

Lingua e traduzione inglese II

TEXT: a manifestation of a language, a unified unit of language which consists of smaller parts like phrases, clauses and sentences

According to Halliday's metafunction: *Ideational metafunction* (a language to represent our thoughts and experiences), *impersonal* (to represent social relationships) and *textual* (to create messages and texts)

Other elements: [*field* (what, what is happening, what is the topic?) *tenor* (who, who's part of the conversation and what's the relationship?) *mode* (how, how language is used, so which channel, medium, nature is embodied) → REGISTER or discourse type: complexity embodied by the elements in the text]

Text external approach: it focuses on characteristics as the audience, the authors, the nature between people

Text internal approach: it focuses on the linguistic aspect found in a text

Channel: aural texts (telephone conversations, podcasts), visual (narratives), audiovisual (films, face-to-face conversations)

Medium: written, spoken, written to be spoken (films, commercials, tv and radio news), multimodal (written + spoken + images)

Nature: monologic, dialogic, prepared or semi-prepared, spontaneous

Aim: the reason why the text is produced

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SPOKEN AND WRITTEN ENGLISH:

SPOKEN

Spontaneous, transient

Face-to-face, so shared content → pronouns, deictics vs ellipsis, vagueness (extensive expressions used when being too precise could be seen as bossy, this aspect is prevalent in formal context where information is softened, but it can also be created by adding --y) and hedges

Usage of paralinguistic features

Deixis and exophoric references → 1) using deictics, words with pointing functions, used to be linked to other elements in the texts or extralinguistic things

ENDOPHORIC: referred to the linguistic context

EXOPHORIC: referred to the extralinguistic context

ANAPHORIC: referred to something backward in the text

CATAPHORIC: referred to something forward

Interactive → direct questions, question tags, vocatives

Social, it reflects social relationships

Not pre-planned → syntactic fragmentation, add-on strategy or parataxis/ dysfluencies and filled pauses, false starts and hesitations/ discourse makers (empty words which unify the text), reduction and repetitions

Loose structure

Informal → colloquialisms and contraction

Utterances (intonation and pauses) and turns are important, coordination is the most common way to link information

Prosodic features like volume, pace, rhythm and stress

WRITTEN

Permanent

Addressed to an unknown audience

No immediate feedback

Endophoric references

Unidirectional

To record facts and develop fiction

Usually pre-planned

More structured, undergoes drafting

More formal, more Latinate terms

Sentences marked by punctuation which clarifies grammatical structures and ambiguities (creative p. can be very important instead); information expanded to the left using even a complex subordination

Graphic features to emphasise something or to add meaning (paragraphing, text layout, underlining etc.)

VERBS IN SPOKEN AND WRITTEN ENGLISH:

Tense: time at which an action takes place referring to the time of speaking

Aspect: way in which the action is expressed by the verb used (complete, ongoing, repeated?)

Common features of written English:

Sentence structure and complexity

Lexical density

Usually more formal vocabulary

More use of passive

According to the text types we can find: recurring formulae and set phrases (which can be translated like *once upon a time/ c'era una volta*), verb tenses and a specific vocabulary

Usage of linking words (on the contrary, then again, on the one hand...on the other one etc.)

TRANSLATION: FROM A SOURCE TEXT TO A TARGET TEXT USING:

Literal translation

Substitution (replacing elements)

Reduction (deleting elements)

Explicitation (adding elements)

Malone's strategies are made up of:

Equation (translating something literally, using also calques)

Substitution (provoking the same effect replacing elements)

Reordering

Reduction (omitting information)

Condensation (make a text shorter **without** omitting information at the semantic level)

Amplification (adding information even at the semantic level)

Diffusion (make a text larger **without** adding information or producing semantic changes)

Divergence: many options to choose between during a translation process (*target* can be translated using *bersaglio o obiettivo*)

Convergence: from many options in the ST you can choose only one option in the TT (*grandson, nephew* become only *nipote*)

Domesticating translation: when you bring a text closer to the TT's culture, so we talk about a target-oriented translation which familiarizes foreign terms

Foreignizing translation: when you keep the TT closer to its original, creating a source-oriented translation which preserves foreign elements

Even though we know spoken English is human specific and can be defined by a shared content, concrete noun, active voice, informal language and everyday vocabulary, we rely that can be a continuum between this and written texts (chats are written and do not consist of face-to-face conversations, but they take place in a shared context and are composed by pretty simultaneous interactions, sometimes written texts can also

embody features like dysfluency and fragmentation) → WRITTEN-TO-BE-SPOKEN genres (speeches, presentations, radio broadcasts and audiovisual texts as films and commercials)

Features:

Parallelism and repetition (by doing so a monologue seems memorable and iconic, it is also easier to remember) and metaphors, hyperboles

A different word order

Simple sentences referred directly to the audience and to the here and now (represented by the usage of the second person, by the verb tense, deictics)

AUDIOVISUAL TEXTS: mixed genres, indeed is spoken but planned → written English traits shown because of planning, spoken English traits may emerge due to the imitation of spontaneous English conversations

STORYTELLING:

Field: topic of the story

Tenor: story-teller and addressee

Mode: spoken medium, but narrative elements, audiovisual channel, bidirectional nature, no or little planning (films are the most planned, storytelling in conversation are the least)

Elements:

Abstract: signal that the story is about to begin

Orientation: contextualization of the story

Complicating action: what happens, what is interesting about the story

Evaluation: the point, why this story is being told

Coda: signal that the story is ending

Commenting

CONVERSATION:

Field: what we talk → phatic exchanges, small talk; why we talk → functions, conversational maxims and speech acts (what we do in conversation)

Tenor: who we are talking to, formality and politeness

Mode: how the conversation is structured → turn-by-turn structures, adjacency pairs, overlaps, how English is used → grammar of the conversation, selection of verb tenses

What we do: doing something beyond what we say, "saying" function and effect of the speech act

Locutionary act: produces a meaningful utterance

Illocutionary: produces a communicative intention

Perlocutionary: produces an effect

Types of acts (Searle)

Representatives: committing to the truth of proposition

Commissives: committing to an action

Directives: persuading others, changing other's actions

Expressives: expressing an attitude

Declarations: changing states of affairs

How to identify them:

Grammar → that-clauses

Modals

Emotionally-loaded-words

Speech acts and world/cultural knowledge

Various degrees of implicitness and explicitness

Indirect request to change other people's action

Indirect complaint to express an attitude

Statement to commit to the truth of a proposition

Structure:

Turn-taking

Adjacency pairs (preferred and dispreferred answers)

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE by Grice

Maxim of the quality: be truthful

M. of the quantity: don't talk too much long or for too little

M. of the manner: be clear

M. of the relevance: be relevant, stick to the point

Flouting: what is not said is implied or inferred, we can also find irony and metaphors which add vagueness

ENGLISH CONVERSATIONS:

Dysfluencies and incomplete utterances

Syntactic blends (grammatical incongruency)

The add-on strategy (adding elements to the right)

Prefaces and tags/tails elements that open and close the sentence

Topic-setting prefaces: heads, a specific type of fronting in which we have a noun phrase at the beginning of the sentence, whose subject is represented by something linked to the head, the tail is the opposite, due it is a noun phrase found at the end

Non-clausal units: clauses structured with no finite verb (*anything else, how about a movie*)

Ellipsis: omission of information from a conversation, usually because that is found in the context of the situation; they can also be divided in initial, medial and final ellipsis and they are usually fixed expressions (part of a language which is pre-formed and it cannot be changed, like as *a matter of fact*)

Lexical bundles: frozen patterns in conversation, chunks of words recurring together like collocations, binomials and idioms

Recurring sequence of three or four words (structure: usually pronoun + verb phrase, segments of interrogative or declarative clauses)

Many functions

LEXICAL BUNDLES ARE DIFFERENT FROM COLLOCATIONS ETC. BECAUSE THEY ARE OFTEN INCOMPLETE, THEY SHOWS GAPS THAT MUST BE FILLED (collocations are frequent combination of two or more words, binomials are collocations where two elements are connected through a linker, idioms are pre-constructed phrases, varying in transparency but often with a figurative meaning, so they are non-literal)

Examples of lexical bundles:

I don't know what...

...you know what...

I don't know whether...

Do you want me...

Not always translated literally:

Equivalent bundle in Italian: it's okay → è tutto ok

Creative translation because there is not the same formula

Reduction of a bundle

Addition of a new formula during the translation process

STRUCTURE:

Fronting: put an information at the beginning of the statement, before the subject, thus this element is not found where it should be

Dislocation: moving a noun phrase to the start or to the end of a clause, but making reference to this through a pronoun copy (allowed only in informal spoken E.), used to make it easier to remember long string of information, emphasize an informal conversation

Clefting: to break a sentence in two blocks using a pseudo-relative clause, adds focus (it-clefts: it's a raise I want, wh-clefts: what I want is a raise, reversed and demonstrative clefts: a raise is what I want)

The order causes focus and emphasis on something, it adds more weight and marks contrast

POLITENESS (one of the features described by Biber): application of social manners and convention which establishes a good communication, sometimes it is bound by the culture, because what is impolite in a culture cannot have the same value in another culture

Relatable to: directness and formality

Lower formality → higher familiarity and directness, lower social distance

Higher formality → be too direct can be considered impolite

Asymmetries between speakers: power relations, social distance (vocatives like honorifics, past tense, modal verbs, hedges-mitigators, indirect questions)

Face: being polite as the preservation of our and the interlocutor's face (public self-image everyone should maintain), so being polite means not to damage our and other's face

Positive: desire to like to be liked and accepted

Negative: desire for freedom of action

A Face Threatening Act is an act that tries to damage other people's face, so that person will use politeness to re-establish an optimal situation (a FTA is showing little or no care for the interlocutor's feelings or self-damaging like apologies as positive face, preventing other's people freedom and self-damaging like thanking and accepting an apology as negative)

General politeness markers: expressions which protect the addressee's face

Play-down: syntactic means to tone down the assertiveness of a speech act (for example using a past tense)

Hedges: being vague to leave options, not to appear too authoritative

Understaters and downtoners: lexical means to tone down the assertiveness, including adverbs

Committers: expressions which can show the degree of speaker's commitment to the proposition

Forewarning: warning the addressee that an FTA is going to happen

Hesitators: *ehm, erm* (which are also fillers) to open FTAs

Intensifiers: *terribly, indeed* to mark empathy

Vocative: low degree of syntactic integration in the sentence, it can be found in initial, medial and final position (noun, adjectives, pronouns, noun phrases like *lucky man*)

Categories like proper names, titles (Professor, Sir), kinship terms (mum), familiarizers (dude) terms of endearment (dear), insults

FUNCTION:

Attracting attention

Identify the addressee

Interpersonal function: preserving interpersonal relation (full names, professional title and honorifics)

POLITENESS AS CULTURE- AND LANGUAGE-SPECIFIC

Adverbs: of manner (slowly) or to modify the noun (extremely), they can also express place and time and they can occur as adverbial phrases or adjuncts

Back-channel: noises made by listeners that react to something that has been expressed, like mm, uhm

Delexical verbs: a word that is combined with other words in order to have a meaning, so alone they would be without an independent meaning (*have* or *take* which carry other nouns and adjectives)

Discourse markers: link between more topics, helping the speakers mediate their ideas (anyway to change topic or stop conversation, you know what I mean to make sure the addressee understood the message), so they are not primarily carrier of a specific meaning

Tags: strings of words (auxiliary and a pronoun with or without "not") after a statement, if it's positive the tag would be negative and vice versa; they play an important role in the interactional process

Transactional: language used during a business, it is the opposite of interactional language

Modality: verbs that do not refer to a specific meaning, but focus on unrealised states and possibility, with a meaning that expresses obligation, option etc.; modal forms can be also adverbs

Telephone conversations: summons-answer (identification-recognition; greeting-greeting; initial inquires)

Pre-closing: the interlocutor is about to leave, but he still preserves his negative face and the other's positive face

Closing: when the farewell is exchanged

Typeface: typefaces with serif suggest a traditional and official ethos, whilst the ones without serif are more modern

Font shifts: their usage can depend on many factors (italics for emphasis and foreign words)

Capitalization: used at the beginning of sentences and for proper names (in German it is used for all the names instead, but this language uses also Fraktur which consists of spaces between all the letters composing a name, however is quite uncommon nowadays)

Genres: classification of text where external factors have an important role, so it is a group of quite stable conventions

Text type: characterisation based only on internal features

SITUATIONAL CRITERIA

Address

Standard (American, British English)

Subject field

Professionalism

Medium

Formality

INTERACTIONAL CRITERIA

Participation

Social roles

Spatial and temporal contact

PRAGMATIC C.

Communicative function

Speech act configuration

SEMANTIC AND SYNTACTIC C.

Macrostructure

Coherence

Grammar and grammar categories

Vocabulary

Corpora: databanks which delimit dimensions and context of use of a specific term

BNC is a very big databank which is divided in "written" (imaginative texts and informative) and "spoken" (conversational and task-oriented), it is composed by words which have a gradient of usage

Sublanguage: a particular language which tries to create closure (absence of new words and structures)

Interdiscursivity or generic intertextuality: it refers to the fact that sometimes texts disguise themselves as other discourse type, borrowing different characteristics

The context of situation is very important for a communicative act and Halliday's functional grammar, which is composed not only of prescriptive and descriptive criteria. Pragmatics is defined as the study of language in communication, depending on the knowledge of real world, how people perceive speech acts and relations between them

Attitudinal disjuncts: the different behaviour of the same words which differ respect of the language in which they are used (in fact vs infatti)

Universe of discourse: the fact that people should identify with the same sets of parameters regarding the world they live in, so there can be discrepancies between a mother and her sons, atheists and faithful people and so on, actually our culture mediate our language due to the fact that it can change our perception and even the literal translation of a term from a language to another can have different shades and context of usage, sometimes even the referent is absent

Express politeness: whereas in Italian we have Tu/Lei, in English there are different means consisting of being less direct and using phatic like "please". The felicity condition refers to the fact that something that is asked to be made COULD be made, so there must be the authority to ask that and the condition to complete the task