Introduction to the study of pragmatics

traditional division of semiotics (Morris 1938)
pragmatics – syntax – semantics
Lyons (1977) strict division is uncertain in the case of a natural language

pragmatics = meaning – truth conditions (Gazdar 1979)
most important notions: context, communicative situation
pragmatic dimension (Verschueren 1999):
every entity higher than phoneme has its pragmatic dimension (phenomena viewed
primarily not from the point of view of form and position in the grammar of the
language,
but from the point of view of its use in the communication = language competence
(performance, i.e. production and interpretation of utterances in concrete situations)
pragmatic competence = competent way of using competently formed utterances
in dependence on communicative situations

according to Leech (1983)
general pragmatics can be divided into **pragmalinguistics** (related to grammar,
language specific) and **socio-pragmatics** (related to sociology, culture specific)

Aspects of speech situation:
1. addressers or addressees
2. the context of an utterance
3. the goal of an utterance (intention)
4. the utterance as a form of act or activity: speech act
5. the utterance as a product of a verbal act
   (pragmatics deals with utterance meaning, whereas semantics deals with
   sentence meaning)

Pragmatics is distinguished from semantics in being concerned with meaning in
relation to a speech situation.

Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader)
- the study of *speaker meaning*
  (the analysis of what people mean by their utterances)
- the study of *contextual meaning*
  (the interpretation of what people mean in a particular context
   and how the context influences what is said)
- the study of *how more gets communicated than is said*
  (the investigation of *invisible meaning*)
- the study of the *expression of relative distance*
  (the choice between the said and the unsaid is tied to the notion
   of distance, closeness implies shared experience)

Pragmatics and its relationship with other areas of linguistic analysis:
syntax - the study of the relationships between linguistic forms
semantics - the study of the relationships between linguistic
     forms and entities in the world
pragmatics - the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and
     the users of those forms
     (humans are taken into consideration only in pragmatics)

Example: *The duck ran up to Mary and licked her.*

syntax and syntactic analysis: correct structure - missing elements -
  - *The bottle of ketchup ran up to Mary.* is also well-formed
semantics: '*duck'* is animate – '*bottle*' is inanimate
   the verb *run* requires animate subject – semantics is concerned with the
   truth conditions of propositions expressed in sentences
formal semantics:
The duck ran up to Mary (proposition *p*) *and licked her* (proposition *q*).
If *p* is true and *q* is true, then *p & q* (& = ampersand) is true.
Unfortunately, whenever *p & q* is true, it logically follows that *q & p* is true.
(*The duck licked Mary and ran up to her*.)
pragmatics: more being communicated than said
Regular pragmatic principle of language use:
Interpret order of mention as a reflection of order of occurrence.

Regularity
People tend to behave in fairly regular ways when it comes to using language.
Some of the regularity comes from the fact that people are members of social
groups and follow general patterns of behavior expected within the group.
Most people within a linguistic community have similar basic experiences of
the world and share a lot of non-linguistic knowledge. Compare:
1. *I found an old bicycle lying on the ground. The chain was rusted
   and the tires were flat.*
2. *I found an old bicycle. A bicycle has a chain. The chain was rusted.
   A bicycle also has tires. The tires were flat.*