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A Cognitive Study  
of Pragmatic Inferencing

# 语用推理的认知研究

樊 玲 / 著



北京交通大学出版社  
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## A Cognitive Study of Pragmatic Inferencing

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• 北京 •

## 内 容 简 介

本书融合了理性原则、概念整合理论和动态语境的认知语用研究,确立了以“动态整合”为核心的认知语用推理理论框架,分析了语用推理的认知运作机制。本书主要从三个方面探讨了交际过程中推理的动态整合过程,包括所意图、所言说和所隐含。本书运用“动态整合推理”模式将信息、社会和情感等意图的交际效果分为成功和失败两类,并对其原因作了认知分析。本书或可为今后继续研究语用推理提供一些理论思考。

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# 前 言

语用推理是推理的一类，是作为日常交际话语生成和理解的一种手段。哲学、语用学、心理学及认知语言学都把推理列为重点研究对象。从各自的研究视角，学者们提出了十几种推理学说，例如：格赖斯和新格赖斯派推出的非自然意义的“含意”推理；斯珀伯和威尔逊的关联理论；认知语言学家从隐喻、转喻和概念整合角度所形成的推理理论。每种学说都有各自较完整的理论体系和模式。然而，语用推理是语言、社会、言语交际活动及由各种有意识认知和无意识认知所组成的认知过程交互作用的结果。从单一的某种理论视角很难概括其复杂的特性。本研究整合认知语言学和语用学的理论，从认知语言学视角研究语用推理的机制，旨在为促进认知语用学的发展做出一些贡献。

语用推理是实现交际双方沟通的手段，即发话者给出交际意图，受话者在动态过程中破解交际意图，交际的结果可能是成功也可能是失败。语用推理具有传递单纯信息意图及实现社会意图和情感意图的多重功能。与直接言语行动相比，间接言语行动（尤其是包括比喻、转喻和反讽等策略的陈说）往往来得更有效而得体；而后者在被理解的过程中比前者更多地依赖语用推理。换言之，恰当地运用语用推理，不仅能取得更好的认知效果，还可以提高交际的效率并有助于交际双方利益之最大化。因此，在日常交际中，语用推理是一种高频使用的推理形式。

本研究融合了理性原则、概念整合理论和动态语境的认知语用研究，确立了以“动态整合”为核心的认知语用推理理论框架，分析了语用推理的认知运作机制。按照我们理解的动态整合模式，语用推理是交

际双方心智过程的动态整合，包括交际的意向性、理性、概念化，以及动态语境之间的整合。由此我们可以清楚地、准确地分析说明交际的失败和成功两种结果。失败是指对交际意图的不理解（non-comprehension）、误解（misunderstanding）和拒绝（refusal）；成功是指发话者能够给出交际意图，受话者成功破解发话者公开或隐含的意图（也包括在失败到成功的过程中准确理解发话者的交际意图）。总之，受话者通过由简单推理到复杂推理、由局部推理到整体推理的动态整合过程而最终成功推断出发话者的交际意图。概念化是指从始源域意义到目标域意义的映射过程。动态语境包括百科知识语境、文化语境、社会语境、临时语境、情感语境。意向性、概念化和动态语境构成了所交际（what is communicated）的内容；动态整合过程受到理性的驱动与制约。

本研究主要从三个方面探讨了交际过程中推理的动态整合过程，包括所意图（what is intended）、所言说（what is said）和所隐含（what is implied）。

首先，本研究讨论了所意图。发话者经过理性驱动所产生的交际意图可分为显性意图（overt intention）和隐性意图（covert intention）两种；又可以细化为三个次类：信息意图、社会意图、情感意图。由于交际意图可以同时是显性的和隐性的，三种次意图之间也有交叉之处，发话者可以同时显示和暗示其中的一个或全部意图，而受话者则需要通过推理最终破解这些意图。

其次，本研究探讨了所言说。在局部推理中，它对发话者和受话者来说都是概念化的过程，即言语的产生和字面意义的理解。对于交际双方而言，由可获取原则（availability principle）及由共同信念、规约和互动组成的预设（presupposition）会自动激活整个可能存在或生成的语境（涉及百科知识语境、文化语境、社会语境和情感语境），从而促使概念化的完成，即由始源域到目标域的映射（如隐喻和转喻的概念化）。所言说的概念化根据交际意图可以分为三类：信息概念化、社会概念化、情感概念化。



最后，本研究从一个综合视角分析了所隐含。发话者在所言说里常附带着所隐含。听话者有意识地激活交际的动态语境（尤其是即时语境），结合发话者的所意图和所言说，经过动态整合后得出一种整体推理，会产生出成功和失败两种结果。两种结果分别体现在信息所隐含、社会所隐含和情感所隐含之中。本研究结合实例对其中的推理机制进行了阐释。

本研究的主要收获是：（1）确立了认知语用推理的理论框架，提出推理有赖于受理性驱动和制约的认知机制及交际双方心智的“动态整合”，该认知机制是在理性作用下概念化与动态语境的整合；（2）首次运用“动态整合推理”模式将信息、社会和情感等意图的交际效果分为成功和失败两类，并对其原因作了认知分析；（3）首次从交际双方互动的角度将所交际的过程分为所意图、所言说和所隐含，并解释了交际双方在互动中的语用推理流程。这些初步的成果或可为今后继续研究语用推理提供一些理论思考。

**关键词：**语用推理；认知视角；动态整合；所意图；所言说；所隐含

## Abstract

Pragmatic inferencing, as a species of inference, is a common daily practice of communication in utterance generation and interpretation. Inference has become a major concern in philosophy, pragmatics, psychology and cognitive linguistics. Starting from different disciplines, scholars have put forward dozens of theories about inference, such as the inference of the "implicature" of non-natural meaning by Grice and neo-Griceans, the relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson, and inferencing models focusing on metaphor, metonymy and blending by cognitive linguists. Each discipline has proposed a different perspective with a different theoretical framework. However, none of these models has offered a sufficient understanding of pragmatic inferencing, because pragmatic inferencing is achieved through the interactions among the elements of language, society, verbal communication and cognition (various conscious and unconscious cognitive processes); its complicated characteristics can hardly be depicted within a framework arising from merely one perspective. In this book, an effort has been made to better integrate the theories of cognitive linguistics and pragmatics, which deals with the mechanism of pragmatic inferencing from the perspective of cognitive linguistics, with the aim of contributing something to the advancement of cognitive pragmatics.

It is argued that pragmatic inferencing enables communication between interlocutors, allowing the addresser ("she") to deliver her communicative intention and the addressee ("he") to interpret it simultaneously in a

dynamic process. The final result of communication may be a success or a failure. Pragmatic inferencing has multiple functions in that it can transmit not only impersonal information, but also social and emotional intentions. Compared with direct speech acts, indirect speech acts (including those employing the linguistic strategies of metaphor, metonymy and irony) may produce more efficient results; the effective understanding of the latter relies on pragmatic inferencing. In other words, the appropriate use of pragmatic inferencing may bring about better cognitive effects and also optimal payoffs for both the addresser and the addressee. Therefore, pragmatic inferencing is a form of inference that is frequently employed in daily communication.

Drawing insights from the rationality principle, conceptual integration theory and cognitive pragmatic studies of context, my research constructs a cognitive pragmatic framework of inferencing called dynamic integration model of inferencing (DIMI), which is used for the understanding of the cognitive mechanism of pragmatic inferencing. According to DIMI, pragmatic inferencing is the dynamic integration of interlocutors' mental process including intentionality, rationality, conceptualization and dynamic context. In this light, the success and failure in communication can be analyzed clearly and accurately. Failure refers to non-comprehension, misunderstanding and refusal of the intended communication. Success means the addresser can transmit her communicative intention successfully while the addressee can interpret her overt or covert communicative intention—his level of understanding can range from failure to success. In short, the addressee may finally infer the addresser's communicative intention through a dynamic integration process, which extends from simple inferencing to complex inferencing, and from local inferencing to global inferencing. Conceptualization refers to the mapping of meaning

from the source domain to the target domain. The dynamic context is the context constructed in interlocutors' mental spaces through interactions among elements such as encyclopedia knowledge context, cultural context, social context, ad hoc context and emotional context. What is communicated is the content and result of the dynamic integration of intentionality, rationality, conceptualization and dynamic context. Rationality is taken as a cognitive drive to make sense and impose a constraint upon the possibilities of meaning.

This study discusses the construction of the dynamic integration process of what is communicated — what is intended, what is said and what is implied.

First, what is intended is analyzed. The cognitive mechanism driven and constrained by the addresser's rationality produces two categories of intention — covert intention and overt intention, each with three subcategories — informational intention, social intention and emotional intention. Since the addresser could have overt and covert intentions at the same time, and these intentions might pertain to matters of information, society or emotion, there is a potential for their overlapping, i.e., she may show or hint at one or many intentions at the same time. Then the addressee must try his best to finally detect and decode these intentions.

Second, it is argued that what is said, which involves interlocutors' mental processes of conceptualization, functions as a form of local reasoning in the generation and interpretation of utterances. In this process, the possible dynamic context is automatically activated by the availability principle and the presuppositions composed of shared beliefs, conventions and interactions between interlocutors' mental states, as well as the environment (social, professional and so forth) they are in as the utterances are created. The dynamic context is a context that mainly

involves encyclopedia knowledge context, cultural context, social context and emotional context that already exist or can be generated. Conceptualization means the mapping of meaning from the source domain to the target domain, as in metaphor and metonymy. The conceptual integration of what is said can be classified into three categories: informational conceptualization, social conceptualization and emotional conceptualization.

Third, what is implied is also explored from a comprehensive perspective of interlocutors. What is said by the addresser often goes with what is implied. Having received that information, the addressee must activate the dynamic context and combine it with his understanding of what is said and what is intended by the addresser in dynamic integration to form a global reasoning. The rationality and inferencing in the communication between interlocutors may result in a range of outcomes ranging from total success to total failure. The informational, social and emotional causes for what is implied and the mechanism of inferencing are analyzed and explicated.

To sum up, there are mainly three objectives of this study. (1) It proposes a theoretical framework of cognitive pragmatic inferencing, clarifying that such inferencing is a mental process of "dynamic integration" driven and constrained by the rationality of interlocutors, and that its cognitive mechanism works when conceptualization and dynamic context operate together with rationality. (2) DIMI is initially adopted to analyze the cognitive pragmatic mechanism of two kinds of communicative results: success and failure, providing the cognitive causes with informational, social and emotional dimensions. (3) For the first time, this study takes a holistic view of the process of communication, i.e., what is communicated, which is composed of what is intended, what is said and what is implied;

and it explains the paths of mental processes occurring in the pragmatic inferencing.

These points newly proposed for cognitive pragmatic inferencing can be expected to offer some useful hints for further theoretical speculation in the study of pragmatic inferencing.

**Key Words:** pragmatic inferencing; cognitive study; dynamic integration; what is intended; what is said; what is implied

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