EL4252 Honours Year: Sessions 4/5

I. INTRODUCTION

(1) [A short story to demonstrate the notion of genre, context and purpose.](#) (Beginning of handout: to read at home)

(2) Circularity of definition of genre

(Link this to the notion that discourse is **constitutive**.) Compare this with the circularity of a **possible** definition of Standard English:

1. The best people are those who use Standard English.
2. Standard English is the variety used by the best people.

Does the notion of *genre* simply reinforce the *status quo*?

We use style X because it is associated with genre Y

Genre Y is defined by the presence of style X

(3) Recap: Last week, we examined Hasan's GSP for economic encounters. Let's now look at her GSP for nursery tales. Remember that those that work in her 'tradition' are concerned about:

- elements belonging to texts in a genre
- distinction between *obligatory* (criterial) elements and *optional* elements
- the sequencing of the elements
- the *realisation* of the elements (*eg* grammatical structures, lexis, terms of address)
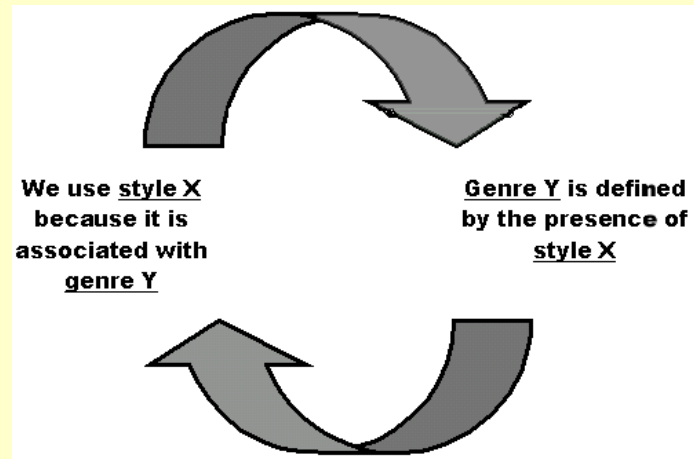
II. ANOTHER GSP: NARRATIVE

Here is the GSP statement:

[(\<Placement\>^)Initiating Event^] Sequent Event ^ Final Event [^(Finale)•(Moral)]

Be sure you remember what the square brackets [ ], the round brackets ( ), the angled brackets < >, the caret ^, the arrow , and the dot in the middle • refer to.

'Since the labels for the elements were selected on the basis of their mnemonic value, they are hopefully self-explanatory, though a word must be added regarding the difference between **Final Event** and **Finale**. The former stands in a logical relation to some event(s)/state(s) of affairs; it represents a culmination, or what Labov refers to as *Resolution* (Labov 1972). *Finale*, on the other hand, is the highly conventionalised 'return to altered rest' statement about the main protagonists, intimating a habitual tenor of existence for them, which can then logically function as the *Placement* for another tale. This is precisely what happens in serial stories of the type exemplified by Revd Awdry's railway stories.' [Hasan 1996: 55]

Linguistic realisations: Look out for *tense* and *aspect* (to indicate *event* v. *state*) and the use of *relational processes* (which do not propel the narrative forwards) and *circumstantial adjuncts*.

Activity: [Texts for analysis (click here)](#) (30 minutes)

III. WILSON'S SPEAKING RIGHTS THEORY OF CONVERSATION

1.   Genre, structure, rights, rules:

   (a) social psychology
   (b) conversational analysis (ethnomethodology)

2.   Defining conversation

   - Speaking rights
   - Ethnomethodology, Speier

- Birmingham School
- Susan Kay Donaldson:
    - at least two participants;
    - turn-taking exists;
    - same subject [*ie* topic];
    - information exchange;
    - not purely business transaction;
    - speakers not in roles of authority, utterances non-predictable;
    - reciprocity;
    - intent;
    - lack of imperatives [*ie* the grammatical mood]
    - normal deletion processes [*ie* ellipsis]

A GSP for Casual Conversation? (*I will probably skip this*)

Ventola posits the following GSPs:

I: strangers

(*i*) minimal conversation:

$$(G)\char94\{[Ap\text{-}I\ (\cdot Ad)\overset{\leftarrow}{\char94}][(Ap\text{-}D)\ (\cdot Id)\overset{\leftarrow}{\char94}]\}\ (Lt)\char94(Gb)$$

(*ii*) non-minimal conversation:

$$(G)\char94\{[Ap\text{-}I\ (\cdot Ad)\overset{\leftarrow}{\char94}][Ap\text{-}D\overset{\leftarrow}{\char94}C\ (\cdot Id)\overset{\leftarrow}{\char94}]\}\ (Lt)\char94(Gb)$$

II: friends

(*i*) minimal conversation:

$$[G\ (\cdot Ad)\char94]\ \{[(Ap\text{-}D)\ (\cdot Ap\text{-}I)\overset{\leftarrow}{\char94}]\}\ (Lt)\char94(Gb)$$

(*ii*) non-minimal conversation:

$$[G\ (\cdot Ad)\char94]\ \{[(Ap\text{-}D)\ (\cdot Ap\text{-}I)\ \ \cdot C\overset{\leftarrow}{\char94}]\}\ (Lt)\char94(Gb)$$

Key: G (greeting), **A** (address, realised by vocatives usually), **Ap-D** (direct approach, personal conversation about the interactants' health, clothing, family), **Ap-I** (indirect approach, contextual talk about the weather, the immediate surrounding), **C** (centring, talk about more involved topics like the interactants' 'world views'), **Id** (identification), **Lt** (leave taking), **Gb** (good-bye).

TRY OUT THESE TEXTS (click here)

Eggins and Slade (1997) and Thornbury and Slade (2006) discuss how there are different genres within casual conversation. Here is a table summarising the various genres and their structures (from E& S, Table 6.9, p. 268).

Genre	Generic structure
Narrative	(Abstract) ^ (Orientation) ^ Complication ^ Evaluation ^ Resolution ^ (Coda) [Labov & Waletzky 1967]
Anecdote	(Abstract) ^ (Orientation) ^ Remarkable Event ^ Reaction ^ (Coda) [Plum 1988, Rothery 1990]
Exemplum	(Abstract) ^ (Orientation) ^ Incident ^ Interpretation ^ (Coda) [Plum 1988, Martin 1995]

Recount	(Abstract) ^ (Orientation) ^ Record of Events ^ (Coda) [Plum 1988, Rothery 1990, Martin 1992]
Observation/Comment	(Orientation) ^ Observation ^ Comment ^ (Coda) ^ (Completion) [Martin & Rothery 1986]
Opinion	Opinion ^ Reaction ^ (Evidence) ^ (Resolution)
Gossip	Third Person Focus ^ Substantiating Behaviour ^ (Probe) / Pejorative Evaluation ^ (Defence) ^ (Response to Defence) ^ (Concession) ^ (Wrap-up) [Slade 1995]
Joke-telling	Generic structure not yet explored
Sending Up	Cannot be characterised in generic terms
Chat	Cannot be characterised in generic terms

3.   Wilson emphasises TENOR: **equality of speaker rights** in (casual) conversation:

- support for 'positive face';
- maintenance of the *flow of talk* or *state of talk* (Goffman)

4.   Wilson emphasises the **realisation** of equal speaker rights in terms of topic control:

- *topic initiator* — utterances which occur in positions of 'non-retrospective relation' (utterances with no propositional relation to any previous turn); topics can be initiated *overtly* (Texts 1 and 2, typically associated with situations where speaker rights are asymmetrical) or *covertly* (Texts 3–5)

- *topic re-initiation* — where there has been failure in the original topic initiation, the topic can be re-initiated at a subsequent turn (Text 6)

- *pre-topic check* — serves to establish whether there is available *shared knowledge* for the topic to proceed

- *phonological marking* — an utterance carries a choice of several possible topics; the constituent that carries pragmatic prominence is normally marked also by phonological prominence

- *topic downgrading* — if the next speaker picks up a constituent that does not carry phonological prominence, s/he can be said to have *downgraded the preferred topic proposition* against some other proposition contained in the topic initiating utterance (p. 37) (Text 8)

- *topic rejection* — if the next speaker refuses to take up any of the propositions contained in the topic initiating utterance, s/he can be said to have *rejected* the topic (Text 7; overt rejection in Text 9)

- *sub-topics* — sub-topics are *secondary propositions* within the topic framework and are intonationally contrasted with the main topic (p. 47) The difference between downgraded topics and sub-topics for Wilson, as I interpret it, is to do with *stress*; if I say 'A̱-B', and you say 'Ḇ-F', you have picked up my *sub-topic* B; whereas if I say 'A̱-B', and you say 'Ḏ-B', then you have *downgraded* my main topic A. I must admit to having difficulty making the distinctions (Texts 10 and 11.)

- *topic drift* — in a topic drift, a participant uses what has previously been the main topic in a bid to initiate a new topic (Text 12, on 'Angela')

5.   Data:

Text 1: Mother and child

M: you were out late last night ←
C: I know
M: well I don't think it is acceptable. OK we're going to talk about this attitude RIGHT NOW. ←

Text 2: Four adolescent girls aged 14-15

L: I know we'll talk about all these troubles and our solutions to them. ←
D: we'll do no such fucking thing
P: aye *just cause your dad got shot*
D: *an my ma got killed [*laughter*]*
P. and your dog died [*laughter*]

Text 3:

A: you know I was just thinking, if we go to Antrim on Thursday we'll miss the volleyball. ←
L: yea, I love the volleyball too
L: I know you remember last week the game we had it was a laugh . . .

Text 4

C: there's big head Tommy ←
K: he fucking loves himself silly
A: that's because no one else would have him.

Text 5

P: I hear JP was in a fight yesterday ←
A: that wee girl over there is looking at us ←
J: what wee girl?
K: her there
G: who does she think she is looking at?
S: hey do you see enough?
          [*laughter*]
A: she is not looking now [*laughter*]

Text 6

C: B's volleyball team are here tomorrow ←
M: - look at the state of my shorts ←
?: what's wrong with them?
M: look they are torn up the side
C: mine went like that ----
C: what about tomorrow? I think we can beat B's volleyball team. ←

Text 7

P: I hear JP was in a fight yesterday ←
A: that wee girl over there is looking at us ←
J: what wee girl

Text 8

T: you see the disco last week it was the worst one yet
D: there is a new disco opened up at . . ah what ya ma call it. ←
I: where?
D: oh ah, fuck I forget
T: that's a good one tells us about a new disco and then forgets where it is -- well I would like to think it would be better than the one we had last week

Text 9

B: well I was shit scared when the fight started
K: yea yea we heard it all before ←
G: I know is the needle stuck or something
B: OK if you don't want to hear
K: not particularly

Text 10

A: I don't think we have a chance of winning tomorrow
G: are you sure it's tomorrow? sub-topic
A: yea of course . . . we are going to win easily

Text 11

A: I don't think we have a chance of <u>winning</u> tomorrow
G: I can't wait until tomorrow *main topic of 'winning' down-graded*
K: I know
J: Yea <u>its</u> gonna be great

Text 12

E: my <u>nails</u> are broke again
B: ah well my <u>nails</u> are always doing that
       [*sound of someone drinking*]
C: <u>Angela</u> has probably started biting hers again since <u>she</u> started mucking about with horses --- she's away to England this week for that- th- thing competition
E: I wish I was good at something (some sport)
C: I know so do I

6.   Formula:

$$TU = (PTC)\char94 TI\char94 (TC \left\{ \begin{array}{c} MT \\ ST \end{array} \right\})^n$$

where ( ) = optionality, { } = either or, and *n* = recursion; TI = topic initiation; PTC = pre-topic check [or *topic initiating statement*], TC = topic comments, ST = sub-topic, MT = main topic

7.   Wilson's **out-mode**

      An out-mode will be defined as any utterance which differs in structure (or content) from the ongoing speech event as established by the previous or surrounding talk. The function of the out-mode is to change the status, or definition, of the developing speech event. [p. 56]

8.   **Institutionalised out-modes *v.* conversationally-tied out-modes**

9.   Institutionalised out-modes: data.

Text 13: Saturday evening; family watching a football match on television

D: Jesus that was close
C: who is that? he's good
R: that's that player what ya ma call him?
D: some Russian sounding name
R: Prash-prat Pratchkova or something
M: RUSSELL look at the TIME GET to YOUR BED ←

Text 14: teacher (T) and pupils (others)

C: where did you get your hair done Miss?
T: down Anne Street (.)
J: are they any good?
T: I think so . . . where do you get your done?
J: my sister does it

T: oh - I think it's nice
J: thanks
K: see P's got scalped again
J: aye she looks like a hedge hog [*laughs*]
T: I think it looks all right
C: ya must be joking it's awful
J: well ahaaha I have seen better (*laughs*) . . .
T: anyway RIGHT back to your SEATS --- OK LISTEN EVERYBODY role time. ←

Text 15: Mother and child

M: would you run down to the shop for me ←
C: I don't want to
M: well I'm not asking I'm TELLING you to get going ←

10.   Conversationally-tied out-modes

      Different from institutionalised out-modes:

      (*a*) no disruption in participant status relationships;
      (*b*) potentially integrative.

      They are out-modes:

(*a*) own performance rules;
(*b*) distinct speech events.　　　Jokes (*specifically, Q-jokes and Narrative Jokes*), and Banter

11.　　　Data:

Text 16

P:　　　why do Irishmen not eat toast?
　　　　because they lost the recipe

Text 17

G:　　　how does an Irishman talk when his brain is taken out?
　　　　with an English accent

Text 18

G:　　　how does an Irishman clean his underpants?
A:　　　I don't know
G:　　　hangs them up and beats the shit-shite out of them

Text 19

T:　　　have you seen Stevie Wonder's new car?
H:　　　no
T:　　　neither has he

Text 20

T:　　　I was going to punch him
D:　　　you couldn't punch a bus ticket
R:　　　aye the last time you lifted your arm you fell over (*laughter*)

Text 21

P:　　　give me that bat
R:　　　yes maahsuh (*with affected accent*)
P:　　　ahahah all right would you pass me the bat?

Text 22

J:　　　run down there and get us a drink
D:　　　FUCK OFF who do you think you are wee girl?
J:　　　OK don't get excited I only asked

Text 23: T = teacher

N:　　　did you hear W's in gaol?
T:　　　what?
A:　　　aye caught mugging an old lady
T:　　　you're joking?
N:　　　no seriously . . . he is a thug just like B there (*laughs*)
B:　　　watch it hog features
A:　　　so we'll not be seeing him for a while
T:　　　put your feet off the desk B ←
B:　　　why? the boots are clean
T:　　　look because I'm telling ya son all right! ←
B:　　　fuck's sake (*whispered*)
T:　　　move it son ←
B:　　　fuck me
T:　　　what did you say? ←
B:　　　nothing

Text 24

R:　　　did you hear about the Irish army, they invaded Falkirk
P:　　　what?
R:　　　Falkirk
P:　　　you mean, OH AYE (*laughs*)
R:　　　ya silly cunt

IV. Haugh's genre of teasing ('jocular mockery')

13. Jocular mockery is an instance of an everyday genre, having a range of **functions**: entertainment, solidarity (creating in- and out-groups), defusing conflict, expressing power and indicating aggression and bullying.

14. **Realisational patterns** isolated: laughter, prosodic or paralinguistic marking, face and body cues, exaggeration and incongruity, formulaicity, topic shift markers.

15. Typical **response** features: laughter, explicit accord, (partial) repetition, elaboration, countering.

(1) ICE-AUS: S1A-004: 1:50

```
61 B: that looks supe:rb mum.
62 P: ↓go:od=
63 B: =it re:ally does.
64 P: look all right (.) or.
65 B: =mmm
66 P: two four six eight (.) looks good enough-     ←
67 good enough to eat.
68 (0.2)
```

```
69 E: almost.                                          ←
70 P: Good enough to eat
```

(2) ART: ABCnat2: 10:49
```
1 R: compound wo:rds which are (.) ↑really very
2 <efficient> (0.4) as you'd expect.
3 (0.3)
4 T: but they do- they do irritate the reviewers    ←
5 of the T L S though hhh heh=
6 R: =ha ha ha ha ha
```

(3) GCSAusE02: 0:14
```
12 T: ye:ah look, look at the myspace badge
13 that spencer got- I got one
14 as well but it's at work [hah?]
15 A:                       [hh ]
16 (0.5)
17 T: who the fuck would ever [wear that?]        ←
18 A:                         [hhh heh ha]
```

(4) ART: ABCnat2: 25:34
```
1 R: I'm Ramona Koval? um (.) talking with Tim Winton?
2    and Sandy McCutcheon? .hhh and ↑let's go: um tsk
3    to Sydney again to Jennifer, hi Jennifer.
4 J: ↑hi:(.) um: tsk .hhh I'm currently studying year
5    twelve at the moment? .hh and we've just
6    started (.) Cloudstree:t and I was just wondering
7    if I could: ask a f- few quick questions.
8 S: are you doing homework [here.   he   he   he   he      ] ←
9 R:                        [are you writing an e(h)ssay?] ←
10 S: [ha ha ha]
11 J: [n(h)o. heh] .hh [I'm not-
12 R:                  [we're not] w(h)riting your essay ←
13    for you.
14 J: £no¹ um we just wrote an essay on why we thought
15    Tim Winton should have won the prize last yea:r
16    so I've already done my essa:y.£ hh but I was
17    wondering um: tsk (.) Tim what was the purpose
18    of including magic realism (.)
19    like why- why did you include it hh.
```

(5) GCSAusE01: 3:42

(Two female students talking in lunch area at university. Haley is in her late fifties and Sarah is in her forties)
```
64 H: yesterday we talked wi- there was this girl
65    I don't know what her name is but she was
66    in (.) second semester Chinese classes?
67    (0.2) really good at languages she was
68    already doing ↑Japanese (0.4) biggish gi:rl
69    (0.4)
70 S: >what was that?<² (0.2) like I would know her?
71    (0.3)
72 H: you mi:ght know her.
73 S: °o::h°³
74    (0.4)
75 H: she was saying that she that has a- (.)a
76    ↓mental illness↓ and she took last semester off.
77 (0.2)
78 S: it's not me.                                      ←
79 H: no no [it's a              ] n(hh)ot y(h)ou
80 S:       [°(I'd be in trouble)°]
```
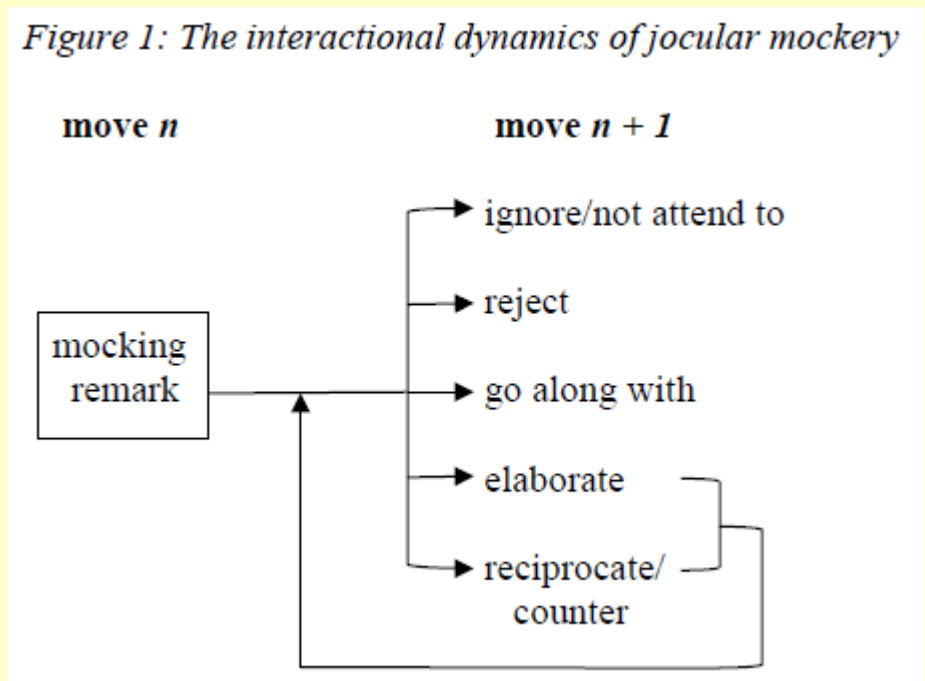
¹£…£ = smiling voice
²>…< = compressed (said quickly)
³°…° = markedly soft

```
81 S: heh heh heh
82 H: she probably does a spazo⁴ 'n exams                    ←
83 S: ↑HA Ha ha ha ha [ha ha ha]
84 H:                  [ha ha ha]ha ha ha
85    like y(hh)ou d(h)o.
86 S: u::m °I don't think I've noticed her°
87 H: a:nyway I do but okay we talked about fo:od
88    (0.2) about (.) restaurants and Sizzler and
```

16. 'Generic structure' expressed as a flowchart:

Figure 1: The interactional dynamics of jocular mockery

move *n*　　　　　　　move *n + 1*

mocking remark → ignore/not attend to / reject / go along with / elaborate / reciprocate/counter

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READINGS

Donaldson, Susan Kay (1979), 'One Kind of Speech Act: How do we know when we are conversing?', *Semiotica* 28: 259-299 [**In RBR, Call No. I-2839**].

Eggins, Suzanne & Diana Slade (1997), *Analysing casual conversation* (London: Cassell), Ch. 6

Hasan, Ruqaiya, *Ways of Saying: Ways of Meaning* (London: Cassell, 1996), Ch. 3

Michael Haugh (2014), 'Jocular mockery as interactional practice in everyday Anglo-Australian conversation', *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 34(1): 76-99.

Thornbury, Scott & Diana Slade (2006), *Conversation: From Description to Pedagogy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

*John Wilson (1989), *On the Boundaries of Conversation* (Oxford: Pergamon), Ch. 1 (pp. 7–14), Ch. 2, Ch. 3, Ch. 4. You might also want to read Chapters 5 and 6 out of interest, which (be assured) are not difficult. [**In RBR, Call No. P95.45Wil**]

Eija Ventola (1979), 'The structure of casual conversations in English', *Journal of Pragmatics* 3: 267-98

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Back to EL4252 contents page

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⁴ AuE: having a fit of spasms [< *spastic*]