

Lecture 6.1

1.11 discourse linguistics

It's important not to confuse the use of the term 'text linguistics' with the new use of 'text' which arrived in relation to short messaging services. Text linguistics is not the study of text-messaging – though mobile phone texts could form part of that study.

3.01 earlier on today

In Lecture 2.2, 27.24. My expression is not good: the examples there are actually of words, not clauses – the adverbial sentence connectors – but any could be expanded into a parenthetical phrase or clause. For example, 'nevertheless' could become 'despite what I've just said'.

3.43 like

'Like' in informal conversation has two chief functions. 'Quotative like', as it's technically called, is illustrated by 'So it was like anybody there?' It's the equivalent of quotation marks around the words following the 'like' (hence the term). 'Emphatic like' is illustrated by 'So it was like three o'clock'. It's equivalent to using italics or bold face to draw attention to an expression. These uses aren't meaningless or random. They've certainly increased in frequency in recent years among young (and some not so young) people, and overuse of any word is always likely to cause irritation, but there's nothing especially new about it. A parenthetical use of 'like' meaning 'as it were' or 'so to speak' has an earliest recorded use in *The Oxford English Dictionary* of 1778.

6.09 friend

The interpolation prompts the interpretation that John's 'friend' is more than just a friend, but has a special relationship with him.

7.20 Plain English

Information about the Plain English Campaign in the UK can be found at:

David Crystal's Introduction to Language

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<<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk>>.

Its gobbledygook generator is at:

<<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/examples/gobbledygook-generator.html>>.

The movement for plain language also has an international presence:

<<http://www.plainlanguagenetwork.org>>.

7.33 political correctness

For an account of the history and present state of political correctness, see:

<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=TDi-l-bsBZoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=political+correctness+geoffrey+hughes&source=bl&ots=atfZluoM3S&sig=WUmNz9Njr-TxPt_rhhg0jBshT-A&hl=en&ei=XSPhTM6tINC2hAeqq8SnDQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false>.

9.14 aesthetic factors

The study of the aesthetics of sound is called 'phonaesthetics'. An illustration from English can be found at:

<http://www.davidcrystal.com/DC_articles/English51.pdf>.

9.36 the fonts that are available

A discussion of the aesthetic properties of fonts in relation to web design can be found at:

<http://www.typographicwebdesign.com/pdfs/aesthetics_twd.pdf>.

10.56 prescriptivism

I'm talking about all language attitudes learned at school, not just the examples of prescriptive teaching I give in the lecture: split infinitives (the avoidance of such constructions as 'to boldly go'), ending sentences with prepositions ('That is the book I was talking about'), and sentence-initial conjunctions ('And God said ...'). It includes awareness of the value of language diversity, the nature of language variation and

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change, the need for linguistic tolerance, the role of linguistic terminology and analysis, and a realistic understanding of what is involved in such notions as correctness, appropriateness, clarity, and ambiguity. The operative word is 'realistic'. A blanket ban on sentence-initial 'and', for example, immediately excludes a significant part of the King James Bible.

12.34 and in that wardrobe it contains

I found myself conflating two sentence constructions here: 'in that wardrobe there are ...' and 'that wardrobe contains'.

13.00 the curriculum

The notion of appropriateness underlies a great deal of the thinking in the English component of the National Curriculum in the UK, as illustrated by the summary of attainment targets at:

<<http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-1-and-2/subjects/english/attainmenttargets/index.aspx>>.

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14.26 new manuscript discourses

The graphical conventions we associate with early manuscripts are explained at:

<<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/GlossA.asp>>.

14.32 that you see in print

There were, of course, books and sections in manuscript material. My point is that print gave a new form to these notions, and eventually added features not present before, such as page numbers and running heads. A sense of the huge variety of graphical conventions in printed material can be obtained from the British Library catalogue at:

<<http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelprestype/prbooks/earlyprintedcoll/index.html>>.

15.01 hello came in with the telephone

The word was around in the early 1800s, but was used very informally, often as a part of street slang. The more formal usage seems to have emerged when the telephone was invented. People had to have a way of starting a conversation or letting the other person know they were there, especially if they were using a line where the connection was always open. Various forms were suggested, such as 'Ahoy!', 'Are you there?', and 'Are you ready?', but Thomas Edison, the inventor of the telephone, evidently preferred 'Hello'. This was the word he shouted into the mouthpiece of his device when he discovered a way of recording sound in 1877. And there is a famous letter which he wrote to a colleague about the telephone saying 'I do not think we shall need a call bell as Hello! can be heard 10 to 20 feet away'. Within a decade, the women who were employed as the first telephone operators were being called 'hello girls'.

15.41 1991

For the origins of the World Wide Web in 1991, see:

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<<http://info.cern.ch>>.

15.49 first send an email

For most people, email did not become a routine reality until the mid-1990s, but the first email was actually sent as early as 1971, as described at:

<<http://inventors.about.com/od/estartinventions/a/email.htm>>.

15.56 blogging

The term 'weblog' was first used in 1997, but for most people blogging didn't become a reality until the advent of easy-to-use blogging software a few years later, as recounted at:

<<http://www.blogherald.com/2005/03/06/a-short-history-of-blogging>>.

16.03 that sort of period

For the history of instant messaging, see:

<<http://communication.howstuffworks.com/instant-messaging1.htm>>.

16.22 a few years before

For the history of text messaging, see:

<<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-text-messaging.htm>>.

17.00 prompt

The change in prompts is presented on the *Twitter* blog at:

<<http://blog.twitter.com/2009/11/whats-happening.html>>.

17.08 Stephen Fry

His tweet can be seen at:

<<http://twitter.com/stephenfry/status/1174476459>>.

Several newspapers carried accounts of the event at the time, such as:

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<<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/celebritynews/4518473/Stephen-Fry-posts-Twitter-updates-while-trapped-in-lift.html>>.

17.28 last November

This was November 2009.

18.14 more written language on the Internet

The scale of the phenomenon is illustrated by this news report:

<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/may/18/digital-content-expansion>>.

An IBM report from 2007 predicted a doubling every 11 hours:

<<http://www.zdnet.com/blog/btl/2010-data-doubling-every-11-hours/4497>>,

presumably chiefly as a result of increased audio and video use.

18.47 60%

In fact there is huge variation in the percentage of posts that are anonymous, depending on the genre and subject-matter, as this site illustrates:

<<http://people.dsv.su.se/~jpalme/society/anonymity.html>>.

22.14 text-messaging poems and text-messaging novels

The results of one of the first text-messaging poetry competitions are shown at:

<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2001/may/03/internet.poetry>>.

An extract from one text-messaging novel, in translated form, can be seen at:

<<http://chawedrosin.files.wordpress.com/2008/06/28.pdf>>.

24.47 little book on text messaging

This is my *Txtng: the Gr8 Db8* (Oxford University Press). The examples of equivalent strategies to the use of numerals for syllables in '2day' is seen in French 'k7' (= cassette), because the word for seven in French is *sept*, pronounced 'set'; Spanish 'sl2' for *saludos* (greetings), because the word for two in Spanish is *dos*; and German 'gn8' for *gute nacht* (good night), because the word for eight in German is *acht*.

26.26 humour doesn't translate well

Several examples are collected in Roger Axtell's book *Do's and Taboos of Humor Around the World*:

<<http://www.amazon.com/Dos-Taboos-Humor-Around-World/dp/0471254037%3FSubscriptionId%3DAKIAJBDG7KBQ6GC2X47A%26tag%3Deollleinfo-20%26linkCode%3Dxm2%26camp%3D2025%26creative%3D165953%26creativeASIN%3D0471254037>>.

26.40 can you pun

No language has yet been studied that does not have some form of word play. The problems of translating puns are illustrated on this site with an example from *Harry Potter*:

<<http://www.languagerealm.com/hplang/translatingpuns.php>>.

28.25 one brief example

The example is from online advertising. Some other applications are described at:

<http://www.davidcrystal.com/DC_articles/Internet18.pdf>

and also in my *Internet Linguistics: A Student Guide* (Routledge).

29.16 it can be sorted out

An example of a commercial application can be seen at:

<<http://www.isense.net>>.

The solution requires a semantic analysis of the entire content of a webpage.

29.56 *Through the Looking Glass*

The whole chapter can be read at:

<<http://www.sabian.org/Alice/lgchap06.htm>>.