

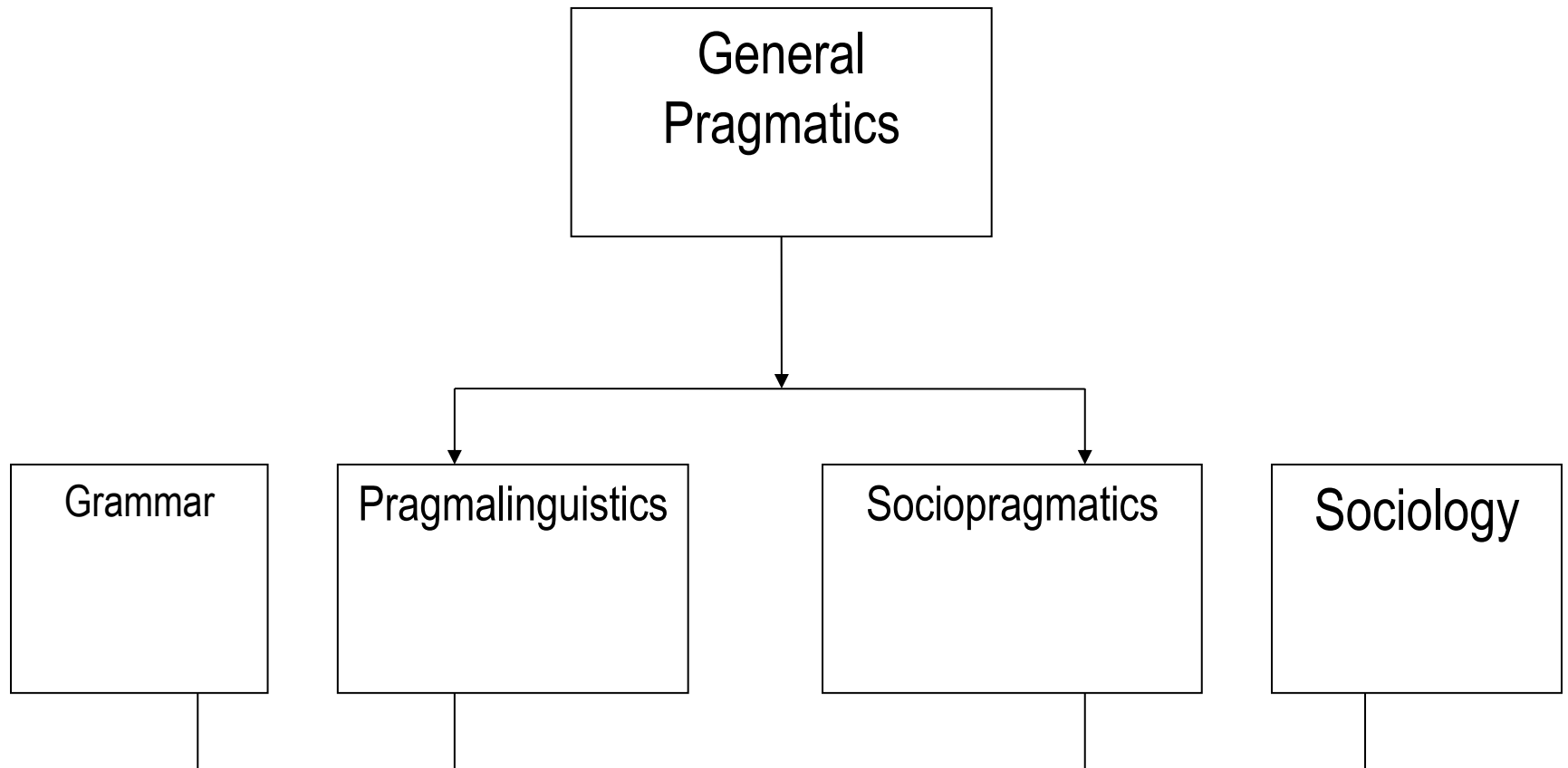
# Defining Pragmatics

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# Yule's :

- The study of the relationship between linguistic forms and the users of the forms
- The study of speaker meaning
- The study of contextual meaning
- The study of how more gets communicated than is said.
- The study of the expression of the relative distance

# Leech's



- Pragmalinguistics talks more about grammar side of pragmatics, in which Leech defines it as study of language-specific. Pragmalinguistics concerns on the linguistics end of pragmatics and specific linguistics features a language has to function as certain illocution.
- Hymes says, in relation to sociopragmatics, 'the study of language is a multidisciplinary field, a field to which ordinary linguistics is indispensable, but to which other disciplines, such as sociology, social anthropology, education, folklore, and poetics are indispensable as well' (1974).

# Crystal's

- Pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effect of our choices on others. Pragmatic factors always affect our selection of sounds, grammatical constructions, and vocabularies in producing the meaning we intend to communicate (Crystal, 1987: 62-5). Hence, pragmatics relates to the study of meaning of words used by people in concrete social situations, that is, with words in context.

# Robin's

- Robin mentions that the study of meaning in pragmatic perspective involves all factors around the speech situation (1964: 23). Pragmatic meaning (meaning in pragmatic point of view), he further states, involves a set of multiple and various relations held between the utterance and its parts and the relevant feature and components of the environment, both cultural and physical and forming part of the more extensive system of interpersonal relations involved in the existence of human societies.

# Leech's pragmatics & speech situation

- Leech (1983:6), pragmatics is the study of meaning in relation to speech situation. Aspects of speech situation further provide a criterion to refer in determining whether we deal with pragmatic or semantic phenomenon (Leech, 1983: 13-4).
- The occurrence one or more of the aspects then indicates a pragmatic one since, as previously mentioned, pragmatics studies meaning in relation to speech situation. The five aspects are:

# 5 aspects:

1. Addressers or addressees (speaker & hearer)
2. The context of utterance

Context, according to Leech, involves 'relevant' aspects of the physical and social setting of an utterance. Still, he emphasizes on context as any background knowledge assumed to be shared by *s* and *h* and which contributes to *h*'s interpretation of what *s* mean by a give utterance.



### 3. the goal(s) of an utterance

- Leech refers to the goal(s) of an utterance as the utterance's intended meaning, or *s's* intention in uttering it.

### 4. The utterance as a form of act or activity: a speech act

- In pragmatics, an utterance is a verbal act(s) performed in a particular situation.

### 5. The utterance as a product of a verbal act

- In this sense, an utterance is a product of a verbal act identified as a sentence-instance, or sentence-token, but not a sentence. Similarly, an utterance is a piece of language which is either too short or too long to be classified as a single sentence.

# Context and Text

- Since pragmatics is the study of how context shapes the meaning, use and structure of utterances, occupying pragmatics analysis also involves the analysis of context.
- Context and text are interdependent as Halliday (1989) defines context as what is 'with the text', and it goes beyond what is said and written; it includes other non-verbal-goings on the total environment in which a text unfolds. According to Brown and Yule (1983:6), text is language that is functional. By functional, text means a language that is doing job in certain context. Such a job can be in different acts.

- Yet, context cannot be separated from communication; it tells what is unwritten but said in communication. According to Spelber and Wilson in Wijana (1997), context is:
- “... A psychological construct a subset of the hearer’s assumption about the world. It is this assumption, of course, rather than the actual state of the world, that affect the interpretation of the utterance. A context in this sense is not limited to the information about the immediately physical environment or the immediately preceding utterance; expectation about the future, scientific hypothesis or religious beliefs, anecdotal memories, general culture assumption, beliefs about the mental state of the speaker, may all play a role in interpretations”.

- Halliday (1985:46) divides context into context of situation (situational context) and context of culture (cultural context). The former is the immediate environment in which a text actually functions. Situational context explains why certain things have been said or written on particular occasion and what else not.
- Cyrstal (1985: 71) also writes that:
- ...situational context includes the total non-linguistics background to a text or utterance, including the immediate situation in which it is used, and the awareness by speaker and hearer of what has been said earlier and of any relevant external beliefs or presuppositions.

# Situational context: SPEAKING

- Hymes in Wardaugh (1992:242-46) and Brown (1987:37) proposes a set of factors to describe the situational context in communication event, under the acronym SPEAKING.
- Setting and Scene (S): refers to the time and place and scene refers to abstract psychological setting on the cultural definition of occasion.
- Participants (P) include various combinations of speaker-listener, addresser-addressee, writer-reader or sender-receiver.
- Ends (E) suggest the purpose of the exchange and what the participants seek to accomplish.

- Act sequence (A) refers to the form and content of the utterance, what it is meant, how it is used, and the relationship between what is said to the topics at hand.
- Key (K) refers to tone, manner or spirit in which a particular message is conveyed: serious or ironical, matter-of-fact or playful, mocking, sarcastic etc.
- Instrumentalities (I) refers to the choice of channel (i.e. spoken or written), and code (mother tongue, foreign language or a mix of codes or code-switching).
- Norms of interaction and interpretation (N) suggests how the participants interact in the exchange and interpret what is said or what they hear or read.
- Genre (G) refers to clearly distinguish types of utterances, such as things as poems, proverbs, riddles, sermons, prayers, lectures and editorials.

# Cultural context

- Halliday further states that the context of culture refers to the culture and the ideological background of the society the text is functioned. Meanwhile, Gang (2004:2) mentions that cultural context is a manifestation of the totality of cultural beliefs. Similarly, he further says that cultural context is that part of context which relates utterances to the cultural awareness of pragmatic community.

# Those definitions can be sum up into:

- “Pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choice of language in social interaction and the effects of our choice on others.”

David Crystal

- “Baby Sale - lots of bargains”

- Pragmatics allows us to investigate how this “meaning beyond the words” can be understood without ambiguity. The extra meaning is there, not because of the semantic aspects of the words themselves, but because we share certain contextual knowledge with the writer or speaker of the text.

However, there is a consensus view that pragmatics as a separate study is necessary because it explains meanings that semantics overlooks.



# Criticisms of pragmatics

- Some of the criticisms directed at pragmatics include these:
- It does not have a clear-cut focus
- Its principles are vague and fuzzy
- It is redundant - semantics already covers the territory adequately
- In defending pragmatics we can say that:
- The study of speech acts has illuminated social language interactions
- It covers things that semantics (hitherto) has overlooked
- It can help inform strategies for teaching language
- It has given new insights into understanding literature
- The theories of the cooperative principle and politeness principle have provided insights into person-to-person interactions.