



Principles of Pragmatics (Longman Linguistics Library)

By Geoffrey Leech

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Over the years, pragmatics - the study of the use and meaning of utterances to their situations - has become a more and more important branch of linguistics, as the inadequacies of a purely formalist, abstract approach to the study of language have become more evident. This book presents a rhetorical model of pragmatics: that is, a model which studies linguistic communication in terms of communicative goals and principles of 'good communicative behaviour'.

In this respect, Geoffrey Leech argues for a rapprochement between linguistics and the traditional discipline of rhetoric. He does not reject the Chomskyan revolution of linguistics, but rather maintains that the language system in the abstract - i.e. the 'grammar' broadly in Chomsky's sense - must be studied in relation to a fully developed theory of language use. There is therefore a division of labour between grammar and rhetoric, or (in the study of meaning) between semantics and pragmatics.

The book's main focus is thus on the development of a model of pragmatics within an overall functional model of language. In this it builds on the speech act theory of Austin and Searle, and the theory of conversational implicature of Grice, but at the same time enlarges pragmatics to include politeness, irony, phatic communion, and other social principles of linguistic behaviour.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Geoffrey Leech was Professor of Linguistics and Modern English Language at Lancaster University from 1974 to 1996. He then became Research Professor in English Linguistics. He has been Emeritus Professor in the Department of Linguistics and Modern English Language, Lancaster University, since 2002.

He has written, co-authored or co-edited 25 books in the areas of English grammar, literary stylistics, semantics, computational linguistics, corpus linguistics and pragmatics. They include:

"English in Advertising: A Linguistic Study of Advertising in Great Britain" (1966); "A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry" (1969); "Meaning and the English Verb" (1971, 2nd ed. 1987, 3rd ed. in preparation); "A Communicative Grammar of English" (with J. Svartvik) (1975, 2nd edn. 1994, 3rd edn. 2002); "Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose" (with M. Short) (1981); "Principles of Pragmatics" (1983); "A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language" (with R. Quirk, S. Greenbaum and J. Svartvik) (1985); "Spoken English on Computer: Transcription, Mark-up and Application" (ed. with G. Myers and J. Thomas) (1995); "Corpus Annotation: Linguistic Information from Computer Text Corpora" (ed. with R. Garside and T. McEnery) (1997); "Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English" (with D. Biber, S. Johansson, S. Conrad and E. Finegan) (1999); "Word Frequencies in Written and Spoken English: based on the British National Corpus" (with P. Rayson and A. Wilson) (2001); "Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English" (with D. Biber and S. Conrad) (2002)

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