



Pragmatics (Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics)

Stephen C. Levinson

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Those aspects of language use that are crucial to an understanding of language as a system, and especially to an understanding of meaning, are the acknowledged concern of linguistic pragmatics. Yet until now much of the work in this field has not been easily accessible to the student, and was often written at an intimidating level of technicality. In this textbook, however, Dr Levinson has provided a lucid and integrative analysis of the central topics in pragmatics - deixis, implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and conversational structure. A central concern of the book is the relation between pragmatics and semantics, and Dr Levinson shows clearly how a pragmatic approach can resolve some of the problems semantics have been confronting and simplifying semantic analyses. The complexity of these issues is not disguised, but the exposition is always clear and supported by helpful exemplification. The detailed analyses of selected topics give the student a clear view of the empirical rigour demanded by the study of linguistic pragmatics, but Dr Levinson never loses sight of the rich diversity of the subject. An introduction and conclusion relate pragmatics to other fields in linguistics and other disciplines concerned with language usage - psychology, philosophy, anthropology and literature. Many students in these disciplines, as well as students of linguistics, will find this a valuable textbook.

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