

lecture 1

both semantics and pragmatics are concerned with people's ability to use language meaningfully .

While semantics is mainly concerned with speakers competence to use the language system, the chief focus of pragmatics is a person's Ability to derive meaning from specific kinds of speech situations.

(I.E., to recognize what the speaker is referring to, fill in information that the speaker takes for granted and doesn't bother to say)

I'm hungry

Said by a beggar who has not eaten all day

Said by a child who hopes to put off going to bed

Said by a man who wants to have lunch with his coworker

The three events obviously have something in common and yet, they indicate different intentions and are liable to be interpreted differently because the situations and the participants are different.

utterance vs. sentence :

an utterance is an event that happens just once , a sentence is a construction of words in a particular meaningful sequence

the meaning of a sentence is determined by the meanings of the individual words and the syntactics construction in which they occur

the meaning of an utterance is the meaning of the sentence plus the meaning of the circumstances ;the time and place,the people involved ,(the physical-social context) **e.g.,our visit to the factory was wonderful**

implicature

An additional meaning, of bridge constructed by the hearer to relate one utterance to some previous utterance (unconsciously)

1) Barbara ;how did you do on the examination?

Adam; I think I'll just drop this course.

2) Jim; would you like to go shopping tomorrow night?

Laura; we have guests coming from out of town.

prosody: a spoken utterance consists of more than just words .
in speech, meanings are communicated not only by **what** is said but also **how** it is said .for example

A; Has the winston street bus come yet?

B; sorry i didn't understand . **what** did you say?

C; I'm afraid fred didn't like the remark i made

D; oh? what did you **say**?

E; some of my partners said they wouldn't accept these terms

F; and you? what did **you** say?

G; you're misquoting me. I didn't say anything like that

H: oh? what **did** you say?

Non-verbal communication

there are some ways of using the voice including e.g.,laughing ,giggling , and crying that are vocal but not verbal.These are called **paralanguage**

similarly , there are visible signs, **gestures** ,body language-which possibly create an effect on the interoperation of a spoken message

consider these visual signs:



nodding the head in response to an utterance

pretending to yawn ,with finger tips in front of mouth

holding up a thumb from a closed fist

pinching one's nose closed with thumb and forefinger

shoulders are moved upward and down again ,possibly repeated (shrugging shoulders)

the palm of one hand is brought up and slaps smartly against the forehead

the hand ,slightly cupped ,is pulled across the forehead as if wiping something away .