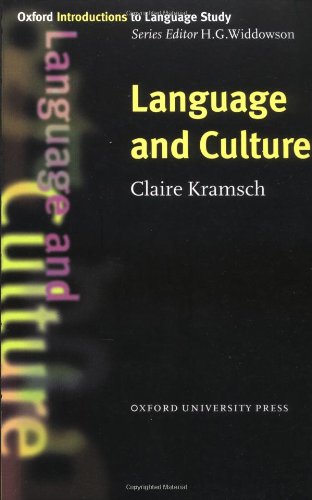
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College of Languages & Translation

[Fall 2013]



**Course Instructor(s)**

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Language & Culture 2

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| **KSU Logo.bmpKSU Logo.bmpLanguage & Culture 2 - Fall 2013** | | | |
| ***Week*** | ***Hejri*** | ***Gregorian*** | ***Lessons…*** |
| **1** | **Sun. Shawwal 25** | **Sun. Sep. 1** | **Registration Week (Dropping / Adding Courses)** |
| **2** | **Sun. Thul Qida 2** | **Sun. Sep. 8** | Introductory Week |
| **3** | **Sun. Thul Qida 9** | **Sun. Sep. 15** | **Chapter 1:** The Relationship of Language and Culture |
| **4** | **Sun. Thul Qida 16** | **Sun. Sep. 22** | **Continue**: The Relationship of Language and Culture + Research |
| **إجازة اليوم الوطني Monday, Sep. 23 / Thul Qida 17** | | | |
| **5** | **Sun. Thul Qida 23** | **Sun. Sep. 29** | **Chapter 2:** Meaning As Sign | |
| **6** | **Sun. Thul Hija 1** | **Sun. Oct. 6** | **Continue Ch. 2**: Meaning As Sign | |
| **7** | **(Sun., Oct. 11 / Thul Hijja 6 to Sun., Oct. 20 / Thul Hijja 15) إجازة عيد الأضحى** | | | |
| **8** |
| **8** | **Mon. Thul Hija 16** | **Mon. Oct. 21** | [Presentation**] Chapter 3**: Meaning As Action | |
| **9** | **Sun. Thul Hija 22** | **Sun. Oct. 27** | [Presentation**] Chapter 4:** Spoken Language, Oral Language | |
| **10** | **Sun. Thul Hija 29** | **Sun. Nov. 3** | **🕮 *1st In-term Exam*** | |
| **11** | **Sun. Muharam 7** | **Sun. Nov. 10** | [Presentation**] Chapter 5:** Print Language, Literate Culture | |
| **12** | **Sun. Muharam 14** | **Sun. Nov. 17** | [Presentation**] Chapter 6:** Language and Cultural Identity | |
| **13** | **Sun. Muharam 21** | **Sun. Nov. 24** | **🕮 *2nd In-term Exam*** | |
| **14** | **Sun. Muharam 28** | **Sun. Dec. 1** | [Presentation**] Continue Ch. 6:** Language and Cultural Identity | |
| **15** | **Sun. Safar 5** | **Sun. Dec. 8** | [Presentation**] Chapter 7:** Current Issues | |
| **16** | **Sun. Safar 12** | **Sun. Dec. 15** | **🖎 All Make-up Exams** | |
| **Sun. Dec. 22 – Thurs. Jan. 16**  **Sun. Safar. 19 – Mon. Rabea1. 14** | | | Oral Exams & Revision |
| 🖎... Written Exams |
| **1st In-term Exam: 25 pts. 2nd In-term: 25 pts. Presentation & Research: 10 pts.** | | | |
| بداية إجازة منتصف العام /نهاية دوام الخميس- 16/1/2014  بداية الدراسة والتهيئة للفصل الثاني -26/1/2014 | | | |

Dear Language & Culture 2 Students, Welcome...

This course is all a matter of regularly attending lectures and studying (i.e. understanding) the booklet, as well as keeping up each week with what step you need to be at with regards to the research paper that you’ll present at the end of this course. Thus, I can’t stress enough the importance of open, and more importantly honest, communication between us. If you have any problems, please don’t hesitate to talk to us. You can contact us by e-mail ([dalsibai@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:dalsibai@ksu.edu.sa)) ([naalyami@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:naalyami@ksu.edu.sa)). You can also use our course Twitter account to stay updated: @LC2\_colt

**CLASSES…**

Classes will typically be lectures explaining the lessons you have in your book, in addition to the presentation of video clips in class related to our lessons when possible. Parts of some lectures will guide to the steps you need to write your final research paper. Regarding our lectures, I encourage you to participate in class with your questions, observations, difference of opinions, additions, etc. If you are absent, you are responsible for any information given during that lecture.

**EXAMS & GRADES**

As for the exams, study each lesson thoroughly after it has been given in class. You shouldn’t try cramming in all the information one day before the exam as this will result, more than likely, in poor performance. The lessons are filled with details which need to be read, definitely more than once, to be learned/understood.

Once you take the exam, you **CAN NOT** take it again under **ANY** circumstance. There will be a make-up exam (on a pre-set date found in the syllabus - at the end of the semester) only for those who were unable to take the exam due to verifiable excuses (**extreme** medical or social circumstances only). If you also miss the make-up exam, you will get a “zero” and not be given another chance to take the make-up exam. If you need to inform us of something, simply come and talk to us in our offices or send us an email. We reply to emails as soon as we get them so “I couldn’t find you,” should never be an excuse.

**ATTENDANCE & WARNINGS**

Regular attendance is a MUST! Your medical excuses **will not** be taken into consideration when presenting the warnings (the limit is 25% for the warnings). Therefore, it is of utmost importance that you **NEVER** exceed the 50% absence limit! I will not hesitate to ban any student exceeding the 50% absence limit. Attendance will usually be taken **10 minutes after class starts**. If you arrive later, come in and attend the rest of the lecture. ***Being late 3 times will equal to being absent one time.***

***Breakdown of Grades:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***1st In-term*** | ***25*** |
| ***2nd In-term*** | ***25*** |
| ***Research Paper & Presentation*** | ***10*** |
| ***Final Exam*** | ***40*** |
| ***Total*** | ***100*** |

***Best of Luck!***

Makeup Exam Policy

Once you take the in-term exam, you CAN NOT take it again under ANY circumstance. There will be a make-up exam ONLY for those who were unable to take the exam due to verifiable excuses (EXTREME medical or social circumstances only)

AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER.

You **MUST** bring a copy of the excuse on the day of the makeup exam or else you WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TAKE THE EXAM.

You can contact us anytime via email [dalsibai@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:dalsibai@ksu.edu.sa)

[naalyami@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:naalyami@ksu.edu.sa)

**Chapter 1**

**The Relationship of Language and Culture**

Language is the principal means whereby we conduct our social lives.

***🗨 Language is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways:***

**(1)** 1 To begin with, the words people utter refer to common experience. They express facts, ideas or events that are commun­icable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share. Words also reflect their authors' attitudes and beliefs, their point of view that are also those of others. In both cases, *language expresses cultural reality.*

**(2)** But members of a community or social group do not only express experience; they also create experience through language. They give meaning to it through the medium they choose to communicate with one another, for example, speaking on the telephone or face-to-face, writing a letter or sending an e-mail message, reading the newspaper or interpreting a graph or a chart. The way in which people use the spoken, written, or visual medium itself creates meanings that are understandable to the group they belong to, for example, through a speaker's tone of voice, accent, conversational style, gestures and facial expres­sions. Through all its verbal and non-verbal aspects, *language embodies cultural reality.*

**(3)** Finally, language is a system of **signs** that is seen as having itself a cultural value. Speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language; they view their language as a symbol of their social identity. The prohibition of its use is often perceived by its speakers as a rejection of their social group and their culture. Thus we can say that *language symbolizes cultural reality.*

***🗨 What does “Culture” actually mean?***

One way of thinking about culture is to contrast it with nature.

**Nature** refers to what is born and grows organically (from the Latin *nascere*: to be born);

**Culture** refers to what has been grown and groomed (from the Latin *colerei* to cultivate).

The word culture evokes the traditional nature/nurture debate: Are human beings mainly what nature [for humans: mainly genes] determines them to be from birth or what culture enables them to become through socialization and schooling? **🎬**

*Essential Oils - are wrung –*

*The Attar from the Rose*

*Be not expressed by Suns - alone –*

*It is the gift of Screws -*

*The General Rose - decay – But this - in Lady's Drawer Make Summer - When the Lady lie In Ceaseless Rosemary -*

******

Emily Dickinson's poem expresses in a stylized way the relationship of nature, culture, and language. A rose in a flower bed “The General Rose” is a phenomenon of nature. Beautiful, yes, but faceless and nameless among others of the same species. Perishable. Forgettable. Nature alone cannot reveal nor preserve the particular beauty of a particular rose at a chosen moment in time. Culture, by contrast, is not bound by biological time. Like nature, it is a 'gift', but of a different kind. Through a sophisticated techno­logical procedure, developed especially to extract the essence of roses, culture forces nature to reveal its 'essential' potentialities. The word “Screws” suggests that this process takes work. By crushing the petals, a great deal of the rose must be lost in order to get at its essence. Culture makes the rose petals into a rare perfume, purchased at high cost, for the personal use of a particular lady. The lady may die, but the fragrance of the rose's essence (the Attar [عطر]) can make her immortal, in the same manner as the language of the poem immortalizes both the rose and the lady, and brings both back to life in the imagination of its readers. Indeed, 'this' very poem, left for future readers in the poet's drawer, can 'Make Summer' [i.e. remain “alive”] for readers even after the poet's death. The word and the technology of the word have immortalized nature.

***🗨 The Importance of Both “Culture” and “Nature”: Liberating & Constraining:***

The poem itself bears testimony that nature and culture both need each other. The poem wouldn't have been written if there were no natural roses; but it would not be understood if it didn't share with its readers some common assumptions and expecta­tions. Like the screws of the rose press, these common collective expectations can be liberating, as they endow a universal rose with a particular meaning by imposing a structure, so to speak, on nature. But they can also be constraining.

***🗨 Constraining… How?***

****(A)** Particular meanings are adopted by the **speech community** and imposed in turn on its members, who find it then difficult, if not impossible, to say or feel anything original about roses. For example, once a bouquet of roses has become codified as a society's way of expressing love, it becomes controversial, if not risky, for lovers to express their own particular love without resorting to the symbols that their society imposes upon them, and to offer each other as a sign of love, say, chrysanthemums instead—which in Germany, for example, are reserved for the dead! 🎬

**(B)** Etiquette, expressions of politeness, social *dos* and *don'ts* shape people's behavior through child rearing, behavioral upbringing, schooling, and professional training.

**(C)** The use of written language is also shaped and socialized through culture. Not only what it is proper to write to whom in what circumstances, but also which text genres are appropriate (the application form, the business letter, the political pamphlet), because they are sanctioned by cultural conventions.

These ways with language, or norms of interaction and interpretation, form part of the invisible ritual imposed by culture on language users. This is culture's way of bringing order and predictability into people's use of language.

***🗨 This double effect of culture on the individual - both liberating and constraining -plays itself out on the social, the historical and the metaphorical planes:***

**(A) Social (achieved mainly through 2 notions):**

★**Speech community**: People who use the same linguistic code. People who identify themselves as members of a social group (family, neighborhood, professional or ethnic affiliation, and nation) acquire common ways of viewing the world through their interactions with other members of the same group. These views are reinforced through institutions like the family, the school, the workplace, religious duties, the government, and other sites of socialization throughout their lives. Common attitudes, beliefs, and values are reflected in the way members of the group use language—for example, what they choose to say or not to say and how they say it.

★**Discourse communities:** The common ways in which members of a social group use language to meet their social needs:

- The grammatical, lexical, and phonological features of their language (for example, teenage

talk, professional jargon, political rhetoric).

- “Discourse accent” The topics people choose to talk about, the way they present

information, and the style with which they interact. For instance, Americans have been

socialized into responding 'Thank you' to any compliment, as if they were acknowledging a

friendly gift: 'I like your sweater! —'Oh, thank you!' The French, who tend to perceive such a

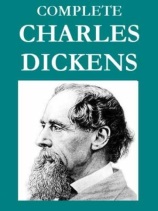
compliment as an intrusion into their privacy, would rather downplay the compliment and

minimize its value: 'Oh really? It's already quite old!' The reactions of both groups are based

on the differing values given to compliments in both cultures, and on the differing degrees of

embarrassment caused by personal com­ments.

**(B) Historical:** There is another way of viewing culture—one which takes a more historical perspective. For the cultural ways which can be identified at any one time have evolved and become solidified over time, which is why they are so often taken for natural behavior. They have remained in the memories of group members who have experienced them firsthand or merely heard about them, and who have passed them on in speech and writing from one generation to the next. For example, Emily Dickinson's allusion to life after death is grounded in the hope that future generations of readers will be able to understand and appreciate the social value of rose perfume and the funeral custom of surrounding the dead with fragrant rosemary. The culture of everyday practices draws on the culture of shared history and traditions. People identify themselves as members of a society to the extent that they can have a place in that society's history and that they can identify with the way it remembers its past, turns its attention to the present, and anticipates its future. This diachronic view of culture focuses on the way in which a social group represents itself and others through its material productions over time—its technological achievements, its monuments, its works of art, its popular culture—that mark the development of its historical identity. This material culture is reproduced and preserved through institutions that are also part of the culture, like museums, schools, public libraries, governments, corporations, and the media. The Eiffel Tower or the Mona Lisa exist as material artifacts, but they have been kept alive and given the prominence they have on the cultural market through what artists, art collectors, poets, novelists, travel agents, tourist guides have said and written about them. Language is not a culture-free code, distinct from the way people think and behave, but, rather, it plays a major role in the perpetuation of culture, particularly in its printed form.

**(C) Metaphorical:**These two layers of culture combined, the social (synchronic) and the historical (diachronic), have often been called the **sociocultural context** of language study. There is, in addition, a third essential layer to culture, namely, the imagination. Discourse communities are characterized not only by facts and artifacts, but by common dreams, fulfilled and unfulfilled imaginings. These imaginings are mediated through the language, that over the life of the commu­nity reflects, shapes, and is a metaphor for its cultural reality. Thus the city of London is inseparable, in the cultural imagination of its citizens, from Shakespeare and Dickens. The Lincoln Memorial Building in Washington has been given extra meaning through the words “I have a dream…” that Martin Luther King Jr. spoke there in 1963. These are intimately linked not only to the culture that is and the culture that was, but also to the culture of the imagination that governs people's decisions and actions far more than we may think.🎬

***🗨 Insiders vs. Outsiders***

To identify themselves as members of a community, people have to define themselves jointly as insiders against others, whom they thereby define as outsiders. Culture, as a process that both includes and excludes, always entails the exercise of power and control. The rose press in the Dickinson poem, one could argue, yields exquisite perfume, but at a high price. Not only must the stem and the petals be ultimately discarded, but only the rich and powerful can afford to buy the perfume. Similarly, only the powerful decide whose values and beliefs will be deemed worth adopting by the group, which historical events are worth commemorating, which future is worth imagining. Cultures, and especially national cultures, resonate with the voices of the powerful, and are filled with the silences of the powerless. Both words and their silences contribute to shaping one's own and others' culture. For example, Edward Said describes how the French constructed for themselves a view of the culture of 'the Orient'. The Orient itself was not given a voice. Such **orientalism**, Said argues, has had a wide-ranging effect on the way Europeans and Americans have viewed the Middle East, and imposed that view on Middle Easterners themselves, who implicitly accept it when they see themselves the way the West sees them. Similarly, scholars in Gender Studies and Ethnic Studies, have shown the **hegemonic** effects of dominant cultures and the authority they have in representing and in speaking for the Other. 🎬

***🗨 Accurate Cultural “Representation”:***

As the considerations above suggest, the study of language has always had to deal with the difficult issue of **representation** and representativity when talking about another culture. Who is entitled to speak for whom, to represent whom through spoken and written language? Who has the authority to select what is representative of a given culture: the outsider who observes and studies that culture, or the insider who lives and experiences it? According to what and whose criteria can a cultural feature be called representative of that culture? In the social, the historic, and the imagined dimension, culture is heterogeneous. Members of the same discourse community all have different biographies and life experiences, they may differ in

age, gender, or ethnicity, they may have different political opinions. Moreover, cultures change over time as we can see from the difficulty many contemporary readers might have with the Dickinson poem. And certainly Ladies in the nineteenth century imagined the world differently from readers at the end of the twentieth. In summary, culture can be defined as membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings. Even when they have left that community, its members may retain, wherever they are, a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluat­ing, and acting. These standards are what is generally called their 'culture’.

The different ways of looking at culture and its relationship to language raise a fundamental question: to what extent are the world views and mental activities of members of a social group shaped by, or dependent on, the language they use?

***🗨 Linguistic Relativity vs. Linguistic Determinism:***

“Linguistic relativity” is the theory that languages affect the thought processes of their users. Some scholars put forward the idea that different people speak differently because they think differently, and that they think differently because their language offers them different ways of expressing the world around them (hence the notion of linguistic relativity). This notion was picked up in the United States by the linguist Franz Boas (1858-1942), and subsequently by Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and his pupil Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941), in their studies of American Indian languages. Whorf's views on the interdependence of language and thought have become known under the name of **Sapir-Whorf hypothesis**. 🎬

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis makes the claim that the structure of the language one uses influences the manner in which one thinks and behaves. Whorf recounts that while he was working as a fire insurance risk assessor, he noticed that the way people behaved toward things was often dangerously correlated to the way these things were called. For example, the sight of the sign **'empty'** on empty gasoline drums would prompt passers by to toss cigarette butts into these drums, not realizing that the remaining gasoline fumes would be likely to cause an explosion. In this case, the English sign **'empty'** evoked a feeling of “neutral space, free of danger”. Whorf concluded that the reason why different languages can lead people to different actions is because language filters their perception and the way they categorize experience.

So, for example, according to Whorf, whereas English speakers conceive of time as a linear, objective sequence of events encoded in a system of past, present, and future tenses (for example, 'He ran' or 'He will run'), or a separate number of days as encoded in basic numerals (for example, ten days), the Hopi conceive of it as a *duration* in the analysis and reporting of experience (for example, 'They stayed ten days' becomes in Hopi 'They stayed until the eleventh day' ). Thus it would be very difficult, Whorf argues, for an English and a Hopi physicist to understand each other's thinking, given the major differences between their languages.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has been subject to fierce contro­versy since it was first formulated by Whorf in 1940. The proposition that we are prisoners of our language seemed unacceptable. And indeed it would be absurd to suggest that Hopis cannot have access to modern scientific thought because their language doesn't allow them to. We can see how a strong version of Whorf s relativity principle could easily lead to prejudice and racism. After all, it is always possible to translate across languages, and if this were not so, Whorf could never have revealed how the Hopis think.

The strong version of Whorf's hypothesis, therefore, that posits that language determines the way we think, cannot be taken seriously (Linguistic Determinism 🗶), but a weak version, supported by the findings that there are cultural differences in the semantic associations evoked by seemingly common concepts, is generally accepted nowadays (Linguistic Relativity ✓).

What is most important in our culture is stressed in our language: The way a given language encodes experience semantically makes aspects of that experience more salient for the users of that language. For example, Navajo children speak a language that encodes differently through different verbs the action of 'picking up a round object' like a ball and 'picking up a long, thin, flexible object' like a rope. When presented with a blue rope, a yellow rope, and a blue stick, and asked to choose which object goes best with the blue rope, most monolingual Navajo children chose the yellow rope, thus associating the objects on the basis of their physical form, whereas monolingual English-speaking children almost always chose the blue stick, associating the objects on the basis of their color, although, of course, both groups of children are perfectly able to distinguish both colors and shapes. This experiment is viewed as supporting the weak version of the Whorf hypothesis that language users tend to sort out and distinguish experiences differently according to the semantic categories provided by their respective codes. We are, then, not prisoners of the cultural meanings offered to us by our language, but can enrich them in our pragmatic interactions with other language users.

“Like having binocular vision gives us 3-D depth of vision, so does having fluency in more than one language gives a "3-D" depth of cultural awareness.” -Phil Bartle, PhD

**Further Proof: 🎬**

Some researchers point to the American Indian dialect of Zuni. Speakers of the language don't have words to distinguish between yellow and orange. The identification of some objects is more difficult for those who speak Zuni than for English-speaking people.

English, for example, has two separate words for (red) and a mixture of red and white (pink) but does not have two separate words for blue and a mixture of blue and white, like in Russian. [“goluboy” –blue] [“senynee” – dark blue]



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**?**

**Glossary:**

**Speech community:** A social group that shares knowledge of one linguistic code and knowledge also of its patterns of use.

**Discourse community:** A social group that has a broadly agreed set of common public goals and purposes in its use of spoken and written language.

**Discourse accent:** A speaking or writing style that bears the mark of a discourse community's ways of using language.

**sociocultural context:** The synchronic (social, societal) and the diachronic (historical) context of language use.

**Orientalism:** Term coined by Edward Said to denote the colonialist perspective taken by European writers on the Orient, and by extension, a colonialist view of any foreign culture.

**Hegemony:** A term coined by Antonio Gramsci to refer to the predominant organizational form of power and domination across the economic, political, cultural and ideological do­mains of a society, or across societies.

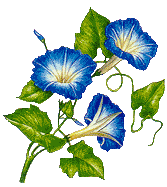
**Linguistic relativity principle:** A hypothesis advanced by the lin­guists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf, according to which different languages offer different ways of perceiving and expressing the world around us, thus leading their speakers to conceive of the world in different ways.

**Sapir-Whorf hypothesis:** The linguistic relativity hypothesis ad­vanced by linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf.

**Chapter 2**

**Meaning as Sign**

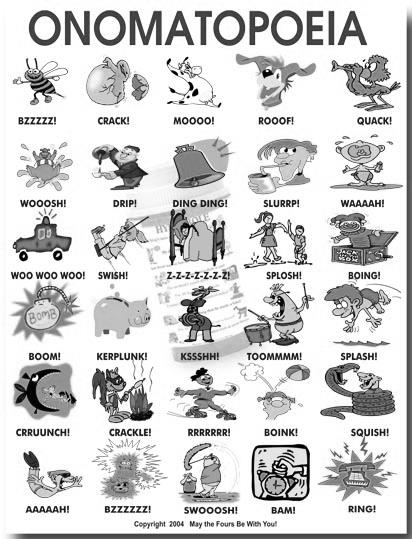
***🗨 The Linguistic Sign = Signifier + Signified:***

The crucial feature that distinguishes humans from animals is humans' capacity to create **signs** that mediate between them and their environment. Every meaning-making practice makes use of two elements: a signifier and a signified. Thus, for example, the sound /rouz/ or the four letters of the word 'rose' are signifiers for a concept related to an object in the real world with a thorny stem and many petals. The signifier (sound or word) in itself is not a sign unless someone recognizes it as such and relates it to a signified (concept); for example, for someone who doesn't know English, the sound /rouz/ signifies nothing because it is not a sign, but only a meaningless sound. A sign is therefore neither the word itself nor the object it refers to but the relation between the two. There is nothing necessary about the relation between a given word as linguistic signifier and a signified object. The word 'rose' can be related to flowers of various shapes, consistencies, colors, and smells. The linguistic sign has been called **arbitrary**.

***🗨 The Meaning of Signs:***

**(A) Denotative:** What is the nature of the relation between signifier and signified? In other words, how do signs “mean”? When Emily Dickinson uses in her poem words like 'rose', or 'rosemary', these words point to (are the **referents** of) objects that grow in the real gardens of the real world. They refer to a definable reality. Their meaning, that can be looked up in the dictionary, is **denotative**.

**(B) Connotative:** On the other hand, the meaning of 'rose' and 'rosemary' is more than just the plants they refer to. It is linked to the many associations they evoke in the minds of their readers: a rose might be associated with love, passion, beauty; rosemary might be associated with the fragrance of summer and the preservation of dried herbs. Both words draw their meaning from their **connotations**. **🎬**

**(C) Iconic:** Signs can also be images (or **icons**) of them. So, for example, exclamations like 'Whoops!', 'Wow!', 'Whack!' don't so much refer to emotions or actions as they imitate them (onomatopoeia). Their meaning is therefore **iconic**. The Dickin­son poem makes full use of iconic meanings. For example, the sound link between the /s/ of 'screw', 'summer', and 'ceaseless rosemary' creates a world of sound signs that replicates the crushing sound of a rose press.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **hache** | ax |
| **tache** | Ink/stain |
| **crache** | same looking |
| **sache** | know |
| **cache** | Hiding place |
| **vache** | cow |

For example, English speakers who belong to certain discourse communities may intensify denotative meanings by iconically elongating the vowel of a word, for example, 'It's beau::::::tiful!'. In French, intensifica­tion of the sound is often done not through elongation of the vowel but through rapid reiteration of the same form: 'Vite vite vite vite vite! Depechez-vous!' (Quick! Hurry up!). These differ­ent prosodic encodings form distinct ways of speaking that are often viewed as typically English or French. Similarly, onomato­poeia links objects and sounds in seemingly inevitable ways for members of a given culture. For example, the English sounds 'bash', 'mash', 'smash', 'crash', 'dash', 'lash', 'clash', 'trash', 'splash', 'flash' are for English speakers icons for sudden, violent movements or actions. A speaker of another language might not hear in the sound /aej/ any such icon at all; for a French speaker the words hache, tache, crache, sache, cache, vache have no semantic relationship despite similar final sounds.

***🗨 Cultural encodings:***

1. ****Different signs denote reality by cutting it up in different ways, as Whorf would say. For example the English sign 'table' denotes all tables, Polish encodes dining tables as *stol*, coffee tables or telephone tables as *stolik.*
2. Cultural encodings can also change over time in the same language. For example, German that used to encode a state of happiness as *gliicklich*, now encodes deep happiness as *gliicklich*, superficial happiness as *happy*, pronounced /hepi/.
3. The encoding of experience differs also in the nature of the cultural associations evoked by different linguistic signs. For example, although the words 'soul' or 'mind' are usually seen as the English equivalents of the Russian word *dusha* [روح], each of these signs is differently associated with their respective objects. For a Russian, not only is *dusha* used more frequently than 'soul' or 'mind' in English, but through its associations with religion, goodness, and the mystical essence of things it connotes quite a different concept than the English. But even within the same **speech community**, signs might have different semantic values for people from different **discourse communities**. **🎬** Anglophone readers of Emily Dickinson's poem who happen not to be members of her special discourse community, might not know the denotational meaning of the word 'Attar', nor associate 'rosemary' with the dead. Nor might the iconic aspects of the poem be evident to them. Even though they may be native speakers of English, their **cultural literacy** is different from that of Emily Dickinson's intended readers.

***🗨 How Semantic Cohesion is Established in a Particular Language:***

**(A) Cohesive Devices:** Beyond individual nouns and sounds, words refer to other words by a variety of **cohesive devices** that hold a text like the Dickinson poem together. These devices capitalize on the associa­tive meanings or shared connotations of a particular community of competent readers who readily recognize the referents whereas a community of less competent readers might not. Examples:

*Essential Oils - are wrung –*

*The Attar from the Rose*

*Be not expressed by Suns - alone –*

*It is the gift of Screws -*

*The General Rose - decay – But this - in Lady's Drawer Make Summer - When the Lady lie In Ceaseless Rosemary -*

\* pronouns ('it'),

\* demonstratives ('this'),

\* repetition of the same words from one sentence to the next (for example, 'The Attar from the Rose ... The general Rose ... In ceaseless Rosemary') or

\* repetition of the same sounds from one line to the next (for example, the sound /I/ in 'Lady's Drawer', 'the Lady lie'),

\* recurrence of words that relate to the same idea (for example, 'Suns', 'summer'; 'essential Oils', 'Attar'),

\* conjunctions (for example, 'but', 'when').

**(B) Prior Text:** A sign or word may also relate to the other words and instances of text and talk that have accumulated in a community's memory over time. Thus, to return, for example, to the Russian sign *dusha*, which roughly denotes 'a person's inner core', it connotes goodness and truth because it is linked to other utterances spoken and heard in daily life, to literary quotes (for example, 'His soul overflowing with rapture, he yearned for freedom, space, openness' written by Dostoevsky), or to other verbal concepts such as pricelessness, human will, inner speech, knowledge, feelings, thoughts, religion, that themselves have a variety of connotations. When English speakers translate the word *dusha* by the word 'soul', they are in fact linking it to other English words, i.e. 'disembodied spirit', 'immortal self', 'emo­tions', that approximate but don't quite match the semantic **cohesion** established for *dusha* in the Russian culture.

**(C) Metaphors:** Another linguistic environment within which words carry cultural semantic meaning consists of the **metaphors** that have accumulated over time in a community's store of semantic knowledge. Thus, for example, the English word 'argument' is often encountered in the vicinity of words like 'to defend' (as in 'Your claims are indefensible'), 'to shoot down' (as in 'He shot down all of my arguments'), 'on target' (as in 'Her criticisms were right on target'), which has led George Lakoff to identify one of the key metaphors of the English language: 'Argument is War'. **🎬** Some of these metaphors are inscribed in the very structure of the English code, for example, the metaphor of the visual field as container. This metaphor delineates what is inside it, outside it, comes into it, as in 'The ship is *coming into* view', 'I have him *in* sight', 'He's *out* of sight now'. Each language has its own metaphors that provide semantic cohesion within its boundaries.

***🗨 The “Non-Arbitrary” Nature of Signs:***

We said at the beginning that signs have no natural connection with the outside world and are therefore arbitrary. Native speakers do not feel in their body that words are arbitrary signs. For them, words are part of the natural, physical fabric of their lives. Seen from the perspective of the user, words and thoughts are one. For example, anyone brought up in a French household will swear that there is a certain natural masculinity about the sun (***le*** soleil) and femininity about the moon ***(la*** lune) [As in Arabic "يا قمر"].

For English speakers, it is perfectly natural to speak of 'shooting down someone's argument'; they don't even think one could talk of arguments in a different way.

The major reason for this naturalization of culturally created signs is their motivated nature. Linguistic signs do not signify in a social vacuum. Sign-making and sign-interpreting practices are **motivated** by the need and desire of language users to influence people, act upon them or even only to make sense of the world around them. With the desire to communicate a certain meaning to others comes also the desire to be listened to, to be taken seriously, to be believed, and to influence in turn other peoples' beliefs and actions. The linguistic sign is therefore a motivated sign; a technically arbitrary / “non-arbitrary” sign.

***🗨 Symbols:***

With the passing of time, signs easily become not only nat­uralized, but conventionalized symbols as well. Taken out of their original social and historical context, linguistic signs can be emptied of the fullness of their meaning and used as symbolic shorthand. For example, words like 'democracy', 'freedom', 'choice', when uttered by politicians and diplomats, may lose much of their denotative and even their rich connotative meanings, and become political **symbols** in Western democratic rhetoric. The recurrence of these symbols over time creates an accumulation of meaning that not only shapes the memory of sign users but stresses these symbols mythical weight and validity. [For example, the signs “warm” and “affection”] **🎬**

***🗨 Stereotypes:***

A **stereotype** is a frozen sign of a specific group of people or objects whose beliefs, habits, and realities often disagree with the imposed image since they assign a limited number of characteristics to all members of a group. They usually negatively affect both those who use them and those whom they serve to characterize.🎬

**Examples:**

**🏶 Age:** "All American teenagers love rock and roll and have no respect for their elders."

**🏶 Looks:** “All blondes are stupid”

**🏶 Race:** "All Japanese look and think alike."

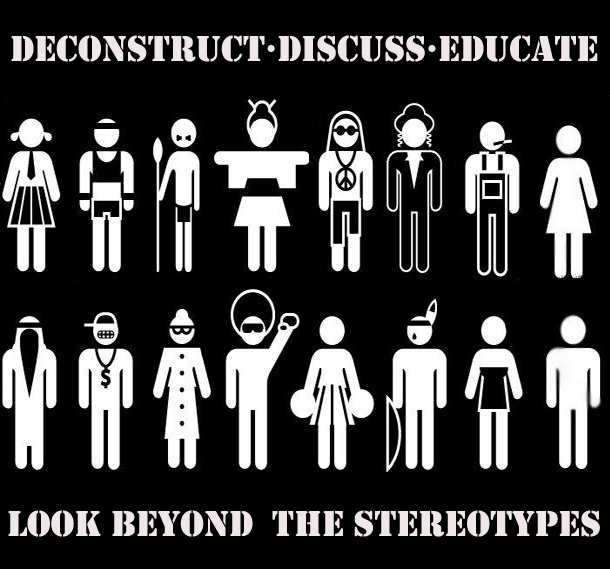
**🏶 Religion:** "All Muslims are terrorists." **🏶 Gender:** "Male chefs are better than female chefs."

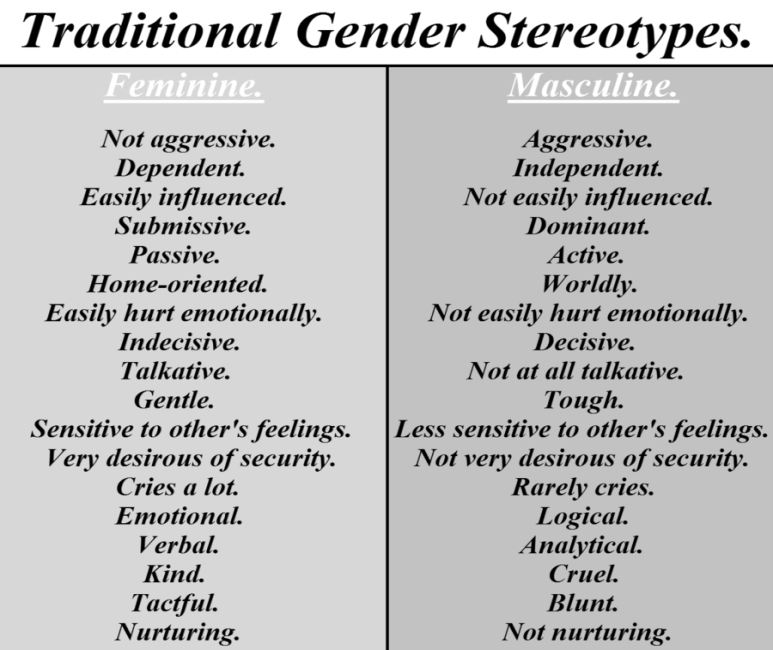
**🏶 Places:** "All cities are corrupt." "Small towns are safe and clean." "In England, it rains all the time." **🏶 Things:** "All American cars are cheaply and ineptly made."

**What stereotypes are usually connected with this image?**

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Gender Stereotypes Woven into Language of Toy Ads:

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**Glossary:**

**Sign:** The relation between a signifier (word or sound) and the signified (image or concept).

**Arbitrariness:** The random nature of the fit between a linguistic sign and the object that it refers to, for example, the word 'rose' does not look like a rose.

**Denotation:** The basic conceptual meaning of a word.

**Connotation:** The associations evoked by a word in the mind of the hearer/reader..

**Iconic:** A meaning of words based on resemblance of words to reality, for example, onomatopoeia ('bash', 'mash')

**Code:** Formal system of communication.

**Encoding:** The translation of experience into a sign or code.

**Cultural literacy:** Term coined by literary scholar E.D.Hirsch to refer to the body of knowledge that is presumably shared by all members of a given culture.

**Co-text:** The linguistic environment in which a word is used within a text.

**Cohesive device:** Linguistic element like a pronoun, demonstra­tive, conjunction, that encodes semantic continuity across a stretch of text.

**Prior text:** One or several texts which a given text explicitly cites, refers to, or builds upon, or which it implicitly harks back to, evokes, or in some way incorporates.

**Metaphor:** Not only a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish, metaphor is a property of our conceptual system, a way of using language that structures how we perceive things, how we think, and what we do.

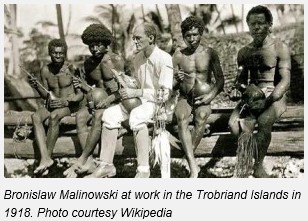
**Symbol:** Conventionalized sign that has been endowed with special meaning by the members of a given culture.

**Stereotype:** Conventionalized ways of talking and thinking about other people and cultures.

**Chapter 3**

**Meaning As Action**

***🗨 Context of Situation, Context of Culture:***



The anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski (1884- 1942) was working at describing the fishing and agricultural practices of the native inhabitants of the Trobriand Islands, when he discovered for the first time that their language (Kiriwinian) was the key to understanding the meaning of their practices. But, as he sat on the beach, observing the fishermen cry out from one canoe to the other, maneuvering their boats across difficult straits, he realized that, in order to understand what was going on, it was not enough to understand and write down the meaning of their words. One had to understand why they said what they said and how they said it to whom in a specific **context of situation**. In addition, one had to link their words, beliefs, and mindsets to a larger **context of culture** such as: tribal economics, social organ­ization, kinship patterns, fertility rites, seasonal rhythms, con­cepts of time and space.

***🗨 Structures of Expectation (Schemata / Frames):***

From childhood on, people have learned to realize certain speech acts in a culturally appropriate manner, like saying 'Thank you' in response to receiving gifts, and 'Goodbye' as a way of closing encounters; they have learned to speak differently to people of different ranks and to distinguish an insult from a compliment. These behaviors have become second nature to them because they are grounded in their physical experience of the phenomena around them. This experi­ence filters their perception and their interpretation of the world. Language users have not only learned to interpret signs and to act upon them; they have also learned to expect certain behaviors of others as well.

\* They expect cars to stop at a stop sign and pedestrians to be able to cross the street at a walk sign.

\* They expect to be greeted upon a first encounter.

\* They expect to be listened to when they speak.

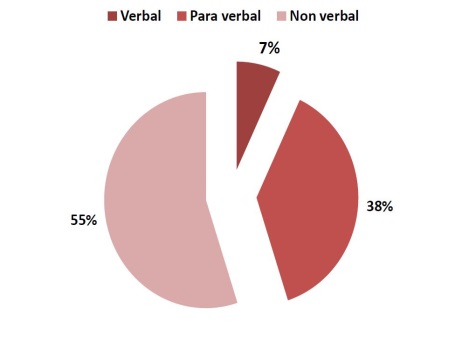
\* They expect to have their questions answered.

There are cultural differences in these expectations.

\* French speakers from France may expect to be greeted with a handshake, Americans may expect a smile instead; a professor may expect to be greeted differently from a student, a friend from a stranger.

On the basis of their experience in their culture (or combination of cultures), people organize knowledge about the world and use this knowledge to predict interpretations and relationships re­garding any new information, events, and experiences that come their way. The general **structures of expectation** established in people's minds by the culture they live in have been variously called **frames** or **schemata. 🎬**

***🗨 Contextualization cues, situated inferences:***

The words people exchange in verbal encounters are linked in a myriad of ways to the situational and cultural context in which they occur. Thus, for example, A's words to B: 'I need to get in there. Can you open the door?' will have meaning for B only if he knows English and is able to grasp the semantic meanings of A's utterance; but, he must also relate the 'I' to the friend he knows and recognize him by his voice and his outward appearance; he must relate the 'there' to a room he knows lies behind the door which he sees from where he is standing; he must recognize that 'the' in 'the door' that A wants opened indicates the same door that he sees; from A's smile, tone and intonation, and from the preceding statement of A's needs, he must understand that this is a justified, friendly request for help and not a accidental inquiry. In other words, beyond the semantic meaning of A's individual words, B has to understand how these words relate to the pragmatic context of their utterance.

\* Verbal ('I', 'there', 'the door'),

\* Para-verbal (stress and intonation, tempo and laughter) and

\* Non-verbal signs (gaze direction, gesture, body posture, tone of voice),

that help speakers hint at or clarify or guide their listener's interpretations of what is being said among the infinite range of potentially relevant factors of the context, are called **contextualization cues**.

These cues help listeners make the relevant **situated inferences**, i.e. evoke the cultural background and social expectations necessary to interpret speech. 🎬

***🗨 Establishing Pragmatic Coherence Via Contextualization Cues:***

Efforts to make the words uttered meaningful within the situ­ational and cultural context of the exchange are efforts to establish pragmatic **coherence**. Coherence is not given in speakers' utterances, it is created in the minds of speakers and hearers by the inferences they make based on the words they hear. Thus, whereas semantic cohesion: relates word to word , pragmatic coherence relates speaker to speaker within the larger cultural context of communication.

The speaker's efforts to establish pragmatic coherencethroughthe use of contextualization cues can have several effects:

**(1) An inclusionary effect** (shows they belong to the same culture)**:**

Chad: I go out a lot

Deborah: I go out and eat

Peter: You go out? The trouble with **M E** is if I don'tprepareand eat well, I eat a **lot** ... Because it'snotsatisfying. And so if I'm just eating like cheeseandcrackers, I'll just **stuff** myself on cheeseandcrackers. But if I fix myself something nice, Idon'thave to eat that much.

Deborah: Oh yeah?

Peter: I've noticed that, yeah.

A conversation between friends

Deborah: Hmmm... Well then it works, then it's agood idea

Peter: It's a good idea in terms of eating; it's not agood ideain terms of time.

**(2)** **Highlights discrepancies:**

Between people from different national cultures, the same contextualization cues may lead to different inferences and may occasion serious misunderstandings. The resulting lack of pragmatic coherence generally leaves the participants confused, or frustrated and angry. The unexpected tone of voice and emphases of the Asian-English speaker may lead to misunderstanding and frustration on the part of the British-English speaker:

Customer: Excuse me

Cashier: Yes sir

Customer: I want to deposit some **MO**ney.

An encounter at the bank between an Asian customer and a British cashier

Cashier: Oh. I see. OK. You'll need a deposit form then.

Customer: Yes. **no, no.** This is the **wrong** one.

**(3)** **Friendly role/relationship:**

A: Y'want a piece of candy?

B: No =

A conversation between friends

C: = She's on a diet

C’s utterance can therefore be understood as enacting B's role as helpful explainer of B's refusal, with the intention of minimizing the negative impact that B's rejection might have on A.

**(4)** **Clarification effect:**

Children are culturally constituted *as children* by parents who consistently 'speak for them', and by children who accept to be 'spoken for', as in the following well-known example:

Kathryn: Mommy sock, */de/*- dirty.

Mother-child relationship

Mother: Yes. They're all dirty. I know.

**(5)** **Guiding effect:**

Teacher: What color are the seeds? \*holding up a picture of an apple\*

Child 1: Brown

Child 2: Black

Child 1: Brown

Students’ words are repeated and evaluated by teachers

Child 2: Brown

Teacher: Yes they're dark brown that's right.

**(6)** **“Considerate” / “Lack of Assertiveness” effect:**

Husband: When will dinner be ready?

Husband-wife relationship

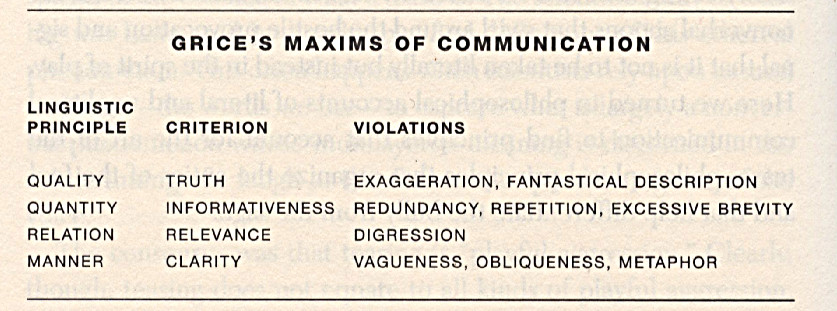
Wife: Oh... around six o'clock... ?

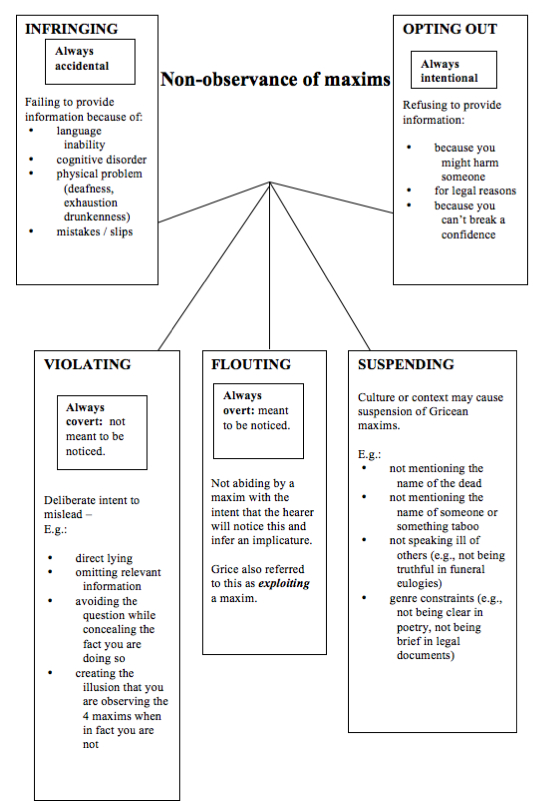
The woman's rising intonation is often interpreted as signaling female uncertainty and lack of self-assertiveness (or, on the contrary, female considerateness).

Language use is a cultural act not only because it reflects the ways in which one individual acts on another individual through such speech acts as thanking, greeting, complimenting, that are variously accomplished in various cultures. Language use is a cultural act because its users co-construct the very social roles that define them as members of a discourse community.

***🗨 Grice’s 4 Co-operative Principle Maxims:***

The expectations of speakers and hearers in informational exchanges are in part shaped by Grice’s 4 maxims of the co-operative principle in conversation. If listeners are sometimes frustrated because they feel that their interlocutor is trying to give them unnecessary or irrelevant information, to avoid the topic, or worse, to deceive them, that is because they expect him/her to abide by the maxims for co-operative behavior.🎬 Speakers from different cultural backgrounds may have differ­ent interpretations of what it means to be true, relevant, brief or clear with regard to conversations. They may have different definitions of the speech activity itself. But we all enter a verbal exchange assuming that there will be some sort of co-operation between the parties involved.





**Glossary:**

**Context of situation:** The immediate physical, spatial, temporal, social environment in which verbal exchanges take place.

**Context of culture:** The historical knowledge, the beliefs, atti­tudes, values shared by members of a discourse community, and that contribute to the meaning of their verbal exchanges.

**Structures of expectation:** Mental structures of knowledge that enable us to understand present events and anticipate future ones.

**Frame:** Culturally determined behavioral prototype that enables us to interpret each other's instances of verbal and non-verbal behavior.

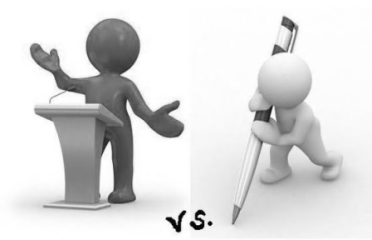
**Schema (plural schemata):** Mental representation of typical in­stance used in discourse processing to predict and make sense of the particular instance which the discourse describes.

**Contextualization** **cues:** A term coined by anthropologist John Gumperz to indicate the verbal, paraverbal and non-verbal signs that help speakers understand the full meaning of their interlocutors' utterances in context.

**Situated inferences:** Mental links made by participants in verbal exchanges between the words spoken and the relevant context of situation and context of culture.

**Chapter 4**

**Spoken Language, Oral Culture**

Scholars have identified the following seven characteristics of conversational speech as distinguished from expository writing.

**1.** Speech is transient, rather than permanent. Because of physical constraints, interlocutors may not speak at the same time, or else they cannot hear what the others say. They are bound by the non-reversible distribution of turns at talk. Written lan­guage, by contrast, can be stored, retrieved, and recollected, and responses can be delayed. Because it cannot be immediately challenged as in oral communication, written language carries more weight and hence more prestige. Moreover, the perman­ence of writing as a medium can easily lead people to suppose that what it expresses is permanent too, hence the important link between written documents and the law.

**2.** Speech is additive or 'rhapsodic'. Because of the dialogic nature of oral interaction, speakers 'rhapsodize', i.e. stitch together elements from previous turns-at-talk, they add language as they go along (and ... and, then ... and then ... ), thus showing conversational co-operation in the building of their own turn. By contrast, the information conveyed in writing is hierarchic­ally ordered within the clause structure, and is linearly arranged on the page, from left to right, right to left, or top to bottom, according to the cultural convention. Since it is likely to be read by distant, unknown, or yet-to-be-born audiences, it has developed an information structure characterized by a high level of cohesion.

**3.** Speech is aggregative, i.e. it makes use of verbal aggregates or formulaic expressions, ready-made chunks of speech that maintain the contact between interlocutors, also called **phatic communion**. 🎬 By contrast, in the absence of such direct contact and for the sake of economy of information over long distances or long periods of time, and because it can be read and re-read at will, writing has come to be viewed as the medium that fosters analysis and logical reasoning.

**4.** Speech is redundant or 'copious'. Because speakers are never quite sure whether their listener is listening, paying attention, comprehending and remembering what they are saying or not, they tend to make frequent use of repetition, paraphrase, and restatement. By contrast, since written language doesn't have to make such demands on short-term memory, it tends to avoid redundancy.

**5.** Speech is loosely structured grammatically and is lexically sparse; writing, by contrast, is grammatically compact and lexically dense. What does this mean concretely? Speakers have to attend to many aspects of the situation while they concen­trate on what they are saying, and while they monitor the way they are saying it. Thus, their speech is characterized by false starts, filled and unfilled pauses, hesitations, parenthetic re­marks, unfinished sentences. They create their utterances as they are speaking them. One way of keeping control of this balancing act is to use grammatical resources as best serves one's immediate needs, and to leave the vocabulary as sparse as possible. Writers, by contrast, have time to pack as much information in the clause as they can, using all the complex syntactic resources the language can give them; they can condense large quantities of information in a tighter space. The contrast is shown in the examples below. **🎬**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| WRITTEN | SPOKEN |
| Every previous visit had left me with a sense of the futility of further action on my part. | ‘Whenever I'd visited there before, I'd ended up feeling that it would be futile if I tried to do anything more.’ |
| Improvements in technology have reduced the risks and high costs associated with simultaneous installation. | ‘Because the technology has improved, it's less risky than it used to be when you install them at the same time, and it doesn't cost so much either.’ |

**6.** Speech tends to be **people-centered**; writing tends to be **topic- centered**. Because of the presence of an audience and the need to keep the conversation going, speakers not only focus on their topic, but try to engage their listeners as well, and appeal to their senses and emotions. In expository writing, by contrast, the topic or message and its transferability from one context to the other is the main concern. Writers of expository prose try to make their message as clear, unambiguous, coherent, and trustworthy as possible since they will not always be there to explain and defend it. Of course, other written texts, in particular of the literary or promotional kind, appeal to the readers' emotions, and display many features characteristic of speech.

**7.** Speech, being close to the situation at hand, is **context dependent**; writing, being received far from its original context of production, is **context-reduced**. Because of the **dialogic** character of oral exchanges, truth in the oral mode is jointly constructed and based on commonsense experience. Truth in the literate mode is based on the logic and the coherence of the argument being made.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Revision: The 7 Basic Differences Between Spoken & Written Language** | | | | | | | |
| **Spoken** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Written** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The features listed above are not inherent in the spoken or in the written medium. Orality and literacy have to be seen on a continuum of more or less 'orate', more or less literate uses of both spoken and written language. A scribbled memo, an e-mail, an informal letter, like a conversation or a sermon, are written in the orate mode; an academic lecture, a scientific presentation, like a scholarly article, are spoken in the literate mode.

***🗨 We now turn to the cultural matrix of language as it is used in verbal*** ***exchanges:***

**(A) Indicating status:**

In verbal encounters, what people say to each other, for example, A: 'Bill, why don't you meet me here tomorrow?' is anchored in the perspective of speaker A, as evidenced in this case by the words 'you', 'me', 'here', 'tomorrow', also called **deictics**. **🎬** Mark­ers of **social deixis** give an indication not only of where the speaker stands in time and place—namely in a 'today' in the 'here' of speaking—but also of his/her status within the social structure, and of the status the speaker gives the addressee. For example, the use of *vous* or *tu* in French, *Sie* or *du* in German can **index** power or solidarity, distance or closeness. English used to have 'you' for distance, 'thou' for closeness; now English has only retained the 'you', but social deixis in English expresses social position by other forms of address like 'Bill', 'Bill X', 'Mister X', 'Professor X' and the like.

**(2) Social positionings:**

We have seen in Chapter 3 how changes in intonation and pronunciation can also indicate changes in our perception of our role as a participant in an interaction, and in our alignment to others. Goffman called such a positioning **footing**, i.e. the stance we take up to ourselves and to the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of utterances. Defining one's footing can also be achieved through **code- switching** [between different languages 🎬 or dialects of the same language **🎬** ]

All changes in footing correspond to a change in the way we perceive events. A change in footing is connected with a change in our frame for events. It is by sharing frames of interpretation that people know that they share the same culture.

For example, Japanese speakers negotiate not only the procedural aspects of subsequent discussions, but also a hierarchical order within the group. The question of who speaks first is, in Japanese culture, of paramount importance. No one simply decides to speak first, as in American groups. In most Japanese group discussions, a female member starts, followed by another female member (if available), then by a younger male member (if available), and last by the oldest male member. **🎬**

**(C) Protecting face:**

Members of a cultural group need to feel respected and not impinged upon in their autonomy, pride, and self-sufficiency (negative face). They also need to be reinforced in their view of themselves as polite, considerate, respectful members of their culture (positive face). These two contradictory needs require delicate facework, since it is in the interest of all participants in a verbal exchange that everyone maintain both his/her negative and positive face, so that the exchange can continue.

In the example given above for the Japanese group, the one who speaks first is the one who runs the greatest risk of face loss, because he/she has to take the floor without knowing where the others stand. The turn-taking order is thus indirectly arranged so that juniors and inferiors take earlier turns, perhaps because their face is con­sidered less important, while seniors/superiors take later turns.

**(D)** **Conversational style**

In face-to-face verbal exchanges, different contexts of situation and different contexts of culture call for different **conversational styles**.

The orate-literate continuum gets realized differently in differ­ent cultural genres, like interviews and friendly conversations, but also in different cultural traditions within one genre, such as classroom talk. For example, Indian children from the Warm Springs reservation in Oregon, who are used to learning by silently listening to and watching adults in their family, and by participating in social events within the community as a whole, have a notably different interactional behavior in the classroom than their Anglo-American peers and the teacher, even though all speak English. They mostly remain silent, do not respond to direct solicitations to display their knowledge in public, do not compete for the attention of the teacher, and seem more interested in working together with their peers.

**(E)** **Narrative style**

The influence of culture on discourse style also becomes apparent in the differential distribution of orate and literate features of speech in storytelling. For example, using the short 'pear narrative' film by William Chafe, Tannen asked native speakers from Anglo-American and Greek background to retell the film in their own words. In comparing the narratives told by American women in English and Greek women in Greek, Tannen reports that each group had a distinctive **narrative style**. The Greeks told 'better stories', by often interweaving judgments about the character's behavior (for example, the boy should not have stolen the pears or should have thanked his helpers sooner). It would be dangerous, of course, to generalize this example to all Greeks and all Americans, or to suggest that Greeks in general tell better stories than Americans. Every culture is heterogeneous, i.e. it is composed of a variety of subcultures, and every situation elicits a variety of responses, even within the same national culture. Nevertheless, because the definition of what makes a 'good' story varies from culture to culture, we can expect storytellers to conform to those models of the genre that were available to them in the culture they grew up in.

**Glossary:**

**Phatic communion:** Term coined by anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski to characterize the ready-made chunks of speech like 'Hi, how are you?' that people use more to maintain social contact than to convey information.

**People-centered:** Characteristic of conversational exchanges where participants have to engage their listeners, not just convey information.

**Topic-centered:** Characteristic of essay-type writing, where the transmission of a message is of prime importance.

**Context-dependent:** Characteristic of oral exchanges which de­pend very much for their meaning on the context of situation and the context of culture of the participants.

**context-reduced:** Characteristic of essay-type writing. Because readers are far removed in time and space from the author, the text itself must be able to make meaning without access to its original context of production.

**Deictic:** Element of speech that points in a certain direction as viewed from the perspective of the speaker, for example, here, there, today, coming, going.

**Deixis:** Process by which language indexes the physical, temporal, and social location of the speaker at the moment of utterance. *See* index; social deixis.

**Social deixis:** Process by which language indexes(l) not only the physical and temporal location of the speaker at the moment of speaking, but also his/her social status and the status given to the addressee.

**Dialogic:** Based on dialog.

**Index:** To index is to point to the presence of some entity in the immediate situation at hand.

**Footing:** A term coined by sociologist Erving Goffman to denote the stance we take up to the others present in the way we I manage the production or reception of utterances.

**Code-switching:**  Verbal strategy by which bilingual or bi-dialectal speakers change linguistic code within the same speech event as a sign of cultural solidarity or distance, and as an act of (cultural) identity.

**Conversational** **style**: A person's way of talking in the manage­ment of conversations.

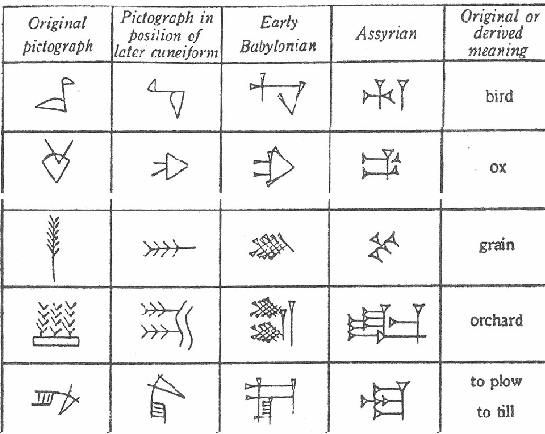
**Narrative style** A person's way of telling stories that reflects the uses of language of the discourse community he/she has been socialized into. *See* conversational style; discourse accent.

**Chapter 5**

**Print Language, Literate Culture**

The technology of writing and print technology have over time not only changed the medium of language use, but irrevocably changed our way of thinking and talking about culture. This chapter will deal with issues of text, power, and the cultural politics of literacy.

**Cuneiform script evolution**

***🗨*** *****Written language, textual culture***

We first need to take an historical perspective on the way technology has affected the relationship of language and culture. The invention of writing around 3000 bc transformed oral tradition, transmitted through storytelling, bardic epics, mythical re-enactments and performances, into textual tradition, handed down by scribes. The culture of the text, as exemplified in the Chinese scribal culture, passed on its wisdom not through reading, but through the faithful copying of texts. It was through the rewriting of fixed texts in one's own handwriting that the truths of the ancestors got embodied anew into new generations. Copying texts was the major way of getting at the texts' meaning, and of obtaining the social prestige that came with a literate education. 🎬

The culture of the text and its respect for and obedience to textual authority was also central to the Judaic and early Christian traditions [of course, also Islam]. In these cultures, revelation was to take place through commentary, exegesis, and translation. The implication was that through the study and interpretation of the sacred texts it would be possible to recover the original truths dispensed in oral form by God, angels, and the prophets. But writing, uprooted from its original context through the passing of time and through its dissemination in space, increases also the absurdity of the quest for the one true 'original' meaning. Ancient texts can only be understood though the multiple meanings given to them by latter-day commentators and translators. Even legal documents, that try to control and legislate people's lives, have to be re-interpreted anew for every particular case.

***🗨 Print and power***

Institutional power has traditionally ensured cultural continuity by providing a safeguard against the unbounded interpretation of texts. In medieval times, monks, scribes, and commentators served as the gate-keepers and interpreters of tradition against cultural change. With the advent of **print culture**, the need to hand copy texts disappeared, and so did the status of scribes. At the same time, religious authority itself was on the decline. The combina­tion of Gutenberg's invention of the printing press around 1440, and the translation of the Bible into German by Martin Luther in 1522, made the sacred truths accessible to all, and not only to the Church-educated elite. It opened the door to the unlimited and uncontrolled proliferation of meanings. Soon, the Church monopoly on meaning was replaced by the interpretive authority and censorship of secular powers, i.e. the academy, the press, and the political institutions. [This is how the “digital” culture differs; endless freedom]

Traditional academic prac­tice, that emphasized form over meaning and had students interpret texts as if they were autonomous units, independent of a reader's response, implicitly imposed its own context of interpretation on all, claiming that its norms of interpretation were universal and accessible to anybody's intuition. Those students who were unable to interpret texts the way their teachers expected them to were called 'bad students', just as students may fail on National Standardized Academic Tests if they don't share the cultural norms of the National Educational Testing Services.

***🗨 Social Construction of Literacy***

Recent years have witnessed a rejection of what is now perceived to be an elitist and colonialist kind of literacy. Besides the traditional “school” literacy, scholars now recognize other sorts of literacies linked to various genres, for example:

* literary literacy
* press literacy
* instructional manuals literacy
* scientific literacy
* marketing industry literacy
* writing of novels or poems

In this regard, to be literate means not only to be able to encode and decode the written word, or to do exquisite text analyses; it is the capacity to understand and manipulate the social and cultural meanings of print language in thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Furthermore, children from different social backgrounds bring to school different types of literacies, not all of which are validated by school literacy practices. For example, in the United States, children from African-American families might display a highly context-embedded, analogic, associative way of telling or writing stories that the school doesn't recognize as acceptable literate practice, whereas middle-class Anglos might have from home a more context-reduced, analytic, hierarchical narrative style that they find reinforced in the way schools teach texts.

***🗨 Text and Discourse***

The notion of **text** views a stretch of written language as the product of an identifiable authorial intention, and its relation to its context of culture as fixed and stable. A text cannot be given fuller meaning if it is not viewed also as discourse. To illustrate this, let us return to the Emily Dickinson poem of Chapter 1.

Essential Oils - are wrung –

The Attar from the Rose

Be not expressed by Suns - alone –

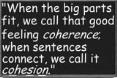
It is the gift of Screws -

The General Rose - decay –

But this - in Lady's Drawer

Make Summer - When the Lady lie

In Ceaseless Rosemary -

**(A)** **Via Coherence (e.g. deictic “this”):** Like all other texts, this poem encodes cultural meaning through various cohesive devices that ensure logical and rhetorical continuity across sentences (see Chapter 2). For example, the deictic 'this' (The General Rose - decay - / But this - in Lady's Drawer) links 'the General Rose' and 'the Lady's Drawer', thus establishing a crucial cohesion between the two parts of the poem. But if we look more closely, 'this', followed by the silent dash and anchored in the perspective of the poet, seems to address the reader directly, by pointing to something outside the poem. Indeed, 'this' seems to refer to the poem itself, offered by the poet to the reader. The literate voice of the poem is here replaced by the orate engagement of the poem with the reader as a person. We can now view the deictic 'this' as either a demonstrative referring back to a prior element in the text (i.e. the antecedents 'Attar' or 'gift of Screws'), or as a new element pointing to the ongoing discourse between text and reader. In the first case, it is a cohesive device. In the second, it is a crucial factor of coherence.

**(B)** **Via Internal Cohesion (e.g. Aspirin label considering “corporate culture”):**

warning: Keep this and all medication out of the reach of children. As with any drug, if you are pregnant or nursing a baby, seek the advice of a health professional before using this product. In the case of accidental over dosage, contact a physician or poison control center immediately.

The pharmaceutical company that issued this warning wants to avoid lawsuits, but it also wants to avoid spreading panic among aspirin users, who might thereby refrain from buying the product. Thus it does not want to highlight the word 'dangerous' on its bottle, nor does it want to use the word 'overdose' because of its too close associations with the drug traffic scene. It wants to create the image of a reader as an intelligent mainstream person who could not possibly take an overdose of aspirin, unless by accident. The commercial and legal interests, i.e. the corporate culture, of the company have to be drawn into the interpretation of this text, in order to make it into a coherent discourse.

**(C) Cultural Coherence (e.g. American Independence):** One of the greatest sources of difficulty for foreign readers is less the internal cohesion of the text than the cultural coherence of the discourse. For example, a sentence like 'Although he was over 20 years old, he still lived at home' written for an American readership, draws on the readers' cultural knowledge concerning young men's independence from their families, but might not be self-evident for readers from a culture where young men continue to live at home well into their twenties.

***🗨*** *****Literacy Event, Prior Text, Point of View***

The interaction of a reader, or community of readers, with texts of any kind has been called a **literacy event**. Literacy events are defined by their members' common social practices with written language (for instance, reading/writing/talking about family letters, attending/reciting religious services, attending/performing poetry readings, delivering/listening to scripted professional speeches, reading/writing scientific articles) and common ways of interpreting these practices.

As with conversa­tional contexts, the context for a literacy event includes a situational and a cultural dimension. The situational context includes:

**1.** The events captured in the propositional content.

**2.** The intended audience: what knowledge, values, interests, and beliefs does the text assume it shares with its readers? How does the text position its audience, and position itself *vis-a-vis* its audience?

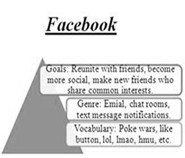
**3.** The text's purpose. A text prompts its readers to ask themselves: Is this particular sentence a question? A statement? An order? A reproach? A criticism? An attack?

**4.** The text's register, or functional language variation according to the audience.

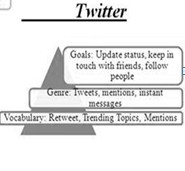
**5.** Its key: every text bears the mark of the narrator's stance—for example, ironic, humorous, or factual—*vis-a-vis* the facts related.

**6.** Prior texts: In order to understand a text, one has to understand what the text is responding to or against. This existing prior language, accumulated over the life of a discourse community, has been called **Discourse** with a capital D. **🎬**

**7.** Point of view: One can distinguish three senses of the phrase point of view. The spatio-temporal point of view specifies the physical context that the narrator refers to. The psychological point of view has to do with the perspective adopted by the narrator, for example, that of a well-informed witness to the events narrated, or that of one of the characters in the story. The ideological point of view reveals the system of beliefs, values, and categories, by reference to which the narrator comprehends the world he/she refers to in the text.



In society, each individual belongs to various types of discourse communities or social groups that allow us to connect with others. These social groups also help shape who we are and how we communicate by our writing with those who also belong in the same discourse community. In this way, we as a society can share common interests with those around us. There are also other purposes for why it is convenient to connect with others.  It is important to belong to some discourse communities because it helps shape our writing by communicating with those who share common goals, specialized genres, and specialized vocabulary.



***🗨*** ***Genre***

Whereas a literacy event is defined as any interaction between readers and written texts within a social context, a **genre** is a socially sanctioned type of communicative event, either spoken— like a sermon, a joke, a lecture—or printed, like a press report, a novel, or a political manifesto. Although sometimes viewed as a universal type, fixed by literary and other conventions, a genre in a sociocultural perspective is always dependent on being per­ceived as such within a specific context of situation or culture. 🎬 The concept of genre is related to text type and language choice: it is as measured against a prototypical sermon in their culture, for example, that members of a group can assess to what extent the register chosen by a certain preacher conforms to or deviates from the genre 'sermon', even if it is not delivered in a church.

**Summary**

The advent of writing and the invention of the printing press have radically changed the relation of language and culture. The maintenance of historical tradition, the control of collective memory, the authority to interpret events have all been enhanced by the written medium. Thus textual culture has become the dominant culture of research and scholarship. However, there have always been two ways of looking at written language: as a fixed and stable product, i.e. as text, or as an interactive, highly inferential process between a text and its readers, i.e. as discourse. Through their educational system, their media, and their political institutions, discourse communities play an important role in establishing the parameters of socially acceptable literacy events, in defining the appropriate genres within their boundaries, and in seeing to it that these genres are respected by their members.

**Glossary:**

**Print culture:** The artifacts, mindsets, and social practices associ­ated with the production & reception of printed language.

**Literacy event:** Interaction of a reader or community of readers with a written text.

**Discourse:** This term, with a capital D, coined by linguist James Gee, refers, not only to ways of speaking, reading and writing, but also of behaving, interacting, thinking, valuing, that are characteristic of specific discourse communities.

**Chapter 6**

**Language and Cultural Identity**

***🗨* Cultural identity**

It is widely believed that there is a natural connection between the language spoken by members of a social group and that group's identity. By their accent, their vocabulary, their discourse patterns, speakers identify themselves and are identified as members of this or that speech and discourse community. From this membership, they draw personal strength and pride, as well as a sense of social importance and historical continuity from using the same language as the group they belong to.

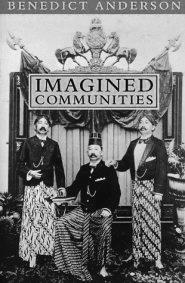
***🗨 But how do we define which group one belongs to?***

In isolated, homogeneous communities like the Trobrianders studied by Malinowski, one may still define group membership according to common cultural practices and daily face-to-face interactions, but in modern, historically complex, open societies it is much more difficult to define the boundaries of any particular social group and the linguistic and **cultural identities** of its members.

**(1) Group identity** based on race would seem easier to define, and yet there are almost as many genetic differences, say, between members of the same White, or Black race as there are between the classically described human races, not to speak of the difficulty in some cases of ascertaining with 100 per cent exactitude a person's racial lineage. For example, in 1983 the South African Govern­ment changed the racial classification of 690 people: two-thirds of these, who had been Coloreds, became Whites, 71 who had been Blacks became Coloreds, and 11 Whites were redistributed among other racial groups! And, of course, there is no necessary correlation between a given racial characteristic and the use of a given language or variety of language.

**(2) Regional identity** is equally contestable. As reported in the London *Times* of February 1984, when a Soviet book, *Popula­tions of the World,* claimed that the population of France consisted of 'French, Alsatians, Flemings, Bretons, Basques, Catalans, Corsicans, Jews, Armenians, Gypsies and "others , Georges Marchais, the French Communist leader, violently disagreed: 'For us', he said, 'every man and woman of French nationality is French. France is not a multinational state: it is one nation, the product of a long history.

**(3)** One would think that **national identity** is a clear-cut either/or affair (either you are or you are not a citizen), but it is one thing, for example, to have a Turkish passport, another thing to ascribe to yourself a Turkish national identity if you were born, raised and educated, say, in Germany, are a native speaker of German, and happen to have Turkish parents.

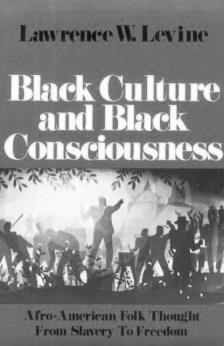
Despite the entrenched belief in the one language = one culture equation, individuals assume several collective identities that are likely not only to change over time in dialogue with others, but are liable to be in conflict with one another. For example, an immigrant's sense of self, that was linked in his country of origin perhaps to his social class, his political views, or his economic status, becomes, in the new country, overwhelmingly linked to his national citizenship or his religion, for this is the identity that is imposed on him by others, who see in him now, for example, only a Turk or a Muslim. His own sense of self, or cultural identity, changes accordingly. Out of nostalgia for the 'old country', he may tend to become more Turkish than the Turks and entertain what Benedict Anderson has called 'long distance nationalism'. The Turkish he speaks may become with the passing of years somewhat different from the Turkish spoken today in the streets of Ankara; the community he used to belong to is now more an 'imagined community' than the actual present-day Turkey.

***🗨 Cultural stereotypes***

The problem lies in equating the racial, ethnic, national identity imposed on an individual by the state's bureaucratic system, and that individual's self-ascription. Our perception of someone's social identity is very much culturally determined. What we perceive about a person's culture and language is what we have been conditioned by our own culture to see, and the stereotypical models already built around our own. Group identity is a question of **focusing** and **diffusion** of ethnic, racial, national concepts or stereotypes. **🎬**

Let us take an example.

**(1)** Le Page and Tabouret-Keller recount the case of a man in Singapore who claimed that he would never have any difficulty in telling the difference between an Indian and a Chinese. But how would he instantly know that the dark-skinned non-Malay person he saw on the street was an Indian (and not, say, a Pakistani), and that the light-skinned non-European was a Chinese (and not, say, a Korean), unless he differentiated the two according to the official Singaporean 'ethnic' categories: Chinese, Malay, Indian, Others? In another context with different racial classifications he might have interpreted differently the visual clues presented to him by people on the street. His impression was *focused* by the classificatory concepts prevalent in his society, a behavior that Benjamin Whorf would have predicted. In turn this focus may prompt him, by a phenomenon of *diffusion*, to identify all other 'Chinese' along the same ethnic categories, according to the stereotype 'All Chinese look alike to me'.

**(2)** It has to be noted that societies impose racial and ethnic categories only on certain groups: Whites do not generally identify themselves by the color of their skin, but by their provenance or nationality. They would find it ludicrous to draw their sense of cultural identity from their membership in the White race. Hence the rather startled reaction of two Danish women in the United States to a young African-American boy, who, overhearing their conversation in Danish, asked them 'What's your culture?' Seeing how perplexed they were, he explained with a smile 'See, I'm Black. That's my culture. What's yours?' Laughingly they answered that they spoke Danish and came from Denmark. Interestingly, the boy did not use language as a criterion of group identity, but the Danes did.

**(3)** Examples from other parts of the world show how complex the language-cultural identity

relationship really is. The Chinese, for example, identify themselves ethnically as Chinese even

though they speak languages or dialects which are mutually unintelli­gible. Despite the fact that a

large number of Chinese don't know how to read and write, it is the Chinese character-writing

system and the art of calligraphy that are the major factors of an overall Chinese group identity.

***🗨 Language Crossing As Act of Identity***

One way of surviving culturally in immigration settings is to exploit, rather than stifle, the endless variety of meanings afforded by participation in several discourse communities at once. More and more people are living, speaking and interacting in in-between spaces, across multiple languages or varieties of the same language: Latinos in Los Angeles, Pakistanis in London, Arabs in Paris, but also Black Americans in New York or Atlanta, choose one way of talking over another depending on the topic, the interlocutor and the situational context. Such **language crossings**, frequent in inter-ethnic communication, include, as we saw in Chapter 4, the switching of codes, i.e. the insertion of elements from one language into another, be they isolated words, whole sentences, or prosodic features of speech. Language crossing enables speakers to change footing within the same conversation, but also to show solidarity or distance towards the discourse communities whose languages they are using, and whom they perceive their interlocutor as belonging. By crossing languages, speakers perform cultural **acts of identity**. Thus, for example, two bilingual 12-year olds from Mexico in a US American school. M is telling F what she does when she comes back from school. M and F usually speak their common language, Spanish.

M: Mira, me pongo a hacer tarea, despues me pongo leer un libro, despues me pongo a hacer matematica, despues de hacer matematica me pongo a practicar en el piano, despues de terminarse en el piano-

F: =you got a piano?

M: I have a piano in my house, don't you guys know it?... No me digas que no sabfa ... yo lo dije a Gabriel y a Fernando ... todo el mundo. [M: Look, I do homework, then I read a book, then I do science, I do math, after doing math I practice the piano, after I finished with the piano =

The fact of owning a piano marks M as belonging to a different social culture than F who shows his surprise—and his dis­tance—by using the dominant Anglo-American language. M acknowledges her membership in that culture by responding in English, but immediately switches back to Spanish to show her solidarity with her Latino peers in the classroom, who come from more modest backgrounds. **🎬**

Not infrequently speakers who belong to several cultures insert the intonation of one language into the prosody of another, or use phrases from one language as citational inserts into the other to distance themselves from alternative identities or to mock several cultural identities by stylizing, parodying, or stereotyping them all if it suits their social purposes of the moment.

***🗨 Linguistic Nationism***

The association of one language variety with the membership in one national community has been referred to as **linguistic nationism**. For example, efforts by present-day France to cultivate a network of French speakers around the world, and link it to a francophone identity, or *francophonie*, must be seen as a way of countering the overwhelming spread of English by offering speakers a supranational cultural identity that is exclusively linguistic. French as an international language remains monitored by the Académie Française **🎬**, a French national institution that is seen as the guarantor of cultural purity—in the same manner as English as an international language is monitored in scientific circles by Anglo-American journals who serve as the gate-keepers of a certain intellectual style of scientific research (see Chapter 5).



Current efforts by the US English Movement in the United States to amend the Constitution by declaring English the official national language have to be seen as the attempt to ensure not only mutual linguistic intelligibility, but cultural homogeneity as well. In periods of social fragmentation and multiple identities, each clamoring to be recognized, language takes on not only an indexical, but a symbolic value, according to the motto “Let me hear you speak and I will tell you who you *are loyal to”* The link between the US English legislation and anti-immigration legislation has been frequently pointed out by critics.

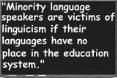
Besides being used as a means of excluding outsiders, as we saw in Chapter 1, the use of one, and only one, language is often perceived as a sign of political allegiance. The remark “I had ten years of French and I still can’t…” maybe the expression not so much of bilingual failure as of monolingual pride. People who, by choice or by necessity, have traditionally been bi- or multilingual, like migrants and cosmopolitans, have often been held in suspicion by those who ascribe to themselves a mono-vocal, stable, national identity.

***🗨 Standard Language, Cultural Totem***

The way this national identity is expressed is through an artificially created **standard language**, fashioned from a multipli­city of dialects. When one variety of a language is selected as an indicator of difference between insiders and outsiders, it can be shielded from variations through official grammars and dictionaries and can be taught through the national educational system. For example, in the times of the Ancient Greeks, any person whose language was not Greek was called a 'barbarian', i.e. an alien from an inferior culture. Hence the term **barbarism** to denote any use of language that offends contemporary standards of correctness or purity. In some countries that have a National Academy for the preservation of the national linguistic treasure against external imports and internal degradation, misuses of the standard language by its speakers are perceived not only as linguistic mishaps, but as aesthetic and moral offences as well (hence derogatory verbs like 'butchering' or 'slaughtering' a language).

Language acquires a symbolic value beyond its pragmatic use and becomes a totem of a cultural group, whenever one dialect variety is imposed on others in the exercise of national or colonial power (France), or when one language is imposed over others through the deliberate, centralized pressure of a melting pot ideology (English over French in Louisiana, English over Spanish in New Mexico), or when one language supplants others through centralized deliberate planning or diffuse societal forces (the spread of English as an international language). The totemization of the dominant language leads to the stigmatization of the dominated languages.

***🗨 Linguistic and Cultural Imperialism***

Beyond the symbolic link frequently established between language and territorial or cultural identity, there is also another link that has more to do with the promulga­tion of global ideologies through the worldwide expansion of one language, also called **linguicism**. Linguicism has been defined as 'ideologies, structures, and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate, and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (both material and unmaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language', as Phillipson says in his book *Linguistic Imperialism* , in which English **linguistic Imperialism** is seen as a type of linguicism. **🎬**

The spread of English is undeniable, and it is viewed by those who suffer from it as a totem for a certain Anglo-American 'culture' or way of life, but it is not clear whether the appropriate response in the long run is to make English and other languages into cultural icons, or to rely on the remarkable ability that speakers have to create multiple cultural realities in any language. This is not to say that linguistic pluralism is not a desirable good in itself. The Babel threat is not the splintering off in mutually unintelligible languages, but the monopoly of one language over others. As in Babel's days, the complacent belief that people are working for a common cause just because they speak a common language is a dangerous illusion. Being human means working through the shoals of mutual misunderstandings. That is why linguistic rights, like anti-trust laws, have to be upheld, not because of the one-to-one relation­ship between culture and language, but because each language provides a uniquely communal, and uniquely individual, means by which human beings apprehend the world and one another. 🎬

**Summary:** Although there is no one-to-one relationship between anyone's language and his or her cultural identity, language is *the* most sensitive indicator of the relationship between an individual and a given social group. Language is an integral part of ourselves - it permeates our very thinking and way of viewing the world. It is also the arena where political and cultural allegiances and loyalties are fought out.

**Glossary:**

**Cultural identity:** Bureaucratically or self-ascribed membership in a specific culture.

**Focusing:** Anthropological concept referring to the process by which stereotypes are formed by selectively focusing on certain classificatory concepts prevalent within a certain discourse community, e.g. , individualism vs. collectivism.

**Diffusion:** Anthropological concept that refers to the process by which stereotypes are formed by extending the characteristic of one person or group of persons to all, e.g. , all Americans are individualists, all Chinese are collectivists.

**Language crossing:** The switch from one language code or variety to another, or stylization of one variety, or creation of hybrid varieties of the same code, as an act of identity or resistance.

**Act of identity:** Way in which speakers display their cultural stance toward their membership in a specific culture(2), and toward the culture of others through their use of language.

**Linguistic nationism:** Association of one language variety (stand­ard or national language) with membership of one national community.

**Standard language:** Artificially conventionalized linguistic code, fashioned from a multiplicity of dialects spoken within a national community, and imposed as the national code.

**Barbarism:** Violation of the standard language by not fully compet­ent speakers of the language.

**Linguicism:** Term coined by Robert Phillipson to refer to discrim­ination and prejudice on the grounds of language, analogous to racism, sexism.

**Linguistic imperialism:** Worldwide expansion of one language at the expense of others.

**Chapter 7**

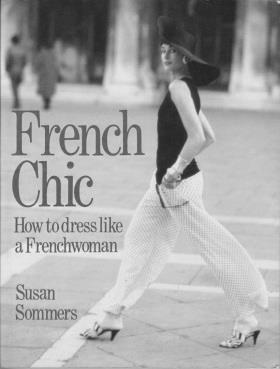
**Current Issues**

***🗨 Who Is A Native Speaker?***

Linguists have relied on **native speakers'** natural intuitions of grammatical accuracy and their sure sense of what is proper language use to establish a norm against which the performance of non-native speakers is measured. Native speakers have tradi­tionally enjoyed a natural prestige as language teachers, because they are seen as not only embodying the 'authentic' use of the language, but as representing its original cultural context as well. In recent times, the identity as well as the authority of the native speaker have been put into question. The 'native speaker' of linguists and language teachers is in fact an abstraction based on arbitrarily selected features of pronunciation, grammar and lexicon, as well as on stereotypical features of appearance and demeanor. For example, children of Turkish parents and bearing a Turkish surname, but born, raised, and educated in Germany may have some difficulty being perceived as native speakers of German when applying for a language teaching job abroad, so entrenched is the association of one language with one national stereotype in the public imagination, as discussed in the last chapter. The native speaker is, moreover, a monolingual, mono- cultural abstraction; he/she is one who speaks only his/her (standardized) native tongue and lives by one (standardized) national culture. However, in reality, most people partake of various languages or language varieties and live by various cultures and subcultures.

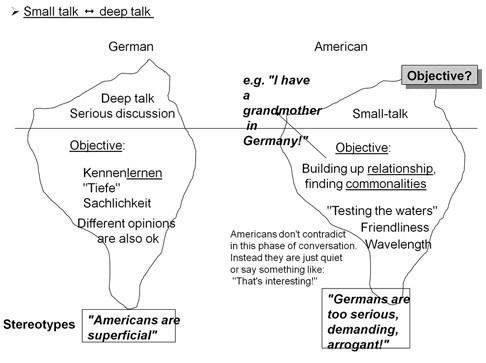
Hence, we are faced once again with the old nature/culture debate. It is not clear whether one is a native speaker by birth, or by education, or by virtue of being recognized and accepted as a member of a like-minded cultural group. If the last seems to be the case, ideal nativeness and claims to a certain ownership of a language must give way to multivarious combinations of language use and membership in various discourse communities—more than has been up to now assumed under the label 'native speaker'.

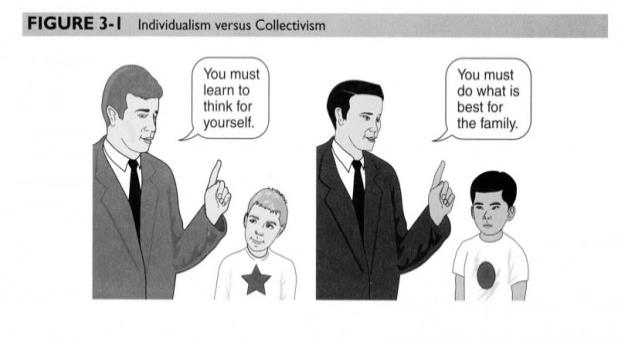
***🗨 Cultural Authenticity***

Much of the discussion surrounding the native speaker has been focused around two concepts: authenticity and **appropriateness**. By analogy with the creation of standard languages, nation-states have promoted a standardized notion of cultural authenticity that has served to rally emotional identification both at home and abroad. Stereotypes, like French chic, German know-how, American casualness, are shorthand symbols, readily recognized and applied to their respective realities; they help draw cultural boundaries between Us and Others in order to appreciate the uniqueness of both. Language learners, keen on slipping into someone else's shoes by learning their language, attach great importance to the cultural authenticity of French bread or German train schedules, and the cultural appropriateness of Japanese salutations or Chinese greeting ceremonies. Their desire to learn the language of others is often coupled with a desire to behave and think like them, in order to ultimately be recognized and validated by them. **🎬**

However, two factors are putting the notion of authenticity and appropriateness in language learning into question. First, the diversity of authenticities within one national society, depending on such contextual variables as age, social status, gender, ethnicity, race; what is authentic in one context might be inauthentic in another. Second, the undesirability of imposing on learners a concept of authenticity that might devalue their own authentic selves *as learners.* Thus cultural appropriateness may need to be replaced by the concept of **appropriation**, whereby learners make a foreign language and culture their own by adopting and adapting it to their own needs and interests. The ability to acquire another person's language and understand someone else's culture while retaining one's own is one aspect of a more general ability to mediate between several languages and cultures, called cross-cultural, intercultural, or multicultural communication. 🎬

***🗨 Cross-Cultural, Intercultural, Multicultural***

Depending on how culture is defined and which discipline one comes from, various terms are used to refer to communication between people who don't share the same nationality, social or ethnic origin, gender, age, or occupation. The term 'cross-cultural' or **intercultural** usually refers to the meeting of two cultures or two languages across the political boundaries of nation-states. They are predicated on the equi­valence of one nation-one culture-one language, and on the expectation that a 'culture shock' may take place upon crossing national boundaries. In foreign language teaching, a cross-cultural approach seeks ways to understand the Other on the other side of the border by learning his/her national language.



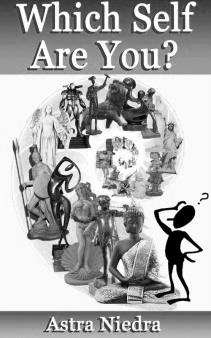
The term intercultural may also refer to communication between people from different ethnic, social, gendered cultures within the boundaries of the same national language. Both terms are used to characterize communication, say, between Chinese- Americans and African-Americans, between working-class and upper-class people, between men and women. Intercultural communication refers to the dialogue between minority cultures and dominant cultures, and are associated with issues of bilingualism and biculturalism.

The term **multicultural** is more frequently used in two ways. In a societal sense, it indicates the coexistence of people from many different backgrounds and ethnicities, as in 'multicultural soci­eties'. In an individual sense, it characterizes persons who belong to various discourse communities, and who therefore have the linguistic resources and social strategies to affiliate and identify with many different cultures and ways of using language. The cultural identity of multicultural individuals is not that of multiple native speakers, but, rather, it is made of a multiplicity of social roles or 'subject positions' which they occupy selectively, depending on the interactional context in which they find themselves at the time. **🎬**

***🗨 The Politics of Recognition***

Finally we turn to the difficult and complex issue of what has been called 'tolerance', 'empathy', or, from a political perspective, 'recognition' of other cultures. Individuals need to be recognized both in their individual and in their social group identity. But as with facework (see Chapter 4), these two demands might be incompatible. As individuals, they deserve the same respect and human rights protection given to all individuals by the laws of a democratic society; but as members of a cultural group they deserve to be given special rights and recognition. In other words, 'I want you to recognize me as the same as you, but at the same time I want you to recognize how different I am from you'. Simply put: should one recognize sameness or separateness? 🎬

National governments that promote multicultural, multiracial harmony like Singapore or the US, one could argue, in fact enhance ethnic separateness by constantly drawing attention to 'racial' and 'ethnic' identities. Such distinc­tions may be bolstered by religion. For example, in Singapore, the differing beliefs and practices of Chinese Taoists or Buddhists, Indian Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs, and Islamic Malays maintain cultural and ethnic separatism despite the strong claim to a national Singaporean identity.

In modern urban communities where the individual cannot rely on predefined social scripts, nor on universally or nationally accepted moral principles, to find his/her cultural self, cultural identities are seen as being formed in open dialogue with others. Communicative practices reflect institutionalized networks of relationships, defined by the family, the school, the workplace, the professional organization, the church, each with its own power hierarchy, its expected roles and statuses, its characteristic values and beliefs, attitudes and ideologies. This may be as far as we may go in defining the boundaries of one's cultural identity. Geographic mobility, professional change, and the vagaries of life may give a person multiple social identities that all get played out alternately on the complex framings and reframings of daily encounters.

However, such a multicultural view of the link between language and cultural identity has to be recognized as stemming, itself, from an urban, industrialized intellectual tradition. A growing gulf is opening up not between national cultures, but between those who can afford to be supranational cosmopol­itans—through access to the Internet, travel privileges, knowledge of several languages beside English, ability and freedom to code-switch between them—and those who are rooted in one national or religious culture. The description suggested above of the plurality and multiplicity of cultural identities within one individual might be violently rejected by people from a different intellectual tradition for whom categories of identity are much more stable consensual affairs. Urgent is the necessity to cast as broad a semiotic net as possible in the study of language and culture, and to honor the marvelous difference and diversity among and within human beings.

**Glossary:**

**Native speaker:** A person who is recognized, linguistically and culturally, by members of a discourse community as being one of them.

**Appropriateness:** Characteristic of linguistic and social practices that meet the expectations of native speakers within their given culture; cf. appropriation.

**Appropriation:** Process by which members of one discourse commu­nity make the language and the culture of another their own.

**Intercultural: 1** Refers to the meeting between people from different cultures and languages across the political boundaries of nation-states. **2** Refers to communication between people from different ethnic, social, gendered cultures within the boundaries of the same nation.

**Multicultural:**  Political term used to characterize a society com­posed of people from different cultures or an individual who belongs to several cultures. *See* intercultural(2).

