Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE

*People's Democratic Republic of Algeria*

*Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research*

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*



# Introduction to
# DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

## Master 1: Literature & Civilization Option

## (Curriculum and Lectures)

Prepared, proposed and delivered by: **Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE**

**2022/2023**

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# INTRODUCTION TO DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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# Introductory Note

In recent times, both educators and students have come to recognize a fundamental objective in English language instruction within Algeria: the nurturing and enhancement of communicative competence among Algerian learners. This realization signifies a shift away from viewing language as a mere assemblage of grammatical rules to be memorized and subsequently forgotten. While the significance of grammatical elements remains undeniable, the core principle guiding English language acquisition is, in fact, effective communication. Consequently, numerous innovative approaches have been introduced to bolster English language education in Algeria, with a primary focus on cultivating the communicative proficiency of Algerian learners.

Notably, the adoption of the LMD (License-Master-Doctorate) system has ushered in a wave of curriculum revisions, introducing novel courses such as Discourse Analysis for students pursuing their Master's degrees in Literature and Civilization. Recognized as a pivotal element in the teaching and learning of English within the Algerian foreign language context, Discourse Analysis was initially incorporated into the syllabi for third-year Bachelor's degree students and first and second-year Master's degree candidates. Subsequently, it became an exclusive offering for first and second-year Master's degree students. For those pursuing Master's degrees in Literature and Civilization, the inclusion of Discourse Analysis as a series of lectures began in the academic year 2016/2017.

Due to the significant number of students enrolled in the course and the unique characteristics of the program, it was decided to divide the lectures into separate groups rather than traditional sections. Furthermore, these groups were initially organized into pairs, but during

the 2020/2021 academic year, in response to health risks and COVID-19 safety measures such as social distancing, we had to create four distinct groups. This adjustment placed considerable strain on both our teachers and students. Adding to the challenges, we faced shortages of essential electronic equipment, including data projectors and overhead projectors (OHP), inadequately lit lecture theaters, and malfunctioning doors.

At the start of each lecture, students receive handouts to help them focus on the lecture content and facilitate discussions. After the lecture presentation, for the sake of consistency and to reinforce students' comprehension, they are encouraged to use the handouts and the lecture notes on the board to summarize the material at home. This teaching approach has proven to be highly effective, as it actively engages students during the lectures, and their retention of the material has shown significant improvement. Furthermore, students are strongly encouraged to ask questions about any topics they find unclear.

The course duration for this new program is restricted to 1 hour and 30 minutes per week, totaling 33.8 hours over the course of a school year. It's essential to note that this course is exclusively for first-year master's students, and they won't continue studying it in subsequent graduation years. Initially, the allocated time for Discourse Analysis appears insufficient to cover the diverse range of disciplines within this research field. This limitation hinders the students' opportunities to develop their foundational knowledge, interdisciplinary skills, and communication proficiency. To enhance these lectures, it is advisable to supplement them with additional practical tutorials.

The examination papers have been carefully crafted in accordance with Bloom's Taxonomy to assess various skills, including comprehension and analysis. Students have engaged in a variety of activities aimed at both enhancing their memory-related abilities and

fostering critical thinking. Consistently, students have expressed their satisfaction with the format and content of their examination papers, as they have been well-prepared to respond to the activities presented at the conclusion of each lecture.

M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Lecturer: Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE

e-mail: a.khireddine@univ-boumerdes.dz

Course: Discourse Analysis

Level: First Year Master

# Course Description & Outline

## *Course Description*

One could posit that our social identity and our capacity to achieve within society are shaped by the diversity of linguistic tools at our disposal. Language serves as a versatile instrument in various contexts, enabling us to fulfill a spectrum of communicative and societal objectives. The field of Discourse Analysis delves into the manner in which language exhibits variations based on subject matter, social environments, communicative intent, as well as the social roles and identities of individuals engaged in discourse. Recently, this course has been integrated into the Algerian tertiary education curriculum in response to higher education reforms and the adoption of the LMD system. It has become an indispensable component in the curricula for first and second-year master's programs. However, the allocated 90 minutes per week for Discourse Analysis may not suffice to cover the extensive range of topics comprehensively. Nevertheless, the course aims to provide a concise introduction to the concepts, theories, and research related to the examination of naturally occurring language in practical use.

Exploration of Discourse Analysis and the communicative competence of adult foreign and second language learners has demonstrated that mere linguistic proficiency does not

necessarily equate to an equivalent level of communication proficiency. Even advanced learners with a strong grasp of the language may struggle to interpret or convey messages in the manner native speakers do in real-life situations. Hence, it is imperative that formal language education places a significant emphasis on cultivating discourse analysis skills in conjunction with other linguistic components.

The course will encompass a historical survey of discourse analysis, the significance of studying this field, and explore various discourse analysis components such as definitions, types of discourses, and its intersections with related disciplines. You will have the opportunity to analyze both spoken and written discourse throughout the course. By the end, you'll be adept at identifying the linguistic components within an utterance, discerning its functions, implicatures, recognizing the speech acts at play, and understanding its role within the context of a conversation.

Furthermore, the course introduces students to the analysis of naturally connected discourse, spoken and written by providing them with some theoretical basis (i.e. exposing students to the different approaches to the analysis of the communicative functions of language), and more importantly providing students with tools to analyse a wide variety of discourse types.

Moreover, as one of the major critical approaches to literature, stylistics depends on the methods and findings of linguistics in the study of literary texts. The ultimate aim of stylistics is to show how linguistic structures and features of literary texts can lead to establishing new meanings and effects. It is expected that this course will familiarise students with the basic concepts, terms, definitions, methods and theories of stylistics discourse analysis. Students are expected to apply the appropriate stylistic methods in the process of analysis at the sentence and text levels with special focus on literary works.

It is an interdisciplinary course which deals with some of the ways in which texts, particularly literary texts, can be examined from a linguistic perspective. It covers areas such as discourse analysis, pragmatics, semantics and literary studies. It aims at helping students to apply textual analysis to oral and written texts. In this course, attention will be given to the relevance of stylistics to literary works and cultural productions. One of the major concerns of the course is also to demonstrate how communicative effects are achieved through linguistic choices.

## *Objectives of the Course*

This course aims to,

- Identify various definitions and approaches to discourse analysis.

- Discuss the purposes that discourse analysis can serve.

- Develop student ability to critically evaluate written and spoken materials in the field of discourse analysis.

- Develop student understanding of the different tools of analysis utilised specifically within Linguistics.

- Encourage awareness of the ways in which discourse practices vary across social, cultural and linguistic boundaries, and how this impacts within local and global contexts.

- Analyse discourse in its socio cultural context.

- **2/** The **general aim** of this course is to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to undertake a meaningful stylistic analysis of any text, especially a literary text. It aims at making them an informed reader/ analyst of a (literary) text.

- The **specific aim** of this course is to introduce the students the theory and practice of stylistics. They will be able to discuss the concepts of style and stylistics, the nature and goals of stylistics as well as types of stylistics. A judicious selection of literary texts should be given to them for discussing the essential levels of linguistic description of a text. Furthermore, they will be introduced to the main features of the language of literature- prose, poetry and drama. Besides, they will be exposed to some practical guides in doing a stylistic analysis of prose, poetry and drama to train them in carrying out a purposeful stylistic analysis of a text.

## *Expected Outcomes*

By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the features characterising spoken discourse vs. those characterising written discourse.

2. Demonstrate knowledge that the differences in 1 above depend largely on genres of texts.

3. Explain the basic concepts and main approaches to discourse analysis.

4. Apply the different approaches on short utterances.

5. Analyse authentic discourses (longer stretches of language).

6. Define the notion of stylistics.

7. Identify the differences between discourse analysis and stylistic analysis.

8. Produce simple stylistic analyses of short literary texts concentrating on some linguistic features. of the texts sowing how they enhance the effectiveness of the message.

9. Students should be acquainted with the nature of stylistics, its scope and the style of language usage in various contexts, both linguistic and situational**.**

10. Intellectual skills with ability to enhancing thinking and feeling about language through a more qualitative and emotive approach.

## *Prerequisite of the Course*

Basic knowledge of general linguistics and Literature.

## *Methodology of Teaching*

I.   Online (Moodle) course presentation (PDF handouts, ZOOM Conferences, Online activities and quizzes)

II.   Class Discussion

III.   Preparing small-scale projects

IV.   Written Essays/ Homework

Introductory lectures, individual student presentations, group discussions, analysis and regular feedback. The principal teaching tool will be the textbooks and student handouts, supplemented on occasion by personal observation and student-constructed tasks related to the field of stylistics. Student handouts will be based on the textbooks and supplementary literature on the subject.

Students are required to read their material in advance since active participation in class discussions is essential and will reflect positively on their overall performance. Throughout this course students are also required to do the following:

1.   Give one presentation on a stylistic analysis of a literary work; handouts should be given to the class. Students may use audio-visual data to illustrate their arguments.

2. Write (1 or 2) stylistic journal responses on topics to be announced in class. These responses can be shared with the class and then typed and handed in later on due date.

3. Bring selections from poems, plays, novels, and can share these with the class to highlight certain stylistic features.

Students are advised during the semester to look for critical sources outside the classroom. A

selected bibliography is handed out to them in this connection, so as to stimulate research and draw attention to the variety of possible approaches to texts.

| Syllabus (Subject to revision) |
| --- |

Tutorials should offer a broad and thorough perspective on the subject matter by employing various teaching methods in order to achieve the established objectives. It's important to acknowledge that adjustments may arise over the course of the academic year, and students will be kept informed of any changes.

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## Historical Overview

## Introduction:

### a. What is Discourse Analysis?

### b. Differences between Spoken and Written Discourse

**Outcomes of the Tutorial**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to :*

1. *Define* discourse analysis

2. *Outline* its emergence and goals ;

3. *Distinguish* it from other branches of linguistics

4. *Single out* its scopes and field of inquiry.

Within the last few decades, in an attempt to apprehend what constitutes knowledge of language, a remarkable shift of interest in the sentence and its components to a concern with stretches of language that transcend sentence boundaries and extend far to include the world in which language is used has arisen. This relatively new approach, known as Discourse Analysis, occupies now a body of literature, which probes into its nature, methods, scope and applications in a number of fields. Basically, any attempt to overview this sort of analysis tackles four main points: What is  Discourse? What is Discourse

Analysis? Why Discourse Analysis? And what are its main lines of inquiry?

**DISCOURSE:**

Etymologically, the word 'discourse' dates back to the 14th century. It is taken from the Latin word 'discursus' which means a 'conversation' (McArthur,1996). In its current usage, this term conveys a number of significations for a variety of purposes, but in all cases it relates to language, and it describes it in some way. To start with, *discourse* is literally defined as 'a serious speech or piece of writing on a particular subject' (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 2001, p.388). In this general sense, it incorporates both the spoken and written modes although, at times, it is confined to speech being designated as 'a serious conversation between people' (ibid). This restriction is also implied in the word when it is used as a verb.

Carter (1993) specifies several denotations of the word 'discourse.' First, it refers to the topics or types of language used in definite contexts. Here, it is possible to talk of *political discourse*, *philosophical discourse* and the like. Second, the word 'discourse' is occasionally employed to stand for what is spoken, while the word 'text' is employed to denote what is written. It is important to note, however, that the text/discourse distinction highlighted here is not always sharply defined. Nunan (1993) shows that these two terms are sometimes used interchangeably and in many instances treated differently. Carter (ibid) adds that the 'discourse/text' dichotomy is often correlated with the 'process/product' dichotomy respectively. Third, this word is used to establish a significant contrast with the traditional notion of 'sentence', the 'highest' unit of language analysis: discourse refers to any naturally occurring stretch of language. In this connection, Trask (1999) clarifies that a discourse is not confined to one speaker or writer, but it can embrace the oral or written exchanges produced by two or more people.

It is this last sense of the term that constitutes the cornerstone of the approach known as Discourse Analysis. Despite that discourse is defined as a chunk that surpasses the sentence, not all chunks of language can fall within the scope of this definition. In fact, what characterizes discourse is obviously not its supra-sentential nature as much as the entirety it has_ its *coherence*. To be more explicit, discourse is a complete meaningful unit conveying a complete message (Nunan, 1993). The nature of this whole cannot be perceived by examining its constituent parts, 'there are structured relationships among the parts that result in something new' (Schiffrin, 2006, p.171). In the light of this, larger units such as paragraphs, conversations and interviews all seem to fall under the rubric of 'discourse' since they are linguistic performances complete in themselves.

**DISCOURSE ANALYSIS:**

To embark on defining discourse analysis (henceforth DA), one would inevitably tackle two divergent approaches to language in general and discourse in particular: the formal approach and the functional approach. Schiffrin (ibid) combines both approaches when designating DA as 'the study of language use above and beyond the sentence' (p.170). The first trend in defining DA is a formal or structural trend. In this paradigm, DA is seen as the exploration of language use by focusing on pieces larger than sentences. Schiffrin (1994) elucidates that discourse is merely a higher level in the hierarchy: morpheme, clause and sentence (as stated originally by Zellig Harris in his first reference to DA); she also explains that the pursuit of DA is to depict the internal structural relationships that tie the units of discourse to each other: to describe formal connectedness within it. The second trend is functional in perspective: it is not so much concerned with intra-sentential relations as much as with language use.

Brown and Yule's (1983) conception seems to be compatible with this paradigm: The analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which these forms

are designed to serve in human affairs. (p.1) The focus in this conception is on the regularities which utterances show when situated in contexts. Thus, it is obvious that the aspects of the world in which an utterance is used can also contribute to the meaningfulness of discourse. Van Els et al. (1984), in this respect, argue that 'the study of language *in context* will offer a deeper insight into how meaning is attached to utterances than the study of language in isolated sentences' (p.94).

## WHY DISCOURSE ANALYSIS?

It seems quite legitimate to question the need for such an approach since it has become typical to describe language in linguistic formal or functional terms and since there has been a long tradition of exploring systematicity within language and determining regularities at all its levels. The answer lies in what constitutes 'knowledge of language'. It is plain to every one that any language user subconsciously possesses the aptitude for constructing sentences out of their minor components, i.e. sounds, morphemes, words…, as well as the aptitude for interpreting them. This grammatical knowledge of sentence structure, in the Chomskyan sense, is an element one cannot do without when utilising language. Carter (1993) illustrates that in many cases of naturally produced language, series of grammatical sentences may not be susceptible to understanding, while grammatically erroneous ones may be easily interpretable. In other words, there are features of language that cannot be accounted for in grammatical terms: some kind of systematicity is thought to transcend the grammar of sentences. 'The sentences that make up a text need to be grammatical but grammatical sentences alone will not ensure that the text itself makes sense' (Nunan, 1993, p.2). This demonstrates that some rules distinct from grammar rules are at work. Yule (1985) concludes that attaining an interpretation of the messages we receive and making our own messages interpretable is not a matter of linguistic form and structure alone. Language users know more than that: they know 'discourse' rules.

**CONTEXT AND THE ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSE**

In pursuit of uncovering the global structure of naturally occurring stretches of language, spoken or written, discourse analysts _ as stated above_resort to the study of language bits in the contexts within which they are used. Widdowson (1973) points out that context, being the environment in which language is used, can be linguistic or extra-linguistic. Context can be approached from a linguistic angle, and this complies with the formal definition of discourse first raised by Harris (1952). In this perspective, the analyst relies on the linguistic elements that surround the utterances under scrutiny to arrive at an adequate interpretation of meaning on the basis of intra-textual relations that bind them. This is referred to as 'the linguistic context'. The term 'co-text' is usually employed to refer to this particular sense of context (Yule, ibid; Hartmann and Stork, 1972).

Carter (1993) expounds on co-text and shows the interrelatedness of linguistic items within it: "The internal environment of the text is also an established context, although not such an obvious one. All textual features whether at word, clause, or between-sentence level are part of an environment: any word relates to those words which surround it both in the immediate vicinity and in other parts of the text. Even whole texts are governed by their textual environment." (Carter 1993: 14). It is possible for the analyst to arrive at the exact message conveyed in speech or in writing on the basis of what surrounds the linguistic item. It appears from this discussion that the enterprise of DA is, partly, to investigate the linguistic context, the way sentences are interrelated and the formal properties that make a piece of discourse hang together.

Context can equally be approached from a wider perspective where discourse interpretation and construction go beyond its linguistic boundaries to include the external world. It is believed that a great deal of significance can be obtained from the analysis of the broader social situation in

which language is used. The latter is termed the 'context of situation' by J. R. Firth (Léon, 2005) or the 'referential context' (Nunan, 1993). This type of context also guides the structure of discourse (Van Els et al., 1984). Thus, determining the key features of the situation justifies some linguistic choices that are made by language users.

Discourse analysts venture to unveil the patterning of the situational context and to state its relationship to the patterning of discourse itself. Robins (1971) stresses this task of DA: "By setting up contexts of situation, the observer or analyst undertakes to state the relationship of utterances to the situations or environments in which they are said or could be said. In a context of situation the utterance or the successive sentences in it are brought into multiple relations with the relevant components of the environment. (p.25) There have been several attempts to analyse the external environment and categorise it. Nunan's (1993) account of the components of extra-linguistic context seems to be comprehensive. He specifies (1) the type of communicative event (for example, joke, story, lecture, greeting, conversation); (2) the topic; (3) the purpose of the event; (4) the setting, including location, time of day, season of year and physical aspects of the situation (for example, the size of the room, arrangement of furniture); (5) the participants and the relationships between them; and (6) the background knowledge and assumptions underlying the communicative event.

It follows, according to what has been stated above, that DA shifts the focus of linguistic analysis from a sentence-centred approach , and it takes it one step further to examine the interplay of language items and the way they merge with the external world to get their real communicative identity. Here the linguistic behaviour appears to be the outcome of a larger discourse apparatus, including the traditional grammatical one.

**THE SCOPE OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

The analysis of discourse shares its quest with a number of disciplines in which language occupies a prominent position being the principal means of human communication. This overlap is, as Schiffrin (1994) points out, obviously due to the arduousness of describing language in isolation: "It is difficult to separate language from the rest of the world. It is this ultimate inability to separate language from how it is used in the world in which we live that provides the most basic reason for the interdisciplinary basis of discourse analysis. To understand the language of discourse, then, we need to understand the world in which it resides; and to understand the world in which language resides, we need to go outside of linguistics." (Schiffrin as cited in Widdowson, 1996, p. 110).

The construction of discourse itself involves several processes that operate simultaneously. Probing into this construction requires analytical tools that derive from linguistics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and even philosophy, according to the nature of these processes. Being informed by approaches in such fields gives DA an interdisciplinary nature and makes it a wide-ranging and a heterogeneous branch of linguistics with a medley of theoretical perspectives and analytical methods depending on the aspect of language being emphasised. It is possible to distinguish several subfields within DA stemming out of works in different domains. McCarthy (1991) comments that this approach, despite being interdisciplinary, finds its unity in the description of 'language above the sentence' and a concern with the contexts and cultural influences that affect language in use. In a brief historical overview, he specifies the following main contributors to DA research, whose interest has been, in some way, the study of larger stretches of language and their interaction with the external world as a communicative framework.

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

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## Discourse and Pragmatics

**<u>Outcomes of the Tutorial</u>**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

1. Speech Acts and Discourse;
2. The Cooperative Principle and Discourse

## What is Pragmatics?

The relationship between linguistic form and communicative function is of central interest in the area of pragmatics and, as Cameron ( 2001 ) argues, is highly relevant to the field of discourse analysis. We need to know the communicative function of an utterance, that is, what it is 'doing' in the particular setting in order to assign a discourse label to the utterance in the place of the overall discourse. For example, if someone says 'The bus was late' they may be complaining about the bus service (and so we label the stage of the conversation '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. We also need to know what this meaning is in order to understand, at a broader level, what people typically say and do as they perform particular genres in particular social and cultural settings.

**Speech Acts and Discourse:**

Two influential works in the area of pragmatics relevant to the area of discourse analysis are Austin's ( 1962 ) *How to Do Things With Words* and Searle's ( 1969 ) *Speech Acts* . Austin and Searle argued that language is used to 'do things' other than just refer to the truth or falseness of particular statements. Their work appeared at a time when logical positivism was the prevailing view in the philosophy of language. The logical positivist view argued that language is always used to describe some fact or state of affairs, and unless a statement can be tested for truth or falsity it is basically meaningless. Austin and Searle observed that there are many things that we say which cannot meet these kinds of truth conditions but which are, nevertheless, valid and which do things that go beyond their literal meaning.

They argued that in the same way that we perform physical acts, we also perform acts by using language. That is, we use language to give orders, to make requests, to give warnings or to give advice; in other words, to do things that go beyond the literal meaning of what we say.

A central issue which underlies this is the relationship between the literal meaning, or *propositional content* , of what someone says and what the person intends by what he/she says. Thus, if someone says 'It's hot in here' they are not only referring to the temperature, they may also be requesting someone to do something such as turn on the air conditioning.

What we say, then, often has both a literal meaning and an *illocutionary meaning* (or *illocutionary force* ); that is, a meaning which goes beyond what someone, in a literal sense, has said. Austin argued that there are three kinds of acts which occur with everything we say. These are the *locutionary act* , the *illocutionary act* and the *perlocutionary act* . The locutionary act refers to the literal meaning of the actual words (such as 'It's hot in here' referring to the temperature). The illocutionary act refers to the speaker's intention in uttering the words (such as a request for

someone to turn on the air conditioning). The perlocutionary act 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).

The following example on a bus illustrates this.

Bus driver: Th is bus won't move until you boys move in out of the doorway.

Clearly the bus driver is doing more than making a statement. He is also telling the boys

to move. The locutionary act, in this case, is the driver saying he won't start the bus with people

standing in the doorway, the illocutionary act is an order and the perlocutionary act

is the boys moving inside the bus.

**Direct and Indirect Speech Acts**

Sometimes when we speak we do mean exactly what we say. The following example from the BBC

*Panorama* interview with the Princess of Wales is an example of this. Here, the interviewer asks

Diana if she allowed her friends to talk to the author of her biography,

Andrew Morton:

Bashir: Did you allow your friends, your close friends, to speak to Andrew Morton?

Diana: Yes I did. Yes I did. (BBC 1995 )

Often we do, however, say things indirectly. That is, we often intend something that is quite

different from the literal meaning of what we say. For example a common expression on an

invitation to a party is 'to bring a plate'. This may, to someone who is not familiar with this kind of

cultural convention, be interpreted as a request to bring an (empty) plate to the party. In fact, it is

asking someone to bring food to the party, not necessarily on a plate. Equally, if someone calls

someone to ask them to come to their home for dinner and the person being asked says 'Can I bring

anything?' in many countries the host will say 'No, just bring yourself' whereas, in fact, they expect

the guest to bring wine (or in some countries something such as flowers for the host) with them to the dinner.

The example above of 'Can I have a Whopper with egg and bacon . . .?' also illustrates this. Here, the customer is not asking about their ability to buy a hamburger – the literal meaning of the sentence – but making a sales request. This is very common in service encounters where 'can' is often used to refer to something other than ability or permission.

**Felicity Conditions and Discourse**

An important notion in speech act theory is the concept of *felicity conditions* . For a speech act to 'work', Austin argued that there are a number of conditions that must be met. The first of these is that there must be a generally accepted procedure for successfully carrying out the speech act, such as inviting someone to a wedding through the use of a formal written wedding invitation, rather than (for many people) an informal email message. Also the circumstances must be appropriate for the use of the speech act. That is, someone must be getting married. The person who uses the speech act must be the appropriate person to use it in the particular context – such as the bride or groom's family, or in some cases the bride or groom, inviting the person to the wedding. A friend of the couple getting married cannot, for example, without the appropriate authority invite someone to the wedding.

Austin argued that this procedure must be carried out correctly and completely. And the person performing the speech act must (in most circumstances) have the required thoughts, feelings and intentions for the speech act to be 'felicitous'. That is, 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'. If the first two of these conditions are not satisfied, the act will not be achieved and will 'misfire'. If the third of these conditions does not hold, then the procedure will be 'abused'.

**Rules versus Principles**

Searle took Austin's work further by arguing that the felicity conditions of an utterance are 'constitutive rules'. That is, they are not just something that can 'go right' (or wrong) or be 'abused' – which was Austin's view – but something which makes up and defines the act itself. That is, they are rules that need to be followed for the utterance to work.

Thomas ( 1995 ) critiques this notion of constitutive rules and suggests that the notion of *principles* is perhaps more helpful to this discussion. She points out that it is extremely difficult to devise rules which will satisfactorily account for the complexity of speech act behaviour. She presents five basic differences between rules and principles to support her argument. The first of these is that rules are 'all or nothing', whereas principles are 'more or less'. That is, rules are 'yes/no' in their application whereas principles can be applied partially. Thus, you can speak extremely clearly, fairly clearly, or not at all clearly, rather than simply 'clearly'. Thomas also argues that rules are exclusive whereas principles can co-occur.

Thus, using one rule precludes another whereas a number of principles (rather than rules) might apply at the same time. Rules aim to define a speech act whereas principles describe what people do. Further, whereas rules are definite, principles are 'probabilistic'; that is, they describe what is more or less likely to be the case, rather than something which either does or does not apply. Finally Thomas argues that rules are arbitrary, whereas principles are 'motivated'. That is, people follow them for a reason, or purpose, to achieve a particular goal. If, for example, someone apologizes for something (in English) there is the assumption that they were responsible for what has been done (or in a position to represent this on someone else's behalf), have actually said 'I'm sorry', are sincere in what they say and will do something to rectify the situation, if this is required (or possible).

The person may not be completely responsible for what was done, however, so it is more helpful to see this as a case of more or less, rather than yes or no. Equally, an apology is often more ritual than 'sincere' but has been carried out for a very important reason, so that the person being apologized to will feel better about the situation and the tension that was there will be resolved. Taking a principles-based view of speech act performance, rather than a rule-based one, thus, describes what people often do, or are most likely to do, when they apologize, rather than what they 'must' do.

**The Cooperative Principle and Discourse:**

In his paper, 'Logic and conversation' Grice ( 1975 ) argues that in order for a person to interpret what someone else says, some kind of *cooperative principle* must be assumed to be in operation. People assume, he argued, that there is a set of principles which direct us to a particular interpretation of what someone says, unless we receive some indication to the contrary. The cooperative principle says we should aim to make our conversational contribution 'such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction' (45) of the exchange in which we are engaged.

Thus, when someone is speaking to us, we base our understanding of what they are saying on the assumption that they are saying what needs to be said rather than more than needs to be said (as in the delicatessen example above), they are saying it at an appropriate point in the interaction (such as when the person working in the delicatessen has finished serving one person and is ready to serve another) and they have a reason for saying what they say (as both an offer of service as well as to make it clear whose turn it is to be served). The person working in the delicatessen follows these assumptions, assuming that customers will follow them as well. In this way, both people involved in the service encounter cooperate in its production and interpretation.

Grice based his cooperative principle on four sub-principles, or *maxims*. These are the maxims of *quality* , *quantity* , *relation* and *manner* . The maxim of quality says people should only say what they believe to be true and what they have evidence for. Grice's 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. His 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 example both speakers observe all of these maxims. 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:

A: Hi. What would you like?

B: Two hundred grams of the shaved ham thanks.

We, thus, expect a person's contribution to an interaction to be genuine, neither more nor less than is required as well as being clear and appropriate to the interaction. Grice argues that we assume a speaker is following these maxims and combine this with our knowledge of the world to work out what they mean by what they say.

In the BBC *Panorama* interview, many of the people Diana is referring to need to be inferred from what has gone before in the interview. In the following extract Diana makes her contribution 'as informative as is required for the current purpose of the exchange' (Grice 1999 : 78) showing she is obeying the maxim of quantity. Her interviewer Martin Bashir and the audience, she assumes, can clearly derive from her answer who she is talking about (Kowal and O'Connell

1997 ). Here Diana uses 'people around me' and 'people in my environment' to refer to the royal household, expecting her audience will know who she is talking about:

Diana: People's agendas changed overnight. I was now the separated wife of the Prince of Wales, I was a problem, I was a liability (seen as), and how are we going to deal with her? Th is hasn't happened before.

Bashir: Who was asking those questions?

Diana: People around me, people in this environment, and . . .

Bashir: Th e royal household?

Diana: People in my environment, yes, yes.

At other points in the interview, Diana uses 'people' to refer to the press and at other points the British public. When she wants to make it clear exactly who she is referring to (and is obeying the maxim of quality) she adds a clarification, as in the extracts below:

Diana: I'd like to be a queen of people's hearts, in people's hearts, but I don't see myself being Queen of this country. I don't think many people will want me to be Queen.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Diana: Th e people that matter to me – the man on the street, yup, because that's what matters more than anything else.

There are times, however, when being truthful, brief and relevant might have different meanings. Indeed different contexts and situations may have different understandings of what 'be truthful, relevant and brief' means. There are, further, occasions where we cannot be brief and true at the same time (Cook 1989 ). This leads us to the 'flouting' of the cooperative principle and its maxims.

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

(**Major**) Literature and Civilization          (**Course**) Discourse Analysis

(**Class**) First Year Master                         (**Instructor**) Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE

## Politeness, Face, and Discourse

Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (1957)

**Outcomes of the Tutorial**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

1. *analyse Harold Pinter's The Birthday Party (1957) using Politeness Theory*

Examine the exchange between the speakers and provide an analysis of the various strategies that speakers have at their disposal for performing FTAs (face threatening acts) and study the interactive relationship between characters using Brown and Levinson's framework of politeness. (who are the participants? what is their relationship? Are they equal? Is there a difference in power or knowledge between them and what are their objectives?)

In this play *The Birthday Party,* **Stanely Webbe**r, who seems to be a musician at a boarding house owned by a married couple, **Meg** and **Petey**, has not gone out since his arrival. Stanely and Petey look to be under the observation of Meg. Yet, the presence of two new characters, **Goldberg** and**McCann,** changes the power relationship within that play.

**Extract 1:**

STANLEY: What about some tea?

MEG: Do you want some tea? (STANLEY reads the paper.) Say

please.

STANLEY: Please.

MEG: Say sorry first.

STANLEY: Sorry first.

MEG: No. Just sorry.

STANLEY: Just sorry!

MEG: You deserve the strap.

STANLEY: Don't do that.

**Extract 2:The presence of two new characters (Goldberg and McCann):**

MEG: Very pleased to meet you.

They shake hands.

GOLDBERG: We're pleased to meet you, too.

MEG: That's very nice.

GOLDBERG: You're right. How often do you meet someone

it's a pleasure to meet?

MCCANN: Never.

GOLDBERG: But today it's different. How are you keeping,

Mrs Boles?

MEG: Oh, very well, thank you.

GOLDBERG: Yes? Really?

MEG: Oh yes, really.

Mccann is trying to talk to Stanely

MCCANN: You know, sir, you're a bit depressed for a man on his birthday.

STANLEY: [sharply.] Why do you call me sir?

MCCANN: You don't like it?

STANLEY: [to the table.] Listen. Don't call me sir.

MCCANN: I won't if you don't like it.

STANLEY: [moving away.] No. Anyway, this isn't my birthday.

**Extract 3:**

GOLDBERG: Where did you come from?

STANLEY: Somewhere else.

GOLDBERG: Why did you come here?

STANLEY: My feet hurt!

GOLDBERG: Why did you stay?

STANLEY: I had a headache!

GOLDBERG: did you take anything for it?

STANLEY: Yes.

GOLDBERG: What?

STANLEY: Fruit salts!

GOLDBERG: Enos or Andrews?

STANLEY: En- An-

GOLDBERG: Did you stir properly? did they fizz?

STANLEY: Now, now, wait, you-

GOLDBERG: Did they fizz? Did they fizz or didn't they fizz?

MCCANN: He doesn't know!

GOLDBERG: You don't know. When did you last have a bath?

STANLEY: I have one every-

GOLDBERG: Don't lie.

MCCANN: You betrayed the organization. I know him!

STANLEY: You don't!

GOLDBERG: What can you see without your glasses?

STANLEY: Anything.

GOLDBERG Take off his glasses.

GOLDBERG: We'll watch over you.

MCCANN: Advise you.

GOLDBERG: Give you proper care and treatment.

MCCANN: Let you use the club bar.

GOLDBERG: Keep a table reserved.

MCCANN: Help you acknowledge the fast days.


Linguistic politeness is often described as attempts to maintain each other's face in interaction. The most well known and dominant theory on linguistic politeness is that of Brown and Levinson. Characters in Harold Pinter's play are always on alert against any kind of physical or psychological threat. They verbally struggle for both power and dominance. This struggle is characterized by direct or indirect impoliteness strategies they use. Impoliteness in their language is the most important weapon to win the struggle for power. Taking Culpeper's five impoliteness strategies as its basis, this essay examines Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (1957) in terms of the linguistic impoliteness strategies the characters employ in their power struggles, their preferences to adopt direct or indirect strategies and the way these preferences affect the power relations between them.

In *The Birthday Party*, Meg and Petey run a boarding house in an English seaside town and their only guest is Stanley Webber, a retired musician in his thirties who has not stepped outside the

house since he came there. The play tells the story of a trio relationship in which Stanley is kept under Meg's control until the arrival of two unknown intruders called Goldberg and McCann. At the beginning of the play Petey, who has just come back from work, is exposed to Meg's pressing questions concerning his breakfast, his job or the news on the newspaper. Insistently asking all these unnecessary questions she forces Petey to give answers and attacks his wish not to be disturbed or distracted. In this way, Meg employs negative impoliteness strategies by making an assault on his negative face. Meg demands answers because she needs to be heard and thus wants her existence to be approved. Petey, who avoids hurting his wife, answers all her questions and satisfies her desire to be approved, thus enhances her positive face.

Meg then directs her attention to Stanley, who is asleep upstairs. After calling out to him from the living room, she goes upstairs to fetch him and then makes him have his breakfast. Stanley has a very central position in the house. Meg, who tries to guide and manipulate him like a child, even corrects the language he uses. Meg's control to Stanely is clearly embodied in the following exchange:

STANELY: What about some tea?

MEG: Do you want some tea? (Stanely read the paper) **say please**.

STANELY: Please.

MEG: **Say sorry first**.

STANELY: Sorry first.

MEG: **No just sorry**.

STANELY: Just sorry!

Meg does not respect Stanley's need to be free to act or his desire not to be interfered with; and thus invading his personal space, she adopts negative impoliteness strategies FTA (**on record without redressive action**) and damages his negative face. She performs a series of orders **(on record bald**

**redress action)** "**say please**, **say sorry first**, **no just sorry**". Meg's interference to Stanley's freedom would be perceived as a threat. It also conveys a superior-inferior relationship between them where Meg is less concerned of being polite to her interlocutor.

However, before long, an outside menace appears and disrupts their ongoing relationship. The arrival of two strangers called Goldberg and McCann initiates a struggle for power. Their presence mark a subversion in the interactive relationship within the boarding house as they take control of it. For instance, Goldberg takes the authority out of the hands of Meg and Petey as the hosts of the boarding house. Neither Meg nor Petey are powerful enough to cope with the authority of Goldberg. In this struggle for power they yield to his dominance and submit to his demands just from the beginning. Goldberg either threatens the negative faces of Meg and Petey, "**would you mind if my friend went into your kitchen and had a little gargle**"(1.179) or approves their positive face by using compliments, "**we are pleased to meet you, too.**"

Stanley is disturbed by the unexpected arrival of these two strangers. Perceiving them as a threat to his life in the house, Stanley is determined not to give in easily. Tension in the play increases along with the power Goldberg and McCann exercise over Stanley. In response to this threat, Stanley adopts a strategy of counterattack (**on record impoliteness strategies**). Asking questions such as "**Staying here long?**" or "**Why are you down here**? [...] **Why did you choose this house?**" ?...**where the hell are they**? **Why don't they come in**? **What are they doing out there**?". When these questions prove to be useless in his counterattack, he tries to send them away by asking them directly**( on record impoliteness)** to "**Get out**" "**I told you to get those bottles out**" . Disrespecting their freedom of action and attacking their negative face, he challenges their authority. Instead of coming to terms and building rapport with Stanley to enhance his positive face and solve the problem, Goldberg and McCann intensify their verbal assault in response to his challenge. Their verbal aggressiveness escalates gradually and their first attempt to control him is to force him to sit

down. In reply to Stanley's direct negative impoliteness strategies, they also adopt the same direct strategies, and forcing him to sit down they disrespect his right to act freely. By sitting down Stanely takes a powerless position and accepts the two men's domination. Therefore, this creates a scene of interrogation as he remains  powerless and confined to his chair as it is seen in the following questions:

GOLDBERG: Where did you come from?

GOLDBERG: Why did you stay?

GOLDBERG: Did they fizz? Did they fizz or didn't they fizz?

Goldberg and McCann employ direct impoliteness strategies to threaten Stanley's both positive and negative faces such as 'giving commands, making accusations, frightening or seeking disagreement 'as, "Don't lie…answer", "What have you done with your wife?", and "Why did you kill your wife?" where these questions are illogical and ambiguous. Stanely becomes gradually silent, impotent, and as he answers he gives illogical answers as, "In_", "what wife?", and "He wanted..". Thus, he becomes as a marionette under both men's control:

GOLDBERG: We will watch over you.

MAcCAN: Advise you.

GOLDBERG: Give you proper care and treatment.

MAcCAN: Help you acknowledge the fast days.

To conclude, the examples listed above show the bizarre and the absurd relationship between characters in the play. Moreover, what adds to the ambiguity of the play is Goldberg and MacCan' behaviors as they take Stanely out of the boarding house making him an impotent object under their possession.

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

(**Major**) Literature and Civilization                    (**Course**) Discourse Analysis

(**Class**) First Year Master                    (**Instructor**) Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE

**Politeness, Face, and Discourse (Part 2)**

**Outcomes of the Tutorial**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

- analyse Eugène Ionesco's *The Lesson* (1951) using Politeness Phenomena

- **This first extract comprises the opening encounter between the Professor and the Pupil:**

*(1) Professor:*  Good morning, good morning… You are…

er… I suppose you really are…er…the new

pupil?

*(The Pupil turns round briskly and easily, very much*

*the young lady: she gets up and goes towards the*

*Professor, holding out her hand.)*

*Pupil:*     Yes, Sir. Good morning, Sir. You see I came at the

right time. i didn't want to be late.

*Professor:*    Good. Yes, that's very good. Thank you. But you

shouldn't have hurried too much, you know. I don't

know quite how to apologize to you for having kept

you waiting… I was just finishing…you under

stand, I was just…er… I do beg your pardon… I

hope you will forgive me…

*Pupil:*        Oh, but you mustn't, Sir. It's perfectly all right, Sir.

*Professor:*   My apologies…(pp. 183–4)

- **This second extract is taken from an episode later in the play:**

*(2) Professor:*   What is four? Greater or smaller than three?

*Pupil:*        Smaller…no greater.

*Professor:*   Excellent answer. How many units are missing

between three and four?…or between four and

three, if you'd rather?

*Pupil:*        There aren't any units, Sir, between three and four.

Four comes immediately after three; there is nothing

at all between three and four!

*Professor:*   I can't have made myself understood properly. It's

doubtless my own fault. I haven't been clear enough.

*Pupil:*        Oh, no, Sir. The fault is entirely mine.

*Professor:*   Listen. Here are three matches. And here is another

one. That makes four. Now,watch carefully…(p. 192)

- **The third and final extract is taken from near the end of the play. It comprises an episode which occurs shortly before the Professor murders the Pupil with the invisible knife:**

*(3) Professor:*   Every language, Mademoiselle—note this carefully,

and remember it *till the day you die…*

*Pupil:*        Oh! yes, Sir, till the day I die… Yes, Sir…

*Professor:*        …and again, this is another fundamental principle,

every language is in fact only a manner of speaking,

which inevitably implies that it is made up of sounds, or…

*Pupil:*        Phonemes…

*Professor:*        I was just about to say so. Don't show off, airing your

knowledge! You'd better just listen.

*Pupil:*        Very well, Sir. Yes, Sir.

*Professor:*        Sounds, Mademoiselle, should be caught in flight by

their wings so that they do not fall on deaf ears.

Consequently, when you have made up your mind to

articulate, you are recommended, in so far as possible,

to stretch your neck and your chin well up, and

stand right on the tips of your toes, look now, like this, you see…

*Pupil:*        Yes, Sir.

*Professor:*        Be quiet. Sit where you are. Don't interrupt… (p. 200).

 

**Paul Simpson** is a well known Professor of English language and the leader of the School of English at Queen's University Belfast. He is a researcher in different areas of English language and Linguistics. Also, he published many books and articles in critical linguistics and stylistics. In the analysis of **literary dialogue**, Simpson in a chapter entitled **"Politeness Phenomena in Ionesco's *The Lesson"*** uses **Brown** and **Levinson's** framework of Politeness phenomena while studying **the linguistic strategies of politeness** used by the characters in Ionesco's play *The Lesson.*

**Politeness: is defined as using communicative strategies to create and maintain social harmony.**

o The choice of the strategies of Politeness is restricted by important **contextual features** such as **the relative power of the speakers**, **the social distance of the speakers and the amount of imposition that face act entails**. These interactive rights are not always shared equally by participants as it is stated by Short on page172.

Simpson assumes that the **discourse model** which helps to explore the relation between language use and the social relationship of the speakers is that developed by the two sociolinguists P. Brown and S. Levinson in their impressive monograph-length paper. Brown and Levinson try to reveal the principles that underlie polite usage and they add that "ways of putting things" are part of the expression of social relationship.

The key notion in Brown and Levinson's Politeness model, is Goffman's notion of *face.* **Face** is defined as the public 'self-image' that every member in a society claims for himself. Brown and Levinson suggest that human beings have two kinds of face, called *positive* and *negative face*. **Negative face** means the desire of every individual that his/her actions should be unimpeded by others. In other words, it refers to the speaker's freedom of action and freedom from imposition. Yet, **Positive face** means the desire for every individual's self image to be appreciated and approved of by others. In other words, it refers to the speaker's desire that his wants should be desirable to at least some others.

**Positive politeness** refers to an atmosphere of inclusion and mutuality created by linguistic means such as compliments, encouragement, joking, even the use of "white lies." Small talk is one expression of positive politeness; that is, creating linguistically a connection to other people.

**Negative politeness** involves respecting the privacy of other people and leaving a "back door" open, that is, showing some reservation. The use of distance-creating linguistic devices (e.g., passive forms), irony, or general vagueness is characteristic for this kind of linguistic politeness.

o Speakers often perform acts which may be said to **'threaten'** either the positive or the negative face of the addressee and such acts are known as *face threatening acts* (FTAs). In other words, **face** of any individual is vulnerable(able to be easily physically, emotionally, or mentally hurt) to *face threatening acts* such as <u>orders</u>( asking someone for the loan of their car) , <u>request</u>(request a similar service), <u>use of insults</u> and <u>terms of threat</u>( damn fool). All of these acts pose a threat to individual's positive and negative face.

There are various ways of performing FTAs, and they depend on three social variables: **the context of interaction** , **the social relationship of speakers** and **the amount of imposition that face act entails**. On the basis of these three social variables, a speaker determines which strategy to employ when performing a FTA.

➢ **Types of FTAs:**

1- **On record ( direct and impolite)** :

    a. **<u>without redressive action, baldly</u>** (close the door). The use of such type makes the act clear, unambiguous and concise. It follows **Grice's four conversational maxims**. In other words, it is non-spurious **( quality)**, it does not say more or less than is required ( **quantity**), it is relevant ( **relation**)  and it avoids ambiguity and obscurity ( **manner**).

• Bald non-redressive FTAs occur where the speaker holds a high relative power and fears no threat to his own face from the addressee.

• **By going on-record**, the speaker has two choices. On the one hand, he may perform the FTA **baldly, without redress.** On the other hand, he may choose to perform the FTA **with redressive action(positive and negative politeness).**

b. **Redressive action** is the action which gives face to the addressee. By giving face to the hearer and by recognizing his wants, the speaker may show that no threat to face was intended.

- If the speaker wants the addressee to close a door, he may select a **redressive FTA**, such as:

  -could you close the door?

  -would you mind closing the door?

  - I wonder if you could close the door.

- These examples are more polite than example 1 because they give redress to the hearer's desire for self-determination and freedom from imposition that an utterance like close the door does not.

- These examples are instances of negative politeness because they redress the hearer's negative face.

2- **Off-record ( indirect)** : one might request the addressee to close a door in an indirect way saying, "it's a bit draughty in here." That utterance takes the form of a declarative sentence, containing no direct lexical link to the services implicitly demanded of the addressee.

  - The speaker avoids the responsibility for a potentially face-damaging interpretation. Another example is given by Brown and Levinson on page 174.

  **Off-record strategy** is realized using all kinds of indirect hints that can be found in a language such as: irony, metaphor, rhetorical questions, understatement(Understatement is way of speaking which minimizes the significance of something) "I'm a little tired." and tautology(Tautology is the repetitive use of phrases or words that have similar meanings) "**Repeat** that **again,**" and "**reiterate again.**"

- In the performance of FTAs, **the speaker does not go off-record**. Instead **he goes on-record** that is to say the speaker makes clear to the addressee what communicative intention lets him to perform this act.

➢ **Those strategies of performing FTAs have been condensed into a basic schema** on page 176 following Brown and Levinson model: each strategy is numbered ( **the higher the number the more polite the strategy**).

❖ Strategy 5: it avoids FTA ( no imposition at all on the addressee).

❖ Strategy 4: off-record  (b) no threat.

❖ Strategy 3: where FTA is performed with redress to the hearer's negative face, it realizes negative politeness(c, d, e).

❖ Strategy 2: where FTA is performed with  redress to positive face of the addressee, it realizes positive politeness.

❖ Strategy 1: which is maximally direct(bald without redress), it incorporates no politeness markers at all (a).

➢ **Strategies of negative politeness:**

Brown and Levinson propose seven of these negative politeness strategies that can be used to reduce the potential damage that an utterance may pose to speaker's or addressee's faces.

1) **Hedges**: they are items which soften or weaken the impact of FTAs:

-" **sort of** "'Do you see what I mean?' in some way or other 'Sort of, **by any chance** possibly, **as it were** in a manner of speaking" . They work as mitigation markers.

- They are also achieved by the use of hypothetical modal verbs such as " could, would, might and should"

- Deliberate mumbling, hesitations and the use of particles as " ahh and umm".

2) **Indicate pessimism**: it is the speaker's doubt about the success of a FTA. He may use requests

like:

- I <u>don't suppose</u> I could hand this in on Friday.

-<u>perhaps he could</u> take this now.

- You <u>couldn't possibly lend me</u> your rod and reel for this afternoon.

3) **Minimizing the imposition**: the intrinsic seriousness of the imposition is not great.

Expressions minimize the potential threat to the addressee.

- Could <u>you just extend the thing</u> for a couple of days.

- Could <u>I borrow a tiny wee</u> bit of paper.

   o It is employed by vagrants in their request for money from strangers.

- Would you… ah <u>… just a couple of pence</u>, sir.


4) **Indicate deference:**

a) <u>honorifics</u> : terms of address which reflect the relative social status of participants in interactions

such as: Sir. Doctor…etc

b) <u>humbling one's self, capacities and possessions</u>:

- I'm ashamed to have to ask you this favour.

-It's not much of a meal, but it will fill our stomachs.

- We could all go in my rustmobile.

5) **Apologize**

<u>Brown and Levinson indentify four sub strategies</u>:

a- <u>Admit the impingement</u>:  I know this is a bore but…, I'd like to ask you a big favour.

b- <u>Indicate reluctance</u>:  I don't want to intrude, I hate to ask you this.

c- <u>Give overwhelming reasons</u>: There just wasn't enough time to complete this, I've been very

   busy, so could you help me with this?

d- <u>Beg forgiveness</u>: please forgive me if…;Excuse me, but..; sorry, but.

6) **Impersonalize:** speaker's desire not to impose personally on the addressee by: omitting pronouns I and you, e.g., say it would be desirable…. instead of I want.

- Also plural form may convey impersonalization.

- It can also be used in hyper-formal utterances like " her majesty is not amused"

7) **Acknowledge the debt**: the speaker can mitigate the FTA impact by claiming indebtedness to the hearer:

- I'd be eternally grateful, I'll never be able to repay you ,This must put you out terribly.

**Analysis of the drama dialogue (*The Lesson*) using Brown and Levinson's model of politeness:**

The drama text under analysis is entitled *The Lesson* written by Eugene Ionesco. The central event is a private lesson involving an ageing professor and an 18 years old pupil. Three short extracts have been taken from key stages in the play's development to show **how the shift in the interactive roles of the two characters is reflected by subtle changes in their linguistic behavior.**

- **In the first extract from the play** on page 180, the professor seems nervous and shy, while the pupil is vivacious and dynamic. **The professor** performs the first FTA when he requests information concerning the identity of his interlocutor, using a declarative sentence. He also uses hedges such as particle "er" and phrases as "I suppose and really". Thus, the professor opening speech is a good example of negative politeness phenomena(it is too a direct imposition on the negative face of his interlocutor). The pupil's answer is interesting where her use of honorific "sir" shows deference and her utterance " you see I came at the right time" shows confidence and self-determination as well as her non- verbal behavior.

  o The professor uses two negative politeness strategies: humbling his own capacities that indicates deference ( I don't know quite how..) and he claims his inability to apologize by admitting the impingement(..for having kept you waiting). Also he uses other sub

strategies of apologize strategy: <u>overwhelming reasons</u> and <u>beg forgiveness strategy</u> and finally <u>pessimistic strategy</u>. Therefore, **the pupil is the more powerful of the two interactants**. The pupil is not only the one who receives deference and apologies but she is also in a position to issue reassurances to her interlocutor.

- **In the second extract** on page 183, the passage begins with a good example of teaching exchange; however, the teaching framework is broken by the professor's next initiation ( I can't have myself understood properly…enough). The attempt to repair this breakdown by the two characters is displayed by the use of <u>deference strategy</u>. The two characters are competing with one another in their use of **the deference strategy** which shows <u>the existence of a symmetrical power between them</u>. **However**, <u>the professor uses another linguistic strategy</u>: a **bald non redressive act** for the first time when he says ,

  " listen…Now watch carefully"(commands).**[IT IS IMPOLITE AND IT DRAWS ON NONE OF THE POLITENESS STRATEGIES AVAILBLE TO REDUCE SUCH FTAs]**

This suggests that <u>the professor is becoming not only more powerful but less concerned with being polite to his interlocutor</u>. Thus, there is a change in the professor's general linguistic behavior where <u>he begins to assume a position of high relative power</u>.

- **The final extract** on page 185 is considered to be the ultimate FTA before the professor murders the pupil with the invisible knife. Here <u>the professor uses intensive warnings and sinister threatening</u> towards <u>the pupil who assumed a role of submission</u>. The pupil use of the **honorific "sir"** in this extract is a term of address <u>used by an inferior to an acknowledged superior</u>. The pupil eagerness to participate makes the professor draws more <u>on a string of bald non-redressive FTAs</u>( you'd better just listen), **(Be quiet. Sit where you are . Don't interrupt).**

These three unmitigated commands show that **the professor's politeness strategies have completely vanished**. Also **the pupil who in the first extract was confident and dynamic is now powerless and confined to her chair.** (sit where you are)

> ➢ **Conclusion:**

The three passages from the play show a marked reversal in the interactive relationship of the two characters. What is remarkable for Simpson is that the bizarre shift in the interactive roles of the two characters in *The Lesson* is signaled by their use of variant linguistic strategies(changes in the linguistic behavior of its characters).

- ❖ **In the first extract:** the professor appears timid, diffident and self effacing, using elaborate negative politeness strategies to his younger more confident interlocutor.

- ❖ **In the second extract:** the interactants 'trade' deference with one another, shows a more symmetrical power relationship between them. However, **the professor becomes aggressive as he starts using least polite strategies as he performs bald non redressive acts .**

- ❖ **In the final extract:** the professor becomes more powerful as he uses a bald, non redressive FTAs towards his pupil. Yet, the pupil becomes less powerful as she lost her earlier confidence and with her use of honorific Sir which indicates a genuine status differential.

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

(**Major**) Literature and Civilization      (**Course**) Discourse Analysis

(**Class**) First Year Master      (**Instructor**) Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE

## Impoliteness Phenomena

**Outcomes of the Tutorial**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

- Harold Pinter's *Old Times* (1971) in the light of Impoliteness theory.

- **Examine the following passages taken from Harold Pinter's *Old Times* in terms of Culpeper framework of Impoliteness. What particular literary effects is Pinter attempting to produce?**

- **Anna:** But I would miss London, nevertheless. But of course, I was a girl in London. We were girls together.

- **Deeley:** I wish I had known you both then.

- **Anna:** Queuing all night, the rain, do you remember? my goodness, the Albert Hall, Covent Garden, what did we eat? to look back, half the night, to do things we loved, we were young then -of course, but what stamina, and to work in the morning, and to a concert, or the opera, or the ballet, that night, you haven't forgotten?

- **Deeley** :We rarely get to London.

- KATE stands, goes to a small table and pours coffee from a pot.

- **Kate** :Yes, I remember.

- *She adds milk and sugar to one cup and takes it to ANNA. She takes a black coffee to DEELEY and then sits with her own.*

- **Anna**: I would love some brandy.

- DEELEY pours brandy for all and hands the glasses. He remains standing with his own ANNA

- Listen. What silence. Is it always as silent?

- **DEELEY** :It's quite silent here, yes. Normally.

- Pause

- You can hear the sea sometimes if you listen very carefully.

- **ANNA**: How wise you were to choose this part of the world, and how sensible and courageous

  of you both to stay permanently in such a silence.

- **DEELEY**: My work takes me away quite often, of course. But Kate stays here.

- **ANNA**: You have a wonderful casserole.

- **DEELEY**: What?

- **ANNA**: I mean wife. So sorry. A wonderful wife.

- **DEELEY**: Ah.

- **ANNA**: I was referring to the casserole. I was referring to your wife's cooking.

- **ANNA** :Do you go far.

- **DEELEY** :I travel the globe in my job.

- **ANNA** :And poor Katey when you're away? What does she do?

- ANNA looks at KATE.

- **KATE** :Oh, I continue.

- **ANNA** :Is he away for long periods?

- **KATE**:I think, sometimes. Are you?

- **ANNA** :You leave your wife for such long periods? How can you?

- **DEELEY** :I have to do a lot of travelling in my job.

- **ANNA** :(To KATE.) I think I must come and keep you company when he's away.

- **DEELEY** :Won't your husband miss you?

- **ANNA** :Of course. But he would understand.

- **DEELEY** :I've been there. There's nothing more to see, there's nothing more to investigate, nothing. There's nothing more in Sicily to investigate.

- **KATE** :(To ANNA.) Do you like the Sicilian people?

- ANNA stares at her.

- Silence

- **ANNA** :(Quietly.) Don't let's go out tonight, don't let's go anywhere tonight, let's stay in. I'll cook something, you can wash your hair, you can relax, we'll put on some records.

- **KATE:** Oh, I don't know. We could go out.

- **ANNA**: Stay in. Shall I read to you? Would you like that?

- **KATE** :I don't know.

- Pause

- **ANNA** :Are you hungry?

- **KATE** :No.

- **DEELEY** :Hungry? After that casserole?

- Pause

- **KATE**: What shall I wear tomorrow? I can't make up my mind.

- **ANNA**: Wear your green.

- **KATE:** I haven't got the right top.

- **ANNA**: You have. You have your turquoise blouse.

- **KATE**: I'll think about it in the bath.

- **ANNA**: Shall I run your bath for you?

- **KATE** (Standing.) No. I'll run it myself tonight.

- KATE slowly walks to the bedroom door, goes out, closes it.

- DEELEY stands looking at ANNA. ANNA turns her head towards him.

- They look at each other.

- DEELEY :Here we are. Good and hot. Good and strong and hot. You prefer it white with sugar, I believe?

- **ANNA** :Please,

- **DEELEY** :(Pouring.) Good and strong and hot with white and sugar. He hands her the cup.

- KATE smiles.  See that smile? That's the same smile she smiled when I was walking down the street with her, after Odd Man Out, well, quite some time after.  What did you think of it?

- **ANNA** :It is a very beautiful smile.

- **DEELEY** :Do it again.

- **KATE** :I'm still smiling.

- **DEELEY** :You're not. Not like you were a moment ago, not like you did then.

- (To ANNA.) You know the smile I'm talking about?

- **KATE** :This coffee's cold.

- Pause

- **ANNA** :Oh, I'm sorry. I'll make some fresh.

- **KATE** :No, I don't want any, thank you.

- Pause Kate's monologue (part)

- I remember you lying dead. You didn't know I was watching you. I leaned over you. Your face was dirty. You lay dead, your face scrawled with dirt, all kinds of earnest inscriptions, but unblotted, so that they had run, all over your face, down to your throat. Your sheets were immaculate.

- *Silence*

- *DEELEY in armchair.*

- *ANNA lying on divan.*

- *KATE sitting on divan*

Theory of Impoliteness is a useful way for the study of any literary work. Harold Pinter's *Old Times* is one of the good examples to study impoliteness strategies used by characters applying Culpeper framework. In *Old Times,* characters counterattack each other through their discourse and behavior to gain a superior position. Indeed, These characters adopt Culpeper' strategies of impoliteness where the latter is the crucial policy to be superior to others. Thus, This essay is an attempt to study the interactive relationship of characters in Pinter' play using impoliteness strategies.

At the beginning of the passages, the arrival of Anna initiates the struggle for power between Anna and Deeley for the possession of Kate. Both Deeley and Anna try to assert their power over each other to win Kate. In this power struggle, they conjure up past events in an attempt to gain Kate's affection. Nevertheless, they deliberately create contradictory versions of the past to exclude each other from their memories with Kate. A good illustration from the play is when both of them give opposing versions about the movie that they have watched with Kate, 'Odd Man Out.' In this context, Anna emphasizes on the use of the pronoun "we" stating, "we saw a wonderful film called Odd Man Out' to attack Deeley by excluding him from her utterance. In this context, Anna uses positive impoliteness strategy to attack Deeley; thus, enhancing Kate's positive face but threatening Deeley's positive face indirectly. Deeley counterattacks Anna by employing positive and negative impoliteness strategies to exclude her and despise (belittle) the city she loves by saying "We rarely get to London." Therefore, Deeley's response to Anna implies that Anna's friendship with Kate stays in the past.

The behavior and language that both characters employ are notable for their indirect

impoliteness. Indeed, Anna scorns Deeley using a sarcastic tone/ or mock impoliteness strategy when she says, "How wise you were to choose this part of the world." However, his use of impoliteness strategies does not make Deeley under Anna's control. Indeed, there is a kind of symmetrical power in this stage and the evidence is that both of them keep using impoliteness strategies. For example, Deeley answers Anna's attack when he reminds her that he is Kate's husband. In this context, Deeley attempts to exclude Anna from Kate's life saying, "My work takes me away quite often, of course. But Kate stays here." Anna is determined to not give up and responds very quickly when she learns that Deeley travels a lot she says to Kate, "I think I must come and keep you company when he's away." Thus, she is giving hints about the possibility to take his place. However, Kate does not get involved in this ceaseless cold war between Anna and Deeley throughout the play; instead, she sits and watches the ongoing battle. Kate's behavior is a marker of her empowerment since she chooses to be silent yet active observer of events around her. Moreover, Kate declares her explicit power over both of them when she refers to Anna, Deeley with past memories as "dirty." Therefore, silence throughout the play as her own choice is her weapon to control both Anna and Deeley.

To conclude, the examples listed above show the intended use of impoliteness strategies  by Anna and Deeley to please Kate.  This battle for power is reflected through the changes in the characters' power relations. Anna and Deeley attack each other from the beginning till the end of the play yet Kate starts as an active observer and ends as a direct attacker by snubbing both Deeley and Anna using a derogatory term. This implies that Kate puts both of them under her control from the beginning till the end.

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(**Instructor**) Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE

| Impoliteness Phenomena (2) |
|---|

**Outcomes of the Tutorial**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

- ***analyse impoliteness phenomena in*** Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming* (1964).

**Teddy and Ruth come down the stairs. They walk across the hall and stop just inside the room.**

**The others turn and look at them. Joey stands. Teddy and Ruth are wearing dressing-gowns.**

**Silence.**

**Teddy smiles.**

**L1 Teddy**. Hullo... Dad... We overslept.

**L2** *Pause.*

**L3** What's for breakfast?

**L4** *Silence.*

**L5** *Teddy chuckles.*

**L6** Huh. We overslept.

*L7 Max turns to Sam.*

**L8 Max.** Did you know he was here?

**L9 Sam.** No.

*L10 Max turns to Joey.*

**L11 Max**. Did you know he was here?

*L12 Pause.*

**L13** I asked you if you knew he was here.

**L14 Joey**. No.

**L15 Max**. Then who knew?

*L16 Pause.*

**L17** Who knew?

*L18 Pause.*

**L19** I didn't know.

**L20 Teddy**. I was going to come down, Dad, I was going to...

**L21** be here, when you came down.

*L22 Pause.*

**L23** How are you?

*L24 Pause.*

**L26** Uh... look, I'd... like you to meet...

**L27 Max**. How long you been in this house?

**L28 Teddy**. All night.

**L29 Max**. All night? I'm a laughingstock. How did you get in?

**L30 Teddy**. I had my key.

*L31 Max whistles and laughs.*

**L32 Max**. Who's this?

**L33 Teddy**. I was just going to introduce you.

**L34 Max**. Who asked you to bring tarts in here?

**L35 Teddy**. Tarts?

**L36 Max**. Who asked you to bring dirty tarts into this house?

**L37 Teddy**. Listen, don't be silly –

**L38 Max**. You been here all night?

**L39 Teddy**. Yes, we arrived from Venice –

**L40 Max**. We've had a smelly scrubber in my house all night.

**L41** We've had a stinking pox-ridden Slut in my house all night.

**L42 Teddy**. Stop it! What are you talking about?

**L43 Max**. I haven't seen the bitch for six years, he comes home

**L44** without a word, he brings a filthy scrubber off the street,

**L45** he shacks up in my house!

**L46 Teddy**. She's my wife! We're married!

*L47 Pause.*

**L48 Max**. I've never had a whore under this roof before. Ever

**L49** since your mother died. My word of honour. (*To Joey.*)

**L50** Have you ever had a whore here? Has Lenny ever had a

**L51** whore here? They come back from America, they bring the

**L52** slop-bucket with them. They bring the bedpan with them.

**L53** (*To Teddy.*) Take that disease away from me. Get her

**L54** away from me.

**L55 Teddy**. She's my wife.

**L56 Max**. (*to Joey*) Chuck them out.

*L57 Pause.*

**L58** A Doctor of Philosophy, Sam, you want to meet a Doctor of

**L59** Philosophy? (*To Joey.*) I said chuck them out.

*L60 Pause.*

**L61** What's the matter? You deaf?

**L62 Joey**. You're an old man. (*To Teddy.*) He's an old man.

*L63 **Lenny** walks into the room, in a dressing-gown.*

*L64 He stops.They all look round.*

*L65 **Max*** *turns back, hits **Joey** in the stomach with all his might.*

*L66 **Joey*** *contorts, staggers across the stage. **Max**, with*

*L67 the exertion of the blow, begins to collapse. His knees buckle.*

*L68 He clutches his stick.*

*L69 **Sam*** *moves forward to help him.*

*L70 **Max*** *hits him across the head with his stick, **Sam** sits, head*

*L71 in hands.*

At the beginning of the excerpt, Teddy and his wife, Ruth, get up late in the morning, and see Teddy's father, Max, the first time after they come home. Teddy smiles and says: 'Hullo...Dad...We overslept' (Line 1, henceforth L1). Here Teddy greets Max politely, supporting Max's positive face, or the 'want' to be respected (Brown and Levinson 1987: 62). According to the principle of adjacency pairs (Schegloff and Sacks 1973), Max is expected to greet Teddy in return, especially after being apart from his eldest son for six years. However, Max ignores the greeting, adopting a positive impoliteness strategy, where he damages Teddy's positive face by snubbing him (Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1555).

In addition, as Max keeps silent 'where politeness work is expected', he also uses the strategy of 'withhold politeness' (Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1555). His silence in response to the greeting can particularly insult the other (Saville-Troike 1985: 6). The offense leads to a 'pause' in Teddy's turn (L2), suggesting a disjointed flow of interaction (Herman 1995: 97-98) and indicating 'unspoken tensions' between the characters (Esslin 1972: 56). Teddy tries to repair the conversation by asking 'What's for breakfast?' (L3), which is followed by Max's silence again (L4). This damages not only Teddy's positive face (by ignoring him and making him feel uncomfortable), but

also his negative face (by refusing to give the information that Teddy wants) (Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1555). Teddy, as a result, 'chuckles' embarrassingly, trying to avoid the silence by saying 'we overslept' again (L56). The repetition suggests the emptiness of their relationship to each other (Esslin 1972: 39).

After Teddy utters 'we overslept' twice (L1 and L6), Max starts speaking, yet not to Teddy, but to his brother, Sam, and his youngest son, Joey. By excluding Teddy from the conversation and using the third person pronoun, 'he' (L8), to refer to Teddy, Max uses a positive impoliteness strategy, damaging Teddy's 'wants' to be acknowledged (Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1555). After several exchanges with others and ignoring Teddy's greetings ('How are you?', L23) again, Max begins talking with Teddy, yet with no greetings, but an abrupt question: 'How long you been in this house?' (L26). This is a use of positive impoliteness strategies again, showing no respect to Teddy. Moreover, Max starts the conversation by interrupting Teddy when the latter is introducing Ruth to the family ('look, I'd ... like you to meet ...', L25). Max's hindering Teddy linguistically also damages Teddy's negative face (Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1555).

In fact, Max interrupts three times in total when Teddy wants to introduce Ruth to the family (L26, L37, and L39). Max appears to be uninterested in who Ruth is, which threatens her positive face (Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1555). What is more disrespectful and aggressive is that Max uses taboo words ten times to address Ruth as a prostitute, such as 'tart', 'scrubber', 'pox-ridden slut', and 'whore' (L33-51), even after hearing Teddy's clarification ('She's my wife! We're married!', L45). The use of abusive or profane language is a typical positive impoliteness strategy, where the addressee's desire to be respected is seriously impaired (Culpeper 1996: 358). Ruth is even depersonalised when being referred to as 'that disease' (L52), which attacks her role as a human, using a positive impoliteness strategy (Culpeper 1996: 361). As Ruth's face is threated in a direct way, a bald on record impoliteness strategy is also used in combination (Culpeper *et al.* 2003:

1554). This further shows the 'violence of [Max's] language' (Trussler 1973: 132), and presents the ex-butcher as 'bullying [and] foul-mouthed' (Billington 2007: 49).

Despite facing such 'a torrent of insults against her femininity' (Sakellaridou 1988: 110), Ruth utters no single word, only listening passively and submissively. Although Ruth gains 'triumph and ultimate empowerment' at the end of the play (Billington 1996: 171), she is absolutely powerless in the dominant male world in the beginning. In addition, Max's remarks 'I've never had a whore under this roof before. Ever since your mother died.' tend to be interpreted as addressing Max's dead wife, Jessie, as a prostitute (Dukore 1981: 179). This disrespectful address also damages Jessie's positive face, which further demonstrates women's 'difficult position in a patriarchal society' (Sakellaridou 1988: 86).

Towards the end of the excerpt, when Max asks Joey to 'chuck out' Teddy and Ruth, he addresses Teddy with the title 'a Doctor of Philosophy' twice (L57). Here the mock politeness strategy is used, where the politeness is insincere, remaining 'surface realisations' (Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1555). In other words, Max refers to his son by his academic title, not because he wants to show respect, but because he intends to mock and exclude him, in order to 'maintain a position of dominance' in the family (Prentice 1980: 461). In fact, Max does not regard Teddy with any approval throughout the play (Prentice 1980: 467). In the father-and-son relationship, where the nickname or other intimate addresses are normally used, the use of title can be regarded as employing an 'inappropriate identity marker' to 'disassociate from the other', which suggests that positive impoliteness strategies are also applied (Culpeper 1996: 357). Max also damages Teddy's positive face by attacking his role as a man. He addresses Teddy as a 'bitch' (L42), which is usually a derogatory term for women (Trussler 1973: 122). This also demonstrates how Pinter exploits use of sarcastic language rather than the situation for effect (States 1972: 153).

Teddy's response to Max's offensive remarks starts with offensive strategies while ending with silence, suggesting that he is incompetent and powerless. His most offensive responses to Max's impoliteness are 'Listen, don't be silly -' (L36) and 'Stop it!' (L41), where bald on record, positive, and negative impoliteness strategies are all used, by employing imperative sentence to give orders, directly belittling Max, and impeding Max's 'want' to humiliate Ruth (Culpeper 1996: 356-358). However, after being repeatedly interrupted by Max, and being continually humiliated (L33-58), Teddy shifts from being offensive to being defensive ('She's my wife! We're married!', L45), and to a much weaker statement ('She's my wife.', L54), and then to silence (L56 and L59). His reactions show that he is 'despairing' (Ganz 1969: 182) and 'pathetic and ineffective' (Free 1969: 4). As Teddy 'returns seeking admiration and tries to assert his superiority over his family', his failure to save face suggests that his academic titles 'guarantee nothing about his intelligence', competence, and power (Prentice 1980: 466, 469).

While Max is 'consistently abusive' (Free 1969: 4) and trying to 'ground the father's power' (Silverstein 1993: 85), his youngest son, Joey, antagonises him by using multiple impoliteness strategies. When Max asks Joey, 'Did you know he was here?' (L11), Joey offers no answer. Here Joey uses, resembling Max's responses to Teddy, both positive and negative impoliteness strategies. He does not show respect to his father who is expected to have more power, and refuses to give the information that his father wants. This causes a pause in Max's turn (L12), and a repetition of the question 'I asked you if you knew he was here' (L13). As Max forces Joey to answer the question, which is against Joey's will, he threatens Joey's negative face. Although Joey answers him this time (L15), he does not follow Max's repeated order to 'chuck out' Teddy and Ruth at the end of the excerpt (L5559). Even after this aggravates Max who shouts: 'what's the matter? You deaf?' (L60), which damages Joey's positive face by attacking his competence, Joey offensively responds with 'You're an old man' (L61). Such a derogatory expression undoubtedly damages Max's positive face

and is also bald on record (Culpeper 1996: 358). Joey even repeatedly challenges Max's authority and belittles him by stating 'He's an old man' (L61) again to Teddy. The repetition boosts the impoliteness, and the shift from the second person pronoun 'you' to third person pronoun 'he' further damages Max's positive face by distancing him. Indeed, Joey is very rude to Max (Babaee, Babaee and Nesami 2012: 43).

The interaction between Max and Joey forms 'OFFENSIVE–OFFENSIVE pairs', where the 'subsequent aggressive actions' lead to 'a spiral of conflict' (Andersson and Pearson 1999: 458), or an 'escalation' (Lein and Brenneis 1978: 301). Max counters the face attack with 'a spasm of violence [...] against both Joey and Sam' (Cahn 1994: 63), which is even more offensive. More specifically, Max 'hits Joey in the stomach with all his might' (L65) and 'hits [Sam, aged sixty-three] across the head with his stick' when 'Sam moves forward to help [Max]' (L70). Such non-verbal aspects of impoliteness create an extremely threatening atmosphere (Culpeper 1996: 363). These present Max as a 'stick-wielding bully' (Billington 1996: 356), who attempts to maintain his 'patriarchal position' in the family (Prentice 1980: 461), by disrespecting the other family members and violently invading their space. His actions damage both the positive and negative face of them, directly. In fact, Max is the only figure in this excerpt who uses all the five impoliteness superstrategies in combination, repeatedly, which amplifies the impoliteness and helps him gain more power (Culpeper *et al.* 2003: 1561).

## 4. Conclusion

This essay has used the impoliteness framework proposed by Culpeper (1996) and Culpeper *et al.* (2003), to discuss the impoliteness strategies used by Pinter in the characters' (both verbal and physical) language in *The Homecoming*, which causes a spiral of conflict and reflects power relations in this play. More specifically, Max uses all the five impoliteness superstrategies, i.e. bald on record, positive and negative impoliteness, mock politeness, and withholding politeness, in

parallel, to insult and distance Teddy, Ruth, and other members, in order to 'maintain a position of dominance' in the family (Prentice 1980: 461). Encountered with the face attack, such as Max's use of taboo words to humiliate her, Ruth remains silent and passive, showing that she has little power when she first meets Max. This is in accordance with Sakellaridou's (1988: 86) suggestion that *The Homecoming* reflects women's 'difficult position in a patriarchal society'. In addition, although Teddy offends Max to counter the face attack in the middle of the conversation, he then changes to use defensive strategies, which are much less face-threatening, and becomes silent towards the end of the excerpt. Teddy's failure to save face shows that he is ineffective and powerless, as indicated by Free (1969: 4). Moreover, Max also uses non-verbal impoliteness with Sam and Joey, with the purpose of gaining more power. Joey, in response, attacks Max's face (both positive and negative) offensively from the beginning to the end, by snubbing him and using derogatory terms to address him. This shows that he is more competent and powerful than Teddy. As the space allowed for this research is limited, it cannot include more data for analysis. For future studies, conversations at the end of the play could also be considered, so as to examine the changes in the characters' power relations reflected in, as well as caused by, their intended use of impoliteness.

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

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| **Phatic Commuion** |
| --- |

**Outcomes of the Tutorial**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

1.　analyse Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) using **Phatic Communion phenomena.**

**What is Phatic Communion?**

　a **phatic expression** is a type of communication that establishes a mood of sociability(social function) rather than to communicate information or ideas(seek or offer any information of value) as they found an atmosphere of hospitability and personal communion between people through overcoming silence, which is inherently unpleasant and somehow threatening.

**Phatic Expressions:**

**1.**They are used to start a conversation, for instance we often say "how are you", "what's up?" "Pleasant weather we are having"… to greet someone, say goodbye…

**2.** They help avoiding uncomfortable silences at the beginnings and endings of conversations.

**3.** These phatic communications are used to establish a friendly ground to start a conversation.

　Laver offers a useful description of the kind **of strategies that speakers use in the opening and closing phases of conversation**. For instance, he notices how, particularly in the initial phase of

conversation, speakers often make supremely obvious comments to one another. In this respect, these comments speakers make (that are also called **phatic tokens) are the transition from non-interaction to interaction smooth.**

Laver develops his theory by proposing three kinds of **phatic tokens:**

**1.** The first category is **neutral tokens:** these tokens comprise references to factors concerning the context of situation, which are not personal to both interactants. In other words, they are **phatic expressions, to start a conversation, that are neither about the speaker nor about the hearer,** they might be comments on weather for instance, comments on natural views if you are accompanying a tourist, questions about the frequency of visiting a place for instance.

**2. self-oriented tokens:** it refers to factors personal to the speaker; "I am not feeling well", "I hate the shoes I am wearing" for instance.

**3. other-oriented tokens:** it refers to factors personal to the listener, for instance, we informally say "what's up" or "Do you come here often?"

Laver takes the discussion further as he asserts that the choice of category is restricted by the social status of the interactant. That is, **if a superior were to initiate( incomer) the phatic exchange, he would use an*other-oriented token*, on the other hand, the inferior(static) would use a *self-oriented token.*** The following exchange takes place **between a prisoner and a policeman:**

**Policeman: '**Good morning to you in the morning-time,' the policeman said pleasantly.

 **Prisoner: '**I answered him in a civil way'….

The policeman, the **'incomer'** who initiates the phatic token with the **static prisoner**. The policeman's phatic initiation is accompanied with the adverbial clue "pleasantly" that reinforces the friendly intention of the phatic token. The policeman is considered to be the superior through the use of **an*other-oriented token***. However, the prisoner is the inferior through the use of *self-oriented token.* He

acknowledges the phatic purpose by answering the policeman in a 'civil way'.

**Task 1: Consider the following conversational opening from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's***

***Adventures in Wonderland*.**

She stretched herself up on tiptoe and peeped over the edge of the mushroom, and her eyes immediately met those of a large blue caterpillar, that was sitting on the top with its arms folded, quietly smoking a long hookah, and taking not the smallest notice of her or of anything else.

The Caterpillar and Alice looked at each other for some time in silence: at last the Caterpillar took the hookah out of its mouth, and addressed her in a languid, sleepy voice.

'Who are *you*?' said the Caterpillar.

This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation.

In the light of the comments made on the function of phatic communion, can you explain *why* this is not 'an encouraging opening for a conversation'?

Paul Simpson, who is a lecturer in English language, teaching sociolinguistics, the history of English, and stylistics at the University of Liverpool, draws specifically on John Laver's paper that is entitled "Communicative Functions of Phatic Communion." He incorporates this linguistic structure or framework into his analysis of some **conversational openings** in some dialogues of Flann O'Brien's novel *The Third Policeman*.

1. **What's Discourse Analysis?**

The analysis of discourse is "the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which those forms are designed to serve…the discourse analyst is committed to an investigation of what [the] language is used for." (Brown and Yule 1).

By extension, it investigates phatic communication being basically a part of speeches and conversations.

2. **What's phatic communion? (the notion of phatic communion: background remarks):**

It is a nonreferential use of language that establishes a mood of sociability rather than to communicate information or ideas as they found an atmosphere of hospitability and personal communion between people through overcoming silence, which is inherently unpleasant and somehow threatening. They are used to start a conversation, for instance we often say "how are you", "what's up?" "Pleasant weather we are having"… to greet someone, say goodbye…

Simpson divides his chapter into three main sections; first, he looks into the framework designed for the analysis of occurring conversation. Second, he intends to analyze the literary dialogues excerpted from the novel. Finally, in his conclusion, he draws some systematic comments on the results of his analysis taking into consideration some theoretical implications of these results.

The first section deals with the notion of phatic communion and its analysis. The term "phatic communion" was first coined by Malinowski in the 1920s as he defined the term in the quotation on **page 44.** Simpson comments on this last quotation, emphasizing that the information imparted between interactants in a phatic exchange is **indexical (**meaning indicator**)** rather than **cognitive**. It is important to restate that phatic communion has a significant **social** function, as it helps avoiding uncomfortable silences at the beginnings and endings of conversations.

Laver offers a useful description of the kind of strategies that speakers use in the opening and closing phases of conversation. For instance, he notices how, particularly in the initial phase of conversation, speakers often make supremely obvious comments to one another. In this respect, these comments speakers make (that are also called **phatic tokens)** are the transition from non-interaction to interaction smooth. Laver develops his theory by proposing three kinds of phatic tokens, which Simpson is going to rely on in his examination. The first category is **neutral tokens**: these tokens comprise references to factors concerning the context of situation, which are not personal to both inter actants. In other words, they are phatic expressions, to start a conversation, that are neither about the speaker nor about the hearer, they might be comments on weather for instance, comments on natural views if you are accompanying a

tourist, questions about the frequency of visiting a place for instance…

The remaining two categories are **self-oriented tokens** and **other-oriented tokens.** The former refers to factors personal to the speaker; "I am not feeling well", "I hate the shoe I am wearing" for instance. While the latter refers to factors personal to the listener, for instance, "How's life" or what we informally say "what's up" or "Do you come here often?"…

Laver takes the discussion further as he asserts that the choice of category is restricted by the social status of the interactant. That is, if a superior were to initiate the phatic exchange, he would use an *other-oriented token*, on the other hand, if the inferior were to initiate, he would use a *self-oriented token*.

The second section of the chapter is devoted to the analysis of some phatic communicational excerpts from O'Brien's *The Third Policeman* applying to them Laver's framework. As you may have read, in brief the novel tells the story of an unnamed narrator who commits a murder along with his rascal partner. A short time later, the protagonist is in turn murdered by his partner in crime about which we don't know until the end of the novel. After his death, he tells of his adventures in a nightmarish world where he encounters the three policemen. At some point in the novel, the protagonist gets arrested and sentenced to death and during a lax incarceration; the following exchange takes place… **page 47.** In this example, it is the policeman MacCruiskeen who initiates a very unusual phatic exchange. It is clear that the policeman selects an **other-oriented** as he refers to a matter which is personal to the addressee. Another thing to notice here is that the policeman is superior to the prisoner and as Laver suggests in such interaction the phatic token is to be other-oriented. Simpson carries on bringing another concept in his analysis, which he refers to as the ***shared knowledge*** of the interactants. It is about an AB event (as defined by Labov and Fanshel); in a dyadic interaction AB-events concern information which is known to both speakers. In this case, both the policeman and the protagonist are aware of the execution. Simpson adds that such AB-events play an important role in phatic communion as they represent a kind of knowledge that is not informational but rather referential. Therefore, references to AB-events are used in a social-solidarity sense; in other words,

by focusing on mutually shared knowledge they provide a kind of 'safe' conversational token.

It is also worth noting the 'propitiatory' (i.e. conciliatory) nature of the policeman's phatic initiation. We see that the token is accompanied with a gift of a cigarette, the word "stretch" is euphemized, in addition to the authorial clue "pleasantly" in the reporting clause that further reinforces the friendly intention of the phatic token.

Simpson takes us to another observation of Laver on **page 48**. This formula is applicable to the policeman, the 'incomer' who initiates the phatic token with the static protagonist. However, Simpson finds it a little speculative as he has not found any significant support for this hypothesis. In regard to the quotation on **page 49**, clearly this is not the case in the example since there is no close psychological relationship between the protagonist and the territory he is in. Regardless of this, it is still the incomer who initiates the phatic token and practically it is the pattern for all the phatic exchanges in the novel, Simpson adds. In this respect, the novel sets up its **own intra-textual** norm.

Simpson highlights another important thing about the example that is the **absurdity** of the policeman's phatic notion. We all agreed upon the purpose of these phatic communications; they are there to establish a friendly ground to start a conversation. In this conversational phase, the psychological comfort of both participants is most at risk; the policeman's phatic token doesn't serve any comfortable initiation or set free tension and hostility. Although the phatic initiation follows what Laver asserts in his study, his choice of topic is a clear deviation that makes the phatic utterance seem absurd.

Simpson provides a second example (b) on **page 50.** This exchange takes place between the protagonist and a second policeman. The first thing to notice is that the token is **neutral**. Similarly to the pervious example, the incomer is the one who initiates the conversation, and the propitiatory aspect of the token is strengthened by contextual clues such as: the adverbial clue 'pleasantly' that appears in the reporting clause. However, unlike the example (a), the choice of topic is **emotionally uncontroversial** as the policeman chooses a more conventional formula for this greeting. Then, a third example is inserted on

the **same page.** This exchange is between the protagonist and the same policeman. What makes this exchange different from the other two is its textual realization; it can be coded as a Narrative Report Speech Act, unlike the previous examples that are direct speech forms. And it is clear that this example has a similar pattern of that of (b).

Then, Simpson considers a final example in this chapter that is on **page 51.** This excerpt or this exchange takes place between the protagonist who flees on a bicycle and a third policeman alluded to in the title. The phatic token here is neutral. However, the example is striking a little bit; as our expectation is deflated because of the friendly phatic expression the policeman makes in a horrific situation which the protagonist undergoes. Thus, the mismatch between the expected and the realized form is a deviation; according to Brown and Levinson, politeness strategies that accompany phatic expressions may be abandoned under certain emergencies. With regard to the example, an emergency certainly prevails, but the politeness strategy that is not expected in this case is not relinquished.

**Conclusion:**

Simpson's conclusion is devoted to a brief discussion of the results of the analysis. In order to facilitate the results' reading, he makes in use a Token Realization Matrix that is **on page 52.** The matrix provides a way of looking at the important features of each example.

▶ In the first column, we notice that all of the phatic exchanges studied are clearly positioned in the opening phase of interaction.

▶ In the second column, we notice that in all cases, the incoming participant initiates the phatic exchange.

So here, in both columns there is no deviation, all phatic exchanges are alike.

- By looking across the matrix, we observe that example (b) and (c) realize all four features. Simpson notes that these examples represent the general pattern of phatic initiation in the novel. Thus, they reflect the **intra-textual** norm in the novel.

- Examples (a) and (d) draw attention to a sort of deviation. The deviation in example (d) lies in the speaker's choice of a neutral and emotionally uncontroversial phatic token in a state of emergency. Thus, there is no acknowledgment or reply by the addressee, simply because the situation is terrifying. Example (a) the deviation also lies in the speaker's choice of material for the phatic token; although the phatic expression seems emotionally uncontroversial, the tone appears to be very sarcastic and absurd.

Simpson adds that example (a) can be argued to be **forgrounded**. Forgrounding is a sort of deviation that brings an item into artistic emphasis. It operates on two levels:

- First, it is forgrounded by its relationship to the occurring amicable conversations.

- Second, it is forgrounded by its relationship to the patterns of interaction set up in the novel. In this case it is referred to as **internal deviation.**

Simpson ends his chapter by shedding light on the writer's strategies of verbal interaction which make him a member of conversationalists and speech community.

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

(**Major**) Literature and Civilization                         (**Course**) Discourse Analysis

(**Class**) First Year Master                              (**Instructor**) Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE

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# Deixis

**Outcomes of the Tutorial**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

1. ***conduct a deictic analysis of*** Charles Dickens' *Little Dorrit* (1857) and **Ernest Hemingway's "Cat in the Rain" (1925)**

**1-Deixis:** formal devices in language for indicating how the speaker is related to what he refers to. In this passage from Charles Dickens' *Little Dorrit* (1857), find how deixis are central to the effects achieved by Dickens that is to say how such linguistic tool contributes above all to a feeling of disorientation (time, place and person).

It was now summer-time; a grey, hot, dusty evening. They rode to the top of Oxford Street, and there alighting, dived in among the great streets of melancholy stateliness, and the little streets that try to be as stately and succeed in being more melancholy, of which there is a labyrinth near Park Lane. Wildernesses of corner houses, with barbarous old porticoes and appurtenances; horrors that came into existence under some wrong-headed person in some wrong-headed time, still demanding the blind admiration of all ensuing generations and determined to do so until they tumbled down; frowned upon the twilight. Parasite little tenements, with the cramp in their whole frame, from the dwarf hall-door on the giant model of His Grace's in the Square to the squeezed window of the boudoir commanding the dunghills in the Mews, made the evening doleful. Rickety dwellings of undoubted fashion, but of a capacity to hold nothing comfortably except a dismal smell, looked like the last result of the great mansions' breeding in-and-in; and, where their

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little supplementary bows and balconies were supported on thin iron columns, seemed to be scrofulously resting upon crutches. Here and there a Hatchment, with the whole science of Heraldry in it, loomed down upon the street, like an Archbishop discoursing on Vanity. The shops, few in number, made no show; for popular opinion was as nothing to them.

**2- Compare the function of deixis here with that employed by Ernest Hemingway in "Cat in the Rain" (1925)**

There were only two Americans stopping at the hotel. They did not know any of the people they passed on the stairs on their way to and from their room. Their room was on the second floor facing the sea. It also faced the public garden and the war monument. There were big palms and green benches in the public garden. In the good weather there was always an artist with his easel. Artists liked the way the palms grew and the bright colors of the hotels facing the gardens and the sea. Italians came from a long way off to look up at the war monument. It was made of bronze and glistened in the rain. It was raining. The rain dripped from the palm trees. Water stood in pools on the gravel paths. The sea broke in a long line in the rain and slipped back down the beach to come up and break again in a long line in the rain. The motor cars were gone from the square by the war monument. Across the square in the doorway of the caf? a waiter stood looking out at the empty square.

The American wife stood at the window looking out. Outside right under their window a cat was crouched under one of the dripping green tables. The cat was trying to make herself so compact that she would not be dripped on.

'I'm going down and get that kitty,' the American wife said.

A speaker's use of deictic terms indicates where they are in relation to the objects, places and people they describe. **For example,** I would refer to the computer I am currently using as I type this chapter as

'this computer', the deictic term this indicating that the computer **is in close proximity, to me**. On the other hand, I would refer to the computer **that is in the next room** from me as **'that computer'**, since the deictic term **that** indicates **distance from me**. What should be apparent from this example is that deictic terms are always interpreted in relation to where the speaker is situated.

- **The Example of "this and that Computer"**

The words *this* and *that* are examples of place or spatial deictics. These are deictic terms that indicate the proximity of a particular referent relative to the speaker. *This* identifies something that is close to the speaker whereas *that* refers to something that is not so close.

**Definition:**

- The term deixis comes originally from Greek and means **'pointing' or 'indicating'. John Lyons describes deixis as 'the orientational features of language relative to the time and place of the utterance'** such features include person, demonstrative and locative expressions, and tense. They are formal devices in language for indicating how the speaker is related to what he refers to**. Deictic terms indicate the position of something or someone in relation to the speaker's deictic centre.** The location of a speaker in time and space is referred to as their deictic centre. Everyone's deictic centre is different.

**The different Types of Deixis:**

According to Levinson deixis are divided into three types:

**temporal deixis, person deixis, spatial deixis** and **empathetic deixis.**

**1.Temporal deictics** indicate metaphorical proximity and distance from the speaker in relation to the point in time at which the speaker makes their utterance (e.g. now and then, yesterday, today and tomorrow).(**Time references**)

**2.Person deixis** is most noticeably exemplified by the pronoun system, and encodes the speakers and

addressees within a speech event (e.g. me and you).(**person references**)

**3. Spatial deixis** is The concept of distance is considered relevant to spatial deixis , whenever relative location of things is being indicated adverbs like,  here and there.(**place references**).

The location, from the speaker's perspective, can be fixed mentally as well as physically.

- **Orientation.**

- **Familiarization.**

- **Clarity ( definite and specific)**

**Deixis : a Point of Entry to *Little Dorrit***

**Such features in the *Little Dorrit* contribute above all to a feeling of disorientation and defamiliarzation.**

**Consider the following:**

1. **Disorientation.**

2. **Defamiliarization.**

3. **Ambiguity.**

4. **Vagueness.**

5. **Confusion.**

6. **Time: are we familiar with time in this paragraph?**

- Let us take time first. A novel would normally begin: 'one day thirty years ago…' 'one day' indicating the beginning of the story at a point in time chosen by the writer, and 'thirty years ago' relating that point to the time of writing. By separating and reversing these phrases, Dickens takes from us the anticipated focus. Thirty years ago from when? When was the one day? Before and since what? Any other time when? August day when?

- The ambiguity of the time is not cleared up by the tenses of the verbs: the general past tense is used throughout, so leaving it unclear whether the actions take place over a short or long period. Adverbs of time are missing.

   **Place:**

- If time is uncertain in the first two paragraphs, so is <u>place,</u> in that the focus on Marseilles is not made clear. Marseilles can be a point on a map, a city seen from above-'everything in Marseilles…' it is confused by different perspective ' and about Marseilles'-then we seem to be a person in 'streets'- 'roads'-'towards the Italian coast' this is vague and misty.

- The spatial uncertainty continues with the repeated 'far away' (from where?)

**Person:** Confusion about time and place is <u>compounded by lack of people</u>. There is no person on whom we can focus. The title 'Sun and Shadow' and the first three sentences could be descriptive of a world which had been unpeopled.

- Stranger- all nations on earth are listed- (to us) exotic nationalities- moving to familiar European ones, 'Englishmen', then 'Frenchmen' the this hypothesis is falsified as the list continues moving to the alien 'Turks.'

- The fourth paragraph moves us abruptly (<u>using passive verbs:</u> 'were all closed and drawn').

- Another facet of the lack of person is the application of words which are normally used of inanimate objects to animate beings and vice versa. In the first paragraph people 'strangers' are merely objects of the verb 'stare', while houses, walls and streets 'stare' and the vines(or grapes) 'wink.'

- When animate beings enter the scene, the verbs remain intransitive (horses creep, people are dozing, spitting and begging, lounging and lying.)

- **Concluding sentence**: The feeling of frustration generated here is the dominant mood of the narrative.

- 1.Let us take time first, in this passage from the novel a paragraph normally begin: "it was summer time" yet putting it like this "it was now summer time," adverbs of time as "now" does not clear up when the action is happening in addition to the tense of the verb which is in the past "was" leaving it unclear whether the actions take place in the past time or the present time.

- 2.The ambiguity of time is not cleared up by the tenses of the verbs: there is an interplay between the use of past tense "rode, dived, came…" and present tense "try, succeed, is…" leaving again readers uncertain whether actions happened in past or present.

- 3.If time is uncertain in this passage, so is place, in that the focus on the "top of oxford street" is not made clear. Oxford street can be a point on a map, a street seen from above "the great streets of melancholy stateliness " it is confused by different perspective "in which there is a labyrinth near Park Lane" then we seem to be a person in 'streets', "horrors that came into existence under some wrong-headed person in some wrong-headed time" this is vague and misty.

- 4.The spatial uncertainty continues with the use of adverbs of location "here and there" (where?)

- 5.Confusion about time and place is compounded by the lack of people. There is no person on whom we can focus although in the first sentence there is a hint of a peopled landscape "they rode" also "his Grace's in the square" yet it is confusing when the lack of people is seen with the application of words which are normally used of inanimate objects to animate beings and vice versa. Such as when "streets" try to be stately, "horrors" demand the blind admiration, "great mansions" breeding in-and-in, "the whole science of Heraldry" loomed down.

- The American wife stood at the window looking out. Outside right under their window a cat was crouched under one of the dripping green tables. The cat was trying to make herself so compact that she would not be dripped on.

- 'I'm going down and get that kitty,' the American wife said.

- 1.Let us take time first, it is certain and this is seen in the use of past tense throughout "were, faced,

liked, came, stood" that indicates when actions take place.

- 2.Place is also certain and clear, in that the focus is on "the hotel, room, the second floor facing the sea…etc" reader are oriented as there is a specific place in which they can focus their attention.

- 3.There is also the presence of person as it is a peopled landscape with the presence of "two Americans, Italians, a waiter, The American wife."

- In Hemingway in "Cat in the Rain," such linguistic tool (deixis) contributes above all to a feeling of orientation, certainty, and there is coherence as readers can follow the story in terms of (time, place and person). Yet, in Dickens' passages such linguistic tool contributes above all to a feeling of disorientation, ambiguity, uncertainty and frustration.

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

(**Major**) Literature and Civilization                    (**Course**) Discourse Analysis

(**Class**) First Year Master                    (**Instructor**) Dr. Amel
KHIREDDINE

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# Transitivity Function

**Outcomes of the Tutorial**: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

1. *analyse* **Sylvia Plath's autobiographical novel** *The Bell Jar* **(1963)** *within the framework of Transitivity Function.*

**Examine the following extract from Sylvia Plath's autobiographical novel** *The Bell Jar* **(1963) in terms of different transitivity functions. This passage depicts Plath's experience of electric-shock treatment as a "remedy" for severe depression.   What particular literary effects is Plath attempting to produce? Who does what to whom?**

The wall-eyed nurse came back. She unclasped my watch and dropped it in her pocket. Then she started tweaking the hairpins from my hair. Doctor Gordon was unlocking the closet. He dragged out a table on wheels with a machine on it and rolled it behind the head of the bed. The nurse started swabbing my temples with a smelly grease. As she leaned over to reach the side of my head nearest the wall, her fat breast muffled my face like a cloud or a pillow. A vague, medicinal stench emanated from her flesh. 'Don't worry,' the nurse grinned down at me. 'Their first time everybody's scared to death.' I tried to smile, but my skin had gone stiff, like parchment. Doctor Gordon was fitting two metal plates on either side of my head. He buckled them into place with a strap that dented my forehead, and gave me a wire to bite. I shut my eyes. There was a brief silence, like an indrawn breath. Then something bent down and took hold of me and shook me like the end of the world. Whee-ee-ee-ee-ee, it shrilled,

through an air crackling with blue light, and with each flash a great jolt drubbed me till I thought my

bones would break and the sap fly out of me like a split plant. I wondered what terrible thing it was that

I had done.

**The outline:**

1. **What is transitivity function?**

2. **The transitivity function's elements: Examples.**

3. **The transitivity function's procedure: Examples.**

4. **Text's analyses**

**Transitivity function:**

Part of the ideational function, which concerns **with the transmission of ideas** is

transitivity. Its function is that **of representing processes or experiences like actions,**

events, processes of consciousness, and relations that cover "all phenomena and

anything that can be expressed by **a verb:** event, **whether physical or not, state, or**

**relations"** (Halliday, 1985; Halliday, 1976, p. 159). Transitivity **specifies the different types of**

**processes are recognized in the language and the structures** by which they are expressed.

**In this model:**

-Transitivity structure **can be characterized by (transitivity function is composed of three**

**elements): as A) agent(person/object/part of body) + B) process (represented by the verb) + C)**

**goal. It is used to express the speaker's experience of the external world or his own internal**

**world.**

    **Examples:**

(1)  John painted the house.

      **T**he process is represented by the verb form 'painted' and the participant functions by the

actor 'John' and the goal 'the house." Where the 'goal' comes into existence as a result of the process.

(2) The ball broke the window. (participant/ agent/ doer of action here is that of instrument/inanimate)

**'ball'** is regarded as instrument or object.

**Procedure:**

In transitivity, processes and participants are analyzed to illustrate the mind frame or world view of the persona in a literary text. It applies the following steps which are (1) **isolating the processes (actions)**, **and determining which participant (who or what) is doing each process;** (2) **determining what sorts of processes they are, and which participant is engaged in which type of process;** and (3) **verifying who or what is affected or seems to be affected by each of these processes and what new effects and meanings these processes produce.**

Transitivity function/processes as developed by Michael Halliday basically presents how the world is perceived **in three dimensions/ In dealing with clause types, Halliday distinguishes three main types, those of action, mental process, and relation.**

**the material world, the world of consciousness (mental process),** and **the world of relations.**

**Examples:**

**1-In the material world**, processes like *build*, *cover*, **and** *cut* assign **the participants as actor** (initiator or doer), Processes of this type are **material processes.**

**2-The world of consciousness or mental process** is identified **with processes of perception, reaction, memory, sensing, seeing, feeling, or thinking.** *Processes* **like** *think*, *observe*, **and** *perceive***. These are known as mental processes.**

**He saw his sister.**

**3-**The last among the basic processes **is the relational processes**, which deal with **facts or things,**

**being attributive or identifying**. The process describes or states a relation between two roles.

**Example:**

He is a musician.

Mr Smith is the secretary.

In the first part of the passage, all three of these major actor-participants are seen as overwhelmingly 'in control' of whatever events take place. They are presented and given as being in charge of the construction of the reality that the persona perceives and expresses.**(providing examples).**

But what of the patient herself ?Her attempt at what is (technically) a material-action-intention process fails. Her related body-part action is similarly only an 'accidental' event, that is, beyond her control. All the other actors are doing constructive, concrete tasks by that option, her contribution is to Shut her eyes—to remove herself from the scene. Her actions are mental-internalized-cognition processes in the passage—a fact which makes it absolutely clear that the piece is very much—and only—from her point of view.**(providing examples).**

Reading  this skeleton gives us a firmer grasp of the abstract reality of the person's world. Massively, it is the Nurse who affects both the person's possessions and body parts and, in one instance, the whole of her. The Doctor, on the other hand, uses his intention processes to affect equipment and, in one localized area, via the persona's body part and the equipment, the persona herself. At this point he disappears from world view. The electricity, not surprisingly, continually affects the whole persona. The patient's actions affects nothing—despite her intentions. The patient's body parts affects nothing.**(providing examples).**

It is also noticeable the persona seems to be passive because the material actions she is doing as "I was sitting, and holding" are affecting nothing. Also, "I realized, sensed" which are mental processes depict the persona as a negative actor as she is again affecting no one and nothing. Moreover, someone else that is taking control of action as "the watch had been replaced and fastened upside down" by someone else.

The third paragraph in the passage is a good example of the persona as being negative actor because she is describing things around her "an old metal lamp surfaced my mind." the first time the persona seems to do an action is when she says, "one day I decided to move," performing a mental process. However, the persona starts being active rather than passive when she states, "I closed both hands…..gripped them tight." This is a brief mention of the persona as being a positive actor. Yet, the persona attempts to remove the lamp from her head is not realized as something "shook her." In fact, something else is taking control of the events and affects the persona's body parts "shook me till my teeth rattled"

The persona does not do anything, her attempt to make a material actions fails as she says, "I tried to pull my hands off, but they were stuck" she does also material processes that put her again in a passive position "my hands jerked free, and I fell back" Moreover, her mental processes which are also not realized "I did not recognize, I felt terrible" thus, there is an interplay between the persona's actions (material and mental processes) yet they are not realized as she is affecting nothing around her she is helpless and passive. Something else affects the persona's body parts which is the electricity that is represented in material processes "something leapt out, shook me"

Thus, it is the doctor's equipments 'electricity and injection "a small hole, blackened as if with pencil lead" that are taking control of events yet the persona is helpless, passive and impotent. This

leads to contradictions about Sylvia Plath as it is known that she supports women and she is a feminist yet her writings puts her protagonist as victim and not an empowered woman.

In the second passage given to you see you need to isolate processes and find which participant (who or what is doing each process), find what sorts of processes they are, and which participant is engaged in which type of process and find who or what is affected by each of these processes and what new effects and meanings these processes produce. (you can do this in your draft paper)

I was sitting (material process) in a wicker chair, holding(material process) a small cocktail glass of tomato juice. The watch had been replaced (material process)on my wrist, but it looked (mental process) odd. Then I realized (mental process) it had been fastened (material process) upside down. I sensed (mental process) the unfamiliar positioning of the hairpins in my hair.

"How do you feel?"

An old metal floor lamp surfaced (material process) in my mind. One of the few relics of my father's study, it was surmounted (material process) by a copper bell which held the light bulb, and from which a frayed, tiger-colored cord ran down (material process) the length of the metal stand to a socket in the wall.

One day I decided to move (mental process) this lamp from the side of my mother's bed to my desk at the other end of the room. The cord would be long enough, so I didn't unplug (material process) it. I closed (material process) both hands around the lamp and the fuzzy cord and gripped (material process) them tight

Then something leapt out (material process) of the lamp in a blue flash and shook (material process) me till my teeth rattled, and I tried to pull my hands off (material process), but they were stuck, and I

screamed (mental process), or a scream was torn from my throat, for I didn't recognize it (mental process), but heard it soar and quaver (material process) in the air like a violently disembodied spirit.

Then my hands jerked (material process non intended)free, and I fell(material process non intended) back onto my mother's bed. A small hole, blackened as if with pencil lead, pitted (material process) the center of my right palm.

But I didn't. I felt terrible (mental process)

**Using Michael Halliday's framework of transitivity function:**

**After isolating processes and finding who or what is doing each process and what kinds of processes they are, you will find that: who or what is affected by each process and what effect this passage produce?**

1. **The persona seems quite helpless**
2. **The persona seems "at a distance," "outside herself," "watching herself," "detached to being with-and then just a victim"**
3. **The medical staff seem more interested in getting the job done than caring.**

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

(**Major**) Literature and Civilization                              (**Course**) Discourse Analysis

(**Class**) First Year Master                                           (**Instructor**) Dr. Amel
KHIREDDINE

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## Transitivity Function (2)

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<u>**Outcomes of the Tutorial**</u>: *By the end of this tutorial, you will be able to:*

1. *analyse* **Joseph Conrad's** *The Secret Agent* **(1907)** *within the framework of Transitivity Function.*

**Text's analyses:** *The Secret Agent: A Simple Tale* is a novel by <u>Joseph Conrad</u>, first published in 1907.[1] The story is set in London in 1886 and deals with Mr. Adolf Verloc and his work as a spy for an unnamed country (presumably Russia). *The Secret Agent* is one of Conrad's later political novels in which he moved away from his former tales of <u>seafaring</u>.

**The passage is taken from Joseph Conrad's novel *The Secret Agent* . The particular scene which is analyzed is the murder of Mr Verloc by his wife. The event describes Mrs Verloc's reaction to the news that her brother Stevie is dead and that Mr Verloc, as she sees it, caused his death. Most prominent are my intuitions of Verloc's submissiveness and that Mrs Verloc is somehow not really responsible for what she does although this is nowhere stated explicitly by Conrad. First, look at the verbs describing the murder and the events leading up to it:**

She started forward at once, as if she were still a loyal woman bound to that man by an unbroken contract. Her right hand skimmed slightly the end of the table, and when she had passed on towards the sofa the carving knife had vanished without the slightest sound from the side of the dish. Mr Verloc heard the creaky plank in the floor, and was content. He waited. Mrs Verloc was coming. As if the homeless soul of Stevie had flown for shelter straight to the breast of his sister, guardian and protector,

the resemblance of her face with that of her brother grew at every step, even to the droop of the lower lip, even to the slight divergence of the eyes. But Mr Verloc did not see that. He was lying on his back and staring upwards. He saw partly on the ceiling and partly on the wall the moving shadow of an arm with a clenched hand holding a carving knife. It flickered up and down. It's movements were leisurely. They were leisurely enough for Mr Verloc to recognise the limb and the weapon.

They were leisurely enough for him to take in the full meaning of the portent, and to taste the flavour of death rising in his gorge. His wife had gone raving mad — murdering mad. They were leisurely enough for the first paralysing effect of this discovery to pass away before a resolute determination to come out victorious from the ghastly struggle with that armed lunatic. They were leisurely enough for Mr Verloc to elaborate a plan of defence involving a dash behind the table, and the felling of the woman to the ground with a heavy wooden chair. But they were not leisurely enough to allow Mr Verloc the time to move either hand or foot. The knife was already planted in his breast. It met no resistance on its way. Hazard has such accuracies. Into that plunging blow, delivered over the side of the couch, Mrs Verloc had put all the inheritance of her immemorial and obscure descent, the simple ferocity of the age of caverns, and the unbalanced nervous fury of the age of bar-rooms. Mr Verloc, the Secret Agent, turning slightly on his side with the force of the blow, expired without stirring a limb, in the muttered sound of the word "Don't" by way of protest.

**The outline:**

5. **What is transitivity function?**

6. **The transitivity function's elements: Examples.**

7. **The transitivity function's procedure: Examples.**

8. **Text's analyses**

**Transitivity function:**

Part of the ideational function, which concerns **with the transmission of ideas** is

transitivity. Its function is that **of representing processes or experiences like actions,**

events, processes of consciousness, and relations that cover "all phenomena and

anything that can be expressed by **a verb:** event, **whether physical or not, state, or**

**relations"** (Halliday, 1985; Halliday, 1976, p. 159). Transitivity **specifies the different types of**

**processes are recognized in the language and the structures** by which they are expressed.

**In this model:**

-Transitivity structure **can be characterized by (transitivity function is composed of three**

**elements): as A) agent(person/object/part of body) + B) process (represented by the verb) + C)**

**goal. It is used to express the speaker's experience of the external world or his own internal**

**world.**

> **Examples:**

(3)  John painted the house.

> **T**he process is represented by the verb form 'painted' and the participant functions by the
>
> > actor 'John' and the goal 'the house." Where the 'goal' comes into existence as a result
> >
> > of the process.

(4) The ball broke the window. (participant/ agent/ doer of action here is that of

instrument/inanimate)

> **'ball'** is regarded as instrument or object.

**Procedure:**

> In transitivity, processes and participants are analyzed to illustrate the mind frame or world

view of the persona in a literary text.  It applies the following steps which are (1) **isolating the**

**processes (actions)**, **and determining which participant (who or what) is doing each process;** (2)

**determining what sorts of processes they are, and which participant is engaged in which type of**

**process;** and (3) **verifying who or what is affected or seems to be affected by each of these**

**processes and what new effects and meanings these processes produce.**

Transitivity function/processes as developed by Michael Halliday basically presents how the world is perceived **in three dimensions/ In dealing with clause types, Halliday distinguishes three main types, those of action, mental process, and relation.**

**the material world, the world of consciousness (mental process),** and **the world of relations.**

**Examples:**

**1-In the material world**, processes like *build*, *cover*, **and** *cut* assign **the participants as actor** (initiator or doer), Processes of this type are **material processes.**

**2-The world of consciousness or mental process** is identified **with processes of perception, reaction, memory, sensing, seeing, feeling, or thinking.** *Processes* **like** *think*, *observe*, **and** *perceive*. **These are known as mental processes.**

**He saw his sister.**

**3-**The last among the basic processes **is the relational processes**, which deal with **facts or things, being attributive or identifying**. The process describes or states a relation between two roles.

**Example:**

He is a musician.

Mr Smith is the secretary.


Mr. Verloc:

There are 13 verbs referring to Mr Verloc as the participant in the role of actor (8 verbs describe a mental process that of perception/ 4 verbs Verloc as actor , they are intransitive verbs without a goal and are passive in which Verloc does not exercise any control and in which he plays a submissive role) ex:

He was content (as he hears the plank creaking, indicating that Mrs Verloc is coming over to him)

He waited (for Mrs Verloc)

He expired (his death is caused by Mrs Verloc's attack)

a) The time to move either hand or foot

b) Turning slightly on his side

c) Without stirring a limb

A and c deliberate actions but not realized because Verloc had no time to move before he was killed by his wife, in B the movement s caused by the force of the blow delivered by Mrs Verloc. All verbs add to the overall impression of Verloc's impassivity.

**Mental process by Verloc:**

Elaborate a plan, taste the flavor of death, take in the full meaning of the portent (Mr Verloc verbs of recognition and reaction)

Hear the creaky plank, not see that (referring to Mrs Verloc's resemblance to Stevie), recognize the limb and the weapon (Mr Verloc as a passive observer of an act he can do nothing to prevent)

- Mr Verloc never sees his wife but makes connections between certain sounds and sights and her physical appearance)

- The verbs with Verloc as actor are either mental process verbs or intransitive with no goals, and none has Verloc as causer or initiator of the action. He is the passive observer of his own death, unable to influence the course of events . He sees what is about to happen but he does not have the time to transfer his thoughts on defense into action.

**Mrs. Verloc's actions:**

- **As an actor in the clause, the verbs are intransitive verbs of action (without a goal) there is a movement but no explicit goal mentioned as if she is not fully in control of the situation. (there seems to be no connection between her physical actions and the**

**mental processes involved as if she is driven by an unknown force which she is unable to bring under control)**

- **The feeling that she is unaware of her actions is strengthened when we notice that a direct reference to Mrs Verloc as actor and causer is avoided in the transitive verbs of action which describe the steps leading up to the murder.**

- **Parts of the body take on the role of actor or the actor is replaced by an instrument: (obviously Mrs Verloc has taken the knife, but this is not stated in those terms)**

1. **Her right hand (actor, causer/part of body) skimmed lightly (action) the end of the table (affected). (the actor is not Mrs Verloc but her hand)**

2. **She (actor) passed on (action) (intransitive verb of movement with no goal)**

3. **The carving knife (instrument, affected) had vanished (supervention/not intended/unexpected), we are not told that Mrs Verloc took the knife, nor even her hand took the knife, but 'her hand skimmed… the table… the knife had vanished..'**

**Results:**

- **the reader is left to make the connections between the two actions, and this has the effect to 'distancing' Mrs Verloc from her own actions. It is as her hand has a force of its own, detached from Mrs Verloc's mental process. (this impression of detachment, of someone who is not responsible of her actions is strengthened by further examples of the avoidance of clauses with Mrs Verloc as actor.**

- **The references to Mrs Verloc are indirect (her movement towards her husband is signaled by a sound 'the creaking plank'). Mr Verloc sees a form of shadows and not physical objects 'an arm with a clenched hand holding a carving knife,' 'the limb and the weapon.'**

- **The use of the passive transformation 'the knife was…. Planted,' and 'the blow was delivered' and not 'she planted the knife' or 'she delivered the blow' where the** reference to the actor or causer (Mrs Verloc) **is removed and** the instrument **becomes the grammatical subject.**

- **The only reference to Mrs Verloc as actor in a transitive verb of action is after she has dealt the blow: 'into that plunging blow….Mrs Verloc had put all the inheritance of her …' this describes her disturbed mental state.**

- **There are four instances of negation in one form or another:**

1. **But Mr Verloc did not see that.**

2. **But they were not leisurely enough to allow Mr Verloc the time to move…**

3. **It met no resistance on its way.**

4. **Mr Verloc… expired without stirring.. in the muttered sound of the word 'don't'**

    **All refer to Mr Verloc's inability to act to prevent his death. Don't/come here (imperatives: a weak protest 'don't'/ a command come here). The only 'action' Verloc is able to take before it is too late is this 'muttered sound: don't'.**

    - **The (the movements of the shadow) were leisurely enough**

    **For Mr Verloc to recognize the limb and the weapon…**

    **For him to take in the full meaning of the portent….**

    **For him to taste the flavor of death…**

    **For the first paralyzing effect of this discovery to pass away…**

    **For Mr Verloc to elaborate a plan of defence….**

    **But they were not leisurely enough to allow Mr Verloc the time to move either hand or foot.**

**The force of the But and  not emphasize the fact that Verloc has time to see and think but not to**

**act.**

| The murderer (Mrs Verloc) | The murdered (Mr Verloc) |
|---|---|
| **Aggressor** | **victim** |
| **force** | **impotence** |
| **movement** | **No movement** |
| **Uncontrolled action, not thought** <br> **(physical actions over thought)** | **Thought, not action (mind over action)** |
| **Intransitive verbs of action, parts of** <br> **body and instruments as causers and** <br> **actors.** | **Verbs of mental process, inanimate and** <br> **abstract goals, and intransitive verbs.** <br> **Verloc as affected participant.** |

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

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# APPENDICES

*M'hamed Bougara University of Boumerdes*

*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

(**Major**) Literature and Civilization Analysis

(**Course**) Discourse Analysis

(**Class**) First Year Master

(**Instructor**) Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE

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## First Term Examination

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**In a well structured coherent essay answer the following TOPIC:**

Brown and Levinson define politeness phenomena as linguistic strategies that redress face-threatening acts (FTAs).

- **Drawing on Brown and Levinson's framework of politeness, analyse the following dialogue from Eugene Ionesco's *The Lesson* (1951).**

**Professor**: Listen. Here are three matches. And here is another one. That makes four. Now, watch carefully…there are four of them. I take one away, how many do you have left?

**(neither the matches, nor any of the objects in question are visible: the professor will get up from the table, write on an imaginary blackboard with imaginary chalk, etc)**

**Pupil:** Five. If three and one make four, four and one make five.

**Professor:** No, that's not right, not right at all. You have a constant predilection for adding up. But it is also necessary to subtract. Integration alone is not enough. Disintegration is essential too. That's

what life is. And philosophy. That's science, progress, civilization.

**Pupil:** Yes, Sir.

**Professor:** Let us get back to our matches. I have four of them. You can see that there are four all right. I take one away, and that leaves me with….

**Pupil:** I don't know, Sir.

**Professor:** Come now. Think a little. It's not easy, I admit. And you're clever enough to make the intellectual effort required and succeed in understanding. Well, then?

**Pupil:** I don't seem to, Sir. I really don't know, sir.

**Professor:** You didn't quite understand my example. Suppose you had only one ear. I stick on another one, how many would you have?

**Pupil:** Two.

**Professor:** Good. I take another one away. How many do you have left?

**Pupil:** Two.

**Professor:** One.

**Pupil:** Two.

**Professor:** No, no, no. That's not it at all. The example is not…is not convincing enough. Listen to me.

**Pupil:** Yes, Sir.

**Professor:** You have …er…you have…er…one stick, two sticks, three sticks, four and five sticks, those are numbers. When you count the sticks, each stick is a unit, Mademoiselle! Repeat what I've just said!

**Pupil:** a unit, Mademoiselle! Repeat what I've just said!

**Professor:** No, Mademoiselle. Listen Mademoiselle! If you don't succeed in fully understanding these archetypal arithmetical principles, you'll never succeed in carrying out your work properly as a

polytechnician.

**Pupil:** I'm sorry, Sir! **(slowly, she lays her hands on the table.)**

**Professor:** Silence! Spanish, then, Mademoiselle, is actually the mother language that gave birth to all the neo-Spanish languages…you may take notes Mademoiselle.

**Pupil: (in a strangled voice)** Yes, Sir.

# BEST OF LUCK!

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*Faculty of Letters and Languages*

*Department of English*

| | |
|---|---|
| (**Major**) Literature and Civilization Analysis | (**Course**) Discourse |
| (**Class**) First Year Master | (**Instructor**) Dr. Amel KHIREDDINE |
| **Full Name**: ……………………….. | **Group**: …………… |

## Second Term Examination

**In a well structured coherent essay answer the following <u>TOPIC:</u>**

Brown and Levinson define politeness phenomena as linguistic strategies that redress face-threatening acts (FTAs). For his part, Culpeper describes impoliteness "as the use of strategies designed to attack face, and thereby cause social conflict and disharmony".

- **Drawing on both Brown and Levinson's framework of politeness and Culpeper's five super strategies of impoliteness, analyse the following dialogue from Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming* (1964).**

- **Refer to any phatic tokens.**

**Teddy**. I was going to come down, Dad, I was going to... be here, when you came down.

*Pause.*

How are you?

*Pause.*

Uh... look, I'd... like you to meet...

**Max**. How long you been in this house?

**Teddy**. All night.

**Max**. All night? I'm a laughingstock. How did you get in?

**Teddy**. I had my key.

*Max whistles and laughs.*

**Max**. Who's this?

**Teddy**. I was just going to introduce you.

**Max**. Who asked you to bring tarts in here?

**Teddy**. Tarts?

**Max**. Who asked you to bring dirty tarts into this house?

**Teddy**. Listen, don't be silly –

**Max**. You been here all night?

**Teddy**. Yes, we arrived from Venice –

**Max**. We've had a smelly scrubber in my house all night. We've had a stinking pox-ridden Slut in my house all night.

**Teddy**. Stop it! What are you talking about?

**Max**. I haven't seen the bitch for six years, he comes home without a word, he brings a filthy scrubber off the street,

he shacks up in my house!

**Teddy**. She's my wife! We're married!

*Pause.*

**Max**. I've never had a whore under this roof before. Ever since your mother died. My word of honour.

(*To Joey.*)

Have you ever had a whore here? Has Lenny ever had a whore here? They come back from America,

they bring the

slop-bucket with them. They bring the bedpan with them. (*To Teddy.*) Take that disease away from

me. Get her

away from me.

**Teddy**. She's my wife.

**Max**. (*to Joey*) Chuck them out.

*Pause.*

A Doctor of Philosophy, Sam, you want to meet a Doctor of Philosophy? (*To Joey.*) I said chuck them

out.

*Pause.*

What's the matter? You deaf?

**Joey**. You're an old man. (*To Teddy.*) He's an old man.

*Lenny walks into the room, in a dressing-gown. He stops. They all look round.*

*Max turns back, hits Joey in the stomach with all his might.*

# BEST OF LUCK!

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## Homework and Further Readings (1)

**In a well structured coherent essay answer the following TOPIC:**

In Michael Halliday's terms, **transitivity** is a part of the ideational function of the clause. The ideational function of the clause is concerned with the "transmission of ideas." Its function is that of "representing 'processes' or 'experiences': actions, events, processes of consciousness and relations." The term "process" is used "to cover all phenomena…and anything that can be expressed by a verb: event, whether physical or not, state, or relation."

- **Drawing on Halliday's definition, analyse the following extract from Sylvia Plath's autobiographical novel *The Bell Jar* (1963) in terms of different transitivity functions.**

The nurse started swabbing my temples with a smelly grease. As she leaned over to reach the side of my head nearest the wall, her fat breast muffled my face like a cloud or a pillow. A vague, medicinal stench emanated from her flesh. 'Don't worry,' the nurse grinned down at me. 'Their first time everybody's scared to death.' I tried to smile, but my skin had gone stiff, like parchment. Doctor Gordon was fitting two metal plates on either side of my head. He buckled them into place with a strap that dented my forehead, and gave me a wire to bite. I shut my eyes. There was a brief silence, like an indrawn breath. Then something bent down and took hold of me and shook me like the end of the world.

I was sitting in a wicker chair, holding a small cocktail glass of tomato juice. The watch had been replaced on my wrist, but it looked odd. Then I realized it had been fastened upside down. I sensed the unfamiliar positioning of the hairpins in my hair.

One day I decided to move this lamp from the side of my mother's bed to my desk at the other end of the room. The cord would be long enough, so I didn't unplug it. I closed both hands around the lamp and the fuzzy cord and gripped them tight

Then something leapt out of the lamp in a blue flash and shook me till my teeth rattled, and I tried to pull my hands off, but they were stuck, and I screamed, or a scream was torn from my throat, for I didn't recognize it, but heard it soar and quaver  in the air like a violently disembodied spirit.

Then my hands jerked free, and I fell back onto my mother's bed. A small hole, blackened as if with pencil lead, pitted the center of my right palm. …

But I didn't. I felt terrible

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# Homework (2)

When approaching a literary text, a stylistician would scrutinise all those person (I/ you/ he …), temporal (tense/ adverbs of time…) and spatial (location/ adverbs of place…) elements, intentionally chosen by the writer, in order to unravel the latent meaning of the text. This is called deixis.

• Read the following excerpt from Ernest Hemingway's short story "Cat in the Rain" (1925) with a close focus on its deictic features:

The wife went downstairs and the hotel owner stood up and bowed to her as she passed the office. His desk was at the far end of the office. He was an old man and very tall.

'Il piove,' the wife said. She liked the hotel-keeper.

'Si, Si, Signora, brutto tempo. It is very bad weather.'

He stood behind his desk in the far end of the dim room. The wife liked him. She liked the deadly serious way he received any complaints. She liked his dignity. She liked the way he wanted to serve her. She liked the way he felt about being a hotel-keeper. She liked his old, heavy face and big hands.

Liking him she opened the door and looked out. It was raining harder. A man in a rubber cape was crossing the empty square to the café. The cat would be around to the right. Perhaps she could go along under the eaves. As she stood in the doorway an umbrella opened behind her. It was the maid who looked after their room.

'You must not get wet,' she smiled, speaking Italian. Of course, the hotel-keeper had sent her.

With the maid holding the umbrella over her, she walked along the gravel path until she was under their

window. The table was there, washed bright green in the rain, but the cat was gone. She was suddenly

disappointed. The maid looked up at her. '

Ha perduto qualque cosa, Signora?'

'There was a cat,' said the American girl.

'A cat?'

'Si, il gatto.'

'A cat?' the maid laughed. 'A cat in the rain?

- Now, attempt to produce a **short** stylistic analysis paper of the passage wherein you discuss the
  following:

**1. The person deixis**

**2. The time deixis**

**3. The space deixis**

**4. The author's intention (to orientate or disorientate the reader):** why does the writer opt for using

these deictic elements? What meaning is he willing to convey?