FOUNDATIONS AND CORE CATEGORIES OF PRAGMATIC THEORY

Djurabekova Yulduz Turdialiyevna
Master's student of Tashkent university of economics and pedagogy

Abstract. This article examines the formation of pragmatics as a distinct field within linguistic theory and explores its fundamental categories. The study focuses on four central dimensions: the position of pragmatics within semiotics, the emergence of the anthropocentric paradigm, the development of speech act theory, and the theoretical distinction between implicature and presupposition. The research adopts a theoretical-analytical methodology and synthesizes classical and contemporary approaches in linguistic pragmatics.

Keywords: pragmatics, semiotics, anthropocentric paradigm, speech act theory, implicature, presupposition, discourse, linguistic theory

The emergence of pragmatics marked a significant transformation in twentieth-century linguistic thought. While structural linguistics focused primarily on the internal organization of language systems, pragmatics shifted attention to language use, communicative intention, and contextual meaning. This shift reflected a broader epistemological movement toward understanding language as a form of human action rather than a self-contained formal structure.

Pragmatics investigates how meaning is generated, negotiated, and interpreted in communicative contexts. It explores how speakers use linguistic resources to achieve specific goals and how hearers reconstruct intended meanings beyond literal expressions. As such, pragmatics cannot be understood independently of semiotics, philosophy of language, and discourse theory.

This article examines four foundational dimensions of pragmatics: (1) its place within semiotics, (2) its grounding in the anthropocentric paradigm, (3) the development of speech act theory, and (4) the theoretical distinction between implicature and presupposition. Together, these components form the conceptual architecture of modern pragmatic theory.

The origins of pragmatics are inseparable from semiotics—the general theory of signs. Semiotics traditionally comprises three interrelated branches: syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Syntax concerns the formal relations among signs; semantics studies the relation between signs and their referents; pragmatics investigates the relation between signs and their users.

This tripartite model reflects a gradual expansion of analytical focus. Early structuralist approaches privileged syntax and semantics, emphasizing formal relations and referential meaning. However, such models proved insufficient to explain how meaning varies across contexts or how speakers communicate indirectly.

Pragmatics emerged to address these limitations. By incorporating the interpreter into the model of sign relations, it redefined meaning as an interactional phenomenon. In this sense, pragmatics does not replace semantics but complements it by examining meaning-in-use rather than meaning-in-system.

Within semiotics, pragmatics represents the dynamic dimension of sign functioning. It emphasizes intentionality, inference, and contextual embeddedness. Meaning becomes a product of communicative negotiation rather than a fixed property of linguistic structures.

The anthropocentric paradigm constitutes the philosophical foundation of pragmatics. Unlike structuralism, which treats language as an autonomous system, the anthropocentric approach situates language within human cognition, social interaction, and communicative practice.

From this perspective, language cannot be analyzed independently of its users. Meaning arises through human intentions, cultural conventions, and contextual interpretations. The speaker's communicative purpose and the hearer's inferential activity become central analytical categories.

The anthropocentric paradigm aligns with developments in cognitive linguistics and discourse analysis. It views language as a tool for constructing social reality, expressing identity, and negotiating relationships. Rather than treating linguistic units as abstract entities, it interprets them as instruments of human action.

This paradigm shift has methodological consequences. It requires integrating linguistic analysis with insights from philosophy, psychology, and sociology. It also foregrounds such concepts as communicative competence, contextual knowledge, shared assumptions, and interpretive strategies.

Pragmatics, therefore, is not merely a subdiscipline of linguistics but an interdisciplinary framework grounded in an anthropocentric understanding of language.

Speech act theory represents one of the most influential developments within pragmatic thought. It reconceptualizes utterances as actions performed through language. According to this view, speaking is not simply describing reality but actively shaping it.

Speech act theory distinguishes three dimensions of an utterance: locutionary act – the production of a meaningful linguistic expression, illocutionary act – the communicative intention performed (e.g., promising, ordering, apologizing), perlocutionary act – the effect achieved on the listener (e.g., persuading, frightening, inspiring).

This framework highlights the functional nature of language. Utterances are evaluated not only in terms of truth conditions but also in terms of felicity conditions—whether the appropriate social and contextual criteria are satisfied.

Further theoretical developments introduced classifications of illocutionary acts, including representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. These categories enable systematic analysis of communicative functions across discourse types.

Speech act theory reinforces the anthropocentric orientation of pragmatics. It demonstrates that meaning depends on speaker intention, institutional norms, and interactive context. In literary discourse, speech acts become tools for character construction, narrative development, and ideological positioning.

The concept of implicature explains how speakers communicate meanings that go beyond literal expressions. It is based on the assumption that interlocutors cooperate in conversation and follow rational communicative principles.

Implicature arises when a speaker appears to violate conversational expectations. The listener then infers an additional meaning that restores coherence. This inferential process relies on shared knowledge and contextual cues.

Two principal types of implicature are generally distinguished: conventional implicature, which is attached to specific lexical items or constructions; conversational implicature, which depends on contextual reasoning and pragmatic inference.

Implicature reveals that communication operates on multiple levels. Literal meaning provides only a starting point; full interpretation requires pragmatic enrichment. In literary texts, implicature generates irony, ambiguity, and subtext.

Presupposition refers to background assumptions embedded within utterances. Unlike implicature, which is inferred from context, presupposition is triggered by particular linguistic structures.

For example, sentences containing factive verbs, definite descriptions, or iterative adverbs often presuppose the existence or prior occurrence of certain events. These presuppositions remain constant even when the sentence is negated.

1333

Presupposition plays a crucial role in discourse coherence. It establishes shared informational ground between speaker and hearer. In narrative discourse, presupposition guides interpretation by embedding implicit contextual frameworks.

While implicature concerns what is suggested, presupposition concerns what is taken for granted. Both phenomena illustrate the layered structure of meaning and the central role of inference in communication.

The theoretical categories discussed above are not isolated constructs. They form an integrated analytical system within pragmatic theory: the anthropocentric paradigm provides the epistemological foundation, semiotics offers the structural framework, speech act theory operationalizes communicative intention, implicature and presupposition explain inferential and background meaning.

Together, these elements demonstrate that meaning is contextually constructed, interactionally negotiated, and cognitively processed. Pragmatics thus emerges as a comprehensive theory of language-in-use.

The formation of pragmatics represents a decisive transformation in linguistic theory. By situating language within human action and social interaction, pragmatics transcends purely structural accounts of meaning.

Its position within semiotics underscores the relational nature of signs, while the anthropocentric paradigm establishes the centrality of human agency. Speech act theory, implicature, and presupposition provide analytical tools for examining how meaning operates beyond literal expression.

In contemporary linguistic research, pragmatics functions as a unifying methodological framework. It integrates structural, cognitive, and social dimensions of language, offering a dynamic model of communicative meaning.

References.
1. Carston R. *Thoughts and Utterances: The Pragmatics of Explicit Communication*. – Oxford: Blackwell, 2002. – 414 p.
2. Horn L. R. Implicature // *The Handbook of Pragmatics* / Ed. by L. R. Horn, G. Ward. – Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. – P. 3–28.
3. Huang Y. *Pragmatics*. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. – 386 p.
4. Mey J. L. *Pragmatics: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. – Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. – 404 p.
5. Сафаров Ш. *Прагмалингвистика*. – Тошкент: Фан, 2008. – 256 б.
6. Нурмонов А. *Лингвистик тадқиқот методологияси* ва методлари. – Тошкент: Akademnashr, 2012. – 280 б.