What crystal calls the effect of the utterance that is referred to as perlocutionary by Austin (1962). According to oxford Bibliography of pragmatics (2019) notes that pragmatics is a branch of the philosophy of language as well as a good field of linguistics. However, pragmatics is to be distinguished from pragmatism, which is a doctrine concerning the nature of truth and knowledge, whereas proponents of pragmatics are pragmaticists, imagine a communicative interaction among two or more parties. Pragmaticists generally study the part of what is communicated that is left over after the conventionally determined, this is because literal meaning of many words used should be subtracted out. This is in contract to what remains after the conventionally permitted since the literary meaning has been subtracted out, sometimes, pragmatics has an empirical experimental dimension as a result of diversification in contextual themes towards language studies. In addition to this, pragmatics has an explanatory aspect by its ability to illuminate familiar communicative phenomena: among these are metaphor, irony and pragmatic paradoxes. Because in some cases, pragmatics shares boundary with semantics through some distinction between sense and contexts references. Or the phenomenon of non-referring language proper names, certain semantic strategies may be appears into pragmatics investigation as well as analysis.

According to pragmatics psychology Manual (2019) explains that pragmatics is a study of the ability of natural language speakers to communicate more than that which is explicitly stated. The ability to understand another speakers' intended meaning is called "pragmatic competence." An utterances that describing pragmatic function is called "Meta pragmatics." Another perspective is that pragmatics deals with the ways we reach our goal in communication. Example, suppose a person wanted to ask someone else to stop smoking, this could be achieved by sing several utterances. The person could simply say stop smoking, please! Which is direct and with clear semantic meaning.

Another alternative, the person could say ho! this could use an air purifier, which implies a similar meaning, but is indirect and therefore requires pragmatics interpretation as well as pragmatic inference to derive the intended meaning. That is why pragmatics is regarded as one of the most challenging aspects for language learners to grasp, and can only truly be learned with experience, wide reading as well as sociolinguistics consultation.

Yule (1996.3) summarize the four (4) areas that pragmatics are concerned with, which include the following:

1. **Pragmatic is the study of speaker meaning:** That is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker or writer, and interpreted by a listener or reader. It has to do with the analysis of what people mean by their utterances than what the words or phrases in those utterances might mean by themselves.

2. **Pragmatic is the study of contextual meaning:-** This type of study is necessarily involves the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context, and how that context influences what is said. It requires a consideration of how speaker organize what they want to say in accordance with who they are talking to, where, when and under what circumstances.

3. **Pragmatic is the study of how more meaning gets communicated that it said:-** This approach also necessarily explore how listeners can make inferences about what is said in order to arrive at an interpretation of the speaker's intended meaning. This type of study also explores how a great deal of what is unsaid is recognized as part of what is communicated. Because sometime, we might say something, but the investigation of a real meaning may be invisible meaning.

4. **Pragmatic is the study of the expression of relative distance:-** This perspective than raises the question of what determines the choice of utterances between what is said and unsaid. In this case, the basic answer is tried to the notion of distance. Such as closeness, whether it is physical, social, or conceptual, implies shared experience and competency. Because of the assumption of how close or distant the listener is, and the speakers determines how much needs to be said. Extracted from pragmatics review, University of Sumatera Utara, Indonesia.

3. **Types of Pragmatics Competency In Communication**

1. **Sociolinguistic Competency:** This is the ability to interpret the social meaning of a linguistic items and decided the use of language utterances in an appropriate social meaning for communication purposes. Sauvignon (1993) notes that "sociolinguistic competency is a knowledge of socio-cultural rules of discourse analysis in language study. It is requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used, the roles of participants, the information they share and the function of words interaction". Erton (2007) further explains that sociolinguistic information which the speaker convey to each other share a pragmatic competency which helps to interpret and act in different situations by making use of different contextual ctues. There are also

including components like. Culture and interaction that reflect the fundamental concepts of verbal and nonverbal communication.

2. **Interactional competency:** This is deals with the language communication and adjusting one's speech to the effect that one intends to have on the side of the listener, or reader to writer. It entails anticipated to the listener's response and possible misunderstanding, response and clarifying one's own or other intentions that arriving at the close possible watch between intended, perceived and anticipated meanings. Auwalu (2020) further explains that interactional competency is not only makes the use of structural rules of language communication meaning, but also runs the psycho-linguistic and socio-linguistic functions of language which can help to provide accuracy and clarify to the mutual comprehension of the speech acts covered in the course of a conversation. It also involves the ability to establish the real recognizing the speaker's intention by evaluating his/her body language and awareness of the semiotic symbols used during the communicative interaction.

3. **Communicative competency:** Wilson (2021) describes this concept as knowing the rules for the composition of good sentences and being able to employ such rules assemble expressions into languages usage as a rules of grammar. It is also require more ability of knowing the stock of partially pre-assembled, formulaic frameworks, a kit of rules so to speak and being able to apply the rules to make whatever adjustments are necessary according to the contextual demands. On the other hand, communicative competency refers to the relationship between the grammatical competency and the knowledge of the rules of a particular language. In summary, the focus of this competency it has a linkage with the development of learning the four (4) major skills of language learning. Such as speaking, listening, reading and writing with the special emphasis on the knowledge of the rules of good language usage.

4. **Strategies competency:-** Canale (2006) states that it is the ability which deals with the knowledge of the language and ability to use that knowledge effectively as well as appropriately for the purpose of style of stylistic in communication. This is deal with the active part of communication rather than passive. On the other hand, strategic competency is the link that lies everything together that associated with the politeness principles in pragmatic study. A typical example for this case can be: if you are late to a particular meeting and if you need to find a good excuse, the white lie that you have utter at that time is a product of your strategic competency which reflects a criteria of personal stylistic in language communication.

5. **Discourse competency:-** It is the ability to arrange the meaning of sentences into cohesive structures. In discourse analysis the terms discourse competency is studied within the limits of conversational interactional patterns that can be great variety of words choice in the process of contextual analysis. That is why (Akmajian, 1997) examples that there are many forms of discourse analysis in communication and many forms of talk-exchange: for examples, letters, jokes, stories, lectures, speeches, etc, and

all categories of discourse may be found through arguments, business discussions and lovers conversations or political statements.
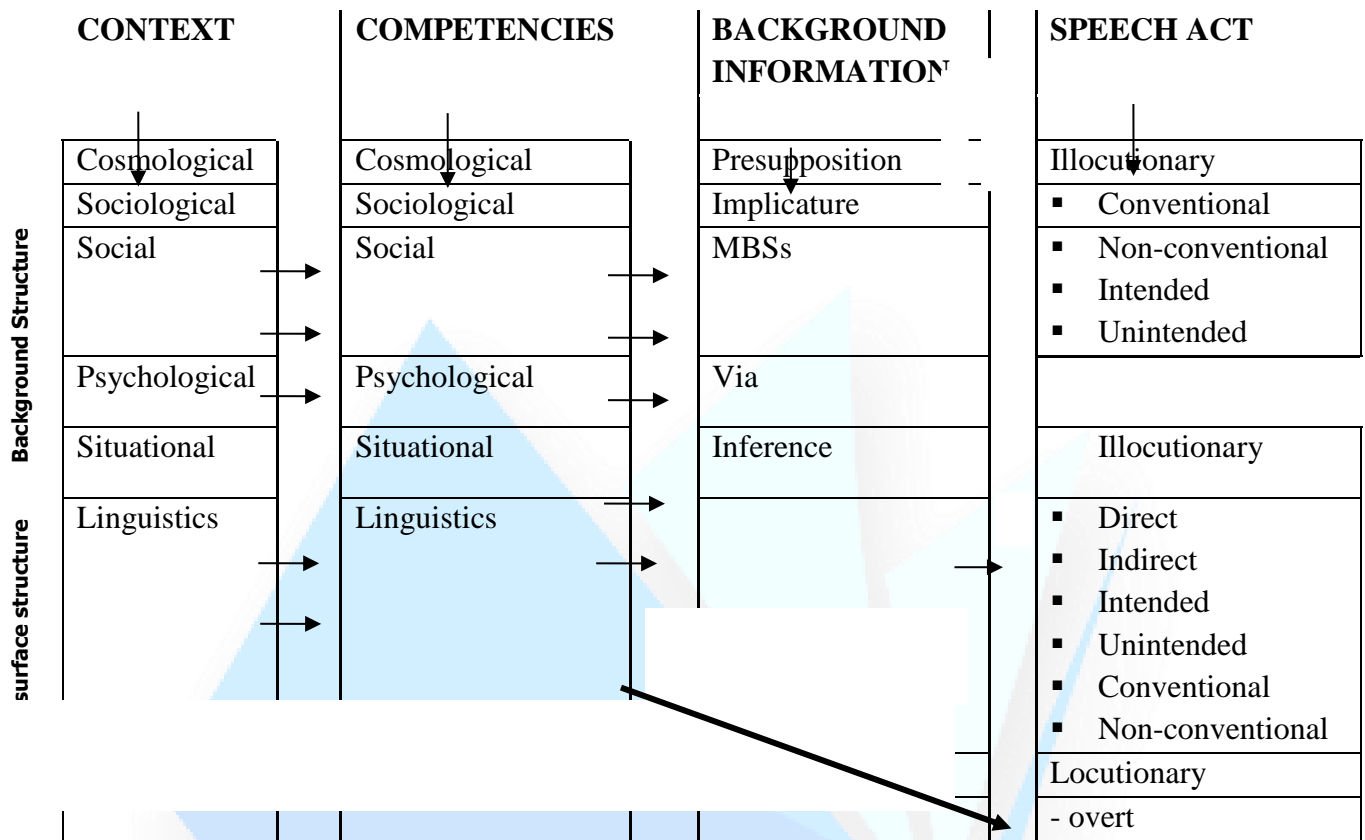
Lyons (2020) beliefs that in order to understand the context of a particular language utterances very well as a professional journalist, there is need for you to study some five (5) social attributes of pragmatic contexts":

1. Knowledge of appropriate distinction between written style and spoken varieties of that particular language
2. Knowledge of appropriate subject matter of discussion in line with the central idea of the topic
3. Knowledge of social-psychological world situational condition in line with the global current affairs
4. Knowledge of appropriate selection of words language register in line with the organization of sentences.
5. Knowledge of a person who is using the language in line with the situation that he/herself at the time of conversation.

Lawan (1997) also notes that the type of meaning use of a particular language should be the process of encode or decode. This is solidly depend on some aspect of pragmatic knowledge;

   a. **Communicative Competency:-** This is including both the linguistic and situational competencies
   b. **Knowledge of the world:-** This is including the world view and the social – cultural background of different regions or continents around the world.
   c. **Psychological state of being:-** This is including the mind and attitude of the speaker or writer towards the topic of discussion
   d. **Communicative context:-** This is has to do with the co-participants in the process of communicative events, that eventually change the narrative for personal interest, in the case of political for statement.

Lawal's (1997) "Aspect of a pragmatic Theory" focuses on both the surface as well as background structure. Lawal identifies presupposition, implicature, MCBs and inferences as the underlying background information that is required for the meaning explication of many discourse for the meaning explication of many discourse analysis provided in the diagramme below:

| | CONTEXT | COMPETENCIES | BACKGROUND INFORMATION | SPEECH ACT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Background Structure** | Cosmological | Cosmological | Presupposition | Illocutionary |
| | Sociological | Sociological | Implicature | ▪ Conventional |
| | Social | Social | MBSs | ▪ Non-conventional |
| | | | | ▪ Intended |
| | | | | ▪ Unintended |
| | Psychological | Psychological | Via | |
| | Situational | Situational | Inference | Illocutionary |
| **surface structure** | Linguistics | Linguistics | | ▪ Direct |
| | | | | ▪ Indirect |
| | | | | ▪ Intended |
| | | | | ▪ Unintended |
| | | | | ▪ Conventional |
| | | | | ▪ Non-conventional |
| | | | | Locutionary |
| | | | | - overt |

Extracted from figure 1: Lawan's (1997) Aspect of a pragmatic theory. That may help the general public to understand and analyze the intended unintended meaning of some language utterances by themselves.

## 4. Politeness Principle

May (1993) state that "politeness principle is a useful and kindness language strategies by many individuals in order or show a certain concern or respect for people's face. This is to indicate that politeness involves taking account of the feelings of others and a polities person makes others feel comfortable in the process of conversation. In linguistic politeness involves speaking to people appropriately in the light of their relationship to you, but inappropriately linguistic choice may be considered rude behavious in the eyes of people.

Holmes (1992) outline the two major types of poliness strategies namely:

i. **Positive politeness strategies:-** This is has to do with making offers, joking, given sympathy

ii. **Negative politeness strategies:-** This is has to do with apologizing, hedging and self-effacement

## 5. Austin's Speech Acts Theory

The speech act theory considers language as a sort of action rather than a medium to convey and express of thought. The theory emphasize that any utterances have a different or specific meaning to its user and listener other than it original meaning according to the language. Also, the theory further identify that there are two kinds of utterances that associated with the levels of secondary or tertiary level of meaning such as constatie and performative utterances. A constatie utterances it something which describes or denotes the situation, in relation with the fact or true or false.

**Case Study 1:**
Example, the teacher asked Fateema whether she had taken the sweet and Fateema replies "hhhhhh". Here the utterances of Fateema describes the event in pact of answering her teacher whether the situation was true or false. In a nutshell, the context of speech act is in the context of situation rather than explanation. This is because the speech act borrows it ideas from structuralism and indirect speck act of John Searie was developed based on Austines speech act.
The "performative" utterences is something which do not describes anything at all. Means the utterances in the sentences or in the part of sentences are normally considered as having a meaning of its own. Which including feelings, attitudes, emotions and though of the person performance in line with the linguistic action.

**Case Study 2:**
Example, Auwalu and Khadija have been dating their marriage for the past two years. But Aumalu has been travelled for atleast one year without realizing that Khadija has a new boy friend who is richer and educated than him. One fine evening Auwalu came back from the one year journey and took Khadija to the most expensive restaurant in Zaria, and Auwalu moved closer to Khadija and asked her again that "How was the previous promise of our marriage" ? "will you still marry me"? Khadija burst with afraid and replied that hhhh "I will". Here in this conversation the "will" of Khadija does not make any genuine referential meaning. But rather express her immediate feelings, attitudes and emotional towards the context of lack of certainty.

Austin further divided his linguistic act into three (3) categories, which include the following.

| 1. | Locutionary act | This is the act of saying something with examples or references |
|---|---|---|
| 2. | Illocutionary act | This is the act of saying something opposite with the literary meaning |
| 3. | Perlocutioanry act | This is the act the doing something that brings about the effects on the audience |

## 6. Research Methodology

This study employed secondary sources of data collection. The choice of this, stand as not unconnected with the fact that the area of the study would be limited to only the knowledge of language programmatic is helping mass-communication professionalism. This is because the content of this topic is still subject to review by different scholars from linguistic background. As a result of pragmatics is very sensitive because of its wide-range of coverage. "Pragmatics is not only the study of the aspects of meaning, and language use the depend on the speaker to the addressee, but also a study of investigating how sense can be made of a certain written texts that deals with the systematic way of explaining language use in context towards meaning". Which is similar to this study that intend to highlights how pragmatics is helping mass-communication professionalism. The secondary sources of data were derived from existing literature, journals, articles, language reports writing, language planning documentation, online sources and other relevant materials to the study.

## 7. Discussion/Results

Specifically, the results of the findings is to interprets and describe the significance of findings in light of what was already known about the study's problem. The results reveals that pragmatics competency dominated by five (5) different types of communication elements towards understanding the real intended meaning by the speaker. But 80% has been dominated by the sociolinguistic competency because it is the ability to interpret the social meaning of linguistic items. While 60% has been captured by the interactive, or interactional competency, because it is the ability to interpret the body language of the speaker. On the other hand, 50% is strictly based on communicative competence. This is because at this point, it is the ability to focuses on the development of four (4) language learning skills, such as speaking, listening, reading and writing. The 40% also dominated the strategic competency, because it is the ability to formulate the personal style or stylistic in communication. This is has to do with the native – speakers or speakers who are born from homogenous speech community where there is no language limitation. The last one is discourse competency that has been dominated only 30% because is the ability to re-arrange the meaning of sentences into cohesive structures. But the analysis has been guided by the aspect of a pragmatic theory figure 1, version of Lawan's (1997).

## 8. Recommendations:

In view of the previous pages of this paper, the following recommendations are made on the basic of partial findings that may help the target audience: The Nigerian universities and polytechnics should considered pragmatic as compulsory course, not optional in Mass-Communication departments. Means both at Diploma or undergraduate level because it can add the glamour towards the mass media professionalism. The politeness principles may help our young generation boys and girls to adjust their choice of words or organization of sentences whenever they are talking with elderly people. This is because many young generation boys and girls lack basic home training. That is why studying pragmatic may help them to understand our abandoned cultural heritage and to know where they were coming from or where they are heading to.

## 9. Conclusion

Language pragmatic competency study does not only relevant to linguistic or mass-communication profession but relevance to the business circles. (Liu, 1996) notes that the level of your politeness strategies in China, usually determine the number of your customers in many companies in China. Similarly, pragmatic strategies may be found in the hospital because a Doctor cannot openly tell the patient that you will die in the next 3 or 4 days. He/she should have a politeness strategies of saying it. Also, pragmatic competency may be found in Aviation industries, because the pilot may not tell the passengers on board that he/she last control. But should have a politeness techniques of saying it, like "Ladies and gentlemen we are now experience   bad weather, please we should pray for one another".

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