AN INTRODUCTION TO PRAGMATICS: METAPHOR, A CASE IN POINT – 5 Creds.

Belen Soria (bsoria@ugr.es), Charles Forceville

Contents

Linguistic expressions are often used in ways that depart (sometimes a little, sometimes a lot) from their linguistic meanings, the ones they are assigned by the grammar. There is generally a gap between the sentence meaning assigned by the grammar and the speaker’s meaning conveyed on a particular occasion of use. Linguistic meaning underdetermines speaker’s meaning.

What a speaker intends to communicate is characteristically far richer than what she directly expresses; linguistic meaning radically underdetermines the message conveyed and understood. Speaker S tacitly exploits pragmatic principles for the purposes of utterance interpretation.

(Horn 2004: 3)

There’s a gap between the meaning encoded by an expression and the meaning communicated by use of that expression on a particular occasion. The gap between the meaning encoded and the meaning communicated by use of an expression provides the basic data for pragmatics, and the goal of pragmatics is to explain how hearers bridge the gap.

The literature on pragmatics distinguishes several types of pragmatic processes, corresponding to different ways in which the meaning communicated by use of an expression may differ from the concept encoded (e.g. saturation, supplementation, transfer). The course will be an overview of these matters and of the different types of pragmatic processes needed to get the speaker meaning and then focuses on one of them: the pragmatic process involved in obtaining metaphoric derived meanings.

Metaphor interpretation is one of the most important challenges in pragmatic theories and we will survey the main approaches to novel metaphor interpretation. Then, we will study the characteristics of metaphor in different types of discourse such as science, literature, etc. and more particularly on advertising. Finally, we will also study multimodal metaphor. The best known author on this topic, Charles Forceville, will be explaining this part of the programme.

Course assessment:

Reading and participation: reading of articles provided by the teacher and active participation by means of a questionnaire for one of the sections (they will be assigned in class) which should be uploaded in “zonas comunes” (SWAD) without the answers and with the answers in “mis trabajos” (DEADLINE to be provided in class). These questions will be answered by all the students and discussed in class (20%).

Final essay: 3,500-4,000 words, due May 12, 2013.

Each student will choose some example or examples of a metaphorical utterance, and say what conclusions s/he have drawn about the characteristics of metaphor in a certain type
of discourse as a result of the course take these examples as corpus. S/he will make a PRESENTATION (20%) of her/his ideas (due 12 April, 2013) and after the comments of other students and the teacher, the final version of the essay (60%) should be provided.

Topics for the essay: The student is free to write on any topic covered by the course. A critical discussion of one or two specific examples or points raised in the course will be expected. I am looking for evidence of independent thinking and reading, and an ability to set out essays professionally (with adequate bibliography, etc).

Lesson planning

Session 1 An Introduction to pragmatics:
  Some preliminary notions
  Linguistic meaning vs speaker meaning
Session 2 Underdeterminacy of linguistic meaning
  Pragmatic processes: saturation, unarticulated constituents, modulation
Session 3 An introduction to theories of metaphor (I)
Session 4 An introduction to theories of metaphor (II)
Session 5 Novel metaphor interpretation: Romero and Soria (I)
Session 6 Novel metaphor interpretation: Romero and Soria (II)
Session 7 Metaphor and discourse
Session 8 Novel metaphor in advertising
Sessions 9-11 Multimodal metaphor (Forceville)
Session 12 Presentations

Lectures and Reading: Copies of the lectures and of the reading are available via the course website (SWAD) or from the photocopies provided by the teacher.

Bibliography:

On Pragmatics

On Metaphor

Pragmalingüística vol.5. pp. 374-378.

On the discourse of advertising