The pragmatics of the referential process and its interpretation
Panel at the 18th International Pragmatics Conference (IPrA)

Brussels (Belgium), 9-14 July 2023
Deadline: 1 November 2022

Proponents: Alfonsina Buoniconto*, Carmela Sammarco*, Debora Vena* (*Università degli Studi di Salerno)

Format: The panel will gather contributions in the form of oral talks (20' presentation +10' discussion).

Keynote speaker: **Emilia Calaresu (Università di Modena-Reggio Emilia)**

This panel aims to promote and compare theoretical and empirical studies investigating the co-construction of reference (Abbott 2010; Brandom 1984; Evans 1982) with particular emphasis on the pragmatic conditions that determine its (mis)understanding by the interpreter (Morris 1938) of a speech act performed through different modalities (written, spoken, dialogic-conversational, etc.; (Voghera 2017).

Studies on comprehension show how the necessary (Balota *et al.* 1990; Verhoeven & Van Leeuwe 2008) ability to decode the surface elements of an utterance is not *per se* sufficient for an effective comprehension (Corno 1991; De Mauro 1985; Ferreri; 2019; Kintsch 1998; Lumbelli 2009; Orrico & Sammarco 2021; Piemontese 1996). This is particularly true for reference comprehension (Buoniconto, in press). It is now established that, from a pragmatic point of view, reference is the action of verbally pointing to "a certain object or individual that one wishes to say something about" (Carlson 2006). In order for this action to be successful, the addressee of the message needs to be able to recognize the relation existing between a linguistic expression and its referent, be it an extralinguistic (Halliday 2014) or a metatextual entity (anaphoric encapsulators) (Berretta1990; Conte 1991; 1996; 1999; Korzen 2015).

Thus, reference construction has a strong interactional-mediational nature (Auer 1984; Calaresu 2018, in press; Clark 2004; 2022; Enfield & Stivers 2007; Jucker *et al.* 2003; Sidnell & Enfield 2017) and context dependency: not only does the speaker select reference expressions following addressee-oriented procedures, but, since referring expressions need to be worked out contextually, the identification of a referent by the addressee may be different from that originally intended by the speaker.

In spite of the increasing awareness on the interactional nature of reference (co)construction, as well as of its place at the semantics/pragmatics interface (Carston 2017), a systematic investigation on how this linguistic operation unfolds is still to be sought for.

Call for papers

The panel means to gather studies shedding light on reference comprehension from different theoretical perspectives (text linguistics, discourse analysis, translation studies, semiotics, language teaching, language acquisition, language education, clinical linguistics, socio- and psycholinguistics, etc.) and **applied to different study domains** (**speech and written production and reception, reading comprehension, text readability, L1/L2 interlanguage, language disorders, Semantics/Pragmatics interface, Cognitive pragmatics**, etc.).

Interpreter-oriented variables that could be taken into account are:

(a) **the co-presence or non-presence of the speaker and the receiver in the enunciative situation**;

(b) **the amount of information that the receiver and the speaker share**;

(c) **the interaction ability of the receiver**.

Point (a) relates to the different strategies for comprehending and/or constructing the reference in the spoken and written modalities respectively (different degree of textual planning; greater or lesser specificity of the reference). Informational background (b): receivers may lack information and speakers

draw the interpreter's comprehension of new topics, through referring to extralinguistic elements or to their encyclopedic knowledge. Finally, point (c) (hearing impairment, aphasia, learning disorders) necessarily conditions the speaker's linguistic choices to eliminate elements that may be an obstacle to comprehension and to make inferences less implicit.

Abstracts should be of max. 500 words (plus references) and they should be **uploaded on the IPrA website by November 1, 2022**. To upload your abstract, please follow the following process:

1) Go to the webpage https://ipra2023.exordo.com/submissions/new (in case you don't have an account, you'll be required to create one)
2) Click on "New Submission"
3) At Step 4 "Topic", please select our panel " The pragmatics of the referential process and its interpretation"
4) Click on "Done" to save your submission

Please note the IPrA membership is required both to send the abstract and then to present at the conference. The selected communication will be later published. Further details will be provided to the panel participants during the meeting.

We invite all contributors to read IPra's regulations on membership status and comply with them before submitting their abstract. For further inquiries or problems with the uploading procedure, you can email the panel organizers: Alfonsina Buoniconto (University of Salerno) abuoniconto@unisa.it, Carmela Sammarco (University of Salerno), csammarco@unisa.it, Debora Vena (University of Salerno) dvena@unisa.it. Further information about IPrA and the conference could be found at https://pragmatics.international/general/custom.asp?page=Brussels2023.

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