

DISCOURSE AND PRAGMATICS

1. **Central Idea of the Chapter.**Chapter 3, “Discourse and Pragmatics”, clarifies the **relationship between language and context**. This section shows that both **pragmatics and discourse analysis** share an interest in the **relationship between language and context** and how language is used to perform different speech acts. The chapter begins by defining pragmatics i.e. the study of meaning in relation to the **context in which the discourse is being produced**.
2. **Language, Context and Discourse.** Use of Language in context is very important in discourse analysis. Same **language carries different meaning** in different context. **For example**, the word ‘**duck**’ in normal English language is only the ‘**bird**’. The same word ‘**duck**’ **while being used in cricket would mean ‘zero score**’. So, what determines the meanings of discourse is the use of discourse in context. However, there are other factors which also play very important role like physical, social contexts and the mental world and roles of people involved in the interactions.
3. **Speech Acts and Discourse.** Austin argued that there are three kinds of acts which occur with everything we say. These are **locutionary act, the illocutionary act and perlocutionary act**. The locutionary act refers to the **dictionary meaning of words**, the illocutionary act **refers to the speakers’ intended meanings** and the perlocutionary act refers to **the way discourse is perceived by others**.
4. **The Co-operative Principle and discourse.** Grice based his co-operative principle on four sub-principles. These are **maxims of quality, quantity, relation and manner**. Quality means, people should only say what they **believe to be true and accurate without any addition** to the meaning from them. Quantity means that the message being conveyed by the discourse should be **comprehensive and holistic without any loopholes** and confusions in it. Relation refers to the fact that **our discourse needs to be in harmony** to the context and should have relevance to the surroundings. If not so, the entire message may not be communicated in its true letter and spirit. Manner says that we should be clear in **what way to say it and what exactly to say so that the listeners / readers understand** the message the best intended way.

5. **Flouting the Co-operative Principle.**The co-operative principle helps the producers of discourse convey their information effectively. This principle is followed to a great extent but the **intentions behind the production of discourse do matter**. The speakers/writers follow the cooperative principle to convey what they intend to convey, rather than following the principle in its true letter and spirit. **For example, the principle of quality wants the producers of discourse to say what they want to be true. But actually what they say is what they want their listeners / readers to believe. This violation of the co-operative principle is best done in the diplomatic circle of the world.**

6. **Cross- Cultural Pragmatics and Discourse.** In the global world of today the cross-cultural pragmatics is very important. When people say something, **it carries different meanings in different culture**. This is called cross-cultural pragmatics. **For example**, once when I was teaching my Saudi students two years back, I wanted them to finish their assignment quickly. I snapped my fingers to tell them to be quick. (as we normally do in our country to tell someone to work quickly) Snapping my fingers made my students feel offended because the act of snapping fingers is done to call dogs in Saudi Arabia. There are **two key notions in the area** of cross-cultural pragmatics i-e **pragmalinguistics** (the study of more linguistic end of pragmatics) and **sociolinguistics** (sociopragmatics refers to specific local conditions of language use).

7. **Conversational Implicature and Discourse.** According to Thomas, an implicature is generated **intentionally** by the speaker to make a listener **do something** which he may fail to understand. For example the sentence **“there is some chalk on the floor”** intends the listener to pick up the chalks. However, a listener in this case may not be able to understand that the speaker wants him to pick up the chalks. Inference, on the other hand, is produced by the hearer on the basis of certain evidence and may not in fact be the same as what speakers intends.

8. **Politeness, Face and Discourse.** Politeness and face are two important factors for discourse analysis. **Lakoff (1973)** introduced three maxims of politeness. These are **don't impose, give options and make your hearer feel good**. If our listeners are meant to understand the intended meaning effectively and comprehensively then we must maintain the three maxims to convey the message.

9. **Face and Politeness across Cultures.** Face and politeness varies from culture to culture. **For example** in the Saudi culture it is not customary to look at somebody's face while talking / listening. On the other hand, if we talk/listen to someone in Pakistan without looking at his face it is **thought to be impolite**. Also in some cultures bedroom is private and cannot be entered while in others there is no problem in strangers' entry into bedrooms.

10. **Politeness and Gender.** Politeness varies depending on the context and culture like women are more polite than men. **Sometime polite words like 'Yar!' (in Pakistani/Urdu culture)** to a strange lady will be an odd one as compared to known friend etc. Therefore, it is important to use polite words at right place.

11. **Face-Threatening Acts.** Some acts 'threaten' a person's face. They are called face-threatening acts. When you interact with some person and in reaction, the individual does not respond and showing you cold shoulder, in this context, your face is going to be threatened. **For example, in Pakistani culture,** if someone says **Asalamolikum** to another person and in response the other person does not say **Waalikunassalam**, the first person will be offended and annoyed. The act of the later will be a face threatening act.