***Further Advances in Pragmatics and Philosophy:
Part 1 From Theory to Practice***

**edited by Alessandro Capon, Marco Carapezza,
and Franco Lo Piparo (2018)**

Reviewed by Zhaoxing Xu

Further Advances in Pragmatics and Philosophy: Part 1 From Theory to Practice is a newly published Volume 18 of the Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy and Psychology (2018). The book is a collection of the latest academic papers that reflect the current frontier fruits in pragmatics and the philosophy of language in international academia. The book traces the source of pragmatics as an independent subfield of linguistics and semiotics, introduces the overall structure of the book, reflects on both its significance and limitations, and finally argues that future research in pragmatics should draw a balance between rigorousness in its theoretical boundaries and the flexibility of its practical applications.

Ever since the British philosopher John L. Austin's work *How to Do Things with Words* (1962) came into being, the central issues in pragmatics have never diverted far away from the regime of the philosophy of language or logic in particular. Despite the new trends in theoretical linguistics that seem to be pushing linguistic research into more methodologically diversified and multidisciplinary trajectories, logical reasoning has been and always will be the most fundamental approach in pragmatic research, which also clearly demonstrates its nature as being close to mathematics. In light of such sombre retrospection into the

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origins of pragmatics, the present book, edited by Alessandro Capone, Marco Carapezza, and Franco Lo Piparo, can be regarded as a rational return to the tradition of pragmatics as an important branch of general linguistics. The book consists of two parts that each include a series of articles focusing on different topics and probing into specific issues that are under heated discussion or are unsettled debates.

Part 1 of this book presents the main theoretical approaches to philosophy of language. In the first article "Semantically Empty Gestures", Nathan Salmon primarily compares two theories of demonstratives respectively proposed by Frege and David Kaplan by discussing their connections and the applicability of them each in the demonstrative "that" and the word "yesterday". Salmon elaborates on the two theories through logical reasoning, philosophical reflection, and more extended exemplifications. He finally argues that "the gesture or other demonstration that accompanies an utterance of 'that' is not part of the designating expression but instead part of the utterance context" (p. 3).

The second article actually comes from Jay David Atlas's lecture, entitled "Aboutness and Quantifying into Intensional Contexts: A Pragmatic Topic/Comment Analysis of Propositional Attitude Statements". The author outlines how philosophers such as Nelson Goodman and W. V. O Quine in contrast to the grammarians have made their analysis and utilised the concept of "aboutness". Atlas points out that Quine argues against qualifying into intensional sentences, while such philosophers have different intellectual motives from the linguists or grammarians. He sequentially analyses Goodman's notion of "aboutness" and Quine's argument against quantifying with sufficient data excerpted from natural language. Finally, Atlas argues that "the Linguists' notion of Topic Noun Phrase offers clarification and an intellectual advance over Goodman's and Quine's motions, especially in the treatment of propositional attitude sentences" (p. 25).

The next article is written by Michael Devitt, under the title "Sub-Sentential: Pragmatics or Semantics?", which centres on how to approach the phenomenon of making oral "sub-sentential" assertions. He first addresses Rob Stainton's interesting discussions that argue for a "pragmatics-oriented approach", then considers four objections Stainton uses towards a semantics-oriented approach, of which the "syntactic ellipsis" objection is the most interesting and thus emphasised, which falls in two sub-points: (a) the assumption that this approach must claim that what appears on the surface to be a sub-sentential is, at some deeper level of syntactic analysis; (b) the claim that there is no such objection issue in these sub-sentential utterances. Ultimately, Devitt argues that (a) is wrong and (b) could be right, while he declines the other three objections, namely "too much ambiguity", "no explanatory work", and "fails a Kripkean test". But he also mentions the limitations of using a fragment of a truth-conditional proposition and admits that a pragmatic-oriented approach could be correct to some degree.

The article that follows is “An Investigation of a Gricean Account of Free-Choice ‘or’” written by Graeme Forbes. Given that the free-choice disjunction manifests itself in complements of comparatives, existential modals, and related contexts, the author conducts a series of formal logic reasonings to investigate a simpler Gricean account of Conjunctive Force in at least some cases. According to such explorations, it is a generalised conversational implicature generated by reasoning from a Cooperative Speaker assumption, adopting premises that tend to apply in contexts where disjunctions like ‘or’ are used. He explores the epistemic possibility in AND from OR as a Gricean derivation. Furthermore, he points out that instead of using classical logic which leads to another rejection of the Gricean derivation of conjunctive force, Levinson argues that the inferring of conversational implicatures applies non-monotonic logic, especially logic with “default rules”. And hence Forbes discusses other modal and tense auxiliaries, supposing that possibility concepts are those of essential consistency, where consistency is interpreted as underivability of a contradiction in certain favoured logic. He argues that “the ‘cooperative speaker’ assumption, added to a disjunctive literal meaning, produces conjunctive force for epistemic modals” (p. 65) with some pessimistic concerns that it may not be able to cover all the modals.

Denis Delfitto, in his article “Negation as a Window on the Non-Sequential Nature of Language Interpretation and Process”, argues that he “optionally realized instances of sentential negation that correspond to so-called ‘expletive’ negation in comprehensive and temporal clauses of Italian are essentially the same instances of ‘covert’ negation that license Free Choice ANY in English according to the theoretical framework on negation developed in Collins & Postal 2015, in which a NEG-raising analysis in terms of movement is received, based on the presence of many cover types of negation”(p. 81). The research concludes that negation offers a crucial window into “the non-sequential nature of both interpretation and processing in natural language” (p. 94).

Written by Alessandro Capone, the co-editor of this book, “Embedding Explicatures in Implicit Indirect Reports: Simple Sentences” mainly discusses NP-related substitution failure in simple sentences. It explores Norrick’s (2016) considerations on the structural similarities between stories and indirect reports. He reflects on the existing solutions on such issues as simple sentences, substitution, and implicit indirect reports by other scholars. He probes into Soames’s problem of “embedding explicatures”, touching upon “free enrichment” as a self-defense in logic. He also refers to Corazza’s dilemma and evaluates his alternative proposal. Then he makes self-defensive argumentation via logic reasoning in response to Davis’s objection and Stephen Schiffer’s objections. Capone concludes that Merger Representations plausibly assign meanings to these sentential fragments and provide a full structure.

The last article in Part 1 is from Alberio Vololini, entitled “How Demonstrative Complex Pictorial Reference Grounds Contextualism”. This article also deals with the problem of demonstratives, but it focuses on “complex cases of pictorial reference, those that cases of complex pictorial experiences such as collapsed seeing-in and nested seeing-in exhibit” (p. 137). It presents the undergoing research efforts made by Voltolini without ending with any definite conclusion.

Generally, Part 1 focuses on the theoretical aspects of the current dynamics in pragmatics, while Part 2 moves forward to the application of such theories in discourse analysis. In other words, the first part is concerned with argumentation in formal pragmatics, while the second part deals with the scholarship of the functionalist school that either address the interfaces or intersections between pragmatics and other branches of theoretical linguistics or the broader contexts where more specific pragmatic issues are under discussion. This part provides insightful explorations, sheds new light on classical pragmatics, and pushes it forward towards more dynamic and diversified trajectories, which at least to some extent reflects the future tendency of this sub-field of linguistics.

The first article “Discourse, Sentence Grammar and the Left Periphery of the Clause” (Alessandra Giorgi) investigates the issue of left periphery in a clause by proposing a syntactic analysis that goes beyond sentence grammar and integrates prosodic and discourse features. She argues that, on the one hand, this move accounts for some observations not yet fully understood, such as the anomalous syntactic properties of Clitic Left Dislocation and Hanging Topic, their differences with respect to Focus and their similarities with parentheticals. On the other hand, it aims at offering a theory of grammar capable of encoding the logical connections between sentence grammar, context, and bigger units like discourses. The author finally argues that “syntactic structures provide the basis on which the interfaces with prosody and interpretation operate. To do so, the syntactic representation must include information going beyond the simple encoding of ‘traditional’ sentential grammar relations” (p. 174).

The second article is “Getting a Grip on Context as a Determinant of Meaning”, in which the author Keith Allan points out the implicitness of the emphasis on the importance of context in the proper interpretation of texts from classical philosophers like Aristotle, Quintilian, and Augustine. He uses his own definition of common ground for argumentation. He is aware that “the speaker/writer/signer makes presumptions about common ground which may properly be called presupposition”, but he argues that “utterances carry pragmatic entailments rather than presuppositions, such that where A pragmatically entails B, B cannot – given A – be denied without creating a paradox, absurdity, or contradiction” (p. 177).

The third article deals with Paul Grice’s theory of Maxims in specific language use, entitled “Theory Meets Practice – H. Paul Grice’s Maxims of Quality and

Manner and the Trobriand Islanders' Language Use" by Gunter Senft. In his research, Senft specifically probes into "biga sopa", which is one of the eight specific non-diatopical registers he called "situational-intentional" varieties, and shows how Gricean maxims of quality and manner are irrelevant to and thus not observed by the speakers of Kilivila. Based on such findings, he makes critical discussions on Grice's claim that his theory of conversational implicature is "universal in application" (p. 203).

In "Abductive Inferences in Pragmatic Processes", Marco Carapezza and Valentina Cuccio point out that, despite the accuracy of some leading pragmatic scholars' analysis of the notion of reference, they insist that such analysis can be further synthesized by including Peirce's notion of abduction. Carapezza and Cuccio try to maintain that the variety of inferential processes in play in a linguistic act are mostly of an abductive nature. They propose identifying the appropriate rule (habit of action/linguistic abduction) to be applied to the contextual situation (abduction by selection) depending on context and background knowledge. Then they argue that the typology of abductive inferences "provides us with all the necessary tools to account for the different inferential demands entailed by different levels of the process of language comprehension" (p. 221). Based on this typology, a fine-grained model of linguistic inferences can be developed to simplify the terms of some of the problematic modes debated within contextualist approaches.

The next article "Coordinating Meaning: Common Knowledge and Coordination in Speaker Meaning" is written by Richard Warner. It investigates the question "When is an indirect report of what a speaker meant correct?" in the context of contract law cases. Warner offers an explanation that assumes Gricean analysis of speaker meaning and emphasizes the role that speaker meaning typically plays in solving coordination problems. The applicable legal rule is the Objective Intent Test, which means that "a person's words and actions constitute a promise to do something if a reasonable person in the circumstances would interpret them as a promise to do that thing" (p. 244). And the primary theory used for analysis is the assurance game model. The legal analysis is based on common knowledge, while sentence meaning is considered a common knowledge generator. Meanwhile, he provides the Gricean explanation to examples corresponding to the legal situations in the addressed cases. The article concludes that the assurance game model offers a satisfactory perspective on the Objective Intent Test, and it would be potentially valuable to apply this model to other areas of contract law such as "the hypothetical intent test".

Brian E. Butler in his article "Dworkin's 'Semantic Sting' and Behavioural Pragmatics" utilises Ronald Dworkin's theory of "semantic thing" – "law is in all its worldly glory ultimately an interpretive concept based upon a conception

of meaning centred upon semantics” (p. 259). He proposes that “an analysis of law and jurisprudence that begins from the assumption of the primacy of behavioural pragmatics in linguistic practice is at the very least good analytic therapy in the face of the above style of argumentation” (p. 265). Interestingly, he further mentions the arguments from neuropragmatics in comparison to Dworkin’s theory that “the same pattern happens in neuroscience and philosophy of mind” (p. 267). Also he tries to answer how behavioural pragmatics would inform pragmatists’ understanding of law by constructing the connections between theory itself and its potential application in legal interpretation. He argues that “law is better analysed as a set of embodied and socially embedded practices and that emphasis upon the interpretive or ‘semantic’ aspects of law crowds out the more important behavioural and concrete aspects of legal practice” (p. 260).

The last article of Part 2 comes from Neal R. Norrick – “Stories and the Transmission of Knowledge: Narrative, Evidence, Credibility and Epistemic Vigilance”. This article takes into consideration how stories transmit knowledge amidst displays of credibility and assessment with the help of engaged listeners in everyday talk. The researchers of this project, by looking at real data from conversations, “see tellers are often at pains to establish their first-hand knowledge or at least the trustworthiness of their second-hand knowledge” (p. 275). The author shows “how conversational narratives depart from simple assertions and testimony, regarding teller strategies and goals as well as the substantial role of the audience, and go on to outline research desiderata” (p. 275). The conclusion is that “the knowledge transmitted by a story depends on the main point of a story, what the teller seeks to transmit based on the slot the story fulfills” (p. 297). Furthermore, the incidentals of telling the story, of securing common knowledge and constructing references, of articulating attitudes and feelings must have a distinctive status other than the described event.

To sum up, this new book primarily targets an audience with some background in pragmatics and who wishes to know more about it and explore it further by keeping up with its current developments. The articles selected in this volume are mostly representative pieces of works that reflect the latest dynamics in each topic, so it would provide clues for readers to trace back and follow up so as to pinpoint their own specific inquiries for more substantial investigations. Compared with other authoritative books written or edited by leading scholars in pragmatics (Allan & Jaszczolt, 2012; Grice, 1989; Horn & Ward, 2006; Huang, 2007, 2017; Levinson, 1983), this book mainly introduces new dynamics and main orientations rather than presenting a full picture of the field. In summary, this book deserves more attention and is worth close reading indeed.

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