FACOLTÀ DI STUDI UMANISTICI

Lingue e Comunicazione

Lingue e culture per la mediazione linguistica

Lingua Inglese 2

LESSON 1

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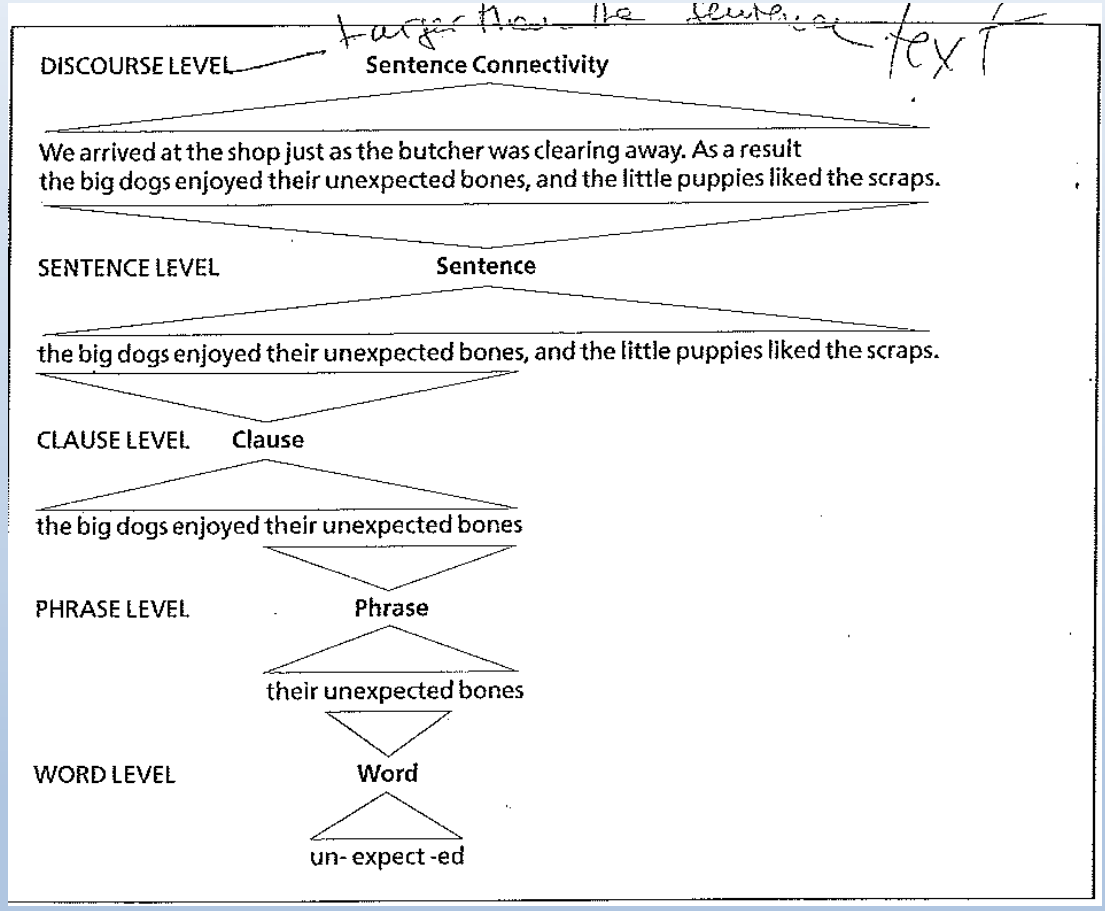
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What is the difference between structural linguistics and functional linguistics?

Outline

- Introduction
- Discourse Analysis
- Microfunctions: Austin & Searle
- Macrofunctions: Jakobson



From structural to functional

- Structural approach: how things are composed (their internal structure)
- Functional approach: what the unit does

✓ Function of syntactic units:

Julia	likes	dancing
Subject	Verb	Complement
Senser	Process	Phenomenon
Theme	Rheme	

- ✓ Functions of speech acts as a whole (speech function): give/demand, action/information
- ✓ Functions of texts as a whole (genre): descriptive, narrative, expository, instructive and argumentative

Julia	likes	dancing	
Subject	Fin./Verb	Complement	Interpersonal f.
Senser	Process	Phenomenon	Experiential f.
Theme	Rheme		Textual f.

1. What the addressor wants from the addressee (question or statement), how certain s(he) is (modality, etc.)
2. To express information
3. The first constituent in the clause plays a relevant function in the connectivity of the text: what is this text about?

Discourse Analysis

Language in Use

D.A. deals with language in context, linking the text/utterance with its social situation.

1960s and 1970s out of work in different disciplines: linguistics, psychology, anthropology, sociology.

Contribution of semiotics and the French structuralist approach to the study of narrative.

Dell Hymes: speech in social settings (1964);

Language as social action: speech-act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), conversational maxims (Grice, 1975), pragmatics, i.e. the study of meaning in context (Levinson, 1983; Leech, 1983).

Discourse Analysis

Language in Use

Every day we encounter or take part in a wide range of different types of spoken interactions….

Each situation has its own conventions and formulae, different role relationships, different purposes and different settings.

Discourse analysis is interested in all the above creating a fundamental distinction between:

LANGUAGE FORMS (grammatical, lexical, phonological) and

DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS (what we do with the language)

Discourse Analysis

2- Communication

Proposition (we talk about something)

Reference (we make a connection with context)

Examples: *His flight should be here any minute.*

I'm on my way

What are we communicating?

Speech Act Theory (John Austin 1962, John Searle 1969)



Locutionary Act
Illocutionary Force
Perlocutionary Effect

"Is there any salt?"

In uttering the locution "Is there any salt?" at the dinner table, one may thereby perform the distinct **locutionary act** of uttering the interrogatory sentence about the presence of salt, as well as the **illocutionary act** of requesting salt (**illocutionary force of request**), and the further **perlocutionary effect** of causing somebody to hand one the salt.

Discourse Analysis

2- Communication

Speech Act Theory (John Austin 1962, John Searle 1969)

Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Example (after a dinner with friends):

Man: Let's have coffee at our place

Wife: You're working tomorrow……

This is an *indirect speech act*. The wife could have expressed the same message with a *direct speech* act:

Man: Let's have coffee at our place

Wife: I am tired, I want to go to sleep

Discourse Analysis

2- Communication

Speech Act Theory (John Austin 1962, John Searle 1969)

Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Direct Speech Act: grammatical form and communicative function (i.e. illocutionary force) correspond.

Indirect Speech Act: grammatical form and communicative function do not correspond.

Is there any salt??

Other examples (requests and proposals):

- Would you like to meet for a coffee? - I have class….
- Can you call Samantha?

Language microfunctions (1)

- Language is used to reach diverse purposes
- J. Austin (1962) speech acts:

➢ Locutionary – literal meaning

➢ Illocutionary – communicative force

➢ Perlocutionary – effect/reaction in the addressee/recipient

Language functions (2)

- Searle's (1969, 1976) taxonomy of speech acts (microfunctions):

Speech Acts	**Purpose**	**Types**
Representatives	representation	Stating, telling, insisting
Expressives	stance	Deploring, admiring
Verdictives	assessment	Assessing, estimating
Directives	ask for action on the receiver's part	Ordering, requesting, warning, prohibiting, daring
Commissives	commitment	Promising, vowing, pledging
Declarations	declaration	Blessing, baptizing, dismissing

Language Macrofunctions
Jakobson's act of verbal communication

CONTEXT

ADDRESSER MESSAGE ADDRESSEE

CONTACT

CODE

Aspects of the discourse situation ->

≠ macrofunctions of language and

≠ structures

Macrofunctions (Jakobson 1960)

	REFERENTIAL	
EMOTIVE	POETIC	CONATIVE
	PHATIC	
	METALINGUAL	

- Emotive f.: internal states and emotions of the addresser (1st p. *I*, interjections, personal style)
- Conative f.: aims at influencing the internal states and emotions of the addressee (2nd p. *you*, vocative & imperative
- Referential f.: informative function (3rd p., objects, events, facts in the context; nominalisation, premodification, passives, stative verbs; less formal, 1st p.p. & dynamic active verbs)

- Poetic f.: aesthetic f., the form of the message (sound-effect, rhythm, figurative language, phonological resemblance) as a crucial part of the message meaning & force
- Examples: political slogans, ads, sayings.
- Phatic f.: sets contact between the addresser and the addressee (opening and checking the channel of communication)
- Examples: Can you hear me?, Well, here we are. I see.
- Metalingual f.: “attention on the code to clarify or re-negotiate it” (Ulrich 29), e.g. *what do you mean?*

Therefore…

- Close to text types & discourse genres
- Writer's communicative purpose
- Although multifunctional, one predominant function & typology

✓ **Emotive (expressive) function** -> author-centred (author's feelings)

- Characterised by: author's personal style + idiosyncrasies
- Ex.: literary texts, autobiographies, speeches, author's prefaces, personal correspondence

- ✓ **Referential (informative) function** -> content-centred (information provided)
- Not the author's feelings but the content
- Ex.: textbooks, technical reports, scientific articles
- ✓ **Conative (vocative) function** -> reader-centred (affecting the reader's behaviour)
- Ex.: Advertising, propaganda, official recommendations, polemical & persuasive writing
- Use of lg geared towards the receiver
- Use of formality in addressing people: you < tu, Lei, loro

Read

- Widdowson 2007, Chapter 1: pp. 3-10
- Ulrich 1992, pp. 32-51

