

A low-angle photograph of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, reaching towards a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The sun is visible near the base of the tower, creating a lens flare effect. The tower's intricate iron lattice structure is clearly visible.

# *Discourse and Pragmatics*

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March 4, 2013.

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# What is pragmatics?

- Pragmatic is 'the study of meaning in relation to the context in which a person is speaking or writing'.
- Co-operative principle
- Cross-cultural pragmatics
- The relationship between linguistic form and communicative function is of central interest to Pragmatic (Paltridge, 2006,p. 53)



# Language, context and discourse

- The role of context situation: physical context, the social context, the mental worlds and the role of people in the interaction. e.g. two people's talk in the restaurant
- A number of key aspects: situational context, background knowledge context, co-textual context, discourse community.



# Speech act and discourse

- Austin (1962) How to things with words
- Searle (1969) Speech Act
- Austin & Searle = language is used to do 'things' other than just true or false statement
- They argue that we perform physical acts, we also perform acts by using language.



# Conts...

- That is we use language to give orders, to make requests, to give warning or advice, => to do 'things' that go beyond the literal meaning.
- Proportional content, illocutionary force.
- Austin = locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act e.g. Bus driver:  
This bus won't move until you boys move in out of the doorway





# Direct and Indirect speech act

- Direct speech act: the utterance means exactly what one says
- Indirect speech act: speaker's intention is sth quite different from the literal meaning.  
e.g. this room's a real mess



# Felicity conditions and discourse

- Felicity conditions = a required number of conditions for speech act to work
- Austin argues that felicity conditions must be carried out correctly and completely
- Necessary terms: felicitous, misfire, abused.



# Rules versus principles

- Searle argues that felicity conditions are ‘constitutive rules’=>pragmatic use of language is rule governed.
- Thomas (1995) prefers “principles” against ‘constitutive rule’.
- Thomas argues: rules = all or nothing, yes or no, clearly, one rule precludes another rule, exclusive, definite **while** principle = more or less, partially, fairly clearly, co-occur, probabilistic.





# Presupposition and discourse

- Presupposition = common ground that is assumed to exist between language users.
- Two kinds of presupposition: conventional (grammar) and pragmatic presupposition (context).e.g.
- CP: would you like some coffee?
- PP: see. p.61.



# The Cooperative and discourse

- Grice (1975) 'Logic and conversation'.
- Four maxims: quality, quantity, relation (relevant) and manner.
- Unsure? Use ***metadiscourse*** (Hyland, 2005b) e.g. 'I may be mistaken, but...', 'may be'



# Flouting the cooperative principles

- See page.64.
- e.g. student and librarian
- e.g. Chinese and American student
- the speakers purposely do not adhere the maxims due to certain conditions.



# Flouting vs violating maxims

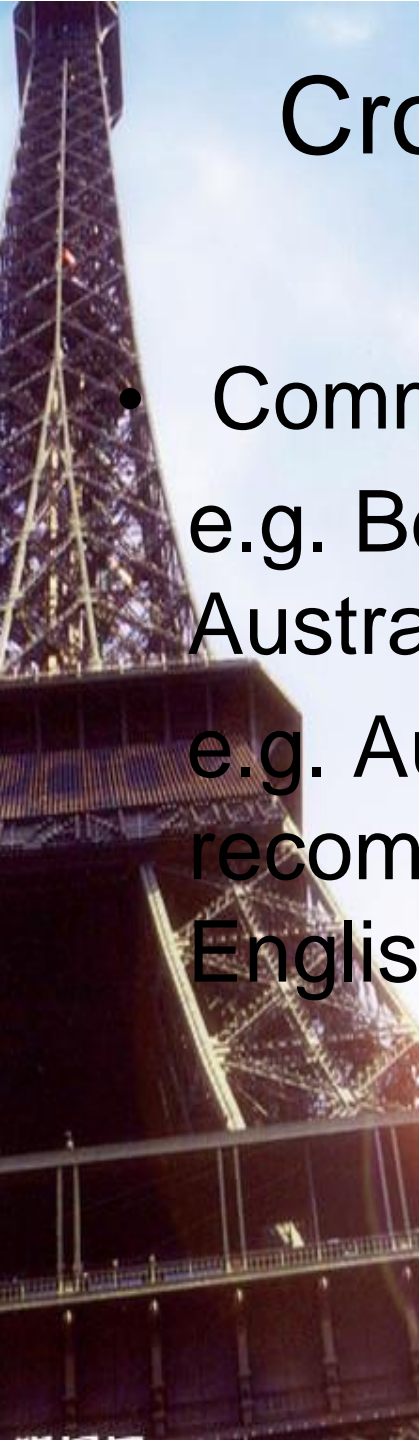
- Flouting = the speaker does not observe a maxim but has no intention of deceiving or misleading the other person.
- Violating = there is a likelihood that a speaker is liable to mislead the other person.
- ‘infringe maxim’? => linguistic capacity
- ‘opt-out maxim’? => breaches a confidentiality agreement



# Overlap between maxims

- an utterance may be both unclear and longwinded, flouting the maxims of quality and quantity at the same time (Cutting, 2002) e.g. the thief of an eyeliner in courtroom interaction.





# Cross-cultural pragmatic and discourse

- Communication across cultures.  
e.g. Beal (1992) How are you? Between Australian and French.  
e.g. Austin (1998) Letters of recommendation in academic setting (in English and in Japanese)



# Cross-cultural pragmatics

- “studies which investigate the cross cultural use of speech act”.
- e.g. “thanks” in English = we feel sth good toward them because of sth good they have done and we want them to be good in return.
- e.g. “sorry” in Japanese means “thank you”.  
Thanking = ‘a debt not yet paid calls for an apology from the debtor’. Apology = one way of expressing indebtedness, and thanking someone. (Cameron, 2001; Wierzbicka, 2003).



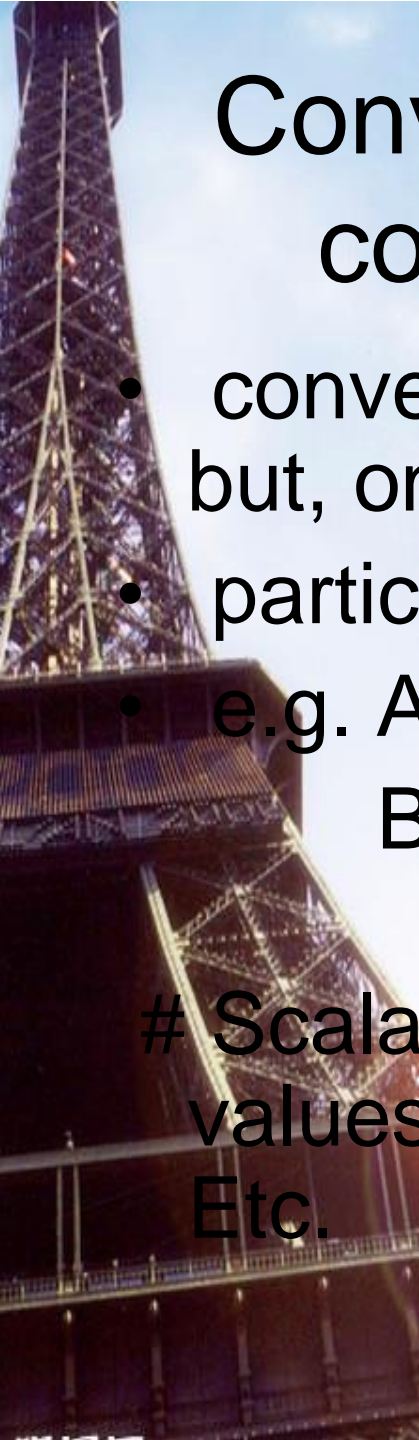
# Conts...

- Pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic (Leech, 1983)
- Cross-cultural pragmatic failure (Thomas, 1983): sociopragmatic and pragmalinguistic failure.
- e.g. Sociopragmatic failure: a foreign manager criticizing a Thai worker in front of their colleagues
- e.g. Pragmalinguistic failure: 'I killed my son, it is my fault', a Korean immigrant was sentenced 20 years in prison in US.



# Conversational implicature and discourse

- ‘There’s nothing on at the movies’
- Implicature vs inference
- a maxim might be flouted because of a clash with another maxim (see p.70-71).



# Conventional and particularized conversational implicatures

- conventional implicatures: e.g. anyway, but, on the other hand, yet, etc
- particularized conversational implicature:
  - e.g. A: You're out of coffee  
B: Don't worry there's a shop on the corner

# Scalar implicature: expressions of scale of values e.g. all, most, something, nothing. Etc.





# Politeness, face and discourse

- Lakoff (1973) three maxims of politeness:
- ‘don’t impose’, ‘give options’, and ‘make your hearer feel good’
- E.g. see page 72-73.
- *Involvement and independence in spoken and written discourse.*
- *choosing a politeness strategy*



# Face and Politeness across cultures

- Gu (1990) Politeness in Chinese is not psychological want but rather social norms. Face is threatened when one fails to live up social standards.
- Japanese politeness is less strategic and more a matter of socially obligatory linguistic choices through which social harmony is achieved (Eelen, 2001).



## conts..

- Gift-giving rituals = a positive politeness strategy in English or involvement strategy
- Japanese indirectness is a sign of intimacy
- e.g. p.75.



# Politeness and gender

- ‘Hello gorgeous’ = can be positive and negative
- Politic verbal behaviour (Watt, 2003). The insults, critiques etc are the discourse expectations of a good parliamentary speaker regardless of gender (in UK context)
- So? Politeness and gender vary across context



# FTA, Politeness and Cross-cultural Pragmatic Failure

- fta: see.student librarian
- Mitigation devices (Fraser, 1980)
- Off record speech act.

e.g. A: I'm dying for a drink

B: Yes, it's really hot isn't it?

# Politeness = varies across cultures

# A lack of understanding of politeness strategies in different languages and cultures => cross cultural pragmatic failure.





# Conts...

- Politeness: culture and language specific.
- Pragmatic competence of L2 speakers are crucial parts of discourse and communicative competence (Kasper, 1997).



# Data Analysis Project: page 80-81.

- Do no 1 up to no.4
- Each number: 300 – 400 words.
- Use references: more than three
- Using APA style
- Make sure to have “voice” in your writing.
- Due: Next Week’s Meeting.



# Notes on Project

- Use one/two/three/four texts for your analysis no.1 up to no.4., if you think that 1 text is enough/appropriate to do four numbers then it is ok just to have one. BUT. If one text is not appropriate for four different analyses, then use more texts, may be four.

## *Reference*

*Paltridge, B. (2006). Discourse Analysis. London: Continuum.*

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