Pragmatics and its Applications to TESOL and SLA

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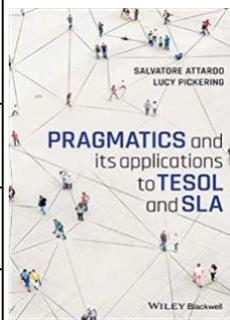
Pedagogical and developmental perspectives on L2 pragmatics have undergone rapid development in recent years (Attardo & Pickering, 2021; Ren, 2021). However, the application of pragmatics to English language classrooms is still limited since it has not been systematically included in most L2 language courses and materials (Roever, 2021). *Pragmatics and its Applications to TESOL and SLA*, by Salvatore Attardo and Lucy Pickering, provides a deep overview of essential concepts in pragmatics and how one can apply those concepts to the pedagogy of second language acquisition (SLA) and teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). The authors devote this book to students, professionals, and novice researchers who are interested in the theoretical and practical sides of L2 pragmatics. The book consists of 11 chapters in which different fundamental and advanced pragmatics-related topics are highlighted.

Chapters 1 and 2 lay the foundation of this book by highlighting the concepts of meaning and semantics and addressing common questions regarding language teaching and pragmatics. Readers will learn how pragmatics is defined through context, modularity, and grammaticalization, in addition to whether pragmatics is teachable and how it should be taught. This prepares readers for the following chapters by acknowledging specific concerns of pragmatics in SLA/TESOL.

The theories of pragmatics are heavily discussed over the next several chapters. These chapters follow a similar structural pattern in that each chapter starts with a conceptualization of the theoretical concepts, followed by applications to SLA/TESOL, and concludes with sample teaching materials. In terms of theoretical concepts, chapters 3, 4, and 5 focus mainly on speech act theory by reviewing its origin and characterization. This is followed by a wide-ranging overview of the development of the speech act theory in Gricean pragmatics, which addresses

how conversations are cooperative efforts between the speakers and listeners, and rationality-based politeness theory, which highlights the rational and conventional rules of conversations among people. In addition, the authors present pragmatics from the lens of several other prominent theories, including the functional sentence perspective (chapter 6), metapragmatics (chapters 7 and 10), and interactional sociolinguistics (chapter 8). For each of these pragmatic theories, the authors present the readers with some examples of pedagogical implications. These examples include but are not limited to the application of a variety of speech acts, implicatures, im/politeness, and pragmatic markers. They also suggest notable teaching materials, such as using Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to investigate language function and role-plays with pragmatic feedback.

Chapters 9 and 11 will be of particular interest to novice researchers who are planning to carry out research in pragmatics. Chapter 9 outlines the pros and cons of data collection tools such as discourse completion tasks (DCT), interviews, and student-collected research, as well as research designs, including longitudinal and action research. The aim of this is to familiarize the target audience with previous pragmatics research conducted within the intercultural SLA/TESOL domain. Chapter 11 begins by providing a general and brief overview of the recent development of pragmatics, including English as a lingua franca (ELF), multilingualism, and cyberpragmatics, and concludes by outlining the new directions of pragmatics research that the field is moving toward.

The book has many strengths, the first being that it is well-written and reader-friendly. The authors introduce advanced pragmatics topics and technical terminology (e.g., stance and indexicality) using simple language, bearing in mind who the book is for. Second, the book is full of illuminating examples and visual figures that could help those readers with limited pragmatics knowledge to understand such advanced technical pragmatics terms. A particular strength of the book is that the provided examples not only address the English language but also other languages (e.g., Italian, Japanese, and Arabic); indeed, as Roever (2021) stated, "learning pragmatics is equally important for learners of any language" (p. 173). The authors also provide typographical conventions before the beginning of the chapters to illustrate the terms and symbols that are presented throughout the book. Third, it serves as a great reference for students, professionals, and novice researchers who are interested in pragmatics, both from theoretical and practical sides. The book can be used as an introductory course book for students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Professionals interested in using this book as course material would find this book perfectly designed to fit the 15-week academic semester. The authors have also included sample lesson plans to make the book more accessible to its target readers. Furthermore, the book is an excellent source for novice researchers, as it outlines the new directions that pragmatics is moving toward by presenting current thought-provoking research trends in the field of pragmatics.

Although the book has many strengths, a few limitations are worth mentioning. A notable drawback of this book is that its content seems to be skewed toward pragmatics learning and teaching. The authors may want to expand more on pragmatics assessment since pragmatics teaching and assessment are highly related aspects of L2 pragmatics and are still undervalued (Roever, 2021). Another limitation is the separation between Chapters 7 and 10, both of which discuss metapragmatics. Although, as explained by the authors, the reason for splitting the metapragmatics topic into two chapters is to avoid having an "overlong" chapter, spreading this topic over other chapters that discuss different subjects might confuse readers. The authors may want to order these two chapters consecutively since they contain some overlapping and repeated concepts. The authors will achieve their goal much more effectively if they acknowledge these limitations, which we hope to see in future versions.

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, *Pragmatics and its Applications to TESOL and SLA* fills the gap between theory and practice in a way other books have not. It offers comprehensive and cohesive insights into the acquisition and development of L2 pragmatics from broad theoretical and practical perspectives, making it more accessible and beneficial to students, professionals, and novice researchers of pragmatics. Therefore, this book presents a worthwhile contribution to the field of pragmatics, since it prompts researchers and teachers to consider new theoretical and pedagogical practices related to L2 pragmatic acquisition, use, and development.

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