Routledge Research on New Waves in Pragmatics

FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON MAJOR ISSUES IN PRAGMATICS

Edited by
Monika Kirner-Ludwig

Fresh Perspectives on Major Issues in Pragmatics

This book showcases new and innovative developments and approaches in pragmatics, spotlighting perspectives from an international range of emerging scholars undertaking cutting-edge research pushing the field in new directions.

The volume begins by taking stock of the most up-to-date developments in pragmatics research, as embodied by the work of a new generation of pragmaticists. Chapters are organized around key areas of development within pragmatics, including intercultural and cross-cultural pragmatics, cognitive pragmatics, and new perspectives on referencing, implicating, and inferring, shedding further light on the ways in which pragmatics increasingly interfaces with other linguistic disciplines and on innovative methodologies. The book also places the focus on pragmatics approaches in languages other than English, further expanding the borders of research.

This book will be of particular interest to scholars in pragmatics interested in staying on top of the latest developments and future directions for the field.

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Acknowledgements

The present volume appears as the first of hopefully many in the newly established series *Routledge Research on New Waves in Pragmatics*. This title is to be understood in two ways: not only does it refer to the innovative approaches and 'hot' topics in pragmatics that the chapters in this and upcoming volumes and monographs address, but also does 'New Waves' refer to the fact that this format exclusively gives the floor to excellent early-career scholars in the discipline. Each one of the following selected chapters has not only been supervised and mentored by well-established scholars of pragmatics, but underwent a rigorous double-blind peer review before being accepted.

The idea for this new series is one of several that Istvan Kecskes, Distinguished Professor at the State University of New York, USA, has been kind enough to share and discuss with me over the past five years. In fact, not only did he share the idea with me but also the credit for it by entrusting me with the task and responsibility of editing this very volume. I am tremendously grateful to him for his unceasing mentorship.

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Abbreviations

ACAC	*Corpus of AMPRA-4 conference abstracts*
ACC	accusative
AF	absolute frequency
AI	at-issue
AMPRA	American Pragmatics Association
AU	audience
BG	background
CG	Common Ground
CG*	Projected set
CMC	computer-mediated communication
COCA	*Corpus of Contemporary American English*
COND	conditional
COP	copula
DA	distributional approach
DC	Discourse Commitment
DC*	Projected Discourse Commitment
DT	Donald Trump
EDQ	echo declarative question
EEG	electroencephalography
EN	English
EPI	entertainment-political interview
F	French
F-domain	Focus domain
GE	German
G-maze task	grammaticality maze task
HC	Hillary Clinton
HOPS	*Handbooks of Pragmatics*, de Gruyter (2011)
IPrA	International Pragmatics Association
IS	information structure
JF	Jimmy Fallon
JK	Jimmy Kimmel
KO	Korean
LOC	locative
ms	millisecond(s)

MT	machine translation
NAI	not-at-issue
NOM	nominative
NOMNL	nominalizer
PCQ	*parce que* (F, 'because')
POL	polite form
POSS	possessive
PSQ	*puisque* (F 'since')
Q	question marker
QUD	question under discussion
QUO	quotative
RF	relative frequency
RSVP task	Rapid Serial Visual Presentation task
SBC	*Santa Barbara Corpus*
SI	scalar implicature
S-O-V	Subject-Object-Verb
S-V-O	Subject-Verb-Object
SWQ	*since when* question
Table*	Projected Table
TOP	topic
TPR	translation process research
T-Vdistinction	*tu-vos* distinction
USU	Undirected Speculation Utterance
V2	verb-second (order)
WSCC	*Web of Science Core Collection*
*	indicates ungrammatical construction or non-attested occurrence

1 Introduction

New Waves in Pragmatics

Istvan Kecskes and Monika Kirner-Ludwig

1 A Brief Introduction to this Introduction

The field of pragmatics is a continuously advancing, dynamic conglomerate of frameworks and approaches. Today's pragmaticists surely have the luxury of being able to resort to a number of detailed and comprehensive accounts that diligently dismantle the complex interrelations and philosophical streams that have been opening up and forming pragmatics as a heterogenous yet game-changing new field of linguistics (e.g. Koyama 2011; Liedtke & Tuchen 2018). Thus, we shall only dedicate a brief section to sketching the tradition of main influences into and in pragmatics (Section 1).

The present introductory chapter is primarily concerned with the facets of pragmatics in today's research agendas and with what pragmatics holds in store with regard to ongoing innovation and interdisciplinary approaches. Section 1 will thus essentially lay the foundation for dissecting the main currents that have continuously been shaping the field, including research on direct and indirect speech acts (Austin 1962[1955]; Searle 1975, 1982) and performativity (Bach & Harnish 1979; Fraser 1975; Recanati 1987; Searle 1989), interactional linguistics (Hopper 1988; Ochs et al. 1996; Couper-Kuhlen & Selting 2001), conversation analysis (Schegloff & Sacks 1973; Sacks et al. 1974; Sidnell & Stivers 2013) and the Cooperative Principle (Grice 1975). As an additional layer of context, our groundwork account of the history of pragmatics uses up-to-date figures from pragmatics-related publications in leading journals, volumes and handbooks in order to trace its development since the 1970s.

Section 3 zooms in on the major research spheres and objects in pragmatics that have taken shape in the last two decades. After all, it is only if we seek answers to and insights into where it is that pragmatics currently stands with regard to the most frequently and saliently addressed topics that we can infer what further developing tendencies there may be. Thus, in order to establish a status quo of the main current research interests in pragmatics, Sections 3.1 and 3.2 resort to corpus linguistic and scientometric resources and tools.

Tackling these issues will inevitably and aptly frame and contextualize the innovative contributions assembled in the present volume – the new waves, so to speak (cf. Section 4).

2 Pragmatics in Context and Context in Pragmatics, or: Many Streams to a River

The field of pragmatics has come a long and windy way since the 1960s, essentially witnessing a shift from *contextualism* (in the Firthian sense) to *context*, or, more simplistically, from sentence to utterance. In other words, structuralism's context-isolated conceptions gave way to context-dependent approaches, and the traditionally prescribed scholarly interest in fictional and historical text shifted to an acknowledgement of real discourse as an equally worthwhile object of investigation (Searle 1982). As Koyama puts it, *context* came to be a notion broadened from pertaining only to "tokens of linguistic types" to "communicative-event participants and their pragmatic acts" (2011: 140; cf. Mey [1993]2001: 206–235).

From the perspective of pragmatics, disciplines like philosophy of language, anthropology, ethnomethodology, European sociology, psychiatry, psychology and ethology were confluent streams, generating a think tank of pragmatic ideas and research desiderates. Consequently, fresh views on text and both intra- and extralinguistic context – which arose from the seeds ultimately planted by scholars of semiotics (cf. e.g. Parret 1983; Deledalle 1989) – sprouted some of the most important pragmatic foundations that still serve as major benchmarks for today's pragmatics (cf. Figure 1.1). These publications include the groundbreaking works on speech acts and performativity by John L. Austin ([1955]1962), John R. Searle (1969, 1975; also cf. Wunderlich 1972; Maas & Wunderlich 1972, 1976; Fraser 1975; Bach & Harnish 1979), Harvey Sacks et al.'s work on turn-taking (1974), Herbert H. Clark & Edward F. Schaefer's notions of Grounding and Common Ground (1989; also cf. Clark & Brennan 1991), and H. Paul Grice's introduction of the Cooperative Principle and the notion of implicature (1975). It was only due to such fresh deliberations – and initially strictly theoretical approaches to language use in context – that the way was paved for such revolutionary frameworks as Politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987) and Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson 1995, 2004).

As pragmatics was emancipating itself, its dissociation from other linguistic disciplines – foremost Lexical Semantics (cf. e.g. McCawley 1978) – was most effectively accomplished by channeling the rapidly growing body of pragmatic research towards new publication organs and international conferences. Thus, the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the launch of the *Journal of Pragmatics* (founding eds. Haberland & Mey, 1977–; current eds. Haugh & Terkourafi, 168 volumes as of October 2020) and the Benjamins journal *Pragmatics* (founding ed. Gruber, 1986–). The latter was started in lockstep with the first International Pragmatics Conference held in Italy in 1985 (and every two or three years since then) and the founding of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA) with John Gumperz, the figurehead of Interactional Sociolinguistics (cf. 1978, 1982), as its first president (1986–1990).[1] In the 1980s Benjamins also launched the *Pragmatics and Beyond* book series: *Pragmatics and Beyond* (eds. Parret & Verschueren, 1980–1986, 56 volumes), *Pragmatics & Beyond*

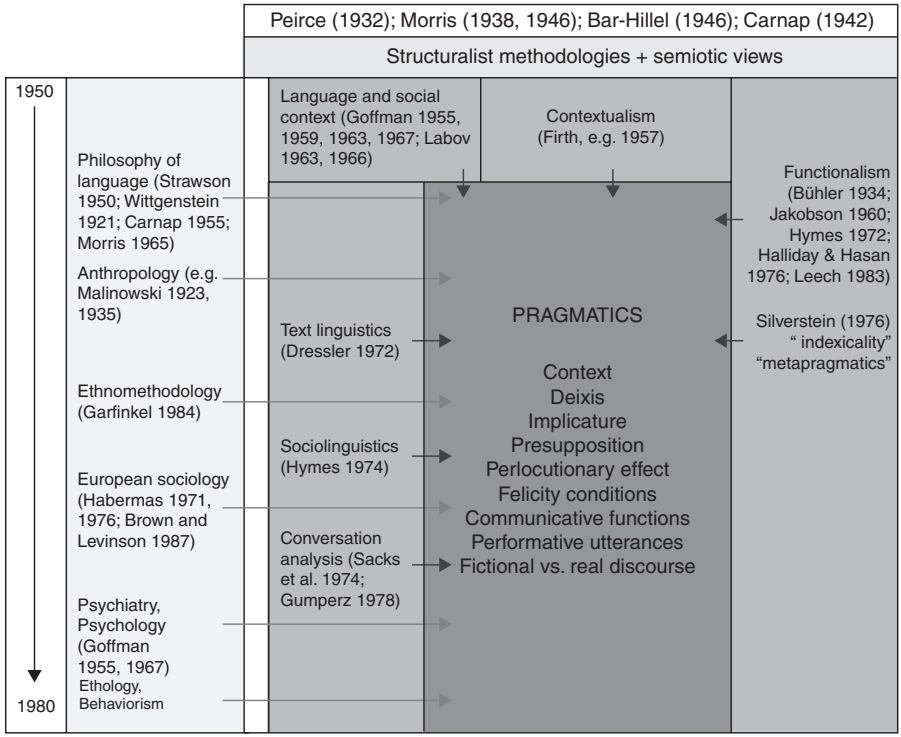

Figure 1.1 Pragmatics – many streams to a river

Companion Series (eds. Parret & Mey, 1985–1987, 6 volumes) and *Pragmatics & Beyond New Series*, ed. Fetzer 1988–). The latter has published 318 volumes to date (cf. Table 1.1).[2]

In the 1990s, pragmatics was productive enough for Benjamins to launch yet another handbook series, i.e. *The Handbook of Pragmatics* (eds. Jef Verschueren, Jan-Ola Östman, Jan Blommaert & Chris Bulcaenthat, 1995–), which, since 2003, has also been available as a continuously expanded online resource. Thus, the discipline of pragmatics had become so well established at that point that – rather than being patronized and informed by other core linguistic disciplines – the tables were beginning to turn: Blutner established the subfield of Lexical Pragmatics and postulated that it be needed to provide a "systematic and explanatory account of pragmatic phenomena that are connected with the semantic underspecification of lexical items" (1998: 115). By 2000, a strong pragmatic camp had worked its way even into Historical Linguistics. Thus, what Labov once coined the problem of "bad data" (1994: 11) is what papers published in the *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* (founding eds. Jucker & Taavitsainen 2000, current ed. Archer) have been making the very best of since its launch (i.e. in 21 volumes to date).

Table 1.1 Pragmatics series since 1980

Title of series, editors	*Publisher*	*Active*
Pragmatics and Beyond, eds. Herman Parret & Jef Verschueren	Benjamins	1980–1986
Pragmatics & Beyond Companion Series, eds. Herman Parret & Jacob L. Mey	Benjamins	1985–1987
Pragmatics & Beyond New Series, ed. Anita Fetzer	Benjamins	1988–
The Handbook of Pragmatics, eds. Jef Verschueren, Jan-Ola Östman, Jan Blommaert & Chris Bulcaen	Benjamins	1995–
Palgrave Studies in Pragmatics, Language and Cognition, eds. Richard Breheny & Uli Sauerland	Palgrave [since 2015: Springer]	2004–
Studies in Pragmatics, eds. Maj-Britt Mosegaard Hansen, Kerstin Fischer & Anne Barron	Brill	2006–
Handbook of Pragmatics Highlights, eds. Jef Verschueren & Jan-Ola Östman	Benjamins	2009–
Handbooks of Pragmatics [HOPS], eds. Wolfram Bublitz, Andreas H. Jucker & Klaus P. Schneider	De Gruyter	2010–
Key Topics in Semantics and Pragmatics [no series editor]	Cambridge UP	2012–
Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology, ed. Alessandro Capone	Springer	2013–
Yearbook of Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics, ed. Jesús Romero-Trillo	Springer	2013–

At the same time, completely new streams of pragmatics emerged and established themselves, amongst these Cognitive Pragmatics (cf. e.g. HOPS 4, ed. Schmid 2012), Formal Pragmatics (Potts 2010; Asher & Lascarides 2003; Kadmon 2001), Corpus Pragmatics (Romero-Trillo 2008, 2018; Kopaczyk 2015), Interlanguage Pragmatics (Kasper & Blum-Kulka 1993; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford 2005), Intercultural Pragmatics (Kecskés 2011, 2013, 2015; Kecskes & Assimakopoulos 2017) and Experimental Pragmatics (Noveck & Sperber 2004; Noveck 2018; Meibauer 2012).[3] Intercultural Pragmatics and Historical Pragmatics have been represented by high-profile journals for over 15 years (cf. Table 1.2).

The majority of handbooks on pragmatics published since 1995 are displayed in Table 1.3,[4] not including handbooks dedicated to individual foci within the field, for example, politeness and impoliteness (cf. Culpeper et al. 2017).

Table 1.2 Pragmatics journals since 1977

Title of journal, editors	*Editors*	*Publisher*	*Active since*	*Number of volumes*[a]	*Impact factor*
Journal of Pragmatics	Michael Haugh & Marina Terkourafi	Elsevier	1977–	155	1.350 (5-year: 1.580)
Pragmatics [Quarterly publication of the International Pragmatics Association (IPrA)]	Helmut Gruber	Benjamins	1986–	29	0.605 (5-year: 0.903)
Journal of Historical Pragmatics	Dawn Archer	Benjamins	2000–	20	0.941 (5-year: 0.714) 0.290 (5-year: 0.407)
Intercultural Pragmatics	Istvan Kecskes	De Gruyter	2004–	16	1.158 (5-year: 1.489)
Lodz Papers in Pragmatics	Paul Chilton & Monika Kopytowska	De Gruyter	2005–	14	—
Pragmatics and Society	Jacob L. Mey	Benjamins	2010–	10	0.429 (5-year: 0.542)
Corpus Pragmatics [International Journal of Corpus Linguistics and Pragmatics]	Jesús Romero-Trillo	Springer	2017–	4	—

a As of October 2020.

Table 1.3 Pragmatics handbooks since 2008

Title of handbook	*Publ. year*	*Publisher*	*Series*	*Output*
The Handbook of Pragmatics, eds. Laurence R. Horn & Gregory Ward	2008	Blackwell	*Blackwell Handbooks in Linguistics*	1 out of 60 books in that series
The Cambridge Handbook of Pragmatics, eds. Keith Allan & Kasia M. Jaszczolt,	2012	Cambridge University Press	*Cambridge Handbooks in Language and Linguistics*	1 out of 36 books in that series
The Routledge Handbook of Pragmatics, eds. Anne Barron, Yueguo Gu & Gerard Steen	2017	Routledge/ Taylor & Francis	*Routledge Handbooks in Applied Linguistics*	1 out of 38 books in that series
The Oxford Handbook of Pragmatics, ed. Yan Huang	2017	*Oxford*	*Oxford Handbooks in Linguistics*	1 out of 57 books in this series
Handbuch Pragmatik, eds. Frank Liedtke & Astrid Tuchen	2018	Metzler/ Springer	—	—

3 A Sea of Possibilities: Pragmatics as a "Functional Perspective on Language rather than a […] Linguistic Theory"[5]

It has been pointed out that, since the 1990s, social sciences have increasingly been forced to challenge "disciplinary thinking" and "traditional disciplinary boundaries" (Holden 1993: 1796). Gradually, such delimitations and categorizations have been

> blurred and bent almost out of recognition to accommodate torrents of new knowledge, to respond to the demand for socially relevant research by funding agencies, and to reflect the fact that the problems of greatest moment today have to be tackled by multiple approaches.
>
> (Holden 1993: 1796)

Although precisely this notion is being postulated and implemented by the majority of today's linguistic scholars, pragmatics has been claiming its very own ground next to – rather than as part of or merely the opposite pole to – semantics. Yet, the issue of the semantic-pragmatic interface and the debate