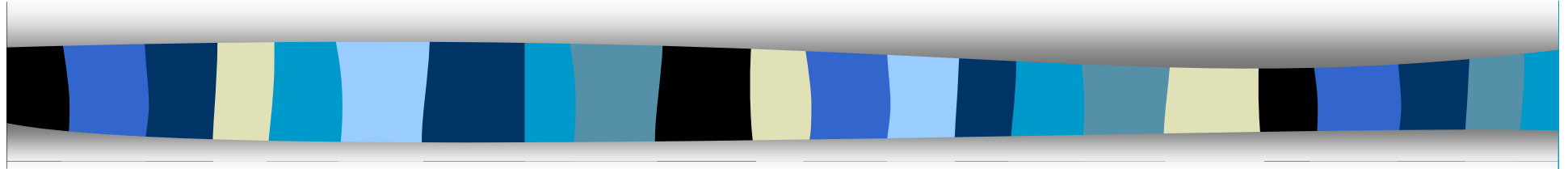


Linguistica applicata

*Semantica e pragmatica in
prospettiva interculturale*



Parte undicesima – La pragmatica
interculturale: le *routines*
conversazionali



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Quattro punti essenziali della pragmatica interculturale:

- (1) In different societies, and different communities, people speak differently.
- (2) These differences in ways of speaking are profound and systematic.
- (3) These differences reflect different cultural values, or at least different hierarchies of values.
- (4) Different ways of speaking, different communicative styles, can be explained and made sense of, in terms of independently established different cultural values and cultural priorities.



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Necessità di un punto di vista *culture-independent* delle etichette classificatorie del comportamento linguistico:

in the literature on Japanese culture and society, Japanese ways of speaking are often described as 'indirect' and are contrasted with the English ways of speaking, which are supposed to be more 'direct'. It is also claimed, or even assumed, that English ways of speaking are characterised by a high degree of self-assertion, whereas in Japanese self-assertion is avoided and suppressed. It is also said that English ways of speaking reflect high regard for sincerity and spontaneity, whereas Japanese ways of speaking discourage sincerity and spontaneity, preferring to them courtesy and consideration for others ...



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

On the other hand, in the literature on (American) Black English, the 'standard' (white) English is presented in the opposite way. Here, it is said, and even assumed, that standard English is 'indirect' rather than 'direct', that it avoids self-assertion, and that it discourages sincerity and spontaneity. It is Black English which is said to be 'direct', and to favour self-assertion, sincerity and spontaneity. Similarly, in the literature on Jewish culture, on the Yiddish language and also on Israeli Hebrew, Yiddish and Hebrew are presented as 'direct', as bent on self-expression and self-assertion, and as favouring sincerity and spontaneity, whereas English is presented as associated with the suppression of all these values ...



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

*At first, one might think that conflicting assertions of this kind are due simply to differences of degree: perhaps English (that is, standard white English) is more 'direct' or more 'self-assertive' than Japanese but less so than Black English or than Israeli Hebrew. But when one examines the data adduced in support of the conflicting generalisations, one discovers that this is not the case, and that in fact the differences referred to **are qualitative rather than quantitative**. For example, what is called 'self-assertion' in the studies of Black English is **not the same thing** that is usually meant by this term in the studies of Japanese; and the same applies to 'self-expression', 'sincerity', 'spontaneity', 'solidarity' and so on (Wierzbicka, *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics*, 1993).*



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Un'alternativa: rappresentare i *cultural scripts* diversi attraverso gli strumenti del *Natural Semantic Metalanguage*

Japanese don't say: 'I want this', 'I don't want this'
Anglo-American do say: 'I want this', 'I don't want this'

Japanese don't say: 'I think this / I don't think this'
Anglo-American do say: 'I think this / I don't think this'



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Conseguenze:

--- nella cultura giapponese è meno frequente offrire delle scelte all'interlocutore;

--- nella cultura giapponese è considerato sconveniente chiedere direttamente all'interlocutore la sua volontà;

--- di fronte all'offerta di una scelta i parlanti giapponesi tipicamente rispondono mostrando indifferenza.



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Una testimonianza di prima mano (Doi, psichiatra giapponese, racconta di un suo viaggio negli USA):

*Another thing that made me nervous was the custom whereby an American host will ask a guest, before a meal, whether he would prefer a strong or a soft drink. Then, if the guest asks for liquor, he will ask him whether, for example, he prefers scotch or bourbon. When the guest has made this decision, he next has to give instructions as to how much he wishes to drink, and how he wants it served. With the main meal, fortunately, one has only to eat what one is served, but once it is over one has to choose whether to take coffee or tea, and - in even greater detail – whether one wants it with sugar, milk, and so on.... **I could not have cared less** (Doi 1973:12).*



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Mosse conversazionali appropriate e inappropriate:

**Nani-o tabetai-desu-ka. (What do you want to eat?)*

**Nani-ga hoshii-desu-ka. (What do you want to have?)*

**Mado-o akete-moraita-desu-ka. (Would you like me to open the window?)*

Mado-o akemashoo-ka. (Shall I open the window?)

Itsu-demo kekkoo-desu. (Any time will do.)

Doko-demo kekkoo-desu. (Any place will be all right with me.)

Nan-demo kamaimasen. (Anything will be all right with me.)



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Un concetto *culture-specific*:

enryo

X thinks:

I can't say to this person: I want this, I don't want this

I think this, I don't think this

someone can feel something bad because of this

X doesn't say it because of this

X doesn't do some things because of this



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Nella cultura anglosassone, al contrario, è saliente il concetto di *self-assertion*, che può essere parafrasato come “tendenza a esprimere chiaramente i propri bisogni, le proprie preferenze e le proprie volontà, purché questi non limitino i bisogni, le preferenze e le volontà altrui”.

Un *cultural script* anglosassone:

I want you to do X

I don't know if you will do it

I want you to say if you will do it



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

... e i suoi riflessi linguistici:

--- tendenza a evitare l'imperativo (tranne in situazioni informali)

--- tendenza a unire l'espressione delle proprie volontà a una richiesta esplicita di consenso:

Would you do X?

Will you do X?

Could you do X?

Can you do X?

Why don't you do X?



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Lo stesso concetto (*self-assertion*) e la sua declinazione in due culture diverse:

White culture values the ability of individuals to rein in their impulses. White cultural events do not allow for individually initiated self-assertion or the spontaneous expression of feeling. Rather, self-assertion occurs as a social entitlement, a prerogative of one's higher status or, as with turn-taking, something granted and regulated by an empowered authority. And even when granted, it is a low-keyed assertion, showing detachment, modesty, understatement. ... 'Showing off', which would represent individually initiated (unauthorised) self-assertion and more unrestrained self-expression, is viewed negatively within white culture. Black culture, on the other hand, views showing off - in black idiom stylin' out, showboating, grandstanding - positively.... Because white culture requires that individuals check those impulses that come from within, whites become able practitioners of self-restraint. However, this practice has an inhibiting effect on their ability to be spontaneously self-assertive. (Kochman 1981:30)



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Black American culture

I want/think/feel something now

I want to say it ('self-assertion', 'self-expression')

I want to say it now ('spontaneity')

White Anglo-American culture

I want/think/feel something

I want to say it ('self-assertion', 'self-expression')

I cannot say it now

because someone else is saying something now ('autonomy',
'turn-taking')

Japanese culture

I can't say: I want/I think/I feel something

someone could feel something bad because of this

if I want to say something

I have to think about it before I say it



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Black American Culture:

- scarsa salienza del concetto di *understatement*;
- rilevanza della pratica sociale del *boasting*.

I know:

I can do good things

other people can't do the same

I feel something good because of this

I want people to think good things about me because of this

I say this because I want people to feel something good



Pragmatica interculturale e valori culturali

Un altro esempio: dire di no in diverse culture

Anglo-American culture

I say: No

I don't want you to feel something bad because of this

I will say something more about it because of this

Israeli culture

I say: No

I think I don't have to say anything more about it

Japanese culture

I can't say: No

I will say something else because of this



Le *routines* conversazionali

Un esempio: la gestione dei complimenti

Macro-caratterizzazione dell'atto linguistico del complimento: “*I want to say something good about you*”.

Mosse conversazionali connesse all'espressione del complimento: *upgrades, contrastive opposite, downgrades, agreements, disagreements, referent shifts, reassignment, ecc.*



Le *routines* conversazionali

Upgrades:

- [1] A: *Isn't he cute?*
B: *O::h he::s a::dorable*
- [2] A: *She seems like a nice little lady.*
B: *[Awfully nice little person]*
- (Pomerantz 1978:93)

Contrastive opposite:

- (1) A: *Did she get my card?*
B: *Yeah she gotcher card.*
A: *Did she t'ink it was terrible?*
B: *No she thought it was very adohrable.*



Le routines conversazionali

Scaled down agreement:

- (1) A: *I've been offered a full scholarship at Berkeley and at UCLA.*
B: *That's fantastic.*
A: *Isn't that good.*

Downgrades:

- (2) A: *By the way I loved yer Christmas card.*
B: *I hadda hard time, but I didn't think they were too good...*



Le *routines* conversazionali

Downgrade + challenge:

[2] A: *By the way I loved yer Christmas card.*

B: *I hadda hard time, but I didn't think they were too good,
but – finally,*

A: *(Those) were lovely. I thought they were lovely.*

Reassignment:

A₁: A praises B

A₂: B praises other-than-self

A: *You're a good rower, Honey.*

B: *These are very easy to row. Very light.*



Le *routines* conversazionali

Returns:

A₁: A compliments B

A₂: B compliments A

- (1) – *Ya' sound (justiz) real nice.*
– *Yeah you soun' real good too.*
- (2) – *Yer looking good.*
– *Great. So' r you.*



Le *routines* conversazionali

--- Le strategie utilizzate per fare complimenti e per rispondere ai complimenti variano da cultura a cultura.

Cultura *wasp* anglosassone:

A: I think that something about you (your X) is very good.

B: Thank you

[i.e.: I know you say this because you want to do something good for me (you want me to feel something good)

I feel something good towards you because of this]



Le routines conversazionali

Un esempio dal giapponese (tradotto --- i parlanti sono entrambi di sesso femminile):

A: 'My, what a splendid garden you have there — the lawn is so nice and big, it's certainly wonderful, isn't it!'

B: 'Oh no, not at all, we don't take care of it at all any more, so it simply doesn't always look as nice as we would like it to.'

A: 'Oh, I don't think so at all — but since it's a big garden, of course it must be quite a tremendous task to take care of it all by yourself; but even so, you certainly do manage to make it look nice all the time; it certainly is nice and pretty any time one sees it.'

B: 'No, I'm afraid not, not at all.'



Le *routines* conversazionali

Un esempio dal giapponese (tradotto --- i parlanti sono entrambi di sesso maschile):

Male version:

A: Ii niwa da nā?

B: Un.

A: 'It's a nice garden, isn't it?'

B: ['Mm.']



Le routines conversazionali

Giapponese: due *routines* conversazionali diverse per donne e uomini

Female version:

A: I think something about you (your X) is very good

B: I don't think this

I think it is not good

A: I don't think this

I think it is good

B: I don't think this

I think it is not good

Male version:

A: I think this X is good

B: I think the same



Le *routines* conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei FTAs in inglese L1 e L2

--- La struttura tipica di un'interazione che prevede la realizzazione di un FTA in inglese australiano:

Opening Acts: Acts which initiate a stretch of discourse which has as its pragmatic goal the accomplishment of a PFTA.

Establishing Acts: Acts by means of which the relative P and D values of the interaction are established (or re-established) and maintained.

Signalling Acts: (i) Acts by means of which S indicates to H that a PFTA is about to be performed; and (ii) Acts by means of which H acknowledges that a PFTA is about to be performed.

PFTA Realisation: Acts by means of which either the pragmatic goal of the discourse is realised or by means of which the attempt is made to realise it.



Le *routines* conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei FTAs in inglese L1 e L2 (C = docente universitario; J = segretaria di un dipartimento; entrambi parlanti di inglese australiano)

Pre-PFTA Opening Acts	C: J _____! J: C _____!
Pre-PFTA Establishing Acts	J: Gee, you're in early today! C: It's such a lovely day out there, I almost didn't come in at all. J: [laughs] C: Have they finished that bloody drilling yet? J: Not yet. I think they've just stopped for a tea break. C: Lucky them. J: [smiles and returns to a document she's reading]
Pre-PFTA Signalling Acts	C: J _____, are you really tied up at the moment? J: Not really. Is it something urgent?
PFTA Realisation	C: Well it's just – you know – this meeting tomorrow morning. I just wanted you to knock these things out on the computer if you can. I need to – I want to – to get them to some people a bit before – you know ...



Le *routines* conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei FTAs in inglese L1 e L2 (A = impiegato all'ufficio informazioni di una residenza universitaria; B = studente universitario; entrambi parlanti di inglese australiano)

Pre-PFTA Opening Acts	A: Can I help you? B: Oh – Yes
Pre-PFTA Establishing Acts	B: Thanks
Pre-PFTA Signalling Acts	B: I was wondering if you could give me some information about... er... A: Sure. What did you want to know?
PFTA Realisation	B: I was wondering if you could tell me what time the party for the foreign students starts tonight

Figure 3.1 L1 AusE speakers' discourse construction



Le *routines* conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei FTAs in inglese L1 e L2 (A = impiegato all'ufficio informazioni di una residenza universitaria; B = studente universitario; A parlante di inglese australiano; B di madrelingua thai)

Pre-PFTA Opening Acts	A: Can I help you? B: Yes
Pre-PFTA Establishing Acts	B: Please
Pre-PFTA Signalling Acts	B: ----- A: -----
PFTA Realisation	B: I'd like to know what time the party for the foreign students begins tonight please

Figure 3.2 L1 AusE and L1 Thai speakers' discourse construction



Le routines conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei saluti in inglese americano (L1 e L2)

--- Classificazione

(i) Greetings on the run:

“Hi, how ya doin’?” “Hi! Gotta run. I’m late for class.” “Okay!”

(ii) Speedy greeting:

He: Hi, how’ve you been?

She: Not bad. ’N you?

He: Oh, can’t complain. Busy.

She: I know. Me, too.

He: Oh well, gotta take off. See ya.

She: Bye. Take care.



Le routines conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei saluti in inglese americano (L1 e L2)

--- Classificazione

(iii) Chat:

Female 1: Hi!

Female 2: Hi.

Female 1: Howa ya doin'?

Female 2: All right — comfortable — pretty good. Oh! Got that letter, by the way, that I said I was waiting for. I finally got it.

Female 1: Wow! That's great. That's pretty good.

Female 2: Look, I'll see you later.

Female 1: Okay. Bye.



Le routines conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei saluti in inglese americano (L1 e L2)

--- Classificazione

(iv) Long greeting:

Michelle: Bea!

Bea: Michelle!

Michelle: Where've you been? I haven't seen you around.

Bea: We were away. We just got back. What's new with you? What have you been up to?

Michelle: (Michelle reports on neighborhood news in detail.) We missed you. How are you? It's so nice to see you. Where'd you go?

Bea: (Bea describes her vacation in detail.)

Michelle: Well, I'm glad you're back. It's so nice to see you. I missed talking to you.

Bea: Aw. Well, we're back! How have you been doing?



Le routines conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei saluti in inglese americano (L1 e L2)

--- Classificazione

(v) All-business greeting:

Client: Mr. Matone?

Joe Matone: Yes?

Client: I want to talk to you about Puerto Rico.

Joe Matone: Oh? Come in. What about Puerto Rico?

(vii) Introductory greeting

A: Nice party.

B: Yes.

A: Who do you know here?

B: Bill. I work with him.

A: Oh. Are you an accountant, too?

B: No, I'm in public relations.

A: Oh. Well, I'm an old friend of Bill's.



Le *routines* conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei saluti in inglese americano (L1 e L2)

Principali tipologie di fallimento nella gestione dei saluti da parte dei non-nativi:

- incapacità dei non-nativi di gestire adeguatamente i saluti tra intimi o informali; ricorso eccessivo alle routines formali;
- particolare difficoltà nella gestione di *greetings on the run* e di *speedy greetings*;
- difficoltà nella gestione di elementi (semi-)formulari: “*Hi. I do not know you. My name is (name)*” invece di “*Hi, I don't think we've met. I'm (name)*”, ecc.;
- difficoltà nella gestione dell'intonazione giusta per veicolare il giusto grado di formalità/informalità (tendenza a utilizzare lo stesso tono in situazioni diverse).



Le *routines* conversazionali e le interlingue

Un esempio: la gestione dei saluti in inglese americano (L1 e L2)

Principali tipologie di fallimento nella gestione dei saluti da parte dei non-nativi:

--- **Problemi specifici di singoli gruppi:** tra i portoricani è assolutamente normale interrompere una conversazione in corso per salutare qualcuno che passa (cosiddetta *rubber neck syndrome*); tra i parlanti di inglese americano è più appropriato limitarsi a un cenno e proseguire la conversazione in cui si è impegnati.

--- **Situazioni potenzialmente rischiose/conflittuali dal punto di vista interculturale:** nelle situazioni in cui si rivedono conoscenti per la seconda o terza volta nella stessa giornata, le diverse culture prevedono routines diverse; alcuni parlanti di inglese americano L2 tendono a ripetere il saluto mentre per i parlanti nativi è sufficiente un cenno della testa.