

# PENDEKATAN PRAGMATIK DALAM MENERJEMAHKAN PERCAKAPAN

## PRAGMATIC APPROACH IN TRANSLATING CONVERSATIONS

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### **Abstrak**

Pragmatik dapat menjadi salah satu pendekatan dalam penerjemahan, terutama dalam menerjemahkan ujaran atau percakapan. Pragmatik merupakan salah satu cabang ilmu bahasa (linguistik) yang berfokus pada makna kontekstual atau studi tentang makna pembicara. Dalam hal ini, makna pembicara merupakan pesan atau makna yang dimaksudkan. Pemikiran ini sejalan dengan konsep penerjemahan. Terjemahan dianggap sebagai fasilitator untuk membuat komunikasi antara dua orang dengan bahasa yang berbeda dapat saling memahami satu sama lain dengan baik. Memahami pragmatik dapat menjadi salah satu kompetensi yang harus dimiliki oleh siapa saja termasuk penerjemah. Kadang-kadang makna literal yang dihasilkan, belum menghasilkan hasil terjemahan yang maksimal. Sebuah kondisi praktis analisis bahasa diluar dari prinsip-prinsip struktural akan mendapatkan komunikasi yang efektif. Tulisan ini berisi beberapa pemikiran dan kontribusi pendekatan pragmatik dalam menerjemahkan percakapan.

**Kata kunci: terjemahan, pragmatik, percakapan**

### **Abstract**

Pragmatics can be an approach in translation, especially in translating utterances or conversations. Pragmatics is a linguistic study focusing on the context or the study of speaker meaning. In this case, speaker meaning is considered as message or intended meaning. This proposition is in line the concept of translation. Translation is considered as a facilitator to make a communication between two people with different language understand well each other. Understanding pragmatics can be one of competencies should be exactly had by anyone learning language included a translator. Sometimes a literal meaning found has not produced a maximal result. A practical condition of language analysis which is out of structural principles will get an effective and efficient communication. This paper contains some consideration and contribution of pragmatics approach in translating conversation.

**Key words: translation, pragmatics, conversation**

## **I. PENDAHULUAN**

Generally, translation and pragmatics are correlated to each other. Why so? Translation is a bridge in delivering message from someone to others. Meanwhile, pragmatics is viewed as an approach used in understanding the message or intended meaning delivered. Shortly, both of them have the same function in communication. A communication is considered to be interesting if a translator are capable to produce a qualified translation and understandable well and properly by the readers. A successfull translation will motivate the translator to improve his ability in translation.

Nababan (2003) sees translation is not only about transferring message, but also the language form of Source language (SL) into Target language (TL). It is not only occurred in translating literary works, but also scientific texts. Thus, a translator should consider two things, the content of the text and the form since a text is truly has its own style in uncovering the message. Nababan (2003) also states that translation is a kind of an interdisciplinary science, that is a science created from other different field of studies like linguistics, psycholinguistics, pragmatics, communication theory, philology, etc. From this consideration, it can be concluded that translation and pragmatics are closely related to each other.

As has been stated that both of translation and pragmatics has the same function in communication. Translation is as a facilitator to make a communication between two people with different language understand well each other (Nababan, 2008: 4). In this case, a translator's role is quite necessarily needed. He must be able to have a role in interlingual communication well in term of transferring the message (meaning and style) of SL into TL. However, pragmatics is a language study focusing on how a language is used in communication. Understanding pragmatics can be one of competencies should be exactly had by anyone learning language included a translator. Related to the text translated, sometimes there are words or phrase that have an intended meaning, not only literal meaning. Sometimes a literal meaning has not produced a maximal result. A practical condition of language analysis which is out of structural principles will get an effective and efficient communication. A translator should consider this things.

One of language study accomodating components outside the language in making the meaning meaningful in a certain communication is called pragmatics. Yule (1996) states that as a newly linguistic branches, pragmatics is considered as the only branch that go along in considering people as language users. Pragmatics study is focused on the language

use contextually. Levinson (1987) proposes that pragmatics covers how a language is used in communication, especially the correlation between sentences and the context.

As a social individuals, communication is always necessarily needed in a society. Almost everyday, language is used to communicate and interact with others. This such communication can be verbally or using sign and symbols. Direct or indirectly, pragmatics appears in our each interaction. When communication comes in intralingual translation, we are easily understand what a speaker intended towards a hearer. However, a problem appears in interlingual translation since there is a media should be prepared to bridge between a speaker of SL and a listener of TL, namely translation.

Pragmatics is commonly applied in analyzing a conversation in which there is always an intention (message) transferred from a speaker to a hearer. Conversation implicature is one of pragmatic scopes related to translation. In conducting a communication, indeed there are some certain intentions that is extremely different from their language structure used. Therefore, implicature has a role in studying a language use and this article can be considered as an entryway to a more complex research. How a pragmatic approach is applied in translating a conversation, especially implicature.

## **II. DISCUSSION**

### **A. Pragmatics Principles**

The term 'pragmatics' is firstly introduced by a great philosopher, Charles Morris in 1938. When he talk about a general form of semiotic ( a study of sign). He proposes three kinds of semiotic: *syntax*, *semantics*, *pragmatics*. Syntax is a linguistic branch studying about formal relation among signs. Semantics deals with how the correlation among sign objects and pragmatics is all about the sign correlation with language users to interpret those signs. Later, this consideration is developed by Levinson (1987). He tries to modify Morris's pragmatic proposition into a language study having a reference related to contextual aspects.

There are several definitions of pragmatics proposed by some linguists. Parker (1986) states that pragmatics is the study of how language is used for communication. Pragmatics is also considered as the study of the aspects of meaning and language use that are dependent on the speaker, the addressee and other features of the context of utterance (Levinson, 1983). In other words, pragmatics is concerned with the way in which the

interpretation of syntactically defined expressions depends on the particular conditions of their use in context. Shortly, it can be assumed that 'context' plays an important role.

Related to context, pragmatics is also defined as contextual meaning. Thomas (1995) says that pragmatics considers three things: a) the negotiation of meaning between speaker and listener, b) the context of the utterance, c) the meaning potential of an utterance. He looks beyond the literal meaning of an utterance and considers how meaning is constructed as well as focusing on implied meanings. It considers language as an instrument of interaction, what people mean when they use language and how we communicate and understand each other.

Pragmatics concern with about language user's ability in correlating and matching sentences with context properly or how a language used in communication. It shows that language function in communication should be known well by the language users. Hence, the message is well accepted supported by the situation and condition beyond the utterances. Leech (1993) and Levinson (1983) are great pragmatic proposers say "*One cannot really understand the nature of language itself unless he understands pragmatics; i.e. how language is used in communication.*" The conclusion taken is there are two important things in pragmatics: language use and context. Language use deals with what are the language used for while context has an important role determining the language meaning. This context may help a hearer interpret the meaning. It can be concluded that pragmatics is a language study focused on utterance meaning beyond certain context.

A concept and theory of pragmatics is firstly given by Cruse (in Cummings, 1999) states that pragmatics is all about information, codes, convention, context, and usage. Cumming then concludes that pragmatics concept consists of speech act theory, implicature, relevance, and deixis.

JL Austin (1911-1960) start his speaking entitled 'How to do things with words' indicates the existence of speech acts theory. There are three things to be considered in performative acts, namely *felicity conditions*; (1) speaker and properly situation, (2) a proper act done by speakers, (3) message (intended meaning). This consideration is then improved by John R. Searle (1969) through his book "*Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language.*" Searle proposes three elements of speech acts, (1) locution (*the act of saying something*), (2) illocution (*the act of doing something*), and (3) perlocution (*the act of persuading someone*).

An implicature is anything that is inferred from an utterance but that is not a condition for the truth of the utterance. In understanding speaker's meaning, a hearer should have an interpretation. Grice (1975) in his article 'Logic and Conversation' states that an implicature is anything that is inferred from an utterance but that is not a condition for the truth of the utterance. Levinson (1983) expands four maxims as a cooperative principle. They are maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relevance, maxim of manner. However, Leech (1993) promotes five interpersonal maxims, (1) cost benefit scale, (2) optionally scale, (3) indirectness scale, (4) authority scale, (5) social distance scale.

Deixis is reference by means of an expression whose interpretation is relative to the (usually) extralinguistic context of the utterance. It is an important field of language study in its own right. However, it has some relevance to the analysis of conversations and pragmatics. It is often and best described as "verbal pointing", that is to say pointing by means of language. There are six kinds of deixis: (1) empathetic deixis, (2) person deixis, (3) place deixis, (4) social deixis, (5) time deixis, (6) discourse deixis.

In the branch of pragmatics, a presupposition is a branch of pragmatics concerning with an implicit assumption about the world or background belief relating to an utterance whose truth is taken for granted in discourse (Levinson, 1987), for example "*I want to do it again and I don't want to do it again*". Both presuppose that the subject has done it already one or more times; *My wife is pregnant* and *My wife is not pregnant* both presuppose that the subject has a wife. In this respect, presupposition is distinguished from entailment and implicature.

## **B. A Concept of Conversations**

Conversation is a cooperative activity also in the sense that it involves two or more parties, each of whom must be allowed the opportunity to participate. Consequently, there must be some principles which govern who gets to speak. Turn-taking in conversations is much more complex than it might appear because we engage in it so easily and skillfully. (Wardhough, 2006: 298). Besides, utterances usually do not overlap other utterances, and the gaps between utterances are sometimes measurable in micro-seconds and on average are only a few tenths of a second. An ordinary conversation employs no such pre-allocation: the participants just 'naturally' take turns. We will see, however, that we can offer some account of what actually occurs.

In most conversations – Schegloff (2000) admits that there may be exceptions – only one person speaks at a time and that person is recognized to be the one whose turn it is to speak. At the conclusion of that turn another may speak, and, as Wardhough (2006) have indicated, there may also be slight overlapping of speaking during the transition between turns. The existence of adjacency pairing assures that there will be turns; however, it does not assure that these turns will be of any particular length.

Once a speaker gets a turn to speak, he or she may be reluctant to give up that turn and may employ any one or more of a variety of devices to keep it: avoidance of eye contact with listeners; stringing utterances together in a seamless manner; avoiding the kinds of adjacency pairings that require others to speak; employing gestures and a posture that inhibit others from speaking; and so on. In these ways a speaker can exploit a turn, but such exploitation can be dangerous if carried to the extreme of ‘hogging’ the conversation, turning it into a speech or a monolog, or just simply boring the listeners by not allowing them the opportunity to participate or possibly even to escape.

Once a conversation has been initiated and the opening forms have been exchanged, it will be necessary to establish a topic or topics on which to talk. One party may have something he or she wishes to convey to, or discuss with, the other. In a telephone conversation, for example, you assume that it is the caller who has a definite topic in mind. If a telephone caller does not have a specific topic in mind, he or she must quickly mention this fact in some way. If the caller attempts to complete the call without either bringing up a topic or explaining that it was a call without a pre-designated topic, the party called is likely to feel somewhat bewildered. Since topics in conversation are usually not well defined, they may be fairly easily changed. One topic exhausts itself so a new one is introduced. However, if most of the conversationalists are fully engaged with a topic and one person tries to force such a change before the point of exhaustion, that attempt is likely to be resisted. It may be successful only if the person trying to force the change has some special power in the group, that is, if he or she is a leader, boss, or teacher, for example.

A sociolinguist Dell Hymes (1974) developed a SPEAKING model to promote the analysis of discourse as a series of speech events and speech acts within a cultural context. According to Hymes, a speech situation can only be understood if not only linguistic, but also other aspects are taken into consideration, such as: the setting of the communication, its goals, and the information about the participants. The speech components come from

each first letter. This model is quite useful and powerful in analyzing many different kinds of discourse.

Hymes coined the following acronym: SPEAKING with the following explanation of each letter:

- a. S=**Setting/Scene** . It refers to the time and place of a speech act and, in general, to the physical circumstances– i.e. where the speech situation is taking place (e.g. a University lecture hall).
- b. P=**Participants** (Speaker and audience.) – i.e. the information about the participants (e.g. their cultural and sociolinguistic background).
- c. E=**Ends** (goals) – i.e. purpose, goals, or outcomes of the speech act (e.g. John wanted to confess his love to Helen, but instead of saying “I love you”, he awkwardly murmured “It is good to see you”. As a result, his confession was put off)
- d. A=**Act sequence** (Form and order of the event.) – i.e. what happens first, second, etc.; also how exactly the events unfold (e.g. a FAQ section of a website: short questions first, brief answers follow).
- e. K=**key** (Cues that establish the "tone, manner, or spirit" of the speech act) – i.e. whether the situation is formal or not (e.g. an informal birthday party or a family reunion);
- f. I=**Instrumentalities** (Forms and styles of speech)– i.e. the linguistic and non-linguistic tools used to make the speech act possible (e.g. a phone, English used by a Spaniard and a Ukrainian who meet in Canada).
- g. N=**Norms** (Social rules governing the event and the participants' actions and reaction)– i.e. the conventions used by the speakers to arrive at their set communicative goals.
- h. G=**Genre** (The kind of speech act or event)– (e.g. the final research paper; a small talk before a class). These terms can be applied to many kinds of discourse.

Grice (1975) views pragmatic interpretation as heavily relying on inferencing processes: the hearer is able to hypothesise about the Speaker's meaning, based on the meaning of the sentence uttered, on background or contextual assumptions and, last but not least, on general communicative principles which speakers are expected to observe. To imply is to hint, suggest or convey some meaning indirectly by means of language. In his

explanation of implied or additional meaning, Grice (1975) distinguishes between two kinds of implicatures:

- a. *Conventional implicatures*, which convey the same extra meaning regardless of context and which are always lexicalized;
- b. *Conversational implicatures*, which convey different meanings according to different contexts, i.e. are calculated afresh each time the Speaker and the Hearer interact.

Conversational implicatures:

A: Is that scotch over there?

B: Help yourself.

A's utterance is literally a request for information (on the nature of the liquor), yet B interprets it as a request for a drink. Nothing in the literal meaning of A's utterance could lead B to that interpretation, which can only be derived by means of conversational implicature. Any implied meaning *risks being (mis) understood* by the Hearer as the Speaker intended it to be uptaken, since a Speaker may imply something that the Hearer may fail to infer appropriately.

Implicatures can be established by envisaging the four conversational rules or 'Maxims':

**1. *Maxims of Quantity*:**

- a. Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange.
- b. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

**2. *Maxims of Quality*:** Supermaxim: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

- a. Do not say what you believe to be false.
- b. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

**3. *Maxim of Relation*:** Be relevant.

**4. *Maxims of Manner*:** Supermaxim: Be perspicuous.

- a. Avoid obscurity of expression.
- b. Avoid ambiguity.
- c. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
- d. Be orderly.



### C. Pragmatic Approach in Translation

A conversation has several principles. Politeness and cooperative principles become important to be considered in translating it. A full comprehension on translating a conversation or utterances involves not only what is written in it but also what can be inferred from it. A comprehension of what is actually expressed and what can be communicated without being explicitly should be considered. A single illocutionary act (intention of a conversation) may give rise to several different perlocutionary acts.

Translation is a process of transferring text. To catch the meaning (intended message) got after translation process has been correlated to the context. In this case, a translator is asked to find a balance adequate interpretation of what is conveyed by the translated text produced. However, several general difficulties that denote a deficient pragmatic competence influence the production of the target language (TL) have to do with what is conveyed in a conversation and the illocutionary and perlocutionary acts brings about.

As we have seen so far, a good translator should have a textual competence to interpret the syntactic and semantic marks in the source language (SL) from a pragmatic point of view. Sometimes, a translator can miss the relevant contextual elements that will turn the translated. Furthermore, the translated text will no be successful communicative tool, lack of considering the function in the target culture.

Pragmatic approach is related to the principle of conducting communication. The focus of the translation using pragmatic approach doesn't lie on the locution conveyed due to locutions inclined to the study are in pure semantics scope. Pragmatics is also stated as the study of speaker meaning. Applying this approach is quite necessary used in translating conversation or utterances. The focus of translation using pragmatics approach is on illocution or illocutionary acts. A consideration comes from Fawcet (1997) in which he uncovers the correlation between illocutionary acts and translation. He states "*However it is translated, the illocutionary force of sentence would not change*". This statement means the type of illocutionary act of SL is similar to the type of illocutionary act in TL. Hence, the utterances are not only translated literally, but the most important thing is on the certain message (intention) that should be transmitted.

### III. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that a message plays a very important role in translating conversation as the principle of pragmatics approach. Translation is viewed as a bridge in delivering message from someone to others. Pragmatics also gives a big contribution in conducting a communication. Situation of communication should be concerned understanding messages (intended meaning). In other words 'context' plays an important role. Pragmatics approach is commonly used in translating utterances or conversation since there is a message or intention conveyed in a conversation depend on the context. Translating a conversation using pragmatics approach has a focus. It is on the illocution or illocutionary acts and the principles of conversation such as politeness and cooperative principles.. In other words, the type of illocutionary act of SL has to be similar to the type of illocutionary act in TL related to the context.

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