FACOLTÀ DI STUDI UMANISTICI

Lingue e Comunicazione

Lingue e culture per la mediazione linguistica

# Lingua Inglese 2

LESSON 2

Prof.ssa Olga Denti

a.a. 2026-2027



# What is a text?

# Discourse Analysis

## Language in Use

British D.A. was greatly influenced by the work of M.A.K Halliday's functional approach to language (1973). His framework emphasizes the social functions of language and the thematic and informational structure of speech and writing

D.A. is interested in the relationship between discourse forms (grammatical, lexical, phonological) and discourse functions.

Forms are the RAW materials which enable students to use language FUNCTIONALLY.

A **text** is "language that is functional", that is to say …….

"language that is doing some job in some context" (Halliday in Halliday & Hasan, 1985/ 1989: 10).

A text is a unit of language being used; it is not simply a grammatical unit, but a form of exchange, not a unit of form but of meaning, it is a dialogue, a meaning-creation interaction among speakers. (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 1-2, 1989: 11)

# Text & Context

- Language is influenced by dynamic elements present in its socio-cultural context: participants in the speech act, topic & setting (together with the addressee's goal & communicative purposes)

# Context

- A frame of reference
- How should we interpret “He delivered a punch?”
- Disambiguation of textual elements as crucial to understand the whole text
- Co-text: con-text, the context of words and sentences that go with the text, an interrelationship and interaction between sentence elements, the linguistic context

- Context of situation: the extra-linguistic context, the total environment beyond the text
- Example: ALT – Halt or Stop? Same function of the text (warning, injunction) but diverse context and thus diverse translation
- Malinowski (1923) – a study on a group of a South Pacific islanders: intimate links to cultural background – how to render them in English? Free translation, literal translation, translation w/ commentary -> texts w/in their environment, -> immediate situation + cultural background

In this functional perspective, a text is therefore always seen as being strictly related to:

1- its **Context of Situation**, which is defined as the immediate social and situational environment in which a text is being realized,

2- the **Context of Culture** which is the 'outer', more external, or 'higher-order' context surrounding both the text and its specific Context of Situation.

(Malinowski 1923)

# Context of culture

- Awareness of cultural differences and similarities
- Culture: the personal development, the knowledge of a country's history & institutions, the sociolinguistic & anthropological sense: socially conditioned aspects of human life (Ulrich 71)
- The definition of the Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Semiotics (Sebeok 1986 in Ulrich 71)

“Culture is the totality of the signifying systems by means of which mankind, or a particular group, maintains its cohesiveness (its values and identity and its interaction with the world). These signifying systems comprise not only all the arts (literature, cinema, theatre, painting, music, etc.), the various social activities and behaviour patterns prevalent in the given community (including gesture, dress, manners, rituals, etc.), but also the established methods by which the community preserves its memory and its sense of identity (myths, history, legal systems, religious beliefs, etc.)”

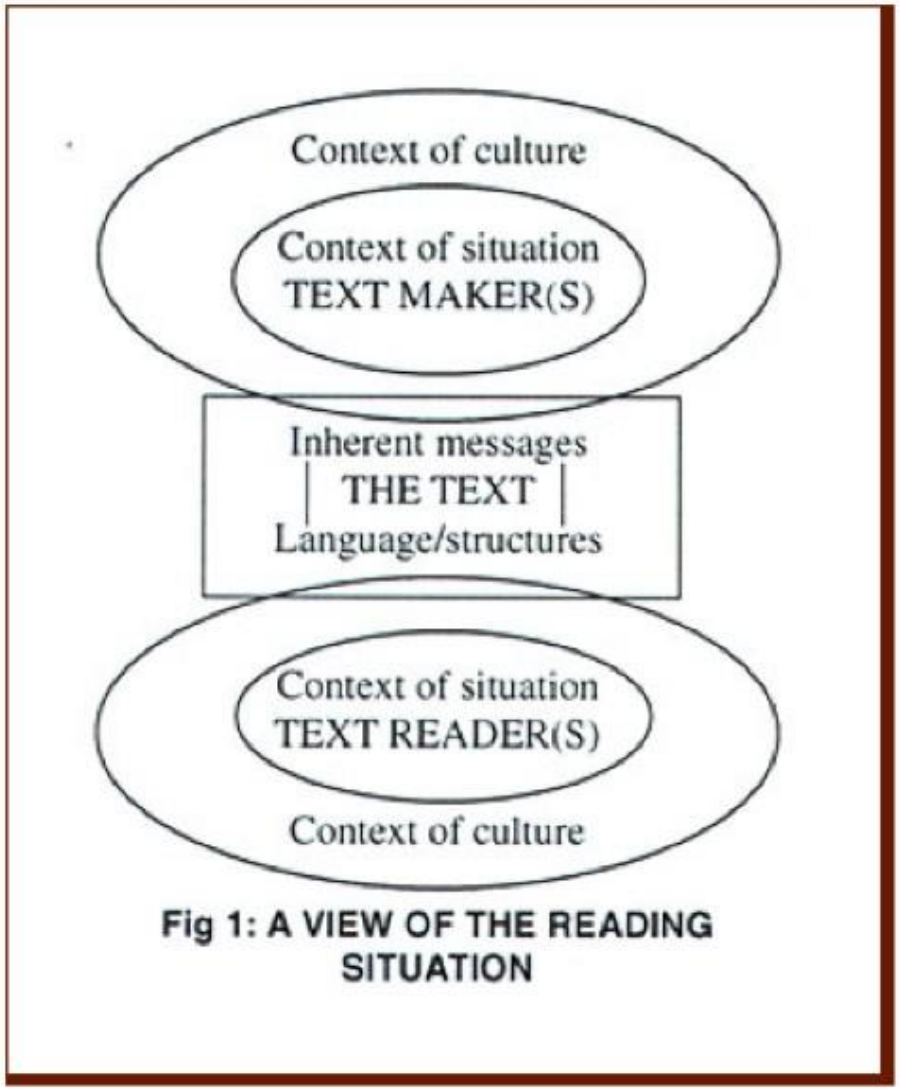



**Fig 1: A VIEW OF THE READING SITUATION**

A **text**, therefore, is basically made of meanings that, in order to be communicated, need to be encoded and expressed through a system of graphic, phonic or visual signs. As a thing in itself, it is **a consistent semantic unit**.

A text is both an object, a product of its environment, of its **Context of Situation** and **Context of Culture**, and an instance of social meaning in a specific situation.

The relation between **text** and **context** is a systematic and dynamic one:

- on the one hand, **a text is the result of the context** in which it is being realized and where language is being shaped to function purposefully;

- on the other hand, a context is then realized in turn by the text: **through a text a context is being created**.

(Halliday in Halliday & Hasan, 1985/ 1989: 10-11).

## Context of Situation

zLanguage use/context of situation: J.R. Firth (1950s-1960s) -> linguistics as the study of meaning in terms of how lg functions in context

zVariables: the participants, the verbal and non-verbal action, other features, the effect of the verbal action

Context of Situation is seen as being comprised of 3 components, or values, or contextual dimensions of variation (contextual configuration, Halliday & Hasan 1985):

**Field, Tenor and Mode** (a set of values), or, respectively:

**FIELD:** what is going on?

**TENOR:** who is taking part?

**MODE:** how are the meanings being exchanged?

# Register

- Halliday: language as the exchange of meanings in interpersonal contexts
- Language, a part of the social system and therefore subject to two types of variation: according to the user – in accent, dialect, not entailing variation in meaning, and according to the use, which causes variation in meaning.
- Register variation, whereas with register he meant language spoken at a particular time, influenced by what the participants are doing there and by the ongoing social activity

- Through register we relate the functions of language – ideational, interpersonal and textual – with those aspects of the situation in which it is being used, the structure of its context – the field of discourse, the roles of tenors, and the mode of communication.
- Different things and meanings according to the social activity
- Registers tend to reflect conventionally-accepted types of discourse, which mainly differ in grammar & vocabulary

**Field, Tenor and Mode**.

**Field** – the nature of the ongoing social speech event and its subject matter, what is being spoken about;

**Tenor** – the human participants in the interaction and the relationship between them, involving their status and discourse roles, as well as the attitude they take towards the subject matter and their interlocutors,

**Mode** – the way that language is functioning in the interaction, which involves a series of features such as the degree to which the process of interaction is shared by the interlocutors, its 'channel', its 'medium' etc.

(see Halliday & Hasan, 1985/ 1989: 12)

# The field of discourse

- What (event, activity), what the participants are doing w lg (in space & time), what (the subject-matter) & what the participants know about it (shared/unshared knowledge)

-> technical, scientific, legal, institutional registers

- Identification of the field of discourse through lexis & grammar

# Field

- **Field:** what the text is about **(**science, education, war, medicine, sports, linguistics, tourism, and each one could be better detailed).
- Moreover,
  - specialised vs. non-specialised (the vocabulary specific to the field, or the vocabulary is common to other fields)
  - Specialised vocabulary used in other fields but with a different meaning in the current field (e.g., a “constituent” in politics means member of a political unit, in linguistics a syntactic unit)

# Field parameters

The ideational metafunction

- Experiential domain: types of texts
- Goal orientation: general v in-detail orientation towards categories of readers (websites v travel guides), when, where, how
- Social activity: a general or a particular reader

# The tenor

- The role relationship between the participants in the communicative event -> level of lg formality < social situation & status of the participants
- Joos's levels of formality (1961):

➢ Frozen (set phrases, conventional structures, wording, rhetoric, intonation/large audiences)

➢ Formal (speaker/audience relationship, no interaction/interruption)

➢ Consultative (interaction: business, doctor-patient)

➢ Casual (friends/social group, work, informal settings, colloquialism, interruptions)

➢ Intimate (family, close friends)

# Tenor

- **Tenor**: relationship between participants

➢ **Power relations:**

- Unequal: father/daughter, doctor/patient, teacher/student
- Equal: friend/friend, student/student

– **Formality:** formal/informal

- Informal: I handed my essay in kinda late coz my kids got sick.
- Formal: The reason for the late submission of my essay was the illness of my children.

– **Closeness:** distant/neutral/close

# Tenor

The interpersonal metafunction

Three role relationships:

- Agentive roles ("we have experienced for you…"; "never forget to …"; "do not let yourself be lured by …"; "for the tourists we are …")
- Social roles
- Social distance

➢ "Things change (…) nothing stays the same. So, if you find things better or worse, recently opened or long-since closed, please tell us and help make the next edition even more accurate and useful." (*Lonely Planet 2003: 8)*

- Websites

- The dialogic dimension: “all language use is dialogic” and “writers engage in ‘inner dialogues’ in the process of planning, writing and editing text” (Bondi 1999: 40)
- Relationships built within the text, around the text (cultural and political orientation) or represented in the text (the use of personal pronouns)

➢ “HelloSardinia.com allows *you to organise your dream holiday from the comfort of your desk.”, “Would you like to …”; “The 7 regions presented for you here are … (www.hellosardinia.com).*

- "for the tourists *we are…*"
- "All of a sudden *we see again before us the terrifying …" (Insight Guide 2001: 117), "We recommend visits to…"* (www.hellosardinia.com)
- HelloSardinia.com is a unique reference tool for the "conscious" tourist, for those people who wish to embark on an intelligent holiday, a journey into a new culture and traditions, as well as for those who are simply looking for relaxation in the idyllic setting of the island with a thousand faces, Sardinia. (www.hellosardinia.com)

- "Where can <u>you</u> find transparent seas and uncrowded beaches, and spectacular Wild West landscapes dotted with hundreds of Bronze Age castles?" (*Cadogan Guide, 2003: 12)*

- Use of pronouns, interrogatives and imperatives, exhortative and laudatory lexis
- Metadiscourse (expressions employed to help readers organise, classify and evaluate propositions in the text, Bondi 1999): connectives, code glosses, action markers, modality markers, attitude markers and commentaries

- The use of Mr. with a Christian name
- Attitude & stance of the addresser
- Use of modality: modal verbs, adjectives, adverbs, nouns, verbs + hedging (caution)

➢ Modal verbs: **epistemic modality** (attitudes & opinions regarding the truth or reality of a proposition) v **deontic modality** (some kind of control over actions & events)

- It+passive+that-clause & personal subject+passive+ infinitive constructions. Ex. it has already been claimed that they will improve v they have already been claimed to improve

- Writer’s stance (assertive, tentative, committed, detached) expressed through attitudinal adverbs: admittedly, certainly, evidently, doubtfully, fortunately, frankly, obviously, naturally, surely, surprisingly, etc…

# Mode

- The textual metafunction: language roles in the interaction
- The relationship between text and images
- Textual and typographical features: who chooses?
- Intertextuality

# Mode

- **Mode: what part the language is playing in the interaction**
  - **Role:** Ancillary (language accompanying non-verbal activity, as when we talk as we cook together) or constitutive (the event is defined by the language, as in a speech).
  - **Channel:** written vs. spoken, or a combination
- Projected channel: where the actual channel is not the intended channel: 'written to be spoken' (e.g., a speech), 'spoken as if written' (e.g., reciting)

- **Directionality:** uni-directional channel or bi-directional (unidirectional allows only monologue, while a bi-directional channel allows dialogue)
- **Media:** +/-visual contact (e.g., visual for a telephone conversation); use of multimedia (blackboard, powerpoint, etc.)
- **Preparation:** spontaneous vs. prepared; rushed vs. time for reflection

# Example

- A recipe in a cook book
- Field: cooking (ingredients and process for preparing food
- Tenor: expert writer to learner, learner is beneficiary of the advice
- Mode: written, prepared. Text often read as part of a process of cooking

# Prehistoric Sardinia



**Bronze figure from Teti-Abini**

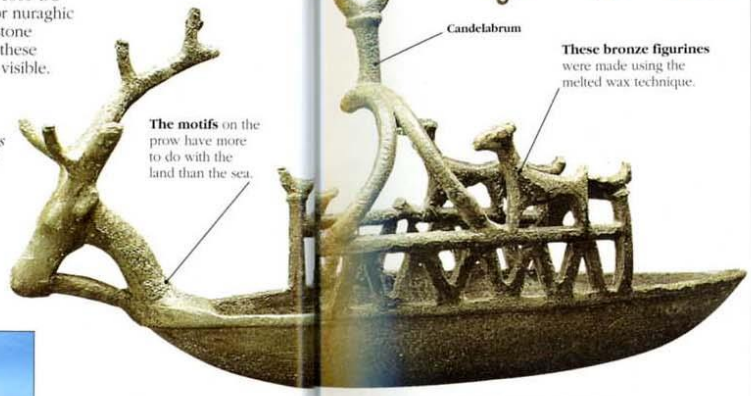
ALTHOUGH SOME stone tools found at Perfugas show that Sardinia was inhabited from the Paleolithic period (150,000 years ago), it was only around 9000 BC that the island began to be settled by populations from Asia Minor, the African coasts, the Iberian peninsula and Liguria. The fertile, mineral-rich land and the obsidian mines at Monte Arci were a major factor in the island's prosperity. By around 3000 BC the Sardinians had grouped into tribes. They lived in villages with thatched-roof huts and buried their dead in rock-cut tombs called *domus de janas* (house of fairies). By about 1800 BC this rural society had evolved into the warrior nuraghic civilization, who built thousands of circular stone towers *(nuraghi)* across the island. Many of these remarkable prehistoric constructions are still visible.



**Necklace with Tusk**
*This ornament was found in a tomb dating from 2000–1800 BC, the bell-shaped pottery era.*



**Earthenware**
*These jugs and vases were everyday objects used to store water and grain.*



**The motifs** on the prow have more to do with the land than the sea.



**Monte d'Accoddi ruins**
*These traces reveal the ruins of a tiered, terraced construction, probably a temple, dating from the 3rd millennium BC. It looked remarkably similar to the famous ziggurat temples of Mesopotamia and the Aztec pyramids.*

## TIMELINE



*Obsidian arrowhead*



*A typical example of* domus de janas

**6000 BC** Sardinian peoples make tools and weapons from the obsidian found at Monte Arci

6000 BC — 4000 BC



*Boar tusk, an ornament from the early Neolithic period*

**4000–3000 BC** The age of the Bonu Ighinu culture – small communities living by raising sheep and goats. Distinctive, high quality grey pottery with incised decoration is produced



**Bronze Artifacts from Abini**
*These spears were part of a hoard of 100 kg (220 lb) of objects hidden in large clay vessels, perhaps to conceal them from the Roman invaders.*





**Candelabrum**

**These bronze figurines** were made using the melted wax technique.

## EX VOTO WITH DEER MOTIF

This ex voto lamp in the shape of a ship was one of 70 or so found at Is Argiolas near Bultei. It dates from the 8th–7th centuries BC, and is now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Cagliari. In the nuraghic age, Sardinians had a love-hate relationship with the sea, which ended with the arrival of the Carthaginians, Romans and later conquerors, who forced the local inhabitants to live in the interior.

## WHERE TO SEE PREHISTORIC SARDINIA

Pre-nuraghic ruins include a ziggurat at Monte d'Accoddi and rock-cut tombs *(domus de janas)* at Pranu Muteddu (Goni). Nuraghic villages survive at Su Nuraxi *(see pp64–5)*, Serra Òrrios *(see p84)*, Tiscali *(see pp104–5)* and Abini. Burial chambers, or "Tombs of Giants", can be seen at places such as Sa Ena 'e Thomes, and holy wells can be visited at Santa Cristina (Paulilàtino) and Santa Vittoria (Serri).



**The nuraghic village of Serra Òrrios** *is one of the best preserved in Sardinia. It consisted of about 70 dwellings* (see p84).



***The Montessu necropolis*** *houses* domus de janas *of the Ozieri pre-nuraghic era.*



*Replica of the goddess Mater Mediterranea of Senorbì*

**3000 BC** Era of Ozieri or San Michele culture. Villages are established throughout the island and the dead are buried in the *domus de janas*

**1800 BC** Rise of nuraghic civilization, characterized by truncated cone-shaped buildings erected at the edges of upland plateaus

**1000 BC** Phoenician ships moor along coast

3000 BC — 2000 BC — 1000 BC



*Dolmen at Luras*

**2000–1800 BC** Civilization known for its bell-shaped pottery. Rectangular or round dwellings constructed

**1500 BC** The first simple forms of nuraghe appear



*The Santa Barbara nuraghe at Macomer*

ESIT - Ente Sardo Industrie Turistiche - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Modifica Visualizza Preferiti Strumenti ?

Indietro Cerca Preferiti Multimedia

Indirizzo http://www.esit.net Vai Collegamenti

Sardegna Ente Sardo Industrie Turistiche

Created by

Mail

# aSeaofTradition



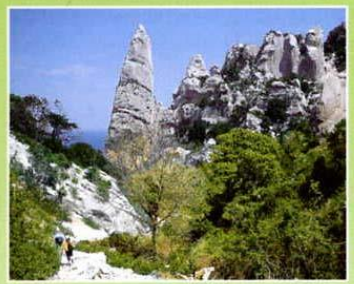
home

Festivals

aSeaofHolidays
aSeaofGreen
aSeaofCulture
aSeaofTradition
aSeaofSport
aSeaofMeetings
aSeaofNews

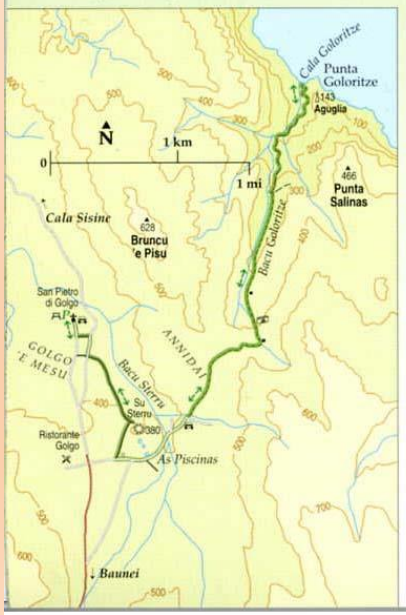
Operazione completata

Internet





*Top: the Aguglia, a rock pinnacle above Cala Goloritze, popular with rock climbers; above: the idyllic setting of As Piscinas*




**MUSIC**

Sardinian music appears archaic and elaborate at the same time; strange harmonies of voices and changes in tempo are typical. Its floating approach and dying away and different kind of tonality appear very alien to our ears.

Some songs are accompanied by *launèddas*, a woodwind instrument with three pipes. A lamenting recitative underlined by the sound of *launèddas*, with its mixture of droning, humming and rattling sounds appears very strange to us. The instrument must have been in use thousands of years ago on Sardinia, as it is depicted on a Nuragic bronze statuette.

Learning to play the *launèddas* requires hard training, in which breathing technique is essential: the player breathes through the nose and uses the mouth as an air reservoir in order to create a constant air stream. The *launèddas* make intonation in several voices possible, although this was not yet known in classical antiquity. The large bass pipe *(su tumbu)* serves as an organ point, whereas the two other smaller pipes *(sa mankosa* and *sa mankoseddu)* supply a melodic accompaniment above the bass tone. The greatest challenge of a *launèddas* player is to fill a simple repertoire of melodic phrases *(sas nodas)* with his own variations.



Turn your back to the entrance gate of the enclosure and go straight back in the direction from where you came by car. After about 100m/yds, go through the GATE in the stone wall and turn left. Turn right at the next fork, ignoring the signposted left turn to Cala Sisine, and follow the wide dirt road. Leave it after less than 200m/yds, where tracks fork off on both sides, and turn left. Goats and half-wild pigs roam around freely here. The countryside is dotted with pear trees which produce delicate white blossoms early in April.

Less than ten minutes later you reach a fork. Ignore the track rising to the right for the moment (you will be taking it later) and keep left on the level track for about 50m/yds, to reach the gaping cavity of **Su Sterru** (also called Voragine di Golgo; **15min**). For safety reasons, this 300m/yds deep abyss is fenced in. Do *not* climb over the perimeter fence — there is sheer drop down into the abyss, concealed by bushes! (The cross here testifies to a fatal accident.)

Return to the fork, now turning left uphill. Soon you meet a T-junction and turn left. Almost immediately you pass a STONE PEN on the left. Hidden between dark basalt rocks, small pools (**As Piscinas**) can be seen between the trees and bushes on the left — an idyllic spot in spring. Reach a wide track junction in an open area and follow the track to the left. Stay ahead on this main track past several turns on the right, but bear right when you reach a Y-fork. After about 100m/yds the track leads to a small open space covered with gravel and used as a CAR PARK (**30min**). Follow the track through this space to the far end, but leave it after about 25m/yds, on a bend to the right (by a boulder with the inscription 'GOLORITZE'): climb the clear path here that begins to thread through the *macchia*.

After 20 minutes of climbing you cross the ridge of **Annidai** (**50min**). The path continues to wind more or less at an even contour through the *macchia*. Among the many plants are *Phillyrea*, mastic trees, strawberry trees and rock-roses *(Cistus monspeliensis)*. Soon rocks come into sight on the right, with a SHEPHERDS' SHELTER built into the side of them (**1h**). The path gradually begins to descend and you get a first glimpse of the sea. A sheer rock face flanks the left-hand side of the **Bacu Goloritze** ravine as you walk down. Pass another SHEPHERDS' SHELTER built into a rock. Ancient holm oaks of imposing size dot the landscape, specimens that were spared by the charcoal burners in the 19th century.

An old and crumbling stone-laid charcoal burners' trail joins from the right. Follow it as it winds down into the ravine. Further down the **Aguglia** comes into sight. Rising

Read:
pp. 69-71, 83-96 Ulrich 1992
Chapters 1, 3 and 4 Widdowson 2007