This book illustrates the potential of Relevance Theory (RT) in offering a cognitive-pragmatic, cause-effect account of translation and interpreting (T&I), one which more closely engages T&I activity with the mental processes of speakers, listeners, writers, and readers during communicative acts.

The volume provides an overview of the cognitive approach to communication taken by RT, with a particular focus on the distinction between explicit and implicit content and the relationship between thoughts and utterances. The book begins by outlining key concepts and theory in RT pragmatics and charting the development of their disciplinary relationship with work from T&I studies. Chapters draw on practical examples from a wide range of T&I contexts, including news media, scientific materials, literary translation, audiovisual translation, conference interpreting, and legal interpreting. The book also explores the myriad applications of RT pragmatics-inspired work and future implications for translation and interpreting research.

This volume will be of interest to scholars in T&I studies and pragmatics.

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Douglas Robinson

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Relevance Theory in Translation and Interpreting
A Cognitive-Pragmatic Approach

Fabrizio Gallai
To my dad, who taught me the meaning of the seasons
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### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVT</td>
<td>Audiovisual translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT</td>
<td>Back translation (a translation of a translated text, which retains the original structure and is used to explain the translation process for an audience that does not understand the target language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Conference interpreting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORT</td>
<td>Competence-oriented research of translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSI</td>
<td>Consecutive interpreting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTIS</td>
<td>Cognitive translation and interpreting studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DI</td>
<td>Dialogue interpreting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>Discourse marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT</td>
<td>Free indirect thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Interpreting studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language (a language that is not the native language of the speaker/writer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Machine translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>Notation text (in consecutive interpreting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RT</td>
<td>Relevance Theory or relevance-theoretic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Source audience (the reader/hearer of the original text/utterance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Source text communicator (the writer/speaker of the original text/utterance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Simultaneous interpreting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Source language (the language of the original text/utterance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Source text (the original text for translation/interpreting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Target audience (the reader/hearer of the translated text/utterance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T&amp;I</td>
<td>Translation and interpreting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TL</td>
<td>Target language (the language of the translation/interpreting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TS</td>
<td>Translation studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TT</td>
<td>Target text (the translated/interpreted text/utterance)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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My greatest intellectual debt is to Prof Diane Blakemore, my mentor in pragmatics and PhD supervisor. Thank you for making me appreciate the wonders of human communication.

This book has drawn on a rich trove of publications by a great deal of authors, working both within cognitive pragmatics and translation and interpreting studies. There are too many names to mention here; the scholars I am most grateful to include Deirdre Wilson, Ernst-August Gutt, Ian Mason, and Robin Setton, whom I was extremely fortunate to meet and talk to about how we understand each other and the world around us.

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Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family in the UK and Italy, who have helped me keep my sanity in the very strange contexts of 2020 and 2021.
Conventions

I have tried to keep technical terms to a minimum, but some of these conventions were unavoidable.

Typographical conventions

- Linguistic expressions: when I refer to a linguistic item, I write it in *italics*, while (encoded or not encoded) concepts are written in LARGE CAPS.
- Interpretations and meanings in contexts: an utterance is between “inverted commas”, a sentence is represented in *italics*, and a proposition in SMALL CAPS.
- Main terms: they are in bold within the text.

Transcription conventions in interpreted speech

- ( . ): a short silence (micro-pause);
- ( .. ) or ( . . . ): untimed intervals of longer length;
- *colon*: long vowel (multiple colons indicate a more prolonged sound);
- *(double parentheses)*: verbal descriptions of sounds or movements;
- *underscoring*: increased volume;
- *[square brackets]*: overlap.

Other conventions

- For ease of understanding, in examples with an unnamed communicator or hearer/reader, I shall refer to the communicator, the translator or the interpreter as ‘he’, and the audience as ‘she’. Furthermore, I shall also distinguish:
  
  i. ‘interpreting’ or ‘to interpret’ (lower case), which indicates the activity of a (conference or dialogue) interpreter or an explanation or way of explaining (e.g., research findings);
ii. ‘Interpretation’ or ‘to Interpret’ (upper case), which denotes the metarepresentation of a communicator’s thoughts recovered by an addressee.

- Implicatures are indicated as such: ‘U \rightarrow I’, which equals ‘Language user producing utterance U implicates proposition I’. By contrast, \textit{+>>} denotes explicatures. Thus, ‘U \textit{+>>} I’ is equal to ‘Language user producing utterance U is an explication of proposition I’.
- The study of translation and interpreting inevitably presupposes knowledge of more than one language. The book has been designed for use by readers from any language background who have an advanced level of English. In the translation examples, English is always either the source language or the target language. The other languages covered are varied, including major European languages (such as German or Italian), Arabic, Japanese, and Russian. An English back translation of a source or target text is provided in square brackets – or in \textit{italics} if within the text – to facilitate analysis. Transliterations of Arabic and Japanese are also to be found in square brackets.

All names, dates and locations in the transcripts are fictitious and do not relate in any way to any real events. Any resemblance is purely coincidental.
Preface

This volume is the outcome of a growing personal concern over the foundations of translation and interpreting, which began when I was an interpreting student in Trieste. Or, more specifically, during my Erasmus period at Heidelberg University Translation and Interpreting Department.

Browsing through its library shelves, something caught my eye. It was an oldish-looking booklet on conference interpreting by Patricia E. Longley (1968). In its Preface, the author states that her main aim is an appraisal of the skills it takes to be an interpreter, so I immediately set out to read it. Aside from the more obvious requirements of good language knowledge and general background, certain advantages struck me as peculiar (such as that of being a married woman). What struck me most, however, was a passage in which the author mentions a need “to find the ‘naturals,’ whom most practicing interpreters can recognize very quickly” (Longley 1968, 61). And if they failed to become professional interpreters, “they will probably make good translators” (ibid. 1968, 66). Was translation just the option of last resort in case I failed my interpreting exams? Do all interpreting trainees have to possess embryonic aptitudes capable of development and training?

Over the following years, as a professional interpreter working in the UK, I noticed that my colleagues’ and my presence affected the interaction in ways that were both subtle and pervasive, sometimes leading to miscommunication undetected by the parties concerned. Individually, although these differences between the source and the target texts may have each affected the exchange locally, they did not alter the outcome overall. Cumulatively, however, each of the features modified in the renditions seemed to amount to a weight of evidence that – in spite of their treatment as identical texts – the two were in fact disparate. I remember singling out a particular component known as discourse marker or connective, and thinking, Is it okay to leave parts of the original text out altogether if they are extraneous to the ‘meat and potatoes’ of the sentence?

It was then that I decided to start conducting research, becoming what Gile (1994) would refer to as ‘practisearcher’. And very soon did I realise that, beginning in the 1990s, views on testing, training, and the very
definition of translation and interpreting had drastically changed. I also realised that the analytical momentum of translation and interpreting studies had not been generated from within the disciplines’ existing paradigms, but rather scholars had looked at other theoretical frameworks for relevant models and methods.

An obvious source of inspiration had been linguistics, and the core linguistic concerns – how to preserve meaning and recreate the same effects in the target language recipients – remain unaltered. In particular, these are questions about pragmatics, the study of meaning by virtue of (or dependent on) the use of language. Consequently, one would expect a pragmatic theory to be able to explain the processes involved in translation and interpreting, and to have practical implications for translators and interpreters.

If we assume that the purpose of translation and interpreting is indeed communication, and the work of professionals in this field is underpinned by linguistic and cognitive abilities, then an appropriate pragmatic framework for capturing these communicative acts must relate these activities to the mental processes a communicator and his audience engage in. It is no surprise, then, that over the past three decades Relevance Theory has become the most influential cognitive-pragmatic approach within translation and interpreting studies. Building on the work of Paul Grice (1961, 1989), Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) have proposed a relevance-theoretic account of human communication, which is opposed to the classical code model, according to which information is encoded into a message, transmitted and decoded by another party, with another copy of the code. Their model offers an additional dimension to the analysis of interlingual communication as it aims to explain both how humans understand the world (cognition) and how we convey thoughts and understand each other (communication). They argue that utterance Interpretation is not achieved by identifying the semantically encoded meanings of sentences, but involves inferential computations performed over conceptual representations or propositions.

Almost 40 years have gone by since the publication of the Postface to Relevance: Communication and Cognition (2nd ed.), in which Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995, 278) express their hope that novel studies “will lead to revisions, new insights, and, perhaps more important, new problems to investigate”. Around that time, Gutt’s (1990, 1991) analysis of translation from a relevance-theoretical prospective was emerging, and has since then provoked a flood of research. This research – now also encompassing interpreting – has witnessed a steady departure from theoretical studies in favour of implementing various types of empirical research in order to gain further insight into the process of interlingual communication.

So, Relevance Theory has enjoyed increasing popularity in translation and interpreting studies, both in Europe and around the world. However, it has sometimes also been misapplied. This mostly happens when it is
presented as a training method to ‘correctly’ derive the intended message, or when the analysis fails to consider the special nature of interlingual communication.

This book aims to provide an authoritative, up-to-date, and yet accessible introduction to the interface between this theory and translation and interpreting studies. To investigate both the practice and the theory in an accessible and systematic way, I divided the book into three macro sections:

- Part I begins by giving a brief overview of technical terms used in linguistic semantics and pragmatics, as well as an introduction to Gricean pragmatics (Chapter 1). The main focus of Chapter 2, instead, is on the cognitive approach to communication taken by Relevance Theory; it revisits the axioms of the theory and expounds the way human communication and cognition are described.
- Part II shows how the application of the theory has shed light on key issues in translation (Chapter 3) and interpreting studies (Chapter 4); that is, on how relevance-theoretic ideas have been tested and applied to the study of mediated communication in various settings. In particular, we will discuss how Gutt’s notion of translation and interpreting as an act of interlingual interpretive language use, based on the concept of interpretive resemblance, has been espoused and challenged over the years.
- Finally, Part III fleshes out the theoretical and methodological implications of Relevance Theory-informed approaches to translation and interpreting, as well as their applications in terms of training and practice (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 explores future avenues, with a view to sparking a debate and further investigations.

The discussion presented here reflects synchronous processes of dynamic expansion and emerging realignment within core areas of Relevance Theory-informed studies on translation and interpreting, as the reality that we attempt to capture both changes and yet, in some ways, remains the same. In particular, this book contains work that brings a variety of data types and methods, and new findings into relevance-theoretic research, thus providing a good cross-section of the field at present and demonstrating the broad scope and vigour of this domain at this point in its evolution.

By the end, you will have been introduced to the essential machinery of the theory and its applications to translation and interpreting, and be able to propose and test your own relevance-theoretic explanations of particular phenomena, as well as strategies needed to achieve a pragmatically successful output. In particular, you will be ready to look in more detail at specific components of the approaches presented here, and apply them to complex questions in a wide range of translation and interpreting contexts, across different languages and cultures.
I have tried to write with more than one audience in mind. It is hoped that this book will provide useful insights and examples both for readers – academics, students, and practitioners alike – with little or no prior knowledge of Relevance Theory, and for more advanced researchers who are looking to develop their understanding of the theory and its application to the world of translators and interpreters. Of course, the extent to which things can be perceived as simple (partly) depends on the nature of the topics at hand.

While the level of difficulty does vary from chapter to chapter, the chapters build on each other. The first four chapters end with a ‘Food for thought’ section, which includes a very focused further reading list, review questions, and exercises. These tasks are designed in such a way that they can be used either by readers working on their own, or in pairs or groups in a more formal teaching situation. There are a number of abbreviations and conventions adopted in the text, explained more fully on pages x and xiii–xiv, respectively. The volume ends with a detailed glossary covering the technical terms (highlighted in bold at critical points in the text), and a bibliography, containing all of the sources mentioned in the book.

In conclusion, studies at the crossroads between this inferential approach to communication and translation and interpreting studies have proved to be very useful for quality evaluation, guiding (meta- and cross-pragmatic) skills acquisition as well as assessing the results in translation and interpreting. On the other hand, oral and written translation practices continue to provide real-world data against which Relevance Theory can be tested. I sincerely hope that this mutually beneficial exchange will continue, and that this volume will meet the needs of its readers and provide support over many years.

F.G.

Florence and Rome, February 2022
Part I
1 Gricean pragmatics
Meaning more than we say

1.1 Introduction

Until the 1950s, most linguists assumed that communication was a purely linear process. In this code model, meaning is believed to be transmitted between sender and receiver by encoding and decoding, constrained only by the precision of the code, the degree of uniformity of senders’ and receivers’ ‘codebooks’, and the quality of the channel. The information is simply processed and stored, and then the receiver can encode her own signal to transmit (cf. Searle 1983, 68).

Yet, sometimes intuition is as valuable as logic, and everyone is able to realise that this idea of meaning is way too simplistic. For example, consider the Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian discourse marker *odnosno* (roughly, ‘so’, ‘that is’ or ‘in other words’) which appears to be a frequent stumbling block in war-related testimonies at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). This was especially the case during the trial of Enver Hadžihasanović and Amir Kubura, top commanders in the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s. On 10 March 2005, Judge Antonetti touched upon the issue of the translation of *odnosno*, which had been disputed by the prosecution and the defence:

Judge Antonetti: I myself have noted that several witnesses have used this word, and I was tempted to ask them to explain the word, but that would mean entering a discussion on grammar, and that was not why the witness came. I noted that Madam Residovic also used the word very often. I was going to ask her to tell us what she means when she uses it.

(IT-01–47 Hadžihasanović et al. Day: March 10, 2005, taken from Mišković-Luković and Dedaić 2012, 1356)

Ms Residovic, the Sarajevo-based attorney who represented defence in several cases brought to the ICTY, responded in a very evasive way:

Ms. Residovic: the word “odnosno” is frequently used in different contexts with a different meaning, and the drafter of the document,
or the person who is speaking would be in the best position to explain then in what sense the word was used.


This small exchange from courtroom proceedings provides us with an insight into a pertinent metalinguistic discussion. A question arises: why is the meaning of words such as odnosno or but impossible to fit into a code model explanation, and how come these terms are so elusive (and hard to translate)?

In the 1950s and 1960s, ordinary language philosophers such as Wittgenstein (1953), Austin (1962), and Searle (1969) started reflecting upon these and other issues, and found an overarching answer. Far from easily encoding propositional information, they stated that natural languages vastly underdetermine the communicator’s meaning, leaving a gap between what can be precisely encoded and what a speaker intends to convey. Explaining how this gap is bridged became the main aim of the new discipline of pragmatics.

The term pragmatics has been used in many ways and to cover a very wide range of aspects, but it can be broadly defined as “the systematic study of meaning by virtue of, or dependent on, the use of language” (Huang 2007, 2). Scott-Phillips (2014) argues that pragmatics is key to understanding language and its evolution. Linguistic systems are said to help make human communication more efficient, and their evolution follows from the development of the kind of communication which pragmatic theories aim to explain. At its heart lies the notion that language is not a logical product, but originates from the conventional practice of individuals, which hinges on the particular context of language use.

And if pragmatics is the study of meaning-in-context (Kasher 1977, Levinson 1983), then cognitive pragmatics can be broadly defined as encompassing the study of the cognitive principles and processes involved in the construal of meaning-in-context. Even though other cognitive-pragmatic theories have been developed in the last three decades, Sperber and Wilson’s (1986/1995) post-Gricean Relevance Theory (henceforth RT) is considered to be the main theoretical framework in the area of cognitive pragmatics (cf. Huang 2007, Schmid 2012), as well as the only cognitive-pragmatic approach adopted so far within translation and interpreting (henceforth T&I) studies.

Scholars in this field focus on the inferential chains necessary to understand a communicator’s intention, starting from their utterance and the different mental representations underlying the comprehension of various phenomena as cognitive processes. Pragmatics is here understood as being about how we work out (or infer) what to write, say, and do when communicating, and how we infer what others intend to communicate to us.
We make *inferences* all the time, especially when communicating. For instance, consider this context: you are eating the dessert at the dinner table, and your sister Serena is sitting next to you. She suddenly turns around, and steals the last bite of cake off your plate. She then winks at you as she slips the last bite into her mouth, and you hear yourself utter the following words:

(1) You: Oi, I was eating that!

In order for your sister to process your utterance, she must recognise the following things (amongst others):

(2)

(2a) Linguistic form: *Oi, I was eating that!*
(2b) Linguistic meaning: the person referred to as *I* about to eat the thing referred to as *that* at some point after the time when he said it (also known as ‘reference assignment’);
(2c) Contextual assumptions: the brother is the speaker; the sister ate the last piece of cake; the brother is holding a fork in his hand and was about to eat that last piece;
(2d) What it directly communicates: the brother was on the point of finishing off the slice of cake on his plate when his sister ate the last piece;
(2e) What it indirectly communicates: the brother is unhappy about what his sister has done; he wanted to carry on eating his cake; he thinks his sister is insensitive or self-centred; he wants an apology; he was being ironic and does not actually care about his last piece of cake; etc.

An account of how utterances are understood in this way has always been at the heart of pragmatics. In the example (2), this area of study usually focuses on how the sister got from the linguistic meaning of what her brother said (2b) to an understanding of what he intended in this context. In other words, it studies how the brother’s utterance led his sister to work out that he was saying (directly) that he was about to eat his last piece of cake (see 2d), and (indirectly) that he was upset that his sister had eaten it, etc. (see 2e). From the outset, pragmatics has focused on the latter – things which are communicated beyond the meanings of linguistic expressions used. These indirectly communicated assumptions are termed *implicatures*.

A key feature of *implicatures* is that they are worked out on the basis not only of what the communicator said or wrote, but also of assumptions about the context in which they were communicated. In another context, an utterance of the expression *Oi, I was eating that!* in (1) would not lead to any of the conclusions in (2e) – or would only lead to part of
them. So, what counts as a (more or less strongly communicated) implicature, and what guides the sister to make inferences such as the ones in (2d) and (2e)?

Before we look at ideas on implicatures, we first need to look at some basic notions in linguistic **semantics** and **pragmatics** which continue to be at the heart of Relevance Theory-oriented research. Section 1.2 considers some issues about terminology, while Section 1.3 presents an outline of Grice’s work on natural and non-natural meaning before discussing Grice’s ‘Theory of Conversation’. Lastly, Section 1.4 mentions a number of aspects within Gricean pragmatics which have been object of critiques over the years.

### 1.2 What pragmatics aims to explain

#### 1.2.1 Sentence, utterance, proposition

In current linguistics, *sentence*, *utterance*, and *proposition* are terms which have a slightly different meaning to their everyday usage. Let me begin with the distinction between sentence and utterance – a distinction that is key to both semantics and pragmatics.

An **utterance** (a sound or an image) is the (oral or visual) use of a particular piece of language, and is produced by a particular person on a particular occasion. According to this definition, “Oi, I was eating that!” in (1) is an utterance.

**Sentences**, instead, are more abstract entities or constructs defined within a theory of grammar which do not take account of properties such as who, when and where they were uttered. They are independent of their realisation in any concrete form. As a case in point, consider:

\[(3)\]

\[(3a)\] Let’s do the time warp again!
\[(3b)\] *Again let’s warp do time the!*

I uttered example (3a) this morning as I was singing *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* refrain. And it has surely been uttered by other people in other situations before – during a musical tour, for instance – and will no doubt be uttered again in the future. Yet, (3a) can also be considered a sentence which existed before I produced my utterance this morning. Example (3b), instead, is not a well-formed string of words according to the laws of grammar, therefore it is not considered a sentence.

The study of sentence-meaning – those aspects of meaning ascribed to a sentence – normally belongs to semantics. By contrast, utterance-meaning, or speaker-meaning – what a speaker intends to convey by uttering something – is normally analysed by pragmaticians.

We now move on to the term **proposition**, which focuses on logical properties. A proposition is what is expressed by a sentence when that
sentence is used to make a statement – that is, to say something true or false – about some state of affairs in the outside world. In other words, when we utter a sentence to make a statement, this sentence is said to convey a proposition. For example, (4c) is the proposition underlying both sentences (4a) and (4b):

(4)
(4a) Beautiful giraffes roam the savannah.
(4b) The savannah is roamed by beautiful giraffes.
(4c) BEAUTIFUL GIRAFFES ROAM THE SAVANNAH.

The propositional content of a sentence is that part of its meaning which can be reduced to a proposition. This means that different sentences may share the same propositional content, even though they may be different in other aspects of meaning. For example, the interrogative sentence Do beautiful giraffes roam the savannah? has the same propositional content – namely, (4c) – as the active declarative sentence in (4a) and the passive declarative sentence in (4b).

If the same proposition can, on the one hand, be expressed by different sentences, the same sentence can on the other be used to convey different propositions on different occasions. Let us consider (5):

(5) My sister got sick before she was able to get the vaccine.

The sentence in (5) may imply quite different things about some state of affairs in the external world when uttered by different speakers. Luigi, who talks about his sister Maria, would mean something different from what Sally would mean if she had used it to talk about her sister Kelly. In this context, the use of the same sentence would express two distinct propositions.

To sum up, the relationship between sentence, utterance, and proposition may be represented schematically in the diagram in Figure 1.1 (adapted from Hurford and Heasley 1983, 23):

![Figure 1.1 Relationship between sentence, utterance, and proposition.](image-url)
Gricean pragmatics

Figure 1.1 shows that a proposition, being the most abstract of the three notions, can be expressed by different sentences. A given sentence can in turn be instantiated by utterances, which are the least abstract notions.

1.2.2 Truth value and truth condition

Propositions may be known, believed, doubted, asserted, or denied, and also held constant under paraphrase and translation. For instance, (6b) in Italian, (6c) in Japanese, and (6d) in German can be said to express the same proposition as the English (6a):

\[(6)\]
\[(6a)\] It hailed for about five minutes.
\[(6b)\] Ha grandinato per circa cinque minuti.
\[(6c)\]雹が5分ほど降った。[hyō ga 5-fun hodo futta.]
\[(6d)\] Es hat etwa fünf Minuten lang gehagelt.

Further, a proposition may also be true or false depending on how and when the utterance is used. For instance, the proposition expressed by the sentence The cat is on the table, if uttered as a statement, is true in a context where the cat is in fact on the table, yet false in another situation where the cat is not on the table. However, on a particular occasion, a proposition has a definite truth value – that is, it is either true or false. It is true if and only if it corresponds to some state of affairs that obtains on that occasion, and it is false if and only if it does not.

On the other hand, a sentence has truth conditions, the conditions that the world must meet for the sentence to be true. An example is given in (7a), or in (7b) in a more abstract form:

\[(7)\]
\[(7a)\] The candies are sweet is true if and only if the candies are sweet.
\[(7b)\] $S$ is true if and only if $p$.

Example (7a) tells us what set of conditions ($p$ in (7b)) must hold for the world, for the proposition expressed by the English sentence The candies are sweet ($S$ in (7b)) to be true. In other words, it tells us under what conditions ($p$) The candies are sweet ($S$) may be used to make a true statement about the external world.4

1.2.3 The notion of context

Context is one of those notions which is used very widely in linguistics, yet to which each theory gives a different definition.5 Broadly speaking,
however, context may refer to any relevant features of the environment in which a linguistic unit is used, and can comprise three different sources:

1. **the physical context**, which refers to the spatio-temporal location of the utterance. For example, the Interpretation of utterance (8) depends on the information derivable from the physical context of the utterance:

   (8) *I’m the one you should be talking to, not him!*

2. **the linguistic (or co-textual) context**, which refers to what has been mentioned in the same discourse. For instance, the surrounding utterances play a crucial role in understanding Marco’s utterance in (9):

   (9) *Daniele: Who gave my cat Coco grapes? It’s dangerous for her! Guglielmo: I did.*

3. **the general (or real-world) knowledge context**. The knowledge computable from this type of context explains why utterance (10a) is pragmatically well-formed, whilst utterance (10b) is pragmatically anomalous – given most people’s real-world knowledge:

   (10)
   (10a) Michelangelo’s David is a true masterpiece of Renaissance sculpture, and I can’t wait to go back to Florence.
   (10b) Michelangelo’s David is a true masterpiece of Renaissance sculpture, and I can’t wait to go back to Venice.

Now that we have analysed some of the most frequent terms in semantics and pragmatics, we can turn back to the big gap we left in our explanation on the brother’s utterance in (1). So far, we have said nothing about what guides his sister to make the inferences in (2d) and (2e) – about how exactly his sister works out what his brother is communicating directly and indirectly. Grice’s work is the first explanation of how humans manage to work out the specific, intended meanings of utterances or other communicative acts based on their underspecified initial meanings. The next section presents a brief summary of what Grice suggested.

### 1.3 Gricean theory of meaning and implicature

The domain of inferential pragmatics owes a lot of its existence to the pioneering work of H. P. Grice (1957, 1961, 1975/1989, 1989), who attempted to reconcile truth-conditional semantics with ordinary