Cyberpragmatics
Internet-mediated communication in context

Francisco Yus
University of Alicante

John Benjamins Publishing Company
Amsterdam / Philadelphia
Table of contents

Acknowledgements vi
Introduction xi

CHAPTER 1
Pragmatics, context and relevance 1
1. Pragmatics and the use of language 1
2. Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory 3
   2.1 The code model versus the inferential model 4
   2.2 Ostension and intention 4
   2.3 Manifestness, Cognitive environments 5
   2.4 (Non-demonstrative) inference and deduction 6
   2.5 Sources of information in a context 7
   2.6 Relevance: Interest (cognitive effects) vs. processing effort 9
   2.7 Presumption of relevance, principle of relevance 10
3. Cyberpragmatics 13
4. Cyberpragmatics, cognition and the Internet 16

CHAPTER 2
The presentation of self in everyday web use 21
1. Introduction 21
2. Discourse and sources of identity 21
3. The (speech) community 24
4. The virtual community 26
   4.1 The linguistic essence of the virtual community 28
   4.2 Virtual cognitive environments 30
5. Towards personal networks of physical-virtual interactions 32
6. Virtual identity 36
7. The personal web page 41
8. The nickname (nick) 42
CHAPTER 3
Relevance on the web page
1. The web page genre. Intention and manifestness
   in the interpretation of a web page 45
2. Relevance (in information retrieval systems) 50
3. Relevance in the user who is surfing the Net 57
   3.1 The role of the “addressee user” and the role
       of the “addressee user” 57
   3.2 Levels or patterns of interactivity 59
   3.3 Availability of information on the Internet and infoxication 61
   3.4 Cognitive effects, mental effort and estimation of relevance 67
4. Usability: A relevance-theoretic approach 71
   4.1 Users and interfaces 72
   4.2 Designing for relevance 72
5. Transferring discourses to the Internet: The printed newspaper 76
6. Transferring discourses to the Internet: The printed advertisement 86

CHAPTER 4
Social networks on the Internet: The Web 2.0 93
1. Blogs 95
   1.1 The blogger’s intention 96
   1.2 The blog genre 99
   1.3 The reader’s interpretation 107
   1.4 An emphasis on interaction 108
   1.5 Communal bonding through blogs 110
2. Social networking sites on the Internet 111
   2.1 Definition, attributes and types 111
   2.2 Some theoretical approaches 116
   2.3 Profiles, entries and (mutually) manifest information 118
   2.4 Adjusting the concepts of “friend” and “friendship” on SNSs 131
3. The microblog Twitter 135
   3.1 Introduction 135
   3.2 Cognitive effects vs. processing effort 137
   3.3 Interpreting tweets 143
   3.4 Twitter conversations 148
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The virtual conversation</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Chat rooms</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 Utterance, propositional attitude and audio-visual context</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 &quot;What is important is to be able to talk&quot;</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3 Compensating for the loss of the audio channel in chat rooms</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4 Compensating for the loss of the visual channel in chat rooms</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5 Oralized written text</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6 Attitudes and emotions in chat rooms</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. See you on messenger</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1 Instant messaging compared to other forms of interaction on the Net</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 Why use instant messaging?</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3 The individual versus the group</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4 Oralized written text in instant messaging</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Chatting in 3D: Advances, avatars and Second Life</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1 Terminological explanation</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2 Identity</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.3 Body</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4 Verbal interaction</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5 Nonverbal behaviour</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Videoconferencing and context accessibility</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>You've got mail</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>General characteristics of electronic mail</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.1 The newsgroup</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 The e-mail distribution list (Listserv)</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Electronic mail in the oral/written continuum</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1 Social dynamics</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 Format</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3 Grammar</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.4 Style</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Elements of an electronic message</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1 The (ostensive) call for attention</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2 The sender</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 The addressee 242
4.4 The e-mail address 244
4.5 The subject line 244
4.6 The body of the message 248
4.7 The signature 252

CHAPTER 7
Politeness on the Net 255
1. Introduction 255
2. Some approaches to the study of politeness 261
   2.1 (In)direct speech acts and politeness 261
   2.2 Politeness in transactional and interactive discourse 263
   2.3 Politeness and rudeness 264
   2.4 Metalinguistic and linguistic politeness 268
   2.5 The context of speech situation 269
3. Brown & Levinson's model 271
   3.1 Parameters for weighing politeness 273
   3.2 Face on the Internet 275
4. Politeness and relevance 279

CHAPTER 8
Conclusion: Prospects for cyberpragmatic research 287
1. The oral/written and visual/verbal dichotomy 288
2. The ubiquity of the Internet 289
3. The consolidation of hybrid networks of interactions 291
4. The transference of information from the Internet
to the mobile phone 293
5. The transference of content to the web 294
6. The consolidation of Web 2.0, participatory culture
   and user-generated content 295

References 297
Name index 343
Subject index 351