

EL4252 Honours Year

Session No. 3/4

PART 1: ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION

- Discourse needs segmenting, and language needs to be seen in the context of the *situation*.
- Ethnography* is a term from anthropology: Greek ἔθνος *ethnos* 'people or nation' and γράφω *grapho* 'I write'. The classic ethnographic approach usually involves:
 - Participant observation, in which the outsider moves inside the culture (and requires long-term commitment), and is always based on field work rather than lab work.
 - One or a few case studies, examined in detail.
 - Working mainly with unconstructed data without set or predetermined categories.
 - Exploration rather than the testing of hypotheses (the process is inductive)
 - Engaging in extensive field work involving interviews, observations, artefacts etc.
 - Exploring ideas and beliefs expressed through language or other activities, and group behaviour
- The 'ethnography of speaking' or 'ethnography of communication' gives a particular linguistic twist to the ethnographic approach. Stephen Levinson's definition is 'the cross-cultural study of language usage' (1983: 279). Dell Hymes borrows Chomsky's performance-competence distinction to talk about *communicative competence* – and suggests that we should be interested in rules of speaking that operate in particular language-using communities. These rules of speaking are at three levels:
 - Speech situation** – not purely linguistic occasions for language use
 - Speech event** (the most significant level) – the activity that must occur through language, and often has a label: argument, gossip, storytelling, chat, lecture, telling-off
 - Speech act**
- The descriptive framework for examining speech events is a mnemonic device SPEAKING.

S - **Setting and Scene** - The setting refers to the time and place while scene describes the environment of the situation.

P - **Participants** - This refers to who is involved in the speech including the speaker and the audience and their roles

E - **Ends** - The purpose and goals of the speech along with any outcomes of the speech.

A - **Act Sequence** - The order of events that took place during the speech.

K - **Key** - The overall tone or manner of the speech (serious? sincere? joking? ironic?)

I - **Instrumentalities** - The form and style of the speech being given (spoken? written? computer-mediated? sung? high pitched?)

N - **Norms** - Defines what is socially acceptable at the event.

G - **Genre** - The type of speech that is being given (poem? proverb? commercial message?)
- Examine Cameron's text, and analyse it in terms of the situation/event/act framework and in terms of the SPEAKING framework.

Transcription conventions: P = Pastor, E = Elder (a senior member of the congregation), T = Testifier (a person who has been called on to 'bear witness' in front of the congregation), M = Member, C = Congregation (acting as a body), // = turn 'latched' to preceding or following turn (shown on line above/below), [] = speech that is simultaneous with bracketed sequence on line above/below, xxxx = applause, (.) short pause

E: I'm going to call brother Tony Tracey and if he would come and speak to us for just ten minutes. Come on Tony come and say what the Lord will have you to say to us//	1
M: //Amen//	
M: //Praise him	
E: Oh glory to God a young man that love the Lord let us praise the Lord for him	2
M: Praise God praise God glory praise the Lord	3
T: Hallelujah Lord Jesus// //Hallelujah Lord Jesus//	4
M: // Praise him// // Praise the Lord	
T: Thank you Lord Jesus// //Hallelujah hallelujah [Lord Jesus]	5
M: //Praise// [Hallelujah]	
T: [Hallelujah] thank you Lord Jesus Hallelujah	6
M: [Hallelujah]	
M: [Praise him]	
T: Praise the Lord everybody//	7
C: //Praise the Lord	

T: The brotherhood has asked me to speak to you for a few minutes(.) Now don't get scared of me I'm not the preacher. Just got a little word I want to give to you// M: // [praise him] M: // [praise the] Lord	8
T: What I want to talk about is the word repentance// E: //yes	9
T: And what we've got to understand here is that the Bible is wrapped up in principles and the word principle in the Bible is used as law as to Psalms 19 verse 1 says the law of the Lord is perfect// //converting the soul// E: //yes// M: //Amen Hallelujah	10
(several minuts of Biblical commentary omitted) T: Now the word repentance means to have a change of heart a change of mind a change of direction uhm if you've ever seen soldiers walking their walking left right left right about turn (.) he turns// M: //yes	11
T: that's repentance when you turn from what you're doing// M: // [yes prai]se the [Lord] M: // [Amen] M: [alright] C: xxxxxxxxxxx	12
T: Before I got saved I was// [laugh] I was no good yes thank you pastor I was P: //no good	13
T: no good// //I smoked I swore I commit fornication M: //praise the Lord//	14
T: you named it I done it// //but until I fully repented of my sins M: //yes//	15
T: then God dealt with me in a mighty way// //and I truly give him thanks for that M: //yes// (testimony continues)	16

PART 2: GENRE

6. Genre, sub-genre:
(a) in literary criticism;
(b) in discourse analysis.

Genre is a term frequently used in literary criticism, where the three main genres are poetry, prose and drama. There can be further divisions into *sub-genres* within each — like the lyric, epic, ode, and ballad (in the case of poetry); and tragedy, comedy and kitchen-sink drama (in the case of drama). Each *sub-genre* seems associated with particular *world views*, *attitudes* and *structures*.

Within applied linguistics, there are two strands of discussion on genre. One is focused on the work of **John Swales** (and arose out of pedagogical contexts). Another is focused on a **systemic functional framework (the 'Sydney school')**, and includes work by Ruqaiya Hasan, Jim Martin, Eija Ventola and Suzanne Eggins. For this module, we shall focus on the latter. This is because the latter is more fully fleshed out in terms of the lexico-grammatical realisational patterns.

<p>Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord. Ham. Buz, buz! Pol. Upon my honour, - Ham. Then came each actor on his ass, - Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Hamlet Act II, sc. ii</p>
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7. Text I:
V: Who's next please?
C: Yes. Can I have eight slices of that [pointing] please?

V: Corned beef?
 C: [Nods.]
 V: You want thick or thin slices?
 C: Oh just medium.
 V: [Slices corn beef. Puts the slices on scales.] Four eighty-two.
 C: Yes, okay.
 V: Anything else?
 C: No, that's all [taking wrapped slices from vendor]. Thanks.
 V: Bye.

Question: WHY ARE THEY SPEAKING LIKE THIS?

8. Original question: **WHAT IS A GENRE?**
 - (a) Known by meanings (*semiotics/semiology* and *semantics*) associated with it.
 - (b) Each genre has its own **CONTEXTUAL CONFIGURATION (CC)**, and is logically related to the CC in that *each genre is the verbal expression of the CC*.
 - (c) Genres can vary in delicacy (in the same way that cultures can vary in delicacy).
 - (d) Each genre has a **potential**, realising different **actual** structures.
9. Martin's definitions

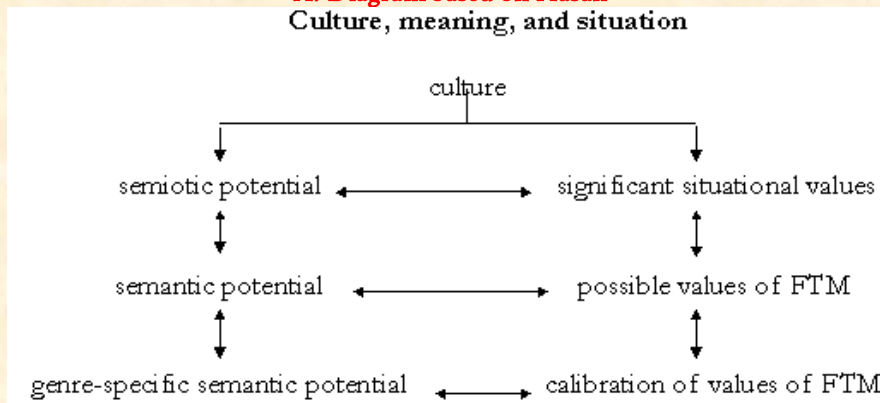
... a genre is a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful **activity** in which speakers engage as members of our **culture**. [Martin 1984: 25]

Genres are how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them. [Martin 1985: 248].

10. **WHAT COUNTS AS A CC?**
 - (a) Context of culture
 - (b) Semiotic potential
 - (c) Semantic potential
 - (d) Genre-specific semantic potential

Semiotic potential subsumes **semantic potential**. The latter refers to the potential for meaning *verbally*.

A. Diagram based on Hasan
Culture, meaning, and situation



B. Diagram based on Ventola

Contextual Construct (variables)	Contextual Configuration (values)	Genre/Register (types of discourse)	Texts (tokens of discourse)	
Field	value $x \rightarrow$	Structure potential: its elements $\rightarrow \{(X, Y, Z) \text{ and the sequencing of elements } (X^*Y(.Z))\}$	realised <i>by an array of actual structures</i>	
Mode	value $y \rightarrow$			Text 1: $X + Y + Z$
Tenor	value $z \rightarrow$			Text 2: $X + Y$ Text 3: $X + Z + Y$

C. Diagram based on Martin & Rose (2008: 10)

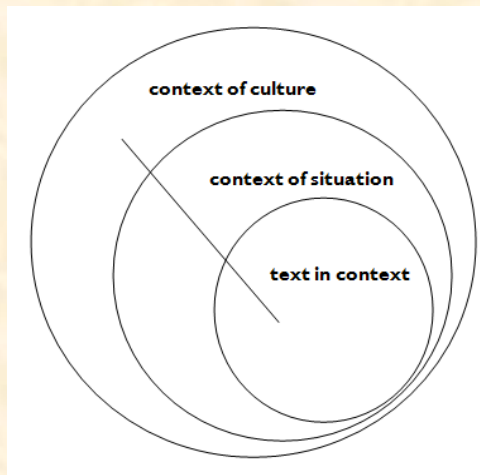


Diagram based on Eggins (2004: 111)

Both register and genre are realised through language.
 Two main dimensions to the realisation of genres:

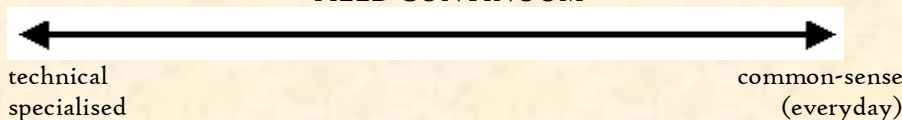
- schematic structure (the staged and goal-oriented organisation of genres is expressed linguistically through a functional constituent structure in the text)
- realisation patterns (the boundaries between the stages, and the function of each stage of the genre, are expressed through language choices ... realised in a text)

ii. Back to the question: **WHAT IS A CC?**

CC1

(a) **Field (nature of social activity):** economic transaction

FIELD CONTINUUM

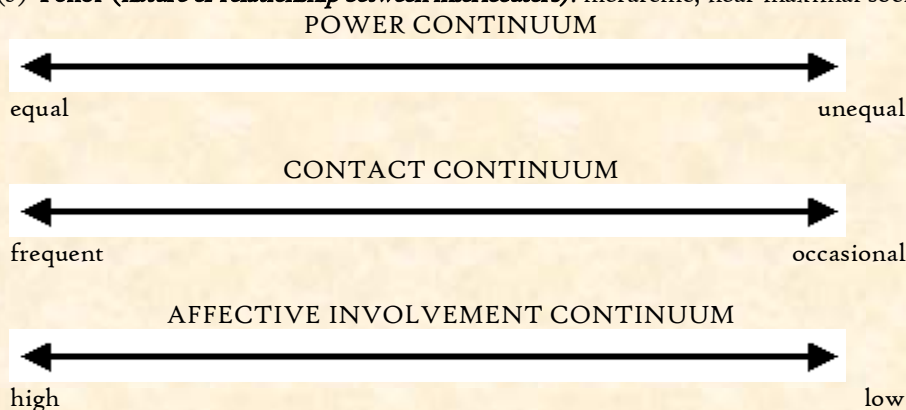


Technical v everyday situations	
Technical situation	Everyday situation
assumed knowledge of an activity/ institution/ area	'common knowledge; no (or little) assumed knowledge
deep taxonomies	shallow taxonomies
- detailed sub-classification	- limited sub-classification

Technical and everyday language: the linguistic implications of FIELD	
Technical situation	Everyday situation
technical terms	everyday terms
- words only 'insiders' understand	- words we all understand
acronyms	full names

abbreviated syntax technical action processes attributive (descriptive) processes	standard syntax identifying processes (defining terms)
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(b) **Tenor** (*nature of relationship between interlocutors*): hierarchic; near maximal social distance

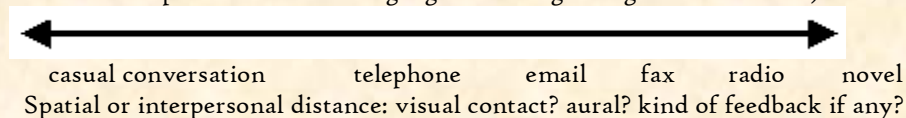


An **informal** situation tends towards the left-hand side of the continua (eg close friends in conversation); a **formal** situation tends towards the right-hand side of the continua (eg first-year student meeting the vice-chancellor). This will be realised in lexical choice (attitudinal? slang v. standard? politeness strategies? vocatives? expletives/swearing? tentative language?)

- *Hey, Freddie! Get off your butt and give me a hand here. Shove that chair over closer to the desk.*
- *Eh Freddie ah! Don't just sit there doing nothing lah. Come and help me and push that chair closer to the desk, can or not.*
- *Oh, Dr Smith. I'm just trying to tidy my office up a bit and I wondered if you'd mind maybe giving me a quick hand with moving some furniture? If you've got time, I mean. It won't take a moment. Now if we could just move this chair over a bit nearer to the desk there. Thanks very much.*

Formal and informal language: the linguistic consequences of TENOR	
Informal language	Formal language
Attitudinal lexis (purr and snarl words) ¹	Neutral lexis
Colloquial lexis (abbreviated forms, slang)	Formal lexis (full forms, no slang)
Swearing	Politeness phenomena (Ps and Qs)
Interruptions, overlap	Careful turn-taking
First names, nick-names, diminutives	Titles, no names
Typical mood choices	Incongruent mood choices
Modalisation to express probability	Modalisation to express deference
Modulation to express opinion	Modulation to express suggestion

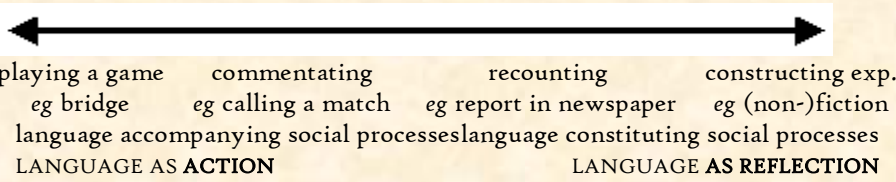
(c) **Mode** (*nature of the rôle of language*): ancillary language rôle; spoken (visual) channel, phonic (kinesic) medium. (Cf. discussion on spoken v. written language at the beginning of this module.)



¹ The American linguist S J Hayakawa introduced the terms **purr words** and **snarl words** to describe words that arouse different associations in the minds of readers or hearers (*purr words* for 'good' associations, and *snarl words* for 'bad'): consider the following.

thinking	day-dreaming
dancing	jiggling about
smiling	smirking
weeping	snivelling
writing	scribbling

The choice of either is important in propaganda and public relations.



Experiential distance

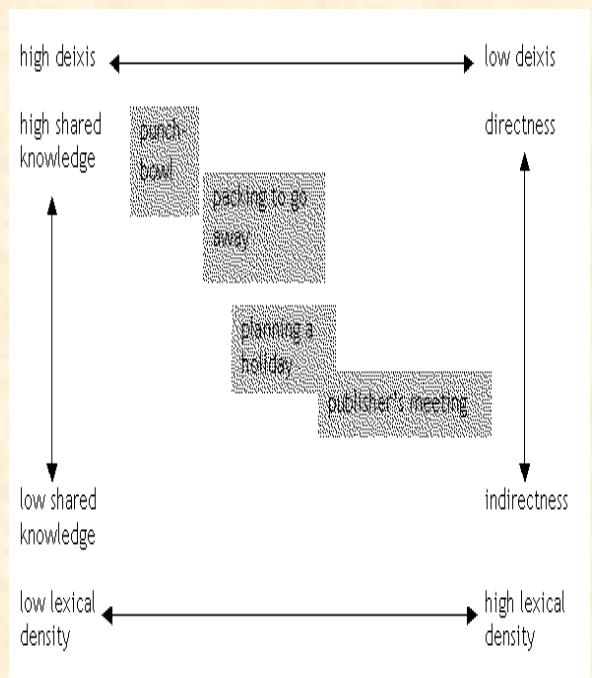
On spoken and written language again.

Mode: typical situations of language use	
Spoken discourse	Written text
+ interactive 2 or more participants	non- interactive one participant
+ face-to-face in the same place at the same time	not face-to-face on his/her own
+ language as action using language to accomplish some task	not language as action using language to reflect
+ spontaneous without rehearsing what is going to be said	not spontaneous planning, drafting and rewriting
+ casual informal and everyday	not casual formal and special occasions

Spoken and written language: the linguistic implications of MODE	
Spoken language	Written language
turn-taking organisation context dependent dynamic structure - interactive staging - open-ended spontaneity phenomena (false starts, hesitations, interruptions, overlap, incomplete clauses) everyday lexis non-standard grammar grammatical complexity lexically sparse	monologic organisation context independent synoptic structure - rhetorical staging - closed, finite 'final draft' (polished) indications of earlier drafts removed 'prestige' lexis standard grammar grammatical simplicity lexically dense

*I handed my essay late because my kids got sick.
The reason for the late submission of my essay was the illness of my children. (note nominalisation)*

McCarthy (1998: 45) has an interesting diagram relating linguistic patterning to genre:



Activity

PART 3: GENERIC STRUCTURE (ECONOMIC ENCOUNTER)

12. Let us go through a familiar genre and try to characterise it in terms of its

- (a) schematic structure,
- (b) realisational patterns.

C: Can I have half a dozen of those red roses please? And also baby's breath. And gift wrapped.
V: Half a dozen roses and baby's breath. OK. That all?
C: Yeah.

V: Thirteen dollars please.
 C: Here you are.
 V: Five and two. Seven dollars.

CC₂ = ?

13. Obligatory elements:
 Sale request = SR [*request for goods*]
 Sale compliance = SC [*request accepted by V*]
 Sale = S [*C informed of price by V*]
 Purchase = P [*C offering V exchange value for goods*]
 Purchase closure = PC [*receipt acknowledged by V*]

SR^SC^S^P^PC
 caret = 'followed by'

14. Re-considering example from Part 1 in the light of the above.

15. TENOR: social distance is non-maximal:

C: Hullo, Molly. Can I have half a dozen . . .

V: Hullo, Mr Wong.

C: Oh hi, Molly. Can I have half a dozen . . .

Greeting = (G) [*parentheses indicate optionality*]

16. Shop busy, queue present, customer lost or undecided (cf. *interaction earlier*):

V: Can I help you?

C: Yes, can I have half a dozen . . .

Sale initiation = (SI)

17. Combination of 4 and 5:

V: Hallo, Mr Chan. Are you looking for something special?

C: Oh hallo, Molly. I need to get some flowers for Geks today.

(G)·(SI)

dot in middle = more than one option in sequence

angled brackets = inclusion possible

Possible realisations: (a) G + SI; (b) SI + G; (c) G₁ + SI + G₂; (d) G; (e) SI

18. Customer wishes help:

C: Can I have half a dozen of those red roses please?

V: Certainly. Anything else, sir?

C: Have you got anything to go with them, do you think?

V: Other flowers? What about some white roses?

C: No, I think something small to contrast with the red.

V: We've got Phoenix's Eyes and Baby's Breath.


C: Which do you think is nicer?

V: Oh, the Baby's Breath looks nicer, and they last longer too.

C: How much are they?

V: Two dollars a bunch.

C: Yah, I think I'll have that then.

Sales enquiry =  (SE)

arrow = recursion possible

19. Further request (SR) after compliance (SC): **homogeneous iteration**

←
{SR^SC^}

curly brackets + arrow = homogenous iteration

20. Appreciative remarks or well wishes at the end:

Finis = (F)

21. Obligatory *v.* optional elements. Obligatory elements **critical** for construing CC2.

22. GSP statement:

← ←
[(G)·<(SI)>^] [(SE)· {SR^SC^} S^] P^PC (^F)

square brackets = range for movable items

23. Probe, repair, align

Attempt an analysis of the following post office interaction from Ventola (1987). S = server; C = customer

- 1 S: Yes, please?
(C steps forward)
- 2 C: Can I have these two like that?
(hands over two letters)
- 3 S: Yes.
(3 secs – S weighs one letter)
- 4 S: One's forty-five.
(3 secs – S weighs the other letter)
- 5 S: One's twenty-five.
- 6 C: And have you got ... the ... first-day covers of ...
- 7 S: Yes ?
- 8 C: (Ansac)
(2 secs)
- 9 S: How many would you like?
- 10 C: Four, please.
- 11 S: Two of each?
- 12 C: What have you got?
- 13 S: Uh, there's two different designs on the –
(5 secs – S shows C the covers)
- 14 C: I'll take two of each.
- 15 S: Uhum .
(6 secs – S gets the stamps for the letters and the covers)
- 16 S: Right ... that's a dollar seventy thank you.
(10 secs – S puts the covers into a bag; C gets out the money)
- 17 S: Here we are.
(2 secs – S hands over the stamps and the covers; C hands the money to S)
- 18 C: Thank you.
- 19 S: Thank you.
(5 secs – S gets the change)
- 20 S: Dollar seventy, that's two four and one's five.
- 21 S: Thank you very much.
- 22 C: Thank you.
(2 secs – C reaches for the letters)
- 23 S: They'll be all right. I'll fix those up in a moment.
- 24 C: Okay
(C leaves)

24. Further points:

- (a) In many Singaporean situations, the customer is expected to help him/herself to the goods. What about the supermarket situation?
- (b) In many Singaporean situations, interactions can be non-verbal.

- (c) In a supermarket situation, the duties of the 'vendor' have been split up.
 (d) In many third-world situations, a bargaining exchange is almost always expected.
 (e) This is useful in illustrating cross-cultural differences:

- (i) Bachman and Cohel-Solel (1980): the Yemeni in a French *pâtisserie*;
 (ii) Mak (1984): **pre-bargaining** and **bargaining**

25. Ventola's criticisms of Hasan:

- (a) 'Mistakes'?
 (b) Other occurrences of reiteration?
 (c) Inconsistency?
 (d) Non-verbal realisations?
 (e) Are obligatory elements genre-defining?
 What if one **opts out**?
 (f) Ventola's *generic structure* (= Martin's *schematic structure*) as opposed to Hasan's *generic structure potential*

26. Network presentation

27. The incorporation of exchange structures:

((DX₁) X₂) X₁ (RX₁) (X₂f),
 where X = anything, D = delay, 1 = primary, 2 = secondary, f = follow-up,
 R = response

28. Ventola's structures (for comparison)

- (a) Greeting (GR): Gr + Rgr
 (b) Attendance-allocation (AA): Att + Ratt
 (c) Service bid (SB): DA₁ + A₂ + A₁ [the whole text]
 (d) Service (S): A₂ + A₁:A [assent] + A₁:R [react], or K₂ + K₁
 (e) Resolution (R): A₂ + A₁:A + A₁:R
 (f) Pay (P): A₂ + A₁:R + A₂f
 (g) Goods handover (GH): A₁:R + A₂f
 (h) Closing (CL): A₁:R + A₂f
 (i) Goodbye (GB): Gr + Rgr

ACTIVITY

READINGS (Sessions 3/4)

- *Deborah Cameron (2001), *Working with Spoken Discourse* (London: Sage), Ch 5
 Suzanne Eggins (2004), *An introduction to systemic functional linguistics*, 2nd edn (London: Pinter), Chs 3 and 4.
 Ruqaiya Hasan (1996), *Ways of saying: ways of meaning* (London: Cassell) – the relevant chapters are Ch 3 and Ch 8
 (beginning sections)
 — (1985), *Discourse on Discourse* (Wollongong, NSW: Applied Linguistics Association of Australia), pp. 25–29
 *Michael A. K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan (1985), *Language, Context, and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective* (Geelong, Victoria: Deakin University), Chs 4 and 6
 J R Martin & David Rose (2008), *Genre relations: mapping culture* (London: Equinox), Ch 1.
 Michael O'Donnell (1999), 'Context in dynamic modelling', in Mohsen Ghadessy (ed.), *Text and context in functional linguistics* (Amsterdam: Benjamins), pp 63–100. Available online:
<http://www.wagsoft.com/Papers/ODonContext.pdf>
 Eija Ventola (1987), *The Structure of Social Interaction: A Systemic Approach to the Semiotics of Service Encounters* (London: Frances Pinter). Ideally, you should read all of Chapters 3 and 4, but specifically, read: Section 3.1 (pp 50–57).

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