

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To support the analysis, this chapter reviews several theories related to this research. Those are pragmatics, the role of pragmatics in the resolution of context, the types of context which consist of four kinds and text and related studies to support the analysis.

2.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatic is the study of relations between context and language in the structure of language. According to author “*Pragmatic interpretations are relative to a context, viz. the pragmatic context*”. Such a context is an abstraction of the cognitive and social context in which the utterance is used. Hence, pragmatics does not for details of our positions and for further references we refer to Van Dijk (1977, 1996). Leech (in Wirotinoyo 2009:8) states that Pragmatic is study about meaning and has connection with utterance. Moreover Levinson (1985:9) states that Pragmatics is the study of those relations between language and context that are grammatical zed, or encoded in the structure of a language. In other words, pragmatic is study of relation between language and context that are basic to understand the language. By those perceptions about pragmatic, thus I can conclude that pragmatic focuses on the language and context itself or emphasize to how the utilizing of language in communication.

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Contexts defined as participant definitions, that is, as mental constructs, are able to function as the interface between situational and societal structures and discourse structures, because they subjectively 'represent' relevant aspects of situations and society and directly interfere in the mental processes of discourse production and comprehension. If contexts control discourse at all, this is only possible when we conceive of them as cognitive structures of some kind. And only in this way are we able to define the crucial criterion of 'relevance', that is, in terms of a selective focus on, and subjective interpretation of some social constraint as defined by the participants.

[illegible]

So far have formulated some ideas on the nature of contexts and some observations on the contextual properties of a political speech. Obviously, this is not yet a theory. In the same way we formulate explicit grammars on the verbal structures of text or talk, or explicit conversation theories on their interactional characteristics, we also need a more explicit theory of contexts as mental constructs. In linguistics, discourse analysis and conversation analysis, we often leave such notions undefined, or treat them as theoretical primitives.

Before language users are able to match incoming information against the more general linguistic and other knowledge in memory, they must analyse the context with respect to which a certain speech act is performed. One of the methodological principles which should be kept in mind is that the notion of context is both a theoretical and a cognitive abstraction, viz. from the actual physical-biological-etc. situation. That is, a great number of features of the situation are not relevant for the correct comprehension of the illocutionary force of utterances. It will seldom be the case that, whether my speech participant has

Context analysis as a component in speech act comprehension also involves self-analysis of the hearer. In order to understand that the particular speech act is appropriate to him, he must be aware of his own (previous) activities and the underlying knowledge, wishes, attitudes and emotions. Thus if in a particular context somebody offers me help, I must be aware of the fact that I am acting such that such an offer makes sense, and that the offer pertains to a goal which is probably (partly) identical with my own goal. More specifically, the speaker not only has information about the world or the social structure in particular, but also about me, as the participant in communication. The hearer, thus, will have to compare what the speaker apparently assumes about the hearer, with his own self-knowledge. (*Context and Cognition: Knowledge Frames and Speech Act Comprehension*, Pages 217)

In order to illustrate informally our levels and categories operating in pragmatic context analysis of language users, we will give two examples of speech acts and a characterization of a context in which they are appropriate. The examples will be taken from both an institutional and a private kind of context. First, consider the following utterance:

Although there is set of possible contexts with respect to which this utterance, taken as a request, may be appropriate, only one example will be given, viz. that of ticket inspection on trains, or means of public transport in general:

Institution: Public Transport

Frame: Ticket Inspection

a. Setting: train (during operation)

b. Functions: F(x): official ticket-inspector

G(y): passenger

c. Properties: x has visible signs of being inspector of the (railroad)

Company; and/or x can identify himself as being an

Inspector of the (railroad) company; x actually performs his task of ticket inspection; y is the obvious ticket-holder (e.g. not a child travelling with his parent)

d. Relations: $F(x)$ has authority over $G(y)$;

e. Positions: (see functions): y is checked by x

x is checking y

B. Frame conventions (rules, norms, etc.)

1. Each passenger must have a valid ticket when on means of public transport;
2. Each passenger must show his ticket upon request to officials of the railroad company;
3. A passenger which is not in the possession of a valid ticket will be fined \$25.00. *n.* It belongs to the duties of ticket-inspectors to inspect tickets. (*Van Dijk, Context And Cognition: Knowledge Frames And Speech Act Comprehension, Pages 221*)

It is roughly in this kind of context that an utterance as may successfully be performed as an acceptable *request*. That is, the hearer will not only conclude from the form of the utterance itself (see below) that it is a request, but also that the request satisfies the specific request conditions as well as the *grounds* for these conditions, as defined by the social structure. Only those hearers who have the information available about the context as specified will be able to judge

2. As a second example we take a speech act from an informal private context:

Performed in a situation in which the speaker (x) takes the hearer (y) from the train, thereby *making an offer* to carry the hearer's luggage. Clearly, such an offer would be appropriate in many kinds of contexts, because there are no institutional restrictions on the interaction as in the first example:

Frame: Meet somebody (at arrival)

a. *Setting:* Railway station. Platform.

- ### B. Frame Conventions

- Contextual course of action:*

Previous acts:

- y prepared for arrival
- y got out of train
- y looked for x
- y walked to x

The categories used above are not definitive, and require further definition. Especially the difference between the *function* and the *position* categories are not always clearcut. By a function we understand a more or less fixed, often institutionalized, set of properties/ relations, e.g. professions, e.g. judge, ticket-inspector, etc. but also host, guest, etc. Positions on the other hand more specifically define the kind of relation operating in the frame, between the participants, i.e. they define their actual role in interaction: I may help, advise, prohibit, etc.