

# Discourse and Culture

Pragmatics 5C  
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In discourse\_based perspective, we're looking at language functions which are three-folds:

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- ▶ Interpersonal function
- ▶ Textual function
- ▶ Ideational function



# Discourse analysis

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- ▶ Coverage: words – ideology
- ▶ Spoken and written
- ▶ Coherence
- ▶ Background knowledge (schema/ta → frame → script)
- ▶ Cultural schemata → holiday to Indonesians vs. Australians?
- ▶ Cross-cultural pragmatics (contrastive pragmatics; interlanguage pragmatics; pragmatic accent)



# Types of DA:

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1) Formalist view: focus on language as a system; language as a cognitive phenomenon; treats discourse by looking at relationship between units

- ▶ Examination of discourse markers, coherence and cohesion

2) Functionalist view: focus on language in use; how language is used in specific circumstances and contexts; how external factors affect language

- ▶ –Example:
- ▶ –A: Would you like to go to the cinema tomorrow?
- ▶ –B: I've got an exam on Monday



# What is DA?

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- ▶ Discourse refers to the study of language ‘beyond the sentence’; study of larger units of language such as paragraphs, conversations, interviews and mainly texts
- ▶ •Refers to the way language is used in context
- ▶ •Discourse analysis focuses on Style, appropriateness, cohesiveness, rhetorical force, subtopic structure, differences between spoken and written discourse, turn taking, speech acts, discourse markers



# Why?

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- ▶ Communicative competence
  - ▶ •i) grammatical competence → mastery of phonological rules, lexical items, morphosyntactic rules, rules of sentence formation
  - ▶ •ii) discourse competence → mastery of rules regarding cohesion and coherence of various types of discourse
  - ▶ •iii) strategic competence → mastery of verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for breakdowns and to enhance the effectiveness of communication
  - ▶ •iv) sociolinguistic competence → mastery of sociocultural conventions within varying social contexts eg rules that are sensitive to factors such as context and topic of discourse, social status (age, sex, social status) → these factors account for the stylistic differences or varying registers of speech
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# Processing DA:

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- ▶ Bottom up: Understanding of grammar, phonology, textual links to understand and parse the text/discourse
- ▶ •Top down: Use of contextual features of the text such as audience, situation, place of occurrence, pragmatics
- ▶ •Previous Knowledge about the topic or the genre of the text (schemata), sociocultural knowledge
- ▶ •Successful learners employ both top down and bottom up processing of discourse



# Aspects of discourse: CONTEXT

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- ▶ Refers to all verbal and non verbal material that affect spoken and written texts (Celce Murcia and Olshtain)
- ▶ 1.Setting-physical and interactional
- ▶ 2.Behavioural environment-nonverbal and kinetic
- ▶ 3.Language co-text
- ▶ 4.Extrasituational-social, political, cultural
- ▶ (Duranti and Goodwin)





# Pragmatic failure

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- ▶ Sociopragmatic failure
- ▶ Pragmalinguistic failure



# Home assignment

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- ▶ Investigating pragmatic failures

