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A Pragmatic Study of Lying in Some American Political Speeches

Zainab Mustafa Noor¹, Asst. Prof. Firas Abdul-Munim Jawad²

Abstract

The present study aims to answer the following questions: What are the pragmatics of lying in American political contexts? What lying is? Pragmatics is a division of linguistics that studies how context contributes to meaning. This field of study clarifies "how human language is utilized in social interactions." Pragmatics includes speech act theory, speech acts, implicature, context, and behaviour. Lying is a pragmatic strategy, it is used to deceive or mislead someone. A person who practices lying is called a liar. Lying serves a variety of interpersonal purposes or psychological functions for the individuals who use them. It represents a kind of speech act which plays an effective role in the study of language. In this regard, lying is an important aspect of a lot of strategic interactions, such as in online newspapers, election discourse, and politics. In this study lying will be discussed in detail. This paper aims to know what should be understood as lying and to make the listeners able to understand its methods.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Speech Act Theories, Implicature, Context, Lying.

1- Introduction

Lying is one of the most common tactic behaviours. It is used when someone says something that is not true to make others believe that the lies are the truth. In general, the term lie carries a negative connotation, depending on the context in which it is used. There are many reasons for lying, such as to hide something or get something. Many politicians use it to accomplish their objectives. Although this behaviour is commonly used, its use by politicians in many strategies and techniques makes the listener unable to distinguish whether the person is telling the truth or is lying.

This study is concerned with answering the following questions: (1) What are the kinds used to lie? (2) How is lying expressed implicitly in conversation? (3) What are the speech acts used to display lying?

The study aims at (1) identifying the kinds of lying through political discourse. (2) Knowing the discourse strategies used in lying and allegations to distinguish between lying and truth. (3) identifying the speech acts used to express the strategy of lying.

After analyzing the selected samples for this study, it was found that (1) all kinds of lying, whether concealment, assertion, or spinning, are currencies for one face, which is deception. (2) Most American politicians use lying in their speeches, whether before the elections or after the wars, to achieve implicit ends and intentions. (3) Lying is a widespread strategy among politicians. It is targeted at people who believe something that they (liars) believe to be false.

¹ Babylon University, Iraq, Email: huseinraad1991@gmail.com

² Babylon University, Iraq, Email: hum.firas.abd@uobabylon.edu.iq

2. Pragmatics: An Overview

Birner (2013:3) defines "pragmatics" as the study of language use in context. That means the pragmatic meaning is a matter of performance, not only understanding the meaning. The speakers within a language community share these pragmatic principles concerning language production and interpretation in context, they constitute part of our linguistic competence, not merely matters of performance. That means pragmatic knowledge can be defined as a part of our knowledge of how to use language appropriately. Mey (2001:6) defines pragmatics as "the study of how humans use their language in communication, bases itself on a study of those premises, and determines how they affect, and practical, mortal language use." Thus, pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society. That means, since speech is an actual act Pragmatics is the study of language usage, what it means, and what it tries to do. Griffiths (2006:132) defines pragmatics as "the study of how senders and addressees, in acts of communication, rely on context to elaborate on literal meaning." Linguistic communication within context studies how they unfold, and what the purposes of the speech are. That means the senders rely on acts of communication to clarify meaning or intent.

According to the preceding definitions, pragmatics is the study of the relationships between linguistic forms. That means pragmatics is the study of contextual meaning because it's about how people linguistically make sense of each other. Pragmatics has intentionally interpreted the difference and the gap between the meanings of human speech and meanings and treats the context and meanings of the words.

2.2 Speech Act Theory (SAT)

According to the philosopher J. R. Searle in "1962, in his book "How to Do Things with Words,". Speech act theories were developed by Austin in "the 1930s," and he expounded them in a series of lectures given at Harvard University in 1955.

Finch (2005:171) defines "speech act theory" as the use of language. Traditionally, scholars have differentiated between actions and speaking on the basis that speaking about something is different from doing it. Whereupon, to know whether they are a correct representation of fact, and not to ask whether they work or not. Searle (1969:19) talks about "illocutionary force indicating devices" and clarifies that they are linguistic devices that indicate that the utterance is made with a certain IF, or they constitute the performance of a certain IA. He adds that IFIDs often include performative verbs.

Levinson (1997:226) explains that "the speech act theory" has recently become a prominent aspect of linguistic studies, and it has acquired much interest among all the issues in the general linguistic theories of language use. Psychologists propose that the acquisition of the concepts underlying speech acts can be a necessity for the acquisition of language in general. Speech act theory is a commonly used and prominent theory in the study of language. It has also gained great interest in all aspects of language study.

Thus, speech act theory is a subfield of pragmatics that studies how words are used not only to present information but also to carry out action. It is a commonly used and prominent theory in the study of language, and it is an attempt at doing something purely by speaking.

2.2.1 Austin's (1962) Theory of Speech Acts

According to Austin (1962), there are three types of acts: the locution act, the illocutionary act, and the per-locution act. Each one has a different function. For example, the locution act

means the utterance of a sentence that determines sense and reference; while the illocution act means the making of a statement, offer, promise, etc. in uttering a sentence by the conventional force associated with it and the per-locution act means the bringing of effects on the audience utilizing uttering the sentence, such effects being unique to the circumstances of utterance.

2.2.2- Searle's (1969) Speech Act Theory

Another language philosopher is Searle who developed the speech act theory by taking his lead from Austin. Searle's model (1969:17) depends upon the idea that when one speaks a language, he will be engaging in a rule-governed form of behaviour. That means these acts are performed according to the rules of language. Searle (1969:24) mentions three acts: an utterance act, which means the production of speech sounds, words, and sentences; another act, a propositional act, which means referring to an entity and predicting some properties of that entity; and an illocutionary act, which means making a statement, command, promise, etc. Searle (1969) believes that the meaning of a speech act can only be accounted for in context. He says that sentences alone do not express assumptions; thus, the speech act cannot be explained without context.

2.3 Implicature

Horn and Ward (2006:3) define 'implicature' as a component of speaker meaning that constitutes an aspect of what is meant in a speaker's utterance without being part of what is said. That means the implicature defines the meaning intended by the speaker without being directly disclosed and is part of what is being said. When there is discourse, there must be meaning. The meaning may be natural or unnatural, and the difference between the natural meaning and the unnatural meaning is the relationship of speech with the intended intention. While the unnatural meaning is arbitrary, unclear, and has a purpose, there are two types of implicature: conversational implicature and conventional implicature.

According to Birner (2013:103), conversational implicatures are calculated based on the linguistic expression uttered, the context in which it was uttered, and the Gricean maxims. Conversational implicatures are non-truth-conditional but, unlike conversational implicatures, are context-independent. While conventional implicatures do not require a calculation based on the maxims and the context, instead, they are consistently attached to a particular linguistic expression, regardless of context (ibid., 103).

2.4 Context

Lewis (1980:79) defines 'context' as the location, time, place, and possible world where a sentence is said. Williams (2004:107) states that meaning and context are interdependent; meaning cannot be communicated without context, and context cannot be established without meaning. That means meaning and context are linked to each other in a variety of situations. Successful communication cannot happen without the integration of meaning and context. To arrive at a full command of different language skills, one needs to combine meaning and context. In addition, inference, ambiguity, and conventional signs are important factors when seeking to understand meaning and context. That meaning cannot be understood without context. A variety of aspects of context may lead to a proper interpretation or understanding of the meaning of a text.

According to Charles (2000:506–507), the meaning of a word can be inferred by context. Different types of contexts relate to meaning, such as nonlinguistic or situational contexts, but the majority of studies limit the meaning of contexts to the linguistic contexts of a word.

Anderson (2006:28) states that any chunk of meaning is context. That indicates the meaning of a sentence is affected by context. Cruse (2004":13) adds that the role of context ranges from disambiguating to ambiguous expressions. That means the meaning and context are related to each other in a variety of situations. Successful communication cannot happen without the integration of meaning and context. To arrive at a full command of different language skills, someone needs to combine meaning and context. The inference, the ambiguity, and the conventional signs are very important factors when seeking to understand meaning and context; meaning can't be understood without context. A variety of aspects of context may lead to a proper interpretation or understanding of the meaning of a text.

2.4.1 Context Types

Cutting (2002) states that there are three types of context: situational context, background knowledge context, and co-textual context, as explained in the next paragraph.

2.4.1.1 The Situational Context

The situational context is the immediate physical co-presence, where the interaction occurs at the moment of speaking (*ibid.*, 4). That means it describes the reason why something is occurring and the appropriate behaviour and actions associated with the situation. Context is the situation, circumstances, or specific setting in which an event occurs.

2.4.1.2 The Background Knowledge Context

It means the assumed background knowledge. That can be either cultural general knowledge that most people carry with them in their minds about areas of life, interpersonal knowledge, or specific and possibly private knowledge about the theory of the speakers themselves (*ibid.*, 5).

2.4.1.3 Co-Textual Context

The context of the text itself is known as the co-text. Language is used to refer to something, and the word that points to the entity that they refer to is 'Deixis'. There are three sorts of deixis: personal deixis when pointing to a person (or personal pronoun), place deixis to point to a location (or adverbs like there), and time deixis to point to a time (like next day).

2.5 Lying

According to Carson, T. L. (2012:3), a lie is an intentionally false statement that the speaker warrants to be true. A lie is to invite others to trust and rely on what one says by warranting its truth, and at the same time to deceive that trust by making a false statement that one does not believe to be true. (*ibid.*) Galasinski (2000: 23–98) argues that in performing an assertion, truthful speakers or writers should commit to the truth of the proposition (essential condition) when they have evidence or reasons for saying or writing what they are saying or writing, and the expressed proposition must be obvious to either the speakers or writers or the addressees (preparatory condition), and finally, commit to a belief that the expressed proposition is true (sincerity condition). He states that liars must issue a lying utterance set out to make the targets believe something that they (i.e., liars) believe to be false (*ibid.*)

According to Carson, T. L. (2012:4), there is a relationship between lying and deception. Deception causes someone to have false beliefs. There are two main differences between lying and deception. First, deception implies success. An act must cause someone to have false beliefs to count as a case of deception. Intentional false statements need not succeed in

deceiving others to count as lies. Second, although a lie must be a false statement, deception need not involve making a false statement; true statements can be deceptive, and many forms of deception do not involve making statements of any sort. Thus, many instances of deception do not constitute lying (ibid.). Carson, T. L. (ibid., 182) states that deceptive speeches harm people in much the same ways as deception and tend to be wrong for the same reasons.

2.5.1 Strategies of Lying

According to the following pragmatists there are different strategies of lying as it explains in the following:

2.5.1.1. Disinformation (Mislead)

Ekman (1989:14) maintains that there isn't much difference between saying something false and concealing the truth. Both are lies. The purpose is the same: to (deliberately mislead). That means misleading, or what is called disinformation, is incorrect or misleading information that is deliberately deceptive and propagated.

2.5.1.2. Fabrication

Tischner (1990: 66–9) argues that lying is the most typical act of deception, fundamentally, a type of fabrication. It is defined as "an intentionally ambiguous statement aimed at misrepresenting the extralinguistic reality" (ibid.).

2.5.1.3. A Half-Truth or Partial Truth

Galasinski (2000:23) says that half-truths are usually discussed as the other part of active deception, complementary to incorrect utterances, which means the marketer provides no information on the issue or attribute of interest, while in the latter case, incomplete information that leads to biased inferences is provided.

2.5.1.4. Lying by Omission

Frank (1992:133) states that concealment refers to the omission of truthful information; this is deception by omission. These lies take the form of an absence of behaviour, either in response to a direct question or in response to compulsory disclosure. For example, a witness may say that A Killed B, when in fact s/he knows that A did not kill B. Fabrication may "take the form of multiword statements, one-word responses, or gestures." (Frank, ibid: 133). That means one step beyond concealment is falsification, where false information is presented as if it were true. This is, therefore, deception by omission.

2.5.1.5. Mendacious Statement

Johnson (2013: 3-4) states that a successful lie looks as if it is a mere truthful statement, while it is no more than a mendacious statement; or an insincere statement.

2.5.1.6. An Exaggeration & Minimization

Metts (1989: 169) states that a distorted utterance is an utterance that exaggerates, minimizes, or equivocates. Exaggerations are the acts of representing excessively by giving more information than is required, whereas minimizations are half-truths where deceivers provide less information than is required (ibid.).

2.5.2 Features of Lying

According to Carson, T. L. (2012:3), there are two features of lying.

1. Contrary to most standard definitions, I argue that lying does not require that the liar intend to deceive others. Thus, in cases of lying in which one can benefit by making false statements even if they do not deceive others, others know she is lying and therefore have no hope or intention of deceiving them.
2. To tell a lie, one must make a statement that is warranted to be true. Any lie violates an implicit promise or guarantee that what one says is true.

3- Methodology

3.1-The Model of Analysis

In achieving the aims of the present study, there will be a model to depend upon in classifying and analyzing the data. Thus, it has been found preferable to adopt: Firstly, Searle's model (1969) is about speech acts followed in distinguishing the type of speech acts used in American political speeches as he classifies them into five categories: representatives (or assertions), directives, commissives, expressive and declarations. Secondly, Van Dijk's model (1977) about speech acts, is followed as he classifies the auxiliary into eight: justification, explanation, addition, conclusion, contradiction, explication, correction, and condition. Finally, both of the previous models are related to lying strategies.

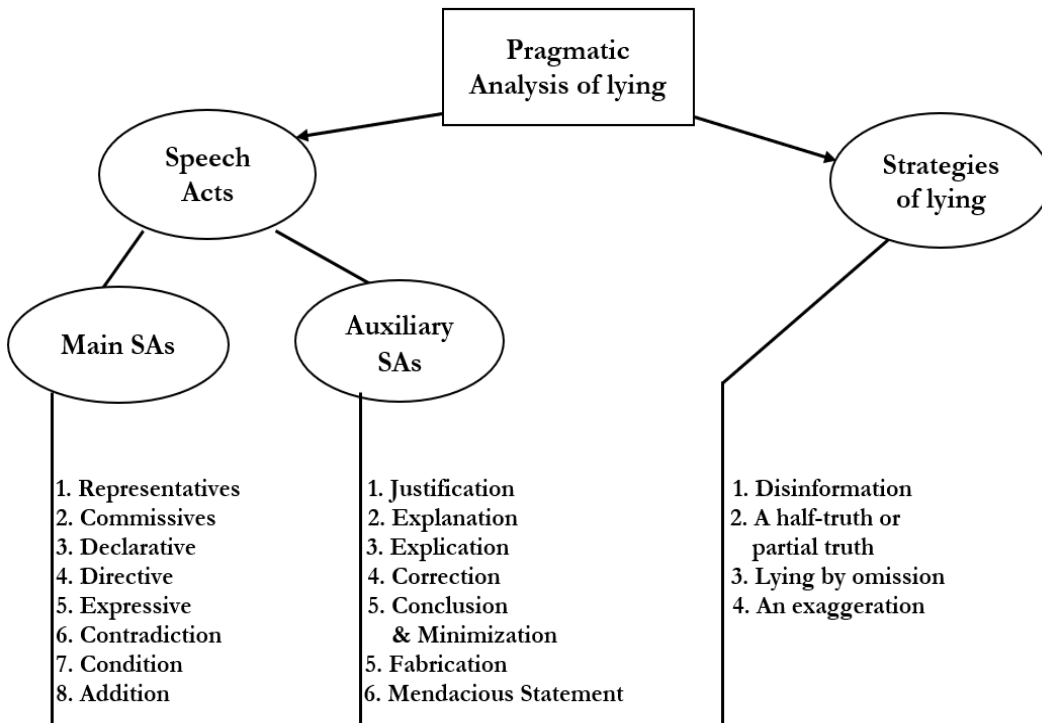


Figure (5): The Analytical Model of Lying

3.2-The Data

3.2.1- Data Description

There are three data randomly selected for analysis. They are collected from the websites and online newspapers cited in the references. The analysis model that will be used is eclectic. It is based on Searle's model of speech acts and Van Dijk's model.

3.2.2-Data Analysis

Text (1)

"It has uniformly defied Security Council resolutions demanding full disarmament. Peaceful efforts to disarm the Iraqi regime have failed again and again because we are not dealing with peaceful men".

W. Bush abstracts the speech using a few words about "the failure of the negotiations with the Iraqi government", wherein they directly support the claim to hold the war or the invasion of Iraq. Accordingly, the lying strategies of half-truth (partial truth) and disinformation, which are pragmatically triggered by the sub-strategies of sincerity violation (Bush is saying false information) and the insincere SAs of accusing and terrorism wherein Bush accuses Iraq of having massive destructive weapons (weapons of mass destruction), at the same time, warn the public of the alleged threats of Iraq.

In his speech "It has uniformly defied Security Council resolutions demanding full disarmament", Bush employs the misinformation approach of lying. Bush employed these deceptions and lies to justify the war in Iraq while being aware that there was no WMD. George Bush, the president of the United States, must be pursuing some implicit or covert goals. Bush employs the main speech act of representative by asserting the presence of weapons of mass destruction. The felicity condition of essential is achieved because there is an emphasis by the speaker when he says "It has uniformly defied".

Bush continues his deceptive political remarks "Peaceful efforts to disarm the Iraqi regime have failed again and again because we are not dealing with peaceful men", Bush claims that the Security Council has failed to disarm nuclear weapons (weapons of mass destruction) and that this is because they do not deal with peaceful folks. He goes on to explain that this causes them considerable difficulty. Bush employed the lying strategy of half-truths despite being fully aware that these weapons do not exist. The confrontation's news was reported in a number of electronic newspapers. After the Iraqi people protested the destruction of their property and the arrival of the American forces on the pretext that there were weapons, a clash took place. because George Bush's malign intents and exploitation of the war as a pretext for occupation were known to the general public. The main speech act of representative employs because there are numerous unsubstantiated claims, and the lack present convincing proof so the felicity condition of essential is achieved.

Text (2)

"We began with this basic proposition: Saddam Hussein must not be allowed to develop nuclear arms, poison gas, biological weapons, or the means to deliver them. He has used such weapons before against soldiers and civilians, including his own people"

Richard Butler tries to summarize the whole speech by using a few words when he says "remarks on Iraq". When they expressly embrace the argument that the Iraq invasion or war was justified. According to that, the lying strategies of exaggeration and disinformation which are pragmatically triggered by the sub-strategies of sincerity violation.

In this speech, Richard uses the strategy of lying as in "We began with this basic proposition", he uses the representative speech act, violating the sincerity (there is no nuclear or biological weapon). Richard uses a clear emphasis in the text on the presence of weapons when he says "nuclear arms, poison gas, biological weapons" so, the felicity condition of a proposition is

achieved. He employs the lying strategy of exaggeration because he repeats his description of weapons in different words with emphasis. Richard claims that the reason for the war was to prevent Saddam Hussein from developing weapons of mass destruction and the means to stop them.

Then he adds that Saddam used these weapons through (a lying strategy of disinformation) against soldiers and civilians. The speech act of the representative uses false allegations and the lack of evidence of the validity of his words as in "He has used such weapons before against soldiers and civilians, including his own people", so the sincerity of felicity condition is violated.

Text (3)

"In all, American troops secretly reported finding roughly 5,000 chemical warheads, shells or aviation bombs. According to interviews with dozens of participants, Iraqi and American officials, and heavily redacted intelligence documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act"

According to a report submitted by the newspaper, between the years 2004 and 2011, there was a strong confrontation that led to injury many Iraqi soldiers and American forces were injured a number of times due to chemical nuclear weapons remaining from previous years under Saddam Hussein's rule.

The report writes "In all, American troops secretly reported finding roughly 5,000 chemical warheads, shells or aviation bombs", here The claim is false because they know that there are no chemical weapons in Iraq. Therefore, the lying strategy of exaggeration is used to deceive. It utilizes the representative of the main speech act. The felicity condition of sincerity is violated because it expresses the belief of the speaker. Then the reporter adds "According to interviews with dozens of participants, Iraqi and American officials, and heavily redacted intelligence documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act" here uses the lying strategy of half-truth when it claims" according to interviews with dozens of participants.... intelligence documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act", It uses the claiming as a representative of the main speech act. The felicity condition of the preparatory condition is violated because the speaker does not have any evidence.

The following Table (1) is The Analysis of Speech Acts (Main \Auxiliary SAs) and the Lying Strategies of the Three Texts Above.

		Speech Acts											No.	
		Main SAs					Auxiliary SAs							
Strategies of Lying	Disinformation	Representative	Commissive	Expressive	Directive	Declaration	Justification	Explanation	Conclusion	Explication	Addition	Contradiction	Condition	Correction
				2										

A half-truth	2	2
Lying by omission		0
An exaggeration & Minimization	2	2
Mendacious Statement		0
Fabrication		0
Tot.	6 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0	6

Table (2) The Final Result of Lying Strategies as Realized in SAs for the Three Texts Above.

No	Strategies	Main SAs	Freq.	%	Auxiliary SAs	Freq.	%	Tot.
1	Misinformation	Representative	2	33.33%				2
2	Lying by Omission							0
3	Half-Truth or partial truth	Representative	2	33.33%				2
4	Exaggeration & Minimization	Representative	2	33.33%				2
5	Fabrication							0
6	Mendacious Statement							0
Tot.			6	100%		0	0%	6

3.2.3. Discussion of Analysis

The present study has two objectives. The first one is to specify the Searle's model that have been most frequently floated in the chosen strategies of deception and the second Dijk's model. The following table (3) is presented the frequent and percentage of SAs analysis (Main \ Auxiliary SAs):

Table (3) The Frequent and Percentage of SAs Analysis (Main \ Auxiliary SAs).

No	Main SA	Freq.	%	Auxiliary SA	Freq.	%
1	Representatives	6	100%	Justification	0	0%
2	Commissives	0	0%	Conclusion	0	0%
3	Directive	0	0%	Explanation	0	0%
4	Expressive	0	0%	Correction	0	0%
5	Declarative	0	0%	Contradiction	0	0%
6				Condition	0	0%
7				Addition	0	0%
8				Explication	0	0%
Tot		6	100		0	0%

The Following Table (4) is Presented the Frequent and Percentage of Lying Strategies.

No	Strategies of Lying	Freq.	%
1	Misinformation	2	33.33%
2	Lying by Omission	0	0%
3	Half-Truth or partial truth	2	33.33%
4	Exaggeration& Minimization	2	33.33%
5	Mendacious Statement	0	0
6	fabrication	0	0
Tot		6	100

According to the above tables, the quantitative analysis shows that the main speech acts have a frequency that constitutes 100% and the minimum frequency in the main speech act is 0%. The most frequent use in the main speech act is the main speech act of representative which constitutes 100% percentage, the main speech acts of commissive, expensive, directive and declaration were not represented and used in the selected data, which constitutes 0%. The auxiliary speech acts constitute 0%. The quantitative analysis shows that the lying strategies of misinformation constitute 33.33% per cent, the lying strategy of exaggeration constitutes 33.33% per cent, the lying strategy of half-truth constitutes 33.33% per cent and the lying strategy of omission constitutes 0%.

This study aims to find out the other pragmatic aspects that are found in those texts so that the lying strategies will be able to comprehend and understand them. The qualitative analysis reveals that the context, situational context, background knowledge context and co-textual context are the remaining pragmatic aspects that help the hearers to recognize and arrive at the intended meaning of the lying.

4. Conclusion

According to the analysis of the chosen data in accordance with Searle's theory (1969) and Dijk's model (1977), in addition to the lying strategies, it is concluded that context is a determinant factor in the study of deception, it helps with language use, language variation, and discourse summary.

Conclusions On the basis of the findings of the analysis, this study has come up with the following conclusions:

1) The whole findings of the pragmatic and statistical analyses verify the hypothesis set at the beginning of the study. Precisely, American politicians utilize certain lying strategies to achieve their goals. These include strategies like misinformation, half-truth or part of truth, exaggeration or minimization and lying by omission, in addition, they exploit assertive and commissive, directive and expressive speech acts.

2). The pragmatic and statistical analyses have shown that lying is defined as an insincere assertion that is used for deception and it is a deliberately false statement that the speaker warrants to be true. The results of the statistical analysis support this view where representative occupies (100%), while directive, commissive, declaration and expressive occupy (0%). The auxiliary speech acts occupy (0%). The lying strategies of misinformation, half-truth or part of truth, exaggeration or minimization each one occupies (33.33%). This indicates that American politicians use lying to advertise their own political position, to show a good image, and to achieve their goals.

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