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Qualification paper

Theme: Presupposition and its features in linguistics

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INTRODUCTION

“The main objective of all our reforms in the field of education is individual. Therefore the task of education, the task of national renaissance will remain the prerogative of the state and constitute a majority. For this, the power of foreign languages also must work in new generation mind.”¹

Conditions of reforming of all education system the question of the world assistance to improvement of quality of scientific-theoretical aspect, educational process is especially actually put. Speaking about the 21th anniversary of National Independence the President I.A. Karimov has declared in the program speech “Harmoniously development of generation a basis of progress of Uzbekistan”: “...all of us realize that achievement of the great purpose put today before us, noble aspirations, it is necessary for updating a society. The effect and destiny of our reforms carried out in the name of progress and the future, results of our intentions are connected with highly skilled, conscious staff, the experts who are meeting the requirements of time”.²

Nowadays we are trying to establish a strong democratic state, of course, with the help of the new generation. I also consider myself as one of the members of this innovative people. I dare to say, foreign languages, especially English is a good source to take the advantage. So, in this very qualification paper we tried to make a good research work on the theme “Interrogative sentences in the English language and their communicative functions”.

On December 10, 2012 there was released the decree of the president of Uzbekistan № 1875 about the development of the system of teaching foreign languages. This decree gives a language learner great amount of opportunities, and at the same time puts concrete tasks for teachers of foreign languages. Based on our president’s task for linguists, we decided to work with one of the most interesting topics of Linguistics - Presuppositions and its feature in linguistics.

¹ From the President I.A.Karimov’s report at the Oliy Majlis session of the first convocation, February, 1995.

² И.А.Каримов. Гармонично-развитое поколение-основа прогресса Узбекистана. Т., 1998. Стр. 158-168.

The study of presuppositions has been an important topic in both the philosophy of language and in linguistic semantics and pragmatics, but only more recently has it become a topic investigated with psycholinguistic methods. However, a lot can be gained from such investigations, both with respect to theoretical issues in presupposition theory as well as with respect to our understanding of semantic processing.

A presupposition is normally a proposition that is or has to be taken for granted, or 'supposed', before (pre-) a certain statement or other linguistic act can be made sense of. A presupposition is not so much the ground you stand on, or the thinking that you rely on, but more like what comes before the ground you stand on, or what comes before the thinking that you rely upon. The notion of presupposition is therefore in essence quite a philosophical subject. By the same token, presuppositions are things which one can try to communicate, without actually stating them. "Has Alfred stopped smoking pot?" Even if you do not know the answer to a question like this, it can be used to communicate, not question that Alfred used to smoke pot. Notwithstanding, the term has gotten its main import as a decent technical term, in philosophy and linguistics, and that is how we will mainly deal with it in this lemma. We will not go into the rhetorical uses, and abuses of the concept. In this introductory section we will speak of the prehistory of the subject and in the remainder we follow, roughly, the historical development.

Even so, we know much more about presupposition in theory than in practice. The ideas put forward in this work are intended to begin narrowing this gap by examining how presupposed information is used by speakers and understood by hearers in spontaneous spoken discourse. The interpretation of presupposed information is context dependent. Examples excerpted from a corpus therefore give us a naturally produced context in which to examine and begin to understand the role of context in presupposition resolution.

A particular point of dispute has been whether presupposition is best thought of as a semantic or a pragmatic notion, or whether indeed such notions must

coexist. In a semantic theory presupposition is usually defined as a binary relation between pairs of sentences of a language. What makes this relation semantical is that it is defined or explicated in terms of the semantic valuation of the sentences, or in terms of a semantic notion of entailment. Thus a definition in terms of semantic valuation might, following Strawson, say that one sentence (semantically) presupposes another if the truth of the second is a condition for the semantic value of the first to be true or false. In pragmatic theories the analysis of presupposition involves the attitudes and knowledge of language users. In extreme cases such as Stalnaker's³ account, presupposition is defined without any reference to linguistic form: Stalnaker talks not of the presuppositions of a sentence, but of the speaker's presuppositions, these being just those propositions which are taken for granted by a speaker on a given occasion. Other pragmatic theories are less radical, in that linguistic form still plays an essential role in the theory. The majority of well-developed pragmatic theories concern the presuppositions not of a sentence (as in semantic theories) or of a speaker (as in Stalnaker's theory) but of an utterance.

In the late seventies the lack of an agreed definition was a subject of much debate, and perceived by some as a stumbling block preventing further progress in the field. However, since then there has been much progress (even without an agreed definition) as should become clear in the coming sections. The semantic/pragmatic debate is little aired nowadays, since so many researchers espouse hybrid theories on which the labels semantic and pragmatic are hard to pin. What the different theories that have been proposed over the years have in common is not a single notion of presupposition, but a more or less accepted set of basic data to be explained, and a more or less accepted set of linguistic constructions to which this data pertains. The data includes such tired examples as 'Have you stopped beating your wife?' and 'The King of France is not bald.', in

³ On a historical note, there is disagreement as to the first use of a technical notion of presupposition. Seuren notes that a well known paradox ordered by Aristotle's contemporary, Eubulides of Miletus, the so-called Paradox of the Horned Man, is based on a presuppositional effect.

which the relevant constructions, or presupposition triggers, include the aspectual verb 'stop', the possessive 'your' and the definite 'the'. With regard to the first example, one may say that the proposition that the addressee has beaten his wife is given a special status. Similarly, many theorists would argue that the proposition that there is a King of France has a special status in the second example. Perhaps such propositions are taken for granted. Perhaps they are propositions that must be true for utterances of the examples to carry meaning. Perhaps they are both. Whilst there is no agreed technical definition of presupposition, there is agreement that the goals of presupposition theory must include determining the special status of such propositions, and explaining why and under what conditions this status obtains.

The subject of the qualification paper is to study the features of presupposition in linguistics, types of presupposition with a little background presenting theories and linguistic and philosophical theories which will be discussed in this chapter vary in the extent to which they involve definitions of presupposition.

The actuality of our research is to deal extensively with presupposition and to discuss the concept of presupposition briefly in relation with linguistics, logic, syntax, theories as well as entailment.

The aim of the research is to study presuppositions and its features in linguistics

- To study types of presuppositions.
- To present methods of applying presuppositions to linguistics.

We have looked through the following **tasks**:

- to analyze semantic and pragmatic presuppositions
- to survey presuppositions and context grammars
- to simplifying presupposition at the level of text structure in terms of logical forms of sentences and sequences of sentences.

The methods of investigation is to elaborate some detailed background on presupposition and on fieldwork methodology that can effective for applying linguistic presupposition to essential process.

For revealing studying functions of linguistic presuppositions, we used some methods presented by outstanding scientists. The results of investigation have the theoretical as the practical as well as methodical meaning.

The hypothesis of investigation is based on that features and types of presuppositions in linguistics, their usage in methodology.

The Material of investigation is taken from “Presuppositions in Context, Theoretical Issues and Experimental Perspectives” by Florian Schwarz. As a material of analyses also are texts taken from works of English and American literature, Russian and Uzbek scientists.

To emphasize that writing is not the exclusive domain of composition classes, these examples reflect a broad range of subjects - history, science, literature - and a variety of popular interests - school, entertainment, issues, and family. Some material are serious, some light or humorous. Some material is academic, some popular that we found very useful.

The novelty of our investigation is that we have looked through the features of presupposition not only in linguistic sphere, but philosophical approach made our research essential novelty.

Theoretical value of this qualification paper is that theoretical position of this paper can be used in delivering lectures on theoretical and practical linguistic lessons of presuppositions, besides this, studying comparative aspects of learning language with a foreign one.

Practical value of this qualification paper is that the practical results could be used in teaching processing in elaboration lectures and during practical lectures from grammar and methodology lessons.

This qualification paper provides the information that can build and improve the skills of all learners - from those with little experience to those who learn linguistics as a experiencing teaching foreign languages to the students.

The structure of our qualification paper consists of Introduction, three chapters, Conclusion and list of used literature. In introduction we gave information about actuality of the theme, defining the aims and tasks, problems of

work, materials and methods of investigation is theoretical and practical value of the work and some other valuable information about our research.

Chapter I - is firstly devoted to the general information about presupposition in linguistics that introduces the concept of presupposition with examples, followed by a historical overview. After this, some theories and conceptions, details of linguistic as well as philosophical presupposition will be characterized.

Chapter II - presents features of presupposition to linguistics, some of the advantages in using corpus data, especially spoken data, for analyzing presuppositions. Here I also briefly introduce the theories, how it was analyzed as well as what could not be taken into account in the analysis.

Chapter III – focuses on the effectiveness of applying pragmatics to the process of teaching and learning foreign language. Also experimental study investigating the processing of presupposed content.

In conclusion we summarized all the given information about the features of presupposition taken from different sources. In the bibliography we can find the list of used literature during the investigation.

CHAPTER I

DIFERENT APPROACHES TO PRESUPPOSITION IN FIELDS OF STUDY

1.1 The ways of identifying presuppositions

Presuppositions are a special kind of information associated or induced by certain lexical items and syntactic structures. Consider the following example.

(1) Julia's bicycle is new. She is glad that it is red. This example has two presupposition triggering structures, *Julia's bicycle* and *glad that p*. The first is a possessive noun phrase, that triggers the presupposition that Julia has a bicycle. The second is a factive adjective with a sentential object complement, and it presupposes the truth of its sentential complement, i.e. in this case that the bicycle is red. The easiest and most traditional way to isolate the presupposed information from the asserted information in a sentence is to negate the sentence. This is the well-known *negation test* for presuppositions. The following examples negate the two sentences given in (1) above:

(2) Julia's bicycle isn't new. It is not the case that she is glad that it is red.

From (2) we still infer that that Julia has a bicycle and that the bicycle is red, despite the fact that both of the sentences are negated. These inferences are called presuppositions. Earlier characterizations of presuppositions have described them as inferences that survive negation. We often say that the presupposed information 'projects out' of the negated context, that is, it is not interpreted within the scope of the negation. This is in contrast with asserted information. Consider the following examples:

(3) Julia's brother has a bicycle.

(4) Julia's brother doesn't have a bicycle.

(3) presupposes that Julia has a brother, triggered by the possessive noun phrase, and it asserts that he owns a bicycle. But if we negate the sentence as in (4) then the presupposed information will not be affected by negation but the asserted information will be; that is, we still infer that Julia has a brother, but we no longer

consider it true that he owns a bicycle. Presupposed information survives negation but asserted information does not. By negating a sentence and seeing what inferences still go through, it is generally possible to distinguish what is asserted from what is presupposed. The negation test is not the only way to identify the presuppositions of particular utterances, and in fact it is not really sufficient as a sole method for determining presupposed information. This is because the quality that makes presuppositions special, in comparison to asserted information, is that they tend to project out of *all* kinds of embedding, not just negation. For example, presuppositions tend to survive other types of logical embeddings such as conditionals, modal contexts and attitude contexts. If we take the examples above and embed them in different contexts, the presuppositions will still hold. In the examples below, the natural language lexical items which are considered to be functioning as logical operators are given in bold. In (5) the *if-then* creates a conditional statement. In (6) *maybe* and *perhaps* are considered to be modal operators and in (7) *believes* creates a belief context. The presupposition trigger is underlined (for the possessives the entire presuppositional expression is underlined). The b-sentences give the presuppositions of the a-sentences. (5) a. **If** Julia's bicycle is new **then** Matt's bicycle is old. b. Julia has a bicycle. Matt's has a bicycle. (6) a. **Maybe** Julia's bicycle is new. **Perhaps** she is glad that it is red. b. Julia has a bicycle. The bicycle is red. (7) a. Jennifer **believes** that Julia is glad that her bicycle is red. b. Julia has a bicycle. Julia's bicycle is red. In each case it should be clear that the presupposed information is still considered to be true. Karttunen⁴ was the first to propose testing for presuppositions by using modality and other types of embeddings, instead of relying on negation alone.

Since his suggestion, several researchers have also proposed sets of tests for presuppositions. These include the "Presupposition Test Battery" (PTB) proposed in Geurts⁵ and the S-family of tests in Chierchia & McConnell-Ginet.⁶ Note that these tests actually have two important functions. They help us see what the

⁴ Karttunen, L. (1971), 'Some observations on factivity' *Papers in Linguistics*, 4: p55–69.

⁵ Geurts, B. (1999), *Presuppositions and Pronouns*, *Current /PragmaticsInterface*: Vol 3. P43

presuppositions are for an individual example and they also help us identify what lexical items or syntactic structures should be considered presupposition triggers in general. This is important, as it has not always been agreed upon as to what lexical or syntactic structures trigger presuppositions, and what the presuppositions triggered actually are. Geurts' PTB is more thorough, so this one is presented here. To test if something is a presupposition trigger we should first test to see if it survives all normal types of embedding. (8) gives a summary of some of the embedded contexts the PTB tests, taken from Geurts⁷. In the following, if ϕ is an utterance that presupposes χ , we can write this as $\phi\{\chi\}$.

- (8) a. not $\phi\{\chi\}$
b. it is possible that $\phi\{\chi\}$
c. a believes that $\phi\{\chi\}$
d. if $\phi\{\chi\}$ then ψ
e. either $\phi\{\chi\}$ or ψ

Geurts (1999) points out that some embeddings will make the presuppositional inference seem stronger than others, but that generally presuppositions will project out of negated and modal contexts, e.g. above in (8) a and (8)b.⁸

The easiest way to get the hang of identifying presuppositions is to look at several examples, varying the embeddings and assuring yourself that the presupposition survives. Below examples sentences are given with each of the triggers that are studied later in the corpus: factives, aspectual verbs, *it*-clefts, *too* and definite NPs. First the a-sentences presented the trigger used without an embedding, with the trigger underlined. The b-sentences give the same sentence but in one of the embedded contexts given in (8).

The c-sentences give the induced presupposition.

⁶ Chierchia, G. & S. McConnell-Ginet (1990), *Meaning and Grammar*, MIT Press, Cambridge, p234.

⁷ Geurts, B. (1999), *Presuppositions and Pronouns*, Current /PragmaticsInterface: Vol 3. P132

⁸ Note also that it is well known that some triggers cannot be embedded under all contexts. For example, positive polarity items like *rather* and *too* can't be embedded in negative contexts (see van der Sandt 1988, Geurts 1999). Because of this, the presupposed information of positive polarity items cannot be identified by using the negation test. For example, you can't embed *too* under negation because in a negated sentence you have to use its negative polarity counterpart, *either*, e.g. **I don't like fruit too*, vs. *I don't like fruit either*. *Too* is the only trigger studied in the corpus work that fails the negation test because of polarity.

(9) factive verb *matter* with a sentential subject complement

a. *That it is already November matters.*

b. *That it is already November doesn't matter.*

c. *It is already November.*

(10) factive verb *regret* with a sentential object complement

a. *Andy regrets choosing the fish.*

b. *Andy regrets choosing the fish.*

c. *Andy chose the fish.*

(11) factive adjective *glad* with sentential object complement

a. *Henk is glad that Reinhard came to visit.*

b. *Rob believes that Henk is glad that Reinhard came to visit.*

c. *Reinhard came to visit.*

(12) aspectual verb, *quit*

a. *Rob totally quit smoking.*

b. *If Rob totally quits smoking, he will probably be in a bad mood all the time.*

c. *Rob smoked before the time of the utterance.*

(13) aspectual verb, *continue*

a. *Bart can continue to eat so much chocolate.*

b. *Bart can't continue to eat so much chocolate.*

c. *Bart has been eating a lot of chocolate up until now.*

(14) *it*-cleft

a. *It was Jip who fell in love with Janneke.*

b. *If my information is correct, it was Jip who fell in love with Janneke*

c. *Someone fell in love with Janneke.*

(15) *too*

a. *Hanneke likes cookies and Noor likes cookies too.*

b. *Hanneke likes cookies and it is not the cases that Noor like cookies too.*

c. *Someone other than Noor like cookies.*

(16) definite NP

a. *The dissertation has to be handed in before Christmas.*

b. If the dissertation has to be handed in before Christmas, I'll never finish.

c. There is a dissertation.

In all the above examples the presupposition projects out. But actually presuppositions are not this simple. They do not always project out. For example, in a complex sentence such as (17) the presupposition that Julia has a bicycle will not project out. The same would be said about (18), taken from Geurts.

(17) If Julia has a bicycle then Julia's bicycle is red.

(18) It's possible that Fred kissed Betty, and that he regrets that he kissed her.

(17) doesn't imply that Julia has a bicycle and about (18) doesn't imply that Fred kissed Betty. Note that if the consequent of the conditional in (17) was given in isolation, e.g. *Julia's bicycle is red*, the sentence would induce the presupposition that Julia has a bicycle.

These two examples illustrate one of the most well known problems in presupposition theory, *the projection problem*. viz. how we can determine what presuppositions of simple sentences project to become presuppositions of complex sentences. Much of the work on presupposition has been geared at trying to solve it.⁹ The obvious reason the presupposition doesn't project out of example (17) above is because its truth is actually questioned in the antecedent of the conditional. The same reason applies to (18).

Because true presuppositions should display this kind of context dependent behavior we need to test proposed triggers for this property as well. This second part of Geurts PTB tests for context dependence in complex sentences. If a sentence can be embedded in one of the patterns given in (19) below *without* having the induced presupposition project out, we can be even more certain that it is a true presupposition trigger¹⁰.

(19) a. if χ then ϕ { χ }

b. it is possible that χ and ϕ { χ }

⁹ For example Karttunen (1973, 1974) Karttunen & Peters (1979), Stalnaker(1973,1974) Gazdar (1979).

¹⁰ Geurts, B. (1999), *Presuppositions and Pronouns*, Current Research in the Semantics vol-2 p145

c. either not χ or $\phi \{ \chi \}$

Example (17) actually illustrates an utterance with the pattern in (19)a and example (18) illustrates the pattern in (19)b. It is fairly easy to modify the earlier examples to test for the other two and that is left to the reader. When presuppositions are triggered in these contexts they do not project.

It was many years until it was recognized that difficulties in interpreting the triggered presuppositions of complex sentences just hints at a much bigger issue. Whether or not presuppositions project depends on the information in the context in which they are used. The problem is not how to interpret presupposed material in complex sentences but how to interpret presupposed material in context. Much of the early work on presupposition has tried to handle projection at a sentence level, perhaps because most semantic work was at that time only equipped to deal with sentence level phenomena. But to correctly interpret presuppositions we need a way to account for the effects of the discourse context¹¹ on their interpretation, i.e. we need a framework that can manipulate or represent the information contributed by the entire discourse.

The third and final part of the PTB tests if presuppositions can, given the correct context, be denied or cancelled¹². One of the examples he gives is presented below.

(20) a. *It isn't Betty who kissed Fred – in fact, Fred wasn't kissed at all.*

b. *It's possible that it's Betty who kissed Fred, but it's also possible that he wasn't kissed at all.*

Examples (20)a and (20)b illustrate *it*-cleft presuppositions. The presupposition is denied in a-sentence, and it is embedded in a modal context in b-sentence, both

¹¹ By discourse context I mean the information contributed before the utterances to be analyzed is made, that is the linguistic information that is considered to be part of the discourse record.

¹² Wilson (1975) and Kempson (1975) have argued that presupposition as a semantic relationship actually doesn't exist. What people have termed presuppositions are just the entailments of simple sentences that in complex sentences are no longer entailed. They argued that this is easy to see because they can always be cancelled, and that the reason why we tend to understand presupposed material as projected out of different types of embeddings is because of other pragmatic factors.

contexts from within which the presupposition should have no trouble in projecting out. But because of the contextual information given in the second half of the sentence the presupposition does not project out. The general idea is this, for any induced presupposition, we should also be able to, with enough contextual manipulation, prevent it from projecting.

Semantically, the status of presupposed information differs according to the theory that is used to analyze them. Traditionally, presuppositions were considered to be other sentences that are entailed by the sentence with the trigger or propositions that are implied by an utterance or by a speaker. Factives with sentential complements presuppose the truth of their complement, or in other words presuppose a *fact*, which is an abstract object. Factive adjectives with sentential complements presuppose their complements as well and this presupposed information is also a semantic *fact* introduced by the linguistic expression in their complements. Aspectual verbs or change of state verbs (COS) presuppose *states*. Exactly what particular *state* in relation to the asserted material differs by each aspectual trigger. For example, *begin to x*, *begin x-ing* both presuppose states that the subject of the verb was not in the state described by **x** before the reference time of the utterance. This is the same presupposition for *start to x*, *start x-ing*. This is the opposite presupposition of what you get for *stop*, *quit* or *finish*. For *it*-clefts the presupposed information is the content of the relative clause with the relative pronoun exchanged for an indefinite noun of the appropriate type. Definite NPs presuppose the existence of an individual of the same type denoted by the head noun plus any additional descriptive information. For possessives, the presupposition is the existence of an individual of the same type as the noun phrase plus the information of who owns the referent of the noun. Finally, the presupposition induced by the particle *too* is somewhat complex.

Let's look at an example.

(21) Hanneke likes cookies. Noor likes cookies too.

The presupposition induced by *too* has two requirements, First, there should be a shared element between the event or situation referred to in the utterance with the trigger and the presupposed information. This is called the *theme* by Asher¹³ and I will also use this term. The theme above is ‘liking cookies’. Then there must be two elements of the same type, but which are contrasted, called the *focus*. In the example above Noor is the focus in the expression with the trigger and Hanneke satisfies the focus in the presupposition. The utterance presupposes that there is someone other than Noor who likes to eat cookies which is then satisfied by the first sentence.

What are presuppositions in terms of information? They can be both given and new. What is important is that they are always meant to be treated as if they were given, as if their truth can be taken for granted when they are presented. This is what the speaker is taken to be signaling to the hearer when he uses a presuppositional expression. The speaker doesn’t have to believe that the presupposed information is true, only commit to pretending it is for the duration of the dialogue. These are just a sample of the lexical and syntactic items that have been associated with the term presupposition. There have been many different proposals for analyzing the triggers and the presuppositions they induce. The next section briefly presents some central earlier proposals that laid the foundations for current theories.

1.2 Background of presupposition and An Ordinary Usage of the Term “Presupposition”

Presupposition has its roots in philosophy of language and linguistic semantics. Recent works in linguistics have given a central place to the notion of presupposition. It is studied as an essential aspect in providing semantic as well as pragmatic representations. Resultantly, presupposition has obtained a significant

¹³ Asher, N. (1993), *Reference to Abstract Objects in Discourse*. Kluwer Academic Publishers. Dordrecht. P187

place in the spheres of interest of linguists, logicians and philosophers. It has been studied as a kind of unspoken information that accompanies an utterance. Moreover, presuppositions perform a significant role in our understanding of how context and background determine proper interpretation of any utterance. They are studied as conditions which must be fulfilled for an expression to be interpreted meaningfully.

Philosophical Background. Presupposition has its roots in philosophy. The notion of presupposition can be traced back to *Aristotle*. As Beaver states, Aristotle explains the similar concept in the following extract quoted from ‘*Categories*’:

- ✓ *For manifestly, if Socrates exists, one of the two propositions ‘Socrates is ill’, ‘Socrates is not ill’ is true, and the other false. This is likewise the case if he does not exist; for if he does not exist, to say that he is ill is false, and to say that he is not ill is true.*¹⁴

In other words, Aristotle treats propositions as having truth value in terms of truth and falsity which is not distinct from the theories either of Frege or Strawson. Beaver further refers to Horn’s view that it is the medieval philosopher *Petrus Hispanus*, who first introduced the notion of presupposition. In the final part of his work ‘*Summulae Logicales*,’ Hispanus uses the terms such as ‘*presupponit*’ for presupposition and ‘*denotat*’ for assertion. The following extract is taken from Hispanus, a translated version, as quoted in Beaver:

- ✓ *We now discuss reduplicative signs. Reduplicative signs are those which imply the reason according to which something is attributed to another, as ‘insofar as’, ‘according as’, ‘by reason of the fact that’ and so on ... A reduplicative word presupposes [*presupponit*] a certain predicate to be in a certain subject and denotes [*denotat*] that to which it is immediately attached is the cause of that inheritance*¹⁵.

¹⁴ Aristotle 1950/350 BC, Ch 10:13b, 27-35, in Beaver 2001:p3.

¹⁵ Petrus Hispanus, as cited in Beaver 2001:p43.

This is the first ever reference of presupposition in relation to discourse connectives. In addition, it deals with the primary distinction between presupposition and assertion. According to Lindberg, the notion of presupposition is borrowed from philosophy into linguistics and has been used to illustrate the importance of context for the generation of sentences. He states that presupposition consists of:

(a) Features from the speaker's perception of the present situation

(b) Possible associations connecting (a) with features in his long term and short term memories.

In modern times, most significant among the philosophers who influenced the theories of presupposition are Frege, Russell and Strawson. However, Richard Garner¹⁶ mentions that the difference between philosopher's talk about presupposition and that of linguist is of 'the matter of what it is that is said to do the presupposing'. In fact, philosophers have their own abstract views, somewhat contrasting with those of linguists, who deal with presuppositions of words, utterances and sentences.

An Ordinary Usage of the Term 'Presupposition'. In everyday sense, to presuppose something is to assume something or to take it for granted in advance without saying it. Levinson¹⁷ points out that there are significant distinctions between the ordinary usages of the term 'presupposition' and its technical usage in the field of linguistics. He provides some examples that distinguish these two usages of the term:

1. Effects presuppose causes

2. John wrote Harry a letter, presupposing he could read

3. John said "Harry is so competent," presupposing that we know Harry had fouled things up – in fact we didn't know and so failed to realize that he was being ironic

¹⁶ 'Buoyancy and Strength', *Journal of Semantics*, 17, 4: p315–334.

¹⁷ Levinson, S. (1983), *Pragmatics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p76

4. *Harry asked Bill to close the door, presupposing that Bill had left it open as usual; he hadn't so he threw a chair at Harry*
5. *Adolph addresses the butler as "Sir", presupposing that he was the host Sir Ansel himself*
6. *The theory of evolution presupposes a vast time-scale*
7. *The article by Jackendoff presupposes Chomsky's theory of nominalizations*

In the above examples, ordinary notion of presupposition is used to narrate background assumptions which make the utterances meaningful. On the other hand, technical usage of presupposition refers to certain inferences built onto linguistic expressions.

Presupposition and Logic. Levinson is of the opinion that the characterization of semantic presupposition requires some fundamental changes in the kind of logic that can be used to model natural language semantics. He provides the following argument based on the classical logical assumptions¹⁸:

1. *A presupposes B*
2. *Therefore, by definition, A entails B and $\sim A$ entails B*
3. (a) *Every sentence A has a negation $\sim A$*
 (b) *A is true or A is false (Bivalence)*
 (c) *A is true or $\sim A$ is true (Negation)*
4. *B must always be true*

The major aim of such presuppositional theories is to cope up with presupposition failure. They also explain that the sentences are neither true nor false when their presuppositions fail. According to Bickerton, logical definitions of presupposition have been framed in terms of the three-valued logic. Such theories suggest that: A sentence S presupposes a proposition P if both S and $\sim S$ logically imply P. If P is false, then S is generally held to lack a truth value. Keenan gives a well-defined presuppositional logic when he defines logical presupposition as:

ϕ LOGICALLY PRESUPPOSES ψ iff ϕ has the third value whenever ψ

¹⁸ Levinson, S. (1997), 'Deixis', in P. Lemarque, *The Concise Encyclopedia of Philosophy of Language*, Elsevier. P65

is not true¹⁹ Keenan defines logical presupposition as:

A sentence S logically presupposes a sentence \acute{S} just in case S logically implies \acute{S} and the negation of S , $\neg S$, also logically implies \acute{S} . Keenan simplifies it as the truth of \acute{S} is a necessary condition on the truth or falsity of S , if S is not true then \acute{S} can be neither true nor false. Levinson makes use of logical devices such as ‘lambda-extraction’ and ‘group- or gamma-operator’ to explain presupposition relation. Levinson analyses the sentence ‘It was John that kissed Mary’ using such logical devices: $\lambda x(x = \text{John}) (\gamma x \text{ Kiss } (\text{Mary}, x))$

The above abstraction can be read as ‘A group kissed by Mary has the property of being identical to John. Janet Fodor is of the opinion that logical presuppositions are relevant to the truth conditions on sentences. He characterizes logical presupposition as: If a sentence S has the logical presupposition L , and L is false, then S has no truth value.

Logical presuppositions bear on the truth conditions of sentences, whereas, pragmatic presuppositions arise out of some extra-grammatical components. In contrast to logical notion of presupposition, pragmatic accounts have sought to define presupposition in terms of felicity conditions and context or common ground. In conclusion of his article, Strawson²⁰ says: Neither Aristotelian nor Russellian rules give the exact logic of any expression in ordinary language; for ordinary language has no exact logic²¹.

Presupposition and Third Truth Value. In truth conditional semantics, pragmatics as well as traditional logic, it is practical assumption that each sentence is either true or false. As Keith Allen points out:

- ✓ *In traditional systems of logic, truth is bivalent, i.e., there are only two values possible: any proposition P is either true or else it is false.*

¹⁹ Gazdar, G. (1979), *Pragmatics, Implicature, Presupposition, and Logical Form*. Academic Press. New York. Vol3, p144

²⁰ Strawson, P. F. (1950), ‘On referring’, *Mind* 59:p 320–344.

²¹ Strawson 1950, as cited in Levinson 1983: p.175

However, according to Allwood et al., the negation of a sentence is true whenever the sentence is false. Consider the following example from Allwood et al:

Have you stopped beating your wife?

The above question would have the following possible answers:

1. *Yes, I have stopped beating my wife.*
2. *No, I have not stopped beating my wife.*

The answer 2 appears to be the negation of answer 1. If 1 is not true, 2 ought to be true. But a person, who never beats his wife, cannot answer either. If he answers, it commits him to having beaten his wife. Statements 1 and 2 in such case are neither true nor false. In other words, these answers have no truth-value. To have a truth-value, these sentences should fulfill a condition that the speaker must have beaten his wife at some time or the other. In addition to true and false, a sentence may have a third truth value called 'Zero'. Keenan calls it as 'nonsense value'. Allwood et al define the Third Truth Value as follows:

- ✓ *If both a sentence p and its negation $\sim p$ can only be true, when q is true, p presupposes q .*

A sentence with unfulfilled presuppositions would then have the truth value zero. In such an analysis, presupposition is treated as a condition for a sentence to have a truth value. It follows that a sentence and its negation always have the same presuppositions.

Presupposition and Inference. Pragmatics is concerned with study of meaning that involves making of inferences. Presupposition is such a kind of pragmatic inference. Inferences are rule governed steps from certain premises or propositions, to another proposition, called conclusion. There are two kinds of inference: deductive and inductive. Encyclopedia Britannica defines these two inferences as follows. A deductive inference is²²:

- ✓ *A type of inference or argument that purports to be valid, where a valid argument is one whose conclusion must be true if its premises are true.*

²² Encyclopedia Britannica, 1826, Andrew Bell, Colin Macfarquhar, Bavarian state library 12vol, p514

An inductive inference is:

- ✓ *A type of nonvalid inference or argument in which the premises provide some reason for believing that the conclusion is true.*

Out of these two, inductive inference is defeasible. It shares certain qualities with presupposition. It can be illustrated with the following example:

Martha avoided quarrelling with Sam. One can draw the following inferences from the above utterance:

- a. Martha did not quarrel with Sam.*
- b. Martha tried to avoid quarrelling with Sam.*

Now consider the negation of the same utterance:

Martha did not avoid quarrelling with Sam.

The above negation survives the inference (b); however, inference (a) is cancelled.

Presupposition and Assertion. Relationship between presupposition and assertion can be shown as it is new information that is asserted and it is old information that is presupposed. In other words, what is asserted in an utterance is new to the addressee and what is presupposed is familiar or part of the common ground to addresser and addressee. In short, presupposition is a proposition that follows from a statement. Fundamental difference between presupposition and assertion is that of status. As Frege²³ mentions, a sentence has a truth-value only if its presuppositions are satisfied. Frege is of the opinion that presupposition and assertion differ in status. Regarding the distinction between presupposition and assertion, Lambrecht has given an explicit statement:

- ✓ *Let us refer to the 'old information' contained in, or evoked by, a sentence as the PRAGMATIC PRESUPPOSITION (or simply the PRESUPPOSITION) and let us refer to the 'new information' expressed or conveyed by the sentence as the PRAGMATIC ASSERTION (or simply the ASSERTION)*

²³ English translation from *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. P190

Any assertion does not come about if the presuppositions are not fulfilled, because only sentences with a truth-value can be the objects of an assertion. The distinction between assertion and presupposition is clarified by Heim and Kratzer with the following examples:

A. *John is absent again today.*

B. *Today is not the first time that John is absent.*

C. *John is absent today, and that has happened before.*

The above statements A, B and C indicate that the speaker believes that (i) John is absent today and (ii) John has been absent before. However, they assume different knowledge on the part of the hearer. If the hearer knows that John has been absent before but doesn't know that John is absent today then A is appropriate but B is not. Statement A presupposes that John has been absent before and it asserts that he is absent today. On the other hand, if the hearer knows that John is absent today but does not know that John has been absent before, then B is appropriate but A is not. Statement B presupposes that John is absent today and asserts that he has been absent before. After that, if the hearer does not know that John is absent today and also does not know that he has been absent before, then C is appropriate but not the other two. Statement C does not presuppose the knowledge of John's absence today or previous absences and instead, asserts both that he is absent today and that he has been absent before.

Presupposition as Common Ground. Barbara Abbott²⁴ states that, Stalnaker and Karttunen initiated the view that the grammatical concept of presupposition can be assimilated to the pragmatic concept of background information, shared knowledge or the common ground. She argues that presuppositions are non-asserted propositions conveyed by an utterance, propositions which are of necessity conveyed but which are not intended by the speaker to be part of the main point. Presuppositions arise by virtue of the facts that there is a preference for an utterance to have a single main point and that the expression of any thought

²⁴ 'Representation and Inference for Natural Language: A First Course in Computational Semantics'chapter3, p123

involves expressions of many atomic presuppositions. Stalnaker states that presupposition is what are taken by the speaker to be the ‘common ground’ or ‘mutual knowledge’ between speaker and hearer. The recognition that the familiar or old information and parts that are new, gives birth to common ground view of presuppositions.

Presupposition and Syntax. Presupposition has been treated as pragmatic and logical concept. However, Bickerton suggests that presuppositions arise because of certain syntactic facts. Gazdar claims that the potential presuppositions of a sentence emphasize the role of syntactic features. He states:

✓ *In terms of their components and constructions as if potential presuppositions were something given to us by the lexicon and the syntax, but I do this without prejudice to the possibility of some future general explanation as to why these lexical and syntactic sources of presupposition are such.*

Here Gazdar envisages a general kind of explanation of how presuppositions are indeed given by the nature of syntax. Levinson²⁵ states that Karttunen and Peters devised a conventional theory in the framework of the ‘Montague Grammar.’ The theory advocates that the clauses are built up from their components from the bottom up rather than the top down as in transformational generative grammar. Semantic content of an expression is built up together with syntax in such theory. As a result, the meaning expressions are associated with words, clauses and constructions what we call them as presupposition triggers. Levinson states:

✓ *As for presupposition, since many kinds of presupposition triggers seem to be essentially syntactic (e.g. clefts) or to have syntactic consequences (e.g. factives) there seem to be intimate relations between syntactic processes and the inference we call presuppositions.*

²⁵ Levinson, S. (1983), *Pragmatics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, MA p181

In addition, George Lakoff is of the view that the study of ‘presupposition-free syntax’ would deviate from the traditional study of syntax because it would no longer involve the study of the distinction of all the grammatical morphemes.

CHAPTER II - THE FEATURES OF PRESUPPOSITION

2.1 Semantic conception and pragmatic characterization of presupposition

2.1.1 Presupposition; Semantic conception

Apart from ordinary usage of the term, there are two kinds of presupposition in natural languages, that is, Semantic Presupposition and Pragmatic Presupposition. Gazdar²⁶ states that modern discussion of the semantic theory of presupposition began essentially with Strawson, although the idea can be traced further back to Frege.

Fregean Theory. Gottlob Frege introduced the notion of Presupposition. He treated it as special condition that must be fulfilled in order to attribute denotation to a linguistic expression. Frege in his article ‘Über Sinn und Bedeutung’ focused presupposition in accordance with problems that arise regarding the use of non-denoting terms. Frege states that:

- ✓ *If anything is asserted, there is always an obvious presupposition that the simple or compound proper names used have a reference. If one therefore asserts ‘Kepler died in misery’ there is a presupposition that the name ‘Kepler’ designates something.*

Thus, according to Frege, the name ‘Kepler’ has a denotation that is a presupposition of both of the following:

²⁶ Gazdar, G. (1979), *Pragmatics, Implicature, Presupposition, and Logical Form*. Academic Press. New York. p145

1. *Kepler died in misery.*

2. *Kepler did not die in misery.*

Here, the main point of Frege's analysis is that the name 'Kepler' has a referent, which is not a part of the assertion 1 and 2. The basic difference between the views of Frege and Russell²⁷ is that the former studies it semantically, whereas, the later considers the issue purely syntactically. For any sentence to acquire a truth-value, its presuppositions must be satisfied. In this way, Frege draws a fundamental distinction between what is presupposed and what is asserted by an utterance of 'Kepler died in misery'. Levinson points out that Frege has devised the following theory of presupposition:

- (i) *Referring phrases and temporal clauses (for example) carry presuppositions to the effect that they do in fact refer*
- (ii) *A sentence and its negative counterpart share the same set of presuppositions*
- (iii) *In order for an assertion or a sentence to be either true or false, its presuppositions must be true or satisfied*

On the other hand, with Russell's analysis of a sentence containing a referring expression, Frege's distinction between presupposition and assertion here seems to be evaporated.

Strawsonian Theory. In 1952, Strawson fiercely attacked Russell's theory and revived the concept of presupposition. Strawson's theory is based on the distinction between the facts that an expression has unique reference and every individual is unique having certain properties. This attitude of Strawson is closely related to Frege, who believes that the truth of the presuppositions of a sentence is a condition for the possibility of making an assertion by means of that sentence. Van Der Sandt²⁸ states that, if the presupposition of a sentence fails, that sentence can't be treated as statement and consequently, it loses its truth-value. According to Strawson, a statement, and not a sentence, is the bearer of truth value. Thus, a

²⁷ Russell, B. (1905), 'On denoting', *Mind* 14: p479–493.

²⁸ Van Der Sandt, (1967) *Linguistics and Philosophy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Chapter 3, p211

given statement can't be identified with the sentence used to make it, but with the utterance of that sentence. Strawson has given the following observation of presupposition:

- ✓ *A statement S presupposes a statement S', if and only if the truth of S' is a necessary condition for the truth or falsity of S*

The above observation makes it clear that the presupposition does not belong to what is asserted in an utterance of a sentence. It explains that any statement that must be true for another statement to have a truth value is a presupposition of that statement.

Presupposition as Binary Relation. In semantic theory, as Beaver²⁹ states, presupposition is usually defined as a binary relation between parts of sentences of a language. Definition of presupposition in terms of semantic valuation might say that one sentence semantically presupposes another, subject to the condition if the second one is true for the semantic value of the first in terms of truth and falsity. Linguists like Hausser, Keenan, Horn³⁰ and Katz argue that the semantic theory of presupposition should be constituted into linguistic theory. Gazdar points out that semantic presupposition has been defined traditionally as a relation between statements or between propositions; rather than between sentences, or sentences and propositions.

Defining Semantic Presupposition. Stephen Levinson. Levinson defines semantic presupposition as: A sentence A semantically presupposes another sentence B iff:

(a) *in all situations where A is true, B is true*

(b) *in all situations where A is false, B is true*

Rob A. Van Der Sandt defines semantic presupposition as:

$\varphi \gg \chi$ iff

(a) *in any interpretation where φ is true, χ is true*

²⁹ Beaver, D. (to appear) 'Presupposition in DRT', in D. Beaver, L. Casillas, B. Clark and S. Kaufmann (eds.), *The Construction of Meaning*, CSLI Publications. P123-167

³⁰ Horn, L. (1984), 'Toward a new taxonomy for pragmatic inference: Q-based and R-based implicature', in D. Schiffrin (ed.), *Meaning, form, and use in context: linguistic applications (GURT'84)*, Georgetown University Press, Washington, p11-42.

(b) in any interpretation where φ is false, χ is true

Semantic Accounts – Limitations. In semantics, presupposition is studied with reference to the truth-conditional aspects of meaning. Attempts to formulate the semantic theories of presupposition, as Levinson argues, are largely misplaced. Truth-conditional theories of presupposition treat it as a special species of entailment, namely one in which a logical consequence relation can be defined in such a way that it is affected by negation. As a result, semantic presupposition remains a kind of invariant relation. Levinson states:

- ✓ *Semantics on this view is concerned with the context independent, stable meaning of words and sentences, leaving to pragmatics those inferences that are special to certain contexts. Given this much, it is clear that presupposition belongs in pragmatics and not in semantics.*

Presupposition is a context dependent aspect of meaning and pragmatics studies meaning in context. Based on this fact, it can be reasonably concluded that presupposition is a pragmatic concept. Beaver poses a number of challenges for a 'purely semantic multivalent/partial' account of presupposition. He states that semantic account of presupposition:

- ✓ *... presents a number of challenges ... and thus provides motivation for either considering pragmatic addition to the semantic theories, or for considering alternative accounts of presupposition*

From 1970's onwards, it became prevalent that the difference between presupposition and other semantic relations is that of context-sensitivity. It cannot be studied simply as a semantic relation. More precisely, presupposition should be studied with a pragmatic point of view. From pragmatic perspective, sentences are seen as utterances of individuals communicating through the language. Thus semantic theories of presupposition, concerning with the specification of invariant, stable meaning, are not capable of analyzing presupposition independently. Consequently, such semantic theories of presupposition have been deserted, paving ways to pragmatic presupposition.

2.1.2 Presupposition: Pragmatic Characterizations

During the seventies, another way of thinking about presupposition became prevalent. As a result of the works of various scholars and attempts at a pragmatic characterization of the theoretical notion of presupposition, linguistic presupposition got a status of a pure pragmatic concept. Gazdar is of the opinion that the pragmatic conception of presupposition was originally proposed by Sellers³¹. For Sellers, presupposition is a condition for the correct use of sentence and his account of presupposition differs fundamentally from Strawson's view. Most of the well developed pragmatic theories consider presuppositions neither of a sentence nor of a speaker but of an utterance. In some other theories presuppositions are seen as conditions that contexts must obey in order for an utterance of a sentence to be felicitous in that context. According to Simons, pragmatic presuppositions are beliefs about the context that must be attributed to a speaker. It is assumed that semantic presuppositions of a sentence become pragmatic presuppositions of speakers, as speakers should believe that contexts satisfy the conditions required to allow their utterances to be meaningful. Chomsky illustrates the term presupposition as a label for non-focus. He mentions that he is using the term presupposition 'to cover a number of notions that should be distinguished'. Jackendoff's notion is a type of pragmatic presupposition, in that; it is a presupposition about the discourse or the things that could be discussed in the discourse.

Roots in Frege and Strawson. The pragmatic view of presupposition seems to be originated from the theories of Frege and Strawson. Both these philosophers draw a fundamental distinction between what a speaker presupposes and what he asserts in uttering a sentence. The notion of speaker presupposition or contextual presupposition is provided by the pragmatic approach. As per the pragmatic view,

³¹ Sells, P. & T. Wasow, (1997), 'Anaphora', in P. Lemarque (ed.), *The Concise Encyclopedia of Philosophy of Language*, Elsevier, p207–213

speakers, not sentences, presuppose propositions in uttering sentences or performing speech acts in specific linguistic or non-linguistic context.

Two Groups of Scholars. Rob A. Van Der Sandt divides proponents of the pragmatic view into two main groups. The first group looks at presupposition as condition for the appropriate, acceptable or correct use of sentences. This group associates presupposition essentially to the devices of speech act theory. The second group considers presupposition to be a special kind of implicature in the Gricean sense. Most of them regard presupposition as nothing but a misleading term covering a diverse set of Gricean and other phenomena.

Three Approaches. Generally, pragmatic study of presuppositions is based on three kinds of approaches. First approach refers to the assumptions made by speaker about the context in which communication takes place. Second approach treats pragmatic presupposition as a felicity condition for implementing some speech acts and the third approach regards pragmatic presupposition as a mutual knowledge or common ground between the speaker and the listener. However, as the three approaches are inter-related and should be studied in connection with each other, one can find out that presupposition is a knowledge shared by the interlocutors engaged in conversational activities. This shared knowledge is the basis for the speaker to express himself/herself to the listener because the speaker believes that the listener can understand what he or she says.

Four-place Relation. Rob A. Van Der Sandt studies presupposition as four place relation between persons (the speakers), sentences (or utterances), propositions and context or set of belief.

As per this view, he defines a scheme for presupposition as: A speaker S presupposes the proposition p in an utterance of a sentence A in a context c iff . . .

Presupposition and Context. Karttunen and Peters' theory treats presupposition as a side product arising out of the process of the context change. In other words, the nature of pragmatic presupposition is context dependent. The main concern is that the interpretation of sentences is always restricted to the class

of context in which their utterances are acceptable. Presuppositions associated with a sentence are supposed to be part of those contexts. Karttunen points out that:

- ✓ *Ordinary conversation does not always proceed in the ideal, orderly fashion ... People do make leaps and short cuts by using sentences whose presuppositions are not satisfied in the conversational context ... But ... I think, we can maintain that a sentence is always taken to be an increment to a context that satisfies its presuppositions. If the current conversational context does not suffice, the listener is entitled and expected to extend it as required.*

Karttunen, here, describes significance of context and the process, that the persons engaged in conversation are supposed to follow, for interpretation of the message with comprehension of proper presuppositions. The theories of presupposition that have dominated discussion since 1979 are the compositional account proposed by Karttunen and Peters. Their theory is on par with the logical approaches towards presupposition. Lewis and Stalnaker have expressed the similar views.

Soames' Typology. Soames attempts to describe the linguistic notion of sentential presupposition with reference to the notion of utterance presupposition, which in turn is directly related to the pragmatic notion of speaker's presupposition.

Speaker Presupposition. A member S of a conversation presupposes a proposition P at the time t iff, at t, S believes or assumes

- a. P;
- b. that the other members of the conversation also believe or assume P; and
- c. that the other members of the conversation recognize that S believes or assumes (a) and (b).

Utterance Presupposition. An utterance U presupposes P (at t) iff one can reasonably infer from U that the speaker S accepts P and regards it as uncontroversial, either because;

- a. S thinks that it is already part of the conversational context at t, or because

b. S thinks that the audience is prepared to add it, without objection, to the context against which U is evaluated.

2.1.3 Defining Pragmatic Presupposition

Presupposition is one of the central concepts in pragmatics. However, it is surprising that there is a lack of agreement among the scholars on a suitable definition of the term. In pragmatic theory, presupposition is analyzed involving attitudes and knowledge of language users.

Stephen Levinson. Levinson defines pragmatic presupposition as:

- ✓ *An utterance A pragmatically presupposes a proposition P iff A is appropriate only if B is mutually known by participants*

George Yule. Focusing on speaker's assumption, Yule defines pragmatic presupposition as:

- ✓ *A presupposition is something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance*

Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet. Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet give the following formal definition of presupposition:

- ✓ *(An utterance of) a sentence S presupposes the proposition P if (the utterance of) S implies P and further implies that P is somehow already part of the background against which S is considered*

This definition indicates that presupposition contrasts with what is asserted by an utterance; as presupposition is a proposition that is part of the common ground or shared assumptions of speaker and hearer.

Jef Verschueren. Pertained to implicit meaning, Jef Verschueren defines presupposition as:

- ✓ *Presuppositions are relations between a form of expression and an implicit meaning which can be arrived at by a process of (pragmatic) inference. It is implicit meaning that must be presupposed, understood, taken for granted for an utterance to make sense*

Knud Lambrecht. Lambrecht regards presuppositions as lexicogrammatical phenomenon that belongs to the information mutually known on the part of interlocutors in conversational exchange.

Hence, he defines presupposition as:

- ✓ *The set of propositions lexicogrammatically evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes the hearers already know or is ready to take for granted at the time of speech*

Edward Keenan. Keenan's following definition emphasizes on the role of context in analysis of pragmatic presupposition. As a result, presupposition doesn't remain binary relation, rather, as he points out, becomes a ternary relation between a pair of sentences and a context:

- ✓ *An utterance of a sentence pragmatically presupposes that its context is appropriate*

Matthew Dryer. Dryer notes that there are propositions which the speakers, while uttering sentences will normally not only believe but believe that the hearer believes as well. He defines pragmatic presupposition as:

- ✓ *A proposition that is considered part of the common ground, the set of propositions that the speaker of an utterance believes and assumes the hearer to believe as well*

Langendoen and Savin. Langendoen and Savin follow the same line of thinking when they refer to Frege while stating:

- ✓ *By 'presupposition' we mean, following Frege . . . the expression of the conditions which must be satisfied (be true) for the sentence as a whole to be a statement, question, command and so forth*

Jerold Katz. Katz defines presupposition in a sense close to Frege's as:

- ✓ *The presupposition of an assertion will be taken to be a condition found in the meaning of the sentence expressing the proposition. It expresses a referential requirement whose satisfaction is the condition under which the presupposition can make a statement, that is, the condition under which the proposition is either true or has a true negation*

Robert Stalnaker. Stalnaker's conception of presupposition opens up the possibility that a speaker presupposes certain sentences regardless of the belief whether they are true or known to be false. He defines speaker's presupposition without reference to sentences or utterances as:

- ✓ *A proposition P is a pragmatic presupposition of a speaker in a given context just in case the speaker assumes or believes that P, assumes or believes that his addressee recognizes that he is making these assumptions or has these beliefs*

Karttunen. Karttunen defines presupposition in terms of felicity conditions as follows:

- ✓ *Surface sentence A pragmatically presupposes a logical form L, if and only if it is the case that A can felicitously be uttered only in contexts which entail L*

Janet D. Fodor. Fodor comments that pragmatic presuppositions are relevant to the appropriateness of an utterance in a context. Therefore, he defines pragmatic presupposition as:

- ✓ *If S has the pragmatic presupposition P, and P is not among the beliefs shared by the speaker and the hearer, then the utterance of S is inappropriate in that conversational context*

Adrian Akmajian et al. Akmajian et al. state that presupposing something is best viewed as a state and not an act. They define pragmatic presupposition as:

- ✓ *The presupposition of a sentence is the set of conditions that have to be satisfied in order for the intended speech act to be appropriate in the circumstances, or to be felicitous*

Horton and Hirst. Following is the definition of presupposition given by Horton and Hirst: *Sentence S potentially presupposes proposition P iff for any speaker Sp, listener L, and state;*

(a) *The utterance of S⁺ by Sp to L in state s would allow L to infer B sp P*

(b) *The utterance of S⁻ by Sp to L in state s would allow L to infer B sp P*

unless L already believed B sp ¬P, i.e., unless S ≠ BL B sp ¬P

The above definition can be simplified as follows: Clause (a) denotes that if the affirmative forms of the sentence were spoken, any listener could infer that the speaker believed P. Clause (b) states that even if the negative forms of the sentence were spoken, any listener could still infer that the speaker believed P.

In short, the concept of pragmatic presupposition has been defined by the scholars, philosophers and linguists focusing on various aspects such as proposition, assumption, context, implicit meaning, shared knowledge, assertion and so on.

2.2 Types and properties of presupposition

Types of presupposition are based mostly on the functions of linguistic items which trigger presuppositions. For instance, factive presuppositions arise because of the use of factive verbs, whereas, structural presuppositions are associated with peculiar sentence constructions. Following are the types of presupposition:

Existential Presupposition. Presuppositions are the aspects of meaning that must be known previously. They are taken for granted by the interlocutors and necessary to be understood properly by them in order to interpret an utterance. Referring expressions such as ‘Mumbai’ in the utterance ‘We visited Mumbai’ and ‘Sachin’ in the utterance ‘Sachin scored century’ presuppose the existence of a given place and the entities of a real world. Such type of presupposition is called as existential presupposition. It has to be satisfied in order for the sentence in which it occurs, to be meaningful. Yule states that the possessive constructions in English

are associated with a presupposition of existence. It is assumed to be present in any definite noun phrase as well³². For instance:

Mary's cat.

→ *Mary has a cat.*

Bermuda Triangle is a mysterious place in the Pacific Ocean.

→ *There exists a place called Bermuda Triangle.*

Actual Presupposition. An actual presupposition is any potential presupposition that is not cancelled by its context. As Levinson points out, cancelling mechanism separates certain presuppositions from those that survive and become actual presuppositions. He further states that potential presuppositions are associated with sentences, whereas, actual presuppositions are associated with utterances. For instance, an utterance like the following has two potential presuppositions. For example:

Martin told that the Queen of England is tall.

→ *There is someone called as Martin.*

→ *There is a Queen of England.*

Out of these two presuppositions, only the first one is an actual presupposition and the second one carries information that is reported. Consider another example cited below.

NASA declared that there is life on Mars.

→ *There is something called NASA.*

→ *There is life on Mars.*

Factive Presupposition. Yule argues that the information that follows verbs like *know*, *realize*, *regret* as well as phrases containing a form of 'be' with 'aware' and adjectives like *odd* and *glad*, is treated as a fact and such fact is labeled as factive presupposition. Consider the following:

Fred didn't realize that he insulted his boss.

→ *Fred insulted his boss.*

³² 'Presupposition and shared knowledge in *it*-clefts', *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 10: p97-103

I regret punishing him.

→ *I punished him.*

He isn't aware that he missed an opportunity.

→ *He missed an opportunity.*

It isn't odd that she came late.

→ *She came late.*

I am glad that he achieved his goal.

→ *He achieved his goal.*

Here, the use of particular expression by the speaker is taken to presuppose the truth of the information that is stated after it.

Lexical Presupposition. Lexical presuppositions, Yule states, are carried by lexical items such as *manage*, *stop*, *start*, and *again*. These are the forms that are treated as sources of lexical presupposition. In lexical presupposition, a particular expression used by the speaker is taken to presuppose another concept. For example:

She stopped gossiping.

→ *She used to gossip.*

He managed to reach in time.

→ *He reached in time.*

It started raining.

→ *It wasn't raining before.*

Again you are wrong.

→ *You were wrong before.*

According to Kempson³³ in case of lexical items, its presuppositions are said to be those elements of its meaning which are unaffected by negation. To simplify, these are the elements of meaning which are undeniable. For instance:

She didn't stop gossiping.

→ *She used to gossip.*

³³ Kempson, R. A. (1975), *Presupposition and the Delimitation of Semantics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. P231

Structural Presupposition. There are certain presuppositions which are associated with sentence structure. As Yule analyses it, some structures have been traditionally analyzed as presupposing that part of the structure which is already assumed to be true. Such structures are used to treat message as presupposed and hence to be accepted as true by listeners. Such structures include *WH-constructions*. WH question is conventionally interpreted with the presupposition that information after *WH-word* is always a fact. For instance:

Why did John kill the snake?

→ *John killed the snake.*

When did you get Master's Degree?

→ *You got Master's Degree.*

When speaker asks such questions, it is presupposed that the listener has accepted the truth of the presupposition i.e. you got Master's Degree. Such presuppositions deal with the ways of presenting information that the speaker believes what the listener should believe.

Non-factive Presupposition. Non factive presuppositions are associated with a number of verbs in English. Yule states that in contrast with the presuppositions assumed to be true, non-factive presuppositions are assumed not to be true. Verbs like *dream*, *imagine* and *pretend* are followed by such type of presuppositions. Consider the following:

Smith dreamed that he was dead.

→ *Smith was not dead.*

Mike imagined that he was in a space-ship.

→ *Mike was not in a space-ship.*

John pretends to be an expert.

→ *John is not an expert.*

Counterfactual Presuppositions. Counterfactual presuppositions imply the meaning that, what is presupposed is not only 'not true' but it is 'opposite of what is true' or contrasting the facts. Generally, counterfactual conditionals presuppose that the information in *if-clause* is not true at a specific time. For instance:

If Smith were Mary's boss, he would have punished her.

→ *Smith is not Mary's boss.*

If English were our mother tongue, we would have acquired it as the first language.

→ *English is not our mother tongue.*

Karttunen³⁴ and Peters also state that the subjunctive conditionals, that are also known as counterfactual conditionals, presuppose the falsity of their antecedent clauses. In such conversational situations, the listener is supposed to assume that the speaker regards the antecedent clause as 'not true'. Karttunen and Peters further argue that it is not necessary to take for granted a counterfactual presupposition for such sentences. It would be even incorrect to claim a general rule to the effect that the counterfactual conditionals presuppose that its antecedent clause is not true. The following example, quoted from Karttunen and Peters clarifies it:

✓ *If Mary were allergic to penicillin, she would have exactly the symptoms she is showing.*

In the above sentence, the presupposition that 'Mary is allergic to Penicillin' is true. Consider another example cited below.

If John were the gold medal winner, he would have reacted exactly as he is doing.

→ *John is the gold medal winner.*

Categorical Presupposition. Categorical or sortal presuppositions are related to the domain of predicates. Consider the following example from Allwood et al:

1. *Fafnir is clever.*

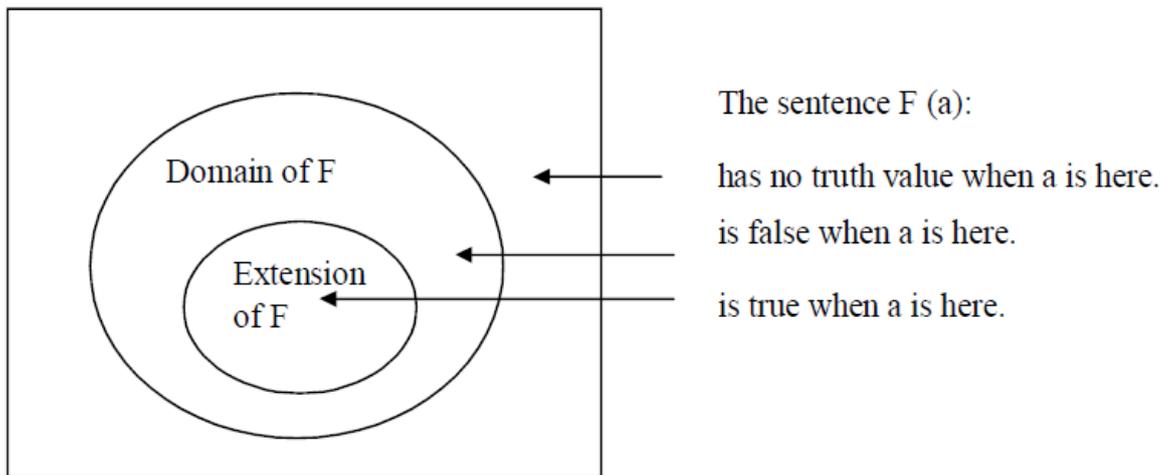
2. *The Eiffel Tower is clever.*

The sentence 1 is true but sentence 2 is neither true nor false. The predicate *be clever* could be said to presuppose that its subject is a living being. Allwood et al., describe such cases to illustrate the concept of domain for predicates. The domain of a predicate is a set of all the things to which it can be meaningfully attributed. The subjects of such predicates exist as restriction on the domain of the predicate.

³⁴ Karttunen, L. & S. Peters (1979), Conventional implicature. In Oh & Dinneen, *Syntax and Semantics 11: Presupposition*, Academic Press, New York p1–56.

The principle ‘F (a)’ presupposes that (a) is in the domain of F. In the analysis, where failure of presuppositions leads to ‘truth-valueless’ sentences, it would result in three cases as illustrated by Allwood et al. with the following figure³⁵:

Domain of a predicate:



Properties of presupposition. There are certain properties of presupposition such as defeasibility, behavior under negation and so on. These properties are important because they serve as tests for presuppositions to differentiate them from other inferences like conversational implicature and entailment. The properties explained below are basically related to peculiar survival or cancellation of presupposition in the specific contextual environment.

Defeasibility. Defeasibility refers to the cancellation of presupposition by addition of certain premises. It is one of the most significant properties of presupposition for which Levinson coins the term ‘touchstone’. He further observes that one of the peculiar things about presuppositions is that they are liable to evaporate in certain contexts. Such context may be immediate linguistic or less immediate discourse context. Presuppositions may evaporate in circumstances where contrary assumptions are made. It is crucial in the assessment of all theories of presupposition. It represents a peculiar quality of presuppositions that they have a tendency to evaporate in the specific context. Generally, presupposition

³⁵ Blackburn P. & J. Bos (1999b), ‘Working with Discourse Representation Theory: An Advanced Course in Computational Semantics’ p187-188

cancellation depends on immediate linguistic as well as discourse context and instances in which contrary assumptions are made. To explain, Levinson cites examples having factive verb *know* as a trigger. The complement of *know* is presupposed to be true in sentences having second or third person subjects, as in the one that follows:

Susan doesn't know that India won the T-20 World Cup.

→ *India won the T-20 World Cup.*

But in the negative sentence, containing first person subject, presupposition is not maintained: *We don't know that India won the T-20 World Cup.*

In the above utterance, presupposition is cancelled. Here, presupposition evaporates for the reason that the information carried by the complement is denied by rest of the sentence. The information in 'That-clause' is not shared by the speaker. As it is stated earlier, the factive verb *regret* presupposes the information that it precedes. But most of the times, as Levinson points out, when the speaker and hearer know that certain facts do not stand, then the consequent presupposition do not arise. For instance, if the interlocutors are aware of the fact that Bill did not resign the job, one can say:

✓ *At least Bill won't have to regret that he resigned the job.*

Here, the presupposition 'Bill resigned the job' is cancelled by the facts shared by the interlocutors. Otherwise, in normal context, such sentences carry presuppositions. Moreover, temporal clause beginning with *before* usually triggers presuppositions. As a result, a sentence such as:

Peter meditated before he did his homework.

→ *Peter did his homework.*

However, the following utterance carries the meaning exactly opposed to the above presupposition: *Peter slept before he did his homework.*

It is for the reason that assertion of the above statement is that the event of sleeping has taken place before the event of doing homework. It is generally assumed that living being could not perform such actions after they sleep. That's

why, presuppositions prove to be defeasible in such contexts. This peculiar property, that presuppositions are sensitive to background assumptions about the world, as Levinson states, is not only due to ‘before clauses’. Specific discourse contexts give rise to contextual defeasibility. As it is mentioned earlier, cleft constructions act as presupposition triggers. For example:

It isn't Sam who will cheat you.

→ *Someone will cheat you.*

However, in utterances that follow ‘elimination process’, like the one given below, cleft constructions do not carry presuppositions.

- ✓ *You say that someone in the group will cheat you. Well may be so. But it won't be Sam who will cheat you, it won't be John, it won't be Bill and it certainly won't be Stephen. Therefore, no one in this group is actually going to cheat you.*

The presupposition ‘someone in the group will cheat you’ does not stand in the above utterance, for the reason that the speaker in the above utterance wants to assure the hearer that there is no one who will cheat him. Levinson sums up the major reason of presupposition cancellation in certain contexts as follows:

- i. *Where it is common knowledge that the presupposition is false, the speaker is not assured to be committed to the truth of the presupposition.*
- ii. *Where what is said, taken together with background assumptions, is inconsistent with what is presupposed, the presuppositions are cancelled, and are not assumed to be held by the speaker.*
- iii. *In certain kinds of discourse contexts, e.g. the construction of reduction arguments or the presentation of evidence against some possibility or assumption, presuppositions can systematically fail to survive.*

Presuppositions are also defeated in intrasentential cancellation called as suspension of presupposition. Most of the times, use of ‘if clause’ suspends the presupposition. Consider the following:

Aston won't make noise again, if indeed he ever did.

In the above utterance, if clause mentions that Aston never made noise. The action which never has taken place cannot be presupposed. Thus, presupposition triggered by ‘again’ is cancelled. Presuppositions are cancelled when they are explicitly denied. For instance, a sentence such as the following denies the presupposition triggered by the definite noun phrase because the existence of the king of bollywood is denied by the clause that follows:

✓ *The king of bollywood is not a famous person; there is no king of bollywood.*

The entity that does not exist cannot be presupposed. As a result, the presupposition is lacking. Simons is of the view that defeasibility is a test that emphasizes the speaker oriented nature of presupposition. According to Peter Grundy³⁶ ‘defeasible’ is the term used by pragmatists to mean that a proposition may be cancelled. If the discourse context does not allow, potential presuppositions fail to arise. Verschueren calls defeasibility as ‘just another term for context sensitivity’. He further states that presuppositions can be strongly sensitive to small changes in linguistic and non-linguistic context. Beaver³⁷ states that many of the inferences, on which the identification of presupposition is based, disappear when thoroughly examined. Strawson’s position is that there is an identifiable presupposition component to the meaning of a sentence containing a definite description. Such component behaves quite differently from ordinary assertions. Speakers’ knowledge of the world plays a crucial role in the way they answer. Consider the following exchange, where presupposition is cancelled by the denial of the definite description:

A: The King of America is very shrewd.

B: Oh, come on; America is not a Monarchy. It’s a Democracy.

A: Ok, I was wrong then. May be it was the President I was thinking of.

³⁶ J. Hedberg, N & Zacharski R. (1993), ‘Cognitive Status and the Form of Referring Expressions in Discourse’, *Language* 69: p274–307.

³⁷ *Presupposition*, In Handbook of Logic and Language, J. van Benthem & A. ter Meulen, eds., p939–1008.

The negation in above exchange is different from ordinary truth-conditional negation. Such type of presupposition cancellation is, according to various presupposition theorists, is exceptional. Such cancellation seems to be in contrast with the concept of presupposition as implication property of language. Consequently, it forces to be careful in the process of presupposition identification. Wilson, while commenting on the hypothetical cancellation account of presupposition, says:

- ✓ *It would be natural for a pragmatic presupposition analyst to respond that there are canceling mechanisms of either an implicit or explicit nature, and that when such cancellations take place, the presupposition must be regarded not as violated, with resulting infelicity, but simply removed, with no resulting defects at all*

Thus, it can be observed that presupposition is cancelled in various distinct environments. It is cancelled when information carried by a complement is denied by rest of the sentence. Moreover, presuppositions are canceled in illogical sequence of events. That's why, defeasibility should not be regarded as a defect of presupposition; rather it is a significant quality of presupposition.

Behavior under Negation. Presuppositions remain constant even if the original sentence is negated. This very behavior of presupposition is known as constancy under negation. For Levinson, various theories of presupposition have sprouted out of such behavior of presupposition. It is a peculiar survival property of presupposition. It is pointed out by Frege³⁸ and Strawson that presupposition survives under negation of an utterance. However, entailments do not survive under negation. For instance:

Bill Gates devised five advanced software.

–» *There exists a person called Bill Gates.*

–// *Bill Gates devised three advanced software.*

³⁸ Frege, G., (1892), 'Über Sinn und Bedeutung', in *Zeitschrift für Philosophie und philosophische Kritik*, 100, 25–50. English translation from *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, ed. P. Geach & M. Black, Oxford, Blackwell, 1952, pp. 56–78.

If the above sentence is negated, as given below, the presupposition remains constant whereas entailment is cancelled.

Bill Gates didn't devise five advanced software.

→ *There exists a person called Bill Gates.*

–// **Bill Gates devised three advanced software.*

It can be observed that presupposition 'There exists a person called Bill Gates' survives in negative sentence above, whereas an entailment '*Bill Gates devised three advanced software' is cancelled by negation of the main verb. This kind of negation, in which the presupposition is not affected, is called 'internal negation' by Weischedel. On the other hand, 'external negation', suggested by Weischedel, denies at least one of the presuppositions of the affirmative form of the sentence.

For example:

HERMAN : Did Mary leave when John came?

FRANK : Mary did not leave when John came. Because John never came

In the above exchange, Herman presupposes that John came and wants to know whether Mary left after John came. But the presupposition is denied with the external negation of the sentence by Frank informing that John never came. As Dinsmore states, presupposition, entailment and negation are in clear relation with each other. He assumes that 'not-s' is syntactically similar to 's' except the presence of 'not' and presence or absence of 'do' to make 'not-s' grammatical. In other words, negative counterpart of a sentence is distinct from its affirmative form with respect to the presence of negative adverb 'not'. When 'not' is attached to the subject instead of main verb, the sentence transforms into denial of negation. Thus, the 'denial negation' of the sentence (1) below would be the one that immediately follows and not the later one.

1. *All of the Indians are patriotic.*
2. *Not all of the Indians are patriotic.*
3. *All of the Indians are not patriotic.*

The sentence (1) cited above has the following presupposition:

→ *Indians are patriotic.*

The above presupposition is shared by the denial negation (2) of the original sentence. However, sentence (3) does not share the same presupposition. Denial negation of a sentence, as Dinsmore states, is a sentence sharing the presuppositions. Such sentences share the same presuppositions without getting affected by negation. Dinsmore defines denial negation as follows, that provides the significance of the nature of discourse in negation which is crucial in semantic as well as pragmatic environment:

- ✓ *X is the DENIAL NEGATION of Y if X and Y are semantically inconsistent and a discourse in which the utterance X is followed by an utterance 'No Y' by another speech participant is natural*

Thus, besides defeasibility, constancy under negation is one of the significant properties of presupposition. It emphasizes the fact that presupposition survives even if the original sentence is negated. Like defeasibility, constancy under negation proves that presupposition stands separate from other types of inferences.

Detachability. Presuppositions are detachable in the sense that it is possible to find another way to express an identical content that lacks the inference in question. According to Levinson, presuppositions are detachable in Grice's sense. Levinson states:

- ✓ *Whereas in the case of implicatures it is generally impossible to find another way to say the same thing that lacks the same implicatures, in the case of presuppositions the inferences seem to be attached directly to certain aspects of the surface form of linguistic expressions*

Presupposition is a kind of inference that is associated with the form, in contrast with implicatures which are associated with the meaning of what is said. Detachability results from the fact that presuppositions are triggered by specific linguistic structures. For instances, interrogative constructions give rise to structural presupposition, verbs of judging trigger presuppositions about the behavior of individuals, cleft constructions carry presuppositions that predicate applies only to the element that is focused, definite descriptions and proper names have presuppositions of existence and so on.

Speaker Commitment and Hearer Accommodation. Speakers are committed to acceptances of the presuppositions of their utterances. As Simons states, presuppositions are propositions which a cooperative speaker must accept. The production of an utterance, indeed counts a commitment to acceptance of the required presuppositions. Such acceptance facilitates the interpreter to make sense. Simons further states that interlocutors accept the presuppositions of utterances of others, even if they did not do so prior to the utterance. This is generally called as accommodation of presupposition. It is the result of the general tendency of the interlocutors to be cooperative and try to coordinate their acceptances. If the speaker accepts any presupposition, he intends that the hearer accepts the same. And if the speaker is aware that his utterance indicates this acceptance, then he assumes that the hearer will share it. In this way, the presuppositions of the speaker's utterances may come to be mutually accepted. Stalnaker proposes a gradual account of how informative presuppositions result in a change in common ground. Consider the following example: *I want to take my uncle to the hospital.* In the above utterance, the hearer first observes that the speaker has said something which is appropriate only if he believes that it is common ground that the speaker has an uncle. From this, the hearer infers that the speaker himself believes that he has an uncle. As Stalnaker states, accommodation is a matter of discourse participants coordinating their first order beliefs.

Non-controversiality. Non-controversiality of presupposition arises out of an intention of the speakers to be cooperative in conversation. Simons states that there should be a tendency of the speakers to produce utterances having highly non-controversial presuppositions for communication to be successful. As mentioned earlier, the speakers are generally committed to acceptances of the presuppositions of their utterances. If the presuppositions are controversial, the speakers may be challenged for the presuppositions which are not part of their intention. To simplify, the conversational goals will be regarded unimportant if certain utterance carries controversial presuppositions. In normal circumstances,

speakers always wish their utterances to be identified as cooperative and share presuppositions that are familiar propositions, not controversial ones.

Backgrounding. This property of presuppositions explains the immediate insight, as Simons states, that they are backgrounded or they are non-main-points. By definition, they are not parts of the speaker's communicative intention. On the contrary, they are necessary prior acceptances of the speaker. Simons further states that sometimes presuppositions do have main-point status. In such circumstances, the speaker becomes deliberately indirect and exploits the presuppositional requirements of the utterance. When someone says:

I have to pick up my son from the school.

He may be aware that as a result of the utterance the hearer will presuppose that the speaker has a son. However, the speaker's communicative intention here is simply to tell that he has to do something.

CHAPTER III APPLIED PRAGMATICS AND COMPETENCE ELATIONS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

3.1 Definition of pragmatics and pragmatic competence

This chapter provides a definition of pragmatics. It also lists components of pragmatics that are used to convey meaning. From this list, I identify and explain some components that I consider essential to learning and teaching the pragmatic dimension of second languages. The chapter goes on to discuss challenges of addressing pragmatics in second language classrooms.

Definitions of Pragmatics. In researching pragmatics, I discovered that there are many definitions for the concept of pragmatics in the field. According to Liu³⁹, Charles Morris introduced the first modern definition of pragmatics, and since then many other specialists have continued to conceptualize this branch of linguistics. Morris originally defined pragmatics as “the discipline that studies the relations of signs to interpreters, while semantics studies the relations of signs to the objects to which the signs are applicable”.

More recently, Kasper⁴⁰ defined the term as “the study of people's comprehension and production of linguistic action in context”. This brief definition states the elements of context and production as relevant elements of pragmatics that are fundamentals of any speech act in a language. Context, as Kasper viewed it, consists of the social and cultural circumstances in which communication

³⁹ Liu, Shaozhong. (August 8, 2007) *What is pragmatics?Uds press, p87*

⁴⁰ Kasper, Gabriele (Editor). (1993). *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. Cary, NC: Oxford University, p93-99

occurs. These circumstances play a critical role in how messages are constructed, conveyed, and how they are received. Kasper also uses a broad term, “linguistic action,” which is a somewhat general term used to describe the capacity of producing utterance that a learner has. Also noteworthy is the emphasis on comprehension as well as production, a distinction that is particularly relevant for second language learners’ daily lives.

Even more recently, Crystal defined pragmatics as:

... the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction, and the effects their use of language has on the other participants in an act of communication. (Original emphasis)⁴¹

This definition analyzes pragmatics from the perspective of the users. It takes into account the different choices that speakers are able to make when using the target language, depending on the social interaction of their communication. The notion of choice brings another aspect into consideration useful to language learners, namely, developing the ability to make the right choices among a variety of pragmatic elements.

On this same topic, the focus on the user, research by Sharples, Hogg, Hutchinson, Torrance and Young provided a definition based on the concepts of context and identity. They define pragmatics as;

✓ *“Those aspects of the study of language that pertain to the identity and intentions of the speaker and hearer, and the context in which speech takes place.”*

Regarding context, they said that “it is sometimes most narrowly regarded as the body of world knowledge to which speakers and hearers have access in generating and interpreting speech”.⁴² They also consider context and identity as factors that

⁴¹ Barron, Anne. (2003). *Acquisition in Interlanguage Pragmatics. Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, p135

⁴² Sharples, H. H. (1996). *Computers and Thought: A Practical Introduction to Artificial Intelligence*, p56-58

may influence pragmatic competence, which means that the style or manners of the speakers change according to these factors.

A simpler definition of pragmatics, one intended for second language learners, is proposed by The Center of Advanced Research in Language Acquisition at the University of Minnesota:

- ✓ *[Pragmatics] is the way we convey meaning through communication. This meaning includes verbal and non-verbal elements and varies depending on the context, the relationship between people taking, and many other social factors.*

This definition puts the emphasis on communication and names social factors that will influence the ways in which meaning is expressed and conveyed.

To summarize at this point, even though many definitions of the term pragmatics have been seen so far, the use of a definition that widely reflects the focus of this investigation is essential. For this purpose, pragmatics can be defined as the subfield of linguistics intended to study the use of the individuals' language with the most accurate level of appropriateness and correctness possible on their performance according to the context or situation where the language is used, and the pragmatic elements that it involves, such as proxemics, chronemics, haptics, and register.

Pragmatic Competence. Given these definitions of pragmatics, another important aspect must be addressed: pragmatic competence. Pragmatic competence refers to the ability to comprehend, construct, and convey meanings that are both accurate and appropriate for the social and cultural circumstances in which communication occurs. This is the goal for second language learners, and as I describe in other parts of this paper, it is a challenging task. Blackman identified pragmatic competence as one element of communicative competence, placing pragmatic competence as part of illocutionary competence, which is a combination of speech acts and speech functions along with the appropriate use of language in context.

Elements of Pragmatics. Pragmatics, as the above discussion shows, is all about communicating appropriately in context. Communication involves language, verbal or written, but it involves many other aspects that go beyond the words in specific speech acts. I refer to all aspects of appropriate communication as “pragmatic elements.” Second language learners need to acquire knowledge of and fluency in these pragmatic elements in order to acquire pragmatic competence.

Many sociolinguists have addressed these elements. Hymes⁴³ proposed a model using the mnemonic device S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G to illustrate the key elements. S represents “setting” and “scene,” the social and physical situation where the communication occurs, including time of day. P stands for participants,” the people involved in the communication and their roles and relationships. E describes “ends,” the purpose or intended outcome of the communication. A represents “act sequence,” the order of exchanges or pieces of the overall communication. K stands for “key,” the tone or manner of the exchange. It describes “instrumentalities,” forms and styles of speech, including register. N represents “norms,” the social expectations or rules that underlie or inform the communication, namely, what is acceptable. G stands for “genre,” the kind of speech act or communication involved.

This model provides a broad picture of relevant aspects in analyzing and understanding how they are part of appropriate communication. For example, what would be the appropriate communication for a male supervisor reprimanding a female employee in a private meeting in his office at the end of the workday about an important appointment she missed? He wants to set a firm but gentle tone since she is a long-time, valued employee and he wants to keep her in the company. She, in turn, senses that there is a problem and wants to maintain her composure, even though she often disagrees with this supervisor. Using the SPEAKING model would help us explore and identify appropriate language for this situation.

⁴³ Hymes, D. (1974). *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. The University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc. Cinnaminson, NJ, p173

This model, however, does not explore or identify the many explicit behaviors that comprise communication. For this, I look to sources from cultural studies and intercultural communication, such as *Teaching Culture*⁴⁴, which lists these behaviors as “features of practice”. Practices are all the actions and interactions, including language, that members of a culture use to carry out their way of life. I find this list particularly useful, since it presents very concrete actions or behaviors that affect the appropriateness of communication. This specificity makes the pragmatic elements more visible.

Moran organizes these features into two broad categories: linguistic and extralinguistic. Linguistic features are those that deal with language, verbal or written, including paralinguistic, the vocal effects that accompany oral language. Extralinguistic features are those that are commonly referred to as non-verbal communication. Below I list these features and provide brief definitions and examples.

Linguistic: The linguistic components refer to all the written language, oral language and the paralinguistic. The written language includes all the elements of written pragmatics such as: syntax and vocabulary. On the other hand, the pronunciation, tone, and accent belongs to the phonology of the oral language, as are the use of one’s voice and other elements that accompany the speech such as interjections, onomatopoeia, coughing, and whistling.

Written Language

Syntax: This is defined by Van Valin Jr. (2001) as “how sentences are constructed, and users of human languages employ a striking variety of possible arrangements of the elements in sentences.” (p. 19) Syntax can be altered to convey different messages, such as “I have got to go” versus “Gotta go.”

Vocabulary: This is the use of words in relation to how we see the world, context, and participants in a speech act. The selection of words that a person uses might vary according to the cultural background or register of the speaker or the

⁴⁴ Moran, Patrick. (2001) *Teaching Culture. Perspectives in Practice*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

receiver of the message. An example would be the use of the words “automobile” and “wheels.”

Oral Language

Pronunciation: This is the way a language is spoken or a word is uttered. Each language follows a different pattern for pronunciation, and even there might be different patterns in within a language. For a word to be pronounced correctly it must have the pronunciation of the specific dialect that is used in a specific context.

Tone of voice: This is the use of pitch in a language to distinguish a lexical item.

Accent: This is related to the pronunciation of a language. It is the way the words are uttered with a characteristic pitch, stress and rhythm, representative of a specific speech community.

Register: This is the specific variety of language that is used in a specific social setting. For instance, the use of certain words might be considered more appropriate in a specific situation than in others. For example, the use of the lexical item “ain’t” would be more suitable in some situations than in others.

Paralanguage:

Onomatopoeia: This is a word that imitates sounds that it describes. It is commonly used in poetry and literature. In pragmatics it is used in the utterance of certain sounds that add intensity to the meaning of the phrase. Some examples in English include: bang, splash, boom.

Interjections and other vocalizations: Interjections are words that express an emotion in the sentence. They are regularly linked to the sentence as a grammatical part of it. There are other elements that can be classified as vocalizations. They usually carry meaning and a specific degree of intensity addition to the uttered phrase: coughing, laughing, groaning, etc. As an example, in some cultures laughing might carry an unenthusiastic meaning while in other cultures it might not.

Extralinguistic: The extralinguistic category of components refers to important elements such as: kinesics, proxemics, oculosics, chronemics, and haptics, and context.

Oculosics: This consists of eye movements used to convey meaning. These movements include maintaining or avoiding direct eye contact, blinking, winking, staring, squinting, rolling the eyes, crossing the eyes, closing the eyes, and other eye behaviors. These movements convey meanings. For example, avoiding direct eye contact conveys meanings of respect and deference in some cultures, but in others, messages of guilt or embarrassment.

Context: Edward T. Hall⁴⁵ proposed two different categories of context to categorize the differences in communication style: Low context is where the message is direct, explicit, as in the utterance (“Oh I forgot my cell phone... Would you mind if I use yours to make a phone call?”), and high context where the speech is indirect, subtle, and understood basically because of social situation signs. For example, a person is looking desperately for something in her purse. He is trying to find a payphone. Another person who offers her phone.

Chronemics: This element of communication can be defined as the use of time in nonverbal communication. In fact, most cultures follow a particular time pattern or even certain human groups in within that culture use a different time pattern. The time perceptions include punctuality, willingness to wait, and interactions in conversations.

Chronemics has identified two different patterns of behavior in cultures: polychronic and monochronic. The United States is considered a monochronic culture which means that things are generally done separately, as in “one thing at a time.” People value their own time and therefore, they value the times of others. These factors of punctuality and respect for the time are rooted in the industrial revolution where according to Guerrero, DeVito & Hecht "factory life required the labor force to be on hand and in place at an appointed hour".

⁴⁵ Moran, Patrick. (2001) *Teaching Culture. Perspectives in Practice*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, p243

On the other hand, Latin America and the Arabic world are polychronic cultures, where people do many things at once, and are highly distracted and subject to interruptions when a conversation takes place. This pragmatic component of chronemics is important for learners of English since it also includes interesting elements that vary according to the culture such as the pace of the conversation, also known as register, and even how long the people are willing to wait in a conversation.

Haptics: This is how touching conveys messages in nonverbal communication. Even though touching is part of all cultures, in some of them it can carry positive and negative denotations. A touching gesture can be perceived as positive in certain situations, but in others a person may get the opposite feeling when it is interpreted as insincere or suggesting ulterior motives.

For some cultures touching is highly determined by the age, sexual orientation, gender and rank of the individuals who intervene in the conversation. As a result, what is impolite for one culture is considered polite for the other.

Kinesics: This is the term used to describe body language. Kinesics includes movement of the hands, arms, head and other parts of the body.

Proxemics: This is the use of space between objects and between persons to convey meanings. For example, the distance between two people standing face to face conveys meaning. The closer the distance, generally speaking, the more intimate the message.

The above list, as mentioned, presents concrete behaviors that second language learners need to recognize and to employ effectively and appropriately. These behaviors are set within particular situations and social circumstances that also need to be understood, and Hymes' model helps analyze and explain these. To show how these pragmatic elements play out, let us examine the case of Bronislaw once again and my own case, this time providing more details.

Bronislaw Revisited. Bronislaw, comes from a rural area of his home country in Chirchiq city, where his cultural background required him to use basically two kinds of register, a very informal one, characterized by the use of *mbi* and a more

polite *esti* for older people and people in a higher rank in his context, since both are used as you in his L2. This choice of words is a clear example of how the context, the register and the participants influence Bronislav's utterance. His level of politeness in his L1 was affecting his conversation in the second language. As a matter of fact, when he arrived in the university, he was not aware of the use of this register until he talked to a senior professor in his school, and he found it remarkably uncomfortable to call her by her first name and not with a more polite use of pronouns. Like Bronislav, many Russian speakers encounter this informality of the language as something remarkably unusual and even arrogant. On the other hand, some English speakers consider these discourse markers of politeness unnecessary and even practically the same as flattering. This illustrates one pragmatic difference in the use of language that may hinder the communication of second language learners.

As we saw in the introduction, Bronislav most likely did use a correct and appropriate language (register) for his greeting "Hi, how are you?" We can assume that other linguistic elements were appropriate, such as volume (he did not speak too loudly or softly), pitch (his voice was not too high or too low). We can also assume that he did use paralinguistic elements appropriately, and avoided behaviors such as inappropriate laughter, whistling, throat clearing, and the like. We can also assume that his use of oculosic elements was appropriate, namely, that he maintained eye contact without staring, and that he avoided winking, or squinting. However, he used a type of body language (kinesics), a kiss on the cheek (haptics) that was very likely inappropriate for this context, creating a misunderstanding. This situation also shows the role of proxemics in that the distance between the two persons may have been too close. It also points to the nature of the relationship between the two, in this case one of professionals in a public setting. As this example illustrates, there are many behavioral elements that come into play if accurate and appropriate communication is to occur.

In regards to body language, the social and cultural differences between English and Spanish are as diverse as the social context where speakers of the

language will interact. Again, the components of proxemics and register are also determiners for the appropriate use of the language. A Spanish speaker who comes from a polychromic environment will use a sociopragmatic language determined on age and social status in order to determine the appropriate register.

On the other hand, English speakers who mostly come from a monochromic background determine the use of their language based on the level of intimacy and the context where they perform the utterance. In contrast, Spanish speakers determine this based on the rapport that the speaker establishes with the receiver of the utterance. These concepts of language use are in my opinion, the main factors of context that will determine the use of body language.

My Case. My own experiences also illustrate pragmatic elements. One example is my use of body language. This has changed in my use of English since I entered to university. As with Bronislaw, some of my inappropriate uses of body language made me feel awkward and out of place. As an example I noticed that men do not shake hands in the same way as they do in my native culture, where men shake hands and greet each other as many times as they see each other during the day. Unconsciously, I did the same ritual here until one of my colleagues let me know that it was not necessary to say “Hi” and greet people with a handshake whenever we met.

Kubo⁴⁶ explained this phenomenon as something that commonly happens in ordinary dialogues: “In ordinary dialogues, we usually find types of regulatory actions performed by the participants”. In this case, hand shaking is used as a regulatory action that may help the speaker to be sure that he has the attention of the receiver. Furthermore, Kubo stated that this body language also “specifies the relation between participants in a dialogue that reflects the success and the satisfaction of the dialogue” since the greeting in this case will determine the receiver’s refusal or acceptance of communication. In addition to these specific

⁴⁶ *Experiential learning. Experience as the source of learning and development.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall. Chap,2 , p312

pragmatic elements, second language learners need to understand the cultural and intercultural dimensions.

Intercultural Communication and Culture. Pragmatics, in simple terms, is about culture, communication, and in the case of second languages, about intercultural communication. In order for second language learners to acquire pragmatic competence, they need to acquire cultural understanding and communication skills.

According to Watzlawick, on Novinger⁴⁷ “We cannot not communicate. All behavior is communication, and we cannot not behave.” Every behavior or action can be considered communication, and each of our actions reflect our cultural background including our opinions towards gender, religion, sexual orientation, lifestyle, politics and even personal space.

Consider the following situation. Ruben is an international student from a Latin American country. He and his American friend Albert went grocery shopping at a local grocery store in the Midwest in the United States. Initially, he found the place remarkably similar to the ones in his hometown, so he felt confident in his language performance there. He and his friend were walking in one of the aisles and there were two people ahead who suddenly stopped and started reading the very complete labels in the bread section. Albert also stopped and made signs asking Ruben to do the same. Albert stared at the bread readers and silently they moved one step back so Albert and Ruben could move. They moved ahead while Albert apologized for the “inconvenience.” What happened here? Why was Ruben surprised? Why did they need to apologize? And how did the bread label readers understand the message without any words?

In this bread label-reading example, it is clear that the concept of personal space of Ruben and Albert are totally different. For Ruben, a public space is public because it is intended to be used by everyone; therefore language in this type of environment should be intended to claim the use of the space in a collectivistic

⁴⁷ Novinger, Tracy. (2001). *Intercultural Communication : A Practical Guide*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press. P67

way. Ruben's first reaction included a request for permission, expressed in an even intonation (that can be considered a transfer from his L1, Spanish), accompanied by a fast-paced walk between the couple and the bread shelves. In contrast, Albert's reaction included a complete ritual that had a gamut of body language items. He first stopped, stared at the couple, waited for a few seconds, then he walked past, and at the end he offered an apology.

Albert, Ruben and the bread-label-reading couple participated in a communication act that is common in Anglo-American culture, where the perception of personal space and how to interact in it is different from what Ruben was accustomed to. This is a clear example of the role of proxemics and context and how the paralinguistic element of interjection appears in active communication. The reaction of the couple of stepping back allowing Ruben and Albert to pass was an unconscious process that was done with automaticity, and therefore accepted with an apology. In my opinion, this apology offered by Albert denoted a confirmation and an act of appreciativeness towards the people who were respecting his space. The actions of Albert and Ruben provide examples of the use of pragmatics and intercultural communication. This relationship is based on the fact that in order to reach a point of communication between cultures the existence of a common language and proper behavioral actions become paramount.

With reference to language, Langacker in Sharifian⁴⁸ described language as “an essential instrument and component of culture, whose reflection in linguistic structure is pervasive and quite significant”. Language is a cultural element that allows its users to reflect different elements that define their identity, such as educational background, tradition, beliefs and even emotional states. As a matter of fact, the discourse or language that a person uses is shaped by the innate potentials and sociocultural experiences that the individuals may encounter throughout their lives. In other words, every person develops an idiosyncratic way of using

⁴⁸ Sharifian, Farzad (Editor). (2007). *Applied Cultural Linguistics : Implications for Second Language Learning and Intercultural Communication*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, p295

language in the culture. Paul Friedrich⁴⁹ referred to “this nexus of language and culture as linguaculture”.

As mentioned, the global spread of English makes it a language that allows different cultures to communicate and interact in a variety of settings. This interaction requires a welldeveloped concept of correctness and politeness amongst the speakers.

Cultural characteristics and features are common in every language. These features shape the way the language is spoken and determine the denotation and connotation of words, phrases, and even body language. Therefore, pragmatics becomes a very useful discipline that allows language educators to do a more specific error analysis regarding cultural differences in language.

To summarize, in this chapter I have defined pragmatics and described its many behavioral elements. These elements are essential to appropriate and accurate communication in a second language. It is important to remember that our culture teaches us our behavioral actions or habits since we were born, and therefore, most of our behavior is unconscious. As a result, human beings speak more than with just words; we also use body language and gestures to communicate ideas. As a language teacher I believe that it is essential to present the elements of the second language in general including the meaning of body language and the different components of pragmatics. The next chapter addresses how pragmatics can be learned.

3.2 Learning pragmatics

“We don’t learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience.”⁵⁰
Here, Dewey makes a simple but powerful point: experience is not the source of learning, but rather it is reflection on this experience. Dewey’s emphasis on

⁴⁹ Friedrich, P. (1989) *Language, ideology and political economy*. American Anthropologist 91. p.295– 312.

⁵⁰ Dewey, J. (1998). *Experience and Education*. The 60th Anniversary Edition. Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education. USA. p.13

reflecting on one's experience is critical to my study of pragmatics, in the form of the Experiential Learning Cycle, a model that David Kolb⁵¹ derived from Dewey's concepts. In this chapter I begin by presenting Kolb's experiential learning cycle as a framework. I describe three examples of my own experience learning the pragmatics of a second language and culture, English in the U.S. and I show the stages of the cycle: description, analysis and an action plan to learn the target pragmatic components.

My approach to learning pragmatics draws upon theories of experiential learning. In my study of pragmatics as a discipline, my personal experiences as a learner and user of English in practice have been essential. Almost on a daily basis during my recent stay in this university, I have been interacting and communicating in English with native and non-native speakers. Needless to say, I have been part of many communication breakdowns and misunderstandings. These experiences pushed me to look more closely at the causes of these breakdowns in order to understand and to remedy them. In short, I set out to develop my pragmatic competence.

One of the theories that helped me the most is the Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC) developed by David Kolb. This model was a key component of the MAT Program at SIT, reflected in the design and implementation of the curriculum as a whole, as well as of individual courses. As the academic year progressed, I became more familiar with this model as used in courses, and I began to apply it on my own outside the courses. In particular, I came to realize that my strategies for acquiring pragmatic competence mirrored the stages of the ELC. Moreover, when I researched and wrote this paper, I also realized that this model supported my notions of learning and teaching pragmatics. Let me explain how the ELC functions.

Kolb developed this model based on the work of other practitioners and theorists who viewed experience at the core of learning. Actually, this model

⁵¹ Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning. Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, p272

receives its name because it emphasizes the important role that experience play in learning. Bearing this in mind, Kolb divided the learning process into four different stages:

- 1) concrete experience, which is where learners encounter and engage an immediate personal experience in different levels. Here, learners need to show willingness to be involved in the experience;
- 2) reflective observation, where learners reflect on the new experience;
- 3) abstract conceptualization, where learners make concepts of the experience (Kolb emphasizes that in this stage, learners need to use analytical skills to make concepts of the experience);
- 4) active experimentation, where learners use the new ideas gained from learning. During this stage learners need to become decision makers in order to use the new ideas with an action plan.

The ELC presents a coherent view of the learning process. However, there are challenges in it that may lead learners to what Dewey identified as “mis-educative experiences” where learning does not occur. An example of this could be a student who attends an ESL grammar class where the content is “modals” but the experiential learning is “I hate grammar.” The learner should be more likely to have a different result like “Modals are complicated.” In the previous example, generalizations and meanings might be misapplied and therefore, cause a mis-educative experience. The participation of an individual in the learning process involves many different aspects of his or her life: the whole person, thoughts, physical activity, and personalities. When teaching pragmatics to ESL/EFL students, it is necessary to achieve the recognition of this “whole person.” By recognition I mean a complete identification, both internal and external.

This holistic approach towards learning is well explained in the experiential learning process, a model used effectively at the SIT Graduate Institute, giving freedom to the spirit of learning. The experiential learning process is defined by

Beard⁵² as “the sense-making process of active engagement between the inner world of the person and the outer world of the environment”.

To me, experiential learning is best seen as a process where action and thought must be linked. This link helps me anticipate the relationship that might exist between a learner’s actions and that learner’s actual thoughts. What I mean by this connection is that there must be a relationship between practice and theory, and that learners do possess both theories and practices.

To take full advantage of experiential learning, learners need to know how to reflect on their experiences. I believe that to develop this reflection skill, it is important to make students aware of the importance of describing their experiences and their learning opportunities. After this is done, it is significant for the learners to recognize the different elements of pragmatics so they will be able to take advantage of the learning opportunity.

Reflection on Experiences of Miscommunication. Let me now describe how I went through the stages of the experiential learning process in order to achieve pragmatic competence. During my academic time in our university, journaling about my language experiences became my primary learning strategy. I focused on my own behavior and feelings and most importantly on my colleagues and teachers behavior towards language. In this stage I described and identified my challenges in the appropriate use of pragmatic elements. Then, I analyzed this description coming up with interpretations and theories to explain what happened. After that, I used these explanations to create action plans that guided me as I entered future experiences. I aligned my beliefs with my practice, creating my performance. And finally I went back to the beginning of the cycle to address new challenges.

In addition to this overall application of the ELC, I pointedly included these strategies: knowledge of pragmatics and pragmatic elements, and comparison and contrast between university culture and my culture of origin.

⁵² Beard, Colin. (2006). *Experiential Learning : A Handbook of Best Practice for Educators and Trainers*. London: Kogan Page, Limited, p190

The comparison and contrast between cultures was in fact the principal source of the miscommunications I experienced. Almost always, I either misunderstood a communication or used inappropriate pragmatic elements based on expectations and norms from my own culture. Once I recognized that cultural differences were such an important factor, I was able to not only recognize these differences but also to explain them in cultural terms. This increased my ability to anticipate possible miscommunications and to predict situations where I would probably need to employ different pragmatic elements.

My knowledge of pragmatics and pragmatic elements helped me interpret the difficulties in communication that I experienced. I learned the terminology that sociolinguists and others use to label the components of communication acts and situations, and I began to apply these concepts to my own experiences. These concepts helped me become more precise in my observations and interpretations, because I was aware of what happens in communication situations. To illustrate this process of using the experiential learning cycle to learn pragmatics, I recount three instances from my personal experience.

Learning Appropriate Forms of Address. Description: In my classes I noticed that most of my colleagues called our professors by their first names. In contrast, I was still calling them with their last names and a more polite salutation (Dr., Mr., and Mrs.). I noticed that some professors asked me to call them by their first names, not using a title or last name.

I encountered this address experience when I attended a group dynamics class in graduate school. I called the professor “Mr.Mansur.” He replied, clarifying that he and the rest of the professors in the program omit the use of that specific word choice in salutation (title-last name) and they use the first name instead. I reacted with feelings of astonishment and discomfort, because I thought that I was not using the correct level of politeness for that specific academic environment.

Analysis: This use of language is considerably different from my native language where professors are called with their last names and the last degree they have gotten: “Professor Svoboykina” vs. “Alexandra”

It is clear that the pragmatic components of the type of register and word choices (vocabulary) were challenging my performance here. With that in mind I decided that was important to develop a strategy in order to address the issues with the right selection of register according to the context, in this case the SIT community.

Plan of Action: I decided that I needed to gather more information about forms of address. So when I returned to my classes, I took notes on what my teachers and my colleagues said. In my notes, I described the forms of address that were used, and I also wrote down tentative explanations or interpretations as to why certain forms were or were not used.

I began interpreting how my teacher talked and how my colleagues talked seeing the differences and how that affects my communication. For example, one of my colleagues addressed the teachers with her first name but with a respectful tone of voice (not too loud nor not too low). Another colleague used the professor's name but was careful to make eye contact and also to use a modulated tone of voice. I noticed that the academic context in which classes took place was very relaxed and informal, resulting in an omission of titles in order to keep the students' affective filters low. This interpretation was conducive to a new learning that helped me to understand the system of greetings in my new setting. From this experience I could say that I went through description, analysis, action plan, and then I went back to the experience stage to start the ELC again.

Every day after class, I wrote all the details about the differences between using titles in my first culture and the culture in the classroom. After that, I analyzed why the new ways of addressing were accepted as part of the mainstream. For example, I noticed that the elements of age and educational level did not change the way people addressed professors, something that is different from a Spanish speaking culture, where the word choice and register might determine the way people address others.

Plan of Action: I made a list of concrete steps that would help me to achieve competence in the correct pragmatic use. I decided to work on my register issues

and word choice issues. To do so, I proposed for myself a series of strategies and deadlines to fulfill them. Here is what I wrote to myself:

Write down the situations when I felt uncomfortable (arriving to the classroom in the mornings, good morning “Mrs.Slovoykina...” vs. “Hi Ekatorina”). Try to imagine that the teachers were friends and not teachers. Start addressing teachers as if they were friends and not teachers by using their first names.

Learning to Use Commands Appropriately. Description: When I participated in conversations in English with teachers and other colleagues in graduate school, I noticed that the use of commanding modals in my utterance made me sound more authoritative during class versus the most acceptable and polite form used by most of my colleagues and teachers:

“*You have to...*” vs. “*It is a good idea to...*”

“*You must...*” vs. “*I would like you to...*”

As an example, during a Language Analysis and Lesson Planning class, I asked the teacher for some clarification in the directions for an assignment. In response, he stated his answer using “It is a good idea to...” This made me feel insecure about his explanation, so I questioned him again “Are you sure?” I realized that he was certain and that I was not receiving the message properly because I did not feel that the use of the modal phrase carried the degree of certainty that I needed.

Analysis: In my native language the use of direct commands makes a receiver of the action feel more secure of what he or she is doing and not that is been commanded in an authoritative way. On the other hand, using phrasal modals instead of commands makes the receiver of the message feel more insecure of what is commanded. This is an example of how vocabulary and tone were challenging my pragmatic performance, since I felt insecure in the directions given by the teacher.

Action Plan: I began interpreting how my teacher and colleagues stated their requests and gave instructions. For example, my colleagues posed questions using

“I was wondering if...” in order to really make his points of view clear and teachers asked us to do things with “I would like you to...” because they wanted to respect our individuality as learners. I decided to make changes in my speaking, to sound more polite and academically appropriate. This interpretation was conducive to a new learning of how commands might be used appropriately in English. From this experience I could say that I went through description, analysis, action plan, and then back to the experience stage.

In order to achieve pragmatic competence in this specific area, I proposed myself a series of strategies. Write down the most common expressions and when they were used:

- During class time: “I would like you to..., what I want you to do...”
- In a conversation with colleagues: “I was wondering if you could...”

Write when I did not use them and what I was saying instead:

- During class time: “You have to...” instead of “I would like you to...”
- In a conversation with colleagues: “you must...” instead of “you might need to...”

Remind myself that instead of my expressions I should use the teachers’ words. I achieved pragmatic competence using a mnemonic device. I remembered the face of a person that means a symbol of respect in my first culture (my mother), and the way I should be treating her. The result was successful and helped me to test the concepts in a real situation.

Learning to Take Turns Appropriately in Conversation. Description: When I interacted in conversations with some colleagues and teachers, I noticed that I interrupted while they were talking. For instance, I encountered this experience when I was doing group work with some colleagues and we intended to prepare a presentation. Initially, I talked and I notice that they were silent listening attentively to my opinion until I finished. When it was my colleagues turn I interrupted them with phrases like: “Aha,” “Yeah,” “That is correct.” I noticed that they looked at me and they stopped talking every time I jumped in the conversation. Afterward, I felt uncomfortable because I was perceived as rude.

Analysis: Conversation in a Spanish speaking setting is generally based in a polychromic pattern. By polychromic I mean that participants in the conversation generally speak at the same time, overlapping each other's speech and not taking turns in an obvious way. On the contrary, in a formal academic setting in the U.S. most of the conversation is performed with a monochromic pattern, that is to say, one person at a time. In the example above, I was using the verbal fillers: "Aha," "Yeah," "That is correct." not with the purpose of interrupting speakers, but to demonstrate acceptance of the message and as a demonstration of empathy, since this is culturally appropriate in my first culture. With this new experience in mind, I decided to develop strategies to address the issues of chronemic patterns used in my conversation.

Plan of Action: As a first strategy, I paid attention to the dialogues between my teachers and my colleagues. I noticed that the pace and the rhythm of the conversation in English chronemics worked with a specific pattern, which is basically one person at a time. Then, I asked a colleague what difference he saw between my chronemics and his. He suggested that I needed to wait until the person would be done with his or her comments in order to start with mine, because I jumped in the conversation before other speaker was finished.

After I collected this piece of information, I decided to take these measures in order to work on adapting my performance to a monochronic chronemics pattern: I wrote every day about my observations with all the details of how teachers and colleagues take turns to talk (A stops and then B begins). I saw the way they stopped and listened to the speaker attentively. This helped me to develop more awareness of my listening skills.

I waited 10 seconds after each person finished talking in order to start my utterance. This also helped me to prepare a more coherent utterance in my mind. I pinched my thumb and forefingers to remind me that I needed to wait in order to start producing my utterance. This strategy represents a successful tool to remind me about my experience, because it makes me stop before I interrupt. I apologized for interrupting people.

This experience was beneficial to my new learning, because I was able to go through the four stages of the ELC, eventually mastering the system of taking turns in a monochromic conversational setting.

To summarize, in order to achieve pragmatic competence it is important to be able to identify real learning opportunities, where learners describe what happens and analyze why in order to propose action plans with strategies leading to pragmatic competence. It is also essential that these action plans lead to achievable goals. In each of the cases described in this chapter, the pragmatic challenge was addressed with short steps that allowed seeing fast and effective results.

Working on adapting pragmatic elements such as chronemics, word choice and register to my new culture helped me to understand that learning pragmatics does not stop, since learning never stops. However, the learning process in this specific area and many others can be taken to a point, but it must continue until the learners' goals are achieved. The next chapter addresses teaching pragmatics.

3.3 Teaching pragmatics

This chapter addresses the teaching of pragmatics. First, I present a model for a coherent lesson plan, the NAPKIN model, conceived during my internship at our first philology. Second, I explain how pragmatic elements can be included in this model. The chapter continues with the application of this model to a lesson based on a U.S. television show. Finally, I mention considerations, explanations and comments regarding the use of NAPKIN model in this lesson.

Teaching Pragmatics. The previous chapter explored a series of examples of how to address a pragmatic challenge from the learner's perspective in order to gain pragmatic competence in a specific area. In each of the examples the experiential learning cycle was used with positive results. In these examples there were two elements that made the learning of pragmatics successful. First, the learner was aware of the need to learn the right behavior (comparing a pragmatic

component in her second culture with one in her native culture); and second, the learner reflected and created a strategy to address the issue.

In my personal approach to teaching pragmatics, I integrate these elements of awareness and reflection in the lesson design model. It is my hope that this framework provides teachers with a coherent way to integrate pragmatic elements in a lesson.

According to Eslami-Rasekh, “The responsibility of teaching the pragmatic aspect of the language use falls on teachers”. This is indeed the case, however, many teachers struggle finding an effective way to create or raise awareness of pragmatic competence in their learners. To help teachers, Bardovi-Harlig⁵³ proposes four basic steps to incorporate pragmatics into the curriculum. These steps are:

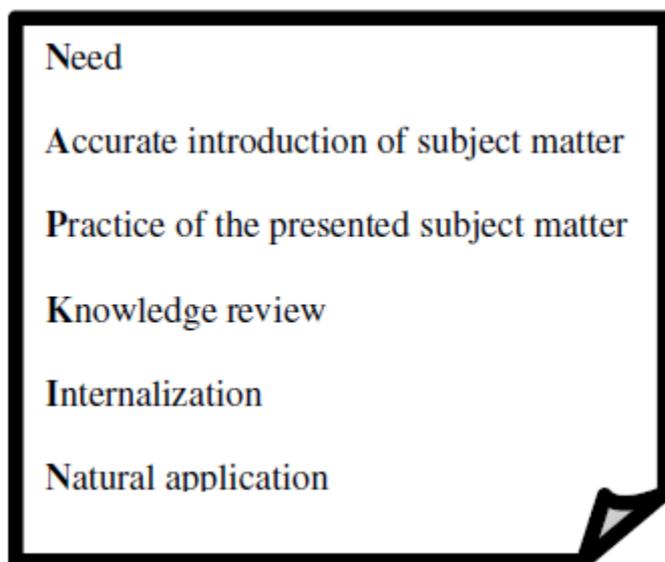
- 1) identification of the speech act
- 2) data collection and description (journals, prediction charts, etc).
- 3) evaluation of texts and materials (critiquing dialogues, and group discussions).
- 4) development of new materials.

The teacher presents the theory and asks students to make predictions based on this theory with the help of a handout or a graphic organizer. After that the results of the students’ observations are evaluated and discussed and finally there is a time for active practice and use of the language with the appropriate pragmatic elements. These procedures are similar to those in the NAPKIN model in that students need to reflect on their experiences or on speech acts and identify the central pragmatic elements, but does not place the same degree of emphasis on practicing these elements.

The NAPKIN Model. As an English language learner who teaches English, I am interested in the integration of pragmatic components in the use of the language. This combination makes the learners active seekers of the treasure of learning. In order to create a scenario where learning may take place, I have come

⁵³ Shemanski, Lori Ann. *Implementing English: Pragmatics and EFL Curricula*. SIT Graduate Institute. 2000, p212

up with a model that allows learners to identify the situations and determine the most suitable way to present and process the subject matter. I call this model “NAPKIN,” named after the first piece of paper at a coffee shop where this framework was originally conceived.



It is my hope that this framework provides teachers with a coherent way to integrate pragmatic elements in a lesson. Each of the steps in the NAPKIN model develops one stage in the learning process. In order to explain the model, let us go back to our friend from the introduction, Bronislav. Remember that Bronislav performed a speech act with correct word choice but without certain pragmatic elements necessary to make it appropriate in the target culture.

Need: The lesson begins with a definition of a need. This need must be based on the students, namely, the description of a situation where students use the language but with a lack of pragmatic competence. In other words, students experience a communication breakdown or a misunderstanding when interacting in a second language with persons of another culture. In the case of Bronislav, for example, the need is based on the lack of pragmatic competence in the use of proxemics, haptics, and kinesics that he encountered in a new setting. To identify these pragmatic elements, the teacher needs to present the misunderstanding to the students and ask them to analyze what happened. The teacher has to raise or create

awareness so the students will be able to make comparisons and reflect on the pragmatic elements, identify a specific pragmatic element, by comparing their culture and the target culture. This comparison is essential, since the source of inappropriate use of pragmatic elements comes from students applying norms and behaviors appropriate for their own cultures. Because the pragmatic dimension is not always obvious, it can be helpful for students to keep a language and culture learning journal where they record their communication difficulties and also attempt to explain why these took place.

Accurate Introduction of Subject Matter: This stage features accurate introduction of the subject matter. This consists of a clear presentation of the speech act along with an analysis of the pragmatic dimensions. As a general rule, this presentation should be done using simple, straightforward terms, avoiding jargon. To do so, I propose to present needs (communicative and pragmatic) utilizing a supportive language known by the learner. The goal is for students to see that successful and appropriate communication depends on the appropriate use of pragmatic elements.

To help with this presentation, it is important to present the speech act with a piece of realia that represents the situation. In her work on pragmatics Shemanski⁵⁴, portrays the importance of authentic data in this realia “not only in the sense of authentic context, but also in terms of authentic language usage”. Some examples of valid realia would be a podcast or a video showing greetings in a U.S. context. In simple terms, the speech act needs to be grounded in a communicative situation so that the relevance of the pragmatic elements is made clear.

In addition, this presentation should be done with a theme familiar to the participants. By theme, I mean an idea or topic that involves a scene or scenario where the target language is presented. The choice of this theme is crucial to the success of the lesson since it has to catch the attention of the students. Factors such

⁵⁴ Shemanski, Lori Ann. *Implementing English: Pragmatics and EFL Curricula*. SIT Graduate Institute. 2000, p142

as age, cultural background, and language proficiency will be taken as references in order to make this decision. An example of a theme that could be used for Bronislav's situation is "Getting to know Shakira and Jennifer Anniston." This theme is familiar, common to the student's background, age and culture. It also helps the teacher to establish the difference in greetings between both cultures and the pragmatic elements that are involved. This is also the stage where teachers need to make sure that students understand the pragmatic elements in question. For example, in Bronislav's case, these elements include proxemics, haptics, context, and kinesics. It is critical to contrast the target pragmatic behaviors with those that students might use in their own cultures for similar situations. Such comparisons will inevitably bring up culture, which should be discussed and explored.

At the end of this second stage, the teacher will have identified the communicative/pragmatic needs of students and accurately introduced the subject matter with an attractive theme. At this point in the process, students understand the pragmatic dimensions of the communication and they have seen it portrayed through a theme.

Practice: At this stage, the focus turns to practice. Students engage in a variety of activities with the goal of incorporating the target pragmatic elements and building fluency in their use. Some activities in this stage would include pair work in short dialogues or conversations. Conversations in pairs are especially effective since they represent specific cultural situations. All activities include the pragmatic components.

During this practice time, I recommend not correcting students' errors. Students need a chance to make mistakes without the distraction of corrections. Instead, the teacher takes notes on errors and presents them in a later session. Students then take these errors into account in the next stage. In Bronislav's case, students would be practicing appropriate touching behaviors, gestures, and maintaining appropriate distance.

Knowledge Review: In the third stage students review what they practiced in the previous stage. This is a good time for correction and also for highlighting the

pragmatic items in the speech act. Role plays and skits in pairs including the pragmatic components are suggested activities in this stage. When working with only one student, the teacher may help with the skit performance as well.

The only difference between this stage and the previous stage is that students actively and precisely restate or clarify their understanding of the pragmatic dimension and also demonstrate appropriate use of the pragmatic elements.

Internalization: In this stage, the students are already aware of the pragmatic and communicative difference. They know the meaning and the form with accuracy; therefore it is time for them to participate in free use of the communicative element and the pragmatic element, and in so doing, demonstrate their performance. The difference between this stage and the previous is that in this the students interact with the rest of the group, while the teacher takes notes of the language development of the students.

Natural Application: In the last stage of the model, students use the pragmatic elements and apply them appropriately in a specific setting. This is a task that students carry out in the culture itself or in a relevant situation outside the classroom, and they write about it in their journals. Ideally, they do this task and report back afterwards, describing the situation, the required pragmatic elements, and what happened. They should be able to do this because the lesson was based on their needs, the teacher used class time to blend both competences communicative and pragmatic, and finally because they are now aware. As a consequence, students are able to recognize the different language elements that surround this specific speech act, giving them an intrinsic motivation for successful communication. In Bronislav's case he could go back to some female friends and greet them in a more appropriate way.

The NAPKIN model thus provides an effective means of presenting, analyzing, and practicing the pragmatic elements needed for appropriate communication in the target language. Let us now turn to another example of teaching pragmatics using scenes from a television program.

Teaching Pragmatics through Television Programs. In the following section, I illustrate how pragmatic elements and pragmatic competence can be addressed in a language lesson. The lesson is adapted from a plan developed by a colleague, Kevin Cross⁵⁵. I first present the essential steps in the lesson, and then I go into detail to show how the NAPKIN framework can be applied and how other activities can be included to help second language learners learn pragmatics. The lesson is based on the U.S. television comedy series, *The Office*.

Plot summary of the show. The show takes place in a paper supply company in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The protagonist is the supervisor Michael Scott, an impolite and insensitive boss who tries to push his own opinions as company policy. He is married to Jan, a very jealous, and opinionated entrepreneur who works from home. The story revolves around the lives of workers at the company. They include a bored but talented salesman, Jim, who is dating the self-righteous receptionist Pam; Jim's sociopathic, sycophantic enemy Dwight; Andy another sycophantic salesman, who boasts about his education in a very prestigious U.S. university, and finally, Andy's wife Angela. The lesson is based on the episode called "Dinner Party" from season four of the show⁵⁶. In this episode, Michael and Jan (the boss and his wife) have invited Jim and Pam (the salesman and the receptionist) for dinner. Things get complicated because Jim and Pam do not want to go to dinner with the other couple, but they cannot refuse the invitation due to hierarchical issues in the company (Michael is their boss). Everything gets even more complex when Michael invites Andy and Angela (the second salesman and his wife) to come to the same dinner. In another twist, Dwight becomes jealous and goes to the dinner party even though he was not invited.

This program shows a number of strategies that characters employ to attempt to refuse the dinner invitation. Because this program is a comedy show, there are many examples of inappropriate use of pragmatic elements, which makes it

⁵⁵ Cross, Kevin. (2009). *Speaking Fluency Through Culture*. Unpublished paper. SIT Graduate Institute. Brattleboro, VT, p80

⁵⁶ For more information, please visit hulu.com

particularly useful for a lesson on pragmatics. In the pages below, I give a synopsis of the steps in Kevin's lesson and follow this with my own commentary with the intention of showing how this lesson incorporates aspects of the NAPKIN model, or can be supplemented with these aspects. For the sake of clarity, I number the steps in Kevin's lesson, and I use the same numbers to signal my corresponding commentary.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the application of different teaching and learning activities is to help students become more effective, fluent and successive communicators in the target language. As Harlow⁵⁷ states, “. . . most importantly, both teachers and textbooks alike need to emphasize to the learner that language is composed of not just linguistic and lexical elements; rather, language reflects also the social context, taking into account situational and social factors in the act of communication.” “We don't learn from experience. We learn from reflecting on experience.”⁵⁸ Dewey makes a simple but powerful point: experience is not the source of learning, but rather it is reflection on this experience.

Moreover, the study of different communicative patterns not only to help students to be the active participants in the classroom but also encourage them to think critically and creatively in foreign language. In sum, language learning is a socio-cultural process which requires the application of linguistic rules in a variety of contexts, audiences and purposes. The development of the pragmatic competence with all its aspects, help the language learners to broaden their education and shape their world views. If the language learner does not achieve most of these goals through the language learning process, the result will absolutely be a 'pragmatic failure'! To say, it is the misunderstanding or the lack of

⁵⁷ Harlow, L. Linda. 1990. *Do They Mean What They Say? Sociopragmatic Competence and Second Language Learners*. The Modern Language Journal p74.

⁵⁸ *Acquisition in Interlanguage Pragmatics. Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company p13

the ability to understand the message uttered by the speaker. As White⁵⁹ in his article mentioned, ". . . although an utterance is grammatically well formed it may be functionally confusing or contextually inappropriate." Therefore, the message conveyed by the speaker can be grammatically accurate, but because of the contextual factors the message might sound inappropriate. The reason of this inappropriacy can result from social factors (traditions, customs, values), the lack of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, cultural differentiations, lack of critical and creative thinking, etc.. Therefore, it should be borne in mind that the development of the pragmatic competence in language learning and teaching today is very indispensable, because pragmatic competence not only shapes the world view of the individual through language but also provides teachers the opportunity to better understand their students by keeping in mind the necessary interactional, psychological, social and cultural factors in language teaching pedagogy.

In conversation, much is presupposed, or taken for granted. The linguistic and philosophical theories which will be discussed in this chapter vary in the extent to which they involve definitions of presupposition which are close to this informal use of the word, and there is no single technical definition of presupposition which will satisfy all theorists. A particular point of dispute has been whether presupposition is best thought of as a semantic or a pragmatic notion, or whether indeed such notions must coexist. In a semantic theory presupposition is usually defined as a binary relation between pairs of sentences of a language. What makes this relation semantical is that it is defined or explicated in terms of the semantic valuation of the sentences, or in terms of a semantic notion of entailment. Thus a definition in terms of semantic valuation might, following Strawson, say that one sentence (semantically) presupposes another if the truth of the second is a condition for the semantic value of the first to be true or false. In pragmatic theories the analysis of presupposition involves the attitudes and knowledge of language users. In extreme cases such as Stalnaker's account,

⁵⁹ White, Ron. 1993. "Saying Please: Pragmalinguistic Failure in English Interaction." *ELT Journal* p47/3.

presupposition is defined without any reference to linguistic form: Stalnaker talks not of the presuppositions of a sentence, but of the speaker's presuppositions, these being just those propositions which are taken for granted by a speaker on a given occasion. Other pragmatic theories are less radical, in that linguistic form still plays an essential role in the theory. The majority of well-developed pragmatic theories concern the presuppositions not of a sentence (as in semantic theories) or of a speaker but of an utterance.

Types of presupposition are based mostly on the functions of linguistic items which trigger presuppositions. For instance, factive presuppositions arise because of the use of factive verbs, whereas, structural presuppositions are associated with peculiar sentence constructions. they can be existential, actual, factive, lexical, structural and etc. There are certain properties of presupposition such as defeasibility, behavior under negation and so on. These properties are important because they serve as tests for presuppositions to differentiate them from other inferences like conversational implicature and entailment. The properties explained below are basically related to peculiar survival or cancellation of presupposition in the specific contextual environment.

The major problem in teaching pragmatics is the sheer number of speech acts, as Williams investigates. He explains that the large number of language functions and speech acts makes the teaching of a particular speech act an unattainable goal and instead suggests that 'the focus should ... be ... on using language in ongoing discourse, As Bardovi Harlig⁶⁰ mentions the real responsibility of the classroom teacher is making students more aware about existing pragmatic functions in language, especially in discourse. The teachers should know about these speech acts and their elements to use the natural input for the students in a particular content, for a particular purpose, and as part of a strategy'. According to Brock⁶¹ for classroom instruction to pragmatic competence

⁶⁰ Bardovi-Harlig, K., Hartford, B. A. S., Mahan-Taylor, R., Morgan, M. J., & Reynolds, D. W. (1991). Developing pragmatic awareness: Closing the conversation. *ELT Journal*, 45(1), p4-15.

⁶¹ Brock, M. N. (2005). Teaching Pragmatics in the EFL Classroom? Sure You Can!. *TESOL Reporter*, 38(1), p17-26.

the teachers should consider the simple acronym S.U.R.E.to guide them as they help their students *See, Use, Review, and Experience* pragmatics in the EFL classroom.

The teachers should improve the learners' understanding of the frames of the interaction and rules of politeness within the target culture. It is also the teachers' responsibility of providing learners with the necessary tools of appropriate pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic decisions in the target language. According to Hymes⁶², "The key to understanding language in context is to start not with language, but with context".

Lack of pragmatic knowledge might cause the learners to be unsuccessful in their communication and, thus, may result in breakdown in the interpersonal relationship between the speakers and listeners. According to Byram⁶³, to successfully master English language in international communication, the people need to have intercultural communicative competence in addition to communicative competence as a successful non-native speaker. Besides emphasizing on only grammar aspects, teachers must encourage language learners to pay more attention to how to use language appropriately in different contexts and avoid making pragmatic mistakes to breakdown the communication. To help learners avoid making pragmatic mistake, it is necessary to teach them the sociocultural rules of the English. Pragmatic knowledge of a language is better acquired by exposing the learners to natural environment and authentic materials. In the case of EFL, students are deprived of such conditions; moreover, these conditions cannot be completely provided for in the classrooms, so students may need special training in this aspect. Foreign language learners should be taught to recognize the situations and circumstances in which different kinds of language are appropriate, and should be given enough practice in using the proper linguistic forms according to those contexts.

⁶² Hymes, D., (1972). *Foundations in sociolinguistics*. Philadelphia: university of Pennsylvania Press.*in a study abroad context*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins.bridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁶³ Byram, M., & Morgan, C. (1994). *Teaching and learning language and culture*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual atters. P119

Another conclusion is that presuppositions are not homogeneous. The presuppositions induced by the triggers studied here all varied in the frequency with which they were used with the different types of resolution. Most lexical and structural triggers generally share the logical characteristics that are associated with presuppositions and recognized by all theories. But the tendency with which the triggered information to be used by speakers with a certain resolution differs according to the particular trigger type. This empirical result supports many of the theoretical ideas regarding the heterogeneity of presupposition triggers discussed in the work of Henk Zeevat⁶⁴.

It is not clear what lies at the root of the tendency to be bound, accommodated, or to be used with hearer-new or hearer-old information. We offered several explanations in the earlier chapters, but We shall summarize them here. The function that the presuppositional expression of a particular trigger can have in discourse is one of the main factors affecting the type of resolution with which presupposed information will tend to be used. This function is in turn intimately connected to the semantic type of the triggered presupposition. Semantic objects of different types have different inherent qualities that affect when and how we refer to these objects in discourse. These effects then carry over to presupposed information depending on its type. If we can identify the characteristics of different types of semantic objects, and how they can be referred to and used linguistically, We I think we will be able to see the effect that these characteristics have on the way we refer to these objects in discourse. This can then give us an explanation for the different tendencies we see in presupposition usage.

⁶⁴ Zeevat, H. (1994), 'A Speculation on Certain Presupposition Triggers', in P. Bosch & Rob van der Sandt (eds.), *Focus & Natural Language Processing*. IBM Working Papers of the Institute for Logic and Linguistics, Heidelberg, p669–676.

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