Introduction to Discourse Analysis
BBI 3210

BBI 3210 (Unit 1 - 4)
Bachelor of Arts (English)

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MODUL PEMBELAJARAN : BBI 3210 INTRODUCTION TO DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
disediakan dalam bentuk bahan pengajaran dan pembelajaran kendihi di bawah program Pendidikan Jarak Jauh, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Sebarang pertanyaan dan cadangan untuk memperbaiki gaya penyampaian dan isi kandungan modul ini bolehlah disemakkan kepada penuhil dengan menggunakan alamat Pusat Pendidikan Luar.

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43400 UPM Serdang
INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

a. Course Information

Department : Department of English
Course Name : Introduction to Discourse Analysis
Course Code : BBI 3210
Credit Hours : 3 (3+0)

This course entails 3 contact hours a week: 2 hours of lecture and 1 hour of tutorial. In total, the course takes up 42 hours per semester and students will have to work on 2 group assignments. The assignments encourage 'self learning' as a feature of distance learning since frequent face-to-face interaction between instructor and students is not possible in this mode of learning.
### b. Module Writers

<table>
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c. Course Objectives

At the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Explain concepts linked to theories of discourse;
2. Identify various approaches to discourse analysis;
3. Analyze spoken and written discourse using appropriate frameworks;
4. Explore ideas and alternative solutions

d. Course Synopsis

This module provides an introduction to discourse and discourse analysis. The module is designed to explore discourse in the English language using a wide variety of spoken and written texts, and involves analysis of discourse types in relation to students’ needs and practices. The principal aim of the course is to introduce students to the pertinent concepts for the study of discourse and to expose them to a mini-analysis of discourse types such as newspaper discourse as an example of written discourse, and conversations as spoken discourse.
e. Course Content
   i. Introduction and overview of discourse analysis as theory and method
   ii. Defining concepts related to discourse
   iii. Identifying approaches to discourse analysis
   iv. Distinctive features of spoken and written discourse
   v. Discourse and society
   vi. Discourse and pragmatics
   vii. Discourse and power relations
   viii. Coherence and cohesion in discourse
   ix. Analysing discourse: applying appropriate frameworks
Table 1: Title of Units and Suggested Lecture Hours

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Attention: Each assignment is about 2000 words (about 8 pages) not including references and appendices. The assignments should be typed double spacing on A4 paper using Arial font size 12. Students’ name and matric number should be clearly written on the front cover.

f. Course Evaluation

The course evaluation is as follows:

(i). Course Assignments
   • Assignment 1 (group) (20%)
   • Assignment 2 (group) (20 %)
   • Test (20%)

(ii). Final Exam
     Total 40% 100%

60%
g. Test
The course entails a mid-semester test that is set based on the module content. The questions involve objective type questions such as multiple choice, true false, and matching statements as well as questions that entail short answers. The test evaluates Units 1-2. The test encompasses 20% of the total course evaluation.

h. Final Exam
The final exam evaluates all units in the module, although emphasis is on the units that have not been tested. The tutors at the respective centres will be informed of the detailed topics covered in the final exam as well as the format of the exam. The exam involves both objective and subjective type questions.

i. Main Reference

j. Additional References
K Penerangan mengenai ikon dalam modul

Untuk menolong pelajar memahami dengan lebih mudah kandungan modul ini beberapa icon telah digunakan. Icon-icon ini bertujuan untuk memudahkan ingatan pelajar mengenai struktur modul. Di bawah disenaraikan icon-icon tersebut berserta dengan maksudnya.

a) Objektif
   - Objektif modul, unit atau topik

b) Pengenalan
   - Sama ada pengenalan unit, topik atau sub topik

c) Isi-isi penting
   - Kumpulan isi-isi penting yang terdapat dalam unit, atau topik

d) Pemerhatian/ Pandangan
   - Mengenai topik yang telah di kaji oleh beberapa sarjana atau maklumat daripada hasil kajian

e) Kesimpulan
   - Kesimpulan yang boleh dibuat berdasarkan unit atau topik yang telah dipelajari

f) Soalan dalam teks
   - Soalan-soalan yang disiapkan oleh penulis semasa membincangkan sesuatu topik

g) Soalan Penilaian kendiri
   - Soalan yang disediakan oleh penulis untuk menolong pelajar mengetahui tahap kefahaman terhadap topik yang dibincangkan

h) Semak Jawapan Latihan
   - Jawapan berdasarkan latihan-latihan yang telah disediakan di setiap unit

i) Rujukan
   - Bahan rujukan yang boleh dijadikan panduan tambahan dalam kursus tersebut

j) Perhatian
   - Simbol ini akan digunakan bagi perkara-perkara yang perlu diberikan perhatian oleh pelajar
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UNIT 1
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Introduction

Unit 1 provides an overview of discourse and discourse analysis by presenting a discussion of the definitions of the terms, the principles for discourse analysis and at last it concludes with a discussion of the differences between spoken and written discourse.

1. Definition of terms: discourse and discourse analysis
2. The principles for discourse analysis
3. Differences between spoken and written discourse

Objectives

1. Define the concepts discourse and discourse analysis
2. Explain the principles for discourse analysis
3. Explicate the differences between spoken and written discourse
TOPIC : DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

1.1 Discourse
1.2 Discourse analysis

1.3 Principles for discourse analysis
   a. Naturally occurring text and talk
   b. Contexts
   c. Discourse as talk
   d. Discourse as social practice of members
   e. Members' categories
   f. Sequentiality
   g. Constructivity
   h. Levels and dimensions
   i. Meaning and function
   j. Rules
   k. Strategies
   l. Social cognition

1.4 Differences between spoken and written discourse
   a. Grammatical intricacy
   b. Lexical density
   c. Nominalization
   d. Explicitness
   e. Contextualization
   f. Spontaneous nature
   g. Repetition, hesitation and redundancy

Main Points

1. Discourse is language use in social contexts and it involves actual instances of communication in real life.
2. Discourse is mainly in the medium of language but also involves a variety of other semiotic systems such as pictures, colours, symbols, gestures, facial expressions, pauses, silence, and laughter. All work together to convey meaning in communication.
3. Discourse involves patterns of belief and habitual action as well as patterns of language use. In a nutshell, discourse is conventional ways of talking and
writing that both create and are created by conventional ways of thinking. Discourse are ideas as well as ways of talking and writing that influence and are influenced by ideas.

4. Discourse is studied in order to understand how people use language, i.e. to understand patterns/ways of speaking and writing as well as patterns/ways of thinking and understanding.

5. Discourse analysis thus gives us an understanding about social life and social reality through the medium of language.

6. When we do a discourse analysis, we have to consider who uses language (the speaker/writer), with whom (hearer/reader), how language is used, why it is used in a particular way, and, what are the effects of such language use on the process of communication.

7. The three main dimensions to discourse analysis therefore are interaction in a communicative event, language use, and the communication of beliefs and ideas.

8. Discourse analysis provides description, interpretation and explanation of patterns of language use, communication and cognition. It accounts for the social and cultural settings of language use and moves from description to explanation to help us understand spoken and written interactions.

Discussion

1.1 Discourse

The common-sense notion of discourse is that discourse is a form of language use, for instance the discourse of politicians refers to the language use of politicians. In relation to this discourse is defined as “language above the sentence or above the clause, (that) includes larger linguistic units such as conversational exchanges or written texts (and) is concerned with language in use in social contexts, involving both spoken and written texts” (Stubbs 1983: 1). However discourse is not only confined to language but also other semiotic systems including pictures, colours,
symbols, gestures, facial expressions and so forth. All elements work together to convey social meaning.

Another popular understanding of the term discourse, in addition to language use, is that discourse also refers to the ideas or philosophies propagated by persons or groups of people (van Dijk 1997). In this case, the discourse of politicians refers not only to the language use of politicians but also to their ideas and philosophies. In this sense, discourse is understood as an institutionalized way of thinking. It is based on the understanding that people use language in order to communicate ideas and beliefs. For example, two different kinds of discourse can be used to describe guerrilla movements, describing them as either “freedom fighters” or “terrorists”. The study of discourse therefore is concerned with providing an integrated description not only of how people speak and write in social situations but also how language use in specific situations influences beliefs and conversely how beliefs influence language use and interaction.

Discourse analysts go beyond common sense understandings of the term and introduce a more theoretical concept of discourse. Although they agree that discourse is a form of language use, they note that discourse also includes how people use language to communicate ideas and beliefs as part of complex social events in specific situations such as in a job interview, a business meeting, a conversation with friends, a lesson in a classroom, a visit to a doctor, when writing or reading a news report, an email, a business letter and so forth. The term discourse therefore embodies functional aspects of a communicative event. Who uses language, how, why, when, and with what effects during interaction in communicative events are components embodied in the term discourse (van Dijk 1997).

The three main dimensions of discourse are thus a) language use, b) communication of beliefs (cognition), and c) interaction in social situations. Discourse studies provide integrated descriptions of these three main dimensions of discourse. For instance how does language use influence beliefs and interaction, how do aspects of interaction influence how people speak or write, how do beliefs
control language use and interaction, and so forth. In addition to providing systematic descriptions, discourse studies also provide interpretations and explanations of such relationships between language use, beliefs and interaction (van Dijk 1997).

1.2 Discourse analysis

The term discourse analysis was introduced by Zellig Harris in 1952 who observed that connected discourse occurs within a particular situation both when a person speaks and writes. He notes that there are typical ways of using language in particular situations. These typical ways of using language in particular situations share particular meanings and they have characteristic linguistic features associated with them. What these linguistic features are, their meanings and how they are realized in language are the central concerns of discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis is the study of discourse that examines aspects of the structure and function of language as used in specific social situations. Discourse analysis involves consideration of issues like who uses language, with whom, how, why, and with what effects in communication. Discourse analysis thus focuses on knowledge about language beyond the word, clause, phrase and sentence and looks at patterns of language use in communication and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used. Discourse analysis also considers the ways that the use of language presents different views of the world and different understandings. It examines how the use of language is influenced by relationships between participants as well as the effects the use of language has upon social identities and social relations. It also considers how views of the world, and identities, are constructed through the use of discourse.

Discourse, as noted above, is embodied within a communicative event such as a job interview, a meeting, a visit to the doctor, a lesson in the classroom, a news report, an e-mail communication, a letter etc. Within these communicative events, participants interact; language is used and ideas and beliefs are
communicated. The study of discourse, in other words, discourse analysis, provides an integrated description of ways of communicating and thinking, such as, how do people speak or write in a particular interaction in a particular social situation, how aspects of the interaction influence the way people speak or write, how language use within the interaction influences beliefs, how beliefs influence language use, and how beliefs control language use and interaction.

Tasks

1. Think of examples of how people recognize your socially situated identity through your use of language. For example, in what ways does your use of language reflect your age, gender, ethnic background or nationality? This might be through your use of vocabulary, accent, or the topics you talk about and how you talk about them. Try to think of specific examples of each of these.

2. Think of a situation you have been in where someone has meant more than what they said in their use of language. For example, you may have asked someone for a favour and not got a direct answer from them. How would the other person have expected you to work out their answer to your request? Or perhaps someone wanted to complain to you about something but thought it wouldn’t be polite to do so directly. How did they do it indirectly, yet still make themselves clear?
1.3 Principles for discourse analysis

Having explained discourse and discourse analysis, this section summarises some of the basic principles for doing discourse analysis.

a. Naturally occurring text and talk

Discourse analysis requires the use of naturally occurring talk and text, that is ‘real data’ rather than edited or otherwise ‘sanitized’ data. Data are studied in their actual appearance or use in their original context for instance tape or video recordings of conversations, or actual texts used in the mass media or education.

b. Contexts

Discourse analysis stresses the study of discourse in context. Discourse should be studied as a constitutive part of its local and global, social and cultural contexts. Naturally occurring talk and text in many ways signal their contextual relevance and as a result when doing discourse analysis the context structures need to be observed and analyzed in detail, such as settings, participants and their communicative and social roles, goals, relevant social knowledge, norms and values, institutional or organizational structures, genres, and so on.

c. Discourse as talk

Although much earlier discourse studies focused on written texts, more contemporary discourse studies focus on the analysis of ongoing verbal interaction in informal conversations as well as other more formal and institutional dialogues. Both written texts and talk are forms of discourse and should be given attention in discourse studies.

d. Discourse as social practice of members

Both spoken and written discourses are forms of social practice in sociocultural contexts. Language users are engaged in discourse not merely as individuals but
also as members of various groups, institutions or cultures. Through their discourse, language users enact, confirm or challenge social and political structures and institutions. In short, discourse reflects the social practice of its members.

**e. Members’ categories**

Discourse analysts should not ‘impose’ preconceived notions and categories on the data analysed, but need to respect the ways social members themselves interpret, orient to and categorize the properties of the social world and their conduct in it. Such a principle however should not be interpreted to mean that analysts cannot go beyond common-sense categories of language users, or should not develop theories that systematically and explicitly account for discourse as social practice.

**f. Sequentiality**

The production and understanding of text and talk is largely linear and sequential. This principle of discourse has two implications. Firstly, structural units (sentences, propositions, acts) should be described or interpreted relative to preceding ones, as is most obvious in various forms of coherence. This discursive relativity also involves functionality where later elements in text and talk may have special functions with respect to previous ones. The second implication of sequentiality in discourse is that language users operate, both mentally and interactionally, in an ‘ongoing’ fashion with the opportunity to reinterpret or repair previous activities and understandings.

**g. Constructivity**

Other than being sequential, discourses are constructive in the sense that their constitutive units may be functionally used, understood or analyzed as elements of larger ones, thus also creating hierarchical structures. Constructivity in discourse applies to forms as well as to meaning and interaction.
h. Levels and dimensions
Discourse can be analysed at various layers, dimensions or levels and at the same time these levels mutually relate to one another. The levels represent different types of phenomena involved in discourse, such as sounds, forms, meanings, or action. Language users are able to strategically manage several levels or dimensions of discourse at the same time.

i. Meaning and function
This principle suggests that both language users and discourse analysts are after meaning. In their production, understanding and analysis of discourse, they ask things like ‘What does this mean here?’, ‘How does this make sense in the present context?’ and explanatory questions like ‘Why is this being said here?’.

j. Rules
Language, communication, and discourse are assumed to be rule-governed. Within discourse analysis, text and talk are analyzed as manifestations or enactments of these socially shared grammatical, textual, communicative or interactional rules, as well as how rules may be violated, ignored or changed, and what the discursive or contextual functions are of such real or apparent violations.

k. Strategies
Besides rules, language users also know and apply mental as well as interactional strategies in the effective understanding and accomplishment of discourse and the realization of their communicative or social goals. For instance, communicative and interactional rules may be analysed as strategies for impression management, negotiation, persuasion, and so forth.
1. Social cognition

Cognition or the role of mental processes and representations in the production and understanding of text and talk is relevant and important in doing discourse analysis. This is because the aspects of discourse discussed above such as meaning, coherence, action, and interaction cannot be properly understood and explained without having recourse to the minds of language users. Personal memories and experiences of events (models), the shared sociocultural representations (knowledge, attitudes, ideologies, norms, and values) of language users as group members also play a fundamental role in the production and understanding of discourse as well as its description and explanation. In effect, cognition is the interface between discourse and society and as such discourse analysis also involves analysis of activation of knowledge and opinions during the production and comprehension of discourse, the way discourse or its meaning is represented in memory and how mental modes of events are formed or activated during production or comprehension.

1.4 Differences between spoken and written discourse

There can be no doubt that people write differently from the way they talk. There are a number of factors for differences between the kinds of language a person may use when he speaks and when he writes. Certainly one of these factors has to do with whether the language is produced by mouth and received by ear, or whether it is produced by hand and received by eye. The differences between spoken and written discourse are also a result of the context of language use, the purpose of the speaker or writer, and the subject matter of what is being said or written. Here, are a number of important differences between spoken and written discourse.

a. Grammatical intricacy
Written discourse is more structurally complex and elaborate than speech. Written discourse is syntactically complex and developed involving the use of subordinate
classes and embeddings, pre-modification of nouns frequently accompanied by post-modification while spoken discourse is syntactically simpler, the syntax is loosely organized, pre-modification of nouns is rare and bits of information is added on from time to time as the speech progresses.

b. Lexical density

Written discourse tends to be more lexically dense than spoken discourse. Lexical density refers to the ratio of content words to grammatical or function words within a clause. Content words include nouns and verbs while grammatical words include items such as prepositions, pronouns and articles. Halliday (1989) declares that in spoken discourse content words tend to be spread out over a number of clauses rather than being tightly packed into individual clauses which is more typical of written discourse. For example:

If Casablanca defined true love for a generation of incurable romantics, it also defined the aesthetic possibilities of cinema for a generation of film lovers.

The above extract from the foreword to the book Casablanca: Script and Legend illustrates the higher lexical density that is typical of many written texts. Specifically, in this extract, there are 7 content words in each of the clauses. (The content words are in italics). In the extract below from the dialogue Casablanca there is an average of 1.6 content words per clause.

Yvonne: Who do you think you are, pushing me around? What a fool I was to fall for a man like you.  

(Paltridge 2006)

c. Nominalization

There is a high level of nominalization in written texts. Actions and events are presented as nouns rather than as verbs. Written texts typically include longer
noun groups than spoken texts. This causes information in written texts to be more tightly packed in fewer words and less spread out than in spoken texts.

The next two examples from Casablanca (in Paltridge 2006: 15) are two opposite illustrations. The former shows long noun groups which are typical in written discourse and the latter shows low level of nominalization and shorter noun groups in spoken discourse.

Although Casablanca defines Bogey for all time as the existential-hero-in-spite-of-himself, several of his roles just precedeing this one (notably High Sierra and The Maltese Falcon) had prepared his fans for the misanthropy and climatic selflessness he would embody as Rick Blaine. Bergman (as Ilsa Lund) and Henreid (as Victor Laszlo) are hardly incandescent lovers—neither are Bergman and Bogart, for that matter—but their turgidity as sexual partners works, intentionally or not, to the film’s advantage.

Ilsa: Can I tell you a story, Rick?
Rick: Has it got a wow finish?
Ilsa: I don’t know the finish yet.
Rick: Well, go on, tell it. Maybe one will come to you as you go along.

c. Explicitness

Writing is more explicit than speech. It is not absolute, because the explicitness depends on the purpose of the discourse. In other words, a person can state something directly, or infer something, in both speaking and writing depending upon what they want the listener or reader to understand and how direct they wish to be. Just in the next example, Rick obviously wishes Yvonne to infer ‘probably not’ without saying so directly.

Yvonne: Will I see you tonight?
Rick: (matter-of-factly) I never make plans that far ahead.

(Paltridge 2006)
d. Contextualization

Speech is more contextualized than writing. This view is based on the perception that speech depends more on a shared situation and background for interpretation than writing which can be interpreted based on less shared context. However there are some spoken genres such as academic lectures which do not require a high dependence on shared context for understanding, while some written genres such as personal letters or memos do. Apart from this, both written fiction and non-fiction may also depend on background information supplied by the reader and an active role of the reader to enter into the world of the text.

e. The spontaneous nature of spoken discourse

Speaking is said to be disorganized and ungrammatical whereas writing is organized and grammatical. This is because spoken discourse contains half-completed and reformulated utterances and is produced spontaneously. Within spoken discourse, topics also change constantly, there is much interruption and overlap between speakers. Speakers can ask for clarification and can correct themselves and each other. Additionally spoken discourse is able to use intonation and body language to convey meaning while written discourse is more constrained because ways of conveying meaning are more limited.

f. Repetition, hesitation and redundancy in spoken discourse

Spoken discourse involves much more repetition, hesitation and redundancy as well as pauses and fillers than written discourse. This is because it is produced in real time with speakers working out what they want to say at the same time as they are saying it.
g. A continuum of differences between spoken and written discourse

There is no simple, one-dimensional difference between spoken and written discourse. The differences between the two are most usefully seen as being on a scale, or continuum.

Paltridge notes that there are no absolute differences between spoken and written language in terms of the predominance of certain linguistic features, but that spoken and written language are, rather, ‘multidimensional constructs’ with some spoken and written genres having a number of features in common with other spoken and written genres and a number of characteristics which show them to be quite different.

Task

3. Think of some kinds of spoken or written discourse that you participate in such as lunch time conversations with friends, group discussions with other students, email messages to friends and so forth. What are some of the characteristic ways in which you interact in this kind of situation? Is the way you communicate in these situations the same or different? How are they different? Why do you think this is the case?
Conclusion

Discourse analysis focuses on knowledge about language and the world beyond the word, clause, phrase and sentence that is needed for successful communication. It considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used and looks at patterns of organization across texts. It considers what people mean by what they say, how they work out what people mean, and the way language presents different views of the world and different understandings. This includes an examination of how discourse is shaped by relationships between participants, and the effects discourse has upon social identities and relations.

Additional References (if any)


Group Work

1. Context is fundamental for discourse analysis. Discuss the importance of context for doing a discourse analysis.
UNIT 2

DISCOURSE AND SOCIETY

Introduction

In order to understand how society is reflected in discourse, we need to know what aspects or factors in society that can influence or shape discourse. It is important to know about the participants practicing a particular discourse because they are part of the contextual features that contribute to the meaning of a particular discourse. This relates to the notion of discourse community and speech community. Other factors such as the participants’ language choice, the social class they belong to and the social networks they are a part of also influences discourse or the language used. In addition, the social identity of the participants is also expressed via discourse. Such identity may be in terms of their gender and sexuality. Another influential factor affecting discourse are the beliefs and thoughts of the participants, of which is termed as ideology. What we can initially see here is that discourse does not exist in a vacuum but is very much socio-culturally influenced. Now, let us move on to the definition of discourse community and speech community.

Unit Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. explain the difference between discourse community and speech community;
2. discuss how social class and social networks can influence discourse;
3. describe how identity and ideology can be expressed through discourse.
DISCOURSE AND SOCIETY

2.1 Discourse communities
2.2 Speech communities
2.3 Discourse and language choice
2.4 Discourse, social class and social networks
2.5 Discourse, gender and sexuality
2.6 Discourse and identity
2.7 Discourse and ideology

Main Points

1. Discourses in the world are influenced by various socio-contextual aspects.
2. These socio-cultural aspects include where we come from, which social group we belong to, our gender, who we are and what we believe in.
3. Discourse analysis help answer questions about social relations, social identification, and why people talk or write the way they do.

Discussion

2.1 Discourse communities

According to Paltridge (2006), a discourse community is a close-knit group of people who share some kind of activity such as members of a club or association. Some of the characteristics that members of a discourse community have include (Swales, 1990):
a. Shared and agreed common goals, values and beliefs  
b. Particular ways of communicating with each other  
c. Particular genres, lexis and specialized language  
d. Similar activities and expertise.

An example of a discourse community is the telephone call centres in the UK (Cameron, 2000). The characteristics of the telephone operators in this community include:

a. They are trained to answer the phone 'with a smile in their voice'.  
b. The tone of their voice should convey confidence and sincerity.  
c. They should not talk too loudly or too softly.  
d. They should not talk too fast or too slow.  
e. They should give appropriate feedback to the callers to ensure understanding.  
f. Their share common goals which are providing service and making sales.  
g. They share particular genres, vocabulary and language terminology.

The fact is, we are all social beings and thus, we are not confined to a single discourse community. We can be a member of many different discourse communities, for example, a person may be a teacher, or a member of the teaching community. He can also be doing a part-time degree at a college where now he is in the student community. Apart from that, he might be a member of a volunteer group like Mercy Malaysia or Greenpeace. If he takes part in the Rukun Tetangga group in his neighbourhood, then he is a member in that discourse community too. In short, this particular person plays a variety of roles in each group, each having its own objectives, expertise and specialization. Wenger (1998) and, Barton and Tusting (2005) term such groups as communities of practice. Such a discourse community may either be close or loosely-knit due to different degrees of membership.
According to Swales (1998), place or location may also produce its own discourse community. In his study on the discourse of each level in a university building, it was found that each level has its own discourse activities due to different personnel occupying each floor.

Other terms for groups of language users postulated by Devitt (2004) are:

a. Communities – Share time together, e.g. office workers.

b. Collectives – Share single interest, e.g. volunteer for Rukun Tetangga.

c. Networks – Closer but restricted membership, e.g. allowing certain people to be your friends in Friendster or Facebook website.

A discourse community also interacts with a larger community – a speech community. It locates itself under the umbrella of a speech community.

2.2 Speech communities

According to Paltridge (2006) and Spolsky (1998), the features of a speech community include:

a. A group of people who speak the same language.

b. A group of people who converse and interact with each other.

c. A group of people sharing the same norms of communication.

d. It is larger than a discourse community.

e. It is not limited in location and size.

f. It is governed by conditions to use appropriate language (linguistic repertoire).

g. It includes discourse communities.

For example (Spolsky, 1998), the local Chinese in Shanghai use standard Mandarin. For those who were born in Shanghai, they also speak the local dialect,
Shanghaiese. These people will know when and where to use Mandarin or Shanghaiese in order to interact appropriately with each other.

Hence, a person can change his identification with a certain speech community to another just by switching his language in a single utterance (Wardhaugh 1998), in this case, from Mandarin or Shanghaiese. Due to this fact, speakers tend to have a range of social identities to suit the speech community they are associated with. They would strategize and position themselves according to the social and communicative rules of that particular speech community. Speakers then develop a communicative repertoire of language styles, registers and varieties of the various speech communities they are in.

What we can see based on the previous example is that adapting to the language of one’s speech community is important for effective communication in order to maintain affiliations, a sense of belonging and sharing of similarities with the community.

However, having said that, we sometimes do not participate fully in the particular speech community due to several factors (Paltridge, 2006):

a. Age of entry into the speech community.
b. The speech community’s attitudes and expectations towards the speaker.
c. Limitations based on education, occupation or proficiency in the language of the speech community.
TASK 1

1. What discourse communities are you a member of? Do any of these communities overlap? How similar or different is your use of language in each of these communities?

2. Compare and contrast the characteristics of a discourse community and a speech community.

2.3 Discourse and language choice

When speakers belong to a range of discourse and speech communities, they possess different social identities for each of the communities. Because of this, they will have several language varieties or linguistic repertoire, although with differing degree of proficiency, to use in their communication with each different community (Patrtridge 2006). This relates to language choice of the speaker which is determined by several factors like setting, status of participants, topic, purpose, preference, constraints, degree of formality and social distance between speakers.
For example, in Malaysia, there is a kind of language that teenagers use which is called the ‘F’ language where the speaker would insert the letter ‘F’ at the beginning of each syllable in a word. Only those who know this language will understand when it is used. A speaker would use this language when she does not want anyone else to understand what she is saying. So, a sentence like “See you at the movies after class” will sound like this “Fee foo fat fe fovies ffter flass”. Because the speaker is so used to this kind of language, she would usually talk a bit fast and this would be difficult for others who do not know this language to comprehend.

Constraints may also influence the language choice of a speaker. Buda (1991) provides two examples of this situation. Firstly, it might be thought, for example, that someone with reasonable fluency in several languages would nevertheless choose to speak his mother tongue wherever possible, that being the language with which he is most familiar and comfortable. This natural tendency would be constrained by only one factor: linguistic congruity. Communication is only possible if both speakers share the same language, and there is little to be gained from addressing someone in a language which they do not understand. A native speaker of Hungarian, for instance, might prefer to use that language wherever possible, but if he should himself in an environment where there are no other Hungarian speakers — in a foreign country, for example — he would be obliged to use his second or third language.

The second example of how constraints affect language choice can be seen when a group of people attending a party are holding a conversation in Polish (Buda, 1991). The Scottish hostess approaches the group to ask how everyone is enjoying the party, and the conversation switches to English. Presently the hostess leaves to talk with other guests, and the group continues to talk in English for several minutes. After a short pause in the conversation one of the members of the group reverts to Polish, and the rest of the group follows suit. The members of the group at the party were all of Polish descent, and Polish was the language they chose to speak among themselves. When they became aware of the presence of their hostess, they felt
obliged to continue their conversation in English, opening the way for her possible participation.

2.4 Discourse, social class and social networks

Another factor influencing our spoken and written discourse is social class. Social class involves grouping people together and according them status within society according to the groups they belong to. Social class can be seen as a collection of subcultures arranged in a hierarchy of prestige or hierarchical distinctions between individuals or groups in societies or cultures. For example, the European society in 1700s was divided between the upper 'bourgeoisie' class and the lower 'peasantry' class. The Indian community may or may not practice their caste system. The class a person belongs to will influence his discourse, or his verbal and non-verbal behaviour. The factors that determine class vary widely from one society to another. Even within a society, different people or groups may have very different ideas about what makes one "higher" or "lower" in the social hierarchy. Members of the working class tend to speak less standard language, while the lower, middle, and upper middle class will in turn speak closer to the standard.

William Labov's (1966) study on the stratification of English in New York City found that salespeople in the highest ranked stores will have the most (r) in their speech patterns, those in the middle ranked store will have an intermediate value, and those in the lowest ranked store will have the least. In New York City, (r) is pronounced more by higher social classes. On the other hand, Bernstein (1973) observed that there were social class differences in the communication codes of working class and middle class children; differences that reflect the class and power relations in the social division of labor, family and schools.

Some of the determinants of class as postulated by Labov (1966) and Wardhaugh (1998) include:
a. Occupation, e.g. Do you perceive a difference in class between a Professor and a cleaner?

b. Education, e.g. Do you perceive a difference in class between someone with multiple college degrees or qualifications and one who did not complete high-school?

c. Income, e.g. Do you perceive a difference in class between a someone who earns more than RM250,000 per annum and one who earns less than RM1000 per annum?

d. Housing and its location, e.g. Do you perceive a difference in class between someone who lives in a mansion and one who lives in a shanty house?

e. Religious affiliation, e.g. Do you perceive a difference in class between someone who has a religion and one who does not?

f. Hobbies e.g. Do you perceive a difference in class between someone who plays golf or sails yachts in their leisure time and one who does not?

g. Membership in societies e.g. Do you perceive a difference in class between someone who is a member of many prestigious societies and one who is not?

h. Family background e.g. Do you perceive a difference in class between a someone from an upper class family background and one who is from a lower class?

Even though a group of speakers appear to be identical in terms of social class membership, their use of language might be different based on the social networks they belong to and the spoken and written genres used by such networks (Patridge 2006). Social networks are mainly determined by:

a. Kinship ties

b. Religious affiliations

c. Neighbourhood relationship

d. Employee relations

e. Hobbies or activities.
For example, Ahmad teaches Mathematics at a local high school. His neighbour Rashid, also works as a teacher in the same school. He is also his brother in law. They both attend their neighbourhood’s mosque for prayers. There, they perform religious activities with Pak Harun, the mosque's Imam. They also made friends with Karim, who only occasionally drops by to pray when he attends business meetings at a nearby office.

Now, we can look at the social network from the above example. The way Ahmad and Rashid speak reflects the fact that they belong to a small closely-knit working class community. They are close in a sense that they are related by marriage and are neighbours. The men Ahmad mixes with outside work, like Pak Harun and Karim are included in his social network, however with different degree of closeness. Pak Harun would be closer to Ahmad than Karim. What and how Ahmad speaks to Rashid will depend on the fact that they both share similar occupation. But with Pak Harun, he might not speak like a teacher, but as a student, since Pak Harun can be said as a religious authority. Ahmad’s speech with Karim might by a bit distanced and different in style.

A social network which is strong and close will yield a high degree of solidarity among members, and thus affects language use and the preservation of language varieties. Holmes (2001) argues that people’s speech reflect the types of networks they belong to. The people we interact and mix regularly with will influence our speech. For example, parents will notice that the language their children speak will gradually resemble the speech of the other kids at school, rather than the family’s language style. When we belong to more than one network, we will automatically change our speech forms according to the different context we are in. For instance, a Kelantanese student taking an English undergraduate degree will speak in standard English in class with her lecturer and classmates, but will use a more local, vernacular style with her family or people in her own hometown.
2.5 Discourse, gender and sexuality

In all speech communities, the linguistic features used by men and women contrast to different degrees. This refers to the study of how gender affects discourse. It is essential to remember that gender does not mean the same as sex or sexuality of a person. Sexuality mainly relates to a person’s biological characteristics and desire for connection to others (Cameron and Kulick, 2003).
Below are some definitions and explanations on gender:

- Gender is a socio-cultural behaviour; socially-constructed category; a product of social practice. It is a routinely, repeated acts according to historical and socio-cultural norms that define masculinity and femininity (Weatherall, 2002).

- Gender is something a person does, the way they talk and act. Gendered identity is continuously produced, reproduced, changed and reaffirmed through peoples’ performance (Cameron, 2005).

- Gender as **performativity** means the diversity of language among male and female language users arise when gender is performed and done in context (Swann, 2002).

**Performativity** – we learn to become a woman by being in a social setting. That is, we learn particular identities in our daily language interactions. What we unconsciously do in public with others enact or reveal our gendered roles.

**Gender preferential speech forms** – One gender shows greater preference in using a particular language form. For example, women tend to use more standard forms than men do. Men use more vernacular forms than women do (Holmes 2001). e.g. Women pronounce words with ‘-ing’ fully, as in ‘swimming, playing, trying’. Men pronounce them ending with ‘-in’, ‘swimmin, playin, tryin’.

- According to Lakoff (1975) – Women’s language differs from men. Some of the features include:
  - More use of standard, polite forms or euphemisms e.g. restroom, loo.
  - Use of questions tags, rising intonation in declaratives, avoidance of fillers (expletives), hedges, mitigating devices, more indirectness and tentative. (All these are due to men’s dominance over women which resulted to them being degraded and marginalized)
- Use of diminutives (word forms that convey a slight degree of the root meaning)
  e.g.
  Dog       doggie
  Cat       kitty
  Bird      birdie
  Wife      Wifey
  Pregnant  preggy
  Cute      cutie

+ According to Spender (1980), such language features in women probably relates to
  the notion of dominance:

(1) Dominance – refers to the distribution of power in society where women’s
    language reflects their continuous subordinate position. The higher male dominance
    existing, the more there is female oppression and subordination.
    This notion is supported by West and Zimmerman (1983) who claimed that men deny
    equal status to women in conversation using linguistic gestures of power which keeps
    women in their secondary position in society. Hence, such ways of doing power reflect
    social status or power differences.

Gender-exclusive speech forms (some forms are used only by women and others
are used by men) reflect gender exclusive roles. For example, in Bengali society, a
younger person should not address a superior by the first name. Since the wife is
considered subordinate to her husband, she must not address him by his first name
but uses circumlocution, husband’s name is ‘Tara’ which means star. But the wife calls
him ‘nokkhotro’ which means heavenly body (Holmes 2001).

The notion above relates to what Tannen (1990) terms as difference:

(2) Difference - Due to different socio-cultural upbringing, boys and girls grow up
different ways with different ways of communicating and behaving.
• Differences and dominance work together to construct gendered discourse.

Holmes (1997) argued that people speak differently in different contexts as we have many roles, activities and personalities or identities. Gender is one part of a person's social identity which interacts with social class and ethnicity. Gendered discourse may also reveal social class. Women favour the overtly prestigious form and men prefer the vernacular, one which is not highly admired by society.

E.g. The use of multiple negation is more frequent in men's speech than in women's. “I don’t know nothing about it.”

Why do women prefer the standard prestigious form? (Holmes 2001).
   a. Women are more sensitive to contextual factors.
   b. Women are more conscious about their status. They are aware that how they talk may signal their social class background or status in the community. Since standard speech is commonly associated with high social status, it is a way for women to claim such status as they are subordinated in society.
   c. Women's role as guardian of society's values. Society's expects better behaviour from women than men. Misbehaving, rule-breaking are not tolerated in women so society expects women to have correct behaviour and speech. However, this depends on the context. A family conversation between a mother and daughter will surely use the non-standard form, informal and personal.
   d. The belief that subordinate groups must be polite. Using standard speech forms enable women to be valued in society and protect her reputation. It is also to avoid losing face and also to avoid offending others.

Why don't men use more standard forms? (Holmes 2001).
   a. Vernacular forms carry macho connotations of masculinity and toughness. Standard forms tend to be associated with female values and femininity.
   b. Male solidarity reduces the formality of the context.
Holmes (2001) conclude that gender affiliation, the social roles that women and men play, their different values and social networks, the social categories they identify with, their sensitivity to contextual factors are relevant factors influencing people's discourse.

Discourse and sexuality, on the other hand, is more towards the notion of desire for connection to others on an unconscious basis. It is the unconscious desire that motivates a person's need for intimate communication or connections with the other sex or with the same sex. This gendered performance, for instance, goes into the subject of mimicking a heterosexual person when one is not, or masquerading as another gender when one is not.

E.g. Tomboys or girls who talk and mimic male or boyish behaviour and identity in order to display, and maintain their so-called "male sexuality".

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**Task 3**

1. Give some examples of routine acts or responsibilities of men and women in our life today. What beliefs or assumptions are made and practiced by society regarding the identity and role of men and women?

2. How do people do gender through language use? Explain and give examples of based on your own observations.
2.6 Discourse and identity

When speakers belong to a range of discourse and speech communities, they possess different social identities for each of the communities.

What is identity?
- The information a person gives off about himself.
- Socially-constructed self that governs human action.
- It is not a fixed entity. It shifts.
- Constantly constructed and reconstructed.
- Depends on context, purpose, occasion, space, time.
- A public performance or construction.
- Our personality.
- Who people are to each other.
- How we talk, how we move, what we wear, where we are, the group we belong to reveal our identity.
  E.g. our gender, sexuality, age, ethnic and national identities.

Here is a dialogue between three girls performing their feminine identities:

Lisa: doesn’t she look really nice/
Kate: yes/
Emily: she DOES look nice/

Lisa: I think with the lipstick/
Kate: you should wear make up more often Sarah

Lisa: It looks good/
Emily: Yeah/....makes your lips more luscious..
Lisa: You should be a model
Kate: Oooh yes!... models have big luscious lips..
Emily: Sarah you really look nice.

From the dialogue, we can observe how the girls do or perform their identity as feminine beings through (Benwell & Stokoe 2006):

a. The use of overt compliments.
b. A shared world in which to wear makeup is ‘doing femininity’
c. The belief in the high status to look nice, like a model.
d. A supportive, friendship discourse.

Identity is also seen as a product of the social context through an individuals’ identification with a certain group. This is divided into two categories:
1. Collective identity – e.g. white, working class, middle income group.
2. Communities of practice – e.g. work mates, your Rukun Tetangga or neighbourhood watch group, being in the same university or high school alumni.

As social beings, humans possess various identities according to different contexts, such as:

- In everyday conversations (telephone talks)
- In institutional settings (academic discourse)
- In narrative stories (people’s stories in the media)
- In commodified contexts (personal or product advertisements)
- In spatial locations (in neighbourhoods)
- In virtual environments. (chatroom discourse)
- Using discourse to create, express and establish social identities
a. Identity in a virtual setting.
Example 1: Chat room or online identities.
- People create their desired personae.
- Identity in the net is playful, creative, impressive, limitless and different from reality.
- Multiple cyber identities can be created as a person can be many different persons and anonymous.
- This can create fraud or crime e.g. cyber-rape, cyber-violence, identity fraud, manipulations, lies.

b. Identity in institutional setting.
Example 2: Identity in academic or medical institutions. Lecturer talk, doctor-patient talk.

c. Identity in everyday conversation.
Example 3: Does your outer appearance reflect your identity or who you really are inside?
Maybe you look timid but inside you are the opposite.

d. Identity in commodified contexts (personal or product advertisements) – people are seen as commodity or product.
Example 4: Advertisement on facial or beauty products which claim that by using them, you will produce a certain kind of identity.
e.g. Aura Seri, Aura Genius
menaikkan seri wajah & membersihkan aura yang kotor.

Why do people create such identities? They do so to maintain solidarity and similarities, to assert their individuality or to be accepted and included.
2.7 Discourse and ideology

What is ideology?
- Set of beliefs or ideas held by a particular person or group that influences the way people behave.

Discourses or texts are ideological. How is this so?
E.g. Newspapers like Utusan Malaysia and the Star have their own ideological slant. Utusan seems to be strongly pro-government. This is seen in the way it reports on all the activities done by the government to show that the government is sensitive to the needs of Malaysians. It is very much Malay-oriented.

Below are some explanations on ideology (Fairclough, 1989):
- Ideology works in implicit (indirect) assumptions.
- It is most effective when its working’s are least visible.
- A text positions the reader through cues, presuppositions or assumptions that the reader brings to the text.
- Ideology is tied to power relations.
- Who is in power is able to influence the discourse.
  E.g. the US media controls most tv channels and news agencies. Through that, it easily justifies US actions in the war through repetitions and foregrounding of ‘heroism’ of its soldiers.
- Ideological diversity vary across societies. These diverse ideologies come from differences in values, attitudes, positions, experiences, interests between social groups.
- Words and expressions that bring about ideological meanings may be gradually accepted by society and lose its ideological meaning. This process is called ‘naturalization’.
  e.g. The noun phrase “weapons of mass destruction” was coined by the U.S. and since then has been a common expression used by the media and public.
How can we detect ideology in a text? We can do this by analysing the textual features to explore the social, cultural and political values underlying the use of spoken and written discourse. There are three ways how ideology is presented in discourse:

1. **Framing / angle / perspective.**
   The angle or perspective or slant that an author or speaker is taking.

   Example 1 - Political value.
   Utusan Malaysia is strongly pro-government. This is seen in the way its articles or authors criticizes those who are anti-government and glorifies actions done by the government.

   Example 2 – Political value.
   Bush’s speech includes a humanitarian slant to soften his cruel military actions in order to show his sensitivity to the people. This is seen in the underlined words below:
   “But the operation will also have a humanitarian component, Bush said.
   "As we strike military targets, we will also drop food, medicine and supplies to the starving and suffering men, women and children of Afghanistan," Bush said.
   "The United States of America is a friend to the Afghan people."

2. **Foregrounding**
   Highlighting or emphazing particular ideas or beliefs or views. Hiding or not mentioning the opposite view.
   
   E.g. Bush’s statement on the war.
   "We are supported by the collective will of the world," Bush said.
   This statement is a lie which is being foregrounded as truth. It is foregrounding US intervention or colonization as a helpful and sacred action.
Bush also told Americans that “helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable and free country will require our sustained commitment.” In closing, Bush said, “We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others. And we will prevail. May God bless our country and all who defend her.”

3. Presupposition or assumption

Making assumptions or to think that something or a value is true in advance without having any proof. This can be seen in beauty advertisements which make use of commodified femininity. Such advertisements place importance on transformation of self and surface appearance.

For example:
Assumption 1 - Bare face is bad, but looking natural is very important.
“Looks flawlessly natural” (from Maybelline: everfresh makeup advertisement)

Assumption 2 - Being fat is bad.
Advertisements on slimming products and slimming centres.
“Gain Success in Eliminating Weight -No Products to Buy”
“Ways to Win at Weight Loss--$15”
“Setting Goals for Weight Loss--$8”
“Know the Risks of Being Overweight--$15”

Assumption 3 - Growing old is bad. We should fight it. This assumption can be in sentences like:
“Ways To Reduce Wrinkles And How To Feel Young Again”
“Try the latest breakthrough in anti-aging skin care for free.”
Task 4
Group Discussion

1. Think of ways in which your identity has been constructed through ways of doing things and ways of belonging to a group. E.g. identity as a student in UPM or other social group.

2. Find a newspaper article and identify if it has an ideological slant in the content.

Conclusion

- Ideology is imposed on people to the point that it is seen as common sense. But we as readers should be aware of such persuasion.
- We have seen how various contextual factors are important in analyzing written and spoken discourse.
- Various social, cultural and political values are involved in identifying ideologies.
- By knowing all these, we are able to read or listen to discourses with a critical mind.
Additional References (If any)


Answer key Task 1

1. You can belong to more than one discourse community. For example, a person might belong to a cycling group and also the Malaysian Association of Engineers. The language he speaks to his fellow cycling friends is sure to be different than the language he speaks with his fellow engineers. Cyclists’ talk of is often filled with topics like cycling equipments, bike-buying advice, cycle training, road cycling, professional cycling, women cycling, road and track safety, touring and recreational cycling and etc. In contrast, conversation among engineers in a construction company will be filled with talks on construction sites, irrigation, transportation, soils and foundation and etc. The difference lies in the jargon and topics used in both groups.

2. Refer to notes in section 2.1 and 2.2.

Answer key Task 2

1. When we are in a particular context, we adjust our language use to suit the particular occasion or setting. The language spoken during a funeral would surely be sympathetic, and considerate. A job application letter would surely contain formal language features, in contrast to a letter to our close friend. We also would not be using code-switching in a job application letter in contrast to the letter to our friend.
2. A social network is another way of describing a particular speech community in terms of relations between individual members in a community. A network could be loose or tight depending on how members interact with each other (Wardough, 2006). For instance, an office or factory may be considered a tight community because all members interact with each other. A large course with 100+ students be a looser community because students may only interact with the instructor and maybe 1-2 other students. Social class on the other hand deals with class aspiration and the relationship is hierarchical, as in upper class or lower class, whereas social network involves a more horizontal relationship.

Answer key Task 3

1. Think of routine acts or occupations where men and women are prone to do like nursing, maids, housewife, teacher, pilots or even the husband being the breadwinner of the family. Do you think nursing is suitable for women or men? Why is this so? What about firemen or doctors? Are women better in being nurses due to their nurturing and gentle nature? Discuss more.

2. What we unconsciously do in public with others enact or reveal our gendered roles. For example, a mother behaves in a way that enact her female gender is the gentle way she talks to her baby, her patience in dealing with her baby’s tantrums and her many ways in caring for her baby, e.g. cooing is a kind of mother-baby talk. How does a father usually enact his gendered role? Discuss more.
Answer key Task 4

1. You can think of how you have changed the way you are starting from right after high school, going on to becoming a university student, then on to a working life probably as a teacher, maybe becoming a parent and so on. You probably had a different identity as a university student in our twenties, compared to now as a working person. You might talk differently then compared to now, which can be due to the many people and experiences that you have gone through.

2. An issue of Utusan Malaysia or New Straits Times may reveal news headlines containing mainly positive words to reflect a good image of the Malaysian government and the country. For example, headlines from Utusan Malaysia showed positive words used e.g. Pembentangan berjalan lancar... Pak Lah puji pembentangan..., NGO alu-alu inisiatif baru, PDRM sambut baik...NGO lega jaminan kerajaan ...etc. You can also look at the words used in news reports on pandemics, or other important issues in the news.
UNIT 3

DISCOURSE AND PRAGMATICS

Introduction

Unit 3 presents an overview of discourse and pragmatics. It discusses the notion of speech acts and the ways in which people typically perform speech acts as well as the reasons people choose to perform a speech act in a particular way such as for example reasons of politeness. The ways in which people perform speech acts across cultures is also discussed.

1. Pragmatics
2. Speech acts: direct and indirect acts, felicity conditions, presupposition
3. Co-operative principle and maxims
4. Cross-cultural pragmatics and pragmatic failure
5. Implicatures
6. Politeness and face
7. Face-threatening acts

Objectives

1. Define the term pragmatics
2. Explain speech act and the principles in performing an act
3. Explain the co-operative principle and its maxims
4. Explicate cross-cultural pragmatics and pragmatic failure
5. Explicate implicatures, politeness and face in communication
TOPIC: DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

3.1 Pragmatics

3.2 Language, context and discourse

3.3 Speech acts and discourse
   a. Direct and indirect speech acts
   b. Felicity conditions and discourse
   c. Presupposition and discourse

3.4 Co-operative principle and discourse
   a. Flouting the co-operative principle
   b. Differences between flouting and violating maxims

3.5 Cross-cultural pragmatics and discourse
   a. Communication across cultures
   b. Cross-cultural pragmatics
   c. Pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics
   d. Cross-cultural pragmatic failure

3.6 Conversational implicature and discourse
   a. Conventional and particularized implicatures
   b. Scalar implicatures

3.7 Politeness, face and discourse
   a. Involvement and independence in spoken and written discourse

3.8 Face and politeness across cultures

3.9 Face-threatening acts

3.10 Politeness and cross-cultural pragmatic failure
Main Points

1. Pragmatics is an approach to discourse analysis that allows text and talk to be studied in its social and situational context. The elements studied are the ways speech acts are performed and why such as for reasons of politeness.

2. Words perform actions and a speech act is an action that a speaker performs when making an utterance such as to ask, to request, to demand, to propose, to suggest, to disagree, to agree, to bargain, to compliment, to give reasons, to joke, and so forth. Acts may be direct or indirect.

3. Speakers and listeners cooperate in order for conversations to proceed smoothly. In conversation, we assume that our interlocutor is being cooperative, and if his utterance is not an explicit contribution to the development of the conversation, then it induces us to look for alternative interpretations of the utterance. There is a set of principles which direct us to a particular interpretation of what is said. This is known as the co-operative principle and there are four maxims that govern this principle: the maxims of quantity (being informative), quality (being truthful), manner (being clear) and relation (being relevant).

4. People do not always say what they mean. Sometimes they mean more than what they actually say and the hearer has to infer the implied meaning. Implicature is the additional unstated meaning of an utterance which has to be assumed in order to understand an utterance.

5. Different languages and cultures have different ways of observing and expressing speech acts. Cross-cultural pragmatics refers to the studies which investigate the cross-cultural use of speech acts.

6. Cross-cultural pragmatic failure refers to the failure to convey or understand the pragmatic intention of a speech act in particular language and culture. There are two main types of cross-cultural pragmatic failure: sociopragmatic failure and pragmalinguistic failure.

7. Politeness and face are important for understanding why people choose
to say things in a particular way in spoken and written discourse. There are three maxims of politeness: ‘don’t impose’, ‘give options’ and ‘make your hearer feel good’. These maxims trigger independence and involvement in communication.

8. A face threatening act is a speech act that causes damage to the face of the addressee or addressee by acting in opposition to the wants or desires of the other. For instance when ordering someone to do something or requesting a favour from someone.

Discussion

3.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of meaning in relation to the social, situational and textual context in which a person is speaking or writing as well as background knowledge context which refers to what people know about each other and about the world. Pragmatics assumes that when people communicate with each other they normally follow some kind co-operative principle, or we say they have a shared understanding of how they should co-operate in their communications. Ways of communication varies across cultures and the study of this use of language across cultures is called cross-cultural pragmatics.

The relationship between linguistic form and communicative function is of central interest in pragmatics. People need to know the communicative function of an utterance for two purposes: first, to assign a discourse label to the utterance in the place of the overall discourse, second, to understand what people typically say and do as they perform particular genres in particular social and cultural settings. For example, if someone says ‘The bus was late’, they may be complaining about the bus service and so we label the utterance ‘complaint’; they may be explaining why they are late as a follow up to an apology and so we label the stage of the conversation ‘explanation’; or they may be doing something else.
3.2 Language, context and discourse

In order to understand the relationship between what is said and what is understood in spoken and written discourse, we need figure out how language functions in context first. The situational context of what someone says is crucial to understand and interpret the meaning of what is being said, which includes the physical context, the social context and the mental worlds and roles of the people involved in the interaction. None of the contexts can be neglected, because each of them influence what we say and how other people interpret what we say in spoken and written discourse. In addition, the linguistic context, in terms of what has been said and what is yet to be said in the discourse, also has an impact on the intended meaning and how someone may interpret this meaning in spoken and written discourse.

In terms of situational context, a good example is a conversation between two people in a restaurant may mean different things to different people, such as the actual speakers, a ‘side participant’ in the conversation such as someone sitting next to one of the speakers, a ‘bystander’ such as the waiter, as well as someone who may be eavesdropping on the conversation. Another example of the importance of situational context is where a law student’s assignment may mean different things to his or her professor and to the client of a law firm.

In conclusion, key aspects of context such as situational context, background knowledge context and co-textual context are crucial to the production and interpretation of discourse and meaning is a dynamic process and is produced in interaction.
3.3 Speech acts and discourse

Austin’s (1962) *How to Do Things with Words* and Searle’s (1969) *Speech Acts* are two influential works in both pragmatics and the relevant areas of discourse analysis. They propose firstly that language is used to ‘do things’ other than just refer to the truth or falseness of particular statements and secondly, that people perform acts by using language just as they perform physical acts, such as to give orders, to make requests, to give warnings or to give advice etc. The two arguments in effect support the same point: people use language to do things that go beyond the literal meaning of what is said.

It is critically important that we should understand the relationship between the literal meaning of what someone says and what the person intends by what is said. Very often, what we say contains both propositional content (a literal meaning) and an illocutionary meaning (or illocutionary force).

Austin holds the idea that there are three kinds of act which occur with everything we say. First, the locutionary act refers to the literal meaning of the actual words (such as ‘It’s hot here’ refers to the temperature). Second, the illocutionary act, which refers to the speaker’s intention in uttering the words (such as a request for someone to turn on the air conditioning); third, the perlocutionary act, which refers to the effect this utterance has on the thoughts or actions of the other person (such as someone getting up and turning on the air conditioning).

a. Direct and indirect speech acts

If the utterance indicates the act to be performed in a literal manner, then the utterance is understood as a direct act. For example, the utterance ‘Please clean the table’ indicates that the speaker is performing a directive to the effect that the interlocutor has to clean the table. In a direct speech act the content of communication is identical to the content intended to be communicated.

However, very often, we express our intention indirectly. For example, when the teacher says, “Well, it’s really hot today”, his or her real intention may mean for
someone to open the window or turn on the air-conditioning. In the utterance, ‘Will you be able to reach the window’, for instance, the criterion is not only that the interlocutor will be able to reach the window but also a request for him to do so to either open or shut it if he can. Since the request is performed indirectly through a question, it is understood as an indirect speech act.

Likewise, although the word ‘can’ is often used to refer to something other than ability or permission when involving a service, the word can mean something else, as shown in the example below.

A: Can I take your order now please?
B: Can I have nine nuggets and chips with sweet and sour sauce and a can of Pepsi thanks?

(Paltrridge 2006)

In the above example, the first sentence is an offer of service, not about the sales person’s ability to serve the customer. The second utterance is an acceptance of the offer and a sales request, not a question about ability or permission.

b. Felicity conditions and discourse

Austin argued that in order to make a speech act ‘work’, some conditions must be fulfilled, such as the generally accepted procedure for successfully carrying out the speech act must be carried out correctly and completely; the circumstances must be appropriate for the use of the speech act; the person who uses the speech act must be the appropriate person to use it in the particular context and the person must have the required thoughts, feelings and intentions for the speech act to be ‘felicitous’.

In a word, the conditions of felicity means that the communication must be carried out by the right person, in the right place, at the right time and normally, with a certain intention or it will not ‘work’, because if the first two of these conditions (procedure and circumstance) are not satisfied, the act will not be achieved and
will 'misfire'. If the third of these conditions (person) does not hold, then the procedure will be 'abused.'

c. Presupposition and discourse

Presupposition is important to both speech act theory and pragmatics, which refers to the common ground that is assumed to exist between language users and/or of the world.

Two main kinds of presupposition are important in pragmatics: conventional presupposition and pragmatic presupposition. The former is typically linked to particular linguistic forms and is less context-dependent than the latter which is context-dependent and arises from the use of an utterance in a particular context. For example, ‘Would you like some coffee?’ suggests the coffee is already prepared whereas ‘Would you like anything to drink?’ does not suggest a drink has already been prepared.

Presuppositions are crucial to an understanding of what people mean by what they say in spoken and written discourse because we often presuppose a person will have a similar understanding to us in terms of what we mean by what we say. In effect, it is because people make such assumptions that discourse normally proceeds as smoothly as it does.
Tasks

1. For each situation below, think of how you would perform the speech acts concerned.
   a. You and your close friend are having dinner together and you suddenly realize you have left your wallet at home. Ask your friend to lend you some money to pay for dinner.
   b. You admire your friend's new clothes and would like to compliment her. How would you perform the compliment?
   c. You would like to take a week off work to entertain a friend/relative who is visiting you from overseas and you have no more leave owing to you. You go to your boss's office to ask for the week's leave.

2. Compare the way the speech acts above are performed. In what ways are they different and why?

3.4 Co-operative principle and discourse

Grice (1975) argues that in order for a person to understand what others say, some kinds of cooperative principle must be assumed to be in operation, which says that we should aim to make our conversational contribution 'such as is required, at stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction' (Grice 1975: 45) of the exchange in which we are engaged.

There are four sub-principles, or maxims in Grice's cooperative principle, which are the maxims of quality, quantity, relation and manner. The maxim of quality means people should only say what they believe to be true and what they have evidence for. The maxim of quantity says we should make our contribution as
informative as is required for the particular purpose and not make it more informative than is required. The maxim of relation says we should make our contribution relevant to the interaction or we should indicate in what way it is not. The maxim of manner says we should be clear in what we say, we should avoid ambiguity or obscurity and we should be brief and orderly in our contribution to the interaction.

In the following examples, both speakers observe all of the maxims for co-operative behaviour. Both say all that is required at the appropriate stage in the conversation. They both observe the purpose and direction of the conversation. What they say is relevant to the conversation and they are each brief, orderly and unambiguous in what they say:

Eg 1: A: Will you marry me?
   B: I will.

Eg 2: A: Where is my coat?
   B: It’s in the wardrobe.

Eg 3: A: Hi. What would you like?
   B: Two hundred grams of the shaved ham thanks.

In a word, we expect a person’s contribution to an interaction to be genuine, neither more nor less than is required, as well as clear and appropriate to the interaction. In this way, we assume that a speaker is following the maxims and combined with our knowledge of the world we are able to figure out what they mean by what they say. However, we should also bear in mind that there are times when being truthful, brief and relevant might have different meanings within different contexts and situations. Apart from this, there are also occasions that we cannot be brief and true at the same time, which brings us to the notion of ‘flouting’ of the co-operative principle and its maxims.
a. Flouting the co-operative principle

On some occasions speakers flout the co-operative principle and intend their hearer to understand this. Put it in other way, they purposely do not observe the maxim, and intend their hearer to be aware of this.

For example, sometimes people may flout the maxim of relation or the maxim of quantity as reflected in the two examples below.

Chinese student: What do you do in America?
American student: I work in a bank.
Chinese student: It's a good job, isn't it?
American student: Well, just so so.
Chinese student: Then, how much is your salary every month?
American student: Oh no...
Chinese student: What's wrong?
American student: Why are you asking that?
Chinese student: Just asking, nothing else...
American student: The station isn't far is it?

Here the question the Chinese student has asked does not observe the maxim of relation for an English conversation of this kind. He is not aware of this, although the American student clearly is.

A: Can I get six thin slices of Danish ham please?
B: Six thin slices...
A: Yep.
B: They're all really thin, so...

In this example, the serving person politely suggests the customer is flouting the maxim of quantity, saying more than is necessary, as the ham is already thinly sliced.
b. Differences between flouting and violating maxims

There are differences between flouting and violating maxims.

A speaker is flouting a maxim if he does not observe a maxim but has no intention of deceiving or misleading the other person.

A person is violating a maxim if there is a likelihood that they are liable to mislead the other person.

For example, ‘Mummy’s gone on a little holiday because she needs a rest’ meaning ‘Mummy’s gone away to decide if she wants a divorce or not’ violates, rather than flouts, the maxim of manner because the speaker purposely intends the hearer to understand something other than the truth.

3.5 Cross-cultural pragmatics and discourse

The ways in which people perform speech acts, and what they mean by what they say when they perform them, often varies across cultures. For example, from the Japanese perspective, an apology doesn’t mean that the sorry-sayer must take responsibility for something or that he or she will be obliged to do anything about it. However, from in English culture, apology means both of what are mentioned above.

a. Communication across cultures

Different languages and cultures often have different ways of dealing with pragmatic issues, as well as different ways of observing Grice’s maxims (Wierzbicka 2003).

For example, speakers of different languages may have different understandings of the maxim of quantity in conversational interactions. Beal (1992) found in a
communication in the workplace study that communication difficulties occurred between English and French speakers because the English speakers saw greeting questions such as ‘How are you?’ or ‘Did you have a good weekend?’ as examples of ‘phatic’ communication and expected short, standard answers such as ‘Fine thanks’. However, the French speakers regarded them as ‘real’ questions for information. As a result, from the perspective of English speakers, the French speakers flouted the maxim of quantity by talking at length about such things. Another example is about silence in the eyes of Japanese and native English speakers when they participate the tutorials in English university. Nakane (2003) made this study and found that miscommunication occurred because native English speaker tutors interpreted the Japanese students’ ‘wait time’ in answering questions as flouting the maxim of quantity. This is because the Japanese students didn’t say enough, soon enough, in relation to the tutors’ English speaking expectations for interactions in this kind of setting. In effect, in Japanese communication silence is typically of longer duration than in Western countries and that silence can play quite a different role than it does in English. For Japanese students, silence does not necessarily mean they have nothing to say. It can represent thoughtfulness and a wish not to be seen as forward or selfish. As a result, silence in Japanese has a very important role in the creation of group harmony which is quite different to its role in English spoken interactions.

Another example to show that different languages and cultures often have different ways of dealing with pragmatic issues, as well as different ways of observing Grice’s maxims is Austin’s (1998) discussion of letters of recommendation in academic settings. She found that in English academic settings, letters of recommendation may vary in strength of recommendation. Besides, readers also take into account the prestige of the person writing the letter, where they work and the content and tone of the letter. Additionally, they might also notice ‘what has not been said’ in the letter. In Japanese academic settings, the situation is quite different. Japanese letters of recommendation are often much shorter than they are in English and often there is no particular relationship between the length of the letter and the quality of recommendation because the reader may need to ask for more information about a candidate rather than rely on
the letter alone. As a result, an English-speaking academic may misread a Japanese letter of recommendation if they are not aware of the different pragmatic role and values these texts have in their particular cultural setting.

b. Cross-cultural pragmatics

Cross-cultural pragmatics refers to the studies which investigate the cross-cultural use of speech acts.

From Wierzbicka’s (2003) standpoint, different pragmatic norms reflect different cultural values which are in turn reflected in what people say and what they intend by what they say in different cultural settings. For example, the speech act of *thanking* is different from English to Japanese. In English, to thank someone means to say we feel something good towards them because of something good they have done and we want them to feel good in return. However, in Japanese culture with its stress on social hierarchy, moral duty and the repayment for favours, the situation is different for one hand, and on the other, they may frequently say *sorry* when they mean thank you, leading to a completely different interpretation of what they mean, from what they intend to mean. Cameron (2001:74) explains like this: the act of thanking is an expression of indebtedness in both English and Japanese, however, in the case of Japanese, it’s ‘a debt not yet repaid calls for an apology from the debtor’. As a result, Japanese speaker often take apologizing as one way of expressing indebtedness and thanking someone.

c. Pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics

Pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics are two key notions in the field of cross-cultural pragmatics (Leech 1983). Pragmalinguistics is ‘the study of the more linguistic end of pragmatics—where we consider the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions’ (Leech 1983: 11); that is the study of speech acts in relation to typical linguistic structures. Sociopragmatics refers to specific local conditions of language use; that is the pragmatic performance of speech acts in specific social and cultural contexts.
d. Cross-cultural pragmatic failure

Cross-cultural pragmatic failure refers to the failure to convey or understand a pragmatic intention in another language and culture (Thomas 1983). Thomas describes two main types of cross-cultural pragmatic failure: sociopragmatic failure and pragmalinguistic failure.

Sociopragmatic failure refers to a situation where a speaker of a second language assesses situational factors on the basis of the sociopragmatic norms of their first language and draws on these for the performance of a particular speech act. For example, a foreign manager criticized a Thai worker in front of their colleagues for being regularly late for work which would not achieve the effect he wanted, because in Thai culture, it's inappropriate to do such things in a direct and public way. The foreign manager's action actually made the Thai person lose his face. Unlike the foreign manager, Thai people usually deal with such things by mentioning the problem in front of the whole group, rather than picking out an individual for criticism. They may also do it through an intermediary such as a friend or colleague, rather than speaking directly to the person who is late for work (Gibson 2000).

Pragmalinguistic failure refers to a situation where a speaker transfers the procedure and linguistic means of realizing a speech act from their first language to their second language. For example, in Japanese society, it's very important to attach an address of chan or san to someone's name, however, a US student who doesn't understand this might cause misunderstanding by calling her Japanese friend's name to show her friendliness.

It means that pragmalinguistic failure is essentially a linguistic problem, whereas sociopragmatic failure draws from the failure to understand different cultural perceptions and expectations of culture-specific speech act performance. Sometimes, the results of this kind of miscommunication can be very serious. A good example of this happened to a Korean immigrant to the US who was sentenced to 20 years in prison for killing her son. In effect, her son was killed in
an accident. She continuously said she killed her son in front of the police just in order to show her responsibility of taking care of her child, which, however, was taken as evidence by the US court to make her guilty of the charge and she was not released until 5 years later when her case was reviewed.

Task 5

Choose a speech act (such as asking someone for a favour) and discuss how it is performed differently in English and in another language (such as Malay, Chinese or Tamil). Discuss cross-cultural differences in the way the speech act is performed and how it is responded to, and the reasons for these differences.

3.6 Conversational implicature and discourse

Conversation implicature refers to the inference a hearer makes about a speaker’s intended meaning that arises from their use of the literal meaning of what the speaker said, the conversational principle and its maxims. The difference between implicature and inference lies in the fact that implicature ‘is generated intentionally be the speaker and may or may not be understood by the hearer’, however, an inference is produced by a hearer on the basis of certain evidence and may not be the same as what a speaker intends (Thomas 1995: 58).

Grice (1975) argues that to calculate an implicature, hearers draw on the conventional meanings of words, the co-operative principle and its maxims, the linguistic and non-linguistic context of the utterance, items of background
knowledge and the fact that all of these are available to both participants and they both assume this to be the case. Below are some examples.

Eg 1: A: Are you going to the lecture tomorrow?
    B: It’s at 8.30 (too early)

Eg 2: A: Have you done your written assignment?
    B: I’ve done the oral task. (I’ve not done the written one)

In effect, implicature can be created in one of three ways. First, a maxim can be followed in a straightforward way and the hearer implicates what the speaker intends (as in Example 1 below); second, a maxim might also be flouted because of a clash with another maxim (Example 2 below); third, a maxim might be flouted in a way that exploits a maxim (Example 3 below).

Eg 1: A: What’d you like?
    B: A beer thanks.

Eg 2: A: What time did your flight get in this morning?
    B: Seven (when it actually arrived at 7:04 am)

Eg 3: A: How are we getting to the airport tomorrow?
    B: Well... I’m going with Peter.

a. Conventional and particularized implicatures

From Grice’s perspective, there are two kinds of conversational implicature with the latter more popular and usual: conventional and particularized conversational implicatures.
With conventional implicatures, no particular context is required in order to derive the implicature. For example, the use of ‘well’ can conventionally implicate that what the speaker is about to say is not what the hearer is hoping to hear; the use of ‘anyway’ conventionally implicates a return to the original topic of a conversation (Lo Castro 2003). The use of ‘but’ and ‘on the other hand’ to express contrast, ‘even’ to suggest something will be different at a later time.

Particularized conversational implicatures are derived from a particular context, rather than from the use of the words alone. These result from the maxim of relation. That is, the speaker assumes the hearer will search for the relevance of what they are saying and derive an intended meaning. For example:

A: You’re out of coffee.
B: Don’t worry there’s a shop on the corner.

b. Scalar implicatures

Scalar implicature refers to the situation when a person uses a word from a set of words that express some kind of scale of values. Such as ‘all’, ‘most’, ‘something’, ‘nothing’ etc. besides, a speaker may choose one item from a scale, and then correct it while they are speaking to cancel out another item in the scale. For example (from Paltridge 2006):

Bashir: Looking back now, do you feel at all responsible for the difficulties in your marriage?
Diana: Mmm. I take full responsibility, I take some responsibility that our marriage went the way it did. I’ll take half of it, but I won’t take any more than that, because it takes tow to get in this situation.

In this example, Princess Diana cancels out ‘full’ with ‘some’, then cancels ‘some’ with ‘half of’, adding an explanation as to why she has done this.
3.7 Politeness, face and discourse

The two notions of politeness and face are also very important in the two areas of pragmatics and discourse. The notion of ‘face’ comes from Goffman’s (1967) work on face and from the English ‘folk’ notion of face, which ties up with notions of being embarrassed, humiliated or ‘losing face’ (Brown and Levinson 1987). Politeness and face are important for understanding why people choose to say things in a particular way in spoken and written discourse.

Lakoff (1973) proposes three maxims of politeness: ‘don’t impose’, ‘give options’ and ‘make your hearer feel good’. For example, we apologize for imposing by saying ‘I’m sorry to bother you but...’. We make requests in an elaborate fashion by saying ‘Do you think you could possibly...’ to give our hearer the option of refusal. We also might make them feel good by saying something like ‘You’re better at this than me’.

For example:

Mum: Is that you Steph?
Stephanie: Yeah, it’s me
Mum: Hi darling
Stephanie: I’m at Town Hall Station. Do you think you could possibly come pick me up?
Mum: Yep
Stephanie: Or are you in a rush to have dinner so you can go out?
Mum: Oh, we’ve already got dinner ready. But I’ll come and get you.
Stephanie: Oh that’d be great. I’m at Town Hall.
Mum: Yep
Stephanie: And the train’s not for ten minutes
Mum: Yep. Ok
Stephanie: OK. Thanks Mum
Mum: Bye.
Stephanie: Bye.

(Paltridge 2006)
In the above example, Stephanie asks for a lift in an elaborate fashion by saying ‘Do you think you could possibly come pick me up?’ She gives her mother an option by suggesting if she is busy cooking dinner then it is not necessary, and makes her mother feel good by saying ‘Oh that’d be great’.

Politeness principles and co-operative principles are often in conflict with each other. When such things happened, we will decide which one is more important by having a look of the degree of emergency. That means, in normal situations, be polite and ‘make your hearer feel good’ is important, but it’s not the case in emergency.

a. Involvement and independence in spoken and written discourse

Involvement refers to the need people have to be involved with others and to show this involvement; that is a person’s right and need to be considered a normal, contributing, supporting member of society; put it in another way, a person has the right and need to be treated as a member of a group.

The independence part of face refers to a person’s right not be dominated by others, not to be imposed on by others and to be able to act with some sense of individuality or autonomy.

In order to maintain social relationships, people acknowledge both of these aspects of a person’s face at the same time, aiming to build up closeness and rapport with each other, while at the same time trying to avoid being a threat to each other’s social distance; that is, maintaining each other’s involvement and independence (Scollon and Wong-Scollon 2001).

3.8 Face and politeness across cultures

It is important to point out that the specific nature of face and politeness varies from society to society and from culture to culture.
Gu (1990) discusses politeness in relation to Chinese culture and found out that in Chinese culture, politeness is not so much in terms psychological wants, but rather in terms of social norms. Face is threatened not when someone’s needs are not met, but when someone fails to live up to social standards.

Ide (1982) discusses politeness in Japanese and found out that politeness in Japanese is something which helps to maintain communication. It’s less strategic and more a matter of socially obligatory linguistic choices through which social harmony is achieved (Eelen 2001).

The ways in which people express politeness also differs across cultures. For example:

**Speaking in English:**
Could you close the window for me?
Can I close the window?
Hey yo, close the window, would you?

**Speaking in Japanese:**
Isn’t it a little chilly?
T’s cold don’t you think?
I wonder why it’s so cold today?

From the above examples offered by a group of bilingual Japanese/English students of how to ask a friend to close the window if they were in the car with them and they felt very cold, we can see that first, in Japanese culture, indirectness is a sign of intimacy and is often used between friends as a sign of mutual understanding and friendship, as a result, it’s often an involvement or positive politeness strategy. However, it’s just opposite in English culture, in which indirectness is taken as an independence or negative politeness strategy. Second, involvement is much more important than independence in Japanese, so they may give much greater weight to what they are saying in terms of involvement rather
than independence, however, in English, a speaker may weigh up what they are saying in terms of both involvement and independence.

3.9 Face-threatening acts

Some acts ‘threaten’ a person’s face which are called face-threatening acts. Very often, we use mitigation devices in conversations to hedge or soften face-threatening acts. For example (from Paltridge 2006):

A: Are you doing anything after work? (a pre-sequence)
B: Why are you asking?
A: I thought we might go for a drink. (an indirect speech act)
B: Well, no, nothing in particular. Where would you like to go?

We might also use an off-record speech act to take the edge off face-threatening acts. For example:

A: I’m dying for a drink (an off-record invitation)
B: Yes, it’s really hot, isn’t it? (an off-record rejection of the invitation)

In this example, A never actually asked B to go for a drink so doesn’t lose any face by being rejected. Equally, B hasn’t rejected the invitation on record but simply ‘commented’ on the weather in his off-record rejection of A’s invitation.

Task 5

Think of examples of face threatening acts; that is acts such as complaining, or refusing someone who has asked you to borrow money. What are some ways in which you would respond to these acts, and why?
3.10 Politeness and cross-cultural pragmatic failure

It is important to remember that the particular nature of face varies across cultures and that politeness strategies are not necessarily universal. Equally, what may be a face-threatening act in one culture may not be seen the same way in another. Clearly, politeness strategies are not the same across languages and cultures and might mean different things in different linguistic and cultural context. Besides, learners at different levels of proficiency may have difficulty in matching form with function in their use of politeness strategies. Because they often acquire the linguistic means of performing politeness strategies before they acquire pragmatic rules of use.

Conclusion

This chapter focuses on key notions in the analysis of discourse from the perspective of pragmatics. Much of the research in the area of pragmatics and discourse examines particular speech acts, including face-threatening acts, how they are performed within a culture and across cultures, issues of face and politeness in the performance of speech acts, cross-cultural misunderstandings and the reasons for them.

Additional References (if any)
Group Work

1. Collect several examples of spoken and written language. In each case try to collect a complete example of the text, rather than just a section of it. Transcribe (in the case of spoken texts) and analyse the data you have collected from one of the following perspectives.

   a. Carry out a speech act analysis to identify direct and indirect speech acts. Analyse in what way the speakers/writers ‘mean more than what they say’; that is, what is the difference between the literal meaning of what they say and what you think they mean by what they say. Why do you think they chose to use a direct or an indirect speech act?

   b. Carry out an analysis of your sample texts concentrating on involvement and independence. Look for strategies which show closeness, rapport, intimacy and solidarity (involvement strategies) and strategies which give the other person choices and allow them to maintain their freedom (independence strategies). How do the speakers/writers use language to do this?
UNIT 4
DISCOURSE AND GRAMMAR

Introduction

This unit takes us into the principles of connectivity that bind a text together, such as formal expressions which are accessible to us to signal explicitly how parts of the text are to be interpreted. This connectivity or cohesion refers to the relations of meaning that exists within a text. It is part of the system of language which has the potentials for meaning enhancement in texts. Halliday and Hasan (1976: 04) note that cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another.

Unit Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Explain the concept of unity of text or cohesion from a discourse perspective;
2. Identify the patterns of grammar and vocabulary that contribute to the notion of cohesion;
3. Apply the notions of theme, rheme and thematic progression in capturing the flow of information in texts.
DISCOURSE AND GRAMMAR

4.1 Grammar from a discourse perspective
4.2 The texture of text
4.3 Cohesion and discourse
4.4 Cohesive features
4.5 Theme and rheme
4.6 Thematic progression

Main Points

1. Cohesion is the grammatical and lexical relationship within a text or sentence.
2. Coherence in linguistics is what makes a text semantically meaningful.
3. Patterns of theme and rheme combine in a text to give it a sense of thematic development or progression.

Discussion

4.1 Grammar from a discourse perspective

In discourse analysis, grammatical items like it, that or this have certain functions in a text. They are often indicators or signals referring to a particular part in the text or outside the text (McCarthy, 1994). A discourse-based grammar links form, function and context in its description (Hughes and McCarthy, 1998). It gives the
advantage of looking at the association between lexical items, text-internally and externally.

4.2 The texture of text

Why do we need unity of texture? According to Paltridge (2006), texture is produced when language items in texts are linked in meaning in the text itself and also in the social context. Unity of texture refers to the way in which resources such as patterns of cohesion create both cohesive and coherent texts. Without unity of texture, a text is devoid of meaning. This unity ties the words together in a semantic relationship.

4.3 Cohesion and discourse

Cohesion refers to the physical formal links between sentences and clauses. It contains certain linguistic devices including pronouns, conjunctions, substitutions, ellipsis, reference, lexical cohesion which enable the writer or speaker to make relationships between entities and events explicitly. In other words, it is the relations between surface linguistic forms and between propositions. Cohesion in discourse must have relation. For example,

"Wash and core six apples. Put them into a dish.

The 3rd person pronoun "them" refers back to the apples, thus giving relation and unity to the whole text. The next section will illustrate the types of cohesive devices stated above.
4.4 Cohesive features

4.4.1 Reference
Reference refers to the situation where the identity of an item can be retrieved from either within or outside the text. The main reference patterns are exophoric, endophoric, anaphoric, cataphoric, homophoric, personal reference, comparative and demonstrative (Brown and Yule, 1983).

a) Exophoric relations
For exophoric reference, the interpretation lies outside the text, in the context of situation. It plays no part in textual cohesion. For example, that in the sentence below refers to the sun.

*e.g. Look at that!*

b) Endophoric relations
According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), this reference occurs within the text and is divided into two:

i. **Anaphoric reference** is where a word or phrase refers backwards to another word or phrase used earlier in the text.

*e.g. Look at the sun. It's going down quickly.*
*(It's refers back to the sun)*

ii. **Cataphoric reference** is where a word or phrase refers forward to another word or phrase used later in the text.

*e.g. It's going down quickly, the sun.*
*(It's refers forward to the sun)*
c) Homophoric reference.
Homophoric reference is where the identity of the item can be retrieved by reference to cultural knowledge, in general, rather than the specific context of the text (Paltridge, 2006). For example, from our cultural knowledge, we know that the use of the in the sentence below indicates 'which' White House, 'which' world and 'which' U.S being referred to.

*e.g.* Barack Obama takes the White House with the promise of change. Here's what it means to the world, and an exclusive look at the U.S. campaign.

d) Personal reference
Personal pronouns like *she, her, their, them, they, it, he* and *himself* are also cohesive markers whereby they relate or link to the mentioned person(s) or item(s). We can see this in the use of *it* below which refers to *apple*.

*e.g.* I saw an apple on the table. I ate it.

e) Comparative reference
With comparative reference, the identity of the item is retrieved by comparing it to another mentioned item in the text. For example, the use of 'this' and 'that' below:

*e.g.* This looks nice....No, that one does.

Another example is the use of 'others' in the sentence below:
*e.g.* He had the polls in his hands. Others were not quite so sure.
f) Demonstrative reference

In longer text, demonstrative reference like 'this' or 'that' can be seen in the example below. "This" in the second sentence refers back to the whole first sentence or event.

*e.g. If she had gone and talk to them, we would not be in this situation. This did not happen.*

4.4.2 Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion refers to relationships in meaning between lexical items in a text, particularly, content words and the association between them (Paltridge, 2006). The main types of lexical cohesion are repetition, synonymy, hyponymy, meronymy, antonymy and collocation.

a) Repetition refers to the reiteration of words/lexical chains where words are repeated in the text in order to remind the audience of the main topic.

*E.g Timotei is both mild to your hair and to you scalp – so mild you can wash your hair as often as you like. Timotei cleans your hair gently, leaving it soft and shiny, with a fresh smell of summer meadows.*

b) Synonymy refers to words with similar meaning. Writers are encouraged to use elegant repetition where synonyms or other phrases are used. For example, the word ‘daffodil’ is being replaced with a synonymous substitute word in the second and third sentence with ‘flower’ and ‘beautiful plant’.

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e.g. Daffodil is a type of weed which only comes out in spring time. The flower with its bright yellow petals thrives in places with a cool climate like Britain, among others. This beautiful plant may be used for flower arrangements in homes and offices.

c) Hyponymy/ Superordinate refers to words which are classed as general-specific. For example, universities in Malaysia or IPTAs may be general, and they include specific subordinate ones like Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Malaya, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and etc.

d) Meronymy refers to words which are part of the same family. For example, the cartoon family, The Simpsons, consists of Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie. A car contains many parts which make it whole, e.g. the wheels, brake, tyres, seats, hood, engine etc.

e) Antonymy refers to words which are opposite or contrastive to each other. For example, the word ‘victory’ and ‘loss’ in the sentence below,
The victory was clear for the Democratic candidate and a loss for the Republican.

f) General words like ‘stuff’ and ‘things’ refer back to the buns in the sentence e.g. Did you try the steamed buns? Yes, but I don’t like stuff (things) like that.
4.4.3 Collocation

Collocational patterns describe habitual associations between words that tend to co-occur together (Paltridge 2006). Based on our background or cultural knowledge, we somehow know which word tend to associate itself together with another word. For example, the word ‘knock’ in the sentences below co-occur with off and on in their respective contexts,

*She accidentally knocked the cup of coffee off the table.*
*We went directly to Jennifer’s apartment and knocked on the door.*
*Will you just knock it off!*

4.4.4 Conjunction

Conjunction refers to words that join phrases, clauses or sections of a text in such a way that they express the logical-semantic relationship between them (Paltridge 2006). Below is a list of conjunctions commonly used in text:

- Additive e.g. and, or, furthermore, similarly, in addition, moreover...
- Comparison/Adversative e.g. but, however, on the other hand, nevertheless...
- Consequence/Causal e.g. so, consequently, for this, because, reason being, therefore...
- Temporal e.g. then, secondly, after that, an hour later, finally, at last, lastly, meanwhile...

4.4.5 Substitution

Substitution refers to words that act as substitutes for another. There are 3 types of substitution.
a) Verbal substitution replaces the whole verb phrase ‘eat too much’ with another word ‘do’
   e.g. A: Annie says you eat too much!
   B: So do you.

b) Clausal substitution replaces a clause with another word.
   e.g. A: Is it going to rain?
   B: I think so.

c) Nominal substitution replaces the noun ‘sweets’ with another word ‘ones’.
   e.g. There are some sweets in the bag. These ones are someone else’s.

   The words do, so and ones can be interpreted with what has happened before.

4.4.6 Ellipsis

Ellipsis refers to the deletion of some words in an utterance which can be recovered by the preceding text. There are 3 types of ellipsis. (Ellipsis is indicated with [0]).

a) Nominal ellipsis. The noun ‘my kids’ are deleted and replaced by ‘both’ in the second sentence.

   e.g. My kids play too much. Both [0] are incredibly energetic.

b) Verbal ellipsis. The verb phrase ‘been working’ is deleted after ‘have’ in the second sentence.
e.g. Have you *been working*?
   Yes, I have [0].

c) Clausal ellipsis. The clause ‘it’s prohibited’ is deleted after ‘know’ in the second sentence.

   e.g. A: Why are you going there? Don’t you know that it’s prohibited?
   B: Really? I didn’t know [0].
**TASK 1**

Look at text below. Analyse and identify the cohesive devices that you have learned in this unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line 1</th>
<th>Line 2</th>
<th>Line 3</th>
<th>Line 4</th>
<th>Line 5</th>
<th>Line 6</th>
<th>Line 7</th>
<th>Line 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The descending sun is temporarily eclipsed by a huge water tower. Shadows play off the concrete embankments of the Los Angeles River and dance across the shallow trickle of sewage in its channel. A locomotive shunts a dozen containers of hazardous chemicals into a siding.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are only five miles from downtown Los Angeles but have entered a world invisible to its culture pundits. This is LA’s old industrial heartland— the South-east.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s 4.30 p.m. Two workers are standing behind an immense metal table, partially shaded by a ragged beach umbrella. A portable radio is blasting rock and roll, hot from Mexico City.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each man is armed with a screwdriver, pliers and a hammer. Eduardo, the taller man, is from Guanajuato in North-central Mexico, and is wearing the navy-blue baseball cap favoured by so many of Los Angeles’s illegal immigrants.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miguel, more slighted built and pensive, is from Honduras. They are unconsciously syncopating the beat as they alternate between hammering, prying and unscrewing. Towering in front of them is a 20-foot high mound of dead and discarded computer technology: obsolete word processors, damaged printers, virus-infected micros, last-decade’s state of the art. The thankless task of Eduardo and Miguel is to smash up everything in order to salvage a few components that will be sent to England to recover their gold content.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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TASK 2

Collocation exercise. Fill in the blanks below with a suitable word that usually associate with the bold words next to it.

1. The fourteenth century cathedral was reduced to a _____ of rubble.
   On his desk is a _____ of books and papers.

2. He has got to hear it from the _____’s mouth. Then he can make a judgment as to whether his policy is correct or not.
   This puts the cart before the _____: elections should follow, not precede agreement on a constitution.
   A small man on a grey _____ had appeared.

3. The plane’s _____ was pointing away from the terminal.
   She wiped her _____ with a tissue.
   The car cautiously _____d forward into the intersection.

4. The thief _____ each lock deftly, and then rifled through the papers in each drawer.
   He _____ a fight with the waiter and landed in jail.
   She _____ up the napkin from her lap and placed it alongside her plate.

5. After a day of fresh air and activity, you should be in the _____ for a good meal.
   The government has obviously misread the _____ of the electorate.
   She was in no _____ to celebrate that night.

6. You have to have _____ of residence in the state of Texas, such as an ID card.
   Peter gave me an uncorrected _____ copy of the book.
   He is living _____ that some players just get better with age.

7. As I recall, but _____ me if I am wrong, it was in a car park in PJ.
   Doctors examine their patients thoroughly in order to make a _____ diagnosis.
   He may need surgery to _____ the problem.
4.5 Theme and rheme

According to Paltridge (2006), another concept of unity of texture is the relationship between theme and rheme in a clause and its contribution to the focus and flow of information in a text. Theme is defined as the starting point of a clause or what the clause is about. Halliday (1967) calls it ‘point of departure’. Rheme on the other hand, is whatever that follows after the theme or what the clause has to say about the theme. Each simple sentence has a theme and rheme. An example is shown below,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Rheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shell technology</td>
<td>has helped create high performance products for millions of cars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A sentence can have multiple themes. There are 3 types of themes – topical, textual and interpersonal theme. The theme in the above example is a topical theme. Textual theme can be seen in conjunctions like but, or, and etc. Interpersonal theme refers to the position or point of view that is being held by the clause. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal theme</th>
<th>Topical theme</th>
<th>Textual theme</th>
<th>Topical theme</th>
<th>Rheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfortunately,</td>
<td>the car</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>its driver</td>
<td>sank into the deep waters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A text with a good theme and rheme development will result in a cohesive structure whereby there is a linear sequence of the topic area and the organization of the paragraph. A well-explained topic is usually foregrounded or thematised in order to highlight the main idea (Brown and Yule, 1983). This brings us to the next section on thematic organization.
4.6 Thematic progression

Patterns of theme and rheme combine in a text to give it a sense of thematic development or progression (Paltridge 2006). The theme of a clause is picked up or expanded in the next sentence in order to create a flow of information. Failure to link and expand a theme or rheme in the proceeding clause is a weakness in writing a cohesive essay. One type of cohesive organization is a constant theme progression where the first theme is picked up and expanded as the second theme in the next clause. For example, the first theme 'Barack Obama' in the first sentence is repeated and expanded as the second theme in the following sentence using a personal reference 'He',

*Barack Obama* had a gift and he knew it. *He* had a way of making very smart, very accomplished people feel virtuous just by wanting to help *Barack Obama*.

The second type of thematic progression is a linear progression when the first rheme is used as the second theme in the following clause, resulting in a zigzag pattern. For example, the first rheme 'the use of an L-box' is taken up as the theme in the second sentence.

*The latest trend in ceiling designs in homes is the use of* an L-box. *An L-box is made of plaster, with a plus point in keeping your fluorescent lights and curtain railings hidden from view.*
TASK 3
Analyse the thematic progression in the text below.

A mosquito goes through four distinct stages of development during its lifetime. Once a female mosquito has fed on blood, it is ready to produce eggs. The eggs are laid in stagnant water and are attached to one another to form a raft. Within a week, the eggs will hatch into larvae. The larvae eat organic matter found in the water and they breathe through a tube, which is thrust above the surface of the water. The larvae will then metamorphose into pupae. Pupae need to stay near the surface of the water, as they need to breathe air using the air tubes on their backs called siphons. However, pupae do not need to feed. After a few days, the skin of the pupa will split and an adult mosquito will emerge. The adult will live for only a few weeks, where the female mosquito will repeat the whole life cycle again.

TASK 4
Group Discussion

This unit has discussed the topic of thematic progression. What kind of thematic progression is typical of the way you write? Take a sample of your own writing and analyse the thematic progression. Are your themes and rhemes explained appropriately?
Conclusion

1. The unity of texture is established with the help of cohesive devices and lexical cohesion.
2. To form a coherent text, we should adhere to the features of coherence in our writing.
3. Without coherence and cohesion, text and talk might not be meaningful or comprehensible.

Additional References


Answer key – Task 1

Anaphoric reference:

The word ‘its’ in line 3 refers back to the Los Angeles River in line 2. The word ‘its’ in line 6 refers back to ‘a world’ in line 5. The phrase ‘the South-east’ in line 6 refers back to LA’s old industrial heartland in the same line. The phrase ‘each man’ in line 10 refers back to two workers in line 7. The phrase ‘the taller man’ in line 10 refers back to ‘Eduardo’ in the same line. The phrase ‘more slightly built and pensive’ in line 13 refers back to ‘Miguel’ in the same line. The word ‘they’ (line 13 & 14) refers back to ‘Eduardo (line 10) and Miguel (line 13)’. The word ‘them’ in line 15 refers back to ‘Eduardo (line 10) and Miguel (line 13). The phrases ‘obsolete word processors, damaged printers, virus-infected micros’ in line 15 & 16 refer back to ‘dead and discarded computer technology’ in line 15. The phrase ‘last decade’s state of art’ in line 16 refers to ‘obsolete word processors, damaged printers, virus-infected micros’ in line 15 & 16. The phrase ‘a few components’ (line 17 & 18). The word their (line 18) refers to the ‘few components’ (line 17 and 18) of the ‘dead and discarded computer technology’ in line 15. The phrase ‘computer breaker’ in line 19 refers to ‘Eduardo and Miguel’ in line 17.

Cataphoric reference:

The phrase ‘LA’s old industrial heartland’ in line 6 refers forward to ‘the South-east’ in the same line. The phrase ‘two workers’ in line 7 refers forward to ‘Eduardo (line 10) and Miguel (line 13)’. The phrase ‘each man’ in line 10 refers forward to ‘Eduardo (line 10) and Miguel (line 13)’. The word ‘Eduardo’ in line 10 refers forward to mean ‘the taller man’ in the same line. The word ‘Miguel’ in line 13 refers forward to the description ‘more slightly built and pensive’ in the same line.
Homophonic reference:

‘The’ in line 1. We can use ‘the’ when saying ‘the descending sun’ because there is only one sun in the universe. The next example is at line 2, ‘the Los Angeles River’.

Personal reference:

The word ‘its’ in line 3 refers to the ‘Los Angeles River’ in line 2. The personal reference used here is also helped by the use of anaphoric reference. The word ‘its’ in line 6 refers to ‘a world’ in line 5. The personal reference used here is also helped by the use of anaphoric reference. The word ‘they’ (line 13 & 14) refers to ‘Eduardo (line 10) and Miguel (line 13)’. The word ‘they’ from these two lines is also an anaphoric reference. The word ‘them’ in line 15 refers to Eduardo (line 10) and Miguel (line 13)’ and also ‘Eduardo and Miguel’ in line 17. The personal reference used here is also helped by the use of anaphoric reference.

Demonstrative reference:

‘This’ in line 6 which refers back to the situation of the whole sentence before it, which is: ‘We are only five miles from downtown Los Angeles but have entered a world invisible to its culture pundits.’ (Line 5 & 6)

Repetition:

The word ‘Los Angeles’ occurred four times in the text in line 2, 5, 6 and 12. The word ‘Mexico’ appeared twice in the text in line 8 and 11. The word ‘they’ occurred two times in the text in line 13 and 14. The word ‘man’ appeared two times in the text both in line 10. The phrase ‘is from’ occurred twice in the text in line 10-11 and 13. The word ‘computer’ occurred twice in the text in line 15 and 19. The word ‘Eduardo’ appeared twice in the text in line 10 and 17. The word ‘Miguel’ appeared two times in the text in line 13 and 17. ‘Two workers’ (line 7), ‘Eduardo and Miguel’ (line 17) and ‘computer breaker’ (line 19) show different form of words used by the author which represent or refer to the same people.

Hyponymy:

Hyponymy are words which are general-specific. The sentence from line 10 “…screwdriver, pliers and a hammer” is the example of hyponymy under the category of tools.
Meronomy:

"... obsolete word processors, damaged printers, virus-infected micros" in line of 15 and 16 of the text refers to the "20-foot high mound of dead and discarded computer technology" of line 15. The obsolete word processors, damaged printers, virus-infected micros are part of the dead and discarded computer technology.

General Words:

The word ‘everything’ in line 17 of the text is an example of general word which refers to all of the dead and discarded computer technology.

Conjunction:

The additive conjunction used is ‘and’. It occurs as frequently as eight times which are in lines 2, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, and 17. The adversative conjunction used is ‘but’. It occurs only once in line 5: ‘We are only five miles from downtown Los Angeles but have entered a world invisible to its culture purists’.

Answer key – Task 2

1. Pile, pile
2. Horse, horse, horse
3. Nose, nose, nose
4. Picked, picked, picked
5. Mood, mood, mood
6. Proof, proof, proof
7. Correct, correct, correct
Answer key – Task 3

A mosquito /goes through four distinct stages of development during its (Theme) (Rheme) lifetime.
Once a female mosquito has fed on blood,/ it is ready to produce eggs. (Theme) (Rheme)
The eggs /are laid in stagnant water and are attached to one another to (Theme) (Rheme) form a raft.
Within a week, the eggs /will hatch into larvae. (Theme) (Rheme)
The larvae/ eat organic matter found in the water and they breathe (Theme) (Rheme) through a tube, which is thrust above the surface of the water.
The larvae /will then metamorphose into pupae. (Theme) (Rheme)
Pupae /need to stay near the surface of the water, as they need to (Theme) (Rheme) breathe air using the air tubes on their backs called siphons.
However, pupae do not need to feed. (Theme)
After a few days, the skin of the pupa will split and /an adult mosquito will (Theme) (Rheme) emerge.
The adult will live for only a few weeks, /where the female mosquito will (Theme) (Rheme) Repeat the whole life cycle again.